

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Speaker

Hon. David Joanasié
(South Baffin)

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok
(Iqaluit-Manirajak)

Minister of Family Services; Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation; Minister responsible for Homelessness; Minister responsible for Poverty Reduction; Minister responsible for the Status of Women

Hon. David Akeegok
(Iqaluit-Niaqunngu)

Government House Leader; Minister of Education; Minister responsible for the Nunavut Arctic College

Hannah Angootealuk
(Aivilik)

Edward Attagutaluk
(Aggu)

Hon. Janet Brewster
(Iqaluit-Sinaa)

Minister of Health; Minister responsible for Suicide Prevention

Hon. George Hickes
(Iqaluit-Tasiluk)

Deputy Premier of Nunavut; Minister of Justice; Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut; Minister responsible for the Labour Standards Board; Minister responsible for the Human Rights Tribunal

Jamie Kablutsiak
(Arviat South)

Gordon Kautuk
(Uqqummiut)

Hon. Brian Koonoo
(Tununiq)

Minister of Culture and Heritage; Minister of Languages; Minister of Environment; Minister of Energy

Simon Kuliktana
(Kugluktuk)

Hon. Cecile Nelvana Lyall
(Netsilik)

Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation

Hon. John Main
(Arviat North-Whale Cove)
Premier; Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs; Minister of Finance; Minister responsible for Indigenous Affairs; Minister responsible for Immigration; Minister responsible for the Utility Rates Review Council; Minister responsible for Seniors; Minister responsible for the Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis Commission; Minister responsible for the Nunavut Liquor and Cannabis Board

Johnny Mike
(Pangnirtung)

Fred Pedersen
(Cambridge Bay)

David Porter
(Gjoa Haven)

Abraham Qammaniq
(Amittuq)

(Vacant)
(Hudson Bay)

Alexander Sammurtok
(Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet)

Hon. Craig Simailak
(Baker Lake)

Minister of Community Services; Minister responsible for the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation; Minister responsible for the Nunavut Development Corporation; Minister responsible for Mines; Minister responsible for Trade

Hon. Annie Tattuinee
(Rankin Inlet South)

Minister of Human Resources; Minister responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission

Steven Taqtu
(Quttiktuq)

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Iqaluit, Nunavut
Thursday, June 4, 2026

Members Present:

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok, Ms. Hannah Angootealuk, Mr. Edward Attagutaluk, Hon. Janet Pitsiulaaq Brewster, Hon. George Hickes, Hon. David Joanasie, Mr. Jamie Kablutsiak, Mr. Gordon Kautuk, Hon. Brian Koonoo, Mr. Simon Kuliktana, Hon. Cecile Nelvana Lyall, Hon. John Main, Mr. Johnny Mike, Mr. Fred Pedersen, Mr. David Porter, Mr. Abraham Qammaniq, Hon. Craig Simailak, Mr. Steven Taqtu, Hon. Annie Tattuinee.

>>*House commenced at 13:30*

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (Hon. David Joanasie) (interpretation): Ms. Angootealuk, if you can open the meeting with a prayer.

>>*Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you, Ms. Angootealuk. Orders of the Day. Item 2, Ministers' Statements. Minister of Family Services, Minister Healey Akearok.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

Minister's Statement 62 – 7(2): Daycare Subsidy

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok (interpretation): Good afternoon to all my colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, today I would like to highlight a program that helps Nunavummiut take the next step in their lives, whether that means going back to school, taking training, or returning to work as parents.

Through the Daycare User Subsidy, the Income Assistance Division at Family Services provides eligible parents and guardians with up to \$700 per child, per month, to help cover the cost of childcare. For many parents, that cost is the single biggest barrier standing between them and a better future for their family. It is important to note that daycare subsidy payments are exempted from income assistance calculations so accessing the subsidy will not reduce income assistance payments.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, uptake of the subsidy has been low. We recognize that part of this is due to a shortage of affordable daycare spaces in many of our communities. But we also know that many parents simply do not know the subsidy is available to them, or that it can be used to support private childcare arrangements as well.

Family Services is stepping up our efforts to change that. We are working to raise awareness of the subsidy, simplify the application process, and integrate these payments with other subsidies and assistance available to families.

Mr. Speaker, to any parent or guardian who wants to go to school, to get training, or go to work but is held back by the cost of childcare, I encourage you to reach out to Income Assistance staff at Family Services. Support is available, and we want to help.
Qujannamiik, Mr. Speaker

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Ministers' Statements. Minister of Culture and Heritage, Mr. Koonoo.

Minister's Statement 63 – 7(2): Launch of Asuillaak – The Inuktit Terminology Database

Hon. Brian Koonoo (interpretation): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize an important milestone for the preservation, promotion, and modernization of Inuktit in Nunavut: the official launch of Asuillaak, the new terminology database developed by the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit, or IUT.

Mr. Speaker, the terms on Asuillaak are available in both syllabics and Roman orthography. This database is available free of charge to anyone with internet access. By visiting taiguusiliuqtiit.ca, users can consult a growing database that currently contains approximately 9,000 Inuktit terms that have been recommended and approved by Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit, as well as traditional and common use terms.

Language is at the heart of who we are. It carries our knowledge, our worldview, and our identity. By investing in tools such as Asuillaak, we are supporting educators, translators, public servants, students, and communities in using Inuktit confidently in all areas of life, including government, education, and professional settings.

The launch of this database is not the end of the work. It is the beginning of a resource that will continue to grow and evolve. Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit remains committed to improving and expanding Asuillaak to ensure it remains user-friendly, relevant, and responsive to the needs of Nunavummiut.

I thank Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit for their dedication and leadership in strengthening our language for present and future generations.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Ministers' Statements. Community Government Services.

Minister's Statement 64 – 7(2): Supporting Communities Across Nunavut

Hon. Craig Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends)
Good afternoon, all. People of Baker Lake, good afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, today I rise to highlight the work being done across Nunavut to support communities during challenging situations.

In Nunavut, response is built on strong communities and the willingness to look out for one another. Our role is to support communities by coordinating resources, strengthening partnerships, and ensuring help is available when it is needed.

Earlier this year, Gjoa Haven faced significant challenges following a prolonged power outage and severe weather event. These impacts affected critical infrastructure in the community, including power and water systems. As conditions stabilized, some homes experienced freezing and burst pipes, creating additional challenges for residents.

This situation required a coordinated, whole-of-government response. Nunavut Emergency Management worked closely with partners across government, including the Department of Health, the Department of Education, Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, the Nunavut Housing Corporation, and Qulliq Energy Corporation, as well as federal partners and organizations such as the Canadian Red Cross to support the community.

This coordinated approach helped ensure residents had access to supports and resources throughout response and recovery efforts, including clean-up kits and other assistance for affected households.

Mr. Speaker, we are also continuing to see strong outcomes in search and rescue efforts across the territory. Recent taskings have resulted in individuals being safely located and brought home.

These successful outcomes reflect the dedication of local search and rescue teams, community members, volunteers, and federal partners. I thank them for the important role they play in keeping Nunavummiut safe.

Preparedness also remains essential. Initiatives such as the SPOT device program help support safer travel on the land by providing a reliable way to communicate during emergencies.

We continue to encourage Nunavummiut to take simple but important steps before travelling, including checking conditions, carrying communication devices, and sharing travel plans.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Nunavummiut, community responders, volunteers, and our partners for the work they do every day to support one another and help keep communities safe across the territory. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you as well. Ministers' Statements. Minister responsible for the Status of Women, Minister Healey Akearok.

Minister's Statement 65 – 7(2): Reflect The Light Campaign

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I rise today to share important information about the Qullit Nunavut Status of Women Council's Reflect the Light Campaign.

The campaign is funded by the Government of Canada to raise awareness about gender-based violence and promote healthy relationships across Nunavut. It encourages Nunavummiut to be open, support one another, create change, and to help start the conversations about abuse, relationships, and equipping individuals with the resources and support they need to light the way to a violence-free Nunavut.

As part of the *Ikajuqtigiikta* mandate, the campaign is built on engagement with our communities and consultations with youth, elders, women, men, organizational representatives, and front line voices to shape the direction of this work.

Currently in its third year, Reflect the Light focused on expanding territory-wide awareness and engagement this year. In-person community engagement took place in Arviat and Baker Lake, where materials were distributed, and teams engaged directly with Nunavummiut through elementary and secondary schools, community halls, service centres, local radio stations, and community feasts, reaching community members where they live. Planning for year four of the campaign is now underway and will include additional community engagements.

Mr. Speaker, this work illustrates what is achieved when communities, organizations, and governments work together toward a common goal.

Everyone deserves to feel safe, respected, and valued in their relationships. I commend the Qullit Nunavut Status of Women Council for their leadership and commitment to

helping make this a reality. Together, we can continue to build a Nunavut where everyone can live safely and with dignity, with communities that reflect care, trust, and respect.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Item 3, Members' Statements. Member for Arviat North, Mr. Main.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 63 – 7(2): Congratulate Mae Himngaat Mercer Manik

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, my colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, I'm very pleased I rise today to congratulate Mae Himngaat Mercer Manik, who graduated from school yesterday. They had a graduation ceremony in University of Manitoba. (interpretation ends) Mae Himngaat Mercer Manik recently, just yesterday, I believe, Mr. Speaker, achieved or was awarded her Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of Manitoba. She took a major in Indigenous Studies and a minor in Psychology.

