



## 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**  
**Tuesday, June 9, 2026**

**Members Present:**

Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok, Hon. David Akeeagok, Ms. Hannah Angootealuk, Mr. Edward Attagutaluk, Hon. Janet Pitsiulaaq Brewster, Hon. George Hickes, Hon. David Joanasia, 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 Joanasia) (interpretation): Mr. Akeeagok, I ask that you lead us in prayer.

>>*Prayer*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Please welcome. Mr. Akeeagok, it's a pleasure to see you back. Good day, people of Nunavut, and those watching the proceedings on TV, and people listening to the radio.

Item number 2, Ministers' Statements. Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, Mr. Akeeagok.

**Item 2: Ministers' Statements**

**Minister's Statement 74 – 7(2): In Remembrance of Louis Tapardjuk**

**Hon. David Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would first of all like to thank my colleagues, and especially the ministers who replaced me when I wasn't in attendance. I thank you very much.

Mr. Speaker, on April 7, 2026, the territory learned of the passing of Louis Tapardjuk. There is so much about Louis to remember, honour, and celebrate. He was a husband, a father, and grandfather, a very public figure who worked tirelessly for our territory of Nunavut. Louis supported the Igloodik Oral History Project in many capacities, and remained engaged in special language projects for years, even after his retirement.

The college recognizes his dedication to Inuit language and culture. Beyond his many public roles, Louis Tapardjuk came into the office each morning at 5:30 a.m., right up until his passing, to study the more than 600 interviews of the Igloodik Oral History

Project, identifying and verifying rare terminology from earlier generations. His work will be published as a glossary by Nunavut Arctic College, ensuring the continued use and growth of Inuktitut for future generations.

Louis Tapardjuk's life was as dynamic as the community that raised him and the territory he served. He shared his story in "Fighting for Our Rights," part of the Inuit Leadership and Governance book series, a life that resonates with Inuit through its themes of change, challenge, and courage. A free digital copy is available at [nacmedia.ca](http://nacmedia.ca), and I encourage everyone to read it.

His life is an important roadmap for us all: a reminder of what is possible when one is committed to understanding, elevating, and sharing Inuit experience, ways of life, and knowledge. Louis Tapardjuk embodied advocacy and diplomacy for Inuit and Nunavut, always grounded in humility before his people. He was of the people and for the people, and our territory is richer for it.

I'd like to invite my colleagues to join me in publicly and posthumously thanking Louis Tapardjuk for his unwavering dedication to Inuit, and in offering our heartfelt condolences to his wife Lucie and their family.

Thank you, Mister Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Louis Tapardjuk, who dedicated his life to our territory.

Ministers' Statements. Minister of Family Services, Ms. Healey Akearok.

### **Minister's Statement 75 – 7(2): Skills Canada Nunavut**

**Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok** (interpretation): Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker.

(interpretation ends) I rise today to share the success of the recent Skills Nunavut competition. Skills Canada Nunavut is a non-profit organization that gives youth hands-on opportunities to try on trades and technology careers through training programs and competitions. Their mission is to bridge education and industry, so that every young person in Nunavut can discover their potential in the trades.

Last month, the value of this program was on display at École des Trois-Soleils and Aqsarniit Ilinniarvik in Iqaluit. Thirty-seven youth competed for honours in 13 trades ranging from carpentry to hairstyling to digital design. They showcased what they had learned through their involvement with Skills Canada Nunavut in the past year.

The winners of the territorial competitions are as follows: Two Dimensional Character Animation: Seporah Satuqsi and Diane Kunnuk, Igloolik; Aesthetics: Victoria Lindell, Iqaluit; Baking: Sophea Hauli, Igloolik; Beading: Alannah-Rose Attagutaluk, Igloolik; Carpentry: Honore Aglukka, Naujaat; Cooking: Savannah Siusangnark, Naujaat; Photography: Wafa Fioza Rahman, Iqaluit; Public Speaking: Azriel Tangnigou Petnkeu, Iqaluit; Video Production: Chaz Irgaut and Wasi Abdur Rahman, Iqaluit; Workplace Safety: Troy Cox, Iqaluit; Outdoor Power and Recreation (Small Engines): Ilaija Eesemaile, Pangnirtung; Hairstyling: Emmalie Alivaktuk, Pangnirtung; and, Northern Fashion: Cecia-Rose Kipisiak, Igloolik.

Mr. Speaker, early exposure to the trades sparks students' interest and shows them a path to supporting their communities and becoming financially self-sufficient. It can strengthen our local economy and reduces our reliance on labour brought in from outside the territory. Nunavut needs a strong, sustainable workforce, and our youth deserve every opportunity.

Mr. Speaker, Skills Canada Nunavut could not accomplish this incredible work without collaborating with schools, communities, industry, and the Department of Family Services. By providing funding to Skills Canada Nunavut for the past 12 years, Family Services has played a role in fostering opportunities for youth to enter careers in trades and technology.

I would like to thank Executive Director Brandon Villeneuve and the board of directors for taking on this important work.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Justice, Mr. Hickes.

### **Minister's Statement 76 – 7(2): Community Corrections Diversion Program**

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, in November 2025, Community Corrections and Community Justice in Kinngait launched a new collaborative initiative that allows Community Corrections officers to refer eligible breaches to the Community Justice team, as an alternative to court. This diversion program is called Pigiakkaniq, meaning "giving another chance" in Inuktitut, reflecting its purpose and the values it upholds.

The program applies only to low-risk, administrative breaches such as failure to report, not attending counselling, or not completing all community service hours. Any breach involving violence, re-victimization, or new victims continues to proceed through the Nunavut Court of Justice.

Mr. Speaker, participation is voluntary, giving clients an opportunity to correct their behaviour rather than returning to court and the possibility of facing additional charges. This community-based approach helps to shift probation from a strictly punitive model to one that offers practical, restorative options that support individuals in taking responsibility for their own rehabilitation.

After early success in Kinngait, the program has expanded across the territory and can now be accessed by probation clients in all of our communities. To support consistent and effective delivery of the program, the Department of Justice provided joint training to all Community Justice Outreach Workers and Community Corrections Officers.

During my recent visit with Justice staff in Rankin Inlet, I learned first-hand about how the program offers a practical, constructive response to minor breaches, helping probation clients get back on track, connecting them with community supports, and easing the burden on the courts.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Languages, Mr. Koonoo.

**Minister's Statement 77 – 7(2): Appointment of New Board Members to the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit**

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to announce the appointment of seven new members to the Board of Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit, the independent language authority established under the *Inuktit Protection Act* to lead the preservation, promotion, and development of Inuktit across Nunavut.

The newly appointed members are: Ida Ayalik-McWilliam of Kugluktuk, Robert Jonas of Clyde River, Shelton Nipisar of Arviat, Margaret Okatsiak of Rankin Inlet, Kathy Okpik and Eva Aariak of Iqaluit, and Mary Thompson of Arviat, whose mandate has been renewed.

Mr. Speaker, each of these individuals brings deep expertise, community insight, and a shared commitment to strengthening the vitality of Inuktitut. Their leadership will support ongoing efforts to safeguard our language, expand terminology resources, and ensure Inuit voices continue to guide this essential work.

I would also like to extend my sincere appreciation to the outgoing members, Mary Voisey, Salomie Qitsualik, and Salomonie Pootoogook, whose terms have concluded. Their dedication has significantly advanced Inuktitut initiatives, supported terminology development, and reinforced the cultural foundations that sustain our communities. We thank them for their service and wish them well in their future endeavours.

Mr. Speaker, these appointments reaffirm our government's commitment to Inuktitut leadership and to the collective responsibility we share in protecting and strengthening our linguistic heritage.

As created through the *Inuktitut Protection Act*, The Inuit Language Authority plays a central role in revitalizing, standardizing, and modernizing Inuktitut, and is empowered to make informed decisions on behalf of all Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to the contributions the new members will make. Please join me in welcoming them to the board. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements. Minister of Education, Mr. Akeegok.

### **Minister's Statement 78 – 7(2): National School Food Program**

**Hon. David Akeegok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am so happy to be talking as a minister.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to update my colleagues on the work being done in our communities to implement the National School Food Program. In February 2025, the Departments of Health and Education signed an agreement with the federal government for \$7.6 million in funding over three years under the National School Food Program.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, since signing the agreement, the Department of Education has provided funding to district education authorities in every community to allow them to enhance their existing school food programming.

Our schools and the district education authorities have put this funding to very good use. Schools are eligible to use the funding for various purposes, including purchasing food, increasing the amount of country food provided, or even to help pay part-time cooks that prepare and serve our children.

Mr. Speaker, I am also pleased to share that some of the federal funding has been allocated for minor capital purchases that will help to upgrade small appliances and equipment in school kitchens. The Department of Education is also partnering with Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut to assess larger capital deficiencies in school kitchens that future federal funding may help address.

The funding also allowed the Department of Education, for the first time ever, to hire a full time School Food Program Coordinator to help facilitate the funding and reporting for our schools.

Mr. Speaker, we know how important it is for children to have access to healthy food throughout the day. It not only improves their health and wellbeing, but it can also support better learning outcomes.

We are grateful to the federal government for the funding, and we are especially grateful to all our school staff and volunteers who make school food programming possible.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Item number 3 in our *Orders of the Day*, Members' Statement. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Kuliktana.

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

#### **Member's Statement 75 – 7(2): Recognizing Ashley Newman**

**Mr. Kuliktana:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I rise in the House to recognize one of our own, and also Nunavut's own, Ashley Newman. Ashley Newman graduated from Kugluktuk High School in 2018. She continued her education with University of British Columbia Okanagan, and graduated in 2023 as a certified nurse. Her passion for the north and her community, today she works at our local health centre.

Our communities need more role models for our youth today, and she sets a perfect example of following your dreams. So today I ask the House to celebrate with me in accomplishing her accomplishments and her dreams. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. We are also proud of her. Congratulations to her. Members' Statements. Member for Arviat South, Mr. Kablutsiak.

**Member's Statement 76 – 7(2): Recognizing Jimmy Napayuk**

**Mr. Kablutsiak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Although the month of May is recognized as Mental Health Awareness Month, I would like to recognize Jimmy Napayuk of Arviat. Jimmy Napayuk is the Arviat Men's Program coordinator at Pulaarvik, funded through Atii Angutiit Initiative through Department of Health.

Jimmy coordinates and delivers programs that support the well-being of men in the community. This includes monthly men's gatherings where country food is served, creating a welcoming environment for participants to connect, discuss mental health, share experiences, and encourage one another. These gatherings regularly attract up to 30 to 50 men.

Mr. Speaker, Jimmy Napayuk also runs land-based and cultural programs throughout year. In February 2026, Jimmy took a group of men fishing, and taught them how to set nets under the ice. In summer months he organizes beluga whale hunting trips, giving many participants the opportunity to harvest their first beluga. Jimmy also facilitates hands-on cultural workshops, focused on the construction of traditional Inuit tools, including onats (ph), qamutiit, and nikulirvit (ph).

Mr. Speaker, Jimmy has completed mental health training through Pulaarvik, and uses this knowledge to support men to Arviarmiut.

He also helped build a cabin in Rankin Inlet, which will be used for men's programs, which will be used for creating space for cultural learning, wellness, and land-based activities for the Kivalliq region, and plans to build one in Arviat as well.

All through his work, Jimmy helps men strengthen their mental wellness, cultural knowledge, traditional skills and connections to one another.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage Nunavummiut to reach out for help through the Nunavut Kamatsiaqtut Help Line, Healing By Talking program, or local health centre if they are struggling. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Member for Iqaluktuuttiaq, Mr. Pedersen.

**Member's Statement 77 – 7(2): Air Ambulance Services**

**Mr. Pedersen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day to you all and to residents of Cambridge Bay that are watching our proceedings today.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly believe that for our health care to be working and to be seen that it is working, our residents need to see progress in terms of timeliness of service performance. I want to focus again today on the issue of the government's contract for air ambulance services.

Mr. Speaker, in discussions with my Kitikmeot colleagues, it is very clear that we are all receiving numerous concerns from residents across the region about this issue. I recognize and understand that anecdotal evidence needs to be looked at carefully, but it is very clear that there is widespread public dissatisfaction with the current response times for medevacs. In some cases we are hearing about delays of more than 24 hours, and of medevac flights originating not only from out of the region, but also from out of the territory.

There was a medevac required in Cambridge Bay over the weekend from a serious accident that resulted in broken bones and head trauma. The plane was eventually dispatched from Churchill, Manitoba, and took 28 hours to arrive.

It is clear that the department needs to review this situation as an urgent priority.

Mr. Speaker, many questions about the status of the government's contract for air ambulance services have been asked in this House. It is imperative that the new contract address the concerns that have been expressed about such issues as aircraft positioning and response times.

Mr. Speaker, I anticipate that several clear questions will be asked today about this issue, and I am hopeful that there will be clear answers. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Ministers' Statements, Minister Akeegok.

**Member's Statement 78 – 7(2): Update on Wife's Medical Condition**

**Hon. David Akeegok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I want to express my gratitude for the people who have elected me in Iqaluit-Manirajak riding. As everyone is aware, I have been missing sessions in the House and I've been away from Iqaluit for some time.

And I also would like to thank the cabinet members, because I have given them heavy, extra load with the business and portfolios.

For that I want to express my wife is ill at this point. I believe everyone is aware now. For those people who have not heard, I would like to inform you, my wife and I would like to inform you that she's being treated with chemotherapy, and she has got cancer on stage 4.

I really am not sure if her cancer was caught right away, but since Christmas month, since December we've been going back and forth to the hospital. This is the fifth time that she will be given chemotherapy treatment, and we have heard that it's helping her body. The nurses and the health professionals, with her illness, are able to send us home for not long, but we have been told that they will have to work with her for a long time.

We have agreed, and we have given ourselves to the nurses and the health professionals that we'll get over this illness, as we're aware with that, and they are giving her proper treatment.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement. Thank you.

**Speaker** (interpretation): The member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? I don't hear any nays. Mr. Akeeagok, please proceed.

**Hon. David Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you my colleagues, and thank you for extending my statement.

We would like to extend our appreciation and gratitude to many people who have prayed for us, especially to my wife, my beloved wife. And also those people, your prayers, we feel your prayers. I know we're going through a very difficult time, and with her chemo treatment, the patients who had received chemo treatment and their spouses discuss these matters with us, and they check on us and know that we're very grateful for checking up on us.

And with that I would like to thank each and everyone. My wife and I are very grateful. Our children are all grown up now, and they have been taking care of the younger ones.

Also, our friends and family have been very supportive. We are very grateful and we're very compassionate. After the doctor told us that her treatment cannot be done or completed right away, so she will have to be in Iqaluit for a short period of time, but we have technology, with telephone and Internet.

As the Member of the Legislative Assembly for Iqaluit-Niaqunngu riding, I can continue to work and with the help of my staff and officials.

