



Nunavut Canada

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NUNAVUT

4th Session

2nd Assembly

HANSARD

Official Report

DAY 4

Friday, March 9, 2007

Pages 104 – 156

Iqaluit

Speaker: The Honourable Peter Kilabuk, M.L.A.

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

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(Rankin Inlet North)

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(Cambridge Bay)

Striking Committee

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**Iqaluit, Nunavut
Friday, March 9, 2007**

Members Present:

Honourable Leona Aglukkaq, Honourable Olayuk Akesuk, Mr. David Alagalak, Mr. James Arreak, Mr. Levi Barnabas, Honourable Levinia Brown, Mr. Tagak Curley, Mr. Joe Allen Evyagotailak, Honourable Peter Kilabuk, Mr. Steve Mapsalak, Honourable Patterk Netser, Honourable Paul Okalik, Mr. Keith Peterson, Honourable David Simailak, Honourable Louis Tapardjuk, Mr. Hunter Tootoo.

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (Hon. Peter Kilabuk)(interpretation): Good morning. Thank you. I would like to ask Mr. Netser to say the opening prayer. Thank you.

>>Prayer

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Good morning, Premier and Members. Orders of the Day. Ministers' Statements. Minister for Culture, Language, Elders and Youth and Human Resources, Minister Tapardjuk.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

Minister's Statement 009 – 2(4): Long Term Service Award Ceremonies

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Mr. Speaker, this morning I would like to take this opportunity to recognize the continued effort and contributions of our employees who have served long periods of employment within the public service.

Long-term service awards ceremonies recognizing employees with five, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, and 40 years of continuous service with the Government of Nunavut including service carried over from the Government of the Northwest Territories were held in 23 communities in Nunavut for approximately 600 employees this fiscal year.

I would like to acknowledge this year's 40-year recipient, Maggie Gordon from Iqaluit, who works in the Department of Education. There are also seven 30-year recipients: Jeannie Iou from Iqaluit, who works in the Department of Health and Social Services, Carl Isnor from Cambridge Bay, who works at the Nunavut Arctic College and from the Department of Education, Johnny Meeko from Sanikiluaq, Celina Tucktoo from Taloyoak, Elizabeth Iksiktaaryuk and Sally Seeteenak, both of whom are from Baker Lake, and Angeline Simik from Chesterfield Inlet.

I would also like to thank my colleagues who were able to participate at these awards: Leona Aglukkaq, Levinia Brown, Tagak Curley, Joe Allen Evyagotailak, Peter Kilabuk, Patterk Netser, Paul Okalik, Ed Picco, and Hunter Tootoo. The next long-term service award ceremonies will be held in 2008-09 fiscal year. Please join me in acknowledging the dedication of our employees, our most valued assets. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Tapardjuk. Ministers' Statements. Mr. Premier.

Minister's Statement 010 – 2(4): Policing in Nunavut

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Good morning. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I am dedicated to the improvement of the safety of every community across Nunavut. Later today, I will be tabling the Nunavut Policing Report and Pan-Territorial Policing Report.

The three northern territories jointly contracted an independent company to hold community consultations and to report on their findings. Consultations were conducted in ten Nunavut communities and they expressed their views on five major aspects of policing:

- community justice
- crime prevention
- community safety
- communications, and;
- the roles and priorities of policing in Nunavut.

Participants in the consultation process recognized and appreciate the policing services now being provided by the RCMP. However, the report also notes that there are some service delivery challenges.

The RCMP has attended to those challenges, and remains committed to working with the Government of Nunavut and with the individual communities to increase safety and security of all our residents.

I continue to seek the support of my colleagues on this important issue. By working together, we can promote and enhance community safety.

I would like to thank everyone that took part in these consultations and to let them know that the information they provided is a valuable tool as it gives insight to the needs and desires of our communities. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Premier. Ministers' Statements. Minister responsible for Community and Government Services, Minister Brown.

Minister's Statement 011 – 2(4): Technical Training Innovation

Hon. Levinia Brown (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) It gives me great pleasure to announce that through our partnership agreement between Community and Government Services, Nunavut Arctic College, and Kakivak Association, a two-year Informatics Technology Program has begun. It started in January 2007 with 15 students from across Nunavut.

This two-year program will graduate informatics technicians in the field of hardware technician, software support specialist, network technicians, and network administrators.

With the current market demand, we face a long-standing difficulty in attracting these skills to Nunavut from other jurisdictions. All people from here and trained here will serve all Nunavummiut in the future.

As a result of this long-range and innovative approach to training and recruitment, I look forward to celebrate the first graduation of this program in 2009, and welcoming the new informatics technicians into the Government of Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Health and Social Services, Minister Aglukkaq.

Minister's Statement 012 – 2(4): Strengthening Financial Management at HSS

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Despite our best efforts, the Department of Health and Social Services will incur a deficit for fiscal year 2006-07. The two major reasons are medical travel and the use of agency nurses.

We are taking steps to address both of these challenges; we are developing new guidelines to support the revised Client Travel Policy, and we are enhancing our recruitment efforts to employ indeterminate, term, and casual nursing staff.

Better financial management would have allowed us to identify these challenges earlier in the fiscal year. We are relying on techniques that haven't changed in more than a decade, even though we have the technology that allows us to respond quickly. We need a new approach to financial management in the department.

I strongly support the Department of Finance initiatives to consolidate financial operations. That is why I'm announcing today that the Department of Social Services will build upon the initiatives by transferring the responsibility for payment processing now held by our department to the Department of Finance.

What does this mean? It means that about 17 positions in the Department of Finance or Health will transfer to the Department of Finance for processing payments; an activity that takes up the bulk of the finance division's time. Finance is in a better position to

process payments as they have large and more stable processing units, both at headquarters and in the field.

This means that the remaining nine positions are able to focus on proper budget development, financial projections, and analyzing expenditure patterns and processes. No jobs will be lost; no salaries will be adversely affected.

The remaining financial analysts at the Department of Health and Social Services will also be in a position to train program managers in more effective financial management practices.

They can give the managers the tools they need to ensure effective, efficient, and responsible use of public funds. Over the course of the coming fiscal year these efforts will help contain expenditures and put in place long term solutions to our ongoing financial challenges.

This partnership between Health and Social Services and the Department of Finance is a practical way to ensure sustainability and quality financial services for the government as a whole.

It is a good example of how our government can meet our goals of simplicity and unity for the betterment of all Nunavummiut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Culture, Language, Elders and Youth, Mr. Tapardjuk.

Minister's Statement 013 – 2(4): Inuit and Dene Games

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Inuit and Dene games presentation sports during the 2007 Canada Winter Games pan-northern territorial partners have banded together to showcase some of our finest athletes from the Yukon, Northwest Territories, and Nunavut.

Our great traditional sports from the north are being highlighted throughout the games. Inuit games were held during the first week while the Dene games are taking place in the second week of the games.

An added benefit to our athletes was that the major corporate sponsor, Inbridge Corporation awarded each individual winner a bursary of \$2,500 towards their pursuit of further education. The extensive cultural portion of the winter games certainly highlighted the rich cultural traditions of the north.

I am happy to report that our Nunavut athletes have been doing great in the Yukon, having won 27 medals, 12 of them gold medals in the Inuit games, and four medals so far in the Dene games.

Please join me in congratulating those young Nunavummiut on their accomplishments. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Orders of the Day. Members' Statements. Member for Akulliq, Mr. Mapsalak.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 022 – 2(4): Literary Prize Winner – Jennifer Kadjuk of Repulse Bay

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize and to congratulate Jennifer Kadjuk from Repulse Bay who was recognized for winning a literacy contest.

Her submission was written in Inuktitut to promote the Inuktitut language. I would like for my colleagues to support me in congratulating this individual for winning this award. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak. Members' Statements. Member for Cambridge Bay, Mr. Peterson.

Member's Statement 023 – 2(4): Long Term Service Awards

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would also like to congratulate the many Government of Nunavut employees in my community of Cambridge Bay who received long-term service awards at the event held at the Arctic Islands Lodge Hotel on February 22, 2007.

Three of the longest serving employees are teachers who taught both of my son's in various grades in elementary school. Both boy's graduated from high school and went on to university. My wife and I are thankful that they had wonderful teachers during their formative years. I'm also thankful these teachers continue to teach our children in Cambridge Bay.

In this day and age of rapid employee turnover and diminishing corporate loyalty, I am proud to know that we have many dedicated and committed employees, many of whom are also our relatives and our friends, in all communities across Nunavut who go to work

everyday and serve our fellow Nunavummiut. Without them, the government would not be able to deliver the vast array of programs and services, which are available to residents and visitors alike.

It is important that we build a stable, experienced, and motivated public service. I ask the House to join me in recognizing our many long-term service award employees in Cambridge Bay and elsewhere in Nunavut for their services and contributions to our residents in our communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Evyagotailak.

Member's Statement 024 – 2(4): Canada Winter Games Coaches

Mr. Evyagotailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to recognize two coaches; Allen Anaviluk, originally from Kugluktuk, now living in Gjoa Haven; and Darlene Hokanak from Kugluktuk. These two individuals were coaches in Arctic Sports during the Canada Winter Games. (interpretation ends)

Allen has been coaching for many years. He started coaching in 1972. Allen was also a record holder in Arctic Sport events while he was an athlete. He has also coached in the last four Arctic Winter Games. Darlene started coaching in recent years and she too was an athlete in Arctic Sports at Arctic Winter Games. Because of these two hard working coaches, the Nunavut Athletes did very well at the Canada Winter Games.

Mr. Speaker, members, please join me in recognizing these individuals and all coaches that encourage our youth to participate in sports in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Evyagotailak. Member for Nanulik, Mr. Netser.

Member's Statement 025 – 2(4): Congratulations to Canada Winter Games Athletes

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to congratulate the athletes in Whitehorse. I would like to rise this morning to congratulate what the Premier said, Blair Tautu, who won medals. She has the most medals for women. Luke Tanuyak, a Chesterfield Inlet resident, has the most medals for men. I would like to congratulate those two athletes. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Item 4. Returns to Oral Questions. Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Nattilik, Minister Aglukkaq.

Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq (interpretation): I would like to recognize a gentleman from Gjoa Haven: Bob Konana. He is here in Iqaluit to attend some meetings. He has been trying to leave Iqaluit but due to weather, he has been waiting here patiently. I would like to recognize Bob Konana from Gjoa Haven.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Welcome to the Gallery. Member for Igloolik, Mr. Tapardjuk.

Hon. Louis Tapardjuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to recognize an individual I'm pretty sure all of us know. He is currently the Mayor of Igloolik: Mr. Paul Quassa. He was a negotiator during the land claims process and I want him to be recognized, the Mayor of Igloolik. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tapardjuk. Welcome to the Gallery Mr. Quassa. Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Item 6. Oral Questions. Member for Akulliq, Mr. Mapsalak.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Question 023 – 2(4): Medical Escorts for Elders

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health and Social Services. This is not a new question. It is in regard to medical escorts for elders.

One of the major concerns is a unilingual Inuit elder going on medical travel without an escort. I would like to thank the minister for her recent letter to all Members of the Legislative Assembly on medical travel for Nunavummiut.

My question is: do elders require an escort when they travel from their community, yes or no? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak. Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Just a quick update to the member, I have provided each member the current guidelines and appeal process for the medical travel that had been approved in 2002.

That Client Travel Policy also has provisions for escorts for unilingual elders. Recently, through consultation with my colleagues, we're looking at trying to update that policy to address the questions that he's asked me, as well as other members in the House.

The draft Client Travel Policy has been presented to Cabinet, and I have been provided an agreement in principal, or approval in principal to do further work on costing just around that subject.

So the other direction that I had received from Cabinet was to also include in the overall process the actual guidelines that will be in place with the policy itself. So that is in the works, and will require more details but I want to reassure the member that some elders don't require escorts.

Not every elder requires escorts, and not every elder is unilingual either. So we have to look at those. As it is right now, the provisions in the current client travel policy allows escorts for unilingual elders that require escorts, generally speaking.

I also want to say that every patient case is different. So every decision will be based on that patient. We have the policy in place that provides overall guidelines for staff. I wanted to state that for the record in that it's difficult to say yes or no, when you're dealing with people, when their cases are different, when their situations are different and so on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Your first supplementary, Mr. Mapsalak.

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, this is an on-going issue and it's raised in the House, especially for the elders who are unilingual when they have to travel alone because they don't speak English. So for those patients who go down to Winnipeg, if they encounter problems, they are left alone, even with making phone calls.

I know that every case is different. Do they require escorts, or do they have to have an escort? That's the information that I was looking for. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak. Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The current policy we have in place allows for escorts of elders that require escorts. That provision is in place already, and I will say that not every elder requires an escort. I'll use any senior in this room that wants an escort or not as an example.

Some seniors don't want an escort, but in cases where an elder requires support when they're traveling through Winnipeg, Ottawa, or Edmonton, the provisions in the policy allow that as it is.

I've been asked by my standing committee colleagues to provide the breakdown of how much we've spent on escorts and patient travel. I'm putting that information together for the House. So there is provision for providing escorts to unilingual elders.

And again, I will say the decisions are on a case-by-case basis. Just because a person is escorted does not mean it is automatic; in cases where the individual practitioner that's dealing with a client will make those decisions based on the situation of that patient. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Just to remind the members; try to make your preambles short to your questions and answers. Your second supplementary, Mr. Mapsalak.

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) In order that we as MLAs can have some clear information on which to base our recommendations, can the minister tell this House how much would it cost per year to ensure that every unilingual elder travelling outside of their home community to receive medical treatment has an escort with them? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak. Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is part of the exercise that we are putting together as part of the agreement in principal that I received from my Cabinet colleagues around the development of that policy for Nunavut. We need to look at the financial impact; we have some suggestions.

In my Minister's Statement this morning, I said that the Department of Health and Social Services would be in a deficit situation in medical travel. So any changes to the current practice and enhancement to automatic escorts to elders because they're elders, there will be a financial cost to that. That's part of the exercise that I have to put forward to the Financial Management Board for approval if there is going to be an enhancement to the current policy as it is. So I'm prepared to share that information with the House and with my colleagues.

I've committed to providing information on the breakdown of how much we spend on escorts as a request from the standing committee. We are working on that. I've provided to the members the current policy and I listened to the members in terms of the direction they want us to go. I've also tried to balance that with our current financial situation as a government. So that information I will have to bring forward to Financial Management Board before I can share it with the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Your final supplementary, Mr. Mapsalak.

Mr. Mapsalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wonder if the minister can respond to me or let me know when this will be completed. When should we expect that? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Mapsalak. Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the development of the guidelines, probably over the summer this year, I have to go back to cabinet on that. The implementation guidelines will take a bit of time, which my colleagues had asked that I present along with the policy when in the delivery of the policy itself costs the territory.

So there are guidelines that will provide assistance to my staff. Sometime, hopefully this year, at the same time the cost analysis of the recommendations coming forth from my colleagues. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Aglukkaq. Oral Questions. Member for Keewatin North, Mr. Curley.

Question 024 – 2(4): Enforcement of Wildlife Act

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Environment. Nunavummiut are keenly aware that the review process for the proposed new regulations under the *Wildlife Act* is ongoing.

I am aware that, until the new regulations are in place, the government is relying on transitional regulations that were published in July 2005. Regulations provide further detail as to what harvesting practices are legal and which are illegal. My line of questioning today will focus on the development and enforcement of the *Wildlife Act* and the new regulations.

There have been a number of significant disagreements between the Government of Nunavut and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated on a number of issues in relation to the development of the regulations. Can the minister provide a frank update today on the status of the regulations? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister of Environment, Mr. Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The wildlife regulations are incomplete, but our department is preparing now, but we are just waiting for NWMB's spring special meeting and then after that special meeting we'll find out exactly what we will be doing with the regulations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Netser. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe that it is important that our laws be enforced evenly, fairly, and consistently. I would like to ask the minister to explain, for the benefit of public who are Nunavummiut who are listening to us today, exactly how a decision is made to charge someone for an alleged offence under the *Wildlife Act*.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister of Environment, Mr. Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Individuals who offend under the *Wildlife Act* are taken care of by the Department of Justice, and we try to make sure that we follow the act. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Your second supplementary, Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the response, I'm sure that the Renewable Resource Officer or the RCMP does the investigation before an individual is charged.

My second question: when it comes to enforcing the law, the public expects that there will be no favouritism. For example, there was a polar bear that was caught last fall and the individual didn't even know that the polar bear had a cub, but he was already charged instantly. Also, there were two mining companies that had adopted a baby muskox and they weren't even charged, they only killed the muskox.

So can the minister clarify for this House today exactly how his department is investigating allegations of violations of the act that occur at mining camps located in Nunavut?

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister of Environment, Mr. Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The mining company who adopted that baby muskox is now being dealt with through the justice system, so I can't talk to that issue right now.

We treat all violations equally, especially when they violate the *Wildlife Act*. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Netser. Your final supplementary, Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That is what Kivalliqmiut are interested in hearing about because quite a few individuals have noticed that the regulators will charge an Inuk right away in the matter of a week or on the same day.

So we're wondering why they're doing long investigations; we're wondering if Renewable Resources is treating everyone equally. Who is ultimately responsible, for example, at the mining company, whether they're going to be charged or not? Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank the member for asking that question. The *Wildlife Act* provisions state that anyone who violates the act, whether it be a mining company or a harvester, my staff and my

department do the investigation, and if they're going to be charged, then they are referred to the Crown Prosecutors.

But the Crown Prosecutors, since they are so busy, it takes a while for us to receive it back from them. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Netser. Oral Questions. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Evyagotailak.

Question 025 – 2(4): Survey of Caribou Herds

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is to the Premier.

In my constituency of Kugluktuk, we have three different caribou herds: the Island Herd, the Bathurst Herd, and the Bluenose Herd. Right now we are hunting the Island Herd. That herd is shared with the Northwest Territories.

During the recent meeting in Whitehorse of the three territorial Premiers, I understand that they discussed caribou issues. Can the minister tell us of the discussions at this meeting and what commitments he made on behalf of Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Evyagotailak. Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The main focus was that the NWT is experiencing some difficulty with a decline in their caribou herds. We expressed our concern for all of our herds. I must say we are not experiencing the same level of decline in Nunavut, fortunately for now. We will work together to make sure that the herds that we do share don't decline in the future. So we committed to working together through our joint board and making sure that we are monitoring this very closely. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Premier. Your first supplementary, Mr. Evyagotailak.

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Premier. Recently, the inmates at Kugluktuk's Illavut Centre had a caribou hunt and the meat was distributed to elders. The herd seemed to be further away from the community than is normal. Hunters have had to travel over 140 miles until they found the caribou. Can the Premier tell us today what resources the government will provide to fund caribou herd surveys to provide adequate numbers? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Evyagotailak. Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know that we've been experiencing that throughout Nunavut. I believe here in Iqaluit, and in Pangnirtung they've been noticing

herds are migrating to different areas. So it's something I guess that we've experienced in the past and it comes and goes.

I must say that our Environment Department has been very active in monitoring caribou herds along with other herds throughout Nunavut. So we will continue to monitor our herds very carefully. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Premier. Your second supplementary, Mr. Evyagotailak.

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks Premier. Are there any opportunities to take advantage of International Polar Year funding or projects to approach this issue? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Evyagotailak. Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I said a couple of days ago to one of our colleagues in the House, the monies that the federal government has allocated are controlled by the federal government. But we will cooperate with any scientist doing work throughout Nunavut to improve our situation here. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Premier. Oral Questions. Member for High Arctic, Mr. Barnabas.

Question 026 – 2(4): Ongoing Problems with Medical Travel in the Baffin Region

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health and Social Services.