And, Mr. Speaker, the Bachelor of Arts degree, achieving that is significant and it represents years of work, and I think it is important to recognize that achievement. And I just wanted to say a heartfelt congratulations to Mae and to her family. I think it's great to see young, smart, committed Nunavummiut excelling and succeeding.

(interpretation) I'm happy to report that she is now working at the elementary school in Arviat. She's a counsellor, and also she helps and supports the students, because education can support you for your career.

(interpretation ends) Education really does pay off, Mr. Speaker. And I can say for a fact her family is very proud of her, and everyone in her circle is so proud of her. I can say that as MLA, I'm very proud of her and again wanted to wish her a very heartfelt congratulations. (interpretation) I think you are very capable and I wish you all the best into the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker: Members' Statements. Member for Cambridge Bay, Mr. Pedersen.

Member's Statement 64 – 7(2): Kitikmeot Campus Graduates

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day to you all and to those watching in Cambridge Bay. Today I would like to recognize the students that are graduating from various programs at the Kitikmeot campus of Nunavut Arctic College.

In the Personal Support Workers Certificate Program: Julie Killiktee of Pond Inlet, Evelyn Kitigon of Cambridge Bay, and Patricia Ogina of Kugluktuk;

In the Early Childhood Education Certificate Program, all from Cambridge Bay are: Julie Allukpik, Ada Carter, Shaylen Fletcher, Megan Mala, Michelle Maniyogina, Camillia Naikak, and Colleen Novoligak.

In the Office Administration Diploma Program: Amber Adjun of Kugluktuk, Bathsheba Kolit of Arviat, Rosemary Mukyungnik from Arviat, Philip Keenainak from Iqaluit, and Leanne Villebrun from Cambridge Bay.

And in the five-year Nunavut Teacher Education Program, Bachelor of Education degree: Denise Vandenbrink of Cambridge Bay, and her sister Janielle Vandenbrink of Cambridge Bay.

We look forward to seeing how you will bring your knowledge and new skills into the Nunavut workforce, and we hope that you will choose careers with our communities with the Government of Nunavut departments. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): We're proud of you. Members' Statements. Arviat South, Member Kablutsiak.

Member's Statement 65 – 7(2): Nunavut Youth Abroad Participants

Mr. Kablutsiak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to urge Nunavummiut who are taking their school to continue on, with summer break coming soon.

But I would like to comment. Northern Youth Abroad: Education Through Work and Travel, and it's in the 2025 annual report (interpretation ends) 2025 four program snapshot by the numbers: Over 4,100 hours of volunteer experience completed by Nunavut Youth Abroad participants in 2025, 267 school credits earned by Nunavut Youth Abroad participants in 2025, 20 Canadian program participants, 16 Nunavut Youth Abroad Next participants, 54 youth engaged in Ayalik Expeditions.

(interpretation) And here I received a letter on May 27, 2027 by Rebecca Bisson, who is the executive director of Nunavut Youth Abroad. I'll read it in English:

(interpretation ends) "To be heading into our 29th year of programming serving Nunavut and young Nunavummiut, NYA was created as the Nunavut Youth Abroad Program in 1998, and over time has grown from having over 10 participants in our first year to now operating to robust organization. Nunavut Youth Abroad now serves hundreds of Nunavummiut annually through our slate programs aimed at offering experiential education and work experience, cross-cultural experiences, and leadership development to youth as they navigate through their teenage years and into young adulthood."

(No interpretation) Mr. Speaker, for 2026, Canadian Program Nunavut, 12 participants from Igloolik, Pond Inlet, Naujaat, Baker Lake, Igloolik, Arviat, Resolute Bay, Clyde River, Taloyoak, Pond Inlet, Kimmirut, Gjoa Haven.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, I would like to extend my statements.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. The member is asking to extend his member's statement. Any nays? Hearing none, Mr. Kablutsiak, carry on.

Mr. Kablutsiak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'll mention the names: Albert Uttak, from Igloolik; Angela Ootoovak, from Pond Inlet; Brooklyn Itturiligaq, from Naujaat; David Kalluk, from Baker Lake; Dylan Kayotak, from Igloolik; Jaron Alikut, from Arviat; Kupaaq Idlout, from Resolute Bay; Qunguliq Kautuk, from Clyde River; Rocky Oleekatalik, from Taloyoak; Ryan Parks, from Pond Inlet; Shelaine Nutarasungnik, from Kimmirut; and Sydney Rose Ameralik from Gjoa Haven.

(interpretation ends) While I'm on the topic about youth and their education, I also want to acknowledge Mae Himngaat Mercer Manik, who recently graduated with a Bachelor of Arts with University of Manitoba, from Arviat. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): We express our pride, too, and with the program Northern Youth Abroad. When it was Nunavut Youth Abroad, I participated in the program and I have been very grateful to the program and a lot of benefits it has had to Nunavummiut. Members' Statements. Netsilik MLA, Ms. Lyle.

Member's Statement 66 – 7(2): Netsilik Graduates

Hon. Cecile Lyall: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And good afternoon, colleagues and those watching online.

I rise today to acknowledge and celebrate the achievements of our youth across Nunavut, particularly those in the Netsilik constituency. Over the past few days we have celebrated our high school graduates and their support networks for reaching this milestone.

This past Tuesday there was a moving up ceremony for the grade 6 class in Taloyoak. This upcoming fall they will be the first grade 7 class in the new Pangnic School in Taloyoak.

>> *Applause*

Mr. Speaker, our youth are not only our future. They are an essential part of our communities today. With our *Ikajuqtigiikta* mandate, we highlight the importance our youth play in shaping our territory.

I thank our youth for the example they set across Nunavut: For teaching us to be kinder, both to ourselves and those around us; for teaching us what it means to grow and learn every day; for helping us to modernize our daily interactions; and reminding us that change is possible; and that we should always be willing to listen, learn and strive to be better.

Mr. Speaker, as community leaders and members of this House, we have been tasked with ensuring we are supporting our communities where our residents can thrive, for working towards a better tomorrow where our next generation does not face the same hardships and challenges.

I started my journey in this House not that long ago as a page, and today with the support of the Netsilik riding, I sit here proudly as their voice in this Assembly.

As the school year comes to an end, I wish all our youth a joyful summer. Please continue to chase your dreams and know that you are supported and loved by your community, and all of us here in the Assembly. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. I don't have any more names. Return to our *Orders of the Day*. Return to Oral Questions. Minister of Human Resources, Minister Tattuinee.

Item 4: Returns to Oral Questions

Return to Oral Question 55 – 7(2): Inuit Employment

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: I would like to return to the question that MLA from Cambridge Bay, Fred Pedersen, had, number 55 – 7(2), on May 29, 2026, related to Inuit employment.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to supplement an answer I gave during question period on May 29 concerning Mr. Pedersen's question about how many students have been hired for this year's program.

As of June 1, 32 students have been hired, 23 Nunavut Inuit and nine non-Inuit. The job advertisements for the Tuglirijavut Student Employment Program is current posted on the government website encouraging students to apply, and for the department to hire Tuglirijavut students.

There's also a guideline on the website with information and tips to help students in writing resumes.

The Government of Nunavut is committed to creating a representative workforce; therefore, priority will be given to Nunavut Inuit students who self-identify as being enrolled under the Nunavut Agreement in accordance with the hiring policy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Returns to Oral Questions. Minister responsible of Qulliq Energy Corporation, Ms. Healey Akearok.

Return to Oral Question 57 – 7(2): Activities of the Qulliq Energy Corporation

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise today to clarify an answer I provided to the member for Amittuq. This is Oral Question 57 – 7(2), concerning the extent to which the new collective agreement will impact Qulliq Energy Corporation's budget and the monthly power rates that it charges customers.

Wage adjustments arising from the recently negotiated collective agreement were anticipated and incorporated into the corporation's financial planning. As a result, the budgets for 2026 and 2027 already included expected compensation changes associated with collective bargaining. While labour costs from the collective agreement form part of the corporation's overall cost structure, they do not independently drive rate changes.

I would also like to clarify that the Utility Rates Review Council does not approve rates, but provides independent recommendations on rates and tariffs to support government decision-making.

The council reviews general rate applications and provides advice to the Minister responsible for Qulliq Energy Corporation on the proposed rate base/rate of return

method to arrive at a revenue requirement, which is the amount of money the utility will need to collect from its customers to cover its operating costs. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Item 4, Returns to Oral Questions. Minister of Education, Minister Brewster.

Return to Oral Question 75 – 7(2): Immunization and Screening

Hon. Janet Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am the Minister of Health today. The interpretation said education.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to provide a response to a question I received on June 2, 2026 regarding cancer screening programs. The Department of Health is implementing an organized population-based colorectal cancer screening program. The program officially launched in May 2025 in Rankin Inlet and is now in 20 communities, including Kugluktuk.

The department is working on a territory-wide scale-up of the colorectal screening program and is expecting territory-wide implementation by the end of this summer.

The Department of Health is prioritizing building a dedicated cancer screening registry and an effective patient follow-up process. Starting first with colorectal cancer, the future aim of the screening program is to encompass lung, breast and cervical cancers. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Moving on to Item 5, Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Item 6, Oral Questions. MLA for High Arctic, Mr. Taqtu.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Oral Question 84 – 7(2): Airport Infrastructure

Mr. Taqtu: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut and they concern his recent statement regarding Nunavut airports.

As the minister is very aware, new northern operational support of this plan to be located in Resolute Bay, which is located in the constituency of Quttiktuq.

