

NUNAVUT HANSARD
UNEDITED TRANSCRIPT
SATURDAY, MARCH 9, 2019
IQALUIT, NUNAVUT

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Beauchesne's 6th edition, citation 55

Corrections:

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Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

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(Tununiq)

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(Quttiktuq)

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(Gjoa Haven)

Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole

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(Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu)

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Minister responsible for Suicide Prevention;
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*Minister of Community and
Government Services; Minister
of Human Resources*

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(Iqaluit-Manirajak)

John Main
(Arviat North-Whale Cove)

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Minister responsible for the
Nunavut Housing Corporation*

Emiliano Qirngnuq
(Netsilik)

Paul Quassa
(Aggu)

Allan Rumbolt
(Hudson Bay)
Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole

Hon. Joe Savikataaq
(Arviat South)
*Premier; Minister of Executive and
Intergovernmental Affairs; Minister of
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responsible for Aboriginal Affairs;
Minister responsible for Seniors; Minister
responsible for the Utility Rates Review
Council*

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Bills

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 Consideration in Committee 2

Bill 15 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2019-2020 – Human Resources –
 Consideration in Committee 58

Iqaluit, Nunavut
Saturday, March 9, 2019

Members Present:

Hon. David Akeeagok, Mr. Tony Akoak, Ms. Pat Angnakak, Hon. Jeannie Ehaloak, Hon. Joe Enook, Hon. George Hickers, Hon. David Joanasie, Mr. Joeline Kaerner, Ms. Mila Kamingoak, Mr. Pauloosie Keyootak, Hon. Lorne Kusugak, Mr. Adam Lightstone, Mr. John Main, Mr. Simeon Mikkungwak, Ms. Margaret Nakashuk, Hon. Patterk Netser, Mr. Emiliano Qirngnuq, Mr. Paul Quassa, Mr. Allan Rumbolt, Hon. Joe Savikataaq, Hon. Elisapee Sheutiapik, Ms. Cathy Towtongie.

>>*House commenced at 10:00*

Item 1: Opening Prayer

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

>>*Prayer*

Speaker: Premier (interpretation) and my colleagues, good morning. Our fellow Nunavummiut, good morning.

We will proceed with our meeting once again. We have work to do and we would like to work adequately. Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, members. Good morning to the people of Nunavut and the people of Sanikiluaq.

Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to proceed directly to Item 19 on the order paper. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, and 21 with Mr. Akoak in the Chair.

In accordance with the authority provided to me by Motion 17 – 5(2), the committee will stay in session until it reports itself out.

I ask that you remain at your desks so that we can proceed immediately to the Committee of the Whole once the department is ready.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

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

Chairman (Mr. Akoak): Good morning, colleagues and Nunavummiut (interpretation) People watching the proceedings, (interpretation ends) good morning.

I would like to call the committee meeting to order. In Committee of the Whole we have the following items to deal with: Bills 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 20, and 21. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good morning. (interpretation ends) We wish to continue with the review of Bill 15 and the 2019-2020 Main Estimates of the Department of Environment, followed by the Departments of Human Resources and, if time permits, Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs and the Legislative Assembly of Nunavut. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Are we in agreement we first deal with Bill 15?

Some Members: Agreed.

Bill 15 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2019-2020 – Environment – Consideration in Committee

Chairman: Thank you. I would now like to ask Minister Savikataaq if you have officials you would like to appear before the committee. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I would.

Chairman: Thank you. Does the committee agree to let the minister's officials go to the witness table? Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the officials in.

For the record, Minister Savikataaq, please introduce your officials, then proceed with your opening comments. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my left is Mr. Steve Pinkston, the Acting DM of Environment, and to my right is Ms. Nikki Nweze, the Director of Corporate Services.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to present my department's proposed 2019-2020 operations and maintenance budget.

The Department of Environment's proposed budget for 2019-2020 is \$27,742,000. There has been no budget increase from 2018-19. By working with our partner organizations, we continue to maximize the impact of our funds. In the 2018-19 fiscal year we leveraged over \$7.8 million from outside sources for projects.

A key focus of my department is recruiting a representative workforce, and so we are implementing initiatives designed to increase Inuit employment in the department.

Climate change is an increasingly important issue in Nunavut. My department continues to coordinate the GN's climate change activities, including work with the Government of Canada to continue implementing the *Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change*.

Mr. Chairman, the department administers the *Wildlife Act* and fulfills the GN's wildlife management responsibilities. Last year I provided an update on the Nunavut Polar Bear Co-Management Plan, developed in cooperation with co-management partners. The department was an active participant in the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board public hearing held in Iqaluit from November 13 to 16, 2018, and anticipates a response to the public hearing as early as March 2019. I will table the plan in the Legislative Assembly after it goes through the *Nunavut Agreement* approval process.

The Department of Environment's draft 2019-2022 business plan identifies several polar bear population estimates and wildlife management initiatives for the development and implementation over the next three fiscal years. Caribou management is a high priority, and in September of 2018 the department provided the results of the 2017 Qamanirjuaq caribou herd study to co-management partners and affected communities. The department recommended no total allowable harvest and continued close monitoring of the herd's decline. We also continue to monitor Baffin Island caribou. In January 2019 staff led community consultations on research results, future research needs, and the draft Baffin Island Caribou Management Plan. The department also collaborated with the Government of the Northwest Territories to complete population estimates for the shared Bathurst and Bluenose East caribou herds in June 2018. The Government of the Northwest Territories led the survey and released the results November 2018. Both herds have declined to the point of serious conservation concern and our governments have committed to work together and with our co-management partners to identify appropriate management actions to address the declines of these herds.

Wildlife harvesting is vital to the economic, cultural and physical health of our communities. A pilot project for wolf sample collection was initiated in the Kitikmeot region under the Support for Active Harvesters Program. Samples collected from harvesters will assist researchers in understanding wolf diets, body condition, and impacts on caribou populations. The department is finalizing a payment system to more effectively pay harvesters for samples collected at the wildlife offices. We also continue to develop resources that promote safe and responsible hunting practices for Nunavut.

In fiscal year 2019-2020 Nunavut Parks and Special Places will continue developing new master, management and heritage appreciation plans for various territorial parks with the joint planning and management committees, as per our legal obligations under the Territorial Parks Inuit Impact and Benefit Agreement. We will finalize the Nunavut Parks Program in order to review the *Territorial Parks Act*.

Mr. Chairman, the department's renewed 2016-2020 Nunavut Fisheries Strategy guides sustainable fisheries development in Nunavut and promotes prosperity and food security in our communities. The department's research vessels, coastal resource inventories, aquatic monitoring, sector developments, and partnerships with stakeholders, universities, federal departments, and industry all contribute to strong sustainable fisheries for Nunavut.

The department's mandate also includes the seal and fur sector. These traditional economies have seen strong sustainable growth in Nunavut and Europe. We focus our support on our local and national markets for seal and fur products and on minimizing trade barriers to Inuit-made sealskin products. The department is actively certifying sealskins and seal products for sale throughout the European Union through the indigenous exemption.

Local demand for seal products is high, and we have several businesses whose main attraction is seal products. The department has programs supporting harvesters, designers, and marketers of Nunavut seal and fur products. We are developing a Nunavut seal and fur strategy to help further guide this sector.

Mr. Chairman, the Department of Environment is poised for actions that will benefit the people and the wildlife of Nunavut. Thank you for the opportunity to share our plans. I will happily take any questions you may have. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Savikataaq. Does the chair of the standing committee have opening comments? Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, good morning. I am pleased to provide opening comments on behalf of the Standing Committee on Community and Economic Development on its review of the proposed 2019-2020 Main Estimates and 2019-2022 Business Plan of the Department of Environment.

The department's proposed 2019-2020 operations and maintenance budget of \$27,742,000 remains unchanged from the 2017-18 and 2018-19 fiscal years. The number of positions in the department is increasing by 2 PYs to 141.5 PYs, which represents a 1.4 percent increase from its 2018-19 main estimates.

During the minister's recent appearance before the standing committee, members took the opportunity to raise a number of issues and concerns.

The department's new Support for Harvesters and Wildlife Co-Management Policy and its new Seal and Fur Programs Policy were approved in May of 2017 and expire on March 31, 2022. A total of seven different funding programs fall under the provisions of these policies, including the Active Harvester Program. The standing committee continues to recommend that comprehensive annual reports concerning the administration of these important programs be tabled in the Legislative Assembly.

Nunavut's current *Wildlife Act* was passed by the Legislative Assembly in 2003. Most provisions of the statute came into force on July 9, 2005. Section 176 of the legislation requires the minister to prepare and table in the Legislative Assembly a comprehensive report every five years concerning wildlife management programs and related matters. The 2013 report was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on November 19, 2013. However, the 2018 report has not yet been tabled in the Legislative Assembly and it is unclear if it has actually been completed.

Significant concerns have been expressed by a number of Members of the Legislative Assembly regarding the risk that large-scale intercommunity and interregional private sales of caribou meat may pose to the health of certain populations. The standing committee again notes that this is a complex issue and recognizes that the engagement of all parties, including NTI, regional wildlife boards, hunters and trappers organizations and airlines operating in Nunavut, will be required to address it.

The department's 2018-19 main estimates included \$150,000 in funding for a new "Water Program," the stated purpose of which is to "support building capacity and knowledge prior to the devolution of water resource-related responsibilities from the Government of Canada. It also supports negotiations on transboundary watershed agreements with neighbouring jurisdictions, as per Section 13.10.1 of the *Nunavut Agreement*." However, it is unclear as to how this funding has been spent to date. The department's proposed 2019-2020 main estimates also contain \$150,000 in funding for the program. The standing committee urges the minister to provide periodic updates to the Legislative Assembly on the status of this work. The standing committee also notes that the 2019-2022 business plan of the Department of Community and Government Services indicates that one of its priorities is to "...develop a Drinking Water Strategy and Action Plan." The standing committee looks forward to monitoring progress in this area and emphasizes the importance of both departments co-ordinating their work in this area.

The Department of Environment is responsible for the government's Climate Change Secretariat. The department's proposed 2019-2020 main estimates indicate that the number of positions in the Secretariat is increasing by approximately 30 percent over the 2018-19 fiscal year. In 2018 a televised standing committee hearing was held on the Auditor General's report on climate change in Nunavut. One of the standing committee's key recommendations was that the department report annually to the Legislative Assembly on its actions and expenditures related to climate change adaptation and mitigation, including actions and expenditures taken to implement territorial commitments made under the *Pan-Canadian Framework on Clean Growth and Climate Change*. The standing committee was disappointed to note that the department's proposed 2019-2022 business plan makes no reference to such reporting.

The Minister of Environment is responsible for administering the territory's *Environmental Protection Act*, which includes provisions concerning the discharge of contaminants into the environment. The standing committee notes that the 2017-18 Public Accounts of Nunavut, which were tabled in the Legislative Assembly on

November 8, 2018, indicate that Government of Nunavut "...has identified an additional 73 sites on Commissioner's land for which liabilities for contamination may exist for assessment, remediation and monitoring." The department's 2018-2021 business plan indicated that one of its priorities for the 2018-19 fiscal year was to "...continue work required to determine an accurate assessment of GN environmental liabilities, and explore any potential human health risks associated with the Nunavut sites." The department's proposed 2019-2022 business plan indicates that "...ongoing work will continue to narrow down high-end costs, as well as updating the contaminated sites database." The standing committee continues to recommend that the minister begin the practice of tabling an annual report in the Legislative Assembly that contains comprehensive information regarding the administration of the *Environmental Protection Act*, including detailed information regarding [enforcement] actions against entities suspected of contravening the law.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my opening comments on the proposed 2019-2020 main estimates and 2019-2022 business plan of the Department of Environment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Are there any comments on the opening comments? Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would first of all like to say thank you to the Minister of Environment. When the migration of the caribou herd in Rankin Inlet this summer was monitored by the wildlife officers, one of the wildlife officers explained to me that the wastage of meat was less and that there was less killing.

However, I have never in my life seen caribou massacred when there is a... . This is a shift in the Inuit culture where meat costs money. It's a drastic shift from domestic use to commercial use and there is no limit or monitoring of the caribou that is being sold; anywhere from 400 increasing to 600, and who knows, maybe it will go up to 800. 15 years ago the Qamanirjuaq herd, the Beverly herd had a population of 1 million. It is now within the 250,000 range. If we look at 15 more years, at the decimation that we are experiencing it's going to be too late to recover the herd.

I encourage the Minister of Environment to aggressively push or start working with the *Nunavut Agreement* to ensure that the caribou management or the monitoring under whatever structure is done sooner than later. I really am sincerely concerned about the caribou herd and so are a lot of other individuals. The NTI board, the HTO board, and so should the Nunavut wildlife management. We can't just say that our hands are tied with the NTI agreement. We have to start finding solutions now, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Comments. Thank you. Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. People of Baker Lake and people of Nunavut, good morning.

I had asked questions on how Inuit who have never worked in offices can be advanced or can benefit, but I am also concerned that some full-time harvesters need more assistance through the Department of Environment. In the past years their estimates have not increased; they have not changed. The HTO boards' funding from Environment has not increased to date.

Additionally, looking at Nunavut, there are three regions: Kitikmeot, Kivalliq, and Qikiqtaaluk. Some of the Department of Environment's new programs only touch part of the population. Some are not being considered and that is an issue.

There is wildlife that is harvested, for example, seals that are marketed aggressively. However, land animals and fur bearing animals are being harvested. There should be programs that Environment should be working on harder. Not only seals are harvested. I will end there for now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Speaker: Thank you. Comments. Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Although we are a government, we look after the environment and wildlife. We have to make plans to protect our wildlife and also our environment. We also have to be thinking about people in the south that protect. They are thinking about what we do up here and they are a bit concerned.

Also, we are concerned about our own wildlife as well as our environment and the different new wildlife species coming up north. We used to look after our own wildlife, before any legislated protection of our wildlife, so we need to do a better job. Thank you, Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Comments. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good morning, minister. I concur completely with my colleague's assessment of caribou as many residents of the Kivalliq are disconcerted with our caribou herds and I believe this applies throughout Nunavut where many Inuit are very concerned today.

It is also obvious since the minister has previously made announcements on this matter in the House that Inuit have to work together along with their representative organizations as collaboration is our only avenue to resolve these concerns. We have no choice but to manage this matter now before it snowballs.

If we are content with the status quo, how will that allow for future events? If our caribou herds collapse with populations dropping and at that point, it would be useless to try to deal with concerns as that would be devastating for Inuit and would cause even more worry.

We would also regret not dealing with the matter, and question why nothing was done when we had the chance to make changes, especially solutions today we should apply now and we may end up having to deal with a more urgent challenge.

It would behoove us to immediately solve these issues now especially from the government management sector. I don't know exactly how it can be solved, but to turn to our conservation officers. If all of our officers were primarily Inuit, it would best to deal with that, at least in my opinion.

It is noticeable when we have shortages of conservation officers in the communities, as some communities have no officers even though there is training available and why aren't people entering this field? It seems the Department of Environment is losing employees as they said they have a 37 percent vacancy rate. We want to support the department to hire more employees through recruitment.

Also the wildlife research is benefiting Nunavummiut. If they were to spend more money on these programs I would be happy. That's it for now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) General comments. Mr. Quassa.

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Indeed, it seems this is the morning to discuss caribou and polar bears in detail. With respect to caribou management, we hear about it in the Assembly, and from our Inuit constituents as I imagine they take note of the Department of Environment's announcements about *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* as well as Inuit culture.

We are all aware that public announcements have been forwarded, for example, today we heard that only males or bull caribou can be harvested within the Baffin region. Indeed, we have to carefully manage our caribou herds.

Nonetheless, the minister should be aware that with the announcements from the Government of Nunavut stating their belief in Inuit societal values and knowledge. Although this government is on record as wanting to follow Inuit values, when we hear announcements about caribou, based on the actual caribou hunting traditions Inuit would choose cows without calves in the winter.

This is the usual practice as Inuit prefer not to harvest the big bulls during the wintertime, and I imagine the minister is aware of this traditional practice, as you too are an Inuk as well as the responsible minister. You must hear about the government position of trying to respect *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* and in believing this position as this government is on record as support that foundation of traditional knowledge.

As an example, I believe this government should be more open to this, and once they make a position known, they should keep following that announcement. That is what I wanted to speak to, Mr. Chairman, yes, concerning caribou and traditional knowledge.

Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit also says that caribou populations move in cycles where the populations drop and then rebound over many years, and Inuit have known about this fact for many years, and I imagine he would also believe in that, as well as our government about *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit*. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. General comments. There being none we'll start... Ms. Kamingoak.

Ms. Kamingoak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome minister and your staff. In your opening comments you say the department is finalizing a payment system to more efficiently pay harvesters for samples collected at the wildlife offices.

