



Nunavut Canada

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NUNAVUT

2nd Session

5th Assembly

HANSARD

Official Report

DAY 13

Friday, June 8, 2018

Pages 681 – 759

Iqaluit

Speaker: The Honourable Joe Enook, M.L.A.

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

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(Tununiq)

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(Quttiktuq)

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(Amittuq)

Mila Kamingoak
(Kugluktuk)

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(Uqqummiut)

Hon. Lorne Kusugak
(Rankin Inlet South)
Minister of Community and Government Services; Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation

Adam Lightstone
(Iqaluit-Manirajak)

John Main
(Arviat North-Whale Cove)

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(Baker Lake)
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(Aivilik)

Emiliano Qirngnuq
(Netsilik)

Hon. Paul Quassa
(Aggu)
Premier; Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs; Minister responsible for Aboriginal Affairs; Minister responsible for Seniors; Minister responsible for the Utility Rates Review Council

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(Arviat South)
Deputy Premier; Minister of Economic Development and Transportation; Minister of Energy; Minister of Environment

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Cathy Towtongie
(Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet)

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Table of Contents

Opening Prayer.....	681
Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters	681
Report of the Committee of the Whole	758
Orders of Day	758

A.

Daily References

Friday, June 8, 2018 681

B.

Bills

Bill 04 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2018-2019 – Nunavut Housing
Corporation – Consideration in Committee 682

Bill 04 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2018-2019 – Family Services –
Consideration in Committee 724

**Iqaluit, Nunavut
Friday, June 8, 2018**

Members Present:

Hon. David Akeegok, Mr. Tony Akoak,
Hon. Pat Angnakak, Hon. Jeannie
Ehaloak, Hon. Joe Enook, Mr. George
Hickes, Hon. David Joanase, Mr. Joeline
Kaernerck, Ms. Mila Kamingoak, Hon.
Lorne Kusugak, Mr. Adam Lightstone,
Mr. John Main, Mr. Simeon
Mikkungwak, Ms. Margaret Nakashuk,
Mr. Patterk Netser, Mr. Emiliano
Qirngnuq, Hon. Paul Quassa, Mr. Allan
Rumbolt, Hon. Joe Savikataaq, Ms.
Cathy Towtongie.

>>*House commenced at 10:01*

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (Hon. Joe Enook)
(interpretation): Mr. Quassa, can you say
the opening prayer, please.

>>*Prayer*

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you,
Mr. Quassa. Good morning,
(interpretation ends) Premier
(interpretation) and members. Good
morning, Nunavummiut who are
watching the televised proceedings and
listening to the radio broadcast.

We will now proceed with the orders of
the day. Member for Arviat North-
Whale Cove, Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you,
Mr. Speaker. Good morning, my
colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, I request unanimous
consent to proceed directly to Item 19 in
the *Orders of the Day*, Mr. Speaker.
Thank you.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you.
The member is seeking unanimous
consent to proceed directly to Item 19 in
the *Orders of the Day*. Are there any
nays? There are no nays. Item 19.
Consideration in Committee of the
Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Bills
4, 5, and 7 with Mr. Mikkungwak in the
Chair.

In accordance with the authority
provided to me by Motion 4 – 5(2), the
committee will stay in session until it
reports itself out.

I ask that you remain at your seats as the
Committee of the Whole will commence
when the paperwork is ready.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

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

Chairman (Mr. Mikkungwak)
(interpretation): Good morning.
(interpretation ends) I call the committee
meeting to order.

(interpretation) Before we proceed, I
would like to recognize in the gallery
representatives from the Nunavut
Wildlife Management Board. I would
like to welcome David Kritterdlik.

>>*Applause*

Caleb Sangoya.

>>*Applause*

Noah Makayak.

>>*Applause*

Attima Hadlari.

>> *Applause*

(interpretation ends) In Committee of the Whole we have the following items to deal with: Bills 4, 5, and 7. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and good morning. Mr. Chairman, we wish to continue with the review of Bill 4 and the Nunavut Housing Corporation, followed by the Department of Family Services and the Department of Justice. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. (interpretation) Do members agree that we first deal with Bill 4? Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Bill 04 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2018-2019 – Nunavut Housing Corporation – Consideration in Committee

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I would now like to ask Minister Kusugak: do you have officials that you would like to appear before the committee? Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I would like my officials to join me. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Does the committee agree to let the minister's officials go to the witness table? Do you agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman (interpretation): Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the minister's officials in.

For the record, Minister Kusugak, please introduce your officials. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you. Good morning, my colleagues. Joining me before you today on your right is the President of the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Terry Audla, and on your left is Gershom Moyo, Chief Financial Officer for the Nunavut Housing Corporation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Please feel welcome in the Legislative Assembly.

(interpretation ends) Before we proceed with the Nunavut Housing Corporation, a reminder that we still have 10 departmental main estimates to review, hence I am advising members that I intend to use my discretion as per Rule 77(2) as our progress dictates.

Also, to all members and ministerial officials, I ask that you refrain from using acronyms, as using acronyms is making it very difficult for our interpreters to keep up with us as they attempt to determine what the acronym means in Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun.

We will now proceed with the Nunavut Housing Corporation. Page L-3. (interpretation) Thank you very much. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you,

Mr. Speaker. Good morning,
(interpretation ends) minister and staff.

Starting off, I would like to ask you about how the housing corporation is governed. It is my understanding that you have a board of directors and looking at the people who are on that board of directors, they know their stuff.

In terms of what we are doing here in providing oversight to your corporation, how do you see the relationship between the Legislative Assembly and your board in terms of that oversight function?
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank you, Mr. Main, for your question on this issue. The board and the office of the housing corporation, or rather your offices have a good relationship in my estimation.

The housing corporation board reviews all the operational matters under the mandate and they search ways to ensure that all the by-laws and regulations are adhered to. The members of the board for the housing corporation, as you mentioned earlier, are well-versed in housing issues. They continually search for improvements in their operations.

I work with the board, as well as you, the members, through the Legislative Assembly *Hansard* based on the comments or concerns expressed. Comments such as “This direction should be taken,” “These matters are causing concern,” or even comments about areas that work well as well as

action items recommended.

When the housing corporation board meets, they also review these issues by deliberating and going hand in hand with recommendations for improvement and areas that can make it easier to move forward.

As an example, they are currently studying how people applying for homeownership can receive more support in their applications as certain issues result in roadblocks, particularly if their household income is either above or below the threshold levels. The criterion lists the amounts of income that would allow eligibility, but as soon as you surpass the threshold, you become ineligible.

Areas such as these are studied by the board to search for efficiencies they can implement and to try to improve the process. They have done quite a lot. It is generally convenient to have this knowledge, especially at the board level.

I hope I answered my colleague’s question, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Now, to turn to the matter of private contractors since many people have experienced this. When one wishes to construct a private home or even in wanting to renovate one’s home, trying to find private contractors can be difficult and frustrating sometimes.

I wonder how, in looking at Nunavut as a whole, the private contractors or qualified contractors could increase as it

seems the numbers have dropped over the years. Are the numbers of contractors declining or increasing (interpretation ends) on the private side? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is a very pertinent question as whenever a RFP comes out to construct housing units in various places, we receive many proposals from private companies. I don't think the numbers are dropping in terms of private companies on the construction side as they remain similar.

Within specialty areas such as window installers or general contractors, the numbers don't seem to be decreasing but neither is it increasing exponentially. It seems that the private side is going well. For example, companies that drop out are replaced by others and this applies to contracts as well currently. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is just a general comment. In past years in Arviat it has become very difficult to get contractors. There are contractors who could do the work, but they're no longer in existence. The larger companies don't seem to be interested in helping private homeowners. They are asked, "Can you renovate our house?" They're not interested in just \$50,000 projects; they're more interested in the \$5 million projects.

It would be good if the contractors could be told, "If you're going to go to Arviat or another community, you should talk to these people who need their houses renovated." The contractor should also be told, "You have to be available to do that kind of work as well." That question is always being repeated, Mr. Chairman.

Please know that I still have seven minutes. (interpretation ends) That's enough for now. (interpretation) Thank you.

>> *Laughter*

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Let me remind you, my colleagues, that if you have questions, please raise your hand ahead of time. As I stated previously, I will use my discretion as the Chair. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you. I didn't really hear a question, but I concur with your assessment. What is noticeable as well in our communities is when large projects or contracts are available, most companies concentrate on these projects. However, we also note when a protracted time occurs between large contracts, these companies then turn to these smaller contracts such as the \$50,000 level you mentioned.

This seems to go in cycles. Some years it becomes literally impossible to find contractors to do work on private homes, even when they search for a contractor to either replace their flooring or to paint the walls, work that is small scale. Yes, some contractors have no interest in these types of small scale work projects, but it also changes from year to year. It

depends on the changes to our contractors.

We understand the challenges and we often are informed at the housing corporation about the challenges that homeowners face. They sometimes can't find a contractor to do repairs, such as the heating and water systems. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Are you done?

Mr. Main (interpretation): I'll ask questions later.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Following my list of names, Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question is, the current public housing rent scale came into effect on February 1, 2014 and that rent scale was supposed to remove disincentives to employment.

I met a lot of my constituents who have complained to me that when they make \$80,000, the housing rent goes to \$1,400 a month. In meeting with the Hamlet Council of Rankin Inlet, we are losing young people who are leaving the communities to the larger centres because of housing rent.

I'm wondering: to what extent is the current public housing rent scale having an impact in the area of the disincentive to employment? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's a really hard thing to gauge if there are people saying that they don't want to work because they don't want to pay rent. In order to pay 30 percent, you have to be making over \$80,000 a year. I don't know if people are actually quitting their \$100,000 a year jobs because they don't want to pay \$1,200 or \$1,500 a month. It's really hard to gauge that.

To be quite honest, Ms. Towtongie, we don't know how to answer that because there is nothing that tells us that this number of people quit their jobs because they don't want to pay rent. It's really hard to answer that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I hope somehow I answered part of your question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to the minister for his comments. The reason why I brought it up is because in meetings with the hamlet council, it was brought to my attention. Perhaps there should be a model with the 30 percent rent scale. That model could be reviewed. It has been in existence for five years. Thank you to the minister for that.

Action No. 12 in the *Blueprint for Action on Housing: Implementation Plan for the Government of Nunavut's Long-Term Comprehensive Housing and Homelessness Strategy* indicates that the Nunavut Housing Corporation will "review best practices related to various models of subsidized housing as alternatives to rent-gated to income." My question is: what specific models has

the Nunavut Housing Corporation reviewed to date? Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's my final question.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In your prior comment, yes, we are constantly looking at the housing rent scales and the 30 percent of \$80,000 and up income. We're constantly looking at those.

In terms of the question on what have we looked at so far, we're looking at the other territorial subsidy and income programs, such as the NWT and Yukon. We're hoping to start having results in those in the coming months, but we are looking at other territorial government subsidy programs that are there. We are also looking to see if there are others out there other than those that we might be able to review and enhance our program. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. (interpretation ends) Next name on my list, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I may only use a minute or two of my time here and would maybe appreciate a second visit dependent upon the response that I get.

On the Implementation Plan for the GN Long-Term Comprehensive Housing and Homelessness Strategy on page 11, it speaks to quarterly reporting and a six-month progress report. Mr. Chairman, there are over 60 recommendations or actions within this implementation plan. I don't recall ever seeing a progress report on the implementation.

I could use up my time and probably most of my colleagues' time by going through all the questions I have on where certain actions are. I have requested the minister; I know it's an interdepartmental progress report that's quarterly reporting, but I was wondering if the minister would be able to share those with members so that it would alleviate a vast majority of the questions that I may have. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, of course we would be able to share them. We're folding them into a quarterly reporting process. As soon as we can, we would be more than happy to share them with you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: I'll just get some clarification on "as soon as we can." Is that going to be available to us today or later today at some point? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Unfortunately not today. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I may use up more of my time than I anticipated then.

I'm going to start off on page 26 of the

implementation document where it talks about meeting the needs of GN employees on a short-term basis, within a year, to hold initial meetings and develop a survey tool to support an employee survey, Action No. 20. What is the status of that survey? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of details on that particular topic, if I could have, through you, Mr. Audla respond to that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Audla.

Mr. Audla (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you to the member for that question. The status is that we're currently in the process of doing the staff housing review under the blueprint for action. As the minister alluded to, the strategies that preceded the blueprint for action are being folded into the whole implementation under the blueprint for action.

As for the staff housing review, we're in close collaboration in working with the Department of Finance. I believe the Minister of Finance has responded in the sense of some timing aspects to it, and that's answer I can give right now. There have been engagement of staff to look at what's in the context of the strategy as well as the blueprint for action, as well as asking the staff of what the ideal situation would be in that scenario when it comes to staff housing.

I hope that answers the question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to jump ahead. Like I said, I could be here all day here, but I'll try to highlight just some of the key issues that I feel.

When we're looking at Action No. 22 of working with Finance and the Nunavut Housing Corporation to determine subsidy levels, one of the issues that I have brought up and some of my colleagues have brought up quite often is the access to housing subsidies first for casual employees. There are some people who are very long in employment, and I know a casual employee can apply for staff housing.

Just to get a gauge of what we're dealing with: currently how many applications for staff housing are on the books? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. (interpretation ends) Hon. Minister of the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thirty seconds, please, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you for your patience, colleagues. From this list there are currently approximately 146 people. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm sure the list would be a lot higher if everyone applied for it. I know a lot of people in casual and long-term casuals don't even bother applying.

I'm going to just move on from that to discuss staff housing and public housing. I know some of the leases for staff housing include utilities and some don't. I know it's going more and more towards the employee pays the additional costs. I know the minister obviously must have concerns on the high costs for public housing and maintaining a unit. They are just ever increasing. The more units we build, the more it costs us. I know there is very little recognition from that from some of our funding partners.

What types of opportunities to reduce those costs are being examined, specifically like more energy-efficient appliances? Even a suggestion I have brought up in the House is providing washers and dryers to public housing tenants, of having low energy use appliances in addition to LED lighting. There was talk a couple of years ago on running LED lighting through some of our staff housing, of maybe doing a pilot of a set amount of units in a community so you can see the benefit versus cost.

I know there are federal programs that can be accessed to do energy retrofit renovations to housing stock. What projects are currently close to pulling the trigger on getting some of these costs reduced? Like I said, it's an ever-expanding budget. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A very good question and I think you answered half of those things that we're working on.

Mr. Chairman, we're constantly in the planning and design stages of units. We're constantly looking at better material, better ways to build, more efficient windows, doors, and lights. I know many of the houses that haven't put in more energy-efficient and LED lighting. You see in parts of the house where they have auto-shutoff in terms of fans and stuff like that so that if they leave the room, it eventually turns off. There are those, and our department is constantly looking to try to see what we can do to make it more efficient.

My colleague is absolutely right. It's costing close to \$27,000 to maintain a house and it's not going any lower. Every dollar we could save on LED lighting or efficient windows, I think a big part of this is going to be a push to do a campaign. The biggest energy saver is the person who is in the house. I think it's very important for the housing corporation to put out a campaign to shut your windows, turn down the thermostats, turn lights off, don't leave lights unattended, and things like that. Don't plug in your vehicle if it doesn't need to be plugged in.

I think a big push would be to have a campaign to be more energy wise. We don't see it on our bill where we're paying a minimal amount; we just leave the lights on. The biggest money saver would actually be a campaign for energy saving. I think that's a very important road to go down. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm just staying with that theme. Action 51 states, "Engage with CHARS on the Potential Opportunities to Reduce Costs Associated with Housing in Nunavut." In the planned activities in year one, it says to "Hold initial meeting with CHARS" to "Identify opportunities for pilot programs, research and funding for innovative solutions." Maybe if the minister could update me if there are any new opportunities or ideas that came out of that meeting. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, that conversation is happening. There was a meeting in Yellowknife, for example, on Polar Knowledge to start working on that. The housing corporation also has partnered with the QEC and Community and Government Services, a very good department, good minister there, to apply for low carbon economy funding from the federal government. We're in the final stages of finalizing that agreement. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm sure the minister is anticipating my next question from our discussion earlier today. One of the challenges that have been brought up in the House in the past and there has been some coverage on it in the media a couple years ago is people that are in staff housing that retire.