I would like my constituents, I check to see if any one of my constituents go to my office and I check my constituency office right away, and as I have agreed and be committed to be a Member of the Legislative Assembly and to be part of the cabinet.

I would like to thank all the cabinet members and our officials who have been very supportive. They work very hard, even though I'm not here, to keep everything going.

I watch the session proceedings everyday and the premier usually responds exactly the same as the way I would respond.

But lastly, I would like to say my wife is very strong; she's more stronger than I am. And our emotions have been very close, even though she's being treated, it shows how strong she is. Sometimes she almost gives up, but she always brings herself back up.

Please continue to pray for us, especially the patients. There are many patients that are going through chemotherapy treatment and they are going through a difficult time with their treatment and how it will end. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Welcome back, Member Akeeagok. Welcome back. We're very pleased that you're back and we think of you and we have missed you as well. But your wife and your children and family, we think of them and we love them.

Going back to *Orders of the Day*, Members' Statements. I have no more names on my list. I'm sorry. Member for Qamani'tuaq, Mr. Simailak.

### **Member's Statement 79 – 7(2): Recognizing Alex Cook of Baker Lake**

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

Mr. Speaker, I would like to briefly speak about a young constituent of mine in Baker Lake, up-and-coming businessman whose name is Alex Cook. He started up a construction company in Baker Lake, a modular housing factory. His business name is ArchTech. Currently Alex is down south, just outside of Ottawa, with a few Inuit to help train them in how to work in a modular housing factory.

They have received some assistance from Caivan (ph) and ArchTech; they co-developed a training program. They also received some assistance from Canada Mortgage Housing Corporation, CMHC, and ArchTech as well, his own company put up some money, combined \$450,000. The outcome of this training program, the staff will complete the

training, will go in to indeterminate employment in Baker Lake in the modular housing factory.

I would like to quickly name off the active trainees. They are Inuit-only right now:

Alvin Bootnac (ph), David Jackson Marty (ph), Gabriel Nugliuik (ph), Kyle Mullins (ph), Mulla Curly (ph), and Mark Etuk (ph), and my little brother, Solomon (ph).

Like I said, once they finish their training program, should be sometime in July, they will be moving back to Baker Lake and start working on putting up the modular housing factory and start working on building some new houses that hopefully will service Nunavummiut right across the territory.

Congratulations, Alex, and good luck on your endeavours. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Members' Statements. Item 4, Return to Oral Questions. Minister of Culture and Heritage, Minister Koonoo.

#### **Item 4: Returns to Oral Questions**

##### **Return to Oral Question 68 – 7(2): The Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Katimajit and Tuttarviit**

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

(interpretation ends) I rise today to supplement my response to Oral Question 68 – 7(2) asked on June 1, 2026 by the Member for Aivilik, Ms. Hannah Angootealuk. I want to thank the member for her question regarding the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Katimajit and Tuttarviit.

I am pleased to confirm, Mr. Speaker, that in the approved 2025-2026 Business Plan, the policy and legislative development process concluded with a policy process manual that includes working with Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Katimajit and Tuttarviit.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, under the 2026-2027 Culture and Heritage business plan priorities, the department has committed to updating the terms of reference for both the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Katimajit and Tuttarviit to support increased and more meaningful engagement on policy and legislative development.

On upcoming activities, Mr. Speaker, the next regular Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit Katimajiit meeting is planned for September, and will be held in Iqaluit. I also wish to inform the House that the Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit Conference, after two postponements due to logistics and regional hosting capacity constraints, will now take place from December 1 to 3 in Iqaluit, with the agreement of all Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit Katimajiit members.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to close by acknowledging the fundamental and too often invisible work carried out by the members of the Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit Katimajiit and Tuttarviit, our elders, Inuit policy professionals, and Iviqtippalliajut advisors, who bring Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit to the heart of government. Their contribution is essential, and I am grateful for this opportunity to recognize it.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Item 5, Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Ms. Healey Akearok.

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

**Hon. Gwen Healey Akearok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (Interpretation ends) First, I want to say welcome back to our colleague. We're happy you're back in the House with us.

Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased to rise today to recognize Skills Canada Nunavut representatives who are here. Several members with us today just returned from the national competition in Toronto. There were no medal placements this year, but a few participants came pretty close.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in welcoming to the House the following people. And you can stand when I say your name. So some of our competitors here with us today are:

Sagesse Salomon, in Job Search.

>> *Applause*

Wasi Abdur Rahman and Chaz Irgaut for Video Production.

>> *Applause*

Josiah Joseph was a participant.

>> *Applause*

And Queen Ajebade for Job Demonstration.

>> *Applause*

We're also pleased to welcome Michael Landry, the board president.

>> *Applause*

Brandon Villeneuve, the executive director of Skills Nunavut.

>> *Applause*

Liam Burrows as a program coordinator.

>> *Applause*

Tau Burrell is an assistant program coordinator and administrator.

>> *Applause*

Justin Tambogon is a volunteer.

And we also have important supporters from the school: Annie Larocque and Nadine Petnkeu, and Nadine is the principal of L'école des Trois-Soleils.

>> *Applause*

Welcome to your house. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Welcome to the House. Welcome, all Nunavummiut. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Item 6, Oral Questions. Member for Cambridge Bay, Mr. Pedersen.

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

#### **Oral Question 105 – 7(2): Air Ambulance Services**

**Mr. Pedersen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As noted in my member's statement, my questions today are for the Minister of Health and they concern an issue of the government's contract for air ambulance services.

Mr. Speaker, the minister is well aware of questions that have been raised in this House regarding medevac wait times and other issues. The minister has informed us that negotiations are still ongoing before the new contract can be finalized, so they are still working with the now-expired contract.

My own understanding of contracts like this are as follows:

One, the government issues a request for proposal outlining what they're looking for. Two, prospective proponents submit bids for the service as outlined in the request for proposals and what the material will cost. Three, the government reviews the submissions and awards it to a company that submitted the best bid as per established criteria. In this case we have been informed that only one company submitted a bid by the closing date.

My first question is, when will the negotiations for the new contract be finalized, and when will the details of the new contract, including contractual requirements concerning aircraft positioning and response times, be shared with the members of the Legislative Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Minister of Health, Minister Brewster.

**Hon. Janet Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member for the question, and I understand the concerns regarding access quickly to medevacs. Medevac operations require real-time decisions based on patient needs and operational circumstances across the territory.

The current contract has been extended until March 31, 2027. Negotiations are underway. And in the meantime, the current contract still stands, where there are dedicated aircraft assigned to both Cambridge Bay and Yellowknife, and a non-dedicated aircraft assigned in Iqaluit and Winnipeg.

There's a mixture of aircraft types: Two King Air 200s, a Pilatus PC-12, two Beechcraft 1900s and another King Air 200.

Mr. Speaker, our officials are working as hard as they can to get those contracts finalized, and once they are finalized, we will be able to share the details of those contracts. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): First supplementary question, Mr. Pedersen.

**Mr. Pedersen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the minister for her response.

Mr. Speaker, my colleagues and I have raised questions on the new medevac contract and how we strongly feel about the positioning of medevac aircraft in the Kitikmeot region.

Can the minister provide a clear description of what the government's minimum requirements will be in this area. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Minister of Health, Minister Brewster.

**Hon. Janet Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The absolute beginning point is those dedicated aircraft that I just mentioned.

Mr. Speaker, one of the things that is really important to us is to hear back from our medevac providers about the number of medevacs that occur, and at what rate that they respond to medevacs.

For example, in Cambridge Bay there were, in 2025, 106 medevacs that occurred; and the time to engine on for each call, the average time was 33 minutes and the average response time was eight hours and 25 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, those kind of issues are the ones that we are working to ensure that occur within that service. We want quick responses. We want aircraft available. That's built into those negotiations.

And Mr. Speaker, certainly the Department of Health is always listening to not just members of the Legislative Assembly, but members of the public as well for ideas and concerns that we have. And we take all of that feedback and we put that forward in our negotiations. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Second and final supplementary, Mr. Pedersen.

**Mr. Pedersen:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and again I thank the minister for her response.

I mentioned in my member's statement that we are hearing numerous concerns from residents about slow medevac response times.

Can the minister provide a clear description of what the government's minimum requirements will be in this area in its new contract? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister Brewster.

**Hon. Janet Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, we're always happy to receive suggestions and we're open to improvement.

The minimums that we want is for medevacs to be available when we call for them and to have as quick a response as possible.

There are a number of drivers to those delays, that can include crew at rest, weather, priority change. We often call for medevacs and something may happen to another person who gets triaged because they need that medevac sooner than another person, and that could cause delay times.

I suppose most importantly is that we want aircraft to be available. We want crew to be ready and available, and we want to be able to avoid any delays in medevacs arriving to safely transport our patients to another care centre. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Amittuq MLA, Mr. Qammaniq.

### **Oral Question 106 – 7(2): Activities of the Nunavut Housing Corporation**

**Mr. Qammaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today my question is for the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation.

As the minister is aware, Sanirajak suffers from a severe shortage of housing. Information published by the Nunavut Housing Corporation in July 2025 indicated that material for the construction of eight new housing units in Sanirajak have arrived in the community and that construction was scheduled to be completed by the end of 2026.

Can the minister provide an update today on the status of these new housing units? 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 that question.

In Sanirajak currently, as the member stated, we have eight units within a multiplex. These units have since been subcontracted to another contractor within the community, and the framing work has started, was started before the winter shutdown, with the crawl space and the main floors mainly completed within those.

The new targeted completion date for these units would be October of this year, and then we can start the condition assessments, and hopefully have the occupancy permits completed within this year as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): First supplementary question, Mr. Qammaniq.

**Mr. Qammaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for the response.

Can the minister provide a clear explanation as to why the Nunavut Housing Corporation's construction plans for the 2026-2027 fiscal year do not include additional new units for Sanirajak? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Minister Lyall.

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

We are working within our capacity constraints, and also budgetary constraints. We do recognize that we need more units in every community. There is a need for every single one of our communities in Nunavut, and the need for public housing is so dire across the territory.

Working within our budget for our capital appropriation that we agreed upon in our prior sitting, we did not see an allocation for Sanirajak for this sealift. Hopefully within the coming years, with capital appropriations from both our government and accessing funding from funding partners, we would be able to see construction on new units and allocations for the community of Sanirajak in the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Qammaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And can the minister provide a clear timeline for when the Nunavut Housing Corporation plans to allocate additional new units to the community. 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. Currently right now within our plans, we do anticipate having new units within our next capital plan, so capital plan 2027-2028; and again, this is pending community readiness. So if we do have lots within the community that are accessible, and also if we're able to attain contracts that would fall within our budgeted amount. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Oral Questions. Member for Pangnirtung, Mr. Mike.

### **Oral Question 107 – 7(2): Fishing Sector**

**Mr. Mike** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say good day to the people of Nunavut, people of Pangnirtung. Before I ask my question, I would like to welcome our fellow MLA. Welcome, and we're happy to see you back again in the House.

Mr. Speaker, my questions today about fishing, for the person responsible for fishing, and that's the Minister of Community Services.

Now, they are fishing all over the place right now, but (interpretation ends) for me, I am continuing to fish for answers.

>>*Laughter*

(interpretation) I have a question to the minister. And as the minister is aware, his department's strategic plan for fisheries, especially for offshore, plan for fisheries and sealing was tabled in the House on November 3, 2023. That's a strategic plan for fisheries.

One of the strategic priorities identified in the document is the need to "advocate for consistent research on offshore stocks, and increase in federal resources dedicated the Arctic region."

(Interpretation ends) It was around 2023, I believe, in OB and OA fishing area, the quota for halibut was reduced because of the lack of research.

(interpretation ends) I know from experience that work in this area is important for Nunavut to make convincing case for fairness in quota allocations.

Can the minister describe how his department has been working to implement this priority? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Minister of Community Services, Minister Simailak.

**Hon. Craig Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for his question and his fishing exercise here, and hopefully he will be satisfied with my drift, Mr. Speaker, as he fishes for some answers.

Regarding what we are doing, we are working with the Inuit organizations to look at what we can do for them for the research, trying find out how much fish that we may be able to fish commercially for our Nunavut fisheries. We do want as much more of the quota transferred to Nunavut, so we're working with the Qikiqtani Association.

I actually reached out to the president of Qikiqtani Inuit Association this morning, advising him I would like to sit down with him and meet with him on the issue of commercial fisheries so that we can work together closely on advocating more for quotas to come to Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): First supplementary question, Mr. Mike.

**Mr. Mike** (interpretation): First of all, I thank the minister. I'm talking about 2023-2028 Sealing Division.

(interpretation ends) On page 12 to deal with offshore, the department's strategic priorities is to advocate for consistent research on offshore stocks, and also an increase in federal resources dedicated to the Arctic region. Under the action plan of the minister's department, conduct a review of federal funding and resources dedicated to research and management of Nunavut's offshore fishery, in comparison to Canada. That was my question.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, I don't think the minister answered my question, so I'm asking it again. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Minister of Community Services, Minister Simailak.

**Hon. Craig Simailak**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We will keep bringing this up with the federal minister as part of the fisheries strategy as part of the development.

During a year-long consultation process, staff met with and listened to hunters and trappers' organizations, unique organizations at various levels of government, and industry groups. Staff also gathered valuable information from over 300 fishers, seal harvesters, and sealskin crafters regarding community priorities, challenges and opportunities.

The strategies development began before the implementation of Government of Nunavut's Article 32 policy process by engaging Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated directly during the drafting process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Mike** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm asking questions about offshore fishing, and as to when research doesn't take place in estimating the amount of fish there are, it has bad effects in the future.

The Department of Fisheries and Oceans are supposed to do research on the offshore, especially studying the quotas for turbot. They are always reducing the quota, and we are worried that the fish may be diminishing in number. But we're always facing the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, and because they didn't do research for five years, they always take away part of the quota. The last time in 0A fishing area, they removed 900 tonnes of the quota, and that's because the federal government hasn't produced enough money for research.

So I'm asking the minister about research. If there is no research done, then the quota that has been allocated will be reduced in number. So I'm trying to ask: Does the department work with the Canadian government about this matter? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Minister Simailak.

**Hon. Craig Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for his question.

We have been advocating the federal government for more research funds. We want them to help us out with the ability to increase our quotas.

The department has been conducting research as we speak. It will not be tabled until five-year period increments are done. Unfortunately, we are into year one, unfortunately, because part of it was COVID issue, part of it was capacity issues.

But we are advocating for more quotas to be advocated to Nunavut, and we will continue to advocate the federal government for more research funds. Because it's not only fishing. Seals have an issue, could cause an issue with fisheries. We all know seals eat a lot of fish, and it's not only fishing that we can research. So we are advocating for the federal government to help us with that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### **Oral Question 108 – 7(2): Arctic Infrastructure Fund**

**Mr. Kautuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My questions today are for the premier. As the premier is aware, the people of Qikiqtarjuaq are looking to the development of the community's seaport. This important project will support the development of the fisheries' sector and the blue economy.