When we look at the shared caribou that we share with the GNWT and the incentives that they're providing for their hunters on the wolves, they are paying up to \$1,600 and we're paying \$300. We're thankful for the incentive, but I encourage your department to look at increasing the amount because it has been said that the Government of the NWT is taking this more seriously than our government.

They would like to see the incentive increased because it's very expensive to be a hunter. It costs overall maybe one hunting trip could cost up to \$500 and that already past the incentive. I encourage your department to look at increasing that incentive and that's all I have to say. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. General comments. Seeing none, we will start page by page. Environment. Corporate Management. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$5,800... Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My first question is in regard to your business plan on page 189 and for the draft 2019-2022 business plan, on (interpretation ends) the fifth bullet, "Begin initial assessments and engagement on Community Energy Planning." (interpretation) I'll use an example of what you would do in Baker Lake. That's my first question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If you didn't talk too much, maybe the budget would have gone through earlier.

I'll read it. It is for all of Nunavut. I'm not sure what it's called in Inuktitut, but it's for the community energy plans in communities across Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak (interpretation): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Looking at the community energy plans and carbon tax and being less dependent on fossil fuels, I would

think that the Nunavut Housing Corporation or the Qulliq Energy Corporation would have taken this initiative.

Again, on the same page and the last bullet states, “Begin development of a Nunavut Trapper Education Program.” It’s probably for trapping foxes or other animals, but you indicate that there’s going to be more training involved. Since you have never changed the numbers every year, how are you going to get this program started? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have never increased the amount for this program. What we do is we use a particular program a year and then we change it to set up another program. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak (interpretation): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. You indicate that you’re going to be training hunters. Are you going to be focusing on younger hunters and provide training for them in the classroom or in the environment or both? Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regard to trapping or hunting, there are fewer and fewer trappers every year and this training is to be provided to the young people so they can learn about trapping and to increase the number of trappers in Nunavut. Back in the days there was a lot of trapping done. We’re going to be focusing on the younger people and to increase the number of people who are trapping. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak (interpretation): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Yes, that’s understandable and I know exactly where you’re coming from. We have to focus on the young trappers in order to increase the numbers and also in hunting wolves.

In your opening comments you indicated that you would like to increase the amount of Inuit employed in your department. How many Inuit are you considering hiring or how are you going to be increasing the number of Inuit employees? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don’t think I understood your question, but I will respond. I believe you’re asking about providing

training or whether you outsource the training, if I understood correctly, or maybe the member should clarify his question, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Clarify your question, Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak (interpretation): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Perhaps if I ask it this way, it will be clearer. For example, the Department of Environment has staff based in Baker Lake and they're usually in the office and go out on the land once in a while, but we usually know who the wolf hunters, wolverine hunters, and fox hunters are because they bring in samples to the conservation office. Are you going to be focusing on those people because they're not government employees? You indicated that you would like to increase the number of Inuit employed within your department. They could become instructors to the younger population. How are you going to be doing that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It would be for fox trapping or cleaning of furs and drying them. We could provide that type of training and sometimes the conservation officers provide the training, but we sometimes outsource it so that we have trainers from outside of our office if the conservation officer doesn't know how to do that type of training or is not knowledgeable about fox trapping, fox fur cleaning, and so on. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak (interpretation): Thank you very much. Thank you for responding to my question. I support that type of program. Usually samples are taken and I have personally seen the conservation officers on the quality of the fur, the quality of the cleaning that has been done, so it's going to be very beneficial if you have Inuit involved and to focus more on knowing how to assess a pelt. That's just a comment. Thank you very much.

Chairman: It's just a comment. Next name on my list, Mr. Rumbolt.

Mr. Rumbolt: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With regard to the southern Hudson Bay subpopulation of polar bears, it has been an ongoing transboundary issue with other jurisdictions for many years. I'm just wondering if the minister is able to give us an update today on what the status of this transboundary dispute is and is there any solution in the near future. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. About the only update I can give the member is there was a court challenge there and the court is still deliberating on the matter. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good morning. I'm not usually the one asking about environment, but I thought I would give it a try today. A few things did catch my eye in your business plan.

One of the things that I saw and I just wanted a bit more information is about the community energy plan initiative that your department is doing. It says in your business plan on 189 that you're also working in partnership with key stakeholders. I guess I have two questions on this. Who are these partnerships with? Also, I would really like to know what kinds of projects are currently being developed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The main stakeholders we are dealing with are the main energy users in Nunavut, which are the Nunavut Housing Corporation, which buys a lot of power, and the Qulliq Energy Corporation, which produces the power. We're working with them on ways to reduce the energy consumption by Nunavummiut, which is mostly the housing corporation, and how the Qulliq Energy Corporation can produce the energy with less greenhouse gas in a more environmentally friendly way. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks to the minister for his response. It sounds like things that we all should be going towards, but how realistic do you think that is in the next few years? We're very dependent on fossil fuel and I think we will for a long time. I know that QC, for example, has been trying to experiment with their windmill...not windmill; that wind thing.

Where are we going when we talk about energy efficiency? In reality, where can we go with this? I have a feeling that we have to wait for maybe technology to develop more when it comes to climates like the one that we have in Nunavut, but just to get your ideas on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The member is correct that we're completely reliant on diesel power energy in Nunavut, but there are ways that we can lessen the amount of diesel we need.

Some of the stuff we're doing is there's a program called EnergyWise and we're working with the QEC and housing on that too where the homeowners, the housing corporation, and public units can do stuff to reduce energy like turn lights off at night, don't have the windows open in the winter, maybe turn the thermostat down, make sure the windows

and doors aren't so drafty. The best way we can do it right now in the situation we're in is try to use less energy so that the QEC doesn't have to produce more energy.

The only project that's in the near horizon that will lessen the greenhouse gas is the project that the Kivalliq Inuit Association is working on, on bringing hydro power from Manitoba into the Kivalliq. If that becomes a reality in the future, then the amount of greenhouse gases produced in that one region will dramatically decrease because the electricity will be not produced by diesel anymore; it would be by renewable hydro energy that's coming from Manitoba. If you convert all the furnaces in the houses into electric, then that's much less diesel being used.

We are trying to do stuff and we're working with the federal government to lessen our reliance on diesel energy. One of the things that we have done is that the QEC has gone to the net metering which the QEC talked about, but it hasn't really taken off yet. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for his response. I have a few questions based upon his response. I know the Premier and the cabinet have worked very hard on getting the hydro power coming into the Kivalliq and I think it's a right move to make personally because, you're right, we need to find other solutions in how we use our power.

A few years ago we also had a project on the books for own hydro power here. In my last term I remember the government wrote off \$10 million on that project because it said that there's no funding for it. I want to know, as a government, as a cabinet, as you as the Premier, are you going to work just as hard to try to bring some money so that we can have hydro power here as well?

I understand it's very expensive, but just going into the future use, perhaps in the end it will pay for itself. I know it would be a long time, but it would be a way of not using fossil fuel. It might be expensive, but I guess the benefit is that we're not putting more and more pollutants and carbon into our environment. I think that's worth the money.

What are your thoughts on this? Is this project never going to rise again? Is this something that, as the Premier and as the government, you would be willing to look at again? I know there's interest at the city level because, when I met with the mayor and council, they brought this issue up. What's the likelihood of anybody looking at our hydro project here in our area? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Before I go to the minister, I would like to welcome to the House former MLA, Mr. Steve Mapsalak.

>> *Applaud*

Welcome, Mapsalak. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I remember the hydro project for here. The difference is at the time, the government was going to be the proponent to build it. My understanding is they either did not have the money or weren't willing to spend it. I am not sure; I was not in government then.

The hydro-fibre project in the Kivalliq is a Kivalliq Inuit Association-led project. We as the GN are not putting any of our funds into it. They are funding it. We are a supporter of it because it is a good project. If the QIA wanted to do a similar project, this is not the Minister of Environment speaking, but since you ask about it, if they wanted to do a similar project there, then I do not see why we would not support a project that would reduce our greenhouse gases too. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for his support. It may be something that the QIA, hopefully they will be listening or reading the *Hansard* and see the value in maybe going that way. I am not too sure and I certainly am not an expert on renewable energy options. I am not sure how their project is working out there, but I would really like to see the government and the Inuit org work together. I think that is the way to go in partnership.

I do have another question, and that was to do with the Baffin Island caribou harvest management and ongoing monitoring. Everybody here wants to talk about caribou. Usually I am not the one to talk about caribou because I am not a hunter. I am very interested in knowing more about what is going on.

You have done some management, you have done research now into our situation, and I understand from your business plan on 193 that you are going to make a submission on the management plan to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board this month. As a minister, can you tell us: what is the status of the Baffin Island caribou? Obviously it is not too good. Officially, what is the status? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There has not been a population estimate survey done since they initially did it and they calculated about 5,000 caribou left on the whole of Baffin Island. That is when first the moratorium was set, so there was no caribou harvesting, and then they had a limited harvest where the quota was approved for 250 male per year for Baffin.

We are waiting for the recovery of the caribou. Everyone knows caribou populations cycle; they go up and down. That is their natural cycle. The problem now is when the caribou are on their low cycle, we're much more efficient at getting to where they are; killing them at long distance. Long ago when caribou were at their low population and

people had limited rifles and they went by dog teams, it was not a concern. The caribou population would come back up on its own. Now that we are much better hunters and have much better equipment than we used in the past, we have to help the caribou up when they are in their low cycle. That is what we are doing right now. That is why there is a harvest of males only.

We haven't done a population estimate, but what we do is we want to know the trend of the caribou population. In the fall they do a cow-calf ratio survey. They go to an area, they count the number of females with calves, and then they take that number and they do another cow-calf ratio survey in the spring so they know how many female caribou still have calves, and then you get a survival rate of the caribou and that gives you an estimate if the population is rising or staying the same or going down. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This moratorium has been in place, I think, for like is it two or three years now? I'm not sure exactly. What you're saying is the numbers haven't been monitored like what you were saying about the spring and that? Is it this year now you're going to do that for the first time? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, we don't plan on doing a population survey right now.

We monitor the herd to see the trend, whether there are more calves being born and surviving. I'll take an example. If you have 100 female caribou in the fall and they have 50 calves, and then you do the same survey in the spring and you count 100 caribou and they still have 50 calves, then you know the survival rate is really good for the calves. If there are only 10 calves for every 100 female caribou, then you know the survival rate is low. That's the trend we're using.

It's a less expensive way just to monitor the trend to see what the population is doing in terms of a trend, but we know the number is still roughly about the same population-wise. If people start seeing lots of more caribou in areas that they normally don't see... . Hunters go out all the time and they do report if they're seeing lots of caribou, no caribou, or some caribou and all that is taken into consideration. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for his response. I just have a couple of more questions and this is to do with... I read with interest you have the Nunavut Online Hunter Education Course that was spoken of earlier, but I'm wondering, with this course, I would like to know two things. One is: what has the feedback been on

how effective this course... ? Do people like this course and also, are you tracking the number of participants? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The feedback has been very positive. As of December, 41 people have successfully passed the course on there.

Just to elaborate a bit, in most provinces, in order for anyone to get a hunting licence, they have to have completed the hunter safety course. We don't have that requirement here, but it's there for people who just move up or are not used to hunting and they want to learn some more. It's one way for them to get into be more of an ethical and safety hunter. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you. I'm wondering on another issue about the firearm acquisition thing you need. Does your department help people acquire that licence in the communities? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, we don't. It's a federal program, a federal responsibility, and our staff do not administer or teach the course that is required for someone to... . If someone wants a firearms licence, then they have to take the firearms safety course in order to get the licence. It's a federal program. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you. I would like to just go back to one of the questions I had earlier about caribou surveying and that. There's actually a tender, air charter service offer and agreement, invitation to tender. This is to do that very thing. This was for February 19. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That would probably be for the High Arctic, not Baffin, for surveying their Peary caribou up there. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I read through these pamphlets and books that the department has been producing. I think I saw one before on the polar bear you had out here in the foyer for us. I believe that was from your department. I am not sure, but who are you distributing this information to? When you produce these, who are they

going to? Is it just to the wildlife offices or do you have a target audience? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Our target audience is all Nunavummiut, mainly the schools, but generally if there are any publications, we make them available for the general public in the wildlife offices. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regard to wildlife research, can the minister tell us how many research projects are currently being carried out now by the Government of Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do not have that level of detail right now because it is not that simple. Every year in fall they have a meeting. All the research crew gets to meet and they decided what research projects they are going to do. Some are one year and some are multi-year. If it is multi-year, then it is ongoing and they do not have to approve it anymore. The number fluctuated, so I cannot give the member the exact number. I'll just say that there's a lot. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the minister tell us: where is the main focus? Is it polar bear or caribou? What are we looking at? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is different. There is polar bear research done every year because we have so many populations and we have targeted to do a population estimate at least once every 20 years on the polar bear population.

On caribou it is more frequent, then they also have grizzly bear studies, they have wolverine studies, and sometimes there are outside entities that want to do research within Nunavut for certain animals and certain things.

I would say that the priority would be given to where the need is. If there was a caribou population that not doing so well, then it would be concentrated on that, or on the polar bear. In short the main research is polar bear and caribou, but there are others. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In your business plan, 190, the first bullet, it talks about the priorities for 2019-2020 and it says to “Identify options for programs and policies that support Nunavut’s ability to respond to the impacts of climate change.” Can you just elaborate on what you mean by this and give us an example of what would be done? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Climate change affects many things, not just wildlife. I guess one of the simple things that I can refer to would be, working with CGS, we have done permafrost mapping in communities where the permafrost is more active in one area than another. That is one example. There is permafrost mapping done for some of the communities now so they know the permafrost is more active here than there, so it is better to build there. That is just one example of stuff we are doing. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome minister and your officials. I would like to say good morning to my fellow residents of Kugaaruk and also to the people of Taloyoak, as well as my colleagues.

I have a question with regard to page 189 in the business plan. The last bullet says, and I’ll read it in English so I am well understood, (Interpretation ends) “Publish series of pamphlets/books outlining harvesting skills and techniques specific to individual Nunavut species. This is an ongoing priority with this year’s focus on publishing *Hunting Polar Bear in the Winter* and beginning work on a narwhal hunt book and video.

(interpretation) I’m unsure what that means, and that is why I’m bringing this up. I would like clarification from the minister on what this means. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The brochures and videos are learning materials. If a child want to learn or hasn’t been out polar bear hunting and wants to watch that or see how they hunt narwhal, or see a video on how they hunt them and how they are butchered, it’s a learning video for various animals. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): When are these videos going to be made available for Nunavummiut so that we can see them? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of the videos; How to Hunt Caribou and How to Hunt Polar Bear are done. The narwhal video will be completed this year in 2019, but the completed ones on caribou and polar bear, if you would like we can provide copies. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I thank you for that response and I look forward to seeing the report and how they are managing them.

I want to move to this different matter, it isn't quite the same but close to it, under the opening comments spread over two pages, the last bullet where it states the Department of Environment is planning to conduct surveys during the 2019-2022 business cycle and they will manage polar bears using the population studies.

It also speaks about the quotas that would be developed using these studies but I don't see how many years between studies? I would like to understand how many polar bear population studies have been completed here in Nunavut. I would like to understand if we have current population estimates for all of our management zones? I want to understand that hence my question, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I grasped the gist of his question and if I misunderstood, you can restate your question. If I understood and based on what I am aware of, he is asking about polar bear surveys and population estimates for the management zones, and what happens after a population study?

If he was asking if communities are informed about the results, after a polar bear population study has been completed, the communities in that management zone and the affected hunters are notified as to the numbers. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted clarification on it. Thank you for your response. Also, I'm thinking about when they had the polar bear management last fall because they're talking about a concern about the polar bear population. We're not the only ones in Canada that are concerned about the polar bear population.

I'm wondering how we're going to manage our polar bear population in Nunavut because when they had a polar bear hearing here in Iqaluit last fall, there was a lot of concern about the polar bears in our region. That's what the polar bear hearing was about last fall here in Iqaluit, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, this fall Nunavummiut were here to discuss polar bear management. The Nunavut polar bear management plan was discussed. What it really looked at was how in Nunavut we will look after and manage bear populations. For example, when one female bear is caught, two males have to be caught. That's the management plan. That's one example of how they look at it.

The NWMB also had another meeting. They just met here this week. The Nunavut Wildlife Management Board and the Department of Environment will be provided a polar bear management plan and it will be presented to the government. As soon as we get, we will look at it and go from there. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the answer. Another question here, you see a lot of news and public through the computer regarding the polar bear. What are we doing about it from the department? We are affected by whatever the decision is made by the Department of Environment. I would like to know what the information that's being put out there. What is the Department of Environment doing about it? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The picture that was shown on TV on the very thin polar bear and the reporter was saying that it's because of climate change and loss of ice that they said the polar bear was starving. We did not agree with it. When you just look at a picture, you have no idea of whether the polar bear is diseased, if it's dying because of age, or if there's disease because of age. We don't know that.