Residents in all three of my constituency's communities continue to have problems with medical travel in the Baffin region. This has been an ongoing issue for some time now. Ever since the medical travel office moved to Pangnirtung, to your constituency Mr. Speaker, the administration of these services has not functioned effectively to date.

Although I heard, and the minister stated, that they will be amending the Client Travel Policy this coming spring or summer, that she would table. Can the minister tell this House exactly what recent steps have been taken to improve the delivery of medical transportation services in the Baffin region? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Minister of Health and Social Services, Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The changes that the member refers to were implemented back in February 2006. Prior to the changes, the department experienced about two percent of concerns raised by our clients, which amounts to about

250 to 300 complaints every year based on processing medical travel before the change took place.

So part of trying to manage all of those changes was to come up with a way of providing the service to our clients to try and address those 300 complaints we were receiving before any changes were ever made. So by making those changes we are looking at trying to reduce the two percent of complaints we were receiving before the change and I believe that systems that we have put forward are an improvement to providing better service to our clients in the communities.

The change I have stated in the past, yes, the member is correct, there are two other individuals in Pangnirtung that will provide travel coordination services with the health centre for travel to Iqaluit from surrounding communities. The hospital will provide travel services to patients from the hospital that need to travel down south.

We also are putting in systems working with Ottawa boarding home, the Baffin Regional office in Pangnirtung, and the hospital to develop a system that will allow us better coordination of patient care. At the same time we developed a process for discharging our patients from various hospitals and centres.

One of the other things we've done in Iqaluit was that we had a meeting with First Air to streamline the process better for people traveling to the various communities in the north. So some of those are examples of improvements that we have made to address the complaints we were receiving prior to February of 2006. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Aglukkaq. Your first supplementary, Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Can the minister provide some clarification on how the Baffin Regional Travel Office works with the health centres and health practitioners? For example, surgeons, cardiologist, and so on to ensure that patients do not have to spend unnecessary days at the boarding homes after they have received medical services. I'm sure that it costs extra to spend additional days at the boarding home. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The process that we implemented as part of the change was as soon as the person was dealt with at the hospital, whether seeing a doctor there or a specialist, that discharge document is faxed to the office immediately.

The travel arrangements are made for that person on the first available flight. Not every patient waits in the hospital because we haven't done our job. Some patients have to wait because there are no flights. We have to also work with the airlines in coordinating best individual travel based on travel to various communities.

Not every community gets a flight every day. So, yes, sometimes patients have to wait in the boarding home a day or two. Sometimes they have to wait longer because of weather. Look at this week, my uncle's sitting here; he's been stuck for five days.

So those are factors sometimes we also have to consider in how we are, in evaluating how we are doing in providing a better service.

I believe the system is improved. I believe the system will allow us to evaluate since February 2006, when we made the change, to see if there is a reduction in issues raised by people from the Baffin in the referral process.

I look forward to also providing that information to the member in terms of whether our statistics have gone down in complaints that we had received prior to February 2006. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Aglukkaq. Your second supplementary, Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member for Akulliq asked some questions in this regard, but I would like to make additions.

My constituents have indicated that elders and unilingual patients are still travelling without escorts, even when they fill out the appropriate escort request forms. In the past, the minister has indicated that all elders are entitled to an escort.

What does the department's Medical Travel Policy specifically say about escorts for elders? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe the original question related to travel coordination, and not the policy, but the two are interlinked.

The Client Travel Policy that I shared with the members that exists right now states as follows: "if the client is travelling outside of Nunavut and needs an escort to interpret if interpretation is not provided."

That is a provision that is applied in dealing with our elders presently. Again, I will state that not every elder requires an escort. Some elders are very capable of travelling and speak two languages and so on. So, just to change the piece of that policy to say every elder will have an escort, whether they need it medically or not, or do I say a unilingual elder that requires escort, or, a person that requires assistance travelling?

So all those the member has raised, I have to bring that back to the Financial Management Board because there has to be an analysis on the financial impact. I said as a department we are experiencing a deficit again in medical travel, and for any change to that policy I have to get approval.

So that's the line that is in the current policy, and if a patient requires an escort because of language issues and so on, they will be provided an escort. That's the current policy. But, we don't have an automatic escort for age.

Age should not be the last piece we look at. The patient's condition should be the first and primary concern. So, those are things that we are challenged with, and we need to go back as a department to the Financial Management Board for a decision. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Your final supplementary, Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the current travel policy, it states that if the individual requires an interpreter, they do need an escort.

We do know that interpreters work from 9:00 to 5:00, and that is the case in both Iqaluit and Ottawa. If the elder doesn't have an escort, and if they're unilingual, even though they are physically able, what happens, for example, if there was a mechanical problem, or if they reached a southern destination at 11:00 in the night, after the staff have gone off for the evening?

My question is: what assurances can the minister provide to my constituents that escorts will be provided for elders and unilingual clients? What assurances can the minister provide? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The current policy is there. It's been in place since 2002, and in that policy, again, it allows an escort for a person who is unilingual.

A person who arrives in any centre is picked up by the boarding home staff. It doesn't matter what time the plane arrives. They are picked up and transported to the boarding home.

So that assistance is there, and I want to reassure people in the communities, the service is there for individuals that are travelling outside the territory. If the member has specific concerns from a specific constituent on an issue, I will be glad to follow up with those individuals as to what happened.

There is an appeal process in place. I've also attached a sample of that appeal form to my colleagues. If a person at the community level, before they travel, feels that they should have an escort, they can appeal immediately.

And those files are reviewed on a case-by-case basis on the conditions of each patient. So the process is there for an evaluation. If the member has constituents that are expressing concerns on their treatment, I would be glad to follow those up with my staff.

If the member has that information, please send it to me and I will forward it to my staff to review, and report back to the individual what transpired. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit Centre, Mr. Tootoo.

Question 027 – 2(4): Process for Overflow at Medical Boarding Homes

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question too is for the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, and it deals with the, I don't know if it's a growing unhealthy or frustrating time for people that have to leave and travel for medical travel.

I know that the department, through the contractors, has adequate facilities in the south to house patients and escorts when they have to leave for medical travel. In a case, with, I would imagine all of them, even the one in Yellowknife, when they have an overflow problem, what kind of processes are in place when people travel down to a boarding home like Larga in Ottawa, and it's full. How do they ensure that adequate accommodations are in place in cases like that for people when they travel? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. When there is no space in a boarding home, any of the boarding homes, we make arrangements to have the patients stay at hotels. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Your first supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. How does the department ensure that the hotels and the facilities that these people are going to adequately suit the individual needs of the client? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The boarding home services in Ottawa, as well as the hospital coordinate the booking of individuals into the hotels. Suitability again, is based on patient-by-patient condition.

So those are worked out between the personnel in Ottawa, as well as the hospital here. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Your second supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I recently corresponded to the minister in writing a case that was brought to my attention. An escort was down with their unilingual elder mother who was in a walker. A reservation had been placed at a hotel room with two beds in it on the first floor with the client but next day they were informed that they had to move to the second floor of the hotel.

The daughter had indicated that she had some concerns that if her mother was in a walker and can't get down the stairs in case there's a fire, or for health and safety reasons that that wasn't suitable. And, on top of that, the two of them were moved to a room with only one bed. So I would like to ask the minister: would she consider that as a suitable accommodation in that particular instance? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister of Health and Social Services, Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure why the hotel would move them from one room to the other room. That's something that I would have to look into and deal with. From what he's saying it would appear not to be, but again, why the hotel moved them, I would have to look into it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Madame Minister. Your final supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll be tabling an article from the paper today that outlines the particular instance that I'm talking about.

In a case where it isn't a suitable accommodation, one could imagine the frustration of the daughter or anybody, any of the escorts, or even the elders themselves that cannot communicate their concerns, 'This isn't right for us.' and being upset about it. In cases like that, what happens?

In this particular case, the individual was told that they were abusive and they were sent home. So as of now, you still have that unilingual elder down there without an escort when an escort was supposed to be there and with her at all times.

The only reason they were sent home was because they were complaining about the fact that the upstairs room with one bed for her and her mother was not suitable. The boarding home said she broke the rules and she was abusive and that's why they were sending her home.

Will the minister commit to looking into that? I would say that's an extenuating circumstance and that should not have happened. So can the minister commit to looking into that particular incident and reporting back as quickly as possible to the Members of this House so that incidents like this do not happen again? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had asked my staff to look into that particular situation around that patient. I understand my staff has spoken to the escort directly to discuss the file.

At the same time my staff have also spoken to the managers of the boarding home in Ottawa. We have a situation in Ottawa in trying to provide our care that the boarding home is very crowded. It's a 54-bed facility and on average we have 90 patients in Ottawa on a daily basis. So it's a challenging job for the staff in Ottawa.

I understand they had dealt with that particular situation with the escort. I'm concerned about tabling a report in the House that will unveil the patients. My approach to this would be to have the staff deal directly with the individual patients and escorts to protect the confidentiality of our patients.

What I can do is report whether all corrective measures were taken. There are two sides to every story then I have to also seek that before I can release anything here. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Madame Minister. Oral Questions. Member for Cambridge Bay, Mr. Peterson.

Question 028 – 2(4): Consultations with Yellowknife Weather Station

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation. Yesterday, I mentioned in my Member's Statement that the Yellowknife weather station is closing.

It hasn't closed, it has actually been transferred to North Bay, Ontario, and it's affecting the flying safety for aviators and residents flying in my region, and it includes aviators flying medevacs and mining charters flying into Yellowknife.

My question for the minister: can the minister tell us if the Government of Nunavut was ever consulted by NavCanada on the closure of the Yellowknife weather station and the transfer in operations to North Bay, Ontario, 3,000 km away from Cambridge Bay? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Minister Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation) I don't have anything in place in my books about what happens in that case. We have a letter from the member and I also have a copy of a letter to NavCanada from the member.

I was not satisfied with what they did to move the station to North Bay, Ontario. I also talked to my staff to talk to the minister responsible from the federal government. That's how we're dealing with it today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Your first supplementary, Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for the answer. It's difficult to understand why NavCanada didn't consult with the Department of Transportation for Nunavut; the one dealing with flying in our part of the world.