The minister's statement indicated that "Resolute Bay has been identified as a northern operational support hub, which is a more critical asset intended to provide logical support for military operations in the Arctic. As the Resolute Bay airport improvements are

planned and designed, the Government of Nunavut will continue to encourage the Government of Canada to ensure that the development of this ambitious facility provides meaningful benefits for the people of Resolute Bay and Nunavummiut and the surrounding region for years to come."

Mr. Speaker, I very much appreciate the minister's commitment to support the community. Can the minister describe what engagements to date have been taking place between his department and the federal Department of National Defence? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, Mr. Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for raising this and repeating the words that I spoke the other day.

I think it's very important to realize and to recognize, as our federal partners, especially with the Department of National Defence, that we work together to make sure that the projects and the infrastructure that they are recommending to be provided, supplement and reinforce the needs of the community itself, to make sure that the core infrastructure in the community is established enough to be able to meet the requirements and the anticipated demand that any additional infrastructure offered by the federal government, specifically to meet some of the military requirements that they're looking at achieving, also enhance the ability of the community itself to be able to accommodate the residents of the community, not just for military purposes.

So to answer more specifically to the member's question, these are very, very early discussions that have just been very recently started. We are continuing to take a look at what they're looking at doing, and what we need, working with my colleague at Community Services, on what type of supports the community will need to make sure that it can support any anticipated infrastructure projects of that nature. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): First supplementary question, Mr. Taqtu.

Mr. Taqtu: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And thank you for the answer, Minister.

Mr. Speaker, information published by the federal government concerning the new northern operational support hubs indicates that the new facilities will "support Canadian Armed Forces operational requirements and meet the needs of federal partners; territorial, provincial and municipal governments; Indigenous partners in northern communities wherever possible. These sites will provide long-term benefits to northern communities in the form of roads, runways, seaports, and medical and power generation facilities that will benefit both the Canadian Armed Forces and the northern communities."

Mr. Speaker, the minister's department is also responsible for the government's Petroleum Products Division and bulk fuel storage facilities. I would expect the major new facility in Resolute Bay will have significant requirements in respect to fuel for military equipment. Can the minister indicate how his department is addressing this issue and its discussions with the federal government? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And I thank the member for also recognizing that again, when we talk about significant infrastructure investments that the federal government, specifically the military, want introduced into the territory, we've got to make sure that we're able to meet the demand that would entail.

Mr. Speaker, already we're currently in the design phase specifically for Resolute Bay, to look at the capacity of the fuel storage in Resolute Bay. That design work is actually currently ongoing, and I would be happy to brief the member on exactly where we are on that stage and what the anticipated capacity would be increased to. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Second and final supplementary question, Mr. Taqtu.

Mr. Taqtu: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I recently raised questions in the House about the recent federal announcement concerning the Nanisivik Naval Facility. It is important that the residents of Resolute Bay be fully involved in the planning for the new northern operational support hub.

Can the minister confirm the extent to which the mayor and council of Resolute Bay have been involved in his department's engagement with the federal government? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, Mr. Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I just wanted to correct a response that I had given earlier. It wasn't fuel capacity, it was the shore manifolds for the fuel delivery into the community that the design work is ongoing right now.

Mr. Speaker, as far as communications directly with hamlet officials such as the mayor and council and the SAOs, I know we work closely with colleague, Minister Simailak, through Community Services.

Mr. Speaker, it's quite an operational question. I don't know off the top of my head how recently communication has occurred or what type of communication has occurred with

the officials. Like I said, with regards to this project specifically with regards to the military infrastructure that's being proposed, we're very early on in discussions. But I can work with my colleague at Community Services to get an update on what type of communications has occurred and what type of requests or what type of information is coming from the hamlet council, which I think at the end of the day should lead a lot of the discussions that we have.

When we're looking at making changes to a community, adding things, adding infrastructure, we want to make sure that the community themselves are benefitting.

Again, we've used the term "dual use" often in the last few months, and I often prefer "multiuse" description of that. I think it's very important that we recognize whenever something is brought into a community, that it can impact as many of the residents and businesses as possible. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Member for Uqqummiut, Mr. Kautuk.

Oral Question 85 – 7(2): Activities of the Nunavut Housing Corporation

Mr. Kautuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My questions today are for the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, I want to begin by thanking the minister for the detailed return that she provided during yesterday's sitting of the Legislative Assembly.

Mr. Speaker, I was pleased to receive information which indicates that the Nunavut Housing Corporation plans to construct four new modular housing units in Qikiqtarjuaq. My understanding is that there will be four three-bedroom units.

Can the minister clarify how the Nunavut Housing Corporation determined the allocation number? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Ms. Lyall.

Hon. Cecile Lyall: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member for the question.

The allocation for this sealift followed the normal allocation process, which was determined in the Nunavut 3000 schedule. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): First supplementary question, Mr. Kautuk.

Mr. Kautuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the minister is aware, information published by the Nunavut Housing Corporation in July 2025 indicated that eight new units for Clyde River have been under construction and are scheduled to be completed in late 2026 to mid 2027.

Can the minister confirm if this timeline has changed? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Lyall.

Hon. Cecile Lyall: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member for that question.

For the eight units in the multiplex in Clyde River, there were issues with the foundation installation. We're hoping to have the foundation completed this summer, which would allow framing to start. And the new anticipated completion date is the fall 2027 for those eight units. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Second and final supplementary question, Member Kautuk.

Mr. Kautuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Minister, for the response. Can the minister confirm if additional new units for Clyde River will be allocated following the completion of the units that are currently under construction? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Minister Lyall.

Hon. Cecile Lyall: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member for the question.

As well as the eight multiplex units currently under construction in Clyde River, there are two modular units that are anticipated to be utilized once complete, as temporary accommodations for contractors in the community.

Right now we have a target for Clyde River to receive additional units this next construction season. This is also pending community readiness and a capital appropriation for those to come through. But we are anticipating units to be awarded next construction season for the community. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Member for Cambridge Bay, Mr. Pedersen.

Oral Question 86 – 7(2): Devolution

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today my questions are for the premier regarding his minister's statement on devolution the other day.

I agree with him that devolution will create greater opportunities for Nunavummiut to participate in resource development decisions and policy development, thus ensuring that lands and resources will be managed in ways that reflect Nunavut priorities and values. And we must remember that these responsibilities commence on April 1, 2027, which is a mere ten months from now.

Mr. Speaker, I also support the government's decision to establish a new department, the department being called "Department of Mines, Natural Resources and Land" or "MNRL", as its acronym.

Can the premier update us on the current number of federal employees that have confirmed their agreement to transfer to this new department, and can he also indicate how many of those employees are Inuit? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question.

(interpretation ends) Devolution is a major initiative, and so there's a lot of moving parts. We touched on some of them this morning and in discussion.

Mr. Speaker, the number of federal positions being impacted by devolution as of our current accounting is 101, and out of those 101 positions, 68 of those positions are filled.

Looking at those filled positions and the employees themselves, the government has been working closely to develop a relationship with those employees. There have been numerous meetings and chances to exchange information. We want them to come over and work for the Government of Nunavut following April 1, 2027.

At this point we are still working very closely. The plan is for individual job offers to go to the staff in the fall, and then ultimately it will be an individual decision, person-by-person, whether or not they want to accept that offer and come over to work for the Government of Nunavut. The approximate Inuit employment rate is 50 per cent. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thanks to the premier for his response.

In my review of happenings in the Parliament of Canada, I see that currently the House of Commons is reviewing Bill C-31. A portion of that omnibus bill includes amendments to the *Territorial Lands Act*.

Our member of Parliament spoke earlier this week on the floor of the House about the proposed amendments to the federal legislation. In her remarks she indicated that several provinces and territories are modernizing how mineral rights are managed, and addressing security and sovereignty vulnerabilities resulting from Canada's mineral rights pre-entry system.

That system is basically, you go on a website, select what lands you're interested in and pay the applicable fee. With this process there is no oversight as to who the owners of the company may be or even where they are from. This can and has created problems for Canadian security. We can remember the Shandong experience when the Hope Bay Mine was up for sale.

My question is: Is the Government of Nunavut supportive of the proposed amendments in Bill C-31 as they relate to the *Territorial Lands Act*? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Premier Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) The bill itself, C-31, and the specific provisions pertaining to national interest, we have yet to develop an official position on that specific piece of what is a rather large piece of legislation, with many different aspects to it.

I can say that the Government of Nunavut is supportive of Canada's sovereignty over the territory. We support efforts to protect security interests in the north. And our position, from a high level, is that Nunavut's interests must be taken into account when decisions are being made.

But I'll reiterate, very specifically, on that national interest piece within the legislation, we have yet to develop an official position. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you again to the premier for his response.

My final question stems from the Nunavut Lands and Resources Devolution Agreement that was signed off by Canada, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, and this government in early 2024.

Section 4.3 is regarding the *Territorial Property Assessment and Taxation Act*. This is where it covers that the landowner is responsible for paying the property taxes, not the land lessee, such as a mining company that operates on Inuit-owned lands.

I am aware that so far in the Kitikmeot region this has not been an issue, as the taxes are being paid by the operators. It is my understanding that this has been a concern elsewhere.