We as the Government of Nunavut, the Department of Environment are aware that we are managing polar bears well and we have legislation that the polar bear population is not decreasing, and I fully support polar bear harvesters. If we manage the polar bears properly, then our grandchildren and their grandchildren will be able to harvest polar bears forever because we manage the polar bears properly in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a comment, no, I don't want to see any negative information coming out to the public. We're thinking about our future in regard to the...more information and what we're trying to do for our future generations. Also, we like information in regard to what the environment has, so more information needed for the public. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. It's just a comment. Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towntongie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Many women are seamstresses and I'm also one of them. We can survive in the Arctic because of our clothing. Also, I saw hunters being trained through computers, but I have also seen many, for example, in August it's the best time of the year for caribou clothing as a seamstress to the end of August. The way they are prepared is not proper for making clothing.

Also on seals, we check the seal to see whether it's through the nose because that's what my mother told me and a seal should not be dragged on land. If they are dragged on land, you cannot make clothing because they are too bloody. Those are the rules and laws.

Also, they just cut up tendons of narwhals. When you're making dog whips, the tendons of the narwhal are the best to use as thread. Animals are different and I was shocked to see that because of climate change, we will tell how impacted the climate is because of climate change, and also different things for all of Nunavut.

We've had laws. What my father taught me, if we catch a fish at that time, we rub ashes on the face so they won't see the land. If you catch a seal, you make it drink water. If they take a seal's heart, they don't chew it, but just swallow it. For those Inuit who understand me, they will know the meaning.

I'm just a seamstress, but animals, because of climate change, are also changing when you're preparing the skin. Bull seals smell because of sunburn and they lose their flesh on the skin. I have noticed what they set up in Nunavut. It's more to do with human beings, not wildlife.

My question is, the strategy will be completed this year. What is the status of this work and when will the strategy be ready for tabling in the Legislative Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The member should clarify which *Turaaqtavut* strategy she is talking about. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Towntongie.

Ms. Towntongie (interpretation): I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman, I'll speak English. Thank you.

(interpretation ends) Your department's draft 2019-2022, page 189, states that the Climate Change Secretariat has been participating in the drafting of the Northern Adaptation Strategy. It is expected to be finalized by the end of this fiscal year, 2019. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That strategy, we're working with the federal government and CIRNAC, the abbreviation for Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, they're in the lead role and we are working with them on that strategy. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was concerned about climate change adaptation in regard to animals. We still make clothing out of animals and I haven't seen it in any of the climate change strategies whether there's been research on animal adaptation to climate change.

My question is, the Auditor General report on climate change, one of the recommendations was that the government should provide an annual report to the Assembly on the government's actions and expenditures related to climate change. Does that include research of animal adaptation to climate change? Why does your department's business plan not make any reference to producing such a report? Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's my final question.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Climate change affects animals, it affects the land, it affects us, and it affects everything on this earth.

Right now the Climate Change Secretariat is not a researcher. It is like a coordinator. It finds funding for people who may want to do research on climate change, stuff that has climate change. If someone wants to do something, it tries to find out where they might be able to get funding from the federal government. It's a helping department.

If somebody wanted to do some research on animals that are affected by climate change, then they can go see the Climate Change Secretariat and they may be able to point them in the right direction and what kind of research that they might want to do.

As for the Climate Change Secretariat doing research on what climate change is doing to animals, they don't do that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll try to keep my comments short. I would like to thank the minister for the letter of February 19. (interpretation ends) In this letter the minister mentions four annual reports or summaries that will be provided. I would like to thank him for that. That's the annual report on climate change, annual report on fur harvesters support programs, annual report on the *Environmental Protection Act*, and an annual summary of the research vessels Nuliajuk and Papiruk. That will be very useful and it will save us having to ask for that in the future years.

(interpretation) I mentioned on the conservation officer, perhaps he can indicate...perhaps I did not have enough coffee...for any Inuit and non-Inuit that the position should be filled and it should be a priority in an area as I understand it. If I wasn't clear, it is unfortunate.

(interpretation ends) The Environmental Technology Program, I am interested to hear what the departments experience has been with that program. Is it effective in training people to go into jobs like a conservation officer? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Environmental Technology Program is good. We hire a lot of their graduates for conservation officers. Once they have done that, they are also qualified to be wildlife technicians. It is a good program. The only problem is that everybody wants the graduates. We are competing with the mining companies, the Inuit org for the graduates. If you are a graduate of the Environmental Technology Program, as long as you are mobile, meaning you are willing to move to where the job is, then you will get a job. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Just to clarify in terms of the curriculum and what is being offered under that program right now, it's sufficient, or would there be any changes that the department would like to see to make it more effective in terms of training the wildlife officers, etcetera? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have a very good working relationship, when I say we, the Department of Environment with Arctic College. We have input into their curriculum and how we can be better suited for our needs and they are very accommodating, so it is working out very well and the course is very tailored to our needs. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) On the climate change side of things, the minister mentioned earlier the net metering program. That is a QEC program. Say if I wanted to put solar panels on my house, I can apply to the Nunavut Housing Corporation. What is Environment's role in this? Are they helping to coordinate? It sounds like there is not very much uptake on that new metering right now. Is Environment helping out in any way? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The member is right that there is not very many. I don't know if there are any that are partaking in net metering. The QEC would be better suited in answering that.

I know that in order for anyone to get into net metering, they would have to buy expensive equipment, whether it be solar panel or a wind generator. We are working with the feds on secure funding so we can have a program where people where can use those funds to help subsidize what they want to buy and as of right now, we haven't secured any funding yet. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. Some communities are currently starting to use alternative energy by way of wind energy. We support people moving on to alternative energy. We could have solar and wind energy. Is the Department of Environment supporting the hamlets should they want to move on alternative energy? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We're not really involved but we have the Community Energy Plan that deals with those types of alternative sources of energy. It's quite costly. We are partially involved. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We do support the communities who are turning to alternative energy. Do you know of any communities or is Qulliq Energy Corporation that would be informed about communities using alternative energy sources? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Qulliq Energy Corporation would have the information The Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy would have more information. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. For me personally, when we're dealing with budgets and business plans, I think Qulliq should be involved and be in front of the Committee of the Whole so we can ask questions. They don't get funding from the Government of Nunavut but it would be a benefit if they would appear in front of Committee of the Whole. That was just a comment.

(interpretation ends) The last questions are around this Harvester Education Program, mentioned on page 190. We have issues with firearms safety; some of our harvesters. We have issues with them using maybe the wrong type of bullets; using hard point bullets to hunt caribou, for example.

We see all kinds of issues and elders mention things like, in Arviat, where young harvesters don't know how to approach a herd of caribou probably without scaring them. I'm just interested. It mentions that you're looking this year to determine the most effective method program delivery for harvester education.

In the next year it says, "...finalize the delivery..." When will this Harvester Education Program actually be rolled out in Nunavut? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's being phased in and being rolled out. The member is right in terms of there's a quite a different level in terms of young people or young hunters or new hunters, their skill level or knowledge level.

One program, it's nothing to do with environment, but there's one in Arviat called the Young Hunters' Program, which I have heard is very popular and well taken by the young people where they're actually taken out and they're taken out to hunt and fish and are taught the skills that should have been taught.

In the old days we were all taught by our fathers, our uncles, our older brothers, and since there's less of that, then I guess we have to step in and try to instil that in the young people in terms of hunting ethics and hunting skills that are needed so that they can hunt safely, properly, and humanely. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) In terms of when that will be rolled out, I would still be interested to hear.

I just have one last, very specific question. Can the department work on developing little stickers that we could put on every box of hard-point bullets that's sold in the territory and the stickers would say, "These are not meant for shooting caribou" or "These are not meant for hunting"?

Basically it's my understanding that hard-point bullets aren't supposed to be used and it could say something like "Make sure your gun is sighted in" or something like that. I don't know. It's a common practice and I'm not talking about making them illegal or anything; just putting a warning sticker or something to help to educate people about these types of bullets.

(interpretation) Usually they just entry wound the caribou and they're bought because they're cheaper than normal ammunition. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The member is right that hard-points are illegal to use on caribou and I know that in the past they've had some educational stuff on that. On the online hunter safety course, that is one of the things that it does talk about.

In terms of getting stickers out to the retailers, I'm not sure if you want to go there or not. Like he says, they're not illegal but they're illegal to use for hunting caribou and for the reasons the member has stated that they're cheaper, that's generally why they are used. One simple thing they can even do is they can just cut off the tip and then it's not a hard point anymore. There are ways around it.

I think it's more of an education issue we have to do with it's the law, it's illegal, and we have to try to inform the hunters about it more, I guess. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As a preamble, the minister stated that today hunters are more capable than in prior years and I'm sorry that the minister said that because he not proud of our traditional hunters who are great hunters of yesteryear. They were very capable, very experienced, but the minister indicated that it's not the case and that they're more capable today. I wanted to rebut that. Those were the days when they were still hunting by dog team and I'm so sorry that he is not proud of our ancestors and their hunting skills.

With the hunters, there are still quite a lot of full-time hunters out there in Nunavut. For example, for myself personally, I am a weekend hunter. A lot of us are weekend hunters. In regard to the Hunter Education Program, I believe the minister indicated that he wanted those training curriculum to be made available in the schools, for example, trappers. I'm not sure what the other word is. He's making reference to two types of words that are for trappers. I just wanted to make that comment, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Just a comment, Mr. Quassa? Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to elaborate on a comment I had made. A long time ago during the time of dog teams they would travel all day and possibly overnight to go 50 to 60 miles. Today, by ski-doo they can go 200 miles. Today with the outboard motors, it can take up to only an hour where long time ago, it would take a whole day with an overnight. That is what I was referring to. We have better equipment, faster equipment; we go longer distances and carry bigger

loads. That is was I was referring to. With regard to trappers and the training curriculum, we are going be using them to teach our younger people. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Quassa.

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Your department is putting together teaching materials and there are different hunting techniques that are practiced, and they can differ, for example between the Baffin, Keewatin and the Kitikmeot. They have different hunting techniques for different animals and with differences between the regions, do you factor that in? For example, do you provide some of the direction for the Kitikmeot, some for the Kivalliq, and some for Baffin?

In Igloolik we go walrus hunting, and in the winter we hunt on (interpretation ends) land fast ice. So there are different hunting techniques in different regions. Do you provide those distinct practices to the schools? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The books aren't completed yet, but we will factor in the variation, various hunting techniques and skills. We have no walrus in Arviat and Igloolik has a lot. We will factor those in and try to make it adaptable to the community and make the curriculum relevant to the different communities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Quassa.

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This will be my final question. Today there are animals being hunted that were never hunted in the past, or fished right now. These days, they fish for turbot in Pangnirtung. In the past they probably didn't fish them very much.

Are other new species that we are seeing being considered as well? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we have different species coming up that are studied. They found turbot near Pond Inlet when they were conducting a survey. Fisheries diversification is how they are looking at shrimp, turbot, and arctic char. Yes, we have considered that and it is being used. It is being done. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good morning, Premier, Mr. Pinksen, and Ms. Nweze. I apologize for having to see you guys this morning, but we've got a lot of

important questions and hopefully we can adjust our winter schedule accordingly to prevent extended sitting hours.

My first line of questioning is going to be to the Inuit Employment Plan section of the business plan. I'm glad to see that the department is projecting to increase Inuit employment by nine positions, but I would like to point out that the senior positions are quite low in Inuit participation rates. The senior management level has zero percent; middle management, 30; and professional level positions have 6 percent.

I understand that the Department of Environment is the type of department that requires qualifications to fill these very specialized roles, but I would like to reference the written response I received to my 2017-18 education leave utilization. The Department of Environment had only one employee off on education leave in that fiscal year and zero Inuit employees were on education leave at that time.

I would just like to request if the Department of Environment has improved their Inuit participation rate in the education leave policy in 2018-19 and whether or not the department will focus on moving Inuit employees into these specialized positions through the utilization of the education leave. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We do support education leave for Inuit and we will support it, but we can't make them go on education leave if they don't want to. It's there, it's available, and I encourage any Inuit to take advantage of it. We can publicize it more, but I think they know all about educational leave and we fully support any Inuit who want to go on education leave.

As for the senior managers, we have an internship for the director of parks right now, which would be an Inuk internship, and we have one more in queue and will be applying for a wildlife director Inuit internship too. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the response, Mr. Premier. I'm glad that the department will encourage Inuit employees to take part in education leave. I would just like to state that as a former GN employee myself, I'm quite aware that very few employees are actually aware of the generous education leave policies. I really hope that the department will communicate that effectively.

I would like to move on to another topic and my colleague, Ms. Angnakak, had brought up discussion of the previous Iqaluit hydro project. The Premier stated that he would give support if the QIA were to move toward creating an alternative energy project. I would just like a little bit more information on what kind of support the Premier would be willing to give, whether it would be financial support or expertise or knowledge gained

through the prior Iqaluit hydro project or if it would be as little as a letter of support. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm here as the Minister of Environment and we support projects that would lower greenhouse gases here. Like I stated earlier, if there was a proponent to do such project, the government in general would support the lowering of greenhouse gases. It's all hypothetical right now, so I can't really comment on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that response. The minister had actually made a statement as the Premier to Ms. Angnakak and hypothetically, if QIA were to move in that direction of an alternative energy project serving Iqaluit, and specifically if it were to be a hydro project, would the minister or the Premier be willing to share all the information that the government had learned in the \$10 million that was spent on researching the project. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I won't get into hypothetical questions but if the member wants to ask QEC that question then he is fully within his right. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll move on to the next question. The minister had previously indicated that the Department of Environment is working with the feds and CIRNAC, the acronym for the northern development department, to provide support to Nunavummiut that wish to purchase alternative energy systems. I am wondering if the minister would be able to elaborate on what exactly they are working on with the feds and CIRNAC, and what types of assistance would the minister like to provide. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just for clarification, when I talked about CIRNAC, it was to do with the strategy, it wasn't to do with the funding. We are working with CanNor to try to come up with funding to help people out for net metering that may want to buy a small windmills or solar panels for net metering. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My time is running low so I will move on to my next line of questioning. It is regarding the Energy Wise initiative. I was curious what sort of collaboration the Department of Environment has done with the Nunavut Housing Corporation to encourage public housing tenants to adopt energy efficiency in their homes, whether it is providing window insulation kits or door draft covers. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I can just step back and correct myself, when I said CanNor, it was supposed to be NRCan that we are dealing with for the funding.

As for the members question about working with the Housing Corporation, yes we are working with closely. We have a campaign about energy-wise use. I think some of you might have seen the ads in the, I think I saw them in the airplane and it's going to be coming out where they have this guy ice fishing and he's got electric heaters all the way around himself, trying to keep him warm while outside. It's stuff like which implies, well in you're in house and you have an open window when you have the furnace up it's kind of counterproductive.

We are working closely with housing corporation on energy-efficient stuff so that they will use less energy. We are working closely with them. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is quite well-known that our public housing stock is aging and a lot of them are not very energy-efficient, and I would like to put forward a recommendation for the minister to look into the Climate Change Secretariat working with the Nunavut Housing Corporation, specifically with public housing tenants, to provide these window insulation kits to help improve the retention of heat. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I stated, we are working closely with the Nunavut Housing Corporation. If the member wants to make those recommendations to the Nunavut Housing Corporation, then that would be the more appropriate place to make it, but we do work with them. We secured \$31 million in funding for them and for the GN to retrofit public housing units and GN buildings. That came from the Climate Change Secretariat from the low carbon economy, so we are getting sources for other departments, but any suggestions to the housing corporation, then the member is welcome to make them to the housing corporation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I still believe, as the Climate Change Secretariat is the coordinator of all environmental adaptation and mitigation strategies, that the Climate Change Secretariat approach the Nunavut Housing Corporation and figure out a way to best distribute these window insulation kits to public housing tenants. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: It's a recommendation. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Nunavut Housing Corporation is the experts on their houses. The Climate Change Secretariat is not the expert on distributing stuff to public housing units. I would disagree. They are the experts. They are the ones in charge of the houses. They are the ones that know their tenants. We talk with them, we work with them, but in your case I would say that the Nunavut Housing Corporation is the expert on their houses. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I apologize for not being quite clear. I was just hoping that the Climate Change Secretariat could work with the NHC in securing the funding to provide these window insulation kits, but I'll move on to my next topic.

Last year when we had the Department of Environment before us here in the Committee of the Whole, I applauded the QEC's efforts in establishing the net metering program. I also identified one of the key barriers preventing people from accessing this net metering program is the lack of experience and certified technicians, and specifically solar installation technicians in the territory.