There are people who have the foresight to put their name on the public housing list, sometimes years in advance, but it ranks them very low because they are accommodated. When the local housing organization is doing their priority rankings for housing, typically these people are very low on the list because they're adequately housed until the day they retire. Sometimes people stay on the list for a number of years and then they retire, which changes their ranking, which would bump them up. Again, because it's on a need-based ranking, it's sometimes putting people into a homeless situation.

I'm just wondering: what kinds of discussions with Finance have occurred through the staff housing review? I'm sure this has been one of the topics, but what are some of the early indications of volume? It's going to keep ever-increasing. Nunavut is almost 20 years old now of moving forward and there are going to be more and more people in our public service retiring. This situation is going to get worse, not better, in my opinion. What types of discussions or options have been put out there? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) We try to work with employees living in staff housing who are going to be retiring to consider what options they have for housing. (interpretation ends) It's a very tough thing to deal with, but we are working closely with Finance in terms of trying to get ahead of the curve. We anticipate, over the next few years, approximately 120 plus people retiring

and going out of government housing, staff housing and moving on into a different home.

When it comes to moving into public housing, it gets a little complicated because the housing list is the responsibility of the housing association or organization and they determine the priority list based on the strict criteria they follow also, so then you have to go onto that list. My colleague will appreciate that when you are housed in a government unit, it doesn't show you as homeless until you vacate that house, so it becomes complicated that way.

The other parameters and stuff that happens with that is if the individuals have bills or things with the QEC or the city, all that kind of stuff fall into place. We are working with different client departments to try to alleviate some of those things. For example, in Iqaluit, with housing units that became available at a very reasonable cost, maybe we could put some of the people who are retiring from government staff housing, maybe they are able to purchase housing at that level.

We are working with Finance, as you say, and trying to find out the smoothest way to help long-term government employees who are retiring to not have to worry about where they are going to sleep tomorrow night when they leave the government. It's not fair to them and we are working to try to find out how we can make it easier for them. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I sincerely thank the minister for that response and look forward to hearing about ongoing dialogue.

I am glad the minister brought up the condo program. I have had a couple constituents in the past come to me and one of the things that I suggested is if you know you're retiring in the next five to eight years, look at purchasing one of those units and accelerate your payments as much as possible so that you can look at a fairly low-cost retirement home, if I may use that term. I just wanted to thank the minister for bringing that up and I thank the minister at the time that had the foresight to help purchase those units for Iqalumiut.

Because I have only talked to a few people, I just want to make sure that people who are listening, if you are anticipating retiring and staying in Iqaluit in the medium term or short term, really consider putting in an application for one of these condo units. I thank the minister for the progress on that project. That is my final comment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. (interpretation) Following the list of names, Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Good morning, minister and staff. (interpretation) Welcome. I would also like to welcome the people behind me who were recognized. Welcome to Iqaluit.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Chairman, (interpretation) it states on page 9 that (interpretation ends) "The NHC will identify interest and feasibility with RIAs to collaborate on potential

provisions of affordable housing for Inuit on Inuit owned land.”

(interpretation) I would like to ask if the municipal boundaries are part of Inuit-owned lands. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Let me ask what page you’re referring to, Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) On page 9 of the business plan. (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The different communities have identified some of the municipal land as Inuit-owned land and some are Crown land, therefore they differ. That’s how it is. The whole municipal boundary is sometimes divided up in different communities. That’s why it makes it difficult for me to say exactly which land within the municipal boundary belongs to Inuit, the municipality, or the Crown. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. Did the minister say that the municipalities are part of this? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Yes, in some communities Inuit-owned lands are within municipal boundaries

and each regional Inuit association can make a decision on how the Inuit-owned lands will be utilized within the municipal boundaries. I hope that’s coming across. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I understood you correctly, if some communities didn’t have Inuit-owned lands within the municipal boundaries, the municipalities are not included in this. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If you will allow me to have the president of the housing corporation respond to that question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Audla.

Mr. Audla: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to the member for that question. For a point of clarity on the specific reference in the business plan, there are some municipalities that don’t have Inuit-owned lands within the municipal boundaries. I can give some examples. Let’s say, in Pangnirtung right next to the church across the Northern Store, there’s a big lot where there’s potential for development, but that’s owned by the QIA through the land claims process in title form. Pond Inlet has municipal lands as well, Inuit-owned lands; Iqaluit, the big plot of land along the Federal Road as well.

In the Kivalliq we would have to work

with the Kivalliq Inuit Association to determine which municipalities have Inuit-owned lands within those municipalities, but in the cases where they don't have Inuit-owned lands within municipalities, we work with Community and Government Services to determine best areas for the development of any housing requirements. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Members, a reminder that a lot of detail for the corporation is on pages N-IV-1 to N-IV-6. We will get to those pages when I have no more names on my list for page L-3. Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am totally lost now. Perhaps we shouldn't be asking questions where I was asking my questions. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): You can still continue, Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser: Thank you. (interpretation) Let me find the page I was asking question on. That N-IV-da-da-da-da page that you referenced.

>> *Laughter*

(interpretation ends) Mr. Chairman, NHC-9, (interpretation) I believe I understand this, but (interpretation ends) the status on the home program review will "contribute to completion of this action, in particular the review of the Interim Financing Program. The NHC awarded a contract for the program review, with the work to be completed in 2018-2019. This work will lead to improvement in homeownership programs that will support private housing construction and, in turn, private

land development."

(interpretation) This issue is very interesting to note and we are gratified to hear about the planned review to improve the homeownership programs. I wish to thank the minister for that. Nonetheless, it doesn't seem to include the age of private homes as many homes are getting quite old. Many private homes were built under the NWT Housing Corporation. Many people received private homes through that program and many of those units are nearing their lifecycles and they have to request assistance from the local housing association to do maintenance work on their units. It does not list that issue.

However, if I understood it properly, page NHC-6 does have some language about a homeownership support program. Will this program still be available for private homeowners? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Netser, for the question. Yes, we still have funding for homeowners under the renovation line item. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm done for now. I will be asking more questions later on. (interpretation ends) Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. (interpretation ends)

Nunavut Housing Corporation details on page N-IV-2. Following the list of names, Ms. Kamingoak.

Ms. Kamingoak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome minister and your staff.

The *Blueprint for Action on Housing* contains 60 different action items. How is the Nunavut Housing Corporation deciding which specific actions to prioritize during the 2018-19 fiscal year? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Hon. Minister of the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank my colleague for the question. The prioritization is on the blueprint for action itself. It shows as a time frame as short term, so anything with short term is priority. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Kamingoak.

Ms. Kamingoak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to the minister for your response. Moving on, the Nunavut Housing Corporation's draft 2018-2021 business plan indicates that one of the priorities for the 2018-2021 fiscal year is to "Engage with Regional Inuit Associations on potential collaborations to provide affordable housing for Inuit on Inuit owned land, including potential P3" project opportunities. As of today, which of the three regional Inuit associations have expressed interest in working with the Nunavut Housing Corporation in this manner? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To date we have worked and met with the Qikiqtani Inuit Association on possible housing options, and we are anticipating meeting with the other Inuit associations in the coming months. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Kamingoak.

Ms. Kamingoak: Thank you. Thank you for the response. The Nunavut Housing Corporation's draft 2018-2021 business plan indicates that it is "finalizing a revised Management Agreement with Local Housing Organizations that clarifies and defines the relationship and authorities between the NHC and Local Housing Organizations, and helps to ensure that the NHCs programs are delivered consistently across the territory, as well as identify areas where more support will be offered to Local Housing Organizations." What is the timeline for finalizing the revised management agreement? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister of the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We're anticipating finalization in the coming months, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Following the list of names, the Nunavut Housing Corporation, page L-3, Mr. Kaernek.

Mr. Kaernek (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good morning,

minister.

Just recently in October 2016 you tabled a report on a long-term strategy for housing and homelessness. Could you give us an update on what's happening with the housing and homelessness issue? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Nunavut Housing Corporation Hon. Minister, Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank you for the question. The housing corporation has identified what they're going to be doing under the blueprint for action on housing. It covers homelessness and looking for housing for the homeless. We're collaborating with (interpretation ends) Family Services (interpretation) on this issue. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Kaernek.

Mr. Kaernek (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank the minister for his explanation. One of the challenges in the smaller communities is the homeless who usually end up in a shack or building a shack, and then there are too many nuclear families living in one house with overcrowding. What types of actions have you taken on homelessness and overcrowding? Has there been any progress to date on addressing the overcrowding issue? Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will leave it at that.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you for speaking about that issue. Absolutely, but not only within our smaller communities as every community in Nunavut, regardless of whether it is a large or small community, faces this challenge due to our extreme housing shortage. Many people end up living in shacks and this is occurring in every community. As a matter of fact, even here in Iqaluit and in my home community, this challenge is faced in every community.

The critical underlying factor is the lack of funds since we are limited to building a certain number of units with what we have. We are always looking for new ways to provide the lowest cost housing we can provide. We were able to purchase condo units in Iqaluit, which were referenced earlier, at a minimal price and we then offered them at those prices to the people who wanted to purchase these units. We are always looking for new ways to work with people who own their homes. People may have ideas or recommendations to improve our situation.

We are also cooperating with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation to look at how we can try to resolve the extreme housing shortage we face here. We definitely understand this situation and we would like to see more alternatives in this area, but the limits of our financial resources are the main barrier. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Kaernek.

Mr. Kaernek (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was thinking about looking at other options, for example,

building tiny houses. Do you think that that would address the issue of overcrowding and homelessness or the long waiting list? It's not a question, but it's just something that should be taken into consideration. Thank you. I'll leave it that for now.

Chairman: Thank you. I take that as a comment. I will now proceed to page N-IV-2. Nunavut Housing Corporation. Headquarters. Total Operations and Maintenance. Any questions? Mr. Main.

Mr. Main: (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Seeing as the headquarters office is located in Arviat, I feel that I should ask a few questions. I think we should all recognize that it isn't the real headquarters office. We don't have to pretend that it is, right? But I am a strong supporter of decentralization.

What role is the headquarters office playing in terms of the housing corporation? I'm not coming at it from an angle of trying to make the corporation look bad and say, "This is supposed to be the headquarters." I would like to understand what the real function of that office is, with an aim to maximizing its effectiveness and usefulness to the corporation.
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I could have the president of the housing corporation respond to that through you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Audla.

Mr. Audla: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to the member for that question. I have been in the present CEO job for the past two and a half years now and I sort of had that same question, being that Iqaluit is the corporate office and Arviat being the headquarters.

I do understand the aspect of decentralization and the requirements there, but I have been finding that the headquarters office in Arviat has been very instrumental in centralizing a lot of the homeownership program applications. A large function of that office as well is to ensure that the district offices are keeping in line with ensuring that all homeownership application programs are being processed and are carrying out the due diligence in the aspect of making sure that no applications are lost and that all applications are actually filled in the most accurate manner.

For the executive director position within that office, we include that position within our senior management committee to ensure that all senior executive decisions are being made and that the Arviat office has a seat at the table. That position has been very instrumental based on the corporate history. The person within that position has been in that position for almost as long as the Nunavut Housing Corporation has been in existence. It's appreciated by how much knowledge is coming out of the Arviat headquarters office and that's, I believe, in my opinion, a very important primary role that they play for the Nunavut Housing Corporation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank you, Mr. Audla. Have you considered giving the headquarters office more responsibility so that it becomes more effective? The response I got from the (interpretation ends) Premier (interpretation) was that there were six PYs, (interpretation ends) six positions, (interpretation) and it seems like there has been a decrease in the number of PYs in that office. I would like to keep that office open in Arviat, so I'm asking if you have looked at whether there was going to be more added responsibilities to become more effective. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Talking about the offices and the housing corporation office located in Arviat, there are 12 positions, not 6. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): What about innovation or technology within the (interpretation ends) corporation? (interpretation) Where is that dealt with? Is it here or in the districts? I would like to know exactly where that is dealt with. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Innovation and technology is dealt with in the

district offices and also in the Iqaluit office. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just for consideration, we have a lot of public housing in Arviat. (interpretation ends) Arviat has, I think, one of the largest public housing stock in the territory, and given that you have a district office there and an LHO and a headquarters office, maybe... . This is just a comment, if some thought could be put into the innovation and experimentation function, maybe being placed in Arviat in some shape or form.

I want to see the housing corporation fail at certain things. I want to see them try different things and failure is not always bad. Try different types of housing; try different technologies. It's just a comment to encourage you to experiment and innovate in terms of bringing down the cost of housing and finding a better mousetrap, as the minister likes to say. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Absolutely and that is what we are doing in Arviat right now with two housing units. We are looking at them. We are going to be trying different things in Nunavut. (interpretation ends) We will try innovative things in all different communities, including Arviat, but try to do them where there may be the best test results or the least-best test results. I totally agree. Failure is an option. You learn from it. I appreciate that.

Arviat also is the territorial headquarters for maintenance. I think our department is looking at trying to put whatever we can into the most productive place and that might be to Arviat or to Iqaluit. I agree with your comments and we will strive to be more efficient in our department. If you and anybody else out there have some real ideas, which some of them you said, we would sure be happy to hear them. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Just a final comment. On the homeownership program delivery out of the headquarters office, I think it's great to see that the corporation is trying to streamline things and develop expertise where you can, so I hope to see that continue. No question, just a comment. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Following the list of names, Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Minister and your official, please feel welcome.

I have just one question that my colleague touched on earlier. I would like to expand the question. To say it in English, the (interpretation ends) district (interpretation) offices, how many are there? Perhaps I can get a response on that, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you

for the question. We have three district offices. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are three district offices and the housing corporation has offices based on those three districts. Are the operations of these district offices the same or do they have different responsibilities? I hope that makes sense, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I completely understand your question. They all have the same responsibilities and operations. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask another question that was raised by one of my colleagues earlier. The communities have ideas about how they can make improvements, but I also know that Inuit don't really express their thoughts. They have ideas on how to improve the way they use houses or how they pay rent. I think, if the housing corporation reaffirms what tenants need to do, it would help. That's just a comment and I might have another question later on. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, that's the way it is, Mr. Qirngnuq. The district offices are our ears for the communities to see where we can make improvements and the district offices work with the LHOs. We want to improve the housing situation; we don't want to make it worse. There are many possible solutions and we're always asking for new ideas through the avenues that I mentioned earlier. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. (interpretation ends) I have no more names on my list. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a few questions under headquarters. The first question I'm going to ask is relating to the business plan. In a number of areas under the priorities, the Nunavut Housing Corporation had indicated that it was unable to accomplish several priorities and items in the blueprint for action plan due to capacity constraints.

When I look at the figures in the "Towards a Representative Public Service" reports for the last several reports that have been released, the Nunavut Housing Corporation has 25 vacant positions as of last December. Those positions are filled by 27 casuals and 1 relief.

I don't understand how the housing corporation can use capacity constraints as an excuse for not accomplishing these priorities considering, comparing the numbers, they are actually over-staffed. Can I get some clarification on what "capacity constraints" are being referred

to? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I assure my colleague that it's not an excuse; it's reality. Maybe I could have my president elaborate on that through you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Audla.

Mr. Audla: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to the member for that question. We're always in a state of trying to keep on top of what's required under the Nunavut Housing Corporation. The blueprint for action is one way of trying to alleviate some of the issues that we face on a territory-wide basis.