Can the premier provide us with an update on the status of the working group that was established to resolve the differences between the Government of Nunavut and Nunavut Tunngavik on this issue? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, (interpretation ends) and I thank the member for the question. I can confirm that the Government of Nunavut and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated have held discussions with respect to concerns regarding the *Property Assessment and Taxation Act*. The Government of Nunavut approached these discussions in the spirit of partnership and cooperation, and we are open to ideas which might address specific concerns.

Mr. Speaker, a legal challenge of the *Property Assessment and Taxation Act* amendments is currently before the Nunavut Court of Justice, and so the discussions under the devolution agreement are separate from the court process and without prejudice.

Mr. Speaker, finally, the Government of Nunavut continues to vigorously defend the *Property Assessment and Taxation Act* amendments before the court, while also fulfilling the commitments in the devolution agreement. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Kuliktana.

Oral Question 87 – 7(2): The Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question today is for the Minister responsible for Languages, and the concern with the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, the *Inuit Language Protection Act* established that Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit as a statutory body, at arm's length from the Government of Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, on July 30, 2025, the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit issues a call for nominations for the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit board of directors. The callout indicated that the board was seeking three individuals with expertise in North Baffin dialect, Sanikiluaq dialect, and from an expert in the Inuinnaqtun dialect.

Mr. Speaker, I note that on January 22, 2026, there was another nomination callout issued for the board of directors' positions.

Can the minister indicate today if the board of directors' position with expertise in the Inuinnaqtun dialect was filled, or if it is currently vacant? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for Inuit Language Authority, Mr. Koonoo.

Hon. Brian Koonoo: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to thank you for your question.

(interpretation ends) Since during April 2 cabinet meeting, seven new members were appointed for a three-year term; however, at this moment I don't know for Inuinnaqtun dialect representative. I will have to get back to the member. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary question, Mr. Kuliktana.

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to the answer.

Mr. Speaker, the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit conducts Inuktitut language assessments under the Inuktitut Language Incentive Program, which encourages Inuktitut-speaking employees of the Government of Nunavut to use the Inuktitut language as their primary working language.

Can the minister indicate how many employees are currently waiting for their language assessment in the Kitikmeot Region, including in Kugluktuk? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Languages, Mr. Koonoo.

Hon. Brian Koonoo (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to thank you for your question. And to add to the previous question, we have Ida Ayalik McWilliam of Kugluktuk who was appointed to the Inuit Language Authority.

For how many employees that are currently vacant or how many employees that currently needs assessment for the language program, the Inuktitut, I'm looking for it right now. To date, I'll have to get back to the member with that number. I know I have it somewhere. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Kuliktana.

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to take this opportunity to encourage my constituents who are working for the Government of Nunavut and who use

Inuinnaqtun in the workplace to consider applying for the Inuktitut Language Incentive Program.

Can the minister indicate if and when the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit will be coming to Kugluktuk to conduct Inuktitut language assessment in the Inuinnaqtun dialect? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Koonoo.

Hon. Brian Koonoo (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for that question. (interpretation ends) How many employees that need assessment, it's in total in Nunavut 137 employees that needs assessment, and it's not by region; it's all within Nunavut.

And for the second question, the last question that he asked, it's all done online, and currently there's no, we don't have any plans to visit Kugluktuk at this moment, but it depends on the committee of IUT. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Following my list of names, for Arviat, Mr. Kablutsiak.

Oral Question 88 – 7(2): Activities of the Nunavut Housing Corporation

Mr. Kablutsiak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation.

(interpretation ends) I thank the minister for the detailed information that he recently provided to me and other members of the Legislative Assembly concerning the corporation's plans for constructing new public and staff housing units.

Mr. Speaker, it was my understanding that the Nunavut Housing Corporation is planning to begin construction of six new public housing units and six new staff housing units in Arviat. This will help address some of the recruitment and retention issues for healthcare and education staff that I have been raising in the Legislative Assembly.

Can the minister indicate how Arviat's allocation of new housing units was determined? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for Nunavut Housing Corporation, Ms. Lyle.

Hon. Cecile Lyall: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member for the question.

We do recognize that within Arviat we have had a number of allocations for the community that were cancelled in prior years because of issues in attaining a development permit. So we are trying to come in and catch up on the years that we have missed.

Currently right now for Arviat, we are waiting on that process to conclude with the application for the development permit for the construction of a 12-plex, which would include six public housing units and six staff housing units. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary question, Mr. Kablutsiak.

Mr. Kablutsiak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the minister is aware, Sakku Innovative Building Solutions is an Inuit-owned company that has been working to construct a new factory in Arviat that will produce modular housing units. The grand opening ceremony for the new factory will be held in August of this year. Mr. Speaker, I very much look forward to attending this important event.

Can the minister confirm that she will be joining the community on this occasion? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Lyall.

Hon. Cecile Lyall: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to the member. Yes, it is a very exciting time to have this factory come into production in Nunavut. I have received the invite and I anticipate attending the opening ceremonies pending weather and other travel-related circumstances. But it is my intent to attend. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Second and final supplementary question, Mr. Kablutsiak.

Mr. Kablutsiak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) You have spoken on a number of occasions about the how the Nunavut Housing Corporation is moving in the direction of utilizing modular technology for the construction of new homes.

Can the minister describe what discussions the Nunavut Housing Corporation has had with Sakku Innovative Building Solutions, and can she indicate when the company will be able to start submitting proposals to manufacture new modular units for Nunavut communities? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister responsible for Nunavut Housing Corporation, Minister Lyall.

Hon. Cecile Lyall: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member for that question.

The first modular units procured in Nunavut from the Nunavut Housing Corporation was a procurement from SIBS through their RG Solutions factory in southern Canada. So that partnership has been growing, and it is one that we see as very important with the Nunavut Housing Corporation and development within the territory.

Conversations between the Nunavut Housing Corporation and the Sakku Innovative Building Solutions, SIBS, are ongoing, and this is a partnership that we really value, and we hope for all the success for the factory in Arviat. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Second and final supplementary question, Member Kablutsiak. Oral Questions. Member from Pangnirtung, Mr. Mike.

Oral Question 89 – 7(2): Nunavut Planning Commission

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is directed to Minister of Environment. I would like to thank him for responding through letter or by way of correspondence in regards, I'll be asking questions here in regards to the minister's statement yesterday he gave in regards to NPC, the Nunavut Land Use Planning.

I'm sure I have mentioned this in the House. In November 2022, the HTOs had to attend the consultation meeting, and I was representing the HTOs, and members of the municipal board attended the meeting. There were numerous people that attended the consultation meeting and also there was some people, representatives from Nunavik when NPC was consulting with the Nunavut land use planning recommendations.

Back then Nunavut government officials made presentation as a panel to the local people and to the people attending the meetings. Some of the questions were responded to, but also, when they couldn't respond to some questions that were posed, like they say that they will get back to us like we do in the House. There were quite a few questions unanswered and that they were going to respond to us by way of correspondence.

At that time when I was still expecting a letter of response, I was no longer a member of HTO, and we have not received any responses yet.

Does the minister know that the Nunavut government officials' responses, or the responses they promised, if they are available? So that's my question to the Minister of Environment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Environment, Mr. Koonoo.

Hon. Brian Koonoo (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Member, for your question. NPC, if there is any response or if there's any information coming from them, we don't have any information coming from them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Your first supplementary question, Mr. Mike.

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Minister.

During the meeting at the time, during our last consultation meeting with Nunavut Planning Commission and to this very important issue of Nunavut land use planning consultation, we have written a letter for those who had attended that consultation meeting, because as Inuit, we have important issues that we are concerned about, especially that concerns our way of life, culture, economic development, and we know about what kind of economic development interests we have.

I'm really quite concerned about this issue of implementing. There was a concern about land use planning implementing, to make sure that it follows the legislation and policies. The people that we represent, the Inuit we represent, need to be represented adequately through Nunavut land use planning. The Inuit and the public were interested and they had important issues.

If the minister can find the letters, response letters, would the minister commit to tabling the responses in the House anytime? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister Koonoo.

Hon. Brian Koonoo (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, we understand that this is a very important issue for Nunavummiut, and it's very interesting.

There are many people who are interested about this issue of very important land use planning and it's important for Nunavummiut, but at this time I cannot table any letters at this time, but sometime in the near future. I cannot tell you when, but I will be able to announce how this will be settled. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Second and final supplementary question, Member Mike.

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Yes, thank you, Mr. Minister. Thank you as well, Mr. Speaker.

The government, when they tell Inuit, during the public hearing, we were told that they were going to respond by way of letter to the questions that we posed. Those officials told us that, during the meeting. But for those of us who attended that hearing, myself and the other participants know that there has never been any responses given to us, because at the time they could not respond to the question in regard to the questions that

were posed for land use planning in Nunavut. They were unable to respond, and they promised to respond to us by way of letter.

But today, if there are no letters, or responses today, we are quite concerned if Nunavut, it is concerning that if we're going to be supporting the land use planning, because we're representing Inuit who were representatives in the hearing. If there are no letters of response, would it have an effect? Or would it delay or defer the agreement signing of Nunavut land use planning? That's my last question. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Environment, Mr. Koonoo.

Hon. Brian Koonoo (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Member.

Yes, we are always interested in hearing from the development of this Nunavut planning. The Nunavut Planning Commission, they have a public registry where you can find all your online information. The public registry also has GN plans in there, and the commitment process are also included in that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Member for Aivilik, Madam Angootealuk.