When I brought this up to the minister, the minister had stated that he would look into that and see what work could be done with Nunavut Arctic College to bring up a certified solar installation workshop to help reduce that barrier. I would like to ask: over the last year what progress has been made? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Since then, I left the department and then I came back. We will look at it. I remember the conversation and at that time I remember clearly in saying if there is a need for it, if the public were to say that there's a need for it, then Arctic College could look at putting on a program. They're the expertise on putting the programs together that are wanted or that are needed. To be honest, I think it hasn't gone anywhere really. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for the response. It's almost exactly what the minister's response was at this time last year. I'll repeat what I said last year. "Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that. I would also like to state that

I have been contacted by my constituents and I can tell the minister that there is a desire, demand, and need for such training here in Iqaluit.”

We need certified solar installation technicians. There’s no need to fly a certified individual up here every time a homeowner or a business would like to install these alternative energy systems. I would like to reiterate to the minister that there is a need and demand for these certified individuals in the territory.

I would once again like to request the minister to commit to working with other GN departments and corporations to ensure that there will be training provided to Nunavummiut to teach them how to install this technology so that we can move towards reducing our reliance on diesel fuel. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We will follow up on it and Mr. Pinksen will talk to Arctic College, but there’s another way around it. If it’s a business opportunity, then someone who wants to set up this course, I believe, would be able to talk to either with Economic Development if it’s an economic development venture. If somebody wants to get into the business of installing, they can put a business case forward to get funding to get the training, whether it’s up here or down south.

The amount it takes to... I may be overstepping my boundaries and speaking on behalf of Arctic College, but I’m not sure exactly how they work. You would have to have the X number of students interested before they could put on a course because there’s money involved. If someone is really interested, they may be able to send them off to a course in order to get the training that they needed, but Mr. Pinksen will follow up on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. I have two more names on this page, but we will break for lunch now and come back at 1:30.

>>Committee recessed at 12:06 and resumed at 13:30

Chairman: Welcome back. Good afternoon, (interpretation) Inuit who are following the proceedings. (interpretation ends) This morning we were at Environment, Corporate Management, and the next name on the list was Mr. Keyootak.

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was busy this morning. I hope this question wasn’t asked to the Minister of Environment. I am just wondering how many communities in Nunavut are without wildlife officers across the territory. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One moment please. We cannot find the page. Mr. Chairman, currently in Kivalliq, they all have a wildlife officer, in the Kitikmeot, Gjoa Haven. In Taloyoak their wildlife officer has been there for years. In Cambridge Bay, they are without one wildlife officer, but there are 2 there. In the Baffin region, Pangnirtung does not have a wildlife officer, as well as Grise Fiord, Hall Beach, Kimmirut, Qikiqtarjuaq. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Keyootak.

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When do you see these positions, including the one for Qikiqtarjuaq being filled? When do you foresee filling these positions? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. All of them are under the process with the main reason being the lack of housing. In Qikiqtarjuaq, we are waiting on Nunavut Housing Corporation for housing, but that position will open for competition soon. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Keyootak.

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The lack of housing often affects us. There are vacant units in Qikiqtarjuaq that belong to the government. Maybe some of these units are not inhabitable anymore. It seems in my community there are some available. Are they not available? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When we have to assign housing to a position as the Department of Environment, we open a position, then we have to request a unit from the Nunavut Housing Corporation, and the housing committee decides whether the position will get a house to it or not. We as the Department of Environment do not decided whether we get a house. We put in a request and wait for a unit. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Keyootak.

Mr. Keyootak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the response. I heard the Environmental Tech program is underway and some of the problems we face in our community are that wildlife officers have not been taught some aspects of what they are supposed to do.

They do not have a lot of marine experience and they cannot use a boat and this makes it difficult. I wonder if, when they are going through the Environmental Tech program, they look at the issue handling a boat. Is that part of the course? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, when they complete the course and they work with the department, they are taught courses on boat handling.

There are often issues, like liability if the wildlife officers have not been taught properly. As environmental officers, we train them on boat safety, snow mobile safety and those types of things. They do get trained as environmental officers when are hired by the Department of Environment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Keyootak.

Mr. Keyootak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is good to hear about the training they receive for safely operating boats. In our community there has always been a boat that is owned by renewable resources, and I ask all the time about the boat. That boat has never been used since before I was even elected.

It's probably been 20 years now that it has always been on the land. When we have a wildlife officer, they cannot use it because they were not trained on boat safety so this has been a problem. The boat has been sitting there. I have wanted it and they have never agreed to that either. I would have used it long ago.

>> *Laughter*

I wonder whether you can provide more assistance on the issue of having boats as it is another tool. Sometimes people harvest polar bears in the communities that wander into town, and I have shot more than one polar bear when they come near our house, even though it wasn't bear hunting season as the polar bears were in the town as I have alluded to on many occasions.

During the summer, when hunters go on overnight trips they sometimes must undertake butchering duties although they won't be paid for the work. We do have a conservation officer and a boat that is available for this service, but they aren't able to use the boat to pick up defence-killed bears even though the boat is useable but the officer doesn't have the boating license required to operate the boat.

The Inuk themselves who killed the bear, then has to butcher and load the meat and pelt, and when the hunter arrives in the community and goes home, the conservation office takes the polar bear pelt. This is quite problematic when you had to do all of the heavy lifting while the officer confiscates the pelt.

I too have gone through this process, although they have a boat available, they aren't able to do their job to investigate the kills due to not having the boating license. Can the department develop more plans to ensure that their employees have the required licenses so they can use the boat in our community? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Earlier, Mr. Keyootak spoke about that and I know for a fact that if the conservation officer doesn't have a boating license, they cannot operate the boat. This is the same law that applies to every citizen in Canada, if they don't have the license, they cannot operate a government vessel.

A person who doesn't have the license can cause the government to become liable if they operate the boat without a license, and if an accident occurs, if the officer loses their life or if the vessel sank, that is when liability becomes an issue. However, I can state that with respect to our conservation officers, we will work towards having training plans so that when an officer undertakes their position, that we would look to conduct the boating license testing in the summertime so that they can all handle watercraft of any type and to be able to use the community vessel. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Keyootak.

Mr. Keyootak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Inuit were all trained on boating. We are trained as hunters. We are aware of boating safety, we know about the land, and we know the waters. Hunters know this stuff.

How about allowing the hunter's' association to use the boat? If a bear is caught outside of the community, can't someone from the HTO access the boat? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, any hunter can go hunting. I go hunting all the time. When I was a wildlife officer, if I was going to use the government boat, federal requirements require that if you are going to use this equipment, then you have to be trained. Any hunter can use their own equipment; they are totally free to use them. A government boat can only be used by qualified operators. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Keyootak.

Mr. Keyootak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is a problem. When a bear is caught outside of the community, the Inuk himself processes the bear that will be confiscated when he gets home. I wonder if there is a payment for this processing and carrying the product back. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes. When you asked me earlier in the House, I agreed. The person that gets a bear out of season, or in defense of life and property without it being in season; he processes the bear and skins, and he can be paid in

the community. If it is outside the community and they have to bring it in, there is an additional payment. He would be paid a higher amount for the delivery. That is the way I answered before too in the House. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. The next name on my list, Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My colleague's question was similar to my question. It is concerning Pangnirtung. We also have not had a conservation officer for almost two years. There are five other communities in the Qikiqtaaluk region without conservation officers. It is not because of the lack of staff housing, I know that. When do you expect to fill the conservation officer position in Pangnirtung? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The conservation officer position in Pangnirtung will be advertised in the near future. We have tried numerous times to get a conservation officer, but we envision filling that position soon. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The concerns about vacant positions within the government have an impact on the operations on what needs to be done in the communities without being worked on. You stated earlier that there was a management trainee on human resources slated for parks and another wildlife management. Are you trying to get more people in those positions? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Presently there are two directors. One of them has been approved for the director of parks and secondly, the director of wildlife, we have tried to get those two positions. Once the conservation officers finish their college education, they are qualified and we try to hire them once they complete their courses. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, that's clear. What are the barriers for those who have taken the Environmental Technology Program? There are some barriers and a lot of Inuit are not trained for higher positions in the community. The positions you just described seem to be headquarter level positions. Are you not planning for conservation officers in the communities? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Presently those who are taking college courses are trained properly, but the barrier that they come across, the graduates are sought after by many entities like the federal government, the Inuit organizations, and there are not enough graduates. Another barrier is for the higher officer 3 positions. Once they finish their college courses, they are not qualified yet for officer 3 positions, but they are qualified for officer 2 positions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): I will keep asking for a conservation officer for Pangnirtung because it has been vacant for a long time. It has been a concern for a period of time.

The last question I want to ask is: what's the government's position when mining companies want to open mines? They can open mines on calving grounds. What's the government's position on preventing mines from operating in those areas? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is being dealt with by the Nunavut Planning Commission and they will have a Nunavut-wide hearing on the land use plan. I'll say it in English. (interpretation ends) Sustainable, responsible development, (interpretation) we support that kind of development on Inuit-owned lands. The benefit has to be recognizable for Nunavummiut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. We're on Environment. Corporate Management. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$5,880,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Page I-5. Branch Summary. Program Management. Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On business plan page 193, I have a question on the third bullet, "Undertake a population estimate for the Beverly and Ahiak caribou herds." On the status it identifies that the Beverly herd population survey has been completed by 2018. Will that information be provided to the Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Once a caribou population estimate is done, it's provided to all the affected communities and it's publicly available. If the member wanted a copy, then we would give him one. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On that very same bullet again, the Ahiak population survey is going to be carried out this new fiscal year. Usually in the springtime it's not so cold. As I have indicated, maybe as a pilot project, would you not try an all-season hunter taking out a youth or an adult who can operate a drone to do a survey on that particular caribou herd to employ Inuit who know the surroundings very well as opposed to an aircraft survey? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just for clarification there, a drone is an aircraft. I'll go onto that. There is a possibility of using drones to do surveys, but it's not the kind that you would pick up at your neighbourhood department store. They're anywhere from \$100,000 to over \$300,000 for the proper drones that would be needed to do a proper survey. If we do a survey, it has to be in the same manner that it's normally done so that the results are credible. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In an aerial survey, what is the cost? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It depends on the area that's being studied and surveyed. If it's a large area, then it's more expensive because we pay for the aircraft time. The longer the survey and the bigger the area, the higher cost it is. For example, when they did the caribou population estimate survey for Baffin Island, I believe it was in the neighbourhood of a million dollars. If you're doing a small survey like Southampton Island, then it's not as high as Baffin Island. It just depends on the size of the area that you're surveying. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak (interpretation): Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I asked earlier if they could try in the east of Baker Lake. As we know, there is some there. With that being that, would you do a pilot? The government would be spending less money and you would employ real Inuit. Couldn't you try that out for at least one year? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When we do any kind of wildlife research, we try to involve Inuit. When we do caribou surveys, Inuit will be included. When we do polar bear surveys, Inuit come along with the aircraft. We always

try to involve Inuit in the research. If the pilot program did not have the proper results and they counted them improperly, then they would say the caribou population is declining. We need an accurate estimate and that's how we operate as a government. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What I said about a drone, it makes a lot less noise than aircraft. I have seen that some Inuit are capable of using them when they try such equipment. I'm urging you that more Inuit should be employed, but our government just looks at that one way of operating and they employ a lot fewer Inuit who are able to work.

On caribou again, some of my colleagues have concerns. This is good food. I'm asking now to the Department of Environment, after the survey is completed, in the past years they stated the population numbers in the Kivalliq, but we don't hear of those numbers anymore. Yes, people are more satisfied if they hear the numbers and they would be able to understand. I'm asking you why, after you complete your surveys, don't you ever publish them anymore, or why don't you publish them as soon as possible? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I indicated earlier, once a survey is completed and an estimate is given, the hunters and trappers organizations are informed and also the elders. We want to make sure that the estimates and reports go to the stakeholders. There's still a healthy population in the Kivalliq region. As I indicated earlier, there are approximately 266,000 around the Qamanirjuaq herd. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I remember your response. There are four herds around the Qamanirjuaq area: Qamanirjuaq, Beverly, Ahiak, and Wager Bay. Usually we can tell where they come from by their colouring and the taste of the meat. I know that and so do the people of Baker Lake and the full-time hunters. Around that time, they would inform all the communities, all the hunters and trappers organizations and the boards about the population estimates.

My next question is regarding the business plan on page 195, (interpretation ends) "Provide air quality monitoring for the territory." (interpretation) The reason why I'm asking that is in Baker Lake there's a nearby mine in the south. Could you give us an update on the air quality around the Baker Lake area? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To date there are three communities. Iqaluit, Arviat, and Kugluktuk have air quality surveys done and we also have an employee in your community. The machinery is in Kugluktuk and Arviat, but they haven't been activated yet. We're not looking at making installations in the other communities. We will see if we are able to put in those monitors in the other communities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If there's going to be air quality monitoring done, there should be one in Baker Lake because there's uranium around the area and it probably affects the air quality.

Again, on page 194 of the business plan and my colleague, Mr. Keyootak, was talking about the conservation officers and if they do not have a licence, they cannot drive the boats if they're government-owned. We have to treat everybody the same.

It's good to hear that the person who has had a defence kill with a polar bear will get paid to bring the carcass back to town, but the conservation officer cannot board the boat since he doesn't have a licence. How is he going to do his job in the summer when he doesn't have a licence? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll go into the air quality monitoring first. You indicated that there's some uranium around Baker Lake and it's still underground, so we're not overly concerned about that. There's a mine nearby and I do believe that there should be air quality monitoring done the same as Rankin Inlet, but it's not in the plan yet.

I didn't quite understand your question about the conservation officer not having a licence, so if you would elaborate, please. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You have an environment officer who has no operator's licence to operate a boat. Therefore that tells me that the environment officer cannot perform his duty or cannot get onto any hunters' boats because they are unlicensed to perform their duty and cannot enter a boat, either like myself or you, because it's our own boat. It's not registered. It's not licensed. How do they perform their duties during the summer months? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to clear the air, almost all the conservation officers are certified. We do it on a regular basis. I would say that almost all

of them are probably certified right now. If there are none that are not certified, then they will be certified. If they start their new job in January, we can't put a boat in the water to train them to certify them, so we have to wait 'til summer in order to get the boat in the water to train them. There's a little bit of a logistic problem there, but we're doing our best. As soon as we can certify them, we certify them because they have to be able to perform their duties, as you said. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Ms. Kamingoak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Your department's draft 2019-2020 main estimates include \$100,000 in funding for the Disaster Compensation Program. However, your department has only spent \$29,000 under this program during the 2017-18 fiscal year. How much has your department spent to date under this program during the 2018-19 fiscal year? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To date on that program we have spent just a fraction of the budget, a little over \$2,600, but we have ten applications that are waiting in queue that will be decided on by the end of the month, before the end of the fiscal year. The committee that looks at the applications meets every so often. The next meeting is to deal with the ten applications that are waiting. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Kamingoak.

Ms. Kamingoak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Your department's draft 2019-2020 main estimates include \$40,000 in funding for the Wildlife Damage Compensation Program. However, your department has only spent \$7,000 under the program during the 2017-18 fiscal year. How much has your department spent to date under this program during the 2018-19 fiscal year? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's the same thing too. We're waiting on applications and there's a possibility of another \$10,000 to \$15,000 that will be put under this budget before year-end. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Kamingoak.

Ms. Kamingoak: Thank you. Your department's draft 2019-2020 main estimates include \$115,000 in funding for the Active Harvester Program. How much has your department spent to date under this program during the 2018-19 fiscal year? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll have to explain a little bit on this and elaborate. We spent zero. We haven't spent that budget at all and the reason we haven't spent it is because the funding requirements or conditions that are put in order for us to expel that money is not working at all. The money that was supposed to be spent on that, we're finding other ways to pay it out.

We're working with Finance to come up with a system by next year so that we could spend this money. When it was set up, it was put under grants and contributions and that's not the right place for it. We're going to have to move it so that we can spend it properly. The problem is if we follow the guidelines for this funding, it's going to take too long for the harvesters to get their payment. We're working around it and we want to have the problem fixed before next fall. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Kamingoak.

Ms. Kamingoak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. How often does your department communicate that these programs are available for the public? These programs could be very helpful to Nunavummiut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. These programs are for Nunavummiut and they're set up to be used. We have to step up to the plate and advertise them a bit more. I agree that people have to know that these programs are available. They're there for Nunavummiut to be helped and assisted. We're going to have to advertise these programs more than we currently are and I commit to advertising them more.

If any Nunavummiuq has any questions, they can come to the conservation officer, to the wildlife office. All conservation officers know about these programs and they're well aware of them and they can answer any questions that the general public might have on them. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Kamingoak.