As we all know air travel is the lifeline for all Nunavut communities and air safety is paramount to all Nunavummiut. My question for the minister: could the minister explain to me what role his department plays in communicating, on a regular basis, with NavCanada, that their decisions to close northern weather stations and their budget cuts endanger everyone flying in the north. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation) My staff spoke with the Minister for the Department of Transportation in Ottawa. The Northern Air Transport Association has told us that they will be having an annual meeting in Yellowknife and they will be responding to the problem that the member is asking about.

So if it's possible, we will have one of our staff attend that conference or meeting in Yellowknife because we would like to be able to rectify the problem that the member is talking about. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Minister. Your second supplementary, Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for that answer. I wrote a letter to the President of NavCanada urging him to reopen the weather station and I'm still waiting for a response to that letter. I'm also aware that the NWT Minister of Transportation wrote a letter to NavCanada last summer, and I don't believe he's received a response to his letter either; at least I'm not aware that a reply have been received.

So maybe we can benefit if we lobby them jointly, the two territories, to get that weather station reopened. My question for the minister: can the minister describe what correspondence the department is providing to their NWT counterparts to lobby NavCanada to reopen the Yellowknife weather station? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We will talk with the Minister of NWT and I will try to get his support to talk, to lobby with the federal government Department of Transportation and we will look into that to see if we can rectify the problem. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Oral Questions. Your final supplementary, Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister again for that information. I'm glad to hear that there may be a meeting in Yellowknife and that the minister is sending an official from his department to attend and communicate our concern.

I'm wondering, can the minister commit to me that he will write a letter, a strong letter to the president of NavCanada, similar to the letter I wrote, and the Minister of Transportation of NWT wrote and urge him to reopen the Yellowknife weather station to improve the flying safety for Kitikmeot aviators whenever flying into the Yellowknife area. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Minister Simailak.

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had said that the Northern Air Transport Association is having their annual meeting in Yellowknife in April 2007 and that they will be formulating an action plan regarding this issue.

I have said that I would be asking my officials to see if they can attend that annual meeting, and I had also provided in my first answer that I have already asked my officials to draft up a letter to both the President of NavCanada, and to my colleague the federal Minister of Transport, a strong letter as he is suggesting and that's already in the works. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Oral Questions. Member for Uqqummiut, Mr. Arreak.

Question 029 – 2(4): Environmental Clean Up of Old Clyde River Site

Mr. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is for the Minister of Environment. I could ask him, but I have to go through the procedures in the House.

Earlier this week I tabled a letter I received from the minister about the old Clyde River site in my constituency, as well as some photographs that I took last summer of the site. These photographs reveal the current state of the old Clyde River site and it clearly shows that action is needed to clean up the site.

I recognize that the minister is working with Indian and Northern Affairs and the Department of Community and Government Services on this file. I would like to ask him, for the public record, if the minister is satisfied with the progress to date for the clean up of the old Clyde River site. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arreak. Minister of Environment, Mr. Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I could also respond to the member not by standing but by just talking to him. I am pleased to tell the members that as the Department of Environment we just let the people know that the CGS Department would be a more appropriate department to ask that question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Netser. Oral Questions. Your first supplementary, Mr. Arreak.

Mr. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. What is the minister doing to ensure that the old Clyde River site is listed in the federal inventory of contaminated sites? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arreak. Minister responsible for Environment, Mr. Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Like I said, my department does not initiate any clean up of any site. We just look to see which sites should be cleaned up, but after we make the list, CGS is responsible for the clean up of sites. Ms. Brown's department is one that does the clean up work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Netser. Your second supplementary, Mr. Arreak.

Mr. Arreak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Minister. Has the minister had any feedback from the federal government to his suggestion about cleaning up the old Clyde River site at the same time as the Cape Christian site? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arreak. Minister responsible for Environment, Minister Netser.

Hon. Patterk Netser: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand Community and Government Services have met with INAC on March 7, for the possibility of partnering on the cleaning up of the old Clyde River site. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit Centre, Mr. Tootoo.

Question 030 – 2(4): Boarding Home Contracts

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, my question is for the Minister responsible for Health and Social Services. Before I get to my question, I just want to remind the minister that she had earlier committed to providing some numbers on the medical travel and between escorts and that to the committee members as she had indicated to my colleague.

I remind her that her commitment was to provide that to the standing committee prior to the session commencing. And, we're still waiting for that.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the minister is: in its contract with the boarding home, I would assume that transportation from wherever the patients are at, whether it be a hotel, whether from the airport to the boarding home, or to the hospital, are included in the services that are provided.

Is the minister aware of what the obligations are under the contract for the service provider to provide transportation to the hospital, or whether it be the patients or escorts? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister responsible for Health and Social Services, Ms. Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the reminder. We are working on that data. It's just taking a bit of time to consolidate and separate the 26,000 files that we process on an annual basis in that. I hope to have that information to the members as soon as it is available.

With the boarding home contract, all of the boarding home contracts, we also have a working relationship with what you call OSNI, or the Northern Medical Unit of Winnipeg, or Alberta hospital, where there is coordination of appointments with the boarding home patients.

When patients arrive, they are picked up and transported to the facility. At the same time, arrangements are made for them for their appointment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Your first supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Are there any provisions in the contract, or is the minister aware of what the provisions are for an escort to be taken to the hospital to see the person that they are down there escorting? If the person that they are escorting is in the hospital, what provisions are in place to ensure the escort has transportation to the hospital from the boarding home? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know there are provisions in place to provide transportation to the patients, but I would have to look and ask the staff what services are provided for escorts. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Ms. Aglukkaq. Your second supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If she's asking her staff to look into it, would she specifically ask if part of the provisions would indicate that the service provider wouldn't take an escort to the hospital because there was only one person; they wanted to wait to get more people to be able to go.

Would she be willing to look at that, or is she aware of whether that would be the case or not? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I will find out what transportation services are provided to escorts. I think the second piece of the question is more specific to an individual and that if he can give me that individual's name, I will follow up on that particular case.

At the same time, overall, what our policy is, what their commitment is in terms of providing service to patients, I can look into that. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Your final supplementary, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe the minister is already aware of the individual in question; it's one that I have corresponded with her on.

As for the same incident that happened at the hotel where the escort and the mother felt that it wasn't an appropriate accommodation, it's the same thing that the escort was told by the driver at the facility that they wouldn't take that person to the hospital because there was just only one person.

I think, in this circumstance, there's a frustration felt by the escorts and the patients of their needs not being looked after. And when they expressed that frustration, it's just like the minister said, there are two sides to every story; we need to listen to both sides. The frustration that the escort felt of not being able to be taken to the hospital to see her mother when she wanted to go, or when she was needed to go, and she was told she had to wait until they had more people to go.

That's what I'm asking: will the minister look into that particular case? And in general, are there provisions that say, 'We're only going to go if we get three people or we're not going to go.' What if there's only one person there? Does that mean they can't go until they get more people come in? It just doesn't seem to make sense.

So I would like to ask the minister if she's aware of one, if that's the case; and two, to look into it specifically on the matter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Minister Aglukkaq.

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you. And I thank the member for clarifying whether that was the same person we were talking about or not. I will look into that. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Question Period is now over. Item 7. Written Questions. Item 8. Returns to Written Questions. Item 9. Replies to Opening Address. Item 10. (interpretation ends) Replies to Budget Address. (interpretation) Item 11. Petitions. Ms. Aglukkaq.

Item 11: Petitions

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to provide a copy of a petition I received from people in Gjoa Haven concerning the urgent need to provide a call display service for the community. A significant number of my constituents took the time to sign this petition and I urge the company to act on this matter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Item 11. Petitions. Item 12. Thank you. The petition, I'm going to have to return it, and then you'll be able to bring it under Tabling of Documents.

Thank you. The petitions have to be directed to the government. Item 12. (interpretation ends) Reports of Standing and Special Committees.

(interpretation) Item 13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills. Item 14. Tabling of Documents. Mr. Premier.

Item 14: Tabling of Documents

Tabled Document 021 – 2(4): Policing in Nunavut and the Territories – Report on the Public Consultation Process March 2006; and Public Consultations

Hon. Paul Okalik: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to table the following document; Policing in Nunavut, Report on the Public Consultation Process, March 2006, and the Policing in the Territories Report on a Public Consultation Process, March 2006. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Premier. Can you please bring the tabled document to the Clerk's table? Thank you. Tabling of Documents. Member for Iqaluit Centre, Mr. Tootoo.

Tabled Document 022 – 2(4): Nunatsiaq News Article “Medical Travel a Stressful Time for All” March 9, 2007

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd like to table an article that is in today's Nunatsiaq News, and it is written by none other than the lady sitting over there in the corner, Jane George. The title of the article is: Medical Travel, A Stressful Time for All. And the first paragraph reads: “A recent incident in Ottawa revealed the unbearable stresses that Nunavut's patient travel system imposes on everyone involved.”

I would just like to table that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Could the member please provide the tabled document to the Clerk's table.

Item 14. Tabling of Documents. Ms. Aglukkaq.

Tabled Document 023 – 2(4): Petition to NorthwEstel for Call Display from Residents of Gjoa Haven

Hon. Leona Aglukkaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to table the copy of the petition to NorthwEstel concerning the urgent need to provide a call display service in the community, and a significant number of my constituents took the time to sign this petition, and I urge the company to act on it. I believe there are about 200 signatures. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Aglukkaq. We'll see if it's a tabled document. Thank you.

Tabled Documents. Item 15. (interpretation ends) Notices of Motions. (interpretation)
Item 16. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. (interpretation ends) Minister Simailak.

Item 16: Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills**Bill 02 – Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act #3, 2006-07 – Notice**

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Monday, March 12, 2007 that Bill 2, *Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act #3, 2006-07*, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Item 16. (interpretation ends) Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Minister Simailak.