Oral Question 90 – 7(2): Airport Infrastructure

Ms. Angootealuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, I was very pleased to hear the minister's statement that he made during Monday's sitting of the Legislative Assembly concerning the Naujaat airport runway extension. This has been a major priority for the community, and I am very happy that I have had the opportunity to advocate for this project.

Mr. Speaker, the minister's statement indicated that work will begin this year on the design of the 600-foot extension to the Naujaat runway.

Can the minister confirm when his department will be issuing a request for proposal to undertake this work? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, Mr. Hickes.

Hon. George Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I was very happy to provide that minister's statement, and I kind of alluded to, in some of the questions that were raised earlier on, that that announcement would be coming. So it was with great pleasure that I was able to announce the further work in that project to extend the runway in

Naujaat, as it has been a long-debated topic in this House. For the fourth term that I have been here, it has been raised every time.

Mr. Speaker, with regards to the exact timing of when that design tender will go out, my officials are working on that right now, as this agreement was just recently finalized. So we want to make sure that we do our due diligence in that aspect.

But I do want to assure the member that we are trying to expedite this project as quickly as possible. My hope is that we can get the design tender out soon enough in the year that, once that design is finalized, that we can come to this House for an appropriation and go into the construction phase as soon as possible. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): First supplementary question, Ms. Angootealuk.

Ms. Angootealuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) The minister's statement indicated that his ability and cost estimate for the runway extension project was produced for his department.

Will the minister commit to sharing a copy of this study with the municipal council of Naujaat and the community's members of the Legislative Assembly? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister Hickee.

Hon. George Hickee: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'll have to confer with my officials on the date of that study on how old it is. We want to make sure that as we move forward, as we've seen in recent years how fast costs are escalating, we want to make sure that we're encompassing the full scope. So I will confer with my officials, and if we can share that full report with the mayor and council as well as the members of the Assembly, I will follow up with the member. Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Second and final supplementary, Madam Angootealuk.

Ms. Angootealuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Correspondence was tabled in the House during the previous Legislative Assembly from both the municipality of Naujaat and Calm Air concerning the community's runway.

Can the minister confirm that scheduled and chartered air carriers which the community will be consulting during the runway design process? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure, Minister Hickee.

Hon. George Hickett: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, just going back to the previous question, when that initial assessment was done, I will have to check with my officials to see what of engagement and what level of consultation occurred during that, whether it warrants to go back to that phase. Not that I am, obviously I am not against any consultation. Just from what I understood there was quite a bit of input from the municipality themselves and what their expectations are and what their desired length of runway and with the resurfacing of the runway in Nauyasat.

I'll have to confer with my officials to see if that consultation needs to be done again or how well it was done in the past.

The main reason I'm hesitant in responding with a firm commitment, Mr. Speaker, is I don't want to stall out any process on this project, and if that consultation has already occurred, then I want it to continue to move forward as fast as possible on this project. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Oral Questions. Moving on to Agenda. Item 7, Written Questions. Item 8, Return to Written Questions. Item 9, Replies to Opening Address. Item 10, Petitions. Item 11, Responses to Petitions. Item 12, Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters. Item 13, Tabling of Documents. Item 14, Notices of - my apologies. I apologize here. Going back to Item 13. I didn't see your hand, my apologies. Minister responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission, Ms. Tattuinee.

Item 13: Tabling of Documents

Tabled Document 28 – 7(2): Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission 2026 Corporate Plan

Hon. Annie Tattuinee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission 2026 Corporate Plan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. Item 14, Notices of Motions. Item 15, Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Item 16, Motions. Item 17, First Reading of Bills. Item 18, Second Reading of Bills. Item 19, Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters.

Before we proceed with the committee on item 19, we'll be taking a break for 20 minutes. Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>House adjourned at 14:50 and Committee commenced at 15:21

Item 19: Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

Chairman (Mr. Jamie Kablutsiak): I will call the meeting to order. In the Committee of the Whole we have the following items to deal with: Bills 1 and Bill 2. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Taqtu.

Mr. Taqtu: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We wish to continue with the consideration of Bill 1, *Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2026-2027*, and the proposed 2026-2027 Main Estimates of the Department of Human Resources. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Taqtu. Are we in agreement we first deal with Bill 1?

Some Members: Agreed.

**Bill 1 – Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2026-2027 –
Consideration in Committee**

Chairman: I would like to ask Minister Tattuinee, do you have any officials you would like to appear before the committee?

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Yes, Mr. Chair, to my left, Deputy Minister Alma Power, and Associate Deputy Minister of Inuit Employment, Elaine Uppahuak.

Chairman: Does the committee agree to let the minister's officials appear before you?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort them in. For the record, Minister Tattuinee, please introduce your officials and proceed with your opening comments.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Chair. To my left, I have Alma Power, Deputy Minister for Human Resources; and to my right I have Elaine Uppahuak, Associate Deputy Minister for Inuit Employment; and in the gallery I have Peter Kinjakausa (ph), Director of Policy; and Reguli Adla (ph), Director of Corporate Services.

Ullukkut, Mr. Chair and colleagues. I am pleased to present the 2026-2027 Main Estimates and the 2026-2030 Business Plan for the Department of Human Resources.

The Department of Human Resources serves as the Government of Nunavut's central authority on human resource management. We are responsible for administering the *Public Service Act* and for providing leadership and strategic direction for the public service. Our department supports all Government of Nunavut's departments and public bodies in a wide range of human resource functions and services, including Inuit pre-employment training strategies, plans, and programs; Inuit employment, public service

training and development, staffing, employee relations, job evaluation, health and safety, and employee wellness.

For 2026-2027, the department's operations and maintenance budget is \$30.7 million. This represents a modest increase of \$537,000, or 1.78 per cent, from the 2025-2026 budget, reflecting the Government of Nunavut's salary increase that took effect in October 2025. The major components of this budget include:

- Compensation and Benefits: \$18.9 million;
- Service Contracts: \$7.7 million;
- Purchased Services: \$2.1 million.

Mr. Chair, in support of *Ikajuqtigiikta*, our priorities for 2026-2027 reflect a clear and coordinated effort to strengthen the public service, create opportunities that support the well-being of Nunavummiut, and modernize human resources practices.

We remain fully committed to increasing Inuit employment and focusing on programs that help Inuit enter and advance within the public service.

We will continue implementing and monitoring the strategies outlined in the 2024–2037 Master Inuit Employment Plan and the departmental Inuit Employment Plans. This year, we will also table the first stand-alone annual Inuit Employment Progress Report in the Legislative Assembly.

In collaboration with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and the Government of Canada, we are leading the Government of Nunavut in the development of a tripartite Inuit Pre-Employment Training Framework. Once completed, this framework will guide the creation of government wide and departmental Inuit Pre-Employment Training Plans. These plans will detail structured pathways, bridging programs, and other education and training initiatives that will lead to government jobs.

As part of our restructuring to better align human resource functions and improve support to departments and public bodies, we have established two new divisions: Human Resource Services and Pre-Employment Training.

The Human Resource Services division, led by the Director of Human Resources with Inuit employment responsibilities, is funded through splitting the Corporate Services Division's budget.

The Pre-Employment Training division will be funded through the new Nunavut Agreement Implementation Contract. It includes eight new Inuit employment planner positions, dedicated to advancing Inuit employment initiatives across government departments.

Mr. Chair, my department will also finalize and begin implementing the Government of Nunavut's new Human Resource Strategy. We will roll out the Fusion Cloud system in phases to modernize and streamline human resources processes, including recruitment, leave and attendance, and learning and development.

To support decentralization, we will work with the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure to maximize local hiring opportunities through the Nunavut-wide hiring policy and by identifying available office space in communities. We will also pilot simplified job advertisements, alternative assessment methods, and improved community outreach to strengthen capacity and Inuit employment in community-based positions.

We will continue promoting the Tuglirijavut Student Employment Program, encouraging departments to use it strategically to provide work opportunities that allow Nunavut students to explore educational and career pathways in public service with added mentorship, training and on-the-job experience. In addition, we will develop a dedicated staffing initiative focused on hiring Nunavut Inuit youth.

To address capacity challenges and fill critical positions, the department will collaborate with departments to develop departmental staffing plans and deliver staffing training to support consistent and efficient hiring practices.

As Nunavut advances toward devolution, we are also preparing for the transfer of federal employees to our workforce on April 1, 2027, as well as staffing the new critical positions that will be needed to support our government's expanded responsibilities.

Using the results of the recent employee engagement survey, we will develop and implement strategies to strengthen employee engagement, wellness, recruitment and retention, and employer-of-choice initiatives.

Mr. Chair, my department is committed to providing leadership and working collaboratively across government to advance the *Ikajuqtigiikta* mandate. A strong, representative and efficient public service will provide a solid foundation for progress and providing a bright future for Nunavummiut.

Mr. Chair, this concludes my opening remarks. I welcome questions and feedback from members of the standing committee. *Qujannamiik*.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Tattuinee. For the record, on your opening remarks on page 2, we will continue implementing and monitoring the strategies outlined in the 2024-2034 Master Inuit Employment Plan and the Department of Inuit Employment Plans.

Does the chair of the standing committee have opening comments? please proceed, Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Chair. I am pleased to provide opening comments on behalf of the Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts on its review of the proposed 2026-2027 main estimates and 2026-2030 business plan of the Department of Human Resources. The department's proposed 2026-2027 operations and maintenance budget is \$30,709,000. This represents a 1.7 per cent increase from the 2025-2026 fiscal year. The number of positions in the department is increasing from 133 in the 2025-2026 fiscal year to 144.0 in the 2026-2027 fiscal year.