Ms. Kamingoak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for committing to communicating these. I encourage your department to do so as soon as possible and the way you communicate them, there are radio stations, everyone uses Facebook, and I just encourage you to do that as soon as you can. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm done.

Chairman: Thank you. It's just a comment. Next name on the list, Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a question in regard to your business plan on page 191, I believe, under Wildlife Research. (interpretation ends) "Wildlife Research includes scientific research, wildlife monitoring and the collection..." (interpretation) I have a question. I'm not sure how to translate "scientific research." What kinds of information do you have in regard to wildlife and scientific research? I'm

thinking, perhaps, these are in regard to wildlife and scientific research. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Scientific research means that it will be biologists doing the study and documenting things properly. They will give us a plan on what they're going to do. It can be believed by other scientists, so they can agree on how they're going to do the study. Whenever we do caribou surveys or polar bear surveys, the counting of the animals, they use a scientific formula. That's basically what we mean by scientific research. It's a bunch of scientists doing the research. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regard to the scientists, there's also Inuit traditional knowledge that should be used more often on wildlife research. It seems that the world believes in the scientific research they do in Nunavut. How often do you use traditional knowledge in scientific research? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Both systems are used, both knowledge bases are used. Inuit traditional knowledge is now being utilized more than previously. In the past only the scientists would do the research and they would provide a number, but these days when scientists are doing research, their data is given to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board and Inuit are given an opportunity to input and talk about Inuit traditional knowledge. They look at both of those and the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board makes considerations using both sources of information. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to the minister for responding to my question. It's clearer to me now.

To my next topic here, since we're using the emergency funding more often and when they're doing a survey for wildlife, they're using that as well, but it's not used quite often in my community. To my constituents, what's the update on that? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): I'm sorry I didn't quite understand his question. Can the member repeat the question? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For clarity, (interpretation ends) “Develop an electronic enforcement database and reporting system.” (interpretation) That’s more like in priority because I think our lives should be more of a priority for using the emergency funding. How is it being used in my community, the one I’m trying to explain to you? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It’s not ready yet, so it’s not used yet, but once it’s being used, any Inuit would not use it. It would not be used by the general public, only by conservation officers. Whenever a law is broken, it would be inputted there and it would tell who got a licence for caribou or fish. The general public would not have access to that. It would be for the use of conservation officers and that’s why it’s being put together. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess my question is clear now. I want to go to my next questioning here. On page 192 of the business plan, the support is going to the conservation officer and it’s also helpful to the public out there for those full-time hunters. If I bring this up in my home community, is it going to be used year after year or is this only a one-time thing? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That money is to be used for one year and it’s renewed every year. It’s \$355,000. That never changes and it’s given out every year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It’s good to hear that it’s being put to good use to our fellow communities, but in this regard here, I’m just concerned about it being misused. The HTOs are getting the hunters to collect country food for the people that don’t have any country food. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have very different dialects, so I’m having a hard time understanding the member. I would like clarification as to what the question is, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll speak clearly. In our community the HTO is giving funding to the people that give country food to the HTO for the people that need it. Also, for the people that get any country food, are they allowed to sell their products to anyone? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for clarifying the question. When we hand out the money to the HTOs from the GN, then the HTO can spend the money with the people. How to spend the money properly is up to the HTO. Once they get the money, it's under the responsibility of the HTO to distribute it to the local people following the guidelines. The money is given to the HTOs and then it's up to the HTO on how to spend it as long as they use it for the purpose set out in the program. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To a different topic on the same page, I want to get clarification under the status, which states, (interpretation ends) "(Parks Officers, Environmental Protection Officers and Conservation Officers)." (interpretation) There seems to be more than one person in reading this, or is it just one conservation officer who looks after all these programs? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If here is a spill, the parks officers that work for the territorial parks under environmental parks deal with that. Conservation officers deal with wildlife. They each have different responsibilities, but the conservation officers are the ones who are able to do the work of parks environmental officers if the officers are not present. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Will there be more than employee looking after these programs near one of the communities that looks after the parks? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We're not adding to the PYs. The PYs are the same. We're not adding any PYs to them. Those PYs are already there. There is a territorial parks officer. The parks officer exists only in communities that are near parks. Conservation officers deal with conservation. In Arviat, Kugluktuk, Pond Inlet, and Iqaluit they only have territorial parks in those communities, but most of the other communities have conservation officers. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Qirngnuq.

Mr. Qirngnuq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If there's a park created near a community, will there be new employment opened in our area? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. During the process of creating a park, it would be one of the positions whether the territorial parks were run by the territory. Just some of them have employees, not all of them have employees. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question is, a number of concerns have been raised within the Legislative Assembly regarding the issue of interregional and intercommunity private sales of caribou meat. Why does not the department's draft 2019-2022 not address this issue? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The member and I have had exchanges here in the House regarding the sale of caribou meat. The last time that the member questioned me on it, NTI was listening and I got a letter back from NTI. In my reply back to the member there, I had said that the only way to stop the sale of caribou meat is to change or modify the *Nunavut Agreement*.

NTI wrote back that they believe that we have better tools that are available to us and they talked about a total allowable harvest and non-quota limitations. I'm drafting a response letter saying that I want to meet with them and I would like to deal with it before we have to go such drastic measures as putting a total allowable harvest.

If we can come to a solution to deal with this problem before it's too late, then that's what I would like to do, but it's totally up to NTI because they're in control of the agreement and they're there to protect the rights of the Inuit. We have to work with them and the reply letter is being drafted. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for his response. I think it's crucial that as the Minister of Environment, he starts pressuring NTI that we have to come up with a monitoring system. I'm talking about the region of the Kivalliq where there are financial gains for the sale of caribou meat. I do appreciate the minister's comments.

I do know that *Inuit Qaujimagajatuqangat* believes that the caribou move from one area and grow in population in another area, but I would like to remind the members that the Inuit population has increased and we have inexperienced hunters who are opportunistic in terms of financial gain. I'm seeing caribou being killed 10, 15, or 5 over and beyond what my ancestors have killed. I do appreciate that comment. Thank you, minister.

Mr. Chairman, my other question is in the department's 2018-19 it includes a new water program and the budget is \$150,000. I'm curious as to how this funding has been spent to date. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This budget is spent on travel, meetings, and staff. What this water strategy is working mostly with the Northwest Territories is about the water strategy that we have between our two territories and it's not so much about the water that we drink that comes out of the tap; it's the water that flows to and from the two territories. We work with NTI and the Nunavut wildlife board and Canada...sorry. Water board. Every time I see a "W," just from my background, I say "wildlife," but the Nunavut Water Board and NTI and Canada to come up with a water strategy. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do see in 2019-2022 that the Department of Community and Government Services on page 217 that their priority for this year is to "Develop Drinking Water Strategy and Action Plan and distribute to relevant stakeholders." I'm curious: is the Department of Environment in this initiative? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Community and Government Services are involved in our water strategy. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Towtongie.

Ms. Towtongie: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a comment, with the technology that we the Inuit now have skidoos, rifles, high-powered rifles, and the ability to come across animals and not being able to distinguish which animals are good for clothing and good for food, we need to take stock in the Keewatin region and be careful of the Inuit IQ. We do have a high birth population. Sometimes the Inuit IQ will apply to certain situations, but at other times such as climate change or weather changes, the Inuit IQ is no longer relevant.

With what I hear about caribou migration and they will increase in a certain fluctuation, I believe that with the mining exploration and the cost of selling caribou, it's declining

each year. The caribou herd is not increasing. I encourage our Minister of Environment to work with NTI and the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board; sooner the better. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. It's just a comment? Thank you. Next name on my list, Mr. Kaernek.

Mr. Kaernek (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good day, minister. Bear with me. It's always a concern, even though it has been mentioned, the issue that the Member for Kugluktuk mentioned as well, asking in terms of lost equipment and emergency program. I'm wondering whether the communities with no wildlife officer, how the process works in terms of losing their equipment and trying to access the program. Whose office will they go to? You mentioned Hall Beach doesn't have one. Where do they go? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I mentioned, there are ten communities before the end of the month that will be approved or not approved. Some of the communities that don't have a conservation officer, if they wish, they can contact in terms of the person, it would be Igloodik from Hall Beach and someone could come in or be assisted in filling out a form. If they wish, also the hunters and trappers association or the board or their employee would know what to do in case of loss of equipment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Kaernek.

Mr. Kaernek (interpretation): Thank you. There was a unilingual hunter who had lost his equipment and couldn't fill out the form. He was wondering how to get assistance. When you're just a hunter and you don't know how to fill out forms, it must be challenging, but it's not impossible.

To go to something else, has anyone applied to have emergency funds accessed from Hall Beach? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If the person can't speak English or write in English and wants to fill out the form, we would help them. We would find a person who can speak Inuktitut and English. I can't say right now whether they're from Hall Beach or Igloodik. I don't see the actual files being processed and who applies or who is approved. I don't get that information. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name on the list, Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all, I would like to ask about what was mentioned earlier, \$115,000. The funds have not changed. When are you going to assess this and when is this going to be available for the communities? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is this year. We're looking at the rollout this fall. The change will require the funds, the hunters that require funding, it's payment and that is being processed right now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you. I also want to ask about the quota. I wonder when you're going to review the quota and how long it will be in place. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you. I didn't quite hear the beginning of her question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There is a caribou quota now. I wonder how much longer we will see this. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for repeating your question. We haven't set a deadline when we see a change in the quota. The caribou quota is set currently at 250 for male caribou for Baffin Island and that will stay in place. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You must be reviewing this. When do you foresee the survey? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I can't say when we will have a survey. As I mentioned earlier this morning, the mother to calf ratio assessment is done in the spring and that is how we monitor the health of the herd. That is one of the ways. We hear from Inuit that see a lot of caribou here or that see caribou here.

We always hear from hunters. That is a sign that caribou are increasing. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Looking at the estimates for 2019-2020, the hunters and trappers organizations' funding has not changed. To date there are 25 HTOs. How much money do you budget annually for them? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): One moment please. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The HTO boards are funded through their Nunavut Secretariat, and we provided the funding in 2017, and it was increased in 2017. For the 25 communities we distribute \$438,000 to all of them. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Quassa.

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Chairman. When you divide the \$438,000 between those communities, it is about \$17,500 in funding that is provided for each of the 25 communities.

In the current year, and the upcoming year to 2021 it is \$438,000 also. This is to help out with their operations for wildlife management. The funding seems too little. The funding the government provides is not even \$20,000 for each community. Does the department think it is adequate? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Quassa, you cannot seek the opinion of the minister. Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That amount is what the Nunavut government gives, but under the land claims each HTO gets another \$160,000 from the Canadian Government. They are getting roughly almost \$178,000 or whatever each. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Quassa.

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Chairman. Thank you for reminding me. Before I go to my next question, the government states "biologist" as though they are the only ones with knowledge. Inuit have knowledge too. Perhaps if they use the term "our fellow knowledge holders." They are not the only ones that hold knowledge.

Concerning caribou, I would like to get clarification. We have a total allowable harvest for all the communities in the Qikiqtaaluk region. I am asking about the Prince Charles

Island. I think it has an Inuktitut name but I think he knows where Prince Charles Island is; the big round island beside the Baffin Island.

There are probably caribou on the island. We have heard that there used to be a lot of caribou on that island, perhaps the Baffin caribou are situated on that island and maybe that is why Baffin does not have many. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. At the time the caribou survey was done on the caribou, they surveyed about 5,000 caribou and half of those caribou were on Prince Charles Island. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Quassa.

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, they found a lot of dead caribou on that island. Thank you for clarifying that to me.

Moving on to something else, I'll be speaking English, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) During its review of your department's 2018-19 main estimates, the standing committee recommended that annual reports concerning the administration of the programs under the Support for Harvesters and Wildlife Co-management Policy and the Seal and Fur Program Policy be tabled in the Legislative Assembly. Why does your department's business plan not address this recommendation? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the chair of the regular members pointed out, he got the letter and we have addressed the issues, but it's not normal practice to put a tabling plan in the business plan. Most tabling requirements are legislated; they're put in the legislation that they have to be tabled. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Quassa.

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Section 176 of the *Wildlife Act* requires you to table a report in the Legislative Assembly every five years concerning such topics as wildlife and habitat management programs in the territory, the status of the species at risk, and enforcement activities under the legislation.

The 2013 report was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on November 19, 2013. My question is: when will the 2018 report be ready for tabling in the Legislative Assembly? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This report is done. It's just in the process that we have to do to table stuff and we're aiming to table it in the spring sitting. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Quassa.

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Your department's draft 2019-2022 business plan indicates on page 194 that one of its priorities for the 2019-2020 fiscal year is to "Undertake a review of the *Wildlife Act*...to identify any amendments or additions." What specific concerns have been identified with the current legislation? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When we do a review of the *Wildlife Act*, we want to know if it's still relevant and everything. It has been 11 years and it hasn't been changed, so we just want to look at it and make sure everything is still current and relevant. There is some stuff like when it was enacted, there were no drones and there have been issues about using drones as part of hunting, the land claims, if there are any more additions we have to do to comply with it. It will be just reviewing the whole Act to make sure it's current and everything is applicable. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Quassa.

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This will be my last question, Mr. Chairman. Wildlife research is a large program and the caribou especially eat plants. Even though it's the Arctic, we have plants that caribou eat. Are those studied too when you do caribou research to see if they're declining and their calving rates? Like you said, this is ongoing research. Are plants researched by them? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, they are studied. If I say it in English, (interpretation ends) vegetation studies and ecosystem studies, (interpretation) those are all researched. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Save the worst for the last, right?

>>*Laughter*

(interpretation) The first question I would like to ask is on the (interpretation ends) Wildlife Damage Program or Prevention Program. (interpretation) Will that be amended to make it easier to apply for compensation? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We studied it and the study is completed on how to make it simpler. The policy will be changing. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Yes, that's good to hear. When will it be renewed? It's too bureaucratic. It's almost impossible to deal with it. Once it's renewed, when will it be ready? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, it would make it simpler, easier, and use less paper. It will be amended. We will try to complete it before the fall. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good and I'll move on to something else on polar bear management. There was a hearing on polar bears here and to my knowledge and understanding, there was nobody from Manitoba. The polar bear tourism activities in Manitoba have been a concern. For instance, they get acclimated to human beings and they're not scared of humans anymore, and I have heard about that. Was there a colleague minister from Manitoba or from Travel Manitoba... ? Have you heard any concerns from them? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just last month I had a meeting with the minister of environment for Manitoba and I also brought this issue up as a concern. They're becoming more aggressive and not scared of humans or dogs. That's what I was telling the minister of environment from Manitoba. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What do we anticipate? Do you think that there's going to be a change in tourism and polar bear interactions in Manitoba? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I did make that statement to the minister, but tourism and polar bears are making very good money and

there are a lot of tourists that go to Churchill just to see the polar bears. It is of a concern for Nunavut. They're not scared of humans or dogs by the time they cross over to Nunavut. I'm not sure exactly if there's going to be a change or anything. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We do support you when you're trying to make some change in the tourism sector because they have to believe that we are affected by the interaction of polar bears and tourists that are right next door.

(interpretation ends) Not my last question but my last subject here, on pages 196 and 197 of the business plan, this current fiscal year mentions about land use planning and environmental assessment. This is at the bottom of page 196. It says, "Reassess priorities and continue with the ongoing development of... guidelines for industry." And then in the status it says that work is in draft form and the timeline is pushed to 2019-2020 for completion, but then when I look at the priorities for 2019-2020, I don't see it on there as a priority. I'm just checking if this work will continue going on in terms of environmental assessment and land use planning guidelines. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, this is ongoing and will be completed. It is ongoing. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you, minister. On page 197 it mentions assessing the "department's participation in Nunavut Impact Review Board process over the last five years, under the existing... structure." In terms of the status it says, "A broader review will be outsourced through the Environmental Assessment Review Teamwork plan and is proceeding through internal processes for approval." (interpretation) I would like an update and clarification on (interpretation ends) "outsourced" through teamwork plan. (interpretation) I would like clarification on that, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I can get DM Pinksen to answer that just so we can get to the answer quicker and clearer. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Pinksen.