As the minister will recall, the government announced last year that responsibility for this project will be transferred to the Qikiqtani Inuit Association and the Qikiqtaaluk Corporation.

Information that was recently published by the project proponent, the Arctic Economic Development Corporation, indicated that the construction of the new facility has been delayed as a consequence to updates under the new federal Arctic Infrastructure Fund.

Mr. Speaker, I recognize that there are a number of different projects seeking support under this fund. Can the premier clarify how this government will decide which project proposed to formally support? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I thank the member for the question.

Regarding the Qikiqtarjuaq Port Project, the member is correct in terms of the responsibility having been transferred during the last government from the Government of Nunavut to a private proponent.

In terms of the Arctic Infrastructure Fund, there is a lot of interest in that funding pot. I can say from our government we have interests towards that fund; and then there are private interests that have a desire to secure funding, and that's just within Nunavut. And then we look at that fund is shared between the three territories.

What has quickly become apparent, just the way I gauge the situation is there's a lot more interest and there is a lot more desire for funds than there is actual funding available. So there's tight competition for funding through that AIF.

I have to mention that we are very appreciate active and very supportive of our federal government making this fund available. It's long overdue. And there is, like I mentioned, there is a lot of competition. So we are looking very closely at where we put our support. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** First supplementary question, Mr. Kautuk.

**Mr. Kautuk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Premier, for the response.

Information that was recently published by the Arctic Economic Development Corporation also indicated that discussions have been underway with the Department of National Defence and Canadian Coast Guard concerning the use of facility for the purpose of supporting Canadian sovereignty in the region. Can the premier indicate how the department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs have been involved in these decisions? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Department of National Defence have been keeping us informed about what kind of plans they have in regards to the affected communities, and with their involvement and with our discussions, the Canadian navy or the air force and other entities are looking at what could be helped. And usually what we do, we do give them ideas and suggestions but the Department of National Defence and the Canadian Coast Guard have looked at this issue.

We are involved in the discussions, but the Department of National Defence make up their own minds about what plans they have with those communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your second and final supplementary question, Mr. Kautuk.

**Mr. Kautuk:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you, Premier for the response. Can the premier formally confirm that the Government of Nunavut fully supports the Qikiqtarjuaq application to the Arctic Infrastructure Fund? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Premier Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker (interpretation ends) As I stated in my earlier response, we are very aware that there's high competition for this fund. We are very appreciative that the fund was established and that the federal partners are increasingly investing in the North. We are looking very closely at projects that we will support, in terms of the Arctic Infrastructure Fund. That's all I can say at this point. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Oral Questions. Member for Arviat South, Mr. Kablutsiak.

#### **Oral Question 109 – 7(2): Therapeutic Justice Program in Arviat**

**Mr. Kablutsiak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My questions today are for the Minister of Justice, and they concern the department's Therapeutic Justice Program in Arviat.

Mr. Speaker, the department's Therapeutic Justice Program provides "a community-focused Inuit-led alternative to the criminal justice system, based on Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit knowledge, principles, and values. The program integrates cultural and mental health services to focus on addressing the root causes of an accused person's criminal behaviour."

Mr. Speaker, I would like to express my appreciation to the minister and his department for their continued effort to provide support and assistance to individuals who have come into conflict with the law, in an effort to reduce recidivism rates in the territory.

Can the minister provide an update today on how many clients have been referred to the Therapeutic Justice Program in Arviat during the previous 2025-2026 fiscal year and the current 2026-2027 fiscal year? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Minister of Justice, Mr. Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that falls right into line with my minister's statement earlier today.

We want to continue to explore opportunities to make sure that people can be diverted, especially from incarcerations or other punitive measures of corrections. And I think this is an incredible program and it has been working very well.

Arviat, as an example, it has led us to be able to look at other communities, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, which helps fund the position in Arviat.

Mr. Speaker, in 2025-2026 there were 16 referrals. For the 2026-2027, my notes are dated May 4, so it's only five days into the new fiscal year, Mr. Speaker, so I don't have any updated numbers for that. But Mr. Speaker, in the last fiscal year there were 16 referrals. Thank you.

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

**Mr. Kablutsiak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Information published by the department indicates that:

“The program has two main components: a clinical component that provides support for mental health counsellors, clinicians and psychologists; and the cultural component that provides support from community counsellors and Inuit elders and facilitates participation in cultural programming.”

Can the minister indicate what specific programming the Therapeutic Justice Program provides to its clients in Arviat? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for continuing to follow up on this. I think, again, it just goes to show that there are some serious thoughts put into making sure that there's rehabilitative programs available, especially to our youth.

Mr. Speaker, specifically within Arviat, there was a sewing program that was utilized to make parkas and mitts, and upon completion of that program, those articles of clothing were donated to the local elementary school children who needed winter gear.

There was also facilitated a fish drying rack program, with a number of participants working with elder facilitators to explore all the steps involved with building the fish drying rack. Some of the racks were donated to the hamlet to be raffled off as a

fund-raising exercise. And Mr. Speaker, the elders actually were entered into the draw for a chance to win one as well.

Mr. Speaker, there were also different presentations that were provided at the middle school to focus on justice, education and career opportunities and increasing awareness for career opportunities and professional roles within the justice system.

Mr. Speaker, as I've often advocated for in a number of different professions, not just within Justice, when you have people with an education or within the health services, when you experience the programs and the offerings of that field, it provides interest and it stimulates interest into exploring those careers as a trade.

So I think it's very important that people going through the Restorative Justice Program, Mr. Speaker, take advantage of learning more about the justice system and it could lead into employment opportunities down the road, or future counsellors. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Kablutsiak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Therapeutic Justice Program initially launched a pilot program in Cambridge Bay in 2019, and later expanded into Arviat in 2021.

Mr. Speaker, I note that the department's approved 2025-2026 Business Plan indicated that the Community Justice Division conducted a needs assessment to expand the Therapeutic Justice Program into the Qikiqtani region.

Can the minister update the House today on the current staffing levels for the Therapeutic Justice Program? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Minister of Justice, Mr. Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, Mr. Speaker, thank you.

The position in Arviat is filled, obviously with the referrals going through and the work that is being done. Cambridge Bay was vacant for a period of time, and we recently just hired someone into that position. The Pond Inlet, it is ready to be staffed and advertising staff. And just also worth noting, Mr. Speaker, there's a manager position located here in Iqaluit for Therapeutic Justice Services and that position is filled as well.

So currently there's one vacancy in Pond Inlet. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Oral Questions. Following my list of names. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Kuliktana.

**Oral Question 110 – 7(2): Air Ambulance Services**

**Mr. Kuliktana:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today my question is for the Minister of Health and the concern of ambulance services in the Kitikmeot.

As the minister is aware, the government issued a request for proposal for air ambulance service back in April 2025, over one year ago. Information published by the department indicates that the “go-live” date for the new contract was posted, at the beginning of April of this year.

Mr. Speaker, it is now June. As the minister responded earlier, the contract negotiations are extended to March 20, 2027.

Can the minister clearly explain why it has been taking so long to finalize the new contract? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Minister of Health, Ms. Brewster.

**Hon. Janet Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and again I thank the member for the question and the concerns about providing medevacs and that level of care to the people of Nunavut.

I can't share details on negotiations, but I can assure the member that patient safety and the quickest access to medevacs is a top priority in those negotiations. We are working very hard to get to a negotiated agreement as quickly as we can. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your first supplementary question, Mr. Kuliktana.

**Mr. Kuliktana:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Numerous concerns have been provided to the office of the Kitikmeot MLAs regarding problems with the medevac services in the region. It is not acceptable when we hear delays of up to 24 and over 24 hours for a medevac flight to arrive in a community.

Can the minister describe how her department enforces the terms and conditions of its existing contract for air ambulance services? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister Brewster.

**Hon. Janet Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the department has established procedures to respond when demand increases, including reallocating resources across regions and accessing additional capacity where available.

And Mr. Speaker, I know that in Kugluktuk in 2025 there were 62 calls for medevacs, and 61 of those were completed. The average time to engine on after a call for a medevac was 25 minutes, and the average time for completion of the medevac was, oh, pardon me, Mr. Speaker. Yes. It was 26 minutes engine-on and average time of eight hours to complete the medevac.

Mr. Speaker, I understand that when people are being medevacked, it's extremely stressful, and any delay causes a great deal of concern, because when a medevac is called, it's for good reason. And so when it comes to getting those medevacs out as quickly as possible, we want to make sure that we're making real-time decisions based on the patient's needs.

What we're also doing, Mr. Speaker, to prevent medevacs is we're investing in care that includes prevention. We're ensuring that we have Well Child Clinics, to keep children healthy so that they don't come down with respiratory issues that can cause them to be medevacked. We are investing in hiring more nurses to work in our communities and our health centres, so that they are ensuring the better health of Nunavummiut. We have our new *Mental Health Act*, which will be coming into force which will ensure that we're providing better mental health care for individuals so that they don't end up having to be medevacked.

We are always, always working to improve that system. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second and final supplementary question, Member Kuliktana.

**Mr. Kuliktana:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for the response.

As the minister indicated, she just mentioned the real times, but I would just like to provide the House today the wait times today are over 24 hours.

Mr. Speaker, I pay tribute to the staff of health centres who work hard to care for our residents while they are waiting for the medevac plane to arrive. The minutes can feel like hours, and hours can feel like days.

Can the minister describe how her department is communicating with health centres to address the delays in the medevac flights? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker (interpretation):** Minister of Health, Ms. Brewster.

**Hon. Janet Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I apologize, I lost the question while I was listening. Would the member please repeat his question? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Can the member help find the question for the minister. Mr. Kuliktana.

**Mr. Kuliktana:** Thank you. Can the minister describe how her department is communicating with health centres to address the issues of delays in the medevac flights. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister Brewster.

**Hon. Janet Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the member repeating his question.

I can tell the member that the information that I have before me from 2025 is that there have been delays between 13 and 76 hours, that's true. And some of those delays, two of them were because there was crew at rest; RCMP were involved in one of them. In 20 to 21 hours there was one priority change, one RCMP involvement, one weather involvement, and the delay that was related to up to 76 hours was because of weather, which is uncontrollable.

And what I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, is that whenever there is an ongoing medevac, there is a constant re-evaluation of the patient in care. And in that re-evaluation, the communication goes from the nursing staff, the health centre staff, to the air ambulance. It goes from the nursing staff to anybody that they're consulting with, whether it's a physician or anyone else. It also, really importantly, Mr. Speaker, goes between the patient and the patient's guardians or the patient's family members.

What we try to do is we try to keep that communication flowing as openly and, importantly, as informative as possible, and so that sometimes results in medevacs actually being cancelled. I know that in the numbers I have before me for Kugluktuk for 2025, there was one medevac that was actually cancelled. And so that re-evaluation is part of a very, very well-informed professional group of people whose number one priority is the safety of the patient.

And again, Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for these questions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Oral Question 111 – 7(2): Fibre Infrastructure**

**Ms. Angootealuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My questions are for the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure and they concern the Kivalliq-Baffin Connector Fibre Project.

As the minister is aware, the federal government has approved over \$270.0 million for this project, which involves constructing 1,300 kilometres fibre connection to the communities of Iqaluit, Kimmirut, Kinngait and Coral Harbour.

Information published by the federal government indicate that:

“This project proposed to improve the connectivity of over 80 anchor institutions such as schools, libraries, health care centres, and community learning centres that are already connected to the Government of Nunavut’s network. Once the fibre connection is in place, other projects will be able to use it as a springboard to connect homes and businesses in the four affected communities.”

Mr. Speaker, it is important that the municipality of Coral Harbour and other local organizations benefit from this project. Can the minister describe how his department is working with the municipalities on this project? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. George Hickes**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for raising this question.

Mr. Speaker, when we’re looking at the fibre projects, as I’ve stated in previous responses to this question, there’s a lot of activity and a lot of fluidity to some of the discussions that are going on.

Mr. Speaker, we would always maintain communication within Baffin communities, and even outlying communities if there’s a perceived impact on those communities. Mr. Speaker, I don’t have the exact details on what type of consultations were done with hamlet officials within Coral Harbour but, Mr. Speaker, I can assure the member if there are any concerns raised by the community, my department officials would be happy to address them. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Your first supplementary question, Ms. Angootealuk.

**Ms. Angootealuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) As the minister will recall, he recently informed the Legislative Assembly that the government is considering different options for managing the fibre project.

Can the minister provide a clear timeline for the construction of fibre connections to Coral Harbour? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, again I appreciate the member following up on this.

Like I've stated in some earlier responses, some of the funding amounts that were provided for some of the fibre projects that we have on the books right now are now insufficient, due to the time and the increase in costs, so we're having to reevaluate basically all of our submissions in all of our projects right now to make sure that it's going to maximize the investment to maximize the impact on communities and on Nunavummiut to make sure, as the member outlined, all the different components that bring in fibre to the territory would benefit.

So unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, I don't have a clear, definitive timeline to give the member today. Thank you.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Second and final supplementary question, Ms. Angootealuk.

**Ms. Angootealuk:** As the minister is aware, (interpretation) thank you, Mr. Speaker (interpretation ends) where his department current Business Plan indicates that one of its priorities is to "finalize a Nunavut fibre connectivity roadmap for the West Hudson Fibre Link."

Mr. Speaker, I understand that the West Hudson Fibre Link project involves the Kivalliq communities of Arviat, Rankin Inlet and Whale Cove.

Can the minister indicate how these communities were selected, and can he confirm what plans the government has to expand fibre access to other Kivalliq communities, including Naujaat? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that's kind of exactly what I was getting to. Maybe I wasn't as clear as I should have been.

Mr. Speaker, we're evaluating all these proposals that were previously submitted, and in recognizing that the cost and the amounts used in those proposals and subsequent funding announcements are now insufficient to complete the projects on the scope that they were originally entailed to accomplish.

Mr. Speaker, so we are having to go back with our funding organizations, with our projects with even just as far as some terrestrial lines now looking at subsea costs, the benefits. We're going to have to take look at what communities are going to continue to be part of these projects going forward.

So Mr. Speaker, unfortunately I just don't have definitive answers to give the member today, as it's continuously being evaluated right now. And as we go forward with the submissions and with, I guess the limits or parameters that our funding partners have given us on the scope of work, and where changes may need to be made, that will dictate our path forward. So unfortunately right now we're not at that stage yet. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Oral Questions. Moving on to *Orders of the Day*. Member for Uqsuqtuuq, Mr. Porter.

**Oral Question 112 – 7(2): Air Ambulance Services**

**Mr. Porter:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Health.

Mr. Speaker, I am joining my Kitikmeot colleagues to ask questions about the government's contract for air ambulance services in the region. As the minister is aware, information published by the department indicate that there were 125 medevacs to Gjoa Haven during the year 2022, and there were over 625 flights to Kitikmeot region during that year.