Bill 03 – Supplementary Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act #3, 2006-07 – Notice

Hon. David Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Monday, March 12, 2007 that Bill 3, *Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act #3, 2006-07*, be read for the first time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Minister. Item 16. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Item 17. Motions. 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. We'll deal with this with Mr. Arreak in the Chair and we'll have a lunch break at 12:00.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House recessed at 11:30 and Committee resumed at 11:31*

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

Chairman (Mr. Arreak)(interpretation): I call the committee meeting to order. (interpretation ends) In Committee of the Whole we have the following item to deal with: Bill 1. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Evyagotailak.

Mr. Evyagotailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We wish to proceed with the review of the main estimates for the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, followed by the Department of Community and Government Services. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Evyagotailak. Are we in agreement we first deal with the main estimates of Executive?

Some Members: Agreed.

Bill 01 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2007-08 – Consideration in Committee – Executive & Intergovernmental Affairs

Chairman: I would like to ask Premier Okalik to make his opening remarks. Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to present an overview of the department and its 2007-08 Operation and Maintenance Budget. This budget is designed to assist the government in meeting the priorities of *Pinasuaqtavut*.

EIA Mission, Role. The Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs provides advice and administrative support to the cabinet, plays a lead role in interdepartmental coordination, and coordinates intergovernmental affairs with a focus on developing Nunavut Government positions on national, territorial, circumpolar, and aboriginal issues and works to ensure that the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement is implemented.

EIA is also responsible for communicating accomplishments, objectives, and policies of the government, both within the government and to Nunavummiut.

Our mandate for the second term is ambitious and EIA will work with the departments to meet the priorities that we set in *Pinasuaqtavut*. I am proud of our territory's accomplishments to date, and by working together we can carry out what remains to be done during our term to meet our goals.

For EIA budget, the total budget for the department in 2007-08 is \$11,306,000. This is the same amount as approved for 2006-07. The Executive Branch is responsible for Corporate Services, Statistics, Communications, Policy, Planning and Evaluation, and provides support to Cabinet and ministers' offices and the Utility Rates Review Council.

Intergovernmental Affairs Branch, Federal Relations. I have met with Prime Minister Harper on a number of occasions. I was encouraged by an early commitment from Prime Minister Harper on a northern vision that includes devolution and recognizes the infrastructure challenges Nunavut faces. He shares a desire to have Nunavut gain the tools needed to increase our economic contributions to Canada. We will need to maintain our intergovernmental activity to ensure the federal government keeps northern issues on its priority list.

At the Canada Winter Games, along with the other northern premiers, I met with Prime Minister Harper to address northern issues, particularly the territorial formula financing and also that the federal budget to be presented on March 19 would at least meet our immediate forced growth needs and begin our long standing infrastructure funding requirements.

We are prepared to begin negotiations with the federal government on devolution so that Nunavummiut can benefit from our abundant natural resources. The federal government INAC minister appointed Paul Mayer as his Nunavut devolution representative. The GN and NTI teams have met with him on a number of occasions. Our major concern is the issue that our internal waters are included in the federal mandate, especially in the High Arctic. We are going to work to ensure they are included.

The Government of Nunavut is participating in Canada's ongoing negotiations with trans-boundary claims of James Bay Cree and Athabasca Denesuliné. The Nunavik Inuit Land Claims Agreement was ratified and I was pleased to travel to Kuujuaq with MLA Peter Kattuk in December to sign the agreement on behalf of Nunavut, even though Peter Kattuk is not here.

Canada continues to meet with Manitoba's Denesuliné and Athabasca Denesuliné, NTI and Kivalliq Inuit Association on southern Kivalliq harvesting rights and land quantum, although they don't always agree. We have advised all parties of the Government of Nunavut's opposition to propose land quantum.

The Government of Nunavut will continue to support the Hudson Bay group NTK, based in Sanikiluaq. The Quebec panel reviewing Hydro Quebec's Eastmain project did not provide any financial resources to address cumulative impacts from the development but did recommend the federal government implement a research and monitoring program for the James and Hudson Bay ecosystems. The GN will assist NTK in ensuring the federal government implements this recommendation.

The department is also home to a small Energy Secretariat. One of the key responsibilities of the secretariat is to provide advice and support to the Minister of Energy. Given that 20 percent of the Government of Nunavut budget is spent on energy, leadership and coordination is absolutely necessary. The Secretariat has developed a comprehensive energy discussion paper for targeted consultation on the development of a Government of Nunavut strategy.

These are the highlights of EIA's mandate and I expect to continue to build upon programs and continue to advance *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* as a strong influence in policy development.

I would be pleased to answer any questions or address the comments of my fellow MLAs. Again, I thank you for the opportunity to meet with you this afternoon. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Premier. Does the committee agree that officials be brought to the witness table?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Sergeant-at-Arms, can you escort the officials please.

Mr. Premier, for the record, could you introduce your officials, please.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Although you know who these individuals are, to my right, my Deputy Minister of EIA John Walsh, and to my left, Deputy Minister for Intergovernmental and Aboriginal Affairs, David Omilgoitok. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Welcome back, minister. Does the Chair of the Standing Committee on Government Operations have opening comments? Please proceed, Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Standing Committee on Government Operations and Accountability has reviewed the proposed main estimates and business plan of the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs for the 2007-08 fiscal year, and I'm pleased to provide you with the committee's comments.

The committee notes that the department's proposed 2007-08 budget of \$11,306,000 is the same amount as approved for 2006-07. The department's budget has increased approximately 46 percent from its initial allocation of \$7,734,000 back in 1999-2000.

A number of concerns have been raised during the previous reviews of the department's main estimates and business plans. I would like to take a moment to note progress and performance in these areas.

In a number of respects, the government's performance in meeting its statutory tabling requirements has improved since the first few years of the GN's existence. EIA has an important role to play in enforcing discipline in this area with respect to the departmental tabling requirements.

The standing committee urges the minister to continue to formally table in the House all policies that are approved by the Executive Council under the signature of the Premier as head of the Executive Branch of government. Although the committee is aware that GN policies are made accessible through such means as posting them on the GN's website, the act of formally tabling such items in the Legislative Assembly in a timely fashion serves to recognize and amplify the principle of the government's accountability to the legislature. Indeed, the regular tabling of new and revised GN policies provides all ministers with the opportunity to make formal statements in the House on the merits of such policies for the benefit of all members and the listening public.

Members have been pleased with Nunavut's ongoing work with the Northwest Territories and the Yukon on tri-territorial priorities, as illustrated by the November 7, 2006 renewal of the Northern Cooperation Accord.

Mr. Chairman, on December 28, 2005, the GN announced the appointment of a Chief Negotiator for devolution talks with the federal government. The standing committee remains firmly supportive of the devolution initiative and notes that the department's 2007-08 business plan indicates that the GN has a goal of achieving an Agreement-in-Principle on devolution by December 31, 2007, and a Devolution Final Agreement by December 31, 2008.

On December 2, 2006, the Federal Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs announced the appointment of a Ministerial Representative for Nunavut Devolution. The standing committee looks forward to the federal government's designation of its formal negotiator. In a recent speech delivered in Ottawa in December 2006, the Premier expressed concerns regarding the federal government's reluctance to include Nunavut's internal waters as part of devolution talks. The standing committee supports our government's position on this matter.

The standing committee continues to believe that it is important for our government to come to the bargaining table with credibility and confidence.

Our ability to achieve a significant transfer of responsibilities will be strengthened if we can clearly and convincingly demonstrate to Ottawa that we are successfully and responsibly managing our own affairs.

It is important that our government act on recommendations made by this standing committee and the Auditor General of Canada to strengthen the government's financial management structures and practices. As we've heard over the last few days, those steps are starting to take place.

The standing committee has previously encouraged the Premier and his ministers to account more frequently and formally to the House on their activities and achievements at the numerous federal/provincial/territorial meetings at which they participate.

While members do note the formal communiqués that are issued from such gatherings, the committee believes that our ministers should report back to the House more directly on their success in advancing Nunavut's specific priorities at such meetings.

The standing committee has noted that ministers have been more proactive during the past year with respect to tabling reports on their intergovernmental initiatives and activities, and the committee looks forward to the continuation of this practice.

The committee continues to support a positive working relationship between the Government of Nunavut and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, while appreciating the government's efforts to be candid with Members of the Legislative Assembly concerning the rationale for its own position in areas where the two parties may have honest disagreements on specific issues such as Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated's recently announced lawsuit against the federal government.

The Government of Nunavut's obligations and activities with respect to the territory's *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* are coordinated by the department. The standing committee notes that the government has been working to develop a privacy impact assessment process for Government of Nunavut departments and public bodies.

The committee recognizes that a degree of progress has been made to act on recommendations made by the Information and Privacy Commissioner and the committee itself.

The committee looks forward to continuing its work in this area and notes that it has held three public hearings since the beginning of the second Assembly on the annual reports of the Information and Privacy Commissioner to the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Chairman, transparency and accountability must be more than a mere catch phrase. It must be a set of values which guides us as a public government. Thanks in part to the recommendations made by the standing committee, the Government of Nunavut has improved and expanded the range of information that it makes available to Members of the Legislative Assembly and the public.

Members are pleased that annual reports on government-wide grants and contribution expenditures, contracting, and leasing activities, and bonus and travel expenditures are now being tabled in the House.

The standing committee has pointed out before, the bottom line is this: the public has a right to know in detail where its tax dollars are being spent. Making detailed information public on a routine basis also serves as an effective deterrent against wasteful spending and abuse of process.

Mr. Chairman, one of our collective goals announced at the 2004 Arviat caucus retreat was to explore overarching legislation to govern the accountability of public bodies across the territory. Issues of transparency and disclosure need to be part of this initiative.

An important issue that continues to need to be addressed is a system for the registration of lobbyists. In a number of Canadian jurisdictions, the government regulates their registration of paid lobbyists. This is to help ensure that there is no secrecy when it comes to the public knowing who is acting on behalf of private interests. Generally, a public registry exists that clearly indicates who is lobbying on behalf of whom.