Members raised a number of issues and concerns during the minister's recent appearance before the standing committee.

The *2024-2025 Public Service Annual Report* was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on September 17, 2025. Members look forward to the timely tabling of the 2025-2026 annual report.

The Department of Human Resources has responsibilities in respect to establishing the government's overall Inuit employment targets. It is important to acknowledge the progress that has been made to date in increasing Inuit employment in the Government of Nunavut. Information that is contained in the government's quarterly employment reports indicates that a total of 1,388 Nunavut Inuit were employed by the government as of March 31, 2006. By March 2026, that number had increased to 1,973. This represents an increase of approximately 42 per cent over the 20-year period.

It is important for the government to develop realistic timetables for achieving full representativeness across all occupational categories in the government. This is a significant challenge. The government's most recent quarterly employment report indicates that as of March 31, 2026, the Government of Nunavut had a total of 5,744 positions, of which 1,973 were filled by Nunavut Inuit. 1,824 positions were filled by non-Nunavut Inuit employees, and 1,947 positions were vacant. In order for the government to achieve an 85 per cent Inuit workforce for a fully staffed organization, it needs to hire approximately 2,909 new Nunavut Inuit employees and not lose a single one of its current Nunavut Inuit employees.

The department's proposed 2026-2027 main estimates indicate that a new Pre-Employment Training Division is being created. The division is budgeted to have 11 PYs, person-years. The department's 2026-2027 main estimates indicate that it will receive \$35.708 million in Article 23 funding from the federal Department of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs.

The government's most recent quarterly employment report indicates that as of March 31, 2026, there were a total of 5,744 positions in the Government of Nunavut's departments,

public agencies and territorial corporations. 3,797 positions were filled and 1,947 positions were vacant. This is a vacancy rate of approximately 33 per cent. The standing committee notes that the government's new Nunavut-Wide Hiring Policy, Out-of-Territory Remote Hiring Policy and Telework Policy are now in effect. The standing committee encourages the minister to ensure that annual reports under the Public Service Act contain comprehensive information on the administration of these policies and their impact on addressing the vacancy rate.

The department's 2026-2030 business plan indicates that one of its priorities for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to "initiate an independent review of operational human resource processes to identify opportunities for efficiency and outcome-based processes." Members look forward to updates on the status of this review.

The Government of Nunavut's current Staff Housing Policy was approved in April 2019. It falls under the responsibility of the Department of Human Resources. The department's 2026-2030 business plan indicates that one of its priorities for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to "complete the review of the Staff Housing Program and develop recommendations." The Nunavut Housing Corporation's 2026-2030 business plan indicates that one of its priorities for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to "collaborate with the Department of Human Resources to develop and formalize alternative housing solutions for Government of Nunavut retirees who are at risk of being without housing options." Member note that this is an emerging issue in a number of communities that primarily impacts long-serving Inuit employees.

The department is responsible for administering the year-round Tuglirijavut Student Employment Program. Members strongly support the expansion of this program to all communities in the territory

That concludes my opening comments on the proposed 2026-2027 main estimates and 2026-2030 business plan of the Department of Human Resources. Thank you.

Chairman: Do members have any general comments before we proceed to detailed questions? Seeing none, I have no more names for general comments, we will now proceed to page-by-page review of the 2026-2027 Main Estimates, starting on page D-4. Human Resources, Branch Summary; Human Resources, Operations. We will now review the Department of Human Resources Human Resource Operations Branch. Do members have any questions? Mr. Qammaniq.

Mr. Qammaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome. (interpretation ends) Your department's 2026-2030 Business Plan indicates that one of its actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year will be restructuring the department to align human resources functions and operate efficiently and effectively and better support the departments and public bodies. What changes are being taken?

Chairman: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you for the question and thank you, Mr. Chair.

We need to take a good look at what we're doing and how as a department we can do it better, and to determine through that process what is missing. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Qammaniq.

Mr. Qammaniq (interpretation): That's your answer. Okay, I have another question, and thank you. (interpretation ends) Your department's 2026-2030 Business Plan indicates that one of its actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to initiate an independent review of operational Human Resource processes, to identify opportunities for efficiency and outcome-based processes. As of today what is the status of this work? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you for the question.

The department plans to put out a request for proposals in September and to have a third party review our internal processes to see where we can make improvements. Thank you for the question. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Taqtu.

Mr. Taqtu: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Which entity will undertake the review? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question.

It depends on what proposals we receive through the request for proposals process. So I'm not able to give you a specific, complete corporation that will do that. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you for the question.

Chairman: Mr. Taqtu.

Mr. Taqtu: Thank you, Mr. Chair. When will the 2025-2026 Public Service annual report be ready for tabling in the Legislative Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question. The report will be tabled in October 2026. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Your department's 2026-2030 Business Plan indicates that one of its actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to begin a legislative review of the *Public Service Act*, including consultations with departments and public bodies to identify sections requiring amendments to support Inuit employment, improve efficiencies, and alignment with the collective agreements. What specific changes to the legislation are being considered?

Chairman: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question. I'm not in a position to answer that question until after the consultations take place. I hope that answers your question. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: What is the timeline for introducing a bill in the Legislative Assembly to amend the *Public Service Act*?

Chairman: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question. I would say that it would probably be the last year of this Assembly. Thank you to the member for the question, and thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Chair. A new Nunavut-wide hiring policy was approved in May of 2023. It sunsets on May 18, 2027. As of today, how many employees have been hired under the provisions of this policy? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you for the question, and thank you, Mr. Chair. At this point in time, only nine individuals have been hired under this policy. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you for that answer. A new remote hiring policy was approved in October of 2023. It sunsets on October 12, 2026. As of today, how many employees have been hired under the provisions of this policy?

Chairman: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Chairman, and thank you to the member for the question. As of March 31 there have been 31 hires under this policy, and there's another 30 in active competition. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you. A new telework policy was approved in June 2024 and it sunsets on June 8, 2028. Similar question: as of today, how many applications under the policy have been approved and how many have been denied? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question. At this point in time departments track their own approvals. As we move to electronic leave and attendance, we will have a true picture of its use. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Do members have any other questions? Mr. Kuliktana.

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Chair. In regards to the Pre-Employment Training Division, during the minister's opening statement, you mentioned that would include eight new Inuit employment planner positions dedicated to advancing Inuit employment initiatives across government departments.

To support decentralization, can the minister confirm that these eight new positions will be in decentralized communities? And when I say that, I'm not talking about the regional hubs as Cambridge Bay, Rankin Inlet and Iqaluit. We have many communities that are decentralized. Can the minister confirm that these eight new positions will be dedicated to decentralized communities? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question. They will be assigned to other departments. Wherever they sit, they can always use the Nunavut-Wide Hiring Policy. So each department will have individuals assigned

to work on the Inuit employment training plans or Inuit employment plans, and there are opportunities for each department to take advantage of the Nunavut-Wide Hiring Policy. So those individuals can work wherever we have offices available in the various communities across Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Kuliktana.

Mr. Kuliktana: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Minister, for your response. You mentioned that it would be up to the individual departments. Can you as a minister indicate that you would like these positions in the decentralized communities compared as to the regional hubs? Because our decentralized communities, they need all the support that we can, how we can support the communities.

As you know, every position certainly helps the GDP in each community. And as you know, the regional hubs, Cambridge, Rankin and Iqaluit have majority of the positions. I just want to know what the government's position was to support smaller, decentralized communities. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question. We will work with the departments to ensure that we're supporting decentralization wherever it can happen across the public service. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: For the record, we are on Human Resource Operations. Do members have any other questions? Mr. Taqtu.

Mr. Taqtu: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Your department's 2026-2030 Business Plan indicates that one of its planned actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to complete the review of the staff housing program and develop recommendations. What specific changes to the government staff housing program are being actively considered? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question.

The staff housing program review is to look at the staff housing program itself in cooperation with our colleagues at the Nunavut Housing Corporation.

There are some delays due to capacity issues, but review is resuming issues to look at or different markets. But we treat every community the same. We need to incentivize people out of staff housing but we need housing options to increase.

Once there are housing options, what is the best way to reduce the number of time employees spend in staff housing, and how to address issues of shared accommodations?

So there's a number of opportunities where we're looking at how we can encourage employees to, aside from staff housing, alternative housing that is available.

At this point in time, as everybody knows due to the housing shortage, that's a challenge at this time. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Taqtu.

Mr. Taqtu: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Department of Human Resources is responsible for administering the government staff housing policy. The Nunavut Housing Corporation's 2026-2030 Business Plan indicates that one of its planned actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to collaborate with the Department of Human Resources to develop and formalize alternative housing solutions for the Government of Nunavut retirees who are at risk of being without housing options.

What specific solutions are being considered by the Department of Human Resources to address this issue? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question. Any time we try to address housing issues, it is complicated because of the lack of housing in the territory.

We are committed to providing assistance to employees retiring with no other housing options. Having been working with colleagues at Nunavut Housing Corporation to develop options and balance and need for these realities, retirees and the need to use staff housing as a recruitment tool as well. We need to consider allowing retirees to stay on an interim basis to allow other options for retirees to come online. So I hope that answers the question. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Next on my list, Mr. Attagataluk.

Mr. Attagataluk: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My question is -- thank you. How many direct appointments were approved by the cabinet during the 2025-2026 fiscal year? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question. For the 2025-2026 fiscal year there was a total of 168 direct appointments, and 167 of them were Inuit. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Attagutaluk.