Taking into consideration the huge housing deficit that we face here in the territory, the homelessness issues, the overcrowding, the staff housing aspects of it, just trying to stay on top of that is something that we have always been trying to keep on top of. The funds that we look at when you take into consideration the other aspects, let's say, the \$30 million in arrears for rent collection is another aspect.

If you look at what we have currently, let's say, compared to the Northwest Territories Housing Corporation, we have two positions for that purpose whereas in the Northwest Territories with a smaller housing stock, they have 13. It's something that we're constantly trying to address and see what we can do to improve the services that we offer and what we can provide in support for the local housing authorities through the districts and see what else we can do to

be innovative and to address the issues of energy efficiency.

When we're trying to use the resources, we have the limited resources. Yes, we would like to do and address everything that we can. In some cases, because of our capacity issues and the churn rate, because of people leaving and going on to other departments or other jurisdictions within Canada, it's something that we're always trying to keep on top of. We are trying our best and what we report to you in the business plan, we give you the reality. This is the situation of how it is of what we're trying to do and what we hope to do, but in circumstances that are sometimes beyond our control, it's just the reality that we face. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that response. It appears that the Nunavut Housing Corporation may have taken on a little bit too much and there's a great list of priorities being put forward for 2018-19. What is the likelihood of the Nunavut Housing Corporation accomplishing all of the priorities that it set forward in 2018-19? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Mr. Chairman, the department hopes to accomplish all those. Of course some of them are reliant on other departments and other key players, but it is our drive to ensure that we accomplish all those that we have set out on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that response. I would like to go to page 10 of the business plan under the second bullet, "The NHC will begin project scoping for an impact and feasibility analysis of different approaches to social and staff housing delivery." The status indicates that "In collaboration with the Department of Finance, the NHC carried out a review of the GN Staff Housing Policy, which resulted in the development of an options paper. From those options, the NHC will develop recommendations for Cabinet consideration." I was wondering if the Nunavut Housing Corporation or the minister would be able to share with us the results of the options paper. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is something we could probably do in time, but I can't commit to that as it would require cabinet approval. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Before I go any further, I would just like to once again commend the Nunavut Housing Corporation for taking the initiative of reintroducing the GN Staff Housing Program. I think that's a great opportunity to encourage homeownership in our territory and I applaud the corporation for taking the initiative.

I have also heard from a number of

residents that they have been accepted into the program and they are in the final stages of selecting the condos. I was wondering if the minister would be able to give us an update on where the staff condo program is at today. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank you for the question and support on this matter. To date, of the 65, we've had 55 applications approved. Once we start to deal with those, we will go through another round of applications, Mr. Chairman. It's looking very good. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was wondering if the minister would be able to share with us the estimated closing date or possession date of these condos. When is it estimated that these 65 units will be transferred over to the staff? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My colleague understands it depends on each applicant, but we are hoping sometime in July to close most of them. Okay, maybe August.

>> *Laughter*

We are hoping to close most of them in July and move on from there. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. I have no more names on my list. Next page, N-IV-3, Debt Repayment, Nunavut Housing Corporation. Any questions?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Next page, N-IV-4, District Offices. Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good morning, colleagues.

Under this we have district offices in each region and we also have our own local housing organization boards and local housing association boards. They allocate housing units to their own people that they know and people that they live with. They do allocate because they know what they are going through, but they are then overruled by the regional office saying, "That person cannot get it." It has been done in the past; I have seen it done. I'm just wondering if that is still the case today. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I can't speak for the past, but it's not done today. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you very much, Mr. Minister. As long as it's not happening today because it has been done, and we do have a local housing association that feels sometimes that, "Why are they there?" They ask themselves how come they are there when they're being overruled by the regional office. They're

not there just to look at paper; they see the real thing. I'm hoping that that is not happening from what I just said. That's just a comment at this time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just that our regional offices should be there for technical assistance and not to decide who gets a house. If it's happening, I want to know, but as of now, it's not. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name, Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, very good chairman. I think we talk a lot about the local housing organization boards. In part they are beneficial and in part they are a hindrance.

Regarding the employees at the district offices who work with the local housing boards or associations, they work together on several fronts. I wonder if the LHO boards have by-laws or a (interpretation ends) code of conduct or conflict of interest policy. (interpretation) I ask because nepotism is a constant refrain when speaking to people.

LHOs are seen by some residents to allocate units to their relatives or they pick their relatives into housing association positions. There should be training for new members. I know that only a few LHO board members act in this manner, as we know the majority of board members act honourably.

However, when nepotism creeps into the LHO board level, it can be very concerning. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The LHO boards have very complicated mandates which can weigh heavily on members. Rumours can quickly abound that the members aren't fair and are picking certain people only, even when there is no nepotism involved.

When we feel slighted as Inuit, sometimes we say the first things that come out, even if it has no basis in truth or that nepotism exists when it doesn't, as units are allocated based on the point system. Even when they follow this system properly, accusations will still fly that nepotism was the reason for not being allocated a unit. No wonder many people lose interest in remaining as board members.

I am not saying that nepotism doesn't exist at all or that every LHO is fair. However, what I can say on that question is that there are governing by-laws they have to follow when they sign agreements with the housing corporation. These (interpretation ends) management agreements (interpretation) have language pertaining to the areas that most people seem disconcerted about. Issues such as nepotism, fair and equal treatment are contained in these agreements. Further, whenever an accusation of nepotism arrives at the district offices, they then investigate the LHO to determine if that is the case.

I think I answered your question. Thank

you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) In terms of the LHO boards and the function that they are performing, has the housing corporation looked at alternative methods to perform that function in terms of “Here’s an alternative to having an LHO board in every community”? We could have, I don’t know, a different approach. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe, in the past, there have been attempts to hand over the housing functions through agreements to municipalities and municipal councils, but they always end up back within the corporation. No, we pretty much stick with the local housing organizations and their functions, but we do look at seeing how we could tweak a few places or issues that may be coming up, in a nutshell, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) How many LHO boards or LHOs across the territory are currently in trouble, in bad standing in terms of needing the district to come in and almost take over the management for a while until they can get back on their feet? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Gershom has been sitting here, itching to answer a question. If I may, through you, have him respond to that question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Moyo.

Mr. Moyo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. From a financial perspective, we have 25 LHOs. Three of those are in a deficit situation, and of those three, the deficit is below \$500,000 in each of them. All three of them have been showing great improvement in the past two years. Those deficits were in the region of \$1 million and they are crawling out of the deficit situation. The districts work very closely with them to assist them to recover and have a positive cash flow. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I look at the LHOs; they are very important, as the minister mentioned, similar to the hamlet. I think increased transparency would be beneficial both for the board and also for the public when they have a perceived conflict. Has any thought been given to encouraging LHOs to conduct their regular board meetings in a public setting, where people are encouraged to attend, or is that not feasible because of the sensitive nature of what they are discussing in terms of how they are allocating housing units? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know the local housing associations are always open to people coming to their housing meetings. I know that in Rankin Inlet, when I listen to the community radio there, they always announce when the housing association is having a meeting and they have annual public meetings through their AGMs. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I understand that every community is different, but in terms of looking at the whole territory, I think there's not enough understanding of how the public housing system functions; just the very basics that yeah, when you leave your windows open in the middle of winter, somebody pays for that.

I don't know if once a year is enough in terms of having a meeting to talk about this very important issue. I guess I'll just leave it as a comment. I feel that there needs to be increased transparency and that it would probably help to alleviate a lot of our issues in terms of perceived conflict of interest, board performance, and staff performance maybe. I'll just leave it there. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. I take that as a comment. Next name on my list, Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe we are on the page where it speaks to the housing corporation interactions with the LHOs. The issue which causes confusion is that when a tenant gains employment, their

monthly rent to the LHO immediately gets increased. I would like to ask the minister if that is indeed the case.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) If our chief financial officer, Mr. Moyo, can respond to it, it will be clearer, with your permission, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Moyo.

Mr. Moyo: Public housing rent is reviewed every year and that is the first of September of each year after receiving verifications of income from tenants. We look at how much rent they're supposed to pay based on their income and it changes once a year. However, if somebody's income falls or they lose their job, the rent is adjusted immediately so they don't have to wait for the whole year for the rent to come down. The rent can only be increased once a year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser: *Qujannamiik* for the information. Does the NHC work with the local...obviously. (interpretation) Do they provide training to (interpretation ends) tenant relations officers on the matters that the official raised? (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, the district offices provide training as

required. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The verification of income guidelines (interpretation) are probably outdated now. They were set in October 2014. (interpretation ends) Will these amounts be updated in the next while? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): This will be further reviewed with the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation when meet with them. Yes, this will be reviewed in the near future. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) Thank you, minister. (interpretation ends) Just a question here. I note that Coral Harbour's core needs income threshold is \$161,000. Can the minister explain to the House what this actually means? Naujaat is \$168,000 and Coral Harbour is \$161,000, and Iqaluit, just for an example, \$177,500. Why are the numbers so different? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll refer the question to our chief financial officer, Mr. Moyo, if you will allow. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Moyo.

Mr. Moyo: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, it is true that Coral Harbour is at \$161,000 and the numbers are different for each community.

I'll just explain where we get the numbers from. The CMHC provides us with what they call the core income threshold, Canada's national income threshold, but we adjust the CMHC's numbers to increase them for Nunavut. What these numbers mean is they basically come up with an income threshold.

If you make, for example, \$161,000 and you live in Coral Harbour, the housing corporation cannot provide you with public housing because you're supposed to be able to fend for yourself. For homeownership, if you make more than that income, you're not eligible for homeownership assistance, but if you make less than that, then the NHC can assist you with either homeownership or public housing. That's what that number means.

In 2014 we revised the number to increase the CMHC threshold to a higher number because it costs a lot more in Nunavut for you to be able to afford your own home. That is why the numbers are different from each community because the cost of living is not the same in Grise Fiord as it is in Arviat, for example. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Thank you for the information. My last question, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) When I went for a constituency visit to Naujaat, my

constituents complained about the Co-op dividends that they receive, as they are very loyal to their local Co-op. The dividends that the Co-op members receive are used to increase the rent of the tenant. Is that allowed? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you. The Co-ops are returning the money to their members through (interpretation ends) dividends, (interpretation) which I'm not sure what the Inuktitut term would be. However, it's considered income and it's included within the salary earnings of the tenants. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't totally agree with the minister. The money comes from my pocket because I purchased something and it's returned as a dividend from the Co-op. It came from my pocket; it's just being returned to me as a dividend. I don't believe that it should be considered income of the tenant. Can the housing corporation make amendments to this, Mr. Chairman? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's how it is. When we invest money, it's very difficult to say that it's just being returned. I understand exactly where the member is coming from, but it's such a huge sum of money with some dividends that are received by the Co-op members.

That's the case at this time. I'm sure that it could be part of the review, whether or not it needs to be done that way. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe that this needs to change through a cabinet directive. If the minister was given a directive, I believe that this can be amended. It's not part of their income; it's just being returned based on what the individual spent. It doesn't come from the government. It's the money that the individual spent already. (interpretation ends) That's my interpretation of this dividend, so I leave it in the hands of the minister to make an adjustment to the way our constituents are assessed in terms of their rents. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's just a comment.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Mr. Chairman, I understand where my colleague is coming and where he is headed with this, but it is an income. When you shop at your Co-op, you're making an investment so you will get a return on your investment. The way it stands now, it's considered a dividend. If you don't shop there, you might not get as much of a dividend, but you're still getting a dividend. You are a shareholder of a company and you are getting a dividend. It doesn't matter if you are a shareholder of Quassa's construction or Kissarviq Co-op or Naujaat Co-op or whatever Co-op you are at. You are still a shareholder, so it is considered a dividend at that point.

I will take my colleague's suggestion to review the matter and we could always look at it, Mr. Chairman. I will take their suggestion. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. I have no more names on my list. We will now go to the next page. N-IV-5. Nunavut Housing Corporation. Affordable Housing Program. Public Housing. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My first question is going to be about the Tenant to Owner Program that the Nunavut Housing Corporation has. When was the last time that this program was utilized, and does the corporation have any plans in reinstating the program? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To date I believe nobody has utilized that program. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Looking at the most recent annual report for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, I believe there are over 120 public housing tenants that have an annual income of over \$100,000. I was wondering how it would be possible for these public housing tenants to take advantage of this program. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr.

Chairman. Very good question and I am glad you are asking questions on this line. Mr. Chairman, it just takes an application. The tenants could fill out an application and apply. It becomes an issue. I think the reason it is not popular or why we have seen that is it would mean that the LHO would give up that house. I think that's where we start running into issues. All it takes is to fill out a form. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that response. My next question, also stated in your most recent annual report is the demographic breakdown of public housing tenants. As of March 31, 2017, there were over 1,000 tenants over 60 residing in public housing units.

With the potential of elders facilities opening up across the territory, they will be taking in elders with varying levels of care requirements, from dementia care, which requires a high level of assistance, to residential long-term care, which is medium, and assisted living, which is low. How many of these public housing tenants that are over 60 would potentially be moving into these elder care facilities? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm not avoiding an answer, but it's not possible to tell at this time. We honestly don't know if any or if all would be qualified for that kind of care. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My next question is with regard to the assisted living units now in elder care facilities. These are generally apartment style units that are attached to the elders facilities for elders who are fairly independent but still require some level of assistance. When our elders facilities do open up, I'm sure that they will be containing these assisted living units. If that is the case, would the Nunavut Housing Corporation be paying the cost of the beds in these assisted living units or would that be the responsibility of another GN organization? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My friend is right; it would be the responsibility of the client department that's responsible for that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reason I was asking is because with potential elder care facilities opening up, a lot of our elders don't necessarily require a considerable amount of residential care or assistance but would, I'm sure, prefer to live in these facilities. Given the option, I believe that they would prefer to live in the environment that allows them to take full advantage of all of the additional services.

My question is: if public housing tenants request to move into these assisted living units, would it not be the responsibility

of Nunavut Housing Corporation to continue to pay for the cost of these units? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think, in terms of elders, they prefer to be independent, living in their own home. Unfortunately, through situations beyond their control, they may have to move into elders facilities and then they become the care of the government. When that happens, then the appropriate department begins to take care of those costs. That's how it works. I don't think the corporation would continue to care for them if they become the care of a different department and responsibility, so too does the care.

If you're an elder and you don't need a long-term care facility, you stay in the home of which you're renting, but if you end up having to go the long-term care facility, that facility is the responsibility of the client department. Anybody who lives in that unit, long-term care facility becomes the responsibility of the client department and they in turn take care of all costs associated with taking care of the elder in that facility. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name on my list, Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is in regard to public housing and the ability to rent units from the LHO. I wonder what this is referring to when mentioning new housing units or how these rents would be set and I wonder if this speaks to that

issue. I would like to get clarification from our minister. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This line item speaks about both types of housing units the LHO maintains. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In thinking about the rent scale, another matter I am also thinking about is rent paid for NHC units, as some clients are not incurring any income and they are aware of these cases. However, it has a caveat here. The reasons are quite numerous as it rarely is due to a single reason. Can the minister provide further information on this issue to provide more understanding and what their thoughts are on it? I hope I was clearly understandable, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you for that question, Mr. Chairman. I will refer this to the president of the housing corporation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Audla.

Mr. Audla: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to the member for that question. On the overall spending of the

monies that we spend for our current public housing stock, when you take into consideration that each unit per year costs us \$26,000 and all combined, when you look at the 5,000 plus public housing units that we're responsible for, we spend close to \$153 million, which goes into the local housing authorities. Then based on that amount, the overall GN budget, we're in the 13 to 14 percent of the overall GN budget.

In comparison to other jurisdictions, I'll use Ontario as an example. They spend 0.01 percent maybe of their overall provincial budget. Nunavut does its part, especially the Nunavut government when it comes to the maintenance and care of the existing housing stocks that we have. We spend quite a bit of our own within the GN and it's something that we always emphasize at the federal level. It's something that we will continue to emphasize.