Can the minister confirm if the number of medevacs sent to Gjoa Haven and other Kitikmeot communities have been increasing or decreasing over the past four years? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Health, Ms. Brewster.

**Hon. Janet Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can tell the member that in 2025 there were 128 calls for medevacs to Gjoa Haven, and 121 were completed. I do have the total number for the Kitikmeot region.

Mr. Speaker, I have many, many pieces of information before me, so it's a little bit difficult to get to that complete number. However, I will be happy to look for it and get back to the member.

What I will say is that medevacs tend to fluctuate. They're very unpredictable. I think the most important thing to always keep in mind is to take the opportunity to take care of your health and the health of your loved ones. A lot of the medevacs are related to issues

that can be preventable, if you're taking care of your health, whether it's respiratory illnesses, whether it's cardiovascular reasons for being medevacked; if people are exercising well, if they are eating well, if they are getting vaccinated. Please, everybody get your flu shots every year, get your COVID shots, get your measles shots. All of those public health measures to protect your health will protect community members from having to be medevacked for many reasons.

There are many reasons, of course, where it's impossible to protect yourself. However, it's really important to do what you can to ensure that your body is healthy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): First supplementary, Mr. Porter.

**Mr. Porter:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the response. As the Member of the Legislative Assembly for Gjoa Haven, I have received many concerns from my constituents about the issue of medevac in the Kitikmeot region. Can the minister describe how the government's new contract for air ambulance services will improve medevac flight response times? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Minister of Health, Minister Brewster.

**Hon. Janet Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, again, there are many, many ways to continuously improve the work that we are doing, and our focus is to learn from all the knowledge that we gain from tracking every single medevac that is called for, as well as every single medevac that occurs, to ensure that we have the best knowledge that we can bring to the table, to negotiations. Am I too fast? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

So we are working to improve medevacs, not just through our negotiations for these new contracts. However, we are continuously improving every day, based on the information that we gather about medevacs, and we put that knowledge into action every day.

And of course we are very much focused on the human side, knowing that a medevac can be the worst day of your life, and so we also want to do better because of that, because we want people to have equitable access to healthcare. In terms of being a Canadian, we all have a right to have equitable access to healthcare as any other Canadian.

And so that is the bigger picture that we're focussing on in the Department of Health, is trying to improve the overall health and well-being and access to excellent healthcare always and every day. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Second and final supplementary, Mr. Porter.

**Mr. Porter:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the minister.

As the minister is aware, her department's most recent request for proposals indicates that its "preferred base locations and aircraft requirements for the Kitikmeot region" are turboprop aircraft located in Yellowknife and/or Cambridge Bay.

Can the Minister confirm that the new contract for air ambulance services will include a clear requirement for more aircraft to be positioned in the Kitikmeot region.

**Speaker:** Minister Brewster.

**Hon. Janet Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I can't get into the details of the current negotiations. However, I will say that when deemed, when demand for medevac services requires an aircraft beyond the dedicated fleets, Keewatin Air will use non-dedicated aircraft from their fleets. And dedicated aircraft may also be shared between regions as required, Mr. Speaker, and this is at the discretion of the on-call regional physicians that triage the emergency evacuation requests.

So though we might have specific aircraft that are dedicate to each of the regions, they can and do fill in when the need is urgent. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Oral Questions. Moving on with 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. Minister of Health, Minister Akeegok.

### **Item 13: Tabling of Documents**

#### **Tabled Document 30 – 7(2): Provincial-Territorial and the Federal-Provincial Territorial Ministers' responsible for Early Learning and Child Care**

**Hon. David Akeegok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to table the *Provincial-Territorial and the Federal-Provincial Territorial Ministers' responsible for Early Learning and Child Care Meeting*. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Item 13, Tabling of Documents. Item 14, Notices of Motions. High Arctic Member, Mr. Taqtu.

### **Item 14: Notices of Motions**

#### **Motion 4 – 7(2): Extended Adjournment – Notice of Motion**

**Mr. Taqtu:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I give notice that on Thursday, June 11, 2026, I will move the following motion:

I MOVE, seconded by the Hon. Member for Iqaluit-Niaqunngu, that the Speaker be authorized to set such sitting hours and days as the Speaker deems fit to assist with the business before the House during the present spring sitting of the Legislative Assembly.

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

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Item 15, Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Item 16, Motions. High Arctic member, Mr. Taqtu.

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

**Speaker** (interpretation): (no interpretation)

**Mr. Taqtu**: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I MOVE, seconded by the Hon. Member for Iqaluit-Niaqunngu, that the Speaker be authorized to set such sitting hours and days as the Speaker deems fit to assist with the business before the House during the present spring sitting of the Legislative Assembly.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker** (interpretation): The motion is in order. Those in favour, raise your hand. Against? Motion is carried.

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.

By the authority given to me under rule number 4-7-2, the committee will be meeting until they finish, if I should say. Before the Committee of the Whole meets, we'll take a 20-minute break. Sergeant-at-Arms.

*>>House adjourned at 15:19 and Committee commenced at 15:50*

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

**Chairman** (Mr. Fred Pedersen): Good afternoon. I'll call the Committee meeting to order. In Committee of the Whole we have the following matters to deal with: Bills 1, 2, 3 and 4. 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 continue the review of the proposed 2026-2027 Main Estimates of the Department of Justice; and if time permits, we will proceed to the proposed 2026-2027 Main Estimates of the Department of Justice. If time permits, we will then proceed to the proposed 2026-2027 Main Estimates of the Department of Environment. 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:** Thank you. I would like to ask Minister Hickes, do you have officials you would like to appear before the committee?

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, please, thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort them in. And for the record, Minister Hickes, please reintroduce your officials.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my right and your left, Mr. Chair, Deputy Minister Christine Ellsworth; and to your right, my left, Assistant Deputy Minister Andrew Blackadar. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Hickes. We will now proceed to a page-by-page review of the 2026-2027 Main Estimates, today starting on page E-5. We're on Department of Justice Law Enforcement Branch. Do members have questions? I recognize Mr. Kablutsiak. Go ahead.

**Mr. Kablutsiak:** Thank you, Chair. On May 31, 2023, the Nunavut Minister of Justice, Nunavut RCMP commander officer shared directional statement 2022-2025 was tabled in the Legislative Assembly. The shared directional statement outlines five priorities, including crime prevention and reduction.

The document indicates that:

“The Government of Nunavut and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police commit to addressing the harm, profits, and crimes associated with bootlegging and substance abuse.”

What specific actions has your department undertaken to assist the Royal Canadian Mounted Police with this priority? Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Kablutsiak. Minister Hicke.

**Hon. George Hicke:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to make sure I don't miss anything through you, Mr. Chair, if Mr. Blackadar can respond to that question.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister. Go ahead Mr. Blackadar.

**Mr. Blackadar:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you for the question. There are a number of different things that the department has done in terms of working with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to reduce the harmful effects of bootlegging and actually illicit drugs in the territory.

The Royal Canadian Mounted Police is working on a strategy right now as we speak to engage community members to make them aware of the harmful effects. But also the Royal Canadian Mounted Police has been taking a lot more aggressive enforcement action in number of communities and working with community members to identify the individuals in the community that are bringing in the harmful drugs and the harmful bootlegging that's happening across the territory.

We are seeing an increase in targeted enforcement. We're seeing an increase in seizures across the territory. Lots more work to be done through the crime reduction strategy that the RCMP is doing to work with other federal partners to actually reduce the harmful effects of drugs and alcohol that comes into the community. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you Mr. Blackadar. Mr. Kablutsiak, go ahead.

**Mr. Kablutsiak:** Thank you, Chair. The Nunavut Minister of Justice and the Nunavut RCMP's 2022-2025 shared directional statement was tabled on May 31, 2023. This document indicates five shared priorities to help promote healthy and safe communities. One of the priority areas is to “actively undertake and encourage the recruitment of Inuit officers and employees on an ongoing basis.”

What specific actions is your department currently undertaking to achieve this goal? Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Kablutsiak. Minister Hicke.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know we touched on it a little bit yesterday. Right now there are currently four people that are currently exploring joining the Royal Canadian Mounted police. There has been some success in administrative positions, two positions there.

As far as actively, I know Mr. Blackadar touched on it a little bit yesterday, and I think maybe just for clarity purposes, Mr. Chairman, if Mr. Blackadar could continue that response. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Hickes. Go ahead, Mr. Blackadar.

**Mr. Blackadar:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again, thank you for the question. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police currently has a 47 per cent Inuit employment rate within the public service employees, so the non-front-line regular members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

There are about six staff regular members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police that are Inuit. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police continues to engage the community through schools, through the Arctic College, through different public forums that are happening across the territory.

And as I mentioned yesterday, Mr. Chair, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police continues to work closely with individuals across the territory who are interested in joining the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, either as a public service employee, a civilian, or a regular member uniformed police officer.

And the outreach is that one-on-one touch point where the recruiters are going right to the community, they are providing computers, they are providing internet sticks, and assisting Nunavummiut who are interested in becoming police officers.

It is a work in progress I will say for sure, but it's not an insurmountable challenge, and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police continues to work diligently on it. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Blackadar. Go ahead, Mr. Kablutsiak.

**Mr. Kablutsiak:** Thank you, Chair, and thank you for your response. The Government of Nunavut's draft 2026-2030 Business Plan indicates in its environmental scan that "in 2025 there were a total of 159 Royal Canadian Mounted Police Officer positions in the territory, 15 of which were funded under the First Nations Inuit Policing Program."

How many of the new positions are filled and how many are vacant? Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Kablutsiak. Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So as of May 1, just a little over a month ago, there were 20 RCMP regular member vacancies, which included 17 in the general duty detachment, a relief unit; and three under contract policing. Of the 15 First Nations Inuit Policing Program positions, 12 of those positions have been filled. I believe that covers the member's question. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Kablutsiak.

**Mr. Kablutsiak:** Thank you for the response, Minister, and thank you, Chair. The Government of Nunavut's draft 2025-2026 Business Plan indicates in its environmental scan that:

“The government continues to work with Royal Canadian Mounted Police and other partners, including Canada Post and the airlines, to address the illegal transportation of drugs and alcohol into our communities.”

What specific actions has your department undertaken to assist the Royal Canadian Mounted Police on this priority? Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Kablutsiak. Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I truly appreciate this question because as I've spoken to in the past, Minister Anandasangaree and Chief Superintendent Michael Duheme with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, along with Canada Border Services and other federal organizations, travelled with me to Yellowknife and subsequently attempted to get to Cambridge Bay; unsuccessfully, I might add, due to mechanical issues with the aircraft. But it does give them all an exposure to travel in Nunavut.

That being said, Mr. Chairman, I think that example of Cambridge Bay through Yellowknife, Cambridge Bay and other outlying communities being vulnerable to importation of illicit substances is definitely a concern, and it showed the federal interest in recognizing that, as well as through Canada Post as you have mentioned.

We have done pilot programs in the past where Canada Post, working in conjunction with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, have screened, and if any suspicious packages were identified, subsequently search warrants were issued and a significant amount of illicit substances diverted.

Right now, and I know I've spoken to Minister Anandasangaree as recently as a couple of weeks ago, that there is some federal legislation that's coming forward that will allow Canada Post to permit more screening opportunities. So I do look forward to that legislation passing and subsequent collaboration on legislation regarding search and security measures at Nunavut airports. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you.

**Mr. Kablutsiak:** Thank you, Chair. How does your department in collaboration with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police determine the amount of police officers stationed at detachments? Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Kablutsiak. Minister Hickee, go ahead.

**Hon. George Hickee:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, I'm not totally familiar with exactly how each detachment staffing is determined; I'll defer to Mr. Blackadar in a moment. But I will say historically the Royal Canadian Mounted Police have asked for increases in members to be allocated to Nunavut. We've made some progress in the last couple of years. I believe there was – I'll let Mr. Blackadar respond, but I believe there was six new PYs that were approved in the last fiscal year, and I believe subsequently there were a few more approved this upcoming year, but I'll let Mr. Blackadar get into the details, through you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Hickee. Go ahead, Mr. Blackadar.

**Mr. Blackadar:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. That is probably one of the more complex questions that ever gets asked of the department, but it also is one of the more complex questions that ever gets asked of the police: How do you decide how many police officers to have in a community?

Across the south they generally come up with a very easy formula, and it's response time of the calls, so how quickly does it take to respond to a call within seven minutes. I would suggest that that exercise goes out the window here in the territory.

One of the big things is the department, as well as Royal Canadian Mounted Police, want to have representation of police in every community to ensure that each individual in the territory is as safe as possible, but not only is safe but feels safe.

So the minimum standard right now, Mr. Chair, is that two police officers per community, minimum. So we have the High Arctic, Resolute and Grise Fiord that have two police officers. There can't be any less because we have to have backup.

At the same time, Mr. Chair, having two police officers in a community of 140 people where there are maybe 100 calls for service a year is not the most efficient use of police resources, but it's a requirement.

The other things that are taken into account as the department working in collaboration with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police is looking at the how close is backup, which is in most cases across the territory. If you're not in that community, it can be a couple of hours away by flight.

So in a larger centre like Rankin Inlet, in Cambridge Bay, Iqaluit, we can work with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to use that model on calls for service as well as response time. So there's no one easy answer to it. We also have to look at some of the different things with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Now they have a union, and there are a lot of things in the collective bargaining agreement that drive the amount of police officers in the community at one time, but it's always a balance.

To sort of end, I don't want to speak all day, but I think the other piece that we look at as a department is using resources like the First Nations Inuit Policing program to supplement that frontline policing and to give back to the community and work on some of the cultural programming.

So I know it's not a very fulsome answer because there is no real answer to it, but there are multifactors that are looked at and considered by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in collaboration with the department when trying to determine the most effective resource methodology for the community. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you Mr. Blackadar. Go ahead, Mr. Kablutsiak.

**Mr. Kablutsiak:** Thank you, Chair. And for the larger centres you mentioned -- and I do hope that Arviat is one of them, because I didn't hear Arviat. Your department's 2021-2024 Business Plan indicated that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police had "signed a new protocol agreement" in relation to your department's Therapeutic Justice Program.

When will a copy of the protocol agreement be tabled in the Legislative Assembly?  
Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Kablutsiak. Minister Hickeys.

**Hon. George Hickeys:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll have to check on the progress of that. The anticipated goal was this upcoming fall. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Hickeys. Do members have any other questions for the Law Enforcement Branch? Mr. Mike, go ahead.

**Mr. Mike** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the minister and your officials. Please be welcome.

(interpretation ends) Under the core business, I just want clarification on implementation measures to improve the accuracy, timeliness and interagency sharing of intelligence to disrupt organized crime groups involving drug trafficking, and standardized reporting on these measures conducting biannual quality reviews and providing an annual report to the Minister of Justice. (interpretation) Thank you Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Mike. Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And similar to a response that I gave earlier, a lot of the collaboration comes from working with our federal counterparts in public safety. But specifically in collaboration with, like it was mentioned, Canada Post, Canada Border Services, other police agencies, and the Government of Nunavut working together to make sure that we're making progress in how we're communicating with communities, but also how we're communicating to people that are continuing to break the law or to challenge the systems, and to look at, especially when we're getting into the organized crime, we used to joke not that long ago that there wasn't organized crime in Nunavut, and that's changing very rapidly.