Mr. Attagutaluk: Thank you, Chair. Working with the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut to maximize the potential of local hires in communities through widespread use of the Nunavut-wide hiring policy and exploring opportunities of available office spaces in communities, what is the process? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question. It also depends on the office space inventory and to identify issues, if there are any, at this point in time. Again, it will require our departments to work closely together. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Attagutaluk.

Mr. Attagutaluk: Thank you, Chair. How many of these appointments were in senior management positions? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question. I just need a second to find the answer. Thank you. There were two management positions and one senior management position. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: For the record, we are on Human Resource Operations. Do members have any other questions? Seeing none, do members agree with the Department of Human Resources, Human Resource Operations Branch, total operations and maintenance of \$19,825,000?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Please go to page D-5. Branch summary, Inuit Employment and Public Service Development. We will now review the Department of Human Resources Inuit Employment and Public Service Development Branch. Do members have any questions?

Chairman: Ms. Angootealuk.

Ms. Angootealuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. [] (interpretation ends) The Government of Nunavut Inuit Employment Plan 2024-2034 was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on May 29, 2025. When will the 2026-2036 plan be tabled in the Legislative Assembly?

Chairman: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The plan is a 10-year plan; it is from 2024-2030. There is no plan currently to have a plan from 2026-2036. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Angootealuk.

Ms. Angootealuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Madam Minister.

(interpretation ends) The government's most recent quarterly employment report indicates that as of March 31, 2026, the Government of Nunavut had a total of approximately 5,744 positions, of which about 973 were filled by Nunavut Inuit employees. 1,823 positions were filled by non-Nunavut Inuit employees, 1,987 positions were vacant.

In order to achieve an 85 per cent Nunavut Inuit workforce, the government needs to hire approximately 2,909 new Inuit employees and not lose a single one of its current non-Inuit employees. What is the realistic timeline for achieving this goal?
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the member for the question. It will take long-term plans. It won't happen, definitely won't happen overnight.

The Government of Nunavut has Inuit employment built in everything that we do. We have priority hiring for all competitions, expedited direct appointments, Inuit-only training opportunities, education leave, priority for all GN training opportunities.

In addition, we have changed the structure to have associate deputy ministers providing oversight on the Inuit employment, Government of Nunavut-wide plans, DM level steering committee for information sharing and reporting, master and departmental Inuit employment plans with short-, medium- and long-term goals. New internal reporting is to be developed in 2026-2027 with tabled reports in the fall 2027.

Implementation contract will allow for 480 million over the next ten years. Human Resource has started callouts for Inuit and pre-employment initiatives with 43 million allocated so far.

There's an expectation that each department will make submissions for their Inuit employment plans, and they will be reviewed on a quarterly to annual basis to ensure that they are living up to what they indicated in their plans. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Do members have any other questions on D-5? Mr. Qammaniq.

Mr. Qammaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't think there was a response to the question that was posed earlier.

(interpretation ends) *Government of Nunavut Inuit Employment Plan 2024-2034* was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on May 29, 2025. When will the 2024-2034 plan to be tabled in the Legislative Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question.

The 2024-2034 Master Inuit Employment Plan was tabled in the House at the last Assembly. It is a 10-year plan.

There are two Inuit Employment Plan reporting mechanisms: quarterly internal to the Government of Nunavut reporting to Human Resources for monitoring and coordination purposes, and an annual public Inuit Employment Plan annual report will be tabled in the Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Qammaniq.

Mr. Qammaniq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Your department's 2026-2030 Business Plan indicates that one of its actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to develop and implement new human resources policy and directives targeted at increasing capacity, strengthening Inuit employment, and addressing barriers in Inuit employment. What specific policies and directives are being considered? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question. As indicated in an earlier response, we are in the process of reviewing our

processes to determine what barriers do exist so we can improve our competitive process or our hiring policies to remove any barriers that exist. And once we identified those, then there's opportunities to make changes to those policies to better meet our public service needs. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Next on my list, Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My questions will be related to the Inuktitut Language Incentive Policy. Your department's Inuktitut Language Incentive Policy was most recently updated on January 8, 2026. Can you let us know what changes were made to the policy? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question. The amounts for compensation for individuals that qualified for this bonus or this language benefit or payment were increased. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thanks for that response. There are approximately 5,700 positions in the Government of Nunavut. I'm wondering approximately how many of them have been designated as requiring Inuktitut language proficiency? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question.

The allowance isn't associated to an individual position. It's the individual's ability in their position to be able to use Inuktitut language in whatever position they hold. So it is recognized across the board; doesn't matter whether it's a requirement for the job or not. We're encouraging individuals to use Inuktitut in the workplace. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Pedersen.

Mr. Pedersen: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thanks for clarifying that for me.

As of today, how many Government of Nunavut employees have received an Inuktitut language proficiency assessment? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the member for the question. There are approximately 800 employees in the public service that received this allowance. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Next on my list, Mr. Mike.

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Madam Minister, welcome, and your officials.

(interpretation ends) I want to touch on the department's mandate commitments, *Ikajuqtigiikta*, build capacity in public service and strengthen Inuit employment through decentralization, pre-employment training, and addressing barriers to employment. Can you elaborate on that, please? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question. We are developing a pre-employment framework, and it should be ready for the fall. This will inform our pre-employment plans, as well as adjust barriers and whatnot.

As I indicated earlier in one of my responses, our plan is to coordinate all pre-employment initiatives across the Government of Nunavut, focus on strengthening Inuit with skills, qualifications and supports needed to successfully enter the public service, support the Government of Nunavut in meeting its Article 23 obligations by increasing Inuit representation in the public service. I hope that answers your question. And thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Mike.

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Madam Minister as well.

Yes, you responded to some part of my question, but I just want if you can elaborate further that the pre-employment -- I'm sure some people who applied for position but they're not hired. What are the barriers? Why aren't they able to be successful in getting a job? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question. We have a number of different opportunities which allow us to determine and to develop capacity of Inuit.

In terms of individuals that are already working for the public service, there's opportunities for them to pursue post-secondary education through the Amaaqtaarniq program.

We also have public service training initiatives. We have opportunities to hire individuals on a casual basis to allow them to get their foot in the door, or to replace somebody on a temporary basis to determine whether they're interested in actually pursuing employment in the Government of Nunavut.

We also have internships for those individuals who are interested in laddering up. We have internal transfer assignments, which allow individuals to get experience in areas that they're interested in pursuing.

And we also have a training fund for individuals that would like to pursue training initiatives outside their community, which is paid for by the Department of Human Resources.

I hope that answers your question. And thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Mike.

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I know that sometimes the lack of housing provided, I'm sure they don't get the job. I'm sure this is one of the issues. *Ikajuqtigiikta* It is very important, by working together. That's part of our mandate. That's why I was asking that question.

But in regards to your action plans for 2026-2027, in your opening comments you talked about devolution: (interpretation ends) “provide expertise, advice and support to the Government of Nunavut Devolution Secretariat to ensure a smooth transfer of devolving federal employees to the Government of Nunavut.”

(interpretation) And to add further on, in addition, how many positions still have to be transferred to Nunavut government? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question.

The department plans, we work closely with the Devolution Secretariat, and at this point there are approximately 101 positions to be transferred that will be devolving to the Government of Nunavut.

The experience of the federal staff working in these positions is invaluable. We look forward to welcoming as many of these employees as possible.

My department is helping the Devolution Secretariat plan for Inuit employment and decentralization opportunities in this new department. Thank you to the member for the question and thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Mike.

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Madam Minister, as well. I'll be asking in your Business Plan for 2026-2027 to talk about it and ask a question in regards to the Inuit Employment Plan.

I know that it requires strengthening in that area. As well as what we alluded to earlier on, we talked about employees, but now I want to talk about Inuit employment.

There are barriers in the government in hiring Inuit employees. In your Business Plan, to get new policies for Inuit employment to increase and strengthen Inuit employees. With that, how are you going to rectify this issue? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I thank the question made by the MLA.

As I mentioned when I started the review, to see what barriers there are in hiring Inuit, we want to inquire further and we will develop a report what problems may be associated. I did mention that the review will provide what problems may be associated to hiring Inuit within government.

Upon the review, we'll look at what improvements can we make and what policies we may establish, whether we hire an Inuk or not when they work for Nunavut government.

We want to look into this, because this is often raised by individuals why they can't get a particular job. What are the barriers? We want to find out. We want to see. And we want to go further. Thank you, and thank you for the question.

Chairman: Mr. Mike.

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Yes, that's a very good response, and something that we want to hear and the people want to hear. So I'll ask another question, then.

The review, when will that be tabled at the legislature and perhaps be reviewed by the MLAs? When would that be? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for the question.

(interpretation ends) I think on an ongoing basis we are going to start looking at the different policies to determine where the barriers exist and look at the policies, and wherever possible for best practices review any changes that need to take place.

We're also interested in collaborating with financial assistance to reach Inuit pursuing post-secondary education, and looking at working programs from school to working in the public service, and also looking at potentially co-op programs. So hopefully that answers your question. And thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Next on my list, Mr. Mike.

Mr. Mike (interpretation): The issue we're discussing, this has to be emphasized further why Inuit are not getting employment and why jobs are not provided for Inuit. Perhaps in this review, perhaps no doubt that some Inuit are not hired for being Inuk. But it will be determined then after the review why individuals cannot attain jobs when they pursue them. We need to have a meaningful response, and it's something I will anticipate further down the road.