As our stock grows, we currently have a 3,000 plus deficit that we need more public housing units. Each and every time we get new units, it costs the GN that much more for the purposes of maintenance. That sort of gives you a perspective or an idea in a nutshell as to what we do at the housing corporation and sort of the lack of resources that we're in right now with a deficit situation, especially in the stock. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank you for clarifying that. Also, earlier you indicated that there are three communities that have a deficit of \$500,000 or more. There are 25

communities in Nunavut that have local housing organizations. What about the deficit recovery plans, or what do you do about communities that are in a deficit situation? I hope I was clear. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Once communities are in a deficit situation, it's up to the community to rectify that problem and the deficit isn't passed on to the other communities, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. (interpretation ends)
Members, we will break for lunch and report back at 1:30 p.m.

>>Committee recessed at 11:55 and resumed at 13:30

Chairman: Order. I call the committee meeting back to order. We are on N-IV-5. Affordable Housing Program. Next name on my list, Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I saw this on the preamble above. Under the rental housing program, duties include allocation of housing to community residents according to need. When I was campaigning, I went to a house. It had two bedrooms with 11 people and one of the communities in another area had 23 people with three bedrooms and the porch was being used for a room. My question is: how does the Nunavut Housing Corporation deal with overcrowding in extreme cases like this? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Unfortunately that's the story that just plays itself over and over and over again. We need to get that kind of detail and that kind of information from the local housing authorities and organizations so that we could factor those figures and numbers in when we are doing housing allocations. It's part of why it's so important for them try to put people who are over-housed into a house that is made for them, more fitting for them because as much as that is true, there are some people who have two people in a four-bedroom house. We work with the housing authorities to try to fix that somehow, but we would really like to hear more. It's important for the LHOs to let us know when there is severe over-housing like that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. (interpretation ends) Next name on my list, Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) When it comes to public housing, there are about 5,000 public housing units across Nunavut. That's a big task. LHOs have their hands full, right?

I notice here in your business plan in terms of monitoring units. On page 16 of your business plan, it says that "The NHC will explore technology to remotely monitor vacant units." You're working with CGS. I don't know about working with that minister because he is really difficult, but it says that "Further collaboration with Community and Government Services is necessary to

support project scoping.” What’s the timeline for this one and what’s preventing it from moving ahead? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. It’s very important for the Nunavut Housing Corporation. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That’s a very good question. Possibly the president of the housing corporation can respond to that question, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Audla.

Mr. Audla: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to the member for that question. We are in the process of handing over to the local housing organizations the tablets to assist in the condition rating of each of the units within the public housing stock. They’re transitioning from the older system to the ones we are now providing to the local housing authority and organization. We are currently trying to work out the bugs so that it’s more maintenance/user friendly and to ensure that everything that needs to be captured in the condition rating towards that unit is within that tablet and that it’s actually quite easy to use and that it’s up-loadable to the local server.

As you can imagine, any transitioning from one technological tablet to another will take some time. Because each of the housing authorities now has these tablets, it’s now a matter of actually using them and seeing how well the transition is. It’s happening now and also

we’re looking into what CGS does with their major infrastructures and how they monitor those and how we can take the best examples that exist right now and not try to reinvent the wheel but to actually use whatever technology is available. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I think the answer was a bit more about maintenance. I was trying to ask about monitoring vacant units, which is the third bullet on that page, “...remotely monitor vacant units...” (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Very much along the same lines, I appreciate the question. We’re working with CGS to clean up the technology and make it more efficient and effective, but we are working on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main: Thank you. Are there any plans to look at rolling out that system so that you would be monitoring all your units, whether they’re vacant or not? You have 5,000 units that you’re maintaining and operating. It’s a bit like the situation with our health system.

If we don’t have the data and we don’t know how many people are sick... I’m putting myself in your shoes or in the LHOs’ shoes. They need access to the data in terms of where are your utility

costs coming from, what are the conditions within your housing units in terms of humidity, in terms of temperature. Is the HRV unit functioning? Is there an overflow in the crawlspace?

If we could have a system where the housing association could monitor the condition of their units, I think it would be really beneficial for them.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Very good points and I couldn't agree with you more. As technology evolves in that direction automatically anyway, I think it will be helpful for us as they start making boiler systems and HVAC systems where they monitor themselves and let you know that something is failing. At this point we want to get something that works. I'm sure that once it starts working with the vacant units so that we're not getting there after the pipe busted but before and things like that, once the client departments get this part hammered out, I'm sure we're going to look at seeing if we can't expand it to those very things Mr. Main is talking about. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Just one more question on the utility costs for the public housing stock, does anybody crunch the numbers in terms of each housing unit has different water and electricity usage? You should be able to

identify the units that are above the average and maybe it's because there could be an issue with the house. It could be an issue with the person who is in the house. Does anybody look at those types of numbers? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We actually do have a system that monitors all of the above house by house, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you, minister. In the case that you notice that, let's say for example, the electricity usage is just way out of whack in a certain unit, what action would be taken to try to correct that? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the first steps would be to determine why it's like that and what is causing the spike or the constant use of such high electricity as the example that my friend is using. You would go and investigate why it's like that, and then go from there and begin to answer how you can decrease it and so on and so forth. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I am trying not to get too detailed here.

When it comes to public housing units, we look at, again, the utilities, the cost of maintenance, the condition of the units, and the debt that is associated with them. What can we do in this territory to encourage public housing tenants to take more personal responsibility for their unit? I think it's a real key and it could really be beneficial if we can help people to understand it. Yes, the cost of maintaining your unit is \$26,000 a year plus any other damage that may be incurred.

I would like to hear what the housing corporation's plans are in this regard and if there is anything new that you are looking at trying in terms of encouraging people to take responsibility for their own public housing unit (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Working through the guidelines and working with the housing corporation's board of directors and through the local housing organizations, I think the key here is education and awareness. That is one area that I know we will be pushing toward, especially educating the clients that your house does cost \$26,000 to \$30,000 a year to maintain, and whatever you could do to keep that number down has a tremendous impact.

We have clients out there who will let the doorknob fall off because they didn't tighten it with a Philips screwdriver,

even though they are very good at taking apart a snowmobile and putting it back together or fixing boat motors and everything. Not all but some of the clients will let a cupboard doorknob fall off because they didn't tighten it.

It's a lot of education because then you have to bring in someone you are paying a lot of money an hour to go in there to tighten a screw, and that all gets into the cost factors, right? I think what's key here is to educate the clients, not all of them. Some of them are tremendous. Some of the houses you go into they look like they just finished them last week, but they are 20 years old or 30 years.

It's not all clients, but again, to repeat myself for the fifth time, I think what's key is to educate the clients in the importance of maintaining your home and turning lights off and turning the thermostat down if you are no there and so on. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) On the issue of educating public housing tenants, are there any specific initiatives that are planned within this fiscal year? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A perfect line of questioning. Yes, we are working on the tenant engagement campaign that we are planning right now and that we will instigate in the coming weeks. We are

working with the energy and QEC campaign to talk about energy efficiency and prospects there, yes, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) When it comes to encouraging public housing tenants to take ownership of their unit, on the one hand, yes, we want them to take care of this unit, maintain it and treat it as if it were your own, but on the other hand, I understand some tenants are frustrated when they're not allowed to paint, for example, a child's bedroom. Maybe they want to paint the kid's bedroom blue. When you're directing these LHOs, do you tell them specifically that tenants are not allowed to paint their own units? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There's a lot of leeway given to the local housing authority and we don't direct them on what they can or can't do. That's usually at the discretion of the housing organization. I know of many communities where the LHOs will let them know that they have paint if they wanted to paint them and stuff. I guess it's a matter of different community LHOs using their authority. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends)

That's good to hear. Maybe it would be beneficial if the housing corporation could take an official position on this. I don't know what your deliberation process would be, but if it came from the housing corporation to the LHOs, something along the lines of it's a really good thing when tenants paint their own units or when they do their own weather stripping on a door or if they want to replace their own doorknob, which is not very complicated; even I can do that.

An Hon. Member: Really?

Mr. Main: Yes, even me.

>> *Laughter*

In terms of something I was asking about earlier, conflict of interest, I know that there is this LHO board members' manual. Can you confirm: is this the current version, the one that I have here that's off the website, or has it been changed recently? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If it's on our website, it's current. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) In terms of conflict of interest, it just lays out very common sense rules here. The board members cannot make decisions if a spouse, son, daughter, brother, or sister of the board member in terms of wherever they live or any other relative or dependant who lives in the same

house as the board member. Are LHOs reporting to the housing corporation in terms of were board members declared conflict in 15 different occasions in the last year? Do you have any kind of reporting in terms of how many times they're declaring conflict when they're making these very important decisions? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The [members] are responsible to the board and they declare those conflicts to the board. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I understand that, but my understanding is that the LHOs report to the housing corporation, so you are the parent of those separate little boards. Without micromanaging them, does the minister think it would be valuable to have this type of information? Maybe I'll phrase in a way. Would be, in an operational sense, beneficial to have this information at a territory-wide level? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When the boards have their meetings, they all produce minutes and in those minutes there's declaration of conflict. As long as conflicts are being declared and they're following the declaration guidelines, then there is no

conflict and we would not have an issue with them. I think where you would begin to run into issues is if people are not declaring conflict. In terms of declaring conflict, it's just part of the process. I haven't heard of any yet to date if there were any people not declaring conflict. Our departmental staff in the districts review the minutes to ensure that proper conduct and procedures were carried during the local housing organization's meetings. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I just have one final question. On page 17 of the business plan it says one of your priorities for M&I, "Develop a strategy to better plan for and address delayed and incomplete Modernization & Improvement work on public housing units, including implementation of comprehensive annual plans..." What problem are these comprehensive annual plans trying to address at the LHO level? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister of the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Mr. Chairman, I would like the president of the housing corporation to respond to that, if you don't mind. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Audla.

Mr. Audla: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to the member for that

question. It is an ongoing issue with respect to M&I and within the communities at the local housing level for these major improvements to happen on top of the expected O&M, the regular maintenance requirements and the local wherewithal or resources that they may have or may not have. Then you are dependent on materials and the shipment of those materials, as well as whether or not there's someone locally that is able to do that kind of work.

I can go into examples of chimney repairs or oil tank replacements or refurbishing of oil tank furnaces or tearing down a wall and putting up a new wall, major improvements such as that. Because they are trying to keep up with the regular O&M, sometimes these M&I issues are left to the wayside, which results in the carry forwards that you have seen over the years.

We're trying to see what we can do at the NHC to assist the local housing authorities to carry out those major improvements and what we can do at the NHC to address some of the issues. We know, because of the lack of actual major improvements that may be happening at the local level, it compounds the issues of the state of that unit and mould becomes an issue. One area where we have been concentrating is at the territorial-wide level to look at mould remediation and using the M&I funds to address some of that.

Again, these are many major projects when it comes to chimneys, when it comes to windows, doors, replacement of either a wall or roofing, or anything of that nature. Again, it's all dependent on whether or not the local housing authority has the actual maintenance

people who are capable of doing that and if they don't, then they would have to fly in a contractor if they don't have one locally and the materials that are needed to address those issues.

We are currently looking at how we can work better together with the districts and the local housing authorities to try to get on top of this. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. A reminder also to all members and ministerial officials, I ask that you refrain from using acronyms, as using acronyms is making it very difficult for our interpreters to keep up with as they attempt to determine what the acronym means in Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun.

Next name on my list, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to kind of continue on the lines of question of my colleague.

When we're talking about the maintenance and utility cost for units, the minister made a very good point. There are different levels of engagement by tenants in housing of general maintenance, things that alleviate some of the workload to LHOs. We have all seen different pictures from some colleagues around the table of units in their communities.

When we look at how far some of these units have deteriorated, what type of oversight is the NHC providing to LHOs on their annual inspections? A lot of these issues don't materialize overnight or even within a one-year period. How in depth are these inspections and are they occurring annually? Thank you, Mr.

Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The inspections that are happening are in very good detail. Just to add a little bit more to the comments on tenants maintaining their units a bit more, as part of the campaign towards that, we will be in the campaign working towards providing some minor maintenance tool kits and stuff like that are planned in that.

In terms of the annual maintenance, if I could have my president respond to that through you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Audla.

Mr. Audla: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to the member. I'll refer back to one of my answers to Mr. Main on the condition rating of units that we're rolling out now to the local housing organizations. That's one aspect of trying to stay on top of the annual inspections, the condition rating system, CRS, and the condition rating systems that we require the local housing authorities to fill. Once we have that system uploaded, we will be able to monitor whether or not those actual condition ratings are happening and to try to make it as close to real time as possible. That's what we're hoping to have and reality may dictate otherwise depending on actual usage at the local housing authority level, but it's something that we're going to keep a close eye on. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know this has been brought up in the past of the example in Nunavik they do like an incentive program for tenants in their public housing, especially where they take the condition rating and if it doesn't change or even improves, tenants are entered into a draw for some fairly substantial prizes with differing levels. As part of the engagement that you're looking at, is that something that's being considered, more of a carrot than a stick type model of encouraging tenants to be more conscientious of the maintenance of their unit? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's definitely something that we could add into the pot of ideas that we have right now and working on right now to improve tenant relations and to get the tenants active in taking pride in maintaining their units. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to take a final comment. I appreciate the work that the local housing organizations. I know the guys here in Iqaluit work very hard to keep the stock maintained and it's an ever-challenging prospect when there are continual broken windows.

I just wanted to thank the minister and his staff for acting so quickly for any issues that I have brought up on behalf of my constituents. I just wanted to thank them publicly and Mr. Audla, Mr. Gershom, and Mr. Hooey sitting over

there for all the hard work that they put in to making sure that the mandate of the Nunavut Housing Corporation is being followed. We're not always here to tear things down. I recognize that there are issues, but there are also good things happening. I just wanted to acknowledge that as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

>>Applause

Chairman: Thank you. I take that as a comment. Next name on my list, Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Just one question on social housing, the federal government is going to be enforcing the carbon tax on Nunavut in 2019. I wonder if the NHC has brought that into consideration. I note in one of the reports that it cost \$26,500 annually per house. Has the NHC come up with a figure on how much extra cost it's going to cost in terms of the carbon tax? (interpretation) Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. (interpretation ends) Minister of the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Mr. Chairman, yes, that's something that's going to affect all the departments, including the Nunavut Housing Corporation. Unfortunately at this time we don't know by how much. It will affect us, but we just don't know by how much at this point, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. I have no more names on my list. We will now move on to N-IV-6. Affordable Housing Program (Staff Housing). Any questions?

Mr. Main.

Mr. Main: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll put my rubber stamp away for now.

When it comes to construction of new housing units, we will use staff housing units for example, I know that contractors do watch these proceedings by the way. In the Budget Address, the finance minister said, "...employers in the territory are relying too much on imported labour while many Inuit are underemployed or dependent on social assistance. We will put our communities first by offering more local skills and trades training." In terms of the housing corporation and new builds, are there any specifics to further elaborate on this line in the Budget Address? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That falls right in the same, no different than CGS and NNI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I feel like it should go without saying, but when it comes to NNI and the Inuit labour requirements that are put into contracts, are there plans to do anything differently going forward under this new mandate in terms of trying to use as much local labour as possible?

My understanding of this issue, and it is very rudimentary, is that the more local labour you're using, in some cases it

could drive up the cost of construction. It's what the contractors say. If we take into account the costs that are incurred for having people not working, having people sitting in public housing and all the unemployed and all the issues that come along with that, I think that we need to push for a higher percentage across the board of Inuit labour requirement for contracting.