Mr. Pinksen: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the question. We have been participating in Nunavut Impact Review Board processes as a government for as long as we have been around. We have learned a lot of lessons, but we have been using the same

structure of interdepartmental coordination. We just wanted to take a look at it, to just take a look and see if there is a more effective way we can participate in these processes. We have done an internal review and we want to get an external review, just a second set of eyes on our work and to make sure that we have the most effective process in place. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) What's the timeline for that external review? Again, I don't see it in the priorities for this year, so I was interested in terms of when they expect the external review to be done. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It will be done in this year, 2019-2020, in the coming fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) In terms of the NIRB process and how the government participates, it's my understanding... I don't know that much about it, but EIA is on top and EIA submits, let's say, project by project assessment. EIA would submit the government's submission and then the other departments are underneath, but ultimately the decision is EIA's whether they say "We want this project to go ahead" or "This project should not happen." Just a clarification on that. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, your knowledge or thinking is wrong. For the assessment there, the DM of DOE and ED&T would have a joint submission. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) If it's a joint submission, I mean I look at them in terms of the budget. ED&T has a much larger budget. I'm just trying to understand better how the priorities of economic development and environmental protection are balanced within the government. They're looking at the project from different angles. When they go to develop that joint submission, if there's a disagreement between the departments on what the position should be, who has the final say? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When there's such submission from the government, the differences have to be worked out before the submission is entered and it goes through the Sustainable Development Committee, which is a bunch of the DMs together. There's health in there, but it's a DMC committee. If there's a real disagreement, then it would be elevated, but in any projects, they work with each other and come up with a common ground so that that is the government position because it wouldn't make sense if the government had different positions. The government has to have a position on a project. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I could see the value in having one government, one position, but at the same time that one position is, I think, open to political influence. I'm not saying anything about the current government or the current minister. I mean if you look at the issues around the land use plan in 2014 and 2016 when the government changed its plan on calving grounds and designating them as a protected area under the land use plan, that clearly was a very political process.

Is the government considering getting back to the Nunavut Impact Review Board process? When you're doing this review, is the idea that Environment and ED&T would be able to submit separate submissions into a NIRB process? Is that something that's on the table? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, that's not on the table to submit different opinions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I'm interested in terms of the decision-making process because, as I mentioned, it seems like it lends itself to political lines of thinking, but the environmental assessment process is supposed to be based on science and community input. I guess it's inevitable that there would be some politics in there somewhere.

Switching to the land use plan, it mentions in here land use planning related guidelines. I know the Nunavut Land Use Plan is in the draft stage and it has stalled out or they're trying to get more momentum going. Currently what's the government's position on the land use plan? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Our position is that we want them to complete their land use plan. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I guess I'll get more specific. With the Department of Environment, when they changed their position on development on calving grounds in 2016, it was quite controversial. Has anything changed since 2016 in terms of the department's position? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The government wants responsible, sustainable development within Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main: Also, I'll take that to mean that nothing has changed since 2016. The Nunavut Wildlife Management Board of the time supported the idea of making calving grounds protected areas. The government did not support that position. Is that something that will be revisited given that the land use plan is not yet finalized? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Savikataaq.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The NPC is working on the land use plan and when it's done, we will see what comes out of the land use plan, but our position is still the same in our submission and the overall plan that they will come up with will be after consultations that they're going to do again if they get their funding...well, I assume they get their funding in terms of consultation.

The Nunavut government wants sustainable, responsible development here and the land use plan will dictate on what can be developed and what kind of development can be done on which area of the land. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. We're on Environment. Program Management. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$21,862,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Department Summary. Environment. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$27,742,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree that we have concluded the Department of Environment?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Savikataaq, closing comments.

Hon. Joe Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Before I thank the members for being engaged and making sure we're on our toes and making sure we live up to our obligations here, I would like to thank the staff that aren't here that helped prepare all the information that we have here and my two staff that are here with me. I'm thankful that they are here to make sure I say the right stuff, I know the right stuff, and they do hard work to make sure I'm well informed. I thank everyone for their time and I thank you that you passed the budget. Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, escort the officials out. We will be taking a 10-minute break before we go on to the next Department of Human Resources.

>>Committee recessed at 15:13 and resumed at 15:31

Bill 15 – Appropriation (Operations & Maintenance) Act, 2019-2020 – Human Resources – Consideration in Committee

Chairman: Welcome back, members. I would 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, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Does the committee agree to let the minister's official go to the witness table?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the official in.

For the record, Minister Kusugak, please introduce your official and then proceed with your opening comments. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) I am proud to appear before you today to introduce for the first time the Deputy Minister of HR, Ms. Sheila Kolola, who is sitting to my right. I warmly welcome her to the witness table.

I am here today to present the 2019-2020 Main Estimates and the 2019-2022 Business Plan of the newly created Department of Human Resources. I look forward to working diligently with Ms. Kolola and her staff and with Members of the Legislative Assembly towards building and overseeing a successful Department of Human Resources.

(interpretation ends) The Department of Human Resources is being set up to address many of the issues that you have raised in the Assembly. With the new structure we will continue to strengthen human resource capacity across the public service; refocusing HR

policies and programs towards Inuit employment at all levels of the public service; and ensuring that government processes and programs operate in a fiscally responsible manner that supports action on priorities and meets the needs of Nunavummiut.

I would now like to provide you with an overview of the main estimates for the Department of Human Resources. For 2019-2020, the department will have a total operational budget of almost \$26.7 million with the majority in these three areas:

- Compensation and benefits at over \$17.5 million
- Service contracts at just over \$4.5 million, and
- Purchased services at almost \$2.3 million

This budget includes approximately \$4,072,000 in incremental funding mostly in the form of compensation and benefits to establish the executive and corporate services functions and to enhance and strengthen various program areas.

The Department of Human Resources will be larger than the department was in 2013 when they had 104 staff. The new department will now have 128 positions. The position growth comes from the establishment of a new executive team as well as an increase in corporate services in the Staffing Division to meet growing demands. We will increase the Policy Division to enhance the development and review of policies to ensure support for Inuit employment is at the forefront.

Mr. Chairman, the Department of Human Resources has a number of priorities for the 2019-2020 fiscal year. Some important highlights include:

- Developing a human resources strategy
- Support departments in implementing their Inuit employment plans and develop strong Inuit leaders for government and the territory of Nunavut
- Continue updating and revising the *Human Resources Manual* to better support a modern public service
- Increasing the use of Inuktitut in the workplace and enhancing the supports available for working in the Inuktitut language
- Working with the Department of Finance and the Nunavut Housing Corporation to update and enhance the Staff Housing Program and other housing-related employee benefits
- Initiate the design of a Respectful Workplace program rooted in *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* and Inuit societal values
- Continuing to improve the Government of Nunavut's internal staffing processes and procedures to fill vacant positions sooner
- Creating a strategy for improved outreach to communities to increase visibility of employment opportunities, and
- Explore options in expanding workplace education and training for public servants

Mr. Chairman, we all now we have a lot of work to do within our human resources department to bring it to the standard that Nunavummiut deserve, and I am confident that

the team we are building is up to that challenge. We will work hard towards our *Turaaqtavut* mandate and endeavour to achieve our vision. I must, however, state that we cannot do this alone. Through *Katujjiqatigiinnivut*, my department will work collaboratively with other departments and stakeholders toward achieving our common goals. We will keep you and this Legislative Assembly informed of our efforts.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I conclude my opening comments and am now available to take any questions or question, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Does the chair of the standing committee have any opening comments? Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I am pleased to provide opening comments on behalf of the Standing Committee on Oversight of Government Operations and Public Accounts on its review of the proposed 2019-2020 Main Estimates and 2019-2022 Business Plan of the Department of Human Resources.

As members will recall, the re-establishment of a stand-alone department was announced on July 11, 2018. The government's announcement indicated that "...the new department will consolidate the human resource functions currently housed in the Departments of Finance and Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs. This approach will closely link Inuit employment planning with the other human resource functions of the government."

The department's proposed 2019-2020 operations and maintenance budget is \$26,699,000. The department has a total of 128.0 positions. The proposed 2019-2020 main estimates of the Department of Finance and the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs indicate that the departments will be reducing in size by a total of 105.0 positions. It is the standing committee's understanding that the majority of these positions will be transferring to the re-established Department of Human Resources. During the minister's recent appearance before the standing committee, members were informed that approximately 60 of the new department's positions have been filled.

During the Legislative Assembly's sitting of November 8, 2018, the Premier announced that the government's current Harassment-Free Workplace Policy would be reviewed by a "working group involving female DMs, human resource experts, and Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit coordinators" to "ensure it adequately addresses and meets the needs of women who have experienced inappropriate behaviour or sexual harassment in the workplace." The standing committee looks forward to progress being made in this area.

The standing committee also notes that the department's proposed 2019-2022 business plan indicates that two of its priorities for the upcoming 2019-2020 fiscal year are to "plan for the establishment of a new Employee Wellness Division within the department" and "initiate the design of a Respectful Workplace Program." The standing committee notes that the term of office of the current ethics officer, a statutory position appointed under the *Public Service Act*, expires on January 5, 2020.

The standing committee looks forward to the timely tabling of the 2018-19 Annual Report of the Ethics Officer, as well as the 2018-19 Public Service Annual Report. Both of these important reports are required by law to be tabled in the Legislative Assembly. Although the standing committee notes recent improvements in the timeliness of the tabling of the Public Service Annual Report, it emphasizes the importance of continuing to expand the range of information contained in future editions of the document, including, for example, information concerning the number of casual employees who receive direct appointments to the public service.

The department's proposed 2019-2022 business plan indicates that two of its priorities for the upcoming 2019-2020 fiscal year are to "work on a new Human Resources Strategy" and to "undertake a review of the casual staffing process and guidelines, with a focus on Inuit employment." The standing committee emphasizes the importance of the new department addressing the issue of long-term casual positions, which is a concern that has been raised on numerous occasions by members.

The Department of Human Resources will have responsibilities in respect to establishing the government's overall Inuit employment targets. It is important to acknowledge the progress that has been made to date in increasing Inuit employment in the Government of Nunavut. Information that is contained in the government's quarterly employment reports indicates that a total of 1,092 Nunavut Inuit were employed by the government as of December 31, 2003. By December of 2018 that number had increased to 1,770. This represents an increase of approximately 62 percent over the 15-year period. On average the government has added approximately 45 new Nunavut Inuit employees to its workforce each year.

It is important for the government to develop realistic timetables for achieving full representativeness across all occupational categories in the government. This is a significant challenge. The government's most recent quarterly employment report indicated that as of December 31, 2018, the Government of Nunavut had a total of 5,014 positions, of which 1,770 were filled by Nunavut Inuit. 1,768 positions were filled by non-Nunavut Inuit employees and 1,475 positions were vacant. In order to achieve an 85 percent Inuit workforce for a fully staffed government, the government needs to hire approximately 2,492 new Nunavut Inuit employees and not lose a single one of its current Nunavut Inuit employees.

On September 18, 2017 the Government of Nunavut's new Inuit Language Incentive Policy was announced. The policy provides that "...employees who demonstrate proficiency in and use the Inuit Language in the workplace will be paid an allowance based on their assessed proficiency level." Under the policy, the Inuit Language Authority has the responsibility to "develop, review, recommend and administer tests that evaluate Inuit Language proficiency." Employees may receive an allowance according to a three-level scale.

The standing committee again notes that although it recognizes the appropriateness of requiring employees who are applying for a new and/or higher allowance to undertake an

assessment, the policy's current requirement that all employees undergo a mandatory re-assessment every five years to determine whether or not they are still proficient in their language is unwarranted, especially when contrasted with the apparent lack of any assessment requirements for employees receiving a bilingual bonus for the ability to use the French language in the course of their employment.

Mr. Chairman, the standing committee strongly supports the government's Summer Student Employment Equity Program, which provides valuable work experience for Nunavut youth. Approximately 3,185 students, approximately 80 percent of whom were Nunavut Inuit, have participated in this program since 2001. However, the standing committee again urges the department to review the program's definition of "Nunavut Student" to ensure that only Nunavut Inuit and long-term residents of the territory are eligible to participate in the program. At present the definition is insufficiently rigorous.

The standing committee notes that the Department of Family Services has administered a separate Summer Employment for Nunavut Students Program that provides wage subsidies to private sector employers, municipalities, and non-governmental organizations for the purpose of hiring students. However, the existence of this program is not necessarily well known, and it would be beneficial for both departments to coordinate their promotion efforts.

Mr. Chairman, that concludes my opening comments on the proposed 2019-2020 Main Estimates and 2019-2022 Business Plan of the Department of Human Resources. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Main. Do members have any general comments? Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon. I would just like to make a quick opening statement. I'm grateful for the correspondence that we received from the minister in relation to our standing committee meetings.

I would just like to express a bit of frustration that during the standing committee meetings, the minister did not have any current human resource staff on hand to assist with our questions and I found it difficult to find answers to many of our questions, which is why the written response was lengthy.

Here we are today with the minister and the deputy minister without any further human resource staff on hand to assist with our questions today. I hope that the minister will be able to provide some quality answers today and, if not, I would highly encourage the minister to request additional witnesses to provide some assistance. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: General comments. Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, minister.

I just want to raise the issue that when we were elected and Inuit speaking of the issue of the department going ahead. We're grateful that the change has been brought forward. We have heard concerns in terms of the GN employees. There are still issues that are outstanding.

I just want to note and we understand it's a new department. Human Resources has a lot of expectations that things will be run better and that it is able to function to deal with employee issues. Some of the agencies and other employment that is required, we expect better operations.

With human resources being a new department, we wonder how it will differ from the previous HR department. We also expect improvements this time around. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. General comments. Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I agree with my fellow member. We have high expectations.

It was reported that in 2012, Inuit employment levels were at 50 percent and it has remained at that level; 50 percent. It is good to support employment in communities. We all know that with the GN being decentralized, there are higher Inuit employment levels in the smaller communities. The governments sometimes forgets, so sometimes we have to remind them here in the House, and we have to do things differently if we want to increase our Inuit employment levels from 50 percent.

We cannot keep repeating the same patterns without being innovative, and without trying new things. It makes you wonder how we are going to attain higher Inuit employment levels. For me, this has to be crucial in terms of a stand-alone department. It has to be a priority. I think the flexibility has to be there.

As an example, we should look at providing the right to change some positions where, let us say "this position has remained vacant in this community" but if it were to be moved to another community, that right to change positions should be provided to the HR department.

That way, we can research if a position that is moved to a different community can then be filled by a qualified employee, but I believe that right to reallocate positions should be provided so that we can have more Inuit applying for these positions and thusly, a higher percentage rate.

As well, more Inuit could then apply for these positions and communities would see the number of residents living below the poverty line or income support recipients become lower, as some communities have higher populations who would like jobs but who have no prospects of employment, so that too is a factor, especially for self-sufficiency.

I believe it would allow communities to develop their economies if they had flexibility, which is why I wanted to speak to this issue. We all support the new department and its role as Members. At least, to me personally, I really support that department. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: I have no more names for general comments. I will now proceed to the page-by-page review of the departmental estimates starting on page D-4. Human Resources. Human Resource Operations. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$16,140,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Mr. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is a great day, I think; a beginning. It is something that I know as a MLA I have been calling for a long time. One of the biggest reasons why, was to do with... . When I first got involved with this was really to do with the number of people that came to me who were staff of the GN who felt that there were great improvements to be made, especially in the area of work wellness.

I was reading the annual report for HR, the Public Service Annual Report of 2017-18, just to get a bit of background to where the department has been going with things, and according to the report that I read, it said that there were a total of 45 written complaints, staffing were complaining, and only five of them were deemed harassment. I know that this is a real issue not only in Nunavut but all over Canada when you try to talk about bullying versus other forms of stressors in the workplace, if you get what I'm trying to say.

Out of the 45, only 5 were deemed as harassment. I would like to know, I guess my first question is: what is the position of the GN when it comes to harassment? What is that? Do you have a definition so somebody will know, "Okay, I'm either being bullied, I'm being harassed, or I'm being something else"? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, member, for the comments. It's agreeable that this is a bold new move and we feel that the issue of employee relations and the issue of harassment is not acceptable. We want a safe workplace and there are things we don't want to see like that in the workplace. I'm glad that all of you have raised these issues. Pat, you have raised this as well, and we just don't accept some of this behaviour.

To add, if you can have my deputy minister respond, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Ms. Kolola.

Ms. Kolola (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the question. When it comes to issues in the workplace or if someone was worried in a certain situation, they can and have the flexibility to approach their supervisors.

It is also written and notified that harassment, there's a policy on this and that our employees cannot be harassed by other employees. This for sure is investigated thoroughly. Sometimes some employees who are required to do their job are not meeting the requirements of their job or they aren't doing parts of what they are required and their boss is sometimes on top of them to make sure they are doing what is required of them and that it is clear... .

(interpretation ends) There are various degrees of harassment or workplace conflict. It can also be performance management. Because there are different variations, we like to make sure we're dealing with the right issue and then take the path that way.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your response. One of the things that I would really like to stress, if I could stress anything, this is what it would be: the fact-finding meetings are terrible on your staff. It is not the way to go. Fact-finding meetings have become like a kangaroo court instead of really trying to help the staff get better. That's why I was always pushing for the wellness office to be created because I saw so many broken people who were broken by the interrogation that the supervisor felt that they had that power, and I guess they did, they had the authority to investigate, but just the tone and things like that, I think, really need to be taken into consideration.