I would like to move on to another question on one of the areas, (interpretation ends) published Government of Nunavut Human Resources Strategy that will guide the department's action over the next four years. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the member for the question.

In the process of developing our pre-employment plans, we are doing an environmental scan to determine what the barriers are for Inuit to obtain employment in government. That will help us to develop pre-employment plans that address those different barriers that are identified over time.

And in terms of the strategy, we are looking at the fall 2026 for bringing that forward. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Next on my list, Ms. Angootealuk.

Ms. Angootealuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) For summer students it's increasing, it has been increasing for summer students. My question is, are they, you know, when we're young we tend to get in an accident anyhow. Are they covered as a summer student? That's my question. *Qujannamiik*.

Chairman: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the member for the question. If while they are a summer student and they are injured, or have an accident, all employees are covered by Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman (interpretation): Under Inuit Employment and Public Service Development, (interpretation ends) do members have any other questions? Mr. Qammaniq.

Mr. Qammaniq: (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Your department is responsible for administering the year-round Tuglirjavut Student Employment Program. How many students are currently participating in the program? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I thank the member for the question.

For this time around, it's 32 students at this time. The opportunity for them to have year-round employment exists while they're working for the summer, so if they're going away to school and want to work after school, then there are opportunities to continue working throughout the year. That's the intent of the program. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Qammaniq.

Mr. Qammaniq: (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and for your responses.

(interpretation ends) The 2026-2027 Main Estimates indicated that Pre-Employment Training Division is being created. The division is budgeted to have 11 person years. Your department's draft 2026-2027 Main Estimates indicate that it will receive \$35.708

million in Article 23 funding from the federal Department of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs.

Are the operations of the new division being entirely funded through this federal program? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question. Only the director positions in each of the departments to help pull the Inuit employment plans together are funded through that funding. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Do members have any other questions? Mr. Mike.

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chair. Many of us have been employed in places, and we know when you're an employee, you notice things. When the atmosphere is positive at workplace, it makes you stand taller. But that is not always the case. In some workplaces it can become sour with the people you have in the workplace.

This is something that Nunavut government employment wellness that I am referring to, that these are one of the things. And *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* is also included in the language here and the benefits it may have on positive lifestyle and so forth in their workplace.

It's only when you work together positively you can carry out your job, and for that reason, I know someone may reflect on safety and compensation commission and so forth.

And what I'm trying to state is using IQ, it has to be a part of this. I'm talking in front of you, but my ancestors would all need try to know what it means to survive adequately on the land, and perhaps because of that reason I am before you asking.

In the 2026-2027 estimates, (interpretation ends) in cooperation with the individual departments develop departmental staffing plans, based upon priority vacancies, working with the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut to maximize potential local hires in the communities through widespread use of the Nunavut-wide hiring policy and exploring opportunities and available office space in communities.

(interpretation) Without a proper office, this cannot move forward. So I would like to get a little more clarification here how that may be improved with no staff housing or office, that are common excuses. And I turn to this question before making a comment to the minister. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question.

The Nunavut-Wide Hiring Policy hasn't been as successful as we hoped. Only nine have been hired under this policy. For an example, if we use transfer assignments or acting assignments and not just competitions, there are opportunities for us to have individuals working in their home communities.

Again, it requires us to work, make a coordinated effort between TIN, Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, and the departments themselves and to working outside their office area, and also the individual themselves wanting to work at a distance away from the main office or their main location.

It requires that type of coordination, but that opportunity is available. The door is open for us to be able to do that. So I hope that answers the question, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Mike.

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Minister. The Human Resources is constantly in collaboration with Nunavut unions and Nunavut Teachers Association, the union, through the collective agreements, and they are able to work effectively together.

And it's obvious that the agreements that have been made for Human Resources through the Nunavut Employees Union and the Nunavut Teachers Association, that they have to initiate things and implement things.

I would like to know what this actually means within your responsibility. Can you explain it? (interpretation ends) implement the terms and conditions of the newly negotiated, (interpretation) even though that's there, even though it says that, not all of us know the details of what needs to be done. And those agreements will help the employees and teachers, because they are used to teach the children by the teachers. And it's good that the Department of Human Resources wants to use that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the member for the question. We do have collective agreements, and there is a requirement for them to align with, for example, the *Public Service Act*. And where there is not alignment, then adjustments need to be made or changes in legislation need to be made.

But we also have established some wellness division in the Department of Human Resources to work with individuals and/or groups. And we interact, the Government of Nunavut supports respectful workplace for all employees that provides conflict management, dispute resolution, workplace assignments or assessments and restoration's recommendations.

So from that perspective, we're doing as much as we can to make sure that we have healthy and well-run workplaces and there are opportunities for individuals to pursue assistance when it's required and to report any incidences that need to be addressed.

Again, there are some adjustments that need to be made to fully implement the collective agreements, but that's a work in progress. Again, as I mentioned earlier, we're hoping to introduce changes to the *Public Service Act* by end of this Assembly. So thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Mike.

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the minister for responding very well to my questions.

I only have two more questions that I would like to ask. Those of us who have been working in the past know what we're talking about. And when employees or staff work well together, even if they're under a union, and we know that (interpretation ends) collaborate with the union to resolve longstanding grievances scheduled for arbitration and introduce mediation and arbitration. Can you give us more idea about this, and to see how you are going to work it out under your action plan? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the member for the question. The department just did a mass mediation, and cleared 100 grievances before it goes to arbitration, or before it went to arbitration.

it's something that we as a department are continually working on, and I don't think that it's anything that will probably ever go away. So that being said, it's important for us to be in a position to respond when required to those kinds of situations. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Mike.

Mr. Mike (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the minister. So I hope that issue will be tabled in the Assembly with details.

This will be my last question to the minister: (interpretation ends) develop a wellness strategy to support employees' wellness and a healthy corporate culture. (interpretation) So it sounds like that will be coming out, and so that the staff or employees will get good support or better support, and also have good wellness programs within their offices, and some do that. Can the minister explain that some more? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question. The Wellness Division is responsible for the programs and services that impact psychological and physical health and safety of Government of Nunavut employees.

The Government of Nunavut is committed to fostering a healthy, respectful and inclusive workplace where all employees feel safe and supported.

Human Resources host wellness programs available to all Government of Nunavut employees. Wellness strategy is in development to strengthen the supports for employees' physical, psychological and social well-being. Wellness programs include mental health programs, occupational health and safety, and workplace conflict resolution services.

The wellness strategy is planned to be launched in winter 2027. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Next on my list, Mr. Attagutaluk.

Mr. Attagutaluk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. How many of the Pre-Employment Training Division's 11 positions will be filled by the current departmental employees? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question.

We have a director position with the Department of Human Resources currently. I believe the other director positions will be located in the other, the various departments, to ensure that we're working, that the work for the Inuit employment plans are being worked on by every department, and to hold each department accountable for what plans have been developed and to ensure that they are being implemented. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Attagutaluk.

Mr. Attagutaluk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to the minister for the response.

How many Government of Nunavut training proposals are currently being considered by the Makigiagta Inuit Training Corporation? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the member for the question. There aren't any proposals at this time with Makigiagta. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: We are on Inuit Employment and Public Service Development. Do members have any other questions? Seeing none, do members agree with the Department of Human Resources Inuit Employment and Public Service Development Branch total operations and maintenance of \$10,884,000?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Please go to page D-3. Do members agree with the Human Resources 2026-2027 Main Estimates, total operations and maintenance of \$30,709,000?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree we have concluded with the Department of Human Resources?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Any closing comments? Minister Tattuinee.

Hon. Annie Tattuinee: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to my colleagues sitting around the table. It really is going to take all of us working together to make things happen for the individuals we represent across Nunavut.

I also would like to thank my departmental officials and all the individuals that work in the background to bring things to fruition and to make things happen.

I'm especially pleased to be here and be able to respond to the questions and receive the feedback from everybody around this table as well as the individuals that work for the department.

Again, it will take a coordinated effort of the whole public service ensure that we're working all in the same direction and we're working for the good of Nunavummiut.

So thank you for this opportunity to share and to respond to questions. Thank you.

>> *Applause*

Chairman: Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the officials. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Taqtu.

Mr. Taqtu: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I move a motion to report progress. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. There's a motion on the floor which is non-debatable. Those in favour of the motion? All those opposed? Motion is carried, and I will now rise to report progress.

>> *Committee adjourned at 16:45 and House resumed at 16:46*

Speaker (interpretation): Please be seated. Item 20, Report of Committee of the Whole. Mr. Kablutsiak.

Item 21: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Kablutsiak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bill 1 and would like to report progress.

Mr. Speaker, I move that the Report of the Committee of the Whole be agreed to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The motion is in order. Is there a seconder? Mr. Kuliktana. All those in favour of the motion, raise your hand. Against? Motion carried.

Item 21, Third Reading of Bills. Item 22, *Orders of the Day*. Mr. Clerk.

Item 22: Orders of the Day

Clerk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Reminder, there is a meeting of the Standing Committee on legislation tomorrow morning at 10 a.m. in the Nanuq boardroom.

Orders of the Day for tomorrow, June 5:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Responses to Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motion
15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
20. Report of the Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. *Orders of the Day.*

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. The session for today is adjourned for the day, and we will restart tomorrow, Friday, June 5, at 9 a.m. Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 16:48*