As I spoke yesterday, there was just a recent public event that I had with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police here in Iqaluit where we had a whole table full of kilograms of drugs, hundreds and thousands of dollars in cash, numerous weapons.

So I think the fruits of that labour are getting more and more apparent. You're seeing more examples in the media coverage of significant, whether it be drugs, alcohol, weapons, cash itself being confiscated, there's more and more examples of that. And I hope that is becoming more of a deterrent for people that think of this as an easy cash cow. It's not. And there's significant repercussions with people that do break the law. So I hope that answers the member's question. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Mike, go ahead.

**Mr. Mike** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you minister. Yes, I agree that it's a difficult matter.

(interpretation ends) Can you elaborate how implementing measures to improve the accuracy? I may not know how difficult it is to disrupt an organized crime group, and I don't myself have an idea how measures are taken within the force. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Mike. Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And while I recognize we want to be as transparent as possible, obviously I don't want to get into too much detail on some of the measures the Royal Canadian Mounted Police are taking to combat the importation, and I will ask Mr. Blackadar to supplement my response.

But I can't highlight enough: Our society has changed a lot, even in the last ten years, never mind you go back 20, 30 years of when Nunavut was created and we look at how free we wanted to travel between Northwest Territories and Nunavut when we were created, and now that has created a gap in security.

But when we look at some of the measures that the RCMP are taking, whether it be through, when you're looking at confiscating kilograms of drugs, that's not somebody importing something to support their own habit or to make a little bit of money to support their habit. These are organized efforts of groups that are taking advantage of our youth, taking advantage of other people's addictions, and taking the opportunity to import literally hundreds of thousands, if not millions of dollars' worth of drugs into our territory, and it's destroying families and communities.

But through you, Mr. Chairman, if you will allow Mr. Blackadar to supplement my response. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister. Go ahead, Mr. Blackadar.

**Mr. Blackadar:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think in order to look at that question to anybody who's not in law enforcement, I can certainly understand why it's a very valid concern. Policing is expensive. It's not a cheap part of any budget or anybody's tax dollars. So everything, Mr. Chair, that the police do has to be strategically driven.

And the Crime Reduction Analyst Program used by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police helps identify crime trends. So do the police focus their time working with Canada Post? Is it shipping? It obviously is not roadways in the territory, but how are drugs, illegal drugs, illegal alcohol coming into the territory? How is organized crime able to infiltrate the community and individuals? And what drives them?

So that's the analytical portion that the department is looking at in terms of crime reduction strategies, and it is to effectively assist the Royal Canadian Mounted Police so that they can maximize their efforts and spend 95 per cent of their time working on the top 5 per cent of people that drive crime.

Experience has shown the police that if you work on that 5 per cent of the top five crime drivers in your community, you will reduce the amount of crime and you'll make people feel much safer. So that's exactly what we're trying to get at is make sure that the analytics are there, that the analysts are there, we understand where to target. Should we

be targeting which community in the south allowing the alcohol and drugs to come into the territory. And it's trying to become much more effective and efficient in rolling out policing across the territory and to actually drive the costs down for the territory. And I hope that answers the question. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Blackadar, for that reply. Any other members with questions under the Law Enforcement Branch? Mr. Qammaniq.

**Mr. Qammaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and welcome.

(interpretation ends) Your department's approved 2025-2026 Business Plan indicates that one of its priorities for the 2024-2025 fiscal year was to support the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to implement initiatives focused at reducing family violence in Nunavut. Your department's 2025-2026 Business Plan indicated that through the Family Violence Initiative Fund, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police offered funding for projects, initiatives aimed at addressing family violence.

What specific projects and initiatives did the Royal Canadian Mounted Police fund in the 2024-2025 fiscal year? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you Mr. Qammaniq. Minister Hickee.

**Hon. George Hickee:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I know with the legislation, the *Family Abuse and Intervention Act*, there has been a number of initiatives that we've moved forward with. But just again so I don't miss anything, through you, Mr. Chair, if Mr. Blackadar could respond to the member's question.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Hickee. Go ahead, Mr. Blackadar.

**Mr. Blackadar:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for the question.

The majority of initiatives come under the Community Justice Program. Therapeutic Justice is one of the major initiatives that we've had. It's a program that helps people understand the consequences of their actions with respect to family violence, and it helps heal families and rebuild families.

Mr. Chair, another program through Community Justice through the *Family Violence Intervention Act* as well as our community justice outreach workers is working with victims of family violence to obtain the orders that prohibit contact when there's family violence and to ensure that victims of family violence still have a safe place to go.

Another initiative that the department has looked into and has been supporting is the creation of a family violence prevention coordinator for the Royal Canadian Mounted

Police. That position has been in place for the last couple of years, and again, it sort of builds on my last answer, Mr. Chair, that the position is a police officer but also an analyst who analyzes the trends, who makes certain that the policy that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police officers follow is sound, and is there to protect and prevent family violence from happening and reduce the harmful effects of family violence.

Those are just three programs that the department is looking after with respect to family violence prevention. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you Mr. Blackadar. Mr. Qammaniq, go ahead.

**Mr. Qammaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I would like to thank you for your response.

(interpretation ends) On November 8, 2022, the federal Minister of Public Safety and the territorial Minister of Justice issued a statement regarding the expansion of the First Nations and Inuit Policing Program. The statement indicated new Royal Canadian Mounted Police officers who are hired for communities across the territory on an ongoing basis.

To date, how many positions have been hired and which communities were they allocated to? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Qammaniq. Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. As I mentioned earlier, 12 of the 15 positions are filled. One of two here in Iqaluit; one is filled in Kinngait. There's another filled in Pangnirtung, Pond Inlet. Arctic Bay is vacant. Igloolik is filled. Rankin Inlet, Baker Lake and Chesterfield are filled, Chesterfield Inlet, sorry. Cambridge Bay there's two positions that are filled. Gjoa Haven is filled, Kugaaruk is filled, and Kugluktuk is currently vacant. And there's backfill officers that have been identified for Arctic Bay and the Kugluktuk vacancies.

I will note that a number of those positions are currently without housing, so that is another struggle that we're having, keeping the different detachments at their capacity is staff housing that is available. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Qammaniq, go ahead.

**Mr. Qammaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for your response.

(interpretation ends) The First Nations and Inuit Policing Program statement indicates: “Under the First Nations and Inuit Policing Program, officers will be given a unique mandate, one that will be developed in consultation with the communities they serve.”

What is the expected timeline for these community consultations? *Qujannamiik*.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Qammaniq. Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As Mr. Blackadar is directly involved with that, and as he just mentioned, he just had a meeting with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, just to get the latest and greatest update, Mr. Chair, if you could ask Mr. Blackadar to respond. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister. Go ahead, Mr. Blackadar.

**Mr. Blackadar:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. The First Nations Inuit Policing Program, as you mentioned, is relatively new in the territory. In fact, one of the vacancies in Iqaluit office is because we seconded a police officer to the Department of Justice to make sure we move the First Nations Inuit Policing Program forward quite quickly.

In the last six or eight months, we’ve been able to develop a community consultative group, which is made up of Nunavut Tunngavik is leading it with us, as well as the regional Inuit associations have representation.

There are four different community consultative groups; one here mainly for South Baffin in the City of Iqaluit, one in North Baffin, and one in Kitikmeot, one in Kivalliq.

The first meeting happened last week, on the 4th of June, and from that meeting, the community consultative group, which also has community members on the committee, they accept the priorities for the First Nations Inuit Policing in those communities. And from those community consultative groups, there’s a letter of expectations which is given to each police officer who represents First Nations Inuit Policing in the community.

It’s very, very much community driven. Those consultations will continue throughout the summer, and by the fall all consultations should be completed, and the program will be rolling out the way it’s meant to be, according to the agreement between the Government of Nunavut and Justice Public Safety Canada. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you Mr. Blackadar. Mr. Qammaniq, go ahead.

**Mr. Qammaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you.

(interpretation ends) Your department's approved 2025-2026 Business Plan indicates that one of its priorities for 2025 was to support the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to implement initiatives focused on reducing family violence in Nunavut.

What specific actions has your department undertaken to assist with this priority?

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Qammaniq. Go ahead, Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Similar to the response that Mr. Blackadar provided earlier, working within the organizations, again, just to go over the family violence initiatives that we're promoting across the territory, we need to take into consideration how limitations are within the Corrections system, as well as with the local Royal Canadian Mounted Police, but also into consideration with other departments where we work with Family Services, we work with the Department of Health. A number of different factors are taken into consideration there. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Qammaniq.

**Mr. Qammaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I would like to thank you for your response.

(interpretation ends) Your department's draft 2026-2030 Business Plan indicated that one of the actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to develop new mandatory in-depth cultural competency and Inuit history training program for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police 'V' Division officers.

What is the expected timeline for the completion of this work? *Qujannamiik.*

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Qammaniq. Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And with the shareholders and stakeholders that we are working with to identify the curriculum and to be able to provide that curriculum, we're looking at finalizing that by the end of this fiscal year. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Qammaniq.

**Mr. Qammaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you.

(interpretation ends) Your department's draft 2026-2030 Business Plan indicated that one of the actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to implement measures to improve the accuracy, timeliness and integrating sharing of intelligence to disrupt organized crime groups involved in drug trafficking, and standardized reporting on these measures;

conduct biannual quality reviews; and providing an annual report to the Minister of Justice.

What specific actions will your department undertake to assist this priority?  
*Qujannamiik*, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Qammaniq. Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know Mr. Mike asked a very similar question. When we're looking at working with our partners, as I described earlier, there's a number of different stakeholders that are involved in I guess taking measures, but also standardizing them, such as some of the federal legislation that's coming through to address search and seizure opportunities at Canada Post, recognizing that a search warrant is still needed in those circumstances; working with Canada Border Services Agency, other police agencies, as well as different departments within the Government of Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Qammaniq.

**Mr. Qammaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for your response.

(interpretation ends) Your department's draft 2026-2030 Business Plan indicated that one of the actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to engage with community consultative groups and other partners to develop individual community work plans within the First Nation and Inuit Policing Program communities to coordinate and support the delivery of culturally tailored programming and education initiatives to address family and intimate partner violence.

What is the expected timeline to develop these individual community work plans?  
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Qammaniq. I believe that question was already asked and an answer provided, so I'm not going to ask the minister to re-answer that question again. Do you have any others? Go ahead.

**Mr. Qammaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I apologize. I'll probably be asking questions again, so this will probably be my last one.

(interpretation ends) Your department's draft 2026-2030 Business Plan indicated that one of the priorities for the 2027-2028 fiscal year is to develop a joint response protocol with local mental health and Family Services staff, and implement specialized crisis intervention training for all officers to enhance trauma-informed and culturally

appropriate police response to intimate partner violence, vulnerable persons, and mental health calls.

What is the expected timeline for the completion of this work? (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Qammaniq. Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As scheduled, we anticipate that to be completed by the end of this fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Hickes. Any other questions? Okay, go ahead, Mr. Qammaniq.

**Mr. Qammaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for your response.

(interpretation ends) Your department's draft 2026-2030 Business Plan indicated that one of the priorities for the 2027-2028 fiscal year is to improve the accessibility and transparency of the public compliance process, by enabling the submission and processing of complaints in Inuktitut, and reducing the average complaint resolution time by 50 per cent.

What specific actions will your department undertake to support the Royal Canadian Mounted Police for this priority? *Qujannamiik*.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Qammaniq. Mr. Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As far as online services go, that is actually available now. As always, we're working to continue to provide more methods of contact and outreach in Inuktitut, and we will continue to endeavour that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Hickes. Any other questions? Mr. Mike, go ahead.

**Mr. Mike:** Yes. Based on your action plan for 2027-2028, I just want more information on increase youth engagement in crime prevention activities by region, at least 50 per cent of the community youth ages 12 to 18 through school-based or land-based cultural programming in collaboration with the community leaders and existing local programs in communities served by First Nation and Inuit Policing Program offices.

What is the expected timeline for the completion for this very encouraging plan? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Mike. Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And as we continue to fill these First Nations Inuit Policing positions, and hopefully even look at increasing the number of those positions, it's going to continue to have those opportunities to roll those out.

Similar to what the member used to do in his home community of bringing youth out onto the land and showing how important that connection is, from a law enforcement I guess side of things; I don't want to use that term "law enforcement", because that's not really what the intention of this program is. It's just to bring more culturally relevant opportunities, not just for the people that the members are working with, but for the members themselves. I think it's a dual learning opportunity.

But we're anticipating to continue to roll that out as available capacity-wise. But as the member mentioned, it is one of our objectives in the 2027-2028 fiscal year to have that cemented in place. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Hickes. Any other questions under Law Enforcement Branch? Go ahead, Mr. Mike.

**Mr. Mike (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Minister. I just want find out whether this program is all for the communities of Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Mike. Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, that will rely upon capacity as it's ongoing. The intention is to have it available everywhere. But as of right now, even with the First Nations Inuit Policing positions that we have right now, there are still only 15 of them across the territory. I do look forward to increasing that complement.

I've been lobbying for First Nations Inuit Police funding long before this term and long before even the last term, and almost into my first term is when I started learning about this program. And rolling it out as far as what we've done to date I think has been an accomplishment.

Even back when I held Minister Main's hat as finance minister, I worked closely with then-Public Safety Minister Bill Blair to highlight how important that program could benefit Nunavut.

We are starting to see some progress, and we're starting to see more engagement and recognition of the benefit that those positions are going to bring to the territory, from

multiple different perspectives, this being to me a very important one of that. Community engagement with our youth I think is going to be a critical component going forward. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Hickes. Go ahead, Mr. Mike.

**Mr. Mike** (interpretation): Thank you, Minister, and thank you as well, Mr. Chairman. I'll be asking another question in the future 2027-2028. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you for that comment, Mr. Mike. Any more questions for Law Enforcement Branch? Seeing none, do members agree with the Department of Justice, Law Enforcement Branch, total operations and maintenance of \$75,813,000?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Please go to page E-6. We'll now review the Department of Justice Lawyers Support Services Branch. Do members have any questions? Mr. Kautuk.

**Mr. Kautuk:** Thank you, Chairman. Welcome again, Minister. Your department's draft 2026-2027 Main Estimate indicates that the budget for the Legal and Constitutional Law Division will increase by 86,000 from 3.101 million in the 2025-2026 fiscal year to 3.187 million in the 2026-2027 fiscal year. This is an increase of 2.7 per cent.

How was the amount of this increase determined? Thank you, Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Kautuk. Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And similar to some of the responses that I gave yesterday for that approximately 3 per cent increase in budget is associated with the collective bargaining agreement with the Nunavut Employees Union. So it's for increase in staffing salaries. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Hickes. Go ahead, Mr. Kautuk.