I haven't found one person, not one that said that these fact-finding meetings were helpful. Not one. They felt they were under attack all the time. I know it takes two or more sides to make a situation occur, but I just felt it was a very unfair position sometimes of the supervisor behind closed doors when there are only two of them. I really hope that, going forward, we can just be a little bit more understanding and more transparent when it comes to problems.

I want to just go over one situation that I came into, and I'm not going to name departments or anything, but I just want to say how it all kind of went through. I had somebody that came to me because they were working in a division that worked on weekends. This female was in that department where they work, there are only usually two people, and she was sexually harassed by the male that sometimes worked there with her too.

She brought that up to her supervisor and the supervisor did nothing for a long time. She found out what her rights were finally and she told me that she went and made a formal complaint, but when she made the formal complaint, it took a while and even though her supervisor knew that this male was doing that, she was expected to go to work on the weekend alone with him to continue. She wasn't taken out of that thing.

I know that the GN says that all staff are supposed to work in a safe environment. Well, with this case, she didn't feel safe at all. Sometimes we like to say that things are this way, but in reality they're not really in that way. Another area I'm really hoping that the department can be more open towards is really looking at what situations are the staff really in. I think one area that the department really needs to look at is safety because on paper you can say that we want to keep people safe like this, but in reality sometimes it really isn't the case, so if you can also look into that.

I'm just wondering if you had any more developments when it comes to the wellness office. I know that the minister had said that they were in the works of preparing that and looking at different options, but do you have anything to say about what I call the wellness office that you can share with us this afternoon? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Please refrain from referring to the actual name of the member. Please use instead the word "member." Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I couldn't agree more with your comments. The government believes that all employees, all staff should work in a safe work environment free from harassment, bullying, and abuse.

Mr. Chairman, during the opening comments of the standing committee on oversight, in the last paragraph of the first page, the gentleman said that he would like to be updated on the announcement of a working group involving female deputy ministers. That's underway and it's very important that this committee is allowed to work safe and free of harassment. It's because of that and because of the comments that our colleague was just mentioning, there is going to be a workshop in the first week of April.

One of our first priorities of this department is to deal with harassment and bullying in the workplace. We are holding a workshop for all deputy ministers and assistant deputy ministers dealing with respectful workplace. That's what the workshop will be. They will be talking about leading a respectful workplace environment. It will cover setting department-wide respectful expectations, recognizing various forms of harassment like bullying or sexual [harassment] and so on, and the executive leaders' duty to act and deal with issues versus brushing them off. I think that is a very important first step. I just want to highlight that it will be within the first week of our department, and it just shows how high of a priority it is. I think that is the first step of many to properly deal with harassment in the workplace.

It is very hard for our staff to go out and complain about being harassed. Just that first step is very hard, and to be brushed-off or to be told "well, deal with it", and not; they need better support than that. Our department will work with all the departments in order to change that attitude and work to improve on those suggestions.

I have said many times, I encourage my colleagues to give us input on their ideas and I hope that after this meeting you are able to write to me, you have my e-mail addresses,

with ideas in how we can move forward on these things. I look forward to that and sharing them with our staff.

In terms of the wellness office, through you, my deputy can respond further, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Kolola.

Ms. Kolola (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To your comment, (interpretation ends) the working group (interpretation) is comprised of deputy ministers as well as other officials. We have met several times with a 2 week interim period where we have reviewed that policy.

However, it was only when deliberations got going, and we began to collaborate, then it became obvious that this issue cannot be the sole challenge, as we should look at the entire context. When we discussed it further, it became obvious that in looking at the 2019-20 fiscal year, where the establishment of the Department of Human Resources will set out how it will be designed, and to perhaps use different systems or to have alternatives which we hope to complete.

(interpretation ends) I know that there have been recommendations from other jurisdictions so the working group that I am chairing, for looking at the harassment-free workplace, has been doing a jurisdictional scan and there are some really good other provinces and territories that have respectful workplace divisions and programs.

I think it is exciting as a new department to design our own workplace wellness with our Nunavut needs. The jurisdictional scan that we are seeing, we are taking pieces; this program would work well here, this part would work, and there is an educational part about promoting how a respectful work place looks.

That is what the working group is doing. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank you for your response. That is very encouraging to hear for the government's willingness to really look at different things and make changes where they are supposed to be. That is really encouraging.

I went through four years of really banging on the door that never wanted to open, so for me to hear about how you are willing to look at how to better address staff when they feel that they have been mistreated, and that it could be dealt with in an open way. I will be writing to you, minister, on some recommendations that I have. I thank you.

Before my time is up, I do want to discuss another area and this area has to do with, and it's a question I brought up in the House, and it's to do with the Employee and Family Assistance Program where you can call if you are stressed and you need to talk to

somebody. Well, I don't think I have found one person that has found this... . We pay a lot of money to this and I don't know of anybody that really felt that it was helpful.

I know somebody very close to me that used this program and it made it worse because basically she was told to go and meditate for a week. That was the solution. She's crying and crying. She's feeling very depressed. She has gone through a big breakup and she needed somebody to help her and talk to her. When she called that number, the person on the other end said, "Go and meditate for a week." That's what you're paying for. "Go and meditate for a week and then come back." That's not what she needed to hear at that time.

I spoke to somebody else whose family member had died and didn't know where to turn to, didn't want to call, I guess, other people, so this number was called. This person told me that they never called back because it was so unhelpful.

I'm not sure how evaluations are made on programs like this, but I would really recommend that you really look at this. I would recommend also that you speak to people who have used this. Maybe they can tell you more about what happened to them so that we're not wasting money on something where you think, "Okay, here's the service. We're providing the service."

It's not just to provide a service; it's also to look at the quality of the service that you're providing that's even more important. If I could have your thoughts on that, minister. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, it's sad that our employees have to go through this resort. All they're trying to do is work for our government, for us, and they need to go get help and get counselled because of the stresses that they are having in working with our government. Those are some very serious challenges that we are looking at trying to fix. I would like to hear from you not today, but if we can find out whom that individual is and see if we can help them and get more detailed information about the concerns there.

I understand that this employee assistance service is contracted out and that we will be putting a new request for proposals on that and we will be mindful of the current practices. We will try and I encourage any employees out there who have been in contact with this service and hear if they had any good comments and bad, I would like to hear both of them and see what we can do going forward, Mr. Chairman.

This service is there. It's an expensive service and people call this. Again, it's one of those people don't want to just call to say, "How are you?" It takes a big step to call and to be brushed off or to be told to meditate and stuff is just not what they're looking for. We will take this matter and look into it and bring it forward. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Angnakak.

Ms. Angnakak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I could spend all day, if I'm allowed, on this subject. I tell you we're talking about HR stuff because I think it's just so important.

I would like to talk about...I read the policy, the *Human Resources Manual Hiring Process Policy*. I was reviewing that. In No. 6 of the policy it states that "Pre-screening of applicants will be done by the following categories..." GN employees on layoff status would be one, Nunavut Land Claims beneficiaries, and then there are Nunavut residents, and then other applicants.

I know the Nunavut government hasn't had this for a very long time, if ever, but in the GNWT they had other categories, including long-term northerners, in fact those with disabilities, or women, minorities. Like, why can't we put that back into the categories, is that something that the department can look doing? Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Very good points, Mr. Chairman, if I could have my deputy, who's been working diligently on this file, to give a response to that [question] Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Kolola

Ms. Kolola: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The priority hiring policy comes first before any of the other policies and that is for Inuit to be hired first if they qualify for the position and the various ideas about...I know in the past other jurisdictions have accommodations for people with disabilities or if the minority are women, that used to be the case, but not in our territory right now.

And, those are certainly areas that we can look at considering for hiring as a territory, we will want to always have Inuit as a priority hire and my department will do our best to make sure that that happens, but certainly if there's ideas on specific groups that we want to focus on then we'd like to hear that too. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Following the list of names, Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My first question and I haven't heard any mention of where the office will be situated is: where is the office going to be located? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We haven't decided where the office is going to be located as of yet. Currently we are preparing to take on the

role of hiring our employees, and all of the multiple details that have to be prepared in advance.

We are looking at the best location that would serve us, also it depends on the availability of office space that can be leased. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The minister stated previously that he had 30-something days (interpretation ends) before this department comes up. When do you anticipate knowing where the office will be located if you're going to be administering the department, in what 30-something days or am I wrong? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is something that we've placed a high priority on, but we have to look at finding an office, getting the furniture for the office, and so on.

But I think it's going to take us a quite a lot of effort to setup and establish our office, but once it's ready then we can setup and complete the tasks we have to do. We want to see an instant set-up but we will have to plan in advance, locate an office, furnish it, and so on. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I'm just disappointed that this has not come to that point yet, because for the fact that we've known since July of last year that this department was forming again, and I'm just curious with the Department of HR, (interpretation) what will be your first priority? (interpretation ends) Is it going to be trying to eliminate as many CSAs, or trying to hire as many Inuit? (interpretation) What are the challenges going to be? I'm sure you won't be able to answer that question because you don't even have an office to lease yet.

It looks like it's going to take another while to establish the office. (interpretation ends) Once you have your staff, is the department thinking of having HR in each of the communities? (interpretation) Even though we have a central location, I'm sure there are going to be some positions in the outlying communities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know that it will be properly planned. We can do a lot of work even though we might not be in one location because there are more and more office spaces available in Iqaluit.

Sometimes it takes quite a while trying to establish or lease an office. With our priorities, I will refer this to Ms. Kolola. She is currently working on that file. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Kolola.

Ms. Kolola: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, the Department of Human Resources will be established on April 1, with or without one building. The department is going through a transition period which is between January and June, but we have decentralized offices in Igloolik, Rankin Inlet, and Cambridge Bay. Their offices will be where they are now.

Here in Iqaluit, it is a little bit more challenging because we have over 90 employees and trying to find one location means it is going to impact another department. I would like to assure the House, the MLAs, that when April 1 does come, the Department of HR will start, our priorities are those of the *Turaaqtavut* mandate and building capacity.

While we're building capacity to fill all of these vacant positions, priorities are hiring and promoting Inuit. Casuals definitely is an area that we would like to see, look at the long-term casuals and working with the departments to see how we can put them, if the vacancy is there in the department. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With regard to your comments about casuals, we definitely have to look at the issue of having casuals fill the positions because some of them are there for years. What about the policies on casual hiring? Are they going to be enforced by your department? We have to see an improvement in the number of casuals that are hired in the departments.

I'm not opposing the idea and I'm not saying that only Inuit should be hired, but when you're from a community, I have heard and seen people who came up here who are not social workers or nurses, but they came up here to fill a position of social worker or nurse. That's where they're breaching the policies. You tend to start not believing that it's being enforced. When you're in a smaller community, all of a sudden you see a new person in a position and you haven't seen the advertisement. There's quite a lot of work to do in that area.

Another thing I would like you to consider is we hear complaints or concerns from the employees and even though they're following the policies and the HR manual and working with their supervisor, they're sent to Iqaluit and then the policies are not applied by their managers or supervisors. There definitely has to be training provided to the staff so that they will know what the policies and procedures are or whether they're not treating right... .

(interpretation ends) Learning to recognize unhealthy workplace, how to do effective performance reviews, review HR manuals, (interpretation) and should an employee gets unhealthy or something wrong physically, they fill another position that they can adapt

to. Some of the HR policies and procedures are not well known by the employees and what procedures they should follow. If the government is going to be effective, they will have to learn more procedures. We would like to see an effective department.

I don't know whether there's going to be a review done, but it's about the Summer Student Equity Program, which is a very good program. Also under the Nunavut government, some seem to have a higher salary when they return the next year, and I believe those have to be reviewed. It's not really a question but more of a suggestion or something to be taken into consideration.

I would also like to ask: (interpretation ends) what are the department's priorities in terms of having an effective department? I am really curious as to know what your priorities will be. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm glad that my colleagues are bringing these topics up and the priorities they want to see. In our business plan, the member's concerns, we will deal with them. We will work on them. We would appreciate seeing all of them. For example, for casual staff, I totally agree with the member.

There has been favouritism, and when people arrive in town to work and they arrive with their family members, they seem to get a job right away; meanwhile, the people in town don't seem to get the jobs. That is really sad to hear. So we will be looking at that when we look at casual staff.

(interpretation ends) We are going to undertake a review of the casual staffing process and guidelines with a focus on Inuit employment. In terms of the other issues that we want to do, Ms. Nakashuk had some very good suggestions and ideas in terms of HR development. We are going to develop and deliver internal training programs for supervisors. It will be programs for GN supervisors and that includes management orientation, performance management, best practices, leave and attendance, respectful workplace alternative dispute resolution, and others that may not be listed here.

Those are some of the things we want to work on. I think it's important for this new department to work on these priorities and I can't stress enough the amount of work and commitment we have towards ensuring that GN employees are not harassed, bullied, and abused while they are working and we will be working with all employees, starting from the top down, to ensure that those kinds of abuses are stopped and that they are able to be recognized and dealt with in a very respectful manner. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Nakashuk.

Ms. Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Another thing I wanted to ask was: in your opening comments you stated all employees undergo a

mandatory reassessment every five years to determine whether or not they are still proficient in their language.

(interpretation) With that one, I see some possible problems with that because if you're an Inuktitut speaking person, I want to ask (interpretation ends) how does the department anticipate that non-Inuktitut speakers are given this course as follow-up to ensure that they are learning to speak the language? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I could have Ms. Kolola respond to that, Mr. Chairman, through you.

Chairman: Ms. Kolola.

Ms. Kolola (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The language assessment specified with that five-year timeline is specific to the Inuit Language Incentive Program. We don't have that program specifically for non-Inuit to learn the language, if I understand the question correctly.

The Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit does the testing of the Language Incentive Program, and through that assessment, gives the final recommendation on which level they would get compensated in, and then an assessment done every five years. This question was raised at standing committee, so we had asked Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit if that is feasible and they assured us it was.

(interpretation) I hope I answered your question adequately. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have many questions. I'll make it short. Up to now, how many PYs will you have from the Nunavut government that will be transferred to the human resources department? Have these staff been notified that they're going to be transferred to HR? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for asking that question. The staff that will be moved to the new department are all aware now, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Quassa.

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that information. We heard previously and we know that there are 128 PYs in the new HR department. On April 1, 2019 they will start their jobs. There are 128 employees and you have stated the

vacant positions as well. How many more vacant positions do you anticipate to have on April 1, 2019? The reason why I'm asking is I know that within the government, there are numerous vacant positions in the departments. There are PYs, but they are vacant. That's why I'm asking the question. Also, how many positions do you anticipate will still be vacant on April 1? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of those numbers, I will try to explain them, where we are now and where we're trying to go. The way it is now, as you stated earlier, there are 128 PYs and 112 out of the 128 will work for HR and 16 of those 128 PYs will be for the (interpretation ends) Sivuliqtiksat internship program.

As of March 1, this is what it looks like: of the 112 PYs, 65 are filled, 47 are vacant, understanding that we are looking at 29 new PYs. Of the 65 PYs filled, 35 are Inuit, that's 54 percent, Mr. Lightstone, and 30 are non-Inuit, or 46 percent. Sixteen Sivuliqtiksat internship PYs, eight are currently filled at various stages of internships, six are in the staffing process to be filled, two internships will be initiated from the wait-list. Mr. Chairman, that is where we stand at the moment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Quassa.

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for clearly elaborating that. Along the same lines, the communities that the deputy minister mentioned earlier by Ms. Kolola that communities have positions that HR will take over, for example, Igloolik has a few PYs and two other communities. So, those PYs were allocated to the communities and the community will continue to keep these PYs under that community's name? Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, Mr. Chairman. The positions allocated to those communities will remain in the community. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Quassa.

Mr. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With regards to the decentralized communities, we still operate under the decentralization model that hasn't been changed yet.

With respect to the PYs that were allocated to the communities under decentralization, as an example, if they had to be moved elsewhere as I imagine positions will need to be moved around. That's why I am asking the question if some of these positions will be moved to different communities.

For example, all the positions after they have been filled, do you think they will have to be moved to other decentralized communities. That is my last and final question, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I thank you for asking that question about the decentralized communities, as the communities have strong feelings about the positions that are moved elsewhere.

It affects lots of things whenever a position is moved, but what I can tell the Member, is that the decentralized communities will not lose the number of positions they were allocated. We may be required to conduct further studies though, whether or not we should be increasing them.

However, positions in Igloolik or Rankin Inlet or Cambridge Bay will not be removed or decreased. Once the department is up and running, then we will have to review and revisit those numbers but they won't be decreased. That is what I can state here. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. The last name on my list is Ms. Kamingoak.

Ms. Kamingoak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome to the minister and Sheila.