This transparency is important when it comes to the public's ability to know who is attempting to make representations to the government decision makers and on what subject. We continue to need such a system in Nunavut.

Mr. Chairman, the department is responsible for the overall implementation and monitoring of the GN Decentralization initiative. According to the department's 2007-08 business plan, a total of 459 GN positions have been decentralized.

The business plan also indicates that the government is looking at various issues that are impeding the filling of decentralized positions. The department is planning an annual decentralization planning and reporting meeting for 2007 to provide an update on the status of decentralization in Nunavut.

According to information revealed in a recent Return to Written Question posed by a member of this House, a total of 124 decentralized GN positions remain vacant as of September 30, 2006.

Although this is an improvement over the 143 vacancies recorded on December of 2004, it is clear that decentralization has not been an unqualified success. Recent reports of the Auditor General and the standing committee recommend that the GN review aspects of its decentralized financial management structure. The GN has indicated that it continues to study this issue. The standing committee looks forward to action being taken to address these concerns.

The department's 2006-07 Business Plan reflected the creation of a new Energy Secretariat in Intergovernmental Affairs branch of the department. The budget for the Energy Secretariat has been increased from \$35,000 in 2006-07 to \$202,000 in 2007-08. Its main priority for 2007-08 is to develop a comprehensive Energy Policy and Strategy with affected departments and agencies.

In December of 2006, the Minister of Energy tabled a document prepared by the Energy Secretariat titled *Approaching Ikummatiit: Developing a Nunavut Energy Strategy*. The Standing Committee looks forward to the tabling of the GN's new energy strategy in the coming year.

In addition to addressing such outstanding issues as the creation of an affordable energy fund, it will be important to examine ways to improve the coordination of energy related functions and responsibilities across the government. For example, while the Department of Finance administers the Nunavut Electricity Subsidy Program, the Department of Education manages the Seniors Fuel Subsidy Program.

Mr. Chairman, the last theme that I wish to address is performance measurement. The Standing Committee was pleased to have worked well with the minister in scrutinizing and approving Nunavut's new *Statistics Act*, and looks forward to the tabling of its first annual report required under legislation.

EIA continues to have a business plan goal of establishing a GN-wide performance measurements program. It is the committee's understanding that one of the first priorities for evaluation is to examine the effectiveness of suicide prevention initiatives. The committee anticipates that this will complement the efforts of an interdepartmental working group that is developing a suicide prevention strategy for Nunavut, as it is a praiseworthy priority.

The standing committee continues to advocate for performance measurement that looks at actual results and outcomes, and not just activities and output. For example, one of the stated priorities for the Department of Education in 2005-06 was to "undertake the development of initiatives to address dropout rates." However, it remains unclear as to whether its activities and expenditures have actually had any measurable success in reducing the dropout rates. We need to be able to honestly, rigorously and accurately establish benchmarks to measure our own success in achieving such important goals, and be prepared to re-evaluate our expenditures and approaches if they do not produce results that genuinely benefit our communities and constituents.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my opening comments. Individual members may have their own concerns and comments as we proceed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. Before we proceed, I would like to remind members of the following: according to Rule 77(1), you have 10 minutes to speak, and according to Rule 77(2), subject to the discretion of the chair, a member may speak more than once to a matter under discussion, but not until every member wishing to speak has spoken.

I suggest to members that wherever possible that you ask your detailed question during the page-by-page review of the departmental estimates. Do members have any general comments? Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Premier. I would like to thank you Mr. Chairman for giving me the opportunity to make my general comments.

I wasn't able to be here in November when we were dealing with the capital budget, but after that meeting, the people of Nunavut heard the Premier say that there were going to be mini Cabinet shuffles.

At that time, some of us knew that wasn't the case. There was no mini Cabinet shuffle. At that time, it wasn't appropriate for the people of Nunavut as we did a review around June at that time.

We didn't know about any minister that wasn't performing up to par. You didn't give any explanations, but when you remove a Cabinet Member, is it because of the policy, or because the minister is not performing up to par?

I don't think we should do that, but we can be consulted in an *in camera* session. I know that the Premier is given certain powers, but I would like to tell the Premier that the people of Nunavut would like to be informed as to why there would be a removal or a shuffle.

At that time, the people out there weren't happy and they call the regular members when the Cabinet or the Premier makes such a decision. There has to be a close working relationship among the ministers.

And, in regard to the Minister of Finance, we weren't asking the questions even though we wanted to because there was a shuffle, and the Minister of Finance was new to his portfolio.

I'll probably have other questions when the time is appropriate. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Do any of the members have general comments? At this time there are no general comments. We'll take a brief break and return at 1:00.

>>*Committee recessed at 11:59 and resumed at 13:01*

Chairman: Thank you for coming back. We're on general comments. Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know that Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated has a lawsuit on gun control, but today in Nunavut, the elders have to renew their gun registration.

Today, they've been receiving letters, but they're unilingual, and they receive letters in English. They have two months to renew their gun registration. If I was an elder and I couldn't read English, even if I received that renewal slip, I would not know what to do.

The gun registration has been in the works for a long time, and it takes a long time to receive the certificate, or the registration, and then the elders cannot acquire guns because they don't have any proof of their certificate or their registration.

So for that reason, I know this is in the courts right now, but Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated has stated that Inuit, even if they don't have a license or certificate to acquire guns, that they are able to purchase guns.

The federal government is like that to everybody, because all guns have to be registered. They have to have a new gun registration and they have to have a license in order to get ammunition and guns. This is a huge problem for the people of Nunavut.

Perhaps if I could ask a question first to the minister: what stage is Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated at with the courts?

Chairman: Mr. Barnabas, we are under general comments at this time. Mr. Alagalak.

Mr. Alagalak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to welcome the minister and his officials. They will be talking about what's happening with their department.

I would like to encourage everyone to be able to ask questions and I know that the funding is limited throughout the government but I would like to say two things in particular because you are dealing with the Department of Justice.

The people that have to go to court in Nunavut and the judges that do the judging of people that have to go through the court, they have to take some time off as well, and they also have to be replaced by other people.

I know in my community in the Kivalliq region, we had to second somebody that's not from Nunavut, perhaps some judges from Manitoba. This is a problem that the people have been telling me about because they don't know anything about the lifestyles or the cultures of the Inuit people. What they do follow is the southern way of doing things.

This has been a problem of the people of Nunavut, especially people that have to go to court, and the jury, too, as well because they seem to be sort of the same charges that they have but they give them a penalty of a different thing.

What they do is they use the culture of the southern people and it takes a longer time to understand what is happening, and they charge them in a different way because the people from the south are a little bit different from the judges from here in Nunavut. Even though the Nunavut judges factor the culture of the Inuit people, the judges down south don't do that. It creates problems for those people that have to go through the courts.

I just wanted to make sure that I voice my concerns in this House in regard to that.

It's not just through the courts; there's also some people that have to go through the court system but not go right into court, such as men; it's mostly men that have to be kicked out of their house from Social Services in the cold weather if there's a problem, or family violence, or family disagreements, Social Services have to kick them out, and there's no place for this individual to go to. They have no way of getting food for themselves, they just kick them out of the house, and then they have to...it seems like for those people in that situation, they have a hard time and they don't want to go to their relatives because they know that they're not going to be welcome. They don't even bother to go see the Justice of the Peace and they just kick them out right then and there with no place to go.

I think there should be something done about that so those people are not just kicked out into the cold, and it's very uncomfortable and it's very dangerous, too, because there's a lot of people that want to follow the law but when they get kicked out, they have no other place to go, and they're in hardship.

I think that has to be looked at again by the government. I just wanted to let the Premier know that these kinds of things happen but I think we have to do something about that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Alagalak. We will not be talking about that under Intergovernmental Affairs. We are on B-5. Main estimates. Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs. We're not dealing with Justice at the moment, just to let the member know.

Are there any further general comments? If there are none. (interpretation ends) There are no more names on my list for general comments. We will proceed with a page by page review of the departmental estimates starting on page B-5.

Page B-5. Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs. Branch Summary. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. I'd like to ask a question of the minister under Energy Secretariat. But I can't see where it is. Is it okay if I ask a question under the Directorate about energy?

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Yes, under Intergovernmental Affairs, we'll get to that page, if the member can wait until that item comes up on the page. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Premier. We're on page B-5. Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs. Directorate. Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under general questions, I would like to ask two questions. What is the status of the Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated court proceedings? I know that you can't talk about what is happening in the courts, but we have not heard anything to date about what the position is with regard to gun registration and licensing of firearms. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Yes, as far as I know, it is under the authority of the courts at this time, and it has not gone any further from there.

Today, Inuit are not affected right now. It will not affect Inuit during the duration of the court proceedings.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If it's not affecting Inuit, why are the Co-Ops and the Northern Stores and catalogue retailers banning people from purchasing firearms if the court proceedings are not affecting Inuit? Inuit still have to show their gun registration or their purchase acquisition licenses. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is the problem that we have today. It states that it does not affect Inuit, but it still affects some of the stores even though some of the stores are thought of in law, they say that they are not Inuit stores. They have to abide by the rules of the Canadian Government.

We'll find out what will happen once the court figures it out. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Premier. Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is also under the Gun Registry so I wonder if Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, have they had any thoughts about whether this Gun Registry and Licensing part of the law could be dealt with by the RCMP in the communities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is not really part of the Nunavut government's responsibility, it's the responsibility of the federal government because it's a federal government law, we're just in support of NTI who will be taking the federal government to court, but there is nothing that we can do about it.

I know this is a problem for the Inuit people, but according to the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement it's the way it is, but there's going to be another federal election, perhaps the Liberals can be asked that question to see whether they can have that.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Barnabas.

Mr. Barnabas (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have to be able to ask a lot of questions with the government before we can get the response that we want because we don't know, because the Government of Nunavut doesn't really know what's happening, or they can't do anything about the federal legislation.