**Mr. Kautuk:** Thank you, Chairman. Thank you, Minister, for your response.

Your department's draft 2026-2027 Main Estimates indicate that the budget for the Legislation Division would increase by \$59,000 from 2.5 million in the 2025-2026 fiscal year to 2.314 million in the 2025-2026 fiscal year. This is an increase of 2.5.

How was the amount of this increase determined? Thank you, Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Kautuk. Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That increase was associated with salaries and benefits also related to the collective agreement with the Nunavut Employees Union. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Hickes. Any other members with questions under the Lawyers Support Services Branch? Mr. Mike.

**Mr. Mike** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the Business Plan, and I'm sure I'm in the correct page. (interpretation ends) Your department's approved 2025-2026 Business Plan indicates that one of the priorities for 2024-2025 fiscal year was to provide legislative drafting and translation services required for devolution.

Your department's approved business plan indicated that the Legislation Division plans to complete the drafting of most of the English version of bills required for devolution by the end of current fiscal year, to support consultation efforts in 2025 and 2026.

Other languages' version of the bill and regulations have been scheduled for future years. What is the status of this work? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Mike. Minister Hickes, go ahead.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, so there needs to be a lot of mirror legislation. I believe the premier answered a question on this last week as well. I can't remember the exact number of pieces of legislation that need to be recognized by the federal government, as well as by our legislature, to recognize the responsibilities being undertaken by devolution before the end of this fiscal year.

So, Mr. Chairman, I guess the only response that I can give to that is that my department is working very close with federal counterparts, as well as with the impacted Government of Nunavut departments to make sure that we're on par with what we're trying to do, as far as making sure the legislation is modelled after the federal.

So from what I understand, there's six pieces of legislation that are anticipated to be completed. Four of them are done and ready to go once the federal government is ready to pass their legislation, and two of them are near completion. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Hickes. Any other questions under Lawyer Support Services Branch? Mr. Kablutsiak, go ahead.

**Mr. Kablutsiak:** Your department's draft 2026-2030 Business Plan indicates one of its priorities for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to develop lawyer and articling student recruitment strategy to promote legal employment opportunities within the Department of

Justice. What specific actions will your department undertake to support this priority?  
Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Kablutsiak. Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I'm sitting beside one right now, Mr. Chairman, I think we've shown some success in previous opportunities to promote Inuit into legal profession, especially as a lawyer.

I think it's important to recruit, but I think it's just as important, if not more important, to retain. So maybe with the Chair's indulgence, maybe as my deputy minister has gone through these exercises personally, I think he would be able to add a unique perspective.  
Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you Mr. Hickes. Go ahead, Ms. Ellsworth.

**Ms. Ellsworth** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I was part of the cohort through Nunavut Arctic College, the Government of Nunavut, and the University of Saskatchewan. We attended law school between 2017 to 2021. There were 25. I had 24 classmates, so 25 altogether with myself. And out of those 25, 22 graduated from the law program and achieved their Juris Doctor.

After you attend law school, you have to article for 12 months, and within those 12 months you must have a principal, a lawyer who has practised for more than five years. And there are also online courses that you have to complete and pass. Once you pass your online courses and work with your principal, and I'm very grateful to have had Stephen Mansell as my principal within the Department of Justice, after completion of the articling, you are then called to the bar. And then once you're called to the bar, you can then legally practise as a lawyer.

So one of the things we're trying to do is in this particular section, in legal and constitutional law and legislation, is recruit more Inuit who become lawyers. We want them to be able to article with us and show them that they can become lawyers who provide legal advice to all government departments.

And we also not only want them to article with us, but we also want to them to stay as lawyers in the Department of Justice. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Ms. Ellsworth. Mr. Kablutsiak.

**Mr. Kablutsiak:** Thank you for the detailed answers. Your department's draft 2026-2030 Business Plan indicates that one of its priorities for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to conduct an audit of existing legal, professional software and equipment and determine

whether additional investments are required. What is the status of this work? Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Kablutsiak. Minister Hickes, go ahead.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I guess in a nutshell we're still looking at some capacity issues to make sure that we're looking at that information to make sure that we can have more accurate information as we move forward.

But that being said, Mr. Chairman, through you, Mr. Chairman, if Deputy Minister Ellsworth would be able to respond with more detail on current activities. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Hickes. Go ahead, Ms. Ellsworth.

**Ms. Ellsworth (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The department is conducting a full audit of its legal software and professional equipment to determine whether current tools meet operational needs. The goal is to ensure that legal staff have the technology required to provide timely, accurate, and effective legal services to the Government of Nunavut.

Based on the audit findings, the department will determine whether additional investments are required to modernize or expand its technology. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Ms. Ellsworth. Mr. Kablutsiak, do you have anymore questions? Go ahead.

**Mr. Kablutsiak:** Thank you, Chair. Your department's draft 2026-2030 Business Plan indicates that one of its priorities for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to complete phase 1 of enabling official regulatory forms to be approved in all official languages by using the *Legislation Act's* revision powers to convert forms into descriptions, reducing the total number of forms from approximately 250 to 150.

What is the expected timeline for the completion of this work? Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Kablutsiak. Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chair, this work will be ongoing. When we are looking at taking the forms to regulations right now, basically the only results in English and French versions is being official. Some of the changing upcoming will allow Inuktitut versions of the forms to be official as well.

I don't have a definitive timeline. This is going to be ongoing. We're hoping to have most of it done by the end of the 2026-2027 fiscal year, but I do look forward to providing members with an update on how that process is being accomplished. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Hickes. Any other questions from members on Lawyers Support Service Branch? Seeing none, do members agree with the Department of Justice Lawyers Support Services Branch total operations and maintenance of \$5,501,000?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Please go to page E-7, and we'll now review the Department of Justice Registries and Court Services Branch. Do members have any questions? Mr. Mike, go ahead.

**Mr. Mike (interpretation):** Thank you. Back in February 21, 2020, the Department of Justice announced the local court committee seeking individuals to sit in the committees.

How many have applied, then, to the Department of Justice? And what responses have been given to the announcement made in this area of seeking justice committees? And how many have been appointed? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Mike. Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I know the member from Aivilik was asking some questions on this a couple of weeks ago as well.

When we're looking at fulfilling the role of the Community Justice Committee members, we want to make sure, and in that process I kind of put another call out for people to apply. I think it's important. I don't have the list of communities right in front of me at this stage. I'll have to respond to the committee after through written correspondence, if the Chair and the members will allow. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Hickes. Go ahead, Mr. Mike.

**Mr. Mike (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Minister. As of today, how many Justice of the Peace positions are filled and/or how many are vacant? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Mike. Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Right now Nunavut Court of Justice has three full-time legally trained Justice of the Peace. All of them are currently located here in Iqaluit.

One is currently filled by a Senior Justice of the Peace. Another is filled on an internal transfer assignment, and the other one is vacant. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Hickee. Next on my list is Mr. Attagutaluk.

**Mr. Attagutaluk:** Thank you, Chairman. Your department's approved 2024-2026 Business Plan indicated that one of its priorities for the 2024-2025 fiscal year was to continue to implement the regional Justice of the Peace programs. What is the status of this work? Thank you, Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Attagutaluk. Go ahead, Minister Hickee.

**Hon. George Hickee:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I don't have that level of detail right in front of me; I'm not sure if my deputy minister will be able to provide some update, but I guess as far as a detailed update, we would have to respond through written correspondence. Maybe through written correspondence we will be able to respond more appropriately to that response. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Hickee. Mr. Attagutaluk, go ahead.

**Mr. Attagutaluk:** Thank you, Chairman. I'll wait for the response. Your department's approved 2025-2026 Business Plan indicated that one of its priorities for the 2024-2025 fiscal year was to develop a joint integrated courts and corrections records management and information system, which will integrate records management and information sharing between various Departments of Justice divisions and stakeholders.

What is the status of this work? Thank you, Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Attagutaluk. Minister Hickee.

**Hon. George Hickee:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, we are a little bit behind on this subject. It has been a little bit more complicated than originally scoped out.

The decision to look at custom software versus off-the-shelf software versus software utilized by other jurisdictions, we've gotten to a point now where we've actually had some of our staff go to Saskatchewan to look at and evaluate the system that they're using to see if it is something that we can adopt here in Nunavut. Those negotiations and discussions are continuing to take a look at if that software is appropriate to be utilized here.

There has been offers from the Saskatchewan, I guess from their jurisdiction as well, offers to assist us with implementation if we do move forward in that direction. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Hickee. Mr. Attagutaluk, go ahead.

**Mr. Attagutaluk:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Minister, for the response.

Your department's approved 2025-2026 Business Plan indicated that one of its priorities of the 2025 which – I just repeat that one; sorry about that. The next one.

Your department's approved 2025-2026 Business Plan indicated that one of its priorities for the 2024-2025 fiscal year was to continue to explore the feasibility of satellite courts in the Kivalliq and Kitikmeot regions.

Your approved Business Plan indicated that the Court Service Division completed a feasibility study for the developing administration solution for the satellite court operation in the Kivalliq and Kitikmeot regions as the division analyzes the option. It is exploring interim solution by conducting audits of community halls in these regions. What is the status of this work? Thank you, Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Attagutaluk. Minister Hickee.

**Hon. George Hickee:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of the things that was recognized during that review was the technology upgrades that needed to be done to audio and visual equipment and software, which again, that review is still a little bit ongoing as we need to complete what type of technology would be able to be implemented here in Nunavut.

When we look at the bandwidth opportunities between community to community, they are not all consistent, so it's not a one size fits all. So that evaluation is still ongoing. Thank you. Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Hickee. Any other questions from members on the Registries and Court Services Branch? Mr. Qammaniq.

**Mr. Qammaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The draft 2026-2027 Business Plan indicates that the budget for the Court Administration Division will decrease by \$149,000 from 11.310 million in the 2024-2025 fiscal year to \$11.161 million in the 2026-2027 fiscal year.

How was this amount of decrease determined? *Qujannamiik.*

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Qammaniq. Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There was one position that was moved to Court Services. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Qammaniq, go ahead.

**Mr. Qammaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for the response.

(interpretation ends) Your department's draft 2027-2027 Business Plan indicated that the budget for the Justice of the Peace program will increase by \$149,000 from \$1.27 million in the 2024-2025 fiscal year to 1.655 million in the 2026-2027 fiscal year.

How was the amount of this increase determined? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Qammaniq. Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, actually, I'll have to look into that. I don't have that detail on that small increase to that budget. The only thing I could think of offhand is there might have been an improvement in staffing within that division, but I will have to get back to the committee with an accurate response on that. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Qammaniq.

**Mr. Qammaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Your department's draft 2026-2030 Business Plan indicates that one of its priorities for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to complete a review of solutions for the new integrated electronic information management system with the Corrections Division, by developing a detailed implementation schedule and entering into an agreement with another jurisdiction to begin testing a software solution.

Which jurisdiction is your department considering entering into an agreement with?  
*Qujannamiik.*

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Qammaniq. Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Saskatchewan. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister. Mr. Qammaniq.

**Mr. Qammaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you.  
(interpretation ends) What is the projected timeline to complete this work? *Qujannamiik.*

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Qammaniq. Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I realize we're already over what we had projected the timeline to be, but I think again, it is one of those things where it's more important to get it right. So I don't have a definitive timeline.

That software is still being evaluated working with our officials in collaboration with Saskatchewan officials, and they're working together just to evaluate the software itself to make sure it will meet our needs.

So I don't have a definitive timeline, but I can commit to the members that as we meet different benchmarks, that I will continue to update the House. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Qammaniq, go ahead.

**Mr. Qammaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you.

(interpretation ends) Your department's Draft 2026-2030 Business Plan indicates that one of its priorities for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to evaluate and develop work plan for Nunavut's participating in the Multi-Jurisdiction Registry Access Service.

What specific actions will your department undertake to achieve this priority?  
*Qujannamiik.*

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Qammaniq. Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I do apologize to the committee, I'm going to have to get back to the committee on that one. The information I have here is vague. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Qammaniq, any other questions? No? Any other members with questions under this branch? Seeing none, do members agree with the Department of Justice, Registries and Court Services Branch, total operations and maintenance of \$15,617,000?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Please go to page E-8. We will now review the Department of Justice Corrections Branch. This has a total operations and maintenance of \$49,798,000. Do members have any questions? Mr. Taqtu.

**Mr. Taqtu:** Thank you, Chair. Your department's draft 2026-2027 Main Estimates indicates that the budget for the Aaqqigiarvik Correctional Healing Facility and on-the-land camps is increasing by \$978,000, from 22.210 million in the 2025-2026 fiscal year to \$23.188 million in the 2026-2027 fiscal year. This represents an increase of 4.4 percent. How was the amount of this increase determined? Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Taqtu. Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, that increase, similar to some of the other ones, is largely related to the collective agreement signed with the Nunavut Employees Union. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Hickes. Any other questions? Mr. Taqtu? No. Other members? Seeing none, do members agree with the Department of Justice, Corrections Branch, total operations and maintenance of \$49,798,000?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Please go to page E-9, and we'll now review the Department of Justice Community Justice Branch. Total operations and maintenance, \$7,811,000. Do members have any questions? Mr. Kautuk, go ahead.

**Mr. Kautuk:** Thank you, Chairman. Your department's draft 2026-2030 Business Plan indicated that one of its priorities for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to "complete phase 1 of the expansion of the Therapeutic Justice Program to a community in Qikiqtaaluk by establishing foundational requirements such as staffing, securing, and equipping office space, and developing co-operational procedures for programs' delivery."

Which Qikiqtaaluk community is your department expanding the Therapeutic Justice Program? Thank you, Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Kautuk. Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Pond Inlet. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Kautuk.

**Mr. Kautuk:** Thank you, Chairman. Thank you, Minister, for your response. What is the expected timeline for the completion of this work? Thank you, Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Kautuk. Minister Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So once this budget is approved, then we can start the process of hiring for that position, and we're expecting the office to be operational early in the 2027-2028 fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Hickes. Any other members with questions? Mr. Taqtu.

**Mr. Taqtu:** Thank you, Chair. As of today, which communities do not have a resident community justice outreach worker? Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Taqtu. Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If the committee will indulge me and just give me a moment to gather that information. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do apologize to the committee indulging me. There are four vacant community justice outreach worker positions, and those are in Clyde River, Resolute Bay, Grise Fiord and Kimmirut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Hickes. Mr. Taqtu, any other questions? Go ahead.

**Mr. Taqtu:** Thank you, Chair, and thank you for your quick response.

Your department's approved 2025-2026 Business Plan indicates that one of its priorities for 2025 is to expand the Restorative Justice Diversion Program, Therapeutic Justice Program, and Spousal Abuse Counselling Program to divert every single community-based justice initiatives as alternatives to the criminal justice system.