I just want to hear if there are plans to do anything differently in terms of housing builds in Nunavut under this new mandate and new government. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I understand where my colleague is coming from. All the construction and contract work for the department includes and goes through the NNI Policy. We have to. We pay bonuses for NNI, so the idea is to pay an incentive. The more Inuit you hire, the percentage goes up and the better your bonus would be. It's trying to be more proactive instead of disincentive, but that's always a work in progress to try to see how we can maximize local hire and Inuit content, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main: Thank you. I understand that. You want the different contractors to compete with each other in terms of who can employ more Inuit or more Nunavummiut. This is how I interpret that, which is I think is great. Will there be any initiatives under the area of...? Let's say, for example, you are building a housing unit here or in community X

and you can't find enough construction labourers in community X, will there be any initiatives to encourage the contractors to recruit from the community next door? I think that's clear enough. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: This is more of O&M for staff housing, but if the minister wants to respond, Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's always a challenge. I think it depends on what community X is; you have a certain labour pool able or willing to do the work. If you have more than one project happening in a community, the pool starts to get small. The idea is always to hire as many local people as you can.

In terms of letting contractors know that if they don't have enough labour in a community, there is a labour pool of employable people in another community is one that should be entertained. To do that, you probably need to have a list of people who are available to do that in, "pick a community." It is something that really should be explored. I don't see why we couldn't do that because you see contractors hiring whole construction crews from the south, construction companies up north that have bunkhouses sitting empty until they get a contract and people from the south come in and fill in the bunkhouse. Why not fill the bunkhouse with people from Nunavut?

It's a very good idea and I think it's something that we really should look at, not just the housing corporation but Community and Government Services

and people who are looking for contractors to do that because it's a great idea. The logistics and details of trying to figure out what people are available from this community and that community and willing to live a whole summer in Arviat or Coral Harbour or whatever is another point, but to get that pool and to do that, I think, is a very worthwhile thing to look at and look at very seriously. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I hope that any contractors who may be watching or might read this later on understand that the housing minister feels that this is a good idea. I hope that the minister's words will have weight and if any contractor manages to put an idea like that into reality, I think I would strongly support them getting additional work from our government dollar because that is money well spent in my opinion. No further questions. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name on my list, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to follow up on Mr. Hickey's questions earlier about employees that are in staff housing that reach retirement. I was wondering: in any given fiscal year, would you be able to provide us with an estimate on how many GN staff retire that are in staff housing? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That question would be better answered by the Department of Finance, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm just wondering if you would be able to provide us with a little bit of information on the proper procedures that are in place for employees that do retire that are in staff housing. Are they given a transition period to find new accommodations or are they expected to vacate the unit upon their last working day? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Not to avoid answering the questions of my colleague, but that would be through the employee relations department where they would do the transitional stuff and work their way out of a unit. Again, I think that would be better responded to by the minister responsible, which is not me. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In response to my written question, the Nunavut Housing Corporation stated that there were 660 staff housing units in Iqaluit and 639 of which were leased from the private market. The CMHC's northern housing report indicated that 41 percent of Iqaluit's private rental market was leased by the government.

My first question is: as of that figure of 639 leased units in Iqaluit, has that figure remained constant or has it been increasing over the years? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I appreciate the question and yes, it has been remaining pretty stable, pretty constant around that figure, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that response. The reason I'm asking is because Iqaluit has a limited housing market, private rental market, and considering that the government plays a major factor in paying the market rent, has the Nunavut Housing Corporation played a role in artificially increasing the market rent here in Iqaluit? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Mr. Chairman, I don't believe we have played a role in it. I think one of the biggest factors in the city of Iqaluit is the land availability drives those figures up, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name on my list, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to just follow-up on my colleague's questions regarding local hiring. I appreciate the minister's use of

that term when they're talking about contract parameters or encouraging contractors to use local hires and Inuit content.

One of the concerns that I have heard over the years is long-time northerners or people who have married into local families struggle to find employment and struggle to find opportunities. When the minister states local hires and Inuit content, are there contract parameters or encouragement to contractors after their Inuit labour attempts are exhausted to move to the next category of northern residents in the contracting field and to encourage contractors to use long-time northerners before they import labour? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Another capital-related question, but if the minister wants to respond, Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Mr. Chairman, we follow the NNI contracting procedures and that strictly deals with Nunavummi Nangminilingnut Ikajuutiit. It talks specifically of beneficiaries and we follow that.

If I can while I have the floor, Mr. Chairman, when we said that we encourage them to hire local and Inuit within Nunavut, it's good to know that there are businesses out there that do hire Inuit. If it's not available in that community, they bring them in and they bring them to places like Sanikiluaq, Kugluktuk, Iqaluktuuttiaq, and move those crews around. There's a very young company out there that I know of that does that. There are success stories like that.

In terms of is there a program in the

contracting where we say, “Okay, you hire first Inuit and then long-term residents local hire,” right now through the NNI Policy it’s not there. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. A reminder to the members to have your questions on operations and maintenance. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am going to follow up with my line of questioning, if you will indulge me. I realize the NNI is very specific on what types of bid adjustments and Inuit labour content is part of the contracting. I’ll just leave it as a comment. I would encourage the minister to explore legalities and contract conditions where local hires could also be a part of the contract content. I’ll just leave that as a comment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name on my...Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to add to the end of his comment, I have just been advised that there is an adjustment for Nunavut content as well in addition to the NNI. There is an adjustment in there. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to correct myself. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name on my list, Mr. Kaernerk.

Mr. Kaernerk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I apologize for coming in late as I had to deal with something.

I’m not sure whether this will make sense or not, but it’s in regard to my

constituency community, for example, Igloolik. How many staff housing units are vacant? I’ll start off with that. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. 18. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Kaernerk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank the minister for elaborating further. Yes, I wanted to voice some comments on this matter and that was why I asked the question with overcrowding in mind. I wonder whether or not this can be looked at. To use an example of a unit overrun with mould or mould infested, can the tenants of these mouldy units be temporarily placed in some of the empty GN units while their units are being cleaned and renovated? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If the member is talking about housing units that are set aside, no, that’s not how it is set up at this time. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Kaernerk.

Mr. Kaernerk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank you for your response. Moving on to another topic, in your business plan, it states that

you will incorporate *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* when construction of housing units is contemplated. When will this inclusion of IQ begin? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When looking at *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* and incorporating it into construction, the housing corporation tries to incorporate that into projects today. We consult with the community about the direction the house should face, which direction the porch should face to be protected, which way the steps should go, using Inuit localized knowledge about the prevailing winds or the way snow drifts around the community. This is where we incorporate this knowledge.

Further, when housing designs are being changed into blueprints, this also includes the layout of the house and what rooms should be in which area. These are the types of work that is incorporating that knowledge and we try to consult them so that the design works with *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* concepts of a home and this is how we use it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Kaernerck.

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, that was the primary reason why I queried you on that matter. Now, more duplex units are being constructed these days and one of the biggest causes of concern is when the wind comes in from the ocean and starts pelting the doors with moist salty

air and when the doors are constantly wet, it causes mould to grow on the opposite side. This usually starts the process of deterioration with the establishment of mould. This is one of the areas I want taken into consideration due to the fact that Hall Beach's beach is eroding quickly, and the A-shaped units are seeing the coastal area shrinking and edging closer every year. This is starting to lead to further issues in our community.

When *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* is spouted as being followed, wouldn't it be better to instead strengthen that in your corporate policies? It should be provided to the construction companies so that they have to follow this knowledge. The majority of units face the ocean. Even though the duplexes that are built are new, they start shifting, causing cracks in the walls and ceilings. Additionally, Hall Beach is dotted with many shallow lakes. When a lake is backfilled with gravel, they then build the units on them. These units remain in good condition for about a year, after which it starts deteriorating.

What I want taken into consideration and which isn't a question is if the local housing association boards were consulted more on the placement of the units, including how to best build in the local environment. Mould and overcrowding are the reasons I want this taken into consideration, especially in light of our housing crisis. I want to have overcrowding and homelessness as the foundation for this idea I want considered. It isn't really a question but more of a suggestion. If he wishes to respond, I would appreciate it. That is it for me.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Your comments are very understandable and are ideas we can support as they are also true.

Nonetheless, we don't have complete discretion as the housing corporation to determine which lot would house the project in the communities. With that being the situation, the lots are given to the housing corporation as the lots to build on. This unit will go to this lot. We then have to build the units on the lots we are provided with. This is part of what causes some of the problems because if we want to move it a little to the side or if we could move it to another lot facing another direction, it would have sufficed, but we have no discretion on the lots.

The community lands division usually has a plan which lays out the development of the community, with areas identified for development. We are told this is where you will build the units, as this is your assigned lot. We then have to work within the lot and it can cause serious problems. However, we do use and want to continue to use the LHO boards when contemplating the building of housing units. I concur with my colleague's comments, but we face quite a number of barriers and these are just some of the problems we face. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. (interpretation ends) Nunavut Housing Corporation. Affordable Housing Program (Staff Housing). I have no more names on my

list. (interpretation) I have already recognized you, but I ask if you have additional questions in regard to this issue. (interpretation ends) I'll give you two questions. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Looking at the list of companies that you lease your staff housing units from, I noticed that one of the companies is the Nunavut Construction Corporation. I understand that with regard to some of their other assets, the government is currently planning to purchase those larger assets. Have you had any discussions with the Nunavut Construction Corporation in terms of doing a rent-to-own type of arrangement for those staff housing units? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, those discussions have just started very recently, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) My final question is following up on Mr. Lightstone's question here. Is the government considering withdrawing from the provision of staff housing altogether in the communities of Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet, and/or Cambridge Bay as was planned by the previous government? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We're reviewing that position at this point. It's not an option right now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. We will now go to page L-3. Nunavut Housing Corporation. Total Department. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. Total Department. \$201,096,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Do members agree that we have concluded the Nunavut Housing Corporation? Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak, closing comments.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) I would first like to thank the LHO board members throughout Nunavut. I know that it's the most difficult board to be a member of because they have to make very heavy decisions. If you're watching the proceedings, you're doing a very good job and please don't give up.

>>Applause

Secondly, I would like to thank my colleagues. When we're not having a meeting here, please don't hesitate to come to my office because it's very beneficial to me and my officials. We like to hear suggestions for improvement and recommendations. We just heard a number of suggestions.

Lastly, (interpretation ends) I would like to thank my staff for being here this morning and today, and also Mr. Hooey and Mr. Lukas, who are sitting in the gallery, ready to put out any fires we weren't able to handle.

Thank you for your time, colleagues. (interpretation) Thank you.

>>Applause

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Sergeant-at-arms, please escort the minister's officials out.

We will take a 10-minute break to set up for the next department review, the Department of Family Services. We will take a 10-minute break.

>>Committee recessed at 14:30 and resumed at 14:44

Bill 04 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2018-2019 – Family Services – Consideration in Committee

Chairman: Order. I call the committee meeting back to order. I would now like to ask Acting Minister Savikataaq, do you have officials that you would like to appear before the committee? Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the acting minister, absolutely. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Does the committee agree to let the minister and his officials to go to the witness table? Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. (interpretation) Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the minister's officials in.

Thank you very much. For the record, Minister Savikataaq, please introduce your officials. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my right is the DM, Yvonne Niego, and to my left is the ADM, Sol Vardy. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Welcome to the House. You may now proceed with your opening comments. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee of the Whole, I am pleased to be here today to present and discuss the proposed 2018-19 Main Estimates and Business Plan for the Department of Family Services.

Mr. Chairman, for year 2018-19, the Department of Family Services is proposing an operational budget of \$153,213,000, which represents an increase of 10.8 percent, or \$14,951,000, over last year's main estimates.

The department's staff complement increased from 228 PYs in 2017-18 to 236 PYs in the proposed 2018-19 main estimates. This increase will allow the department to provide the range of programs and services that promote the well-being and self-reliance of Nunavummiut and to prepare individuals for meaningful work through employment readiness programming and supports.

Children and Family Services

The Children and Family Services Branch has been allocated \$64.0 million of the department's proposed 2017-18 operational budget. This branch provides a broad range of support services for children, families, and vulnerable adults who may require protection and/or specialized support. The division also provides emergency intervention as well as prevention programs to address domestic and family violence.

The department recognizes the important role that foster parents play in Nunavut. They provide children and youth with a safe family setting that provides the vital support that is necessary to enable parents to address issues of concern related to the safety and well-being of their children. Providing foster families with appropriate support results in stable placements and better outcomes for children and youth.

To support these efforts, the Children and Family Services Branch will be increasing supports to foster parents through the addition of three foster care coordinators. One coordinator will be placed in each regional office to support communities within the region at a cost of \$311,000.

As the department must utilize residential care, such as group homes, supported living homes, and alternative family care homes both in-territory and out of territory, for Nunavummiut who have complex needs, additional funding of \$7,739,000 has been allocated to address the residential care budget shortfall. In total the number of clients in residential care increased to over 200 clients in 2017-18.

Income Assistance Branch

The Income Assistance Branch has been allocated \$60.0 million of the department's proposed operational budget for 2018-19. The Income Assistance Program includes a variety of benefit programs that provide financial assistance to people 18 years of age and over and their dependants. Income assistance is a program of last resort intended to help Nunavut families and individuals meet their basic needs when, for various reasons, including disability, illness, low income, or periods of unemployment, they are unable to provide for themselves.

Based on income assistance records and population estimates, approximately 40 percent of Nunavummiut rely on income assistance for their primary source of income.

The department will undertake its second phase of income assistance reforms to simplify benefits and ensure that they cover basic living expenses. In these next reforms, the department will revise the food allowance table, combine the food and clothing benefits, increase supports to single clients who are currently under-supported, and simplify how benefits are calculated. The department has requested an additional \$6.2 million to accomplish these improvements.

Career Development Branch

The Career Development Branch has been allocated \$20 million of the department's proposed 2018-19 operational budget. This branch employs career development officers in all regions to promote employment training

programs, to administer funding to clients for these programs, and to offer career counselling services. Career Development delivers the Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students (FANS) program, which provides funding for students to attend post-secondary education. The branch is also responsible for the Nunavut Apprenticeship Certification Unit, which oversees the certification of apprentices and journeypersons in the territory.

Corporate Management

The Corporate Management Branch has been allocated \$9.2 million of the department's proposed operational budget for 2018-19. This branch is responsible for overall management support to the department, setting direction and leadership in the key areas of strategic planning, policy development, Inuit employment and human resources planning, systems management, financial planning, as well as the Office of the Public Guardian.

The department provides a range of support services to vulnerable Nunavummiut through its Guardianship Program. The Public Guardian, whose main role is to make decisions about personal and health matters for those who, in the court's opinion, are unfit to make such decisions independently, currently has 241 active files and receives approximately 84 new referrals each year. The increase of \$701,000 will provide for a staffing increase of five PYs.

As you will see, this year the department separated the Poverty Reduction Division in the business plan in order to better identify the work that the

department does to address poverty in Nunavut. We will continue to support the coordination and reform of programs with the goal of identifying ways to reduce poverty and better support Nunavummiut who find themselves in vulnerable situations and community-based organizations. In partnership with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, the division supports the Nunavut Roundtable for Poverty Reduction and the implementation of the *Nunavut Food Security Strategy Action Plan*.

Conclusion

Mr. Chairman, in conclusion, this proposed operating budget would allow the department to begin its path to address commitments of *Turaaqtavut* while completing previous reforms that had been identified. It would improve our ability to provide care and to support Nunavummiut as they work toward achieving the vision of Nunavummiut living with a sense of personal well-being.

I would be happy to respond to questions from members of the Committee of the Whole on the proposed 2018-19 Main Estimates and Business Plan of the Department of Family Services. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Does the chair of the standing committee have comments? Please proceed, Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Members of the Standing Committee on Social Wellness have reviewed the 2018-19 Main Estimates and Business Plan of the Department of Family

Services.