But the Inuit are also in a bad state right now because NTI is taking the federal government to court on the gun registration, but the stores have to realize that the Inuit people are in a bad situation in trying to acquire firearms and to renew their license and registration for guns, but they still ban them from purchasing firearms or ammunition.

It stated that they were allowed to use their gun license for about five years, but some of the people are in a bad situation where they are told that they have to renew those things. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Barnabas. At this time we are on B-5. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$1,666,000. Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Going to B6. Communications, Policies, Planning, and Evaluation. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$2,224,000. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister and his assistants for appearing today. Question on the comment there, it says in the description provided, serve as a resource to GN departments and agencies with respect to evaluation and performance measurements, and a couple days ago, the Minister of Finance mentioned that in his budget speech.

I wonder if the minister could expand on what his department will, what services the department will provide to government departments in terms of evaluation and performance measurements in the upcoming fiscal year? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, each department usually asks our department to do the evaluations. Right now we are currently working on suicide prevention and decentralization. Other than those right now there are no plans for other evaluations at this time, but that doesn't prevent us from receiving requests from various departments and carrying out evaluations. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Premier. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer.

On Page B-6 of the department's business plan, at the top there is a reference to establishing a Government of Nunavut Performance Measurement system, and then a second reference to providing input to the development of the Performance Management Program.

I am wondering if the minister could explain the difference between a measurement system and a management program. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik: Well the distinction between the two is that one sets the benchmark and the other is assisting the various departments on how to get there. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Premier. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On Page B-7 of the Business Plan there is a reference under decentralization that the Government of Nunavut is looking at various issues that are impeding the filling of decentralized positions.

I am wondering, for the benefit of the regular MLAs, if the minister could expand on what are the issues that are impeding the filling of decentralized positions? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, there are some vacancies throughout government and what we want to do is evaluate what we have to do to fill those positions. We're currently running a pilot program with the high vacancies in Pangnirtung to see how we can meet the targets that we have set out in the decentralization plan. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Premier. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. I recall in the September 30, 2006 report that there were 124 vacant decentralized positions across Nunavut. It appeared to be a very high number.

I am wondering...I ask the minister again if he could provide some clarification on what are the issues that are impeding the filling of those decentralized positions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have vacancies throughout government and it's something that we deal with every day. In decentralization there have been varying degrees. That's why we're trying to get to the bottom of the problem. That's why we're doing a pilot project so that we can find the best way of meeting those targets and work with it. So it would be pointless for me to do the pilot project if I knew the answers already. So that's what we're trying to do. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. Could the minister provide an update on how many vacant decentralized positions there are currently across Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Other than the September response I don't have any update right now, but once it get it I'll table it in the House. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. We are on B-6. Communications, Policy, Planning and Evaluation. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$2,224,000. Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) B-7. Statistical Services. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$436,000. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) B-8. Nunavut Cabinet. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regard to what I said earlier, the Premier stated last summer that there was going to be a mini-shuffle within the Cabinet.

One of the senior ministers; he was already a minister at the First Assembly and we know he has the experience, and you called it a mini-shuffle when it was not. It seemed like you demoted a particular minister. Can you advise Nunavummiut why this was necessary? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Curley. Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I work with the ministers daily and I work very well with them; I talk with them and have discussions, and I try my best after talking with them. Because I communicate with the ministers regularly and in agreement we do that and that's what I will do. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Mr. Chairman, the Nunavummiut have put their trust on the mandate for Nunavummiut and we have to trust the ministers. The Premier does not own them but the Minister of Finance has a big responsibility and he has to go down and negotiate.

There are positions within Economic Development and we know that he has a heavy responsibility. Yes, you said why it was clear, maybe you were not happy with his performance, and the Nunavummiut have to have a good representation. The big responsibility is under the Minister of Finance. Is there going to be another mini-shuffle soon? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We don't know what the future holds. At this time I can't give him an answer but when the opportunity arises, then we have to come with an answer.

I have been given the authority to make sure that every minister performs to their ability. If you feel that I'm not doing my job, then you can remove me. I try and work very closely with the Cabinet Ministers and that's the practice that we take. If you are unhappy with our performance, we are under your hands. If I feel there need to be improvements, then I try and do so because that's my responsibility. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Premier. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Premier, for making that statement. You probably had a good discussion but it was clear that there might have been some dissatisfaction with one of the Cabinet Ministers.

If there's going to be a shuffle, then there should be a balance between the responsibilities of the ministers because some ministers have heavier responsibilities. It

isn't the place where if you disapprove as to what I do, then you can remove me. If you don't want to be a minister any longer, then you can remove yourself. If it was left to us where we want to remove a minister, then our constituents wouldn't be satisfied. There have to be some adjustments in the departments.

Nunavummiut have to be happy with the shuffle, not putting a big responsibility on one minister. There should be a balance. I'm not just saying it because I don't like what happened; I just want a balanced responsibility between the ministers. The ministers, especially at this time, don't travel to the communities so much.

I wonder if you will be able to do another mini-shuffle. If we ask the public, we would hear a lot of dissatisfaction from them. So we are asking for you do to another mini-shuffle within the Cabinet. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, as I responded earlier, we get people who are not satisfied with some things and we have to give responses. I meet with the ministers and we try and make improvements in any way we can. We are very open and I try and assist them when they need my assistance because that is my responsibility. Up to now, we have done that and I will try and keep it that way. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Premier. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you. I would like to thank the minister for responding. I'm sure the ministers will not complain to you that their plate is too full and I'm sure they're just waiting for you.

So therefore, the Minister responsible for the Housing Corporation is not holding enough portfolios. There's a President and the officials are all available. So therefore I believe the portfolios should be balanced and evened out.

Although you may believe that the ministers are doing their jobs properly, I don't know why you weren't happy with one of the ministers. Perhaps you should announce that to the public. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we try to operate smoothly and sometimes we have to deal with confidential issues. So therefore I can't disclose that information.

To date, I have worked very closely with the Cabinet members and I would like to thank them. I was being supportive, that's how the government system works; we have to

support each other to make sure all of the departments are running and operating smoothly. We will just go the way we have been going. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Premier. We're on B-8. (interpretation ends) Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs. Branch Summary. Nunavut Cabinet. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$4,044,000. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. B-9. Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs. Branch Summary. Commissioner of Nunavut. Total Operations and Maintenance. \$227,000. (interpretation) Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Page B-10. Intergovernmental Affairs. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question, we heard just recently through the media, perhaps if you can provide information, perhaps starting now, in regard to the residential school compensation through the federal government, and I'm sure that people are asking about that.

I was wondering if the minister can update us on this because I was asked by an individual who was a student of a residential school and they have no place to go, and they don't even know where to go because that individual is hurting emotionally so that individual wanted to ask what is happening, I didn't want to update him, or tell him, because I have no idea what the position is.

So perhaps the Premier can update us on the approved residential school compensation and what kind of impact it will have on Nunavut and how you will publicize this information? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We weren't involved because the residential schools were operated outside of Nunavut so therefore as a government we have no jurisdiction. That's why we are not involved. But we try to provide any form of assistance and support to NTI and we look for ways we could provide more assistance. It's NTI that was responsible for this because they are representing Inuit beneficiaries, so therefore NTI has been working on it and being involved more so than us. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Premier. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I seem to remember that Nunavut Government seemed like they set aside some funds for compensation. If that's

the case, if something was geared towards the residential school students I think government is in some ways involved.

Perhaps if you can give us an update or provide us some information as to what is happening so that we can publicly announce to the Nunavummiut so they know what's happening now because there are many provinces in Canada that I'm sure that they provide provincial ministers and I'm sure that they provide information to you. Therefore I would like to get clarification on that, or if it's true then Inuit will have to ask NTI to get an update on this? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Federal government and NTI are working on the residential school compensation. We were responsible for Ed Horne compensation issues.

Although we are not fully involved, we've mainly dealt with Ed Horne compensation. But Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated is working with the federal government. I can ask them to provide us an update and table it in the House. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Premier. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I will conclude my line of questioning on that so I would like to ask another question or different question in regard to the Energy Secretariat.

I would like clarification on whether the minister can state to the House that ... when you are sitting on this side, we really don't know who's responsible for the decision-making of the Energy Strategy. Is it Minister Picco who is responsible for decision-making on the policy, or is it you that is responsible in regard to making decisions on the Energy Secretariat? Is it you that is responsible for that, or is Minister Picco involved with that decision-making process? Which one do we go to for that? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Curley. Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Minister Picco is responsible since he's the Minister of Energy, and through the Energy Secretariat we try to provide advice and support to the minister. Yes, it was quite difficult to place the secretariat, so that's why it was in our department. Our department tries to provide support and advice, and the Government of Nunavut has a budget set aside.

We don't want to operate separately; we have to work together because we would like to see the price of fuel and energy going down. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): I would like to thank the minister. At some time in the future can they expect to see, even if it's not at the present time, that the Energy Secretariat is provided in one department? Can we expect to see that some time in the future? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reason why we are operating the secretariat in our department is because of lack of funds. If we try to run this as a separate department, it's going to cost more. So that's why we've been operating that way due to lack of funds. We don't want to just leave it idling. We want to progress on fuel and energy savings. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I understand. Your officials and you as the minister know that there is room for improvement in Nunavut.

Some of us are looking at ways of how to improve the energy alternatives. So I believe we need to be more open to Nunavut; there's oil exploration happening in the north, like the federal government doing oil exploration.

We don't hear that on a daily basis. Although it doesn't occur right now, perhaps the minister could provide an update. It doesn't have to be in the House. Somewhere have a meeting, or update us as to how much oil reserves there are in the north, or how much potential oil reserves we have.

We don't know much about energy issues and we don't have conferences on energy issues. I was wondering if you and your department can consider making a report or update. If some officials can come and update us, that way I'm sure the interest will grow.

I am sure the private businesses on oil and fuel can start being established and I am sure that it would generate income in Nunavut so this is a huge opportunity for consideration, perhaps if you can have information provided at a meeting or some sort of event. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Currently I cannot respond to that question as to how it can be today. It is the responsibility of the federal government on oil and fuel and they believe the 10 percent, we hold the 10 percent oil reserves of Canada and we believe we have 10 percent of the oil reserves. For natural gas they say we hold 15 percent in Nunavut. So those are the ones that we know, they might even be higher but we don't know.