Where will your department be expanding the Restorative Justice Diversion Program, Therapeutic Justice Program, and Spousal Abuse Counselling Programs? Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Taqtu. Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Right now the Community Justice Division is reviewing that program just in response to some of the fluctuation of numbers, so that would determine where and which communities we would be looking at moving into, in the future. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Hickes. Any other questions from members on Community Justice Branch? Mr. Qammaniq.

**Mr. Qammaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Your department's draft 2026-2027 Main Estimates indicates that the budget for the Community Justice Directorate is increasing by 1.073 million from 2.677 million in the 2026-2027 fiscal year to 3.750 million in the 2026-2027 fiscal year. This represents a 40 percent increase. How is the amount of this increase determined? *Qujannamiik*.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Qammaniq. Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, some of that increase is similar to previous responses, the increase from the Nunavut Employees Union collective agreement. In addition to that, there was one position created as a Firearms Safety Coordinator as part of the Suicide Prevention Action Plan.

In addition to that, there's a contract with the Pan Am Sports Clinic as part of the Traumatic Brain Injury Program, as well as Nunavut Association of Municipalities to administer handing out lock boxes for firearms, as well as firearm safety Train the Trainer Program, to expand the offering of that program. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Hickes. Any other questions? Seeing none, do members agree with the Department of Justice Community Justice Branch total operations and maintenance of \$7,811,000?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Please go back to page E-3. Do members agree with the Justice 2026-2027 Main Estimates, total operations and maintenance of \$182,814,000?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Do members agree we have concluded with the Department of Justice?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Any closing comments? Minister Hickes.

**Hon. George Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members. I appreciate the lines of questioning that were offered yesterday and today. I appreciate even more so the staff and all the work that goes on behind the scenes to prepare the information to be able to hopefully answer most of the questions.

I know there were some commitments to follow up with the committee with some written correspondence, and I will make sure my officials respond in an appropriate manner.

That being said, Mr. Chair, I think it's very important I guess to recognize the process that we go through to approve these budgets, and how important it is to continue that accountability factor.

So I do appreciate the questions that were offered by the Committee members yesterday and today, and I look forward to following up and showing progress in as many of our files as we can do so. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

>> *Applause*

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Hickes. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the officials. We'll now take a 10-minute break before we start our review of the proposed 2026-2027 Main Estimates of the Department of Environment.

>> *Committee adjourned at 17:14 and resumed at 17:30*

**Chairman:** Thank you, and welcome back everyone. I would like to ask Minister Koonoo, do you have officials you would like to appear before the committee?

**Hon. Brian Koonoo:** Thank you, Chair. Yes, I do.

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

**Some Members:** Agreed.

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

**Hon. Brian Koonoo:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm pleased to present my department's proposed operations and maintenance budget for this fiscal year. To my right I have my Assistant Deputy Minister Naomie Pudluk. To my left I have Acting Deputy Minister Steven Mansell for Department of Environment. I also have with me on the side there Nikki Nwese, Director of Corporate Services; and Ms. Leanne Babstock, Director of Policy and Legislation to assist in responding to members' questions.

I'll proceed with my opening comments. Mr. Chairman, the Department of Environment's proposed budget for 2026-2027 is \$29.4 million, approximately 29,392,000 which is \$556,000 increase from 2025-2026.

The proposed increase is a result of new employees' union collective agreement that resulted in salary increases of \$556,000. Other than collective bargaining-related increases, there are no other increases to the department's 2026-2027 budget.

The Department remains focused on addressing broader environmental challenges facing Nunavut. Across the territory, the impacts of climate change are becoming increasingly visible, affecting infrastructure, the environment, and daily life. Addressing these changes requires thoughtful and informed decision-making to effectively plan, invest, and support Nunavummiut.

To strengthen this approach, the Department has completed a government-wide analysis of climate risks and opportunities. This work is now helping to inform decision-making and improve the integration of climate considerations across government.

Collaboration also remains central to our work in waste management. In partnership with the Nunavut Association of Municipalities, the department has established a Solid Waste Initiatives Working Group to advance a territory-wide waste management strategy. This initiative is already improving coordination with municipalities and identifying practical, community-informed solutions to solid waste challenges.

Beyond these initiatives, the department continues to fulfill its core legislative and regulatory responsibilities. This includes administering the *Wildlife Act*, co-managing wildlife under the Nunavut Agreement, and meeting the Government of Nunavut's obligations under federal legislation, as well as national and international agreements and conventions.

Within this mandate, wildlife conservation, particularly caribou management, remains a top priority. The department is working toward finalizing the Melville Peninsula caribou survey in 2026, and continues to monitor herds through ongoing telemetry programs in the Kivalliq and Baffin regions. We will also maintain regular consultations with affected communities to ensure hunters and trappers organizations and regional wildlife organizations are kept informed of research progress and interim findings.

In addition, we will conduct community consultations and present the results of the Lancaster Sound polar bear survey to the High Arctic communities.

The Department is also planning to continue the Kivalliq wolf collaring project to assess the effectiveness of the wolf harvest incentive program and its potential impact on caribou recovery in the region.

Looking ahead, the Department's work will continue to be guided by Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and scientific research. This balanced approach supports meaningful progress toward our goals, while ensuring that we meet the evolving needs of Nunavut in a sustainable and responsible manner.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity to speak today and to highlight the Department's priorities. I would be pleased to respond to any questions you may have. *Qujannamiik*.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Koonoo. Does the chair of the standing committee have opening comments? Please proceed, Mr. Mike.

**Mr. Mike** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to provide opening comments on behalf of the Standing Committee on Community and Economic Development on its review of the proposed 2026-2027 main estimates and 2026-2030 business plan of the Department of Environment.

The department's proposed 2026-2027 operations and maintenance budget is \$29,392,000. This represents an increase of 1.9 per cent from the 2025-2026 fiscal year. The number of departmental positions remains unchanged at 144.5.

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

The Department of Environment is responsible for the government's Climate Change Secretariat. The secretariat's 2018-2019 annual report was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on November 3, 2020. No other annual reports have been tabled since that time. The department's 2026-2030 business plan indicates that one of its planned actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to "develop a Nunavut-wide energy strategy." Members note the importance of the department working with the Qulliq Energy Corporation on the development of the strategy, and emphasize the importance of prioritizing investment in the provision of modern and reliable power generation infrastructure in all Nunavut communities.

The department's proposed 2026-2027 main estimates include \$500,000 in funding for the Independent Power Producer Subsidy Program, which was introduced for the 2025-2026 fiscal year. Members encourage the minister to report regularly to the Legislative Assembly on the administration of this program.

(interpretation ends) The department's Support for Harvesters and Wildlife Co-Management Policy was approved in May 2017 and sunsetted on March 31, 2022. The department's timetable for revising or renewing the policy is unclear. Members note the importance of ensuring that all government policies clearly indicate whether or not they remain in effect past their sunset date. A number of different funding programs fall under the Support for Harvesters and Wildlife Co-Management Policy. The standing committee continues to recommend that the minister begin the practice of tabling a comprehensive annual report in the Legislative Assembly on the administration of the Support for Harvesters and Wildlife Co-Management Policy.

(interpretation) Nunavut's current *Wildlife Act* was passed by the Legislative Assembly in 2003. (interpretation ends) Section 176 of the legislation requires the minister to prepare and table in the Legislative Assembly a comprehensive report every five years concerning wildlife management programs and related matters. The most recent five-year report was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on May 29, 2025.

(interpretation) The department's 2026-2030 business plan indicates that it will undertake a number of wildlife research and management initiatives during the upcoming fiscal year, including work to "develop a Baffin Island caribou monitoring strategy that incorporates Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit and science to monitor the recovery of the herd." The standing committee encourages the Department of Environment to ensure that the results of such work are made publicly available in a timely manner.

(interpretation ends) Members have been concerned at the longstanding high vacancy rate in the department's Wildlife Research Division. During the Legislative Assembly's sitting of September 17, 2025, members were informed that the department had been "working with the federal government in moving the wildlife research section from Igloolik to the Canadian High Arctic Research Station in Cambridge Bay, and the memorandum of understanding was signed back in March 2025." The total number of positions in the department's Wildlife Research Division is 23. This is unchanged from the 2025-2026 fiscal year.

The Government of Nunavut's quarterly employment reports indicate that the number of positions in the department's Igloolik office has decreased from 14 to 6. The number of positions in the department's Cambridge Bay office has increased from 3.5 to 10.5. Members look forward to ongoing updates on the status of the department's work to fill the positions. The standing committee also looks forward to the department moving forward with its new Wildlife Guardian Program.

The Minister of Environment is responsible for administering the territory's *Environmental Protection Act*, which includes provisions concerning the discharge of contaminants into the environment. The standing committee continues to recommend that the minister begin the practice of tabling an annual report in the Legislative Assembly that contains comprehensive information regarding the administration of the *Environmental Protection Act*, including detailed information regarding enforcement actions against entities suspected of contravening the law and expenditures related to management of contaminated sites.

(interpretation) That concludes my opening comments on the proposed 2026-2027 main estimates and 2026-2030 business plan of the Department of Environment. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Mike. Do members have any general comments before we proceed to detailed questions? Seeing none, we will now proceed to the page-by-page review of the 2026-2027 main estimates starting on page I-4. We will now review the

Department of Environment Corporate Management Branch. Total operations and maintenance, \$7,329,000. Do members have any questions? Mr. Taqtu.

**Mr. Taqtu:** Thank you, Chair. Your department's 2026-2030 Business Plan indicates that one of its planned actions for the year 2026-2027 is to develop a Nunavut-wide energy strategy. Will this work be undertaken by departmental employees or external consultations? Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Taqtu. Minister Koonoo.

**Hon. Brian Koonoo:** Thank you, Chair. This will be spearheaded by the department's employees and is going to be helped with the support of experts outside. Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Koonoo. Mr. Taqtu, go ahead.

**Mr. Taqtu:** Thank you, Chair. To what extent will the Qulliq Energy Corporation be involved in the development of the new strategy? Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Taqtu. Minister Koonoo.

**Hon. Brian Koonoo:** Thank you, Chair. They've been involved with as third partners ever since this started. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Koonoo. Go ahead, Mr. Taqtu.

**Mr. Taqtu:** Thank you, Chair. Your department's draft 2026-2027 Main Estimates include \$500,000 in funding for the Independent Power Producer Subsidy Program. How much did your department spend under this program during the 2025-2026 fiscal year? Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you Mr. Taqtu. Minister Taqtu.

**Mr. Taqtu:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Through you, I would like to have my Deputy Minister, Steven Mansell, to answer that question.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister. Go ahead, Mr. Mansell.

**Mr. Mansell:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thank the member for the good question. The full amount of that funding was transferred to two projects that are working to get connected to the grid. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Mansell. Go ahead, Mr. Taqtu.

**Mr. Taqtu:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Your department's 2026-2027 Main Estimates include \$500,000 in funding for the Renewable Energy Rebate for Cabin and Homeowners Program. How many applicants under the program were received during the 2025-2026 fiscal year? Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Taqtu. Minister Koonoo.

**Hon. Brian Koonoo:** Thank you, Chair. Yes, we saw quite a number of applicants that the department received, and from our records there have been in total 89 applicants from throughout Nunavut. Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Koonoo. Mr. Taqtu.

**Mr. Taqtu:** Thank you, Chair. How many applications were approved and how many applications were denied? Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Taqtu. Minister Koonoo.

**Hon. Brian Koonoo:** Thank you, Chair. This is not based on the fiscal year, but for the whole life since the project has started. In total there's been a total of 529 approved. There's been cancelled or rejected of 46, and there's also pending or incomplete ones of 20. Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Koonoo. Any other members with questions under the Corporate Management Branch? Seeing none, do members agree with the Department of Environment Corporate Management Branch, total operations and maintenance of \$7,329,000?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Please go to page I-5. We will now review the Department of Environment Program Management Branch. Total operations and maintenance \$22,063,000. Do members have any questions? Mr. Kuliktana.

**Mr. Kuliktana:** Thank you, Chair. Your department's new support for harvesters and wildlife co-management policy was approved in May 2017, and sunsetted on March 31, 2022. What is the status on updating or renewing this policy? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Kuliktana. Minister Koonoo.

**Hon. Brian Koonoo:** Thank you, Chair. This project is still ongoing, still continuing on to this day. Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Koonoo. Mr. Kuliktana, go ahead.

**Mr. Kuliktana:** Thank you, Chair, and thanks for the response. During the previous Legislative Assembly, the standing committee recommended that an annual report concerning the administration of the programs under your department's support for harvesters and wildlife co-management policy be tabled in the Legislative Assembly. What is the status of developing this annual report? Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Kuliktana. Minister Koonoo.

**Hon. Brian Koonoo:** Thank you, Chair. Through you I would like to ask Acting Deputy Minister Steven Mansell to answer that question. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister. Go ahead, Mr. Mansell.

**Mr. Mansell:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the member for the good question. We do have the request to start tabling that report. The department is looking at our other tabling responsibilities, our statutory tabling responsibilities, to determine our capacity for meeting tabling needs.

But we do understand that you would like to have more information, and we are looking right now at the best way to ensure that we get you the information that you want, whether it's through a tabled document or some other mechanism. But we know that you want more information about our wildlife operations, and we'll make sure that we do that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Mansell. I'll just remind members to speak a little bit slower so the interpreters can translate the information to everybody. Thank you. Mr. Kuliktana, anymore questions? No? Questions from other members on management branch, Program Management Branch? Mr. Mike, go ahead.

**Mr. Mike (interpretation):** I'm not exactly sure where it is at in the business plan. Are we under program management page? For the 2026-2027 Action Plan in Baffin region, Caribou Management, I believe it's the correct time to ask the question in regards to caribou management for Baffin region.

When I was a minister at the time, at that time caribou management was introduced, and it was quite difficult to work with. I remember that Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated had started. They initiated the caribou management to service a concern around risk on caribou population. We followed the Land Claims Agreement, as the caribou management was not going to be able to stand on its own if we didn't follow the Land Claims Agreement.

Many times we speak to the issue caribou management plans, as the government is a co-management partner, especially for HTOs and Nunavut Wildlife Management Board. I'm not too sure exactly, as I am unaware how the decision will be, if they're going to be making changes to the caribou management, how would you utilize Inuit traditional knowledge during the continuation of the caribou management.

The Nunavut Land Claims Agreement says that Nunavut Wildlife Management Board, once they have a motion from Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board or from any other entity, that the traditional knowledge of Inuit will be utilized during the decision process.

Can the minister explain further to identify what it will be? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Mike. Go ahead, Minister Koonoo.

**Hon. Brian Koonoo** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, member, for your question. We do a caribou population survey, and they do a population survey along with traditional knowledge is utilized, and they do consult with the hunters and trappers. The HTOs usually are consulted and consulted first, and they also consult with the harvesters. The harvesters usually include elders, to utilize the knowledge of the elders. So that's what they include during the decision process so we consult with them.

They had a meeting on February 5, recently, 2026. The QWB and HTOs met along with the wildlife board, and they have given their recommendation on the plans of caribou management given the caribou population has increased.