Mr. Chairman, the proposed operations and maintenance budget for the Department of Family Services is just over \$153 million for 2018-19. This represents an increase of almost \$15 million over the department's approved budget for 2017-18.

Mr. Chairman, the Department of Family Services coordinates and delivers Nunavut's income assistance programs which are directed towards assisting families, adult individuals, and seniors in meeting their basic needs. Members recognize that new reforms to income assistance programs will require additional funds. A significant percentage of Nunavut's population relies on income assistance. Food allowances and other such benefits have not seen an increase for a number of years and members applaud the government's commitment to revising allowances and benefits based on the increased costs of living in Nunavut. The standing committee looks forward to updates on further reforms of income assistance policies and practices that take into account the actual employment opportunities in communities and how income assistance clients must apply for and use their benefits.

Mr. Chairman, the Child and Family Services Division of the Department of Family Services provides a wide range of support services for children and vulnerable adults, including providing emergency intervention in cases of domestic violence, protecting the rights of children, youth, families, and vulnerable individuals and advocating for the interests of vulnerable members of Nunavut society.

Members have expressed concerns regarding the operation of residential facilities for youth, especially given the current levels of support for foster parents and families. The standing committee encourages the minister in her or his efforts to improve and monitor services in this area and looks forward to updates on the role and operations of the department's new foster care coordinator positions.

Members of the standing committee have raised concerns regarding the limited services available to address mental health issues across Nunavut communities and urge the minister to work closely with her counterparts in Health and Justice to give further consideration to establishing facilities where care and counselling can help and support individuals and communities suffering from trauma and abuse.

Mr. Chairman, the Department of Family Services provides funding and resources for the operation of shelter programs across Nunavut. The standing committee has noted that the department has not significantly increased funding in its 2018-19 budget for contributions towards shelter programs. Members look forward to updates on what options and partnerships are being considered to establish shelters in those communities which currently do not have them. The standing committee further appreciates the Department of Family Services' role in addressing the critical issues of poverty and homelessness across the territory and support the minister in her efforts to work with her government counterparts, especially the Department of Economic Development and Transportation, to develop initiatives and solutions that will assist Nunavummiut

in finding options that will enable them to lead self-sufficient and productive lives.

Mr. Chairman, during the minister's appearance before the standing committee to review his department's draft main estimates for 2018-19, the minister noted that his department has been working closely with Nunavut Arctic College on initiatives to revise the social worker certification program. Members fully support all initiatives to recruit new Nunavummiut into social worker positions, including a review of current compensation and benefit levels.

The Department of Family Services, in conjunction with the Department of Education and Nunavut Arctic College, administers a number of programs and resources related to adult and post-secondary learning. The department also administers financial assistance programs such as FANS, Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students, and the Adult Learning and Training Supports Program which provide important support to individuals seeking to further their education. Members encourage the minister to make greater efforts to promote the department's Summer Employment for Nunavut Students program.

Committee members noted that the delivery of apprenticeship and trades programs could benefit from review and look forward to the introduction of legislative changes in this area.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my opening remarks. I anticipate that individual members will also have questions and comments as we proceed.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Well read. Family Services. We are now on page D-4. Family Services. Corporate Management. Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The *Income Assistance Act* was amended in 2017 following the *Report on the Review and Reform of Income Assistance and Economic Development*. Can you, the minister, describe some of the changes that have been made to income assistance programs to date and what further program or policy changes are currently being considered, for example, productive choices, when there are no jobs to be had in smaller communities like Chesterfield Inlet? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of the main changes that had been done in the phase 1 operational review was income support clients can have up to \$500 in their bank account and still qualify for income support. There are a few more, but if you allow me, I'll let the ADM to tell you what the other details are. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Vardy.

Ms. Vardy: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The changes we made since July 2016 include strengthening incentives to earn income, that is, to increase the amount of earned income that is exempt from income assistance calculations. As the

minister mentioned, we exempt the first \$500 of savings from income assistance calculations for a one-person household and the first \$1,000 of savings from households with two or more persons. We also increased the monthly disability allowance for social assistance living with long-term disabilities. We also improved the implementation of the income assistance delivery system so that we can deliver our income assistance payments in a more efficient manner. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. A friendly reminder, be mindful of our interpreters when you're speaking. Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I truly appreciate that last comment you made because I'm bilingual.

My concern was, like my colleague across the table, Mila, and the minister advised us that this is was a specific Nunavut policy and they can make changes to it in Nunavut, where income support clients every month go office to office job searching under productive choices. How many months would we have to wait for a change to ensure these clients will at least have two months in between where they don't have to go office to office where there are limited job choices? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am fully aware of what the member is talking about. It is an issue in the smaller communities where there is no job, but it is part of the productive choice programs. I agree at times it

could be futile if you know there is no job, but it's part of the process of having a productive choice. You never know. There may be a job available. It's slim, but you never know until you go check and ask, so it's a part of our productive choice programming that we have for income support clients. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Mr. Chairman, I thank the minister for his response, but it's more of an administrative detail when we're dealing with lives at the grassroots level. These lives, if they're receiving income, already have very low self-esteem. Forcing them to go around looking for a productive choice when there are no choices for months on end is almost futile. That's just a comment.

However, in saying that, the draft 2018-2021 business plan indicates that the department has been working on updating its information technology services, including a number of electronic databases related to service delivery, such as income support systems. What is the current status of these initiatives? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to take a step back on productive choices, seeking for wage employment is one of the productive choices. There are a few more. These are the categories in productive choices: traditional activities such as hunting or fishing or trapping, education or

training, parenting or care of adult family members, going into counselling or treatment, and volunteering for community services. It's just not in the wage economy for these productive choices.

To answer the member's question now about the programming, all communities in Nunavut are under the computerized program now to get their income support. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to the minister for his response. I often feel compassion for income support when traditional activities are carried out by skidoos that cost close to \$20,000 or \$15,000. That to me is not a productive choice when you're receiving income support.

In saying that, I realize there are other productive choices, but two of the priorities listed in the draft business plan for 2018-19 identify programs, legislation, and policies which require evaluation or review. Have any programs, statutes, or policies been identified to date? That's my final question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If you could let the DM answer that, please. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For our income support, in regard to

policies and particularly on productive choices, support for frontline workers has been provided in order to work closely with clients in making those positive choices. Assistance and an aspect of counselling occur. The discussions are done in consultation with the client. Not every client is required to go office to office getting signatures from different workplaces. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Mr. Chairman, my question was two of the priorities listed in the draft business plan for this year, 2018, focused on identifying programs, legislation, and policies which require evaluation or review. Have any programs, statutes, or policies been identified to date? Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's my final question.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll try to answer that question to the best of my understanding. One of the changes that we are proposing is the phase 2 of the Income Assistance Program. It's quite a change in terms of how it will be run and how it's run for putting the clients into categories and calculating the amounts that the clients will be entitled to. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. (interpretation) Are you done? Following my list of names, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As all members here know,

apprenticeship is always a focus of mine. In the draft business plan it indicates that the process is underway to make changes to the *Apprenticeship, Trade and Occupation Certification Act*. Can the minister describe what changes are being considered and what impact these changes may have on current programs and policies? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For expediency, if you allow the DM to answer that question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As a part of the apprenticeship system review and proposed legislative changes, we are looking at particularly seven action items: rejuvenating the apprenticeship board; revising the trade designation order; streamlining access and application; establishing an internal communications protocol; creating a Nunavut apprenticeship brand; establishing an evaluation framework and gathering data; and finally, modernizing the Act and regulations. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm very pleased to hear that there is some detail in those action items and I look forward to following their progress with great interest. I do have a couple of more questions on apprenticeship, but I'll wait until the appropriate page. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. The next name on my list, Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, colleagues. First of all, I would like to thank the Minister of Family Services and the DM for visiting Gjoa Haven and meeting with the council. They were happy to meet with you.

The Nunavut Housing Corporation's draft business plan for 2018-19 indicates that the Nunavut Housing Corporation is working with Department of Family Services on the "transitional housing needs study." Can you describe what this study and its objectives are? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Transitional housing is needed. I am not sure exactly where the discussions are right now, but just for the information of the viewing audience and members here, there has to be a go-between housing in terms of when someone is either coming out of a mental health facility, prison, or other areas where they are under the government care and there is no public housing or no housing for them. It's just housing that they can get to transit to go from one stage of their life to another stage of their life for the betterment of them.

If I can get my DM just to add a bit on that because I am not sure exactly where the talks are, but that's what the transitional housing is. It's like in-between housing for that period of your life. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regard to transitional housing, the department has limited funding for O&M, so the difficulty becomes when capital is needed and therefore that is where we are working with housing. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Is transitional housing for each community or will it be just, again, for the bigger communities? Are you not thinking about the smaller ones? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We need more research done and just to see exactly what the need is before we can decide if we need one, two, three, four, five, or where they should go so. It would be inappropriate if we went ahead and built them in whatever location without knowing the number of clientele that we may have, so we are still studying that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm just going to go back to your opening comments on page 2 under Children and Family Services. You have, "This branch provides a broad range of support services for children, families, and vulnerable adults who may require protection and/or other specialized support." As we all know, we don't have any homeless shelters in

the smaller communities. With that statement you have, how are you working in the smaller communities towards that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe that when we talk about the vulnerable adults who may require protection and/or other specialized support, it could be either they have mental capacity issues or physical issues and they can't take care of themselves, and they may have been deemed that they are under public guardianship and then we would take care of them. We do our best to take care of these people within Nunavut, but if we don't have the treatment or the facilities that are needed to give this person the best possible care, then they are shipped outside of Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When you talk about people who really do need help and they have to be shipped out, we don't have any place to put them and the family doesn't want to take care of them anymore. They have been family to family and now you want to ship them out. Sometimes you want to ship them out to the bigger centres like Cambridge Bay. Flights from my community to Cambridge Bay is probably just once a week almost, once or twice a week. We have five days waiting. Where are we going to put that person while they're waiting to be shipped to Cambridge Bay? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We would look at it on a case-by-case basis and I can't speak of any specific case, but if you said that you have a flight every day, then we assume that, unless I misheard... . If there's a flight only once every five days, then we would do the best we can to take care of that individual until we can get that person to a place that he or she can get proper care or treatment.

If need be, if we have to put them in a different family that's not their family member who is willing to take care of them until they leave, then that's what we would do, but each case is different. They may be a child, they may be an adult with issues, or it could be an elder with issues, but we look at each case differently and we do the best that we can for that person. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's so easy to say something, but it's so hard to do. I'm going to ask you this: if you can't find a place for that person while they're waiting, can you put them in a place like a hotel? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Maybe possibly in very rare circumstances because obviously you could not put this person alone in a hotel because obviously there are issues about this person taking care of themselves and

that's why we are taking care of this person. It could be done, but I'm not aware if it has ever been done because these people are vulnerable and they have to have someone give them constant care. That's why they are being shipped out to a facility that can take care of them. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll save some questions in that area for question period.

On the next page, on page 3, you talk about foster care coordinators and one coordinator placed in each regional office. I guess you're talking about the bigger centres. I'm guessing. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The member is correct. The regional centres will be in Rankin Inlet, Kitikmeot, and Iqaluit. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You said "Kitikmeot" and there are five communities in the Kitikmeot, so which community? Gjoa Haven? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I omitted to say that the regional centre in the Kitikmeot is Cambridge Bay. It would be based in

Cambridge Bay, in the regional centre. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name on my list, Ms. Kamingoak.

Ms. Kamingoak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister and your staff, for coming.

On page 161 of the business plan it states that one the priorities for 2018-19 is to "Strengthen existing resources, and establish additional resources for safe and affordable housing, specific to emergency homeless shelters, respite services, and transitional housing."

Kugluktuk has no men's shelter, no emergency shelter for children, and no group home for children. Can the minister clarify what resources can be made available to address these needs in Kugluktuk? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Our capital resources are very limited. We don't have the capacity to build these kinds of shelters in the communities, but we can help out with the O&M. If the community has a building and someone is willing to get it up to standards and wants to run the group for the homeless or emergency shelter, then we can help with the O&M. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. A friendly reminder that we are here to deal with the operations and maintenance budget, not capital. Ms. Kamingoak.

Ms. Kamingoak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are many other hidden homeless individuals or even families who go from temporary shelter to temporary shelter provided by friends or relatives. What specific steps are being taken in Nunavut's communities and particularly Kugluktuk to establish transitional housing for the hidden homeless? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We did the hidden homelessness surveys and they are all completed now. The last one was Gjoa Haven and it should have been completed this week. That will be used to get baseline data just so we know what we are dealing with in those communities and we can use that as a rough guideline for others.

We know there is a problem with homelessness, but we just don't know how huge it is. Once we have a grasp on what the real problem is and how big it is, then we will deal with it from there. You have to know what you have in order to try to fix the problem. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Kamingoak.

Ms. Kamingoak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the response. I'm going to go back to...how could I word this? When a child is being taken from a family and social services have nowhere to put the child, where does this child go? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To the best of my knowledge, it goes to foster care. We are not going to apprehend a child and leave it in the office. We will find a place for it. If need be, they will even fly it out of the community if that's the case.

When a child is apprehended, what we do is we want to keep the child with immediate family if possible. It could be an aunt. It could be a brother. That's the first choice. The next choice is within the family and then it's within the community. If we still can't get that, then it will be flown out of the community, but our first choice is to keep apprehended children with immediate family. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Kamingoak.

Ms. Kamingoak: Thank you. Thank you for the response. To my knowledge, I know you guys struggle to have a list of names of foster parents or people to take care of these apprehended children. I know of social workers forcing a child on one of the foster parents. That foster parent couldn't take that child because he had no room, but social services were forcing this child on that person. If there is no room, what are the other options? Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I can't speak to the individual case, but I find it highly unlikely that a foster parent would be forced by a social worker to take a child if they don't have the room. I would think that other options would be looked at, but I'll just

get the DM, if you don't mind, Mr. Chairman, to elaborate on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Individual families being requested to foster a child have the right to refuse. I know it is difficult in some communities to find the appropriate levels of foster parents, which is the reason for our request of an increase to our foster care program. We need proper staffing, the coordinators in each region to work with families to develop a culture of willingness to foster children. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. (interpretation ends) Next name on my list, Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Minister, welcome. We appreciate your dedication to the House and the staff.

(interpretation) The question I want to ask relates to income support clientele who are not approved for income support by an employee of Family Services. As their representative and as the MLA of the constituency, we receive a number of letters from constituents and visits to our offices. I wonder if the minister can briefly explain the (interpretation ends) procedures for a client applying for social assistance from the department. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Our client would apply for income assistance and there are guidelines as to who qualifies. After they do the checks and balance, then either they qualify for income support or they don't. If they don't qualify and they disagree with it, then they can call to, I can't remember the names, either the regional board or the appeal board. From there the case would be heard. I'll just get my DM to have the actual process explained better in detail. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego: *Ma'na*, Mr. Chairman. If a client is dissatisfied with the service of the income support office and is being declined, the first level would be by an internal review committee. If it is again refused, then it goes up to the appeal board. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Is the client given any type of written refusal so that he or she can take it to the appeal board? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There is no written documentation saying you are refused, but the client can request it. It's not part of the procedure that they automatically get it, but if the client wants written confirmation that they have been refused and why, then they can request it and they will get it, Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) That's good to know. Then we can pass on the message to our constituents because when they have been refused assistance, it's usually the word of the government official against the client that is applying for the assistance, so the client is usually the one that gets the short end of the stick. That is good information to know.

(interpretation) I'm not sure if it's under here, Mr. Chairman, but I know it's under Family Services. Correct me if I'm out of line.