The oil exploration, looking at the act, they did not move or progress ahead. The companies cannot start exploring for oil by themselves, so there are stringent rules. It's not just Nunavut that has stringent rules, it is Newfoundland too that they froze all the licenses. This could be of concern if we take on the responsibility. Although we want to get royalties, if this trend continues then we won't be able to get royalties, but to date that is why we have not progressed any farther in Nunavut.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Premier. Mr. Curley.

Mr. Curley (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you very much for that and I think that we are part of the problem since we don't have any jurisdiction over those reserves then we just leave it as is. From what I understand I think that if we participate, if we ask to be kept updated, if we ask for information, then we'll be able to distribute that information out to the public and there is going to be more and more concern and we would get the process going.

Nobody says anything about it. We know that a lot more people want it but we have to make sure that the information outside is out there; we'll have to make sure that we keep working on it. The Inuit have to be involved in the planning process even though this is under the Federal Jurisdiction. All of the three territorial governments have to be involved and if we want to devolve these natural resources to the government we have to be involved.

There's more and more, the global world is looking at the north and they're looking at the natural resources that are untapped. I think that the whole process will begin going once we talk about it and insist on being part of the plan. We're talking about the ownership of these natural resources; we should be the owners and not just the labourers.

I think that it's up to us to work with the businesses. If the people of Nunavut know that we have 10 percent of oil reserves and 15 percent of natural gas, and if the people out there know that then I think that, not only the government and the businesses and the people of Nunavut would start talking about it, talking about getting shares and talk about getting royalties.

With that, I would urge you to at least have a conference with some of the parties to get all these discussions going. I would just like to state my support to you Mr. Premier because we're the only ones who can become self-dependant.

Chairman (interpretation): I didn't hear a question, but Mr. Premier, if you would like to respond, please.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): From what I know, I think there are approximately 50 businesses that have these licenses, and they all have equal shares.

Petro Canada tried to buy some shares but weren't able to do so even though they were financially competent. These shares are given out using federal laws. We're looking at

how this is going to evolve. We would be in full support of the process especially if this should be part of the devolution to the Government of Nunavut in regard to the natural resources up in the High Arctic.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Premier. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On page B- 6 of your business plans, under objectives for intergovernmental affairs, you have a bullet that says coordinate the Government of Nunavut's relationship with Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, and other federal departments and agencies.

I wonder if you could give us an indication today of what the relationship is between the Government of Nunavut and the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I must say that it is much better than years past. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm glad to hear that answer from the minister. A few years ago, we in Nunavut had been lobbying, calling for an economic development agreement for Nunavut.

I'm wondering if in your discussions, and relationships with that department, if that initiative is continually being brought forward to the federal officials and your minister? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know that there has been money set aside for the three territories akin to that of EDAs in the past, and it's scheduled to sunset next year I believe. So, we'll continue to work on it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Premier. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister. Just for a point of clarification, could you tell us what that program is and the amount of money that is involved? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have the exact figures, but off the top of my head, I think it was \$40 million over three years for Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Premier. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the Premier for that answer. Again, for clarification, was that funding for economic development activities or for other activities in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. Paul Okalik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Primarily for economic development I understand. You've probably seen these ads that the three territories have been promoting through the Canada Winter Games. Some of that was used for that purpose: to promote our interests to the rest of the country. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the Premier for that information. As we all know in Nunavut, we heard from the Minister of Finance the other day in his budget speech, we really have to start developing our economy. We're 80 to 90 percent dependent on the Government of Canada for our operational funds, and our economy is not very well developed.

That is probably going to cause us some hardships in the years ahead. So, we really need some form of economic development instrument from the federal government that allows them to invest in Nunavut to help us develop our infrastructure to support industry, for example, and invest in our various businesses.

With that in mind, Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the minister if the regional development agency has ever come up in discussions in Ottawa. Not just for Nunavut alone but maybe a joint regional development agency for Nunavut and the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know that when we're lobbying hard for economic development dollars, that was one of the things that we were impressing on the federal government.

The federal government responded with some money set aside to the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs. And as I said, this money will sunset this coming year, and I'm sure this will be rekindled in the coming months ahead. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Premier. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer. I hope that the federal government does take a serious look and quits putting us off onto the back burner.

As the Minister of Finance again indicated in his budget speech the other day, we have a lot of promise and hope in Nunavut. We have oil and gas, and mineral resources that are waiting to be developed.

We have renewable resources as well right across the north in Nunavut, so we really need some help. And I'm not referring to handouts from the federal government. I'm referring to investments from the federal government.

Surely, you would think that if they invest in Nunavut and help us out we can put people to work so that our businesses can develop and everybody will be paying their taxes and contributing to the federal coffers, and increase our gross domestic product and theirs as well.

With that in mind again, Mr. Chair, an initiative that is important for the Kitikmeot is the Bathurst Inlet Port and Road Project. I'm sure the minister has probably talked to his counterparts in Ottawa and I'm wondering if he can give us an update on where the negotiations or lobbying are in Ottawa with respect to an advance in the Bathurst Inlet Port and Road Project in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have not lobbied on one particular project. I've lobbied on spending for just basic infrastructure for Nunavut. I'll continue to impress on my colleagues, not just the federal government, but our provincial colleagues have been very supportive.

I recall that we did submit a comprehensive strategy to the federal government for transportation needs, and the Bathurst Port and Road was on that list of projects.

So that's something that we continue to impress upon the federal government. I do hope that we'll get a favourable response because I know one of the studies that were undertaken, the O'Brien report, identified that Nunavut is far, far behind in terms of infrastructure, as opposed to the rest of the country.

So hopefully the current government will heed that advice and will move on some of the projects. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Premier. Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that answer, it's good to know about that the minister and Premier is getting support from his colleagues across

Canada. I'm sure it'll come up again at the Western Premiers Conference that's supposed to be held in Iqaluit in July and I'm sure that'll be a topic of discussion.

I'm curious, I don't know if this is a flippant question or not, but when we see the title Indian and Northern Affairs Canada we don't technically think of Inuit. I am wondering if there have been any discussions with your federal colleague about the creation of a separate and distinct division in the Indian and Northern Affairs Canada for the Government of Nunavut to deal with Inuit specifically. Do they have to go in there and deal with all the federal programs and just deal with programs that are specific to Nunavut and to the Inuit in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Peterson. Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I know that the federal government has established an Inuit Secretariat within the Department of Indian Affairs so that's an improvement from past practice, where there was none in the past so I hope that that is an indication of things to come. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Premier. Mr. Tootoo.

Mr. Tootoo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Let me just, before we adjourn at 2:00, just a couple of quick questions, nickel it in before the weekend. Maybe just a comment, I know that discussions earlier about devolution and resource royalty sharing agreements.

I know that all members would support you and whoever else is lobbying the federal government for that but if you do run into any difficulties there, you know, maybe we need to follow, it wouldn't hurt for us to follow the example led by our islander neighbours in the south in Newfoundland and take down our Canadian flags and send them back to Ottawa until they start treating us equally as the rest of Canadians as well.

I think that we got as far as B-10, in there is also Senior Personnel Secretariat and I know in opening comments to the Standing Committee and during last year's review on the report of the Auditor General, the government stated that the Senior Personnel Secretariat has been directed to enhance the deputy ministers' mandate letters to provide additional focus on their accountability for results in the management of financial resources.

I'm just wondering if the minister could indicate has this initiative achieved its objective and what other new priorities will be included in the mandate letters to the deputies this year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Tootoo. (interpretation) I will let Mr. Tootoo have that last question before we adjourn. Mr. Premier.

Hon. Paul Okalik (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The financial accountability is considered standard instructions for all deputies for some time

and will continue to be so, and it forms part of the analysis of all deputies in our evaluations.

In terms of adding new priorities, I think I must say that the primary instruction for this year will be to complete what we set out to do for the duration of this term, which is meeting *Pinasuaqtavut* and that will be the main focus this year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. At this time, there has not been a motion to adjourn. So, according to our Rule 6(1), I would like to recognize the clock at this time, and to report progress. Thank you, Mr. Premier, and your staff.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Orders of the Day. Item 21. Report of the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Arreak.

Item 21: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Arreak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bill 1 and the main estimates, and would like to report progress. Also, Mr. Speaker, I move that the Report of the Committee of the Whole be concurred with. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Arreak. Is there a seconder to the motion? Thank you, Minister Akesuk. All in favor of the motion. Opposed. The motion is carried. Thank you.

Member for Cambridge Bay, Mr. Peterson.

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I request unanimous consent to go back to Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Peterson. If I understand the member correctly, he is seeking unanimous consent to go back to Item 5 in our orders of the day. Are there any nays? There are no nays. Go ahead.

Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Mr. Peterson.

Revert to Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Mr. Peterson: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank my colleagues for the unanimous consent. I was a little worried there for a moment when I saw a note flash across the floor there.

>>*Laughter*

Mr. Speaker, I would like to welcome some former residents of Cambridge Bay to the Gallery today. They are on their way to Cambridge Bay for a visit. Mr. David Pelly and his son Eric. They lived in Cambridge Bay for quite a few years, and Mr. Pelly is a well known writer for the Above and Beyond Magazine, and he's the author of many books about the north. So, welcome to David and son today.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Welcome to the Gallery. Thank you. Orders of the Day. 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 Monday, March 12:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statement
3. Members' Statement
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Replies to Budget Address
11. Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees
13. Reports of Committees on the Review of Bills
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notice of Motions
16. Notice of Motions for First Reading of Bills
17. Motions
18. First Reading of Bills
 - Bill 2
 - Bill 3

19. Second Reading of Bills
20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 1
21. Report of the Committee of the Whole
22. Third Reading of Bills
23. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. This House stands adjourned until Monday, March 12 at 1:30 p.m.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 14:10*