QWB and Nunavut Wildlife Management Board will be holding a meeting this month and they will be making a recommendation on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Koonoo. Go ahead, Mr. Mike.

**Mr. Mike** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Minister, for explaining that further. Caribou population has been, it is the traditional pattern that occurs with the population of caribou; they would populate in high numbers and then they would reduce in their population. That's the pattern that they use. At this time that's the science we know.

In regards to how, I am pleased to consult and ensure that Inuit traditional knowledge is utilized during the decision process, and also the HTOs, especially in Baffin region, the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board. As Inuit would like to hear, and I know that the traditional knowledge of Inuit was utilized, and the members of QWB or HTO were usually the same individuals. I myself was a hunter at the time.

I realize and I know that the caribou hunt, we were unable to harvest caribou at the same usual area, and also the calving grounds are empty when the caribou moves or deplete. So everything changes. Even the feeding grounds change with the abundance of caribou in Baffin region, South Baffin region, the people usually go harvesting by boat or snowmobiles. The harvesters are very aware of the area.

That's why Inuit traditional knowledge with the Land Claims Agreement in place nowadays, that it should, if we're going to be managing caribou on that, would the minister be in support of utilizing only traditional knowledge, rather than using the science knowledge as the population for caribou increase? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Go ahead, Minister Koonoo.

**Hon. Brian Koonoo** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the question. We use joint information. We also monitor harvesting, number of harvest of caribou. And also samples are given, and to see if there's any diseases going on and so forth. We use that.

And also elders and hunters are listened to. We try and use more than one information, Inuit knowledge and knowledge given by scientists, based on numbers and so forth. In the agreement, the regulations are adhered to. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Koonoo. Mr. Mike.

**Mr. Mike** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Minister. You have to abide by the agreement. If not, the Wildlife Management and government or other organizations don't carry much weight. And management, by way of an agreement, is very evident. Since the agreement on wildlife, they're the main instrument and more trustworthy.

So co-management, in English as you call it, is in the agreement. So you need a co-management, then, on wildlife with differing organizations meeting together and hash out what laws you have on hunting or not.

The agreement have been supported by the people, but I will be hopeful that Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit was used when the caribou population became low, and the directive then had been about already 12 years, and we've been hearing the caribou numbers are coming back, in terms of numbers.

This is just a comment to the minister. I agree with him that we have to adhere to the agreement. I know those who may be in support of the agreement may decide I won't be supporting for certain reasons, and you often hear that as well out there. I wanted to include that. Thank you, Minister.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Mike. Minister Koonoo.

**Hon. Brian Koonoo** (interpretation): Thank you. I didn't hear a question, but the agreements are adhered to and this management really stems from the Inuit community. The caribou population on Baffin is not at risk, but before it arrived to that status, Inuit made the initiative, and we have seen the caribou populations increase. In 2024-2025 the population was estimated to be 45,000 in numbers. It's very good news, and I'm very grateful that questions are being raised on this. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Mike, do you have another question? Before you start, I'll remind you that on the clock you have a minute and 40 seconds left of your time. Thank you.

**Mr. Mike** (interpretation): Thanks for the warning.

(interpretation) Thank you. The minister is anticipating on the meeting of NWMB in Kinngait. After some meeting, your presentation, how many days after will the NWMB make a decision? And after they make a decision, when will you be making announcement or change? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Mike. Minister Koonoo, go ahead.

**Hon. Brian Koonoo** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I thank my colleague. Once we are given the news, we have 30 days to make a decision. And the meeting between Nunavut and cabinet, we usually meet every four weeks and we'll be meeting this month on the 22nd. Give us a miss, and we'll probably be giving our decision four weeks after, when we meet, four weeks after, as a caucus.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Koonoo. I was just waiting for the translation to come through. Mr. Mike, go ahead.

**Mr. Mike** (interpretation): As you mentioned earlier, I just have a minute; I'll try and maximize it. NWMB and the direction they take on caribou management with Inuit QIA, NTI, will they need to give support or it won't be necessary?

When directives were made, I was given understanding, because I knew we weren't going to move without support from the president of NTI and QIA. And is that a similar situation for this? Will support have to be given by those orgs? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Mike. Go ahead, Minister Koonoo.

**Hon. Brian Koonoo** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you. Perhaps our Deputy Minister Mansell can respond to the question, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister. Mr. Mansell.

**Mr. Mansell:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the member for the good question. So the NWMB acts independently, but they have representation from Inuit, and there is a consultative process.

As the minister said, the data that's delivered, these decisions are both scientific and Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit, in speaking with elders and HTOs. And so there's a lot of information that goes into their decisions. When they issue a decision, the GN would make a response in good time. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Mansell, for that response. I'm going to just remind members: Under Rule 77 there is a time limit on speaking from the members of the committee. And it's a 10-minute time limit. We keep the clock up here. So right now there are 13 seconds left on the clock for that.

However, subsection 2 of that rule allows a member to speak again for another 10 minutes after members have asked questions.

I guess if your question is short, Mr. Mike, you can go ahead and ask it now. And if it's longer, you might want to wait until after another member has asked a question; then I can recognize you again. So I am just reminding members of that. Go ahead, Mr. Mike.

**Mr. Mike (interpretation):** I wasn't really given a response. My apologies, I wasn't really given a response to my question. The question I had: Was NWMB directive in Cape Dorset will have to be supported by NTI or QIA? Is it only through that process can this be enacted? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Mike. Minister Koonoo.

**Hon. Brian Koonoo (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, my colleague. They will be informed and decide, but through the agreement. They don't have any powers over the matter of wildlife directive plan. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Koonoo. Any more questions for members on the Program Management Branch? Ms. Angootealuk.

**Ms. Angootealuk (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) How many applicants for compensation were received by your department during the 2025-2026 fiscal year? *Qujannamiik*.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Ms. Angootealuk. Just to be clear, that's under the Disaster Compensation Program you're asking that question, yes? Just to be clear, it's on the

Disaster Compensation Program that your question is being asked on? Yes, it is. Sorry about that. Minister Koonoo.

**Hon. Brian Koonoo:** Thank you, Chair. For the Disaster Compensation Program, six applicants were received and processed to date under the Disaster Compensation for 2025-2026 fiscal year. Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Koonoo. Go ahead, Ms. Angootealuk.

**Ms. Angootealuk:** Seal and Fur Purchasing Program policy sunsetted March 31, 2025. What is the status of renewing the policy? *Qujannamiik*.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Ms. Angootealuk. Minister Koonoo.

**Hon. Brian Koonoo:** Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Member, for the question. We are currently working with Community Services, and we are trying to update it. Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Koonoo. Are you done? Any other questions from members? Mr. Attagutaluk.

**Mr. Attagutaluk:** Thank you, Chairman. Your department's 2026-2030 Business Plan indicates that one of its planned actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to explore options for a structured model process for the Wildlife Guardian Program that includes targeted onboarding as well as training for wildlife guardians, including new conservation officers.

How many wildlife guardians have been hired to date under this program? Thank you, Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Attagutaluk. Minister Koonoo.

**Hon. Brian Koonoo:** Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Member, for that question. I could give you a number for each region. For Kitikmeot, there's five wildlife guardians; and for Kivalliq, there's four wildlife guardians; and for Baffin region, there's two wildlife guardians. Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Koonoo. Mr. Attagutaluk, go ahead.

**Mr. Attagutaluk:** Thank you, Chairman. Thank you for the response, Minister. Approximately how many wildlife guardians are planned to be hired during the 2026-2027 fiscal year? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Attagutaluk. Minister Koonoo.

**Hon. Brian Koonoo:** Thank you, Chair. Thank you, member, for that question. We're working on onboarding process, training plans and drafting stage to make sure proper services are available and trained guardians are in place.

Training to include all admin side of issuing licences and permits and wildlife deterrents. And we also would like one in each community in Nunavut. Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Koonoo. Any other questions from members? Mr. Qammaniq.

**Mr. Qammaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Your department's 2024-2025 main estimates included \$100,000 in funding for the Disaster Compensation Program. However, your department spent \$72,000 under this program during 2024-2025 fiscal year.

How much did your department spend under this program during 2025-2026 fiscal year? *Qujannamiik.*

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Qammaniq. Minister Koonoo.

**Hon. Brian Koonoo:** Thank you, Chair. Thank you, member for that question. For the approved application for the compensation program, the department has spent \$68,145. Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Koonoo. Mr. Qammaniq, go ahead.

**Mr. Qammaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for the response. (interpretation ends) During the Legislative Assembly's sitting of September 17, 2025, the Minister of Environment stated that the department has been working with the federal government in moving the wildlife research section from Igloolik to the Canadian High Arctic Research Station in Cambridge.

The Government of Nunavut's quarterly employment report indicates that the number of positions in the department's Igloolik office has decreased from 14 to six. The number of positions in the department's Cambridge Bay office has increased from three-and-a-half to 10-and-a-half.

What is the status of filling the vacant positions in both communities? *Qujannamiik.*

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Qammaniq. Minister Koonoo.

**Hon. Brian Koonoo:** Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Member, for that question.

Yes, filling the positions is still ongoing, and currently we've been having trouble with housing issues to fill those positions, but the process is still ongoing. Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Koonoo. Mr. Qammaniq, any more questions? Go ahead.

**Mr. Qammaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, for the response. (interpretation ends) Your department's 2026-2030 Business Plan indicates that one of its planned actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to undertake research to determine potential amendments to the environmental regulatory process, including the development of a consultation plan, to engage stakeholders in the review of the *Environmental Protection Act*. What specific changes to the legislation are being considered? *Qujannamiik*.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Qammaniq. Minister Koonoo, go ahead.

**Hon. Brian Koonoo:** Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Member, for that question. I would like to question Steven Mansell, acting deputy minister, to answer that question. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Go ahead, Mr. Mansell.

**Mr. Mansell:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thank the member for the good question. That project is still internal to the department, so we're still doing work internally. But as soon as we're ready to consult with Nunavummiut, we will. But right now we have work to do internally first. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Mansell. Mr. Qammaniq, go ahead.

**Mr. Qammaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for the response. (interpretation ends) What is your department's timetable for introducing a bill in the Legislative Assembly to amend the *Environmental Protection Act*? *Qujannamiik*.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Qammaniq. Minister Koonoo.

**Hon. Brian Koonoo:** Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Member, for that question. Yes, we would like to do that during this term of the government, but currently we have a lot of work to do right now. As you know, there's devolution and also the Land Use Plan that we've been working hard towards. We would like to have that completed in this current government. Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Koonoo. Mr. Qammaniq, go ahead.

**Mr. Qammaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for the response. (interpretation ends) Your department's 2026-2030 Business Plan indicates that one of its planned actions for the 2026-2027 fiscal year is to begin for the development of Nunavut's Solid Waste Management Strategy that will mitigate environmental and infrastructure pressures associated with the population growth and climate change, including the creation of a consultation plan.

Will this strategy be developed by departmental employees or external consultants?  
*Qujannamiik.*

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Qammaniq. Minister Koonoo.

**Hon. Brian Koonoo:** Thank you, Chair. Thank you, member, for that question. Yes, it's spearheaded by employees, with outside experts to support the initiative. Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Koonoo. Mr. Qammaniq, go ahead.

**Mr. Qammaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for the response. (interpretation ends) Nunavut Planning Commission's Draft Land Use Plan was submitted to the Government of Canada, the Government of Nunavut, and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated in June 2023. As of today, what is the status of the review of the plan? *Qujannamiik.*

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Qammaniq. Minister Koonoo.

**Hon. Brian Koonoo:** Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Member, for that question. I know there has been a lot of interest in the current Land Use Plan status, and I know it's been debated quite well. But to have an expert level answer, I would like to request my acting deputy minister answer that question, Steven Mansell. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Koonoo. Go ahead Mr. Mansell.

**Mr. Mansell:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thank the member for the good question. As the minister said, we understand that there's a lot of interest in the Land Use Plan and that Nunavummiut are looking for the GN's position on the Land Use Plan.

We are working hard with the co-signatories at Nunavut Tunngavik and the Government of Canada. It's important that all three parties have a position, and we're working hard with them to jointly ensure that we have an informed decision that takes into account the

needs of Nunavummiut. This remains a priority, but I can't give you a date for a decision. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Mansell. Mr. Qammaniq, go ahead.

**Mr. Qammaniq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for the response. (interpretation ends) Your department's 2026-2027 Business Plan indicated that a draft public consultation report is underway and it will serve as a supporting document for the legislative proposal to amend the *Territorial Parks Act*.

What is your department's timeline for introducing a bill in the Legislative Assembly?  
*Qujannamiik.*

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Qammaniq. Minister Koonoo.

**Hon. Brian Koonoo:** Thank you, Chair. I thank the member for that question. It's pretty much the similar timeline, that we would like to have it continue with this current government, but we still have to work with more consultations to get this moving forward. At this time I can't commit to a date. Thank you, Chair.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Minister Koonoo. Any other questions from members on the Program Management Branch? Seeing none, do members agree with the Department of Environment Program Management Branch, total operations and maintenance of \$22,063,000?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Please go to page I-3. Do members agree with the Department of Environment 2026-2027 Main Estimates, total operations and maintenance of \$29,392,000?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Do members agree we have concluded with the Department of Environment?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Any closing comments, Minister Koonoo?

**Hon. Brian Koonoo:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you, members. Yes, I would like to express that our commitment of the Department of Environment have been doing a lot of

great work with limited staff and also with very outdated office spaces throughout Nunavut.

We've been struggling hard over the past several years, but currently they have been doing a very good job, especially with the wildlife management section. They have done very well.

And it's good to see that the current caribou population, especially in Baffin region, have increased dramatically over the years. It sounds like a very good example of co-management practices. I am happy that we are getting good support from the government.

We would like to express our gratitude and also express our future work ahead that needed to upgrade our equipment, our staff, and our buildings that could function better in the future.

I thank my colleagues, and thank you, everyone, to have gone through the Environment Department for this term. Thank you.

*>>Applause*

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

*>>Committee adjourned at 18:30 and House resumed at 18:32*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Item number 20, report of the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Pedersen.

### **Item 20: Report of the Committee of the Whole**

**Mr. Pedersen:** 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** (interpretation): There is a motion on the floor. Is there a seconder? Mr. Attagutaluk. To the motion, all those in favour? Opposed? Motion carried. Thank you. Item number 21, Third Reading of Bills. Item 22, *Orders of the Day*.

### **Item 22: Orders of the Day**

**Mr. Clerk** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) There will be a meeting of the Standing Committee on Rules, Procedures and Privileges at 10 a.m. in the Nanuq boardroom, which is not currently scheduled, but we'll hold a quick meeting at 10 a.m.

(interpretation) *Orders of the Day* for June 19:

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.

>>*Applause*

**Speaker** (interpretation) Thank you. Today's sitting stands adjourned and we will resume tomorrow on June 10 at 1:30. Sergeant-at-Arms..

>>*House adjourned at 18:34*