In our communities there are some constituents that require assistance and support because of mental illness and mental health issues. We hear about these people scaring other community members and we hear about people wanting to kill another person. We hear of these things because we live in a small community. How does the Department of Family Services deal with these people? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For individuals who have mental health issues, the department would refer them to the Department of Health and if they needed to receive counselling, they would be counselled. The Department of Health would have the responsibility for people needing mental health services. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you. The government has been talking about Inuit societal values and traditional knowledge as a priority. Mr. Chairman, we do get social workers who don't understand our culture and traditions and they are not very compassionate to the people that they are supposed to be providing support to because they have to follow rules. They seem to have no compassion when they arrive to our community and this needs to be rectified.

Does the Department of Family Services have any goals or targets to work with Inuit so that they can hire them to provide counselling? I'm not trying to put anyone down. We see this and this needs to be rectified, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We hear what you are saying. To say it in English, (interpretation ends) family resource workers (interpretation) will be Inuit when we hire them and I know we are training a few people in the communities. They will be taking on this responsibility, but I'll have my deputy minister provide further detail, Mr. Chairman, with your permission. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, we are working with the college to improve our recruitment of Inuit social workers through the college

program. We're very much encouraging people to enter the program. We have recommendations from inquests that we are following up on. We intend to implement cultural awareness training for social workers. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's very interesting to hear this. When can we see these Inuit in a position to be able to counsel people? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you. If I understood the member, social workers that are Inuit, perhaps the member can elaborate further with his question, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): Yes, actually how to say this. When you are an Inuk, you can empathize and understand a fellow Inuk, isn't that right? As Inuit or (interpretation ends) Eskimo to Eskimo, (interpretation) we understand our own culture as Inuit. (interpretation ends) I don't mean to offend the ITK president when I mention the word "Eskimos."

(interpretation) As I mentioned earlier, when a person who has no understanding of one's culture, I am not trying to denigrate any non-Inuit as their culture and traditions are also very different from ours. I, too, would be the cause of

consternation, obviously, if I were to direct a person who has a different culture to change their customs or traditional practices unilaterally.

As I mentioned earlier, this government believes in *Inuit Qaujimaqatunqangit* or (interpretation ends) Inuit societal values. (interpretation) That is the basis of this mandate. They have this mandate and are trying to uphold it. We also believe in this vision, which we want to see realized. I wonder when this will become a reality when it comes to this vision? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As my deputy had stated, they are working very hard to hire Inuit. Currently I know that there are not too many Inuit social workers. The Department of Family Services is now starting to work with orientation programs for new social workers that are coming in so that they will have a better understanding of Inuit culture and tradition. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Next name on my list, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have too many questions with corporate management. My first one is about the priorities under 2018-19 on page 157. The second last bullet there states, "Implement the department's Inuit Employment Plan with a focus on recruitment and retention of frontline workers." I was wondering what frontline worker positions were

being referred to in this priority. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In this instance, frontline workers mean community social workers. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll move on to the department's Inuit Employment Plan on page 176, priorities for 2017-18. The Department of Family Services had 11 new positions and of these, at least 6 were identified to be filled by Inuit. Did the department meet its target in 2017-18 in filling six of those positions with Inuit employees? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm happy to say that yes, we have met that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm glad to hear that. I'll move on to page 177. The first bullet states, "Undertaking competitions restricted to the hiring of Inuit." The status is "The department's competitions for Income Assistance Workers and Family Resource Workers have been restricted to Inuit Employment." I was wondering: how many restricted positions were put out in 2017-18 and how many were successful? Thank you,

Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We won't know that level of detail here. We do put out restrictive competitions to Inuit only, but we don't have that level of detail in front of us here right now for the Committee of the Whole. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: I'll move on to the next question. The third bullet on page 177 is "Reviewing existing job descriptions with a goal of reducing systemic barriers to Inuit representation." The department states that "Maintaining a majority of positions in the department as generic positions allows the department to have an efficient staffing process and allows for identification of possible changes needed for job descriptions to overcome barriers."

I think that removing barriers in qualifications to fill specific positions is a great idea, but I was wondering if, in doing so, it wouldn't have any implications on the pay scale for those positions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To the best of my understanding, when we talk about barriers, there may be an educational requirement that was needed, but if you have equivalences, then that could meet your educational requirements and that would not affect the pay because it

doesn't change the job description. It doesn't change anything other than having equivalences on the same par as educational requirements if the job can still be done properly and as it's supposed to be. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll move on to page 178. I would like to give credit to the department for promoting education leave and professional development opportunities to staff. I think Family Services and Education are undertaking a great initiative here in promoting education leave and encouraging professional development of their employees. I was wondering if the department has created a target as to how many employees they would like to see go on education leave in fiscal year 2018-19. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, we don't have a target, but we are letting the department know and taking anyone who wants to go on educational leave and each will be case by case, but we don't have a quota system. We will look at all applications and we will do our best to grant educational leave providing it does not upset the providing of services. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name on my list, Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a few short

comments and questions related to the minister's opening comments, specifically on page 3. In this section, which I will say in English, (interpretation ends) the Income Assistance Branch (interpretation) provides financial assistance to people 18 years of age and over.

Earlier the minister responded to the member for Rankin Inlet when she was querying the minister. If someone goes to the income assistance office and they had \$500 available, I may be misunderstanding this part and please correct me if I am wrong. If they have \$500 and they go to the income support worker, how does this impact their income support amount for the month? Can this be explained? I would like to be clear on it and is the reason for asking about it, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): This was brought up already, but I'll leave it up to the minister. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you. I'll explain it to the member. Before there was a change, if a person went to the office and if this individual had money, they were denied their request. However, with the change, if they have up to \$500, he could be granted the income assistance as long as he has \$500 and under. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that clarification. I was thinking that the individual would be denied. I'm smiling now. Again, before the change was

made, they were denied, but they can have up to \$500. Today approximately 40 percent of Nunavummiut rely on income assistance for their primary source of income. Has there been a change in the approximate percentage? I would like to know and that's why I asked the question. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The 40 percent has not changed to date. Approximately 40 percent of Nunavummiut rely on income assistance. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that response. On the top of the fourth page in English it states, (interpretation ends) "In these next reforms, the departments will revise the food allowance table, combine food and clothing benefits, increase supports..." (interpretation) Mr. Chairman, I would like further information or I would like to know when this is going to become effective, or is it going to be tomorrow? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It would be for 2018-19 if the budget is approved and it would become effective this coming summer in July. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Moving on to another subject on page 5, the second paragraph states that "The increase of \$701,000 will provide for a staffing increase of five PYs." Is that going to apply just for that one year or is it going to occur indefinitely? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For the increase of five PYs, once the \$701,000 is approved, these five PYs would be permanent, so we would apply for that amount every year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that clarification. I may have more questions afterwards. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): That was just a comment. Following my list of names, Mr. Kaernek.

Mr. Kaernek (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, minister and your officials.

The Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak was talking about the Inuit Employment Plan. In your business plan for 2018-2021, one of your priorities on page 159 indicates that you will be training your staff. Would there be training available for the social workers and their staff

under the Inuit Employment Plan? That is my first question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I understood the question, we have dialogue with Nunavut Arctic College and we have a program there for social workers so that we can hire more Inuit working as social workers. That is our objective. Again, we would like to see an increase in the number of family resource workers who would be Inuit and working in the communities at the office. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Kaerner.

Mr. Kaerner (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the Member for Aivilik stated earlier, he's not trying to put your social workers down. My question is: could those resource workers also be trained to become social workers because they work very closely with the social workers themselves? I hope that was clear. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If you're talking about family resource workers, they would be there to provide assistance and they would have to take the Arctic College course.

I will ask my DM to supplement my response, with your permission, Mr.

Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The family resource workers perform a role to support the social workers. Long-term goals of the department would be to develop those resource workers into social workers, recognizing individual wishes. Some may not want to increase and expand their role within the department. A social worker position is much more difficult than a family resource worker. There are other opportunities for the development of the resource workers into other positions as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Chairman: Thank you. I have already recognized members on this page, so I will move on. Family Services. Corporate Management. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$9,172,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. We are now on page D-5. Family Services. Children and Family Services. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. Any questions? Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A number of the priorities listed in the business plan address the issue of family violence and sexual abuse. What kinds of community-based initiatives are being considered to address these issues? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If you can redirect that to my DM. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On the child abuse aspect of your question, the department is aiming to increase the amount of training and the level and quality of training to our frontline staff, particularly in child interviews. At the moment a child discloses for the first time is very critical to getting to the root issue. That is where the future of that child could be determined, whether or not they feel comfortable in how they are supported. That's a critical piece for the department to implement.

On the domestic violence aspect, there are several areas. There are the FPT forums; the federal provincial territorial forums that we participate on; we support the Qullit Status of Women Council; and we are working on resources routinely with our support and other supporting agencies both internal and external to the Government of Nunavut. These are a few of the examples. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. (interpretation) Are you done? Following my list of names, Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser (interpretation): That was unexpected, Mr. Chairman. What was that? Oh, now I remember. (interpretation ends) Mr. Chairman, (interpretation) it is in regard to a mental breakdown or it could be the other way around where the mother can no longer care for their child while the father is

fine enough to care for the child. Which parent or relative would be given custody? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll try to answer that properly. When one part of a couple is having mental issues and if that child is at risk, then that child would be taken out of that at-risk household if the mother or father is having mental issues or difficulties. That child would be taken out of that household to make sure that it's away from risk.

I would like my deputy minister to expand on my response. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Each individual case has to be taken individually. The staff will work with the families in the best interest of the child, taking into consideration where they are most safe. If either parent is capable and willing, the placement would be with that parent. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser: Thank you for the explanation. What about if the father or the other side of the family doesn't have a mental breakdown, does the father have the right over that child and does the father have the right to give his child to his grandparents? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With your permission, I would like my DM to answer that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am not sure if I understood the question of whether or not the two parents are in the same house. However, again, each person interested in the care of that child will be taken into consideration and the best interest of the child is first and foremost, where the child will be safe, where hopefully the family will agree to on both sides. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Netser.

Mr. Netser: My question is: if the father doesn't have any mental issues, does he have the right of guardianship over his little child? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is a complex issue that I don't think I could answer unless you have all the facts, but just using what limited knowledge I have, if this couple lives in a house together and the child is there and one of them has mental issues, the best interest of the child would be looked at and I don't think if the guardianship is the mother or the father, if they are still in the same house, the child probably would not be in a safe situation.

The child probably would be taken out of that unsafe situation, if it is an unsafe situation, but if the father is mentally capable, then of course what he wants would be taken into consideration. I think that is the best that I can answer it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. (interpretation ends) Next name on list, Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of the priorities for 2017 was aboriginal custom adoption. I am wondering what kinds of amendments to the legislation are being considered. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We would have to do extensive consultation before we make any amendments to the *Custom Adoption Act*. The regional Inuit organizations would have to have input. NTI would have to input and communities would have an input. Currently the Auditor General has, I believe, if my memory serves me correctly, has talked about it before. We are aware of there may be some issues in custom adoption. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have long considered this aspect of safe shelters for women over the years since it was first introduced to Nunavut. There have been instances that I know of where a woman and a child were taken out and the husband knew he was going to be charged. Within a few

minutes, the husband had committed suicide.

I thought funding for shelter programs is provided through contributions from your department's Children and Family Services Division. Now, if we turn it around, has there been any consideration for safe shelters for men? Keep the child and the mother in the home and put the men in the safe shelter. In saying that, also consideration has been given to increasing the amount of contribution funding available to shelters across Nunavut this year, 2018-19. Is there any consideration for safe shelters for men? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I understand where the member is coming from. It may or may not work. There would be issues if the man did not want to leave the house because, I think, in general the women and children want to escape from an unsafe or unhappy situation and they're willing to do that.

It does make more sense to pull, if it's an abusive husband or abusive boyfriend, them out of the situation and then the woman and children can still have the house, but the problem arises from if the man, if it is a man, doesn't want to leave there, and then the RCMP would be called in to deal with the situation and it may just escalate it. That's why it has been talked about, but there would definitely be issues if the abuser did not want to leave the house. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Towntongie.

Ms. Towntongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's understandable, but we have to consider the fact that men are sometimes not the abusers. Sometimes it's the woman who is abusive both verbally and physically and the man is silenced by that. I'm talking about suicides. Young Inuit men are high on suicide. Can there be an instance where we can have a few minutes that man, when the wife and children are going to the safe shelter, is taken care of, just watched or monitored? It could save some lives. That's just a comment, Mr. Chairman.

The other one under the department's grants and contributions funding for the Children and Family Services Division, \$50,000 will be provided for men and boys initiative grants and \$50,000 will be provided for women's initiatives. Can you describe what types of initiatives this funding will be used for? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe that is towards the men's groups or the boys groups so that they can have stuff to do, but I'm not exactly familiar with it, so I'll get my DM to elaborate on it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For men and boys initiatives in the last fiscal year, successful applicants to the funding initiative by the department were in four communities: Arviat, Hall Beach, Kugluktuk, and Pangnirtung. The different programs were regarding

teaching men and boys to express themselves through dance, weekly sessions consisting of healing circles and cooking classes, weekly sessions to teach men about mental health self-care, healthy coping skills, and lastly for boys to learn printmaking from a local artist. These are four examples of what has been occurring in the area of men and boys. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you. Thank you for that response, minister. Your department's draft business plan indicates how it will review and incorporate Inuit traditional knowledge.

Years ago when Inuit women were going to get married or be partnered with a man, they used to be told and advised, and this is an old saying and is about 1,000- or 3,000-year-old saying, "Do not use your tongue to make a man angry." It's an old saying and it makes sense. In fact, when I was getting married my father told me, "Do not use your tongue to make your husband angry or to try to make him prove how much he cares for you or manipulate him."

This incorporation of traditional knowledge of women in the delivery of services, what specific types of services will this review focus on and who will be doing the work, staff or consultants? Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's my final question.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will have to ask my DM to

answer that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am not sure if I understand the question, but if it's in regard to *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* and how the department operates in various program areas, there are several different ways we incorporate IQ. Number one would be Inuit content, so staffing up in regard to our Inuit Employment Plan. Another one would be developing the Inuit staff that we have so that they can partake in program management, be involved at the decision-making level, involved in policy, and increasing Inuit numbers in our policy division so that an Inuit lens can be applied to each program area. We have our boards that consist of Inuit elders and we incorporate their ideas on several fronts. These are just some examples of where we are utilizing *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit*. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: My question was on the topic of incorporating Inuit traditional knowledge. Who did the work? Was it staff or was it a consultant when they were incorporating it? The draft business plan indicates that the department will review how it incorporates traditional knowledge of elders. I want to know: were consultants used or were staff used? Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's my final question.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am not sure if the staff or Inuit were used, so I will get my DM to do her best to answer that question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Any review of IQ, or *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit*, would be done by Inuit whether they are staff or consultants. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Okay. (interpretation) Thank you very much. Following my list of names, Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The question I wanted to ask was already enquired about. Perhaps I will just add a supplement instead. What options do children have as we prefer our children not to observe bad situations? If a shelter could be made available to families who are experiencing bad times, I believe there would be less abuse. I am unsure whether or not this adds to that, but I will just end with my thanks, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I didn't really understand or hear a question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Qirngnuq, was that a general comment? Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Yes, it was a general comment, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Do you have any other questions? Are you done? Following my list of names, Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) When it comes to adoptions in Nunavut, the acting minister mentioned recently that most of the adoptions in Nunavut are custom adoption.

When it comes to the radical idea of trying to ensure that convicted sex offenders are not allowed to adopt children... . You have to forgive my sarcasm. I just think it's a very unfortunate situation we're in here.

Under Adoption Services, my understanding is that there would be a screening process and criminal records checks and whatnot if it's under the *Adoptions Act*, but if it's under the *Custom Adoptions Act*, there is no requirement for a criminal records check. If the minister could just confirm if I'm right or wrong in my understanding. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The member is correct. Under custom adoption, the custom is between the person giving up their child and the person receiving the child. Very limited interaction is done through Family Services because there are independent custom commissioners and they do the work.

Like the member said, if it was through a regular adoption, there are lots of checks and balances that are done before a child is given up, and custom adoption is different. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main: Thank you. What powers do the custom adoption commissioners have? Do they have the power to say, "This adoption should not take place"? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. They have the authority to request more information and if they have any concerns, then I guess they can bring that forward over to Family Services. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main: Thank you. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am wondering if the (interpretation ends) custom adoption commissioners (interpretation) could be provided a document listing names within their community of past sexual offenders or abusers. Is there any possibility of the commissioners being provided a list they can check from time to time in case an applicant has their name in the list, as they shouldn't be allowed to adopt a child? Perhaps in conjunction with the Department of Justice, have you ever considered that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) With respect to what you're talking about, I think you would have to request it through the courts. I'm not quite sure, so I'll get my deputy minister to respond. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There is a National Sex Offender Registry maintained through the RCMP and indirectly through the Department of Justice. They have control over this registry. I'm not sure if legislation would prohibit the sharing of information. We would have to hear from the Department of Justice or the RCMP. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I wonder if the department could commit to looking into this issue as soon as possible. I would like a commitment. I realize that the minister is acting, but I believe that we should do everything in our power to prevent children being victimized, especially if we know if people are convicted. I'm sorry; in my opinion, you have lost your right to adopt a child. If the minister could comment in terms of maybe a timeline or looking into this. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Before I answer the question,

I would just like to reaffirm to the members and the public that even through custom adoption, Family Services still has the right to apprehend the child. We may not be involved in the adoption, but if there is a complaint or concern put in, it will be investigated by Family Services and the child's interest and well-being is the number one priority.

Even though we don't do custom adoptions, the custom adoption commissioners do, but if there is a concern and someone makes a legitimate concern about the child being in an unsafe situation, then the complaint will be acted upon and investigated.

I'll just let the DM talk about the sex offender registry and whether it could be shared or not because I'm just not that familiar with that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe, on the *Aboriginal Custom Adoption Act*, this is why it is important for a review to take place of the legislation and regulations to perhaps outline a more thorough process that will more clearly define the role of the adoption commissioners. Through the regular adoptions, there is a clearly defined process. In all cases, the best interest of the child needs to be taken into consideration. Criminal record checks will not always prohibit an adoption. However, in cases of child abuse, it is likely something that should be considered. Again, the review needs to take place with appropriate consultations. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) In terms of the longer term, I understand that the Act is going to be reviewed to maybe close any loopholes or address issues. I'm talking about what we can do in the short term. What can we do in the short term to address this issue?

When it comes to these custom adoption commissioners, you had a three-day training session for 22 of them here in April 2017. Does the minister know if sexual abuse or sex offenders were issues that were discussed or identified? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wasn't involved in the training course, I don't have the contents, and I'm sorry to say that my DM was not here at the time either. We can get back to the member and see exactly what was in the training, but I am going to just assume that most of the training would have been done in how to fill the paperwork properly and who gets what so that the adoption is smooth and quick. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) In your business plan on page 163 it mentions the GN Suicide Prevention Strategy. It mentions specifically child sexual abuse prevention initiatives because there is a link between suicide and this issue. On the next page, on page

164, it says, “Work with our partners to support community-based healing programs to address family violence and sexual abuse.”

The next two bullets down it says, “...Suicide Prevention Strategy, including...” What type of initiatives are we talking about here when we’re talking about prevention initiatives? The DM talked about training for the social workers. Besides that social worker training, what kinds of initiatives are under this topic? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With your permission, I would like my DM to answer that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The training course that I had mentioned previously was a child interviewing focused course, but it expands further on that. It’s a weeklong course that involves everything from learning about the *Child and Family Services Act* to what are the habits or the typologies of a sexual offender to understanding how false disclosures can be made, and how to deal with different family members.

Often child abuse is done very close to the child, people with immediate access to the child, often very close relatives. It involves training of not only social workers and police officers but also teachers, public health nurses, and various entities in the community that potentially have contact with families

with children.

This program existed a few years ago, but with loss of staff both within Family Services and the RCMP, I was one, the program lost its momentum and now that I’m with Family Services and the staff I have, we are looking at retraining trainers to be able to get it into each and every region, hopefully with each and every community as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thanks for that information. My final question is in terms of the timeline for trying to revive that program. What does that look like? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For expedience’s sake, I’ll have my DM answer that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We’re currently looking at the train-the-trainer providers and reviewing the program to see who best and how to roll this initiative out. We also need to consider our financial resources for this fiscal year and hopefully a plan can be put in place with a clearer timeline for the next fiscal. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Just a comment, I think that this is something that should be addressed as soon as possible. If financial resources become an issue, I would appreciate if the department could let us know because, if somebody is standing in the way of this initiative taking place, I would like to hear about it. If we are going to spend money on anything, it should be a plan of protecting our children.
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) That was just a comment.

>>Applause

Chairman: Thank you. I take that as a comment. Next name on my list, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My first question is going to be about social workers. They face extremely difficult, stressful, and mentally taxing jobs. I was wondering how many social worker positions there currently are within Family Services and how many are currently filled. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have 15 that are filled with permanent workers...sorry, 50. I read it wrong. There are 50 social workers and 11 of those are filled with casuals. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am glad to hear that there is

a large amount. Has there historically been a high turnover rate amongst social workers? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The member is correct. We have a very high turnover and like he said, it is a very stressful job. We are recruiting as much as we can and we are losing almost at the same rate. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The work they do is extremely important, the children that they are working for to protect are extremely important, and having these positions filled is extremely important. Has the department looked into providing additional support or similar recruitment and incentive programs that Health offers the nurses? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, that option is being explored. Just to add to that, we have hired family resource workers to help out with the social workers in certain communities. They are not in all communities; they are just in some. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As it has been stated several times in the House, the rate of sexual

abuse in Nunavut is disgraceful. I was wondering if the social workers are aware of individuals in the communities or in the territory that are currently on the National Sex Offender Registry. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are not sure if they have access to the sex offender registry or not. I'm not that familiar with who can access it or if there are any privacy issues with that. I can't answer right now whether the social workers have access to that list or not. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll move on to my next question. Is there an open line of communication between social workers and school teachers? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, there is. We work with the teachers, counsellors at the school, the RCMP, and any community members that have any concerns. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the priorities on page 163 in the last bullet, the department discusses providing training to social workers on "current protocols,

procedures, and training materials related to child sexual abuse." Was this training shared with the Department of Education staff? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It depends on the staff turnover in the communities, but I'll just get my DM to elaborate on the circumstance of this. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Niego.

Ms. Niego: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I can't speak for every single case, but in most cases yes because our social workers and schools are working close together in regard to children at risk. That type of information is shared. However, we do have high turnover rates in certain communities that may not be accurate for those communities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would also like to voice my concern with Mr. Main on the custom adoption issue. I was wondering if the minister would be willing to commit to conducting a review of all of the custom adoptions over the last several years and compare it with the National Sex Offender Registry to see if any custom adoptions may have gotten past that screening. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We're not looking at that right now, but what is being looked at is the number of kids who have gone to care for Family Services that were custom adopted to see if the numbers are still within the normal parameters of every other family there. That is being looked at right now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. We are on Family Services. Children and Family Services. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$63,947,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Moving on to page D-6. Family Services. Income Assistance. Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My first questions are going to be related to the opening comments from the minister on page 4 at the very top where you talked about "The department will undertake its second phase of income assistance reforms to simplify benefits..." It goes on to say, "...increase supports to single clients who are currently under-supported..." I'm wondering if you can clarify what that means. Is this a territorial-wide issue or is it certain communities? Is it a dollar issue or is it just more support you want to give people? If you could explain that more, please. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for the chance to explain what that means. In

the income assistance, the single clients are under-supported because the only income source they get is from income support. If you have a child, then you get a child tax bonus and that is not considered income anymore. They get extra money that is not considered income if you have a child or two or three. They get extra money, but if you're a single client, then the only money you get is what is given to you at the income support worker. I hope that clears it up. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank him for the explanation. I'm assuming then it's a territorial-wide issue and not community-specific. The next thing it says is to "simplify how benefits are calculated." Can you explain how you intend to simplify how benefits are calculated for clients? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll do the best I can. It's this thick, but I'll give you the *Reader's Digest* version, okay?

We're going to come up with a base amount that a single person gets. Then you add to that amount if they have a spouse, and then you add to that amount for each kid and you add an amount for another kid and another kid. It will simplify the process in terms of how you can calculate what a person should get from income support.

Plus, it used to be you would get your

food allowance and then you get your clothing allowance. I believe it was every three months. That is going to be combined together now, so there is no clothing allowance. You get your allowance and everything is calculated into that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Where the minister just talked about setting a base allowance, will this base allowance be like a base territorial-wide or will it be based on community? Because the prices are all different throughout Nunavut, so I think a base would have to be based on each individual community. If he could clarify, please. Thank you.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll start from the beginning. First I talked about the food basket in terms of how much a person and family of four needs to survive or to be fed adequately for the month. That is calculated into each community. Then it's put into four categories, so there are actually four different rates or zones within Nunavut and each zone has a set rate in terms of their basic needs. That's about as clear as I can explain it. What I can do is after this, I can get a copy to every member here as to exactly how everything is calculated. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm sure all members would

appreciate that information.

My next question on this subject before I change to something different is: all these changes you talk about implementing, what kind of timeline do you have before this comes into effect? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If the budget is approved today, then this would be implemented this summer. As I stated to one of the members, we're aiming for July because there would have to be training involved because this is a different system on how it's done right now, but it would be implemented this summer. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll change the subject a little bit. One of the issues I have been having in my community, and I'm sure it's happening in others, is the issue where you've got young single parents who are on income support and also attending school and they're having issues at times with attendance and claiming their income support. I had another email like 15 minutes ago with a concern where a client is denied income support because she didn't meet the 80 percent threshold for attendance. Can you explain this program or this policy a little bit so that people can understand how it works, please? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is one of the categories of productive choices. Our goal is to have people get off income support eventually; they get training, they get a job. Most people don't want to be on income support all the time. If they make productive choices, then they have a better chance of getting off income support. If you're going to school, that's a good choice because if you go to school, you get educated. If you're educated, then you have a better chance of getting employment. We don't want students to just stay home and collect income support. There's an incentive for them. If they go to school, then they qualify for income support. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Be mindful of the interpreters when you guys are responding. Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm going to use an example; it's a real example. In a case where a student doesn't meet the 80 percent requirement and she is denied her income assistance, I'm assuming there's no appeal process for that. If you don't make your 80 percent, you can't change that? What happens to that person? Do they now get no income support for the next 60 days, leaving this family without food? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you very much. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, they can appeal that. If they have a legitimate reason why they couldn't go to school, then it would be heard. They can appeal it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That leads to my next question, the appeal process. If a person is denied income support for whatever reason and they go through the appeal process, what is the timeline for that appeal process from the time a client fills out the papers to the time that it's heard by the appeal committee to where they're back to the client and they can hopefully receive funding? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll get one of my officials to answer on the timeline for that, if you just give us a few minutes, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I'll have my DM, Ms. Vardy, answer that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Vardy.

Ms. Vardy: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the appeal process the first process is, as soon as the client is notified that assistance is denied, the client will be told that there will be a hearing that would be scheduled for the appeal. Regularly we have this on a monthly basis and we make sure that the appeal request is included in our agenda. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to be sure that I understand this process correctly, a

person is denied income support on such a date and they appeal. It's now going to take 30 days for the appeals committee to review this. Now you're talking about clients having to go 60 days without any income and any income support. Is there any way that you guys can speed up this process? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll have Ms. Vardy answer that again. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Vardy.

Ms. Vardy: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We normally have scheduled meetings for the appeals for the first appeal and the second appeal. In terms of denying the assistance, it is more the food that is being denied, but they continue paying for the rent, utilities, and other benefits. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Ms. Vardy talked about the food part is denied. They continue paying the other expenses, but that is the biggest issue. People want the food. Rent could probably wait a little bit, but people want their food now. Again, she said that they have scheduled monthly meetings for the appeal process, and usually income support clients get their appointments early in the month. At what time of the month are these appeal hearings scheduled? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have been informed that they try to schedule them for early in the month. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It just seems that whenever there are appeals done, from my recollection and dealing with clients in my community, it seems to take a lot longer than a few days. It takes them months and sometimes longer before the department makes decisions on whether the clients are going to get any sort of income or not. Again, I'll ask: is there any way you can speed up this process where, if somebody is denied, they can get access to a reasonable timeline to an appeal? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I can inform the member that we can look at this to try to see how we can speed up the process. We can't have a meeting the very next day right away because it's a board and they might not be able to get it, but I can assure that we will be looking at ways of how we can speed up the appeal process. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name on my list, Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I feel compassion for the income support clients, 40 percent right across Nunavut, the cost of living, the cost of a skidoo if you are a hunter, bullets. They're caught in between lifestyles and at the same time they have

to report whatever income they're receiving.

\$500, I would say, if I go to a store for a family of eight, I would spend about \$200 to \$300 of groceries easily. In my mind they will always desire to have a skidoo that they have bought, but they will never get it or they will always desire to have a truck or a Honda, brand new, but they will never get it. That hurts me, so I don't like the idea of productive choices when there are no choices. In the government's mind maybe they have productive choices, nice, cleanly, well-written, well thought out, but at the grassroots level, in reality, those choices are limited.

In saying that, can you clarify what factors are contributing...? I do like the projected increase. What factors are contributing to the projected increases for social assistance support across Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The projected increase is from the new way that income support will be calculated and the income support clients are going to be getting more assistance, so therefore we need more money. That's the increase from it because we will be spending more money because the clients will be getting more. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Towntongie.

Ms. Towntongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that response. I heard "clothing allowance." I assume that's for clothing bought from

the stores, but looking at the Iqaluit auction and others on social media, traditional clothing, easily kamiks is \$1,500; polar bear wind pants, \$3,000. If this income support, let's say on a hypothetical note, applies for clothing allowance, what does the clothing allowance cover? Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's my final question and I'm being sarcastic when I say that.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I stated earlier, if this budget is approved and the new way of calculating income support is in effect, there will be no more clothing allowance to apply for. It's all going to be put into the simple system where everything is put into one and it's just calculated on the basic needs for the clients. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Akoak.

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. At this time I would like to report progress. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. We have a motion on the floor to report progress and the motion is not debatable. All those in favour of the motion. All those opposed. The motion is carried. I will now rise to report progress.

Iqsuqtii, can you please escort the officials out of the witness table.

Speaker (interpretation): Going to the orders of the day. Report of the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Mikkungwak.

Item 20: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Mikkungwak (interpretation): Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 4 and the main estimates and would like to report progress. Also, Mr. Speaker, I move that the Report of the Committee of the Whole be agreed to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. There is a motion on the floor. Is there a seconder? Thank you, Mr. Main. The motion is in order. All those in favour of the motion, please raise your hand. Thank you. All those opposed. The motion carried.

Going to the orders of the day. Third Reading of Bills. *Orders of the Day*. (interpretation ends) Mr. Clerk.

Item 22: Orders of Day

Clerk (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For members, there is a change to the sessional work plan. The Standing Committee on Oversight will now meet tomorrow at 1:00 p.m., followed by the Standing Committee on Legislation. Both meetings take place in the Nanuq Boardroom.

Orders of the Day for June 11:

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 Motions
15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions
17. First Reading of Bills
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters
 - Bill 3
 - Bill 4
 - Bill 5
 - Bill 6
 - Bill 7
20. Report of the Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

>>Applause

Speaker (interpretation): Thank you. In accordance with the authority provided to me by Motion 4 – 5(2), this House stands adjourned until Monday, June 11, at ten o'clock in the morning.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 17:10*