The most recent public service annual report indicates that the number of direct appointments approved by Cabinet increased from 8 appointments during the 2016-17 fiscal year to 46 appointments during the 2017-18 fiscal year. What accounts for that increase? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And thank you for asking that question. (interpretation ends) Mr. Chairman, there was a concerted effort in 2017-18 to move Inuit into longer term casual positions into indeterminate positions, hence the increase from 8 to 46. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Kamingoak. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would just like to start off by following up on few of my colleagues' questions. Excuse me.

And beginning with Ms. Angnakak's question on priority hiring, as I just want to seek some clarification because from what I heard from the deputy minister's response was that they were suggesting removing the top priority for GN employees, with lay-off status.

I just wanted to confirm whether or not that was the case? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I can have Ms. Kolola elaborate on that response. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Kolola.

Ms. Kolola: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm sorry if I did not say it correctly. The Priority Hiring Policy will always be first and foremost for hiring Inuit. That is through the competition process.

The layoff that you are referencing is something that is used through accommodating current GN employees. If there are any layoffs, then they get priority, but from what I remember and understand, the layoff is done internally, not through the competition process. There would be no change in that. (interpretation) Thank you. I apologize for any misunderstandings I may have caused. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you very much for the clarification. I would like to follow up with Ms. Nakashuk's questions on the office lease and specifically for the lease of the Iqaluit offices. I understand that the lease is currently under negotiation. I don't want the details; I was just curious: what is the intention of the department? Is it to house all the employees in one office or to continue to have several offices in Iqaluit? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, the intention is to have our department housed under one office building. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the response, minister. I definitely do see a benefit from having the department under one roof, and I hope that you will be able to find those accommodations.

I would like to follow up with Mr. Quassa's questions regarding the vacancies as at April 1. The minister indicated that as of March 31, there were 65 filled positions. I just wanted to enquire if that 65 amount includes casual employees. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, just to elaborate a bit on the office space, in fact we're trying to be strategically located in terms of being close to other departments, not necessarily the GN but federal hiring agencies so that we are able to be within walking distance or stuff like that, if we can.

In terms of the 65, those are filled; those are not casuals, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you again for the clarification. I would like to move on to my first topic and it's regarding the motion that was put forward in the previous Assembly, which was passed, and the motion was recommending the creation of an independent public service commission modelled similar of the Government of Yukon.

I'm just curious: what factors influenced the government's decision to re-form the Department of Human Resources as opposed to something similar to a public service commission, and specifically why does the government believe that the Department of Human Resources would function in a way that would be more beneficial to the territory? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think this is a question that I'll have to get back to my colleague on and provide proper detail as to the pros and cons and reasons behind going through a human resources department instead of...the title just exited my memory, but instead of the commission, Mr. Chairman. I honestly will have to get to you with details on that, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll move on to my next topic, and I guess I'll start off with the amount of casuals that are working in the Government of Nunavut. As was previously indicated, the rate that casuals currently represent is 25 percent of our workforce and only a few years ago, in 2015 that amount was 17 percent. It's steadily increasing and increasing at a rate that I would consider to be alarming. I do believe that we need to ensure that our casuals are treated fairly and I'm under the understanding that there are a number of benefits that our casuals are excluded from.

And, specifically a household allowance, education leave, and the ability to apply for a transfer assignment and most importantly, the top-up allowance for female employees on maternity leave. I would like to ask the minister specifically what he would do to ensure that 25 percent of our workforce would be eligible for those four benefits. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Unfortunately the way that policy's written right now, we have to work through those policies, but I would like to assure my colleague that nothing's stopping us and I will take a look at it, and see what kind of changes could be made to deal with those issues.

And that's why early on in my statement, and also in standing committee, I had made a comment that I'd really like to hear some of your concerns and ideas in terms of what we can do in our employment and I mean that seriously. I really hope that we can have these kinds of discussions and here's our opportunity to deal with that issue and others.

I assure my colleague and colleagues that we are going to look at those, and see where and how we can make changes if necessary. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll move onto my next topic, well, continuing along the lines of long-term casuals.

As I've stated before, I do believe in order to ensure that effective change is applied, that directions are going to have to come from the top, which is why I posed my questions to the Premier earlier this week on the topic.

And the way I see it now, we're at this level of long-term casuals because it is simply easier for program managers to fill out a casual staffing action, and then provide extensions consecutively, as opposed to following the proper procedures of filling that position indeterminately through the competitive process.

So, like I said before I do believe it's going to take directions from the top, from the Executive all the way down to the program managers, to give them the direction they need to end the practice of continually extending the casuals as opposed to direct appointing or releasing competitions with restrictions to assist those casuals to transferring to term or indeterminate employment.

I would like to ask the minister if he's willing to support an executive directive to cabinet or bring forward an executive direction to cabinet to give the direction to the government to encourage program managers to begin taking the extra steps to go through the competitive process, and also if the Department of Human Resources would give the program managers more assistance in doing so. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank my colleague for that question. As a government we look at the casual issue. We don't want to see that as well. Casual employment is not all bad; it does have its benefits. They acquire skills in the position that they're in and when the job is open on a short-term basis, they are able to apply for that job and possibly acquire that position, having worked

there before. If they haven't gotten that position, they have better knowledge of how that goes. There are benefits to having casuals, but there are problems with it.

As a government, we know the issue of casuals has to be reduced and to increase the full-time employees. That is our goal, even to the point where we direct appoint casuals. We want to see that pool shrink as well. (interpretation ends) I think the government takes very seriously the need for long-term, full-time, permanent staffing and make smaller the number of casual employees that we do have. We're taking that step, keeping in mind, as I said earlier, that there is some need for casual employment.

There are some benefits to it, but this government takes seriously the need to decrease the number of casuals we have that are on long term and work towards decreasing that number. Our department will work with all our client departments to find ways to make that happen, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that response. The next topic I'll move on to is related to staffing. I was a little disappointed not to see an increase in the staffing division of the Department of Human Resources. Looking at the numbers in the Public Service Annual Report, the staffing division is quite busy with our competitions. Looking at the average days taken to close job advertisements, it has steadily been on the rise since 2013-14.

I would be very happy if the minister came back next year requesting additional positions in the Recruitment and Staffing Division to assist our program managers in filling our vacancies. I would like to put forward a request if the minister would consider looking into that for next year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have added some supervisor person years and we're working on some plans and ideas in terms of how we could minimize the time between putting a job out and hiring people at the end result. We couldn't agree with you more that there has to be work in that field and we are working to address that. I also look forward to sitting here next year evaluating some of those outcomes with you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to point that looking at last year's positions for staffing in the Department of Finance, there was a total of 42 in the Staffing Division as well as the regional staffing offices, and this year there are 40, so there was decrease of two positions. I do believe that if we are ever to increase our capacity, we definitely need to concentrate on that recruitment and staffing function, and

go a step further, and provide more assistance to the departments that have the higher levels of vacancies.

I will move onto my next topic and that's transfer assignments. Looking at the purpose of the transfer assignments, and one of them is to help employees gain knowledge and experience, and in the public services annual report, the number of transfer assignment to Inuit employees has been relatively low; approximately a third. That is another recommendation I would like to put forward to the minister is to try and encourage the government to emphasise the importance of providing transfer assignment to Inuit employees because I do believe that the ratio of Inuit employees taking part in transfer assignment should be the majority. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I could have my deputy respond to that comment, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Ms. Kolola.

Ms. Kolola: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I totally agree with the member's comment about transfer assignments. I have used transfer assignments in my career with my staff because I think it is a very good developmental tool.

The transfer assignments that I have put forward for my own staff had a learning plan in it so that if the position should come out in competition, they would have the experience and the qualifications, so I agree.

There are two types of transfer assignments; the competitive transfer assignment, and non-competitive, both of which I think should have learning plans. If we can increase the number of Inuit to get the experience through a transfer assignment, then that would be the one that we'll be promoting a lot. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Mikkungwak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, minister, and official. I will get right to the question. Business plan, page 39, bullet number three, "Complete review and revision of the GN staff housing policy, in collaboration with NHC." I sure hope that the HR department has a new vision on this considering the fact some communities have had staff housing unit vacant for well over five years, and yet it frustrates some of us members when they get public housing also and yet they have vacant units that are not even occupied.

One example I guess I would use is, earlier today we dealt with Department of Environment, they've got good training that is succeeding in possible employees, but the challenge they face is staff housing, so if there are vacancies in that community, maybe the Department of HR and the NHC can reprofile one of those long standing vacant units

to the Department of Environment as an example. Will that be taken into consideration when posting vacancies for job advertisements? Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Our department will be working with the Nunavut Housing Corporation and they've been working together to look at the staff housing policy and program to ensure its effectiveness as an employee benefit and the creation of HR will mean that the three departments will continue to work together to enhance and improve the policy regarding staff housing, Mr. Chairman.

I've sat here and heard discussions and frustrations on that whole issue, and I would like to assure that we will be looking at this very seriously to make changes necessary, to make it more effective. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Moving on to my next question, same page, same business plan, Priorities 2019-2020, "Work in partnership with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated on Inuit employment through education and training." I seriously read that sentence there, for example, I've had constituents who have tried to get employed by the Department of Family Services, even though they know it's a very stressful job, but they've been trying to get a career in that department as they want to help their fellow people.

But the thing that's defeating them right now, a lot of the hires are coming from the south. Will this be taken into serious consideration by the Department of Human Resources? Considering the facts and giving the beneficiaries the benefit of the doubt, even though it's a stressful career, they want to be employed in that department. I'm using that as an example. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you for bringing that up. Human resources involves many different aspects as it comprises a very large file, and further, applicants who apply for the position have to have the proper qualifications and certain positions require specific training.

They have to qualify in order to be interviewed, but we commit to working with the regional departmental offices when positions need to be filled. We can bring that up in that context, how to prioritize Inuit in some fields, and where possible, to offer training to assist them to fulfill their tasks, especially the specific training for those jobs.

We will continue to work on these details over time, and where possible, we will hire qualified Inuit, and when their qualifications match the position that government wants, they move to the next step. This is indeed the reality. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Not a question, but a brief comment. (interpretation) When employees come up from the south for Family Services, they don't go through difficult times but they are non-Inuit who have no knowledge of the community when they move up as well as the homes of the clients.

In an emergency situation, they need assistance from the residents. This is a general comment and it is within the context of Inuit, who are already resident in the community and they live in the community and that's another qualification.

When they have to deal with emergency situations and what not, I believe this requires more consideration as an asset, so I am just putting it out as a general comment. This is just a commentary and not a question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I also don't have that many questions at this point. When we look at going to a new Human Resources department I'm assuming that there has been a lot of looking backwards in terms of the shift that happened from the old human resources department to Finance, in terms of trying to learn from that experience because my understanding is, this new human resources department is somehow going to be better run and superior to the old human resources department.

Putting the two side by side; the old human resources department that existed and this new one, what are the main differences? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I could have Ms. Kolola respond to the details of that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Kolola.

Ms. Kolola: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that question. I've been around a bit long that I did know the old HR and the new HR coming on. The difference that I've seen coming into this role is the increased focus on developing detailed Inuit employment plans that were not there before, the focus on having a senior manager overseeing regional staffing, versus only having one.

So now there is one for headquarters and one for regional offices, and the other exciting things about the new Department of HR is Sivumuaqatigiit, which is transferring from EIA, oversees the Inuit employment plans, is going to be working side-by-side with staffing. So they are the contacts of all the departments of how they're going to

implement their short-, medium-, and long-term, and then they have contacts with their colleagues in the Staffing Division.

If you might remember too, in 2015 there was a settlement agreement between the Government of Canada and NTI, and \$50 million of which went to the Government of Nunavut. Sivumuaqatigiit was successful in accessing \$16 million of that settlement agreement to create five programs. The Hivuliqtikhanut Leadership, the policy development, because we need more Inuit in the policy positions, Training Travel Fund for those in the regional offices that need to travel for training either to get certification or professional development, Amaaqtaarniq Education Leave, which is unique for Inuit, and the Career Broadening Program.

I would also like to share for the Career Broadening Program, is that casual employees get first priority over term and indeterminate. Those are new programs, new positions that will be coming to the Department of HR that are significantly different than the old one. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Now I would like to compare the Department of Finance HR setup to what the new HR setup is going to be.

I understand it's going to be a standalone department, so it has its own deputy minister now, and there a shift in a few of the... . But I mean, if we put, as of today, the existing programs and the existing resources and we compare that to the new department, it's not clear to me what the difference is going to be other than pieces of EIA are being pulled off and a piece of Finance is being pulled off and they're being put together under one department. Other than that, what will the main difference with the new human resources be? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I could just have Ms. Kolola complete the circle in explaining that difference. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, through you.

Chairman: Ms. Kolola.

Ms. Kolola: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I understand correctly, the difference between the current Department of Finance role with HR... . There are staffing and employee relations coming to the Department of Human Resources. Right now the Department of Finance has an associate deputy minister. The new department is going to have a dedicated deputy minister.

There will also be two ADM positions in the new department. One is assistant deputy minister of operations and that oversees employee relations, staffing, and oversees the

operations of the department. The assistant deputy minister, strategic planning, will be overseeing the Sivumuaqatigiit public service training and policy. The Policy Division is a key in both to look at the *Human Resources Manual* and making sure that Inuit employment and enhancing Inuit is at the forefront.

The staffing right now, as I mentioned earlier, has one director. We will now have two, so there will be a focus on headquarters and the regional director focusing on the region. The Employee Relations Division right now oversees the conflict management or collective bargaining and providing supervisory training and also the job evaluation of all the positions.

If you look at the business plan for 2019-2020, we will be looking at establishing a workplace wellness division. That will be a whole new division and that doesn't exist now. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you for summarizing that for me. It is useful. I know it might seem kind of overly high level, but in terms of understanding what the main differences are.

In terms of the nuts and bolts of the new department in the most recent fiscal year, I'm talking about jobs posted, in 2016-17, 620 jobs were posted and 213 were filled. The year before that it was 400 posted. I don't know, two-year average, about 500 job postings per year. Does the department have a target that they have set in terms of how many job postings they would like to see out in this next 2019-2020 fiscal year? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, we don't have a target *per se* in terms of how many job postings we want to see out.

I think what our department wants to see is that we decrease the length of time it takes that when we do put a job ad out, the job ad goes out in a timely manner and is dealt with at the earliest convenience. If we put a job ad out, we will know exactly when it's closing, when the interviews are going to be done, and when we will go to hire and that we shorten that amount of time. As my colleague knows, it could get pretty lengthy and has gotten pretty lengthy at times. That's where we're focusing our energy in that spectrum. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you, minister. In the Public Service Annual Report on page 22 it says, "Staffing appeals can add weeks to a competition." I understand that the appeals process is important.

Candidates have up to 14 business days to file an appeal after being notified. In terms of bringing that number down and closing the competitions quicker, is it possible to reduce the time that's available to file an appeal to a week from two weeks or is that something that has to go into negotiations with the union? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When I mentioned in my previous response that we're trying to shorten the length of time it takes between putting out a job ad and filling it, that's one of a few different things that we are looking at.

We have to take into account the time when some of these processes were put in place, some of the things weren't so reliable, such as cellphones and other means of being able to get in touch with people quickly. Things are moving along in terms of being able to communicate with clients and being able to communicate with people who are looking to work with our government.

As those evolve, I think so too could our way of communicating. I think, in fairness to the appeals process, you want to give them ample time to be able to respond in case they didn't have means of getting communicated that they didn't get the job or to decide. Yes, that's one of a few ways that we are looking at decreasing the length of time it takes to actually hire individuals. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) One of your big priorities for this year will be a new human resource strategy. My understanding is that Inuit employment will be one of the top priorities in that strategy. I'm assuming it will be. I would just like to confirm if the topic of decentralization and/or further decentralization will be part of that discussion when you're putting together the strategy. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank my colleague for that question and for bringing it up on a number of occasions during this and other sittings. Mr. Chairman, decentralization was something that started when we started Nunavut. At the time they were able to decentralize some of the departments and I think there are questions, as you have raised, Mr. Main, in the previous months concerning it. It will be one of the things that we look at and review. It will be part of the look, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. I'm very pleased that it's going to be part of the review. I thank you already.

This will be my last question. (interpretation ends) The Department of Health, Education, the QEC, some positions with the Assembly, they all have their own authority for hiring certain positions and in terms of other agencies that are interested or have indicated an interest, we can add to that the Nunavut Housing Corporation and as of yesterday, Nunavut Arctic College, if I recall correctly.

In terms of approving that or making it a reality particularly for the college and for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, where will that decision rest with in terms of whether the HR function stays within this new department, of whether it gets decentralized or handed off or devolved to the agencies? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We would have to develop, I believe, an MOU, or a memorandum of understanding, with the client department, but I believe the ultimate authority would have to go through the cabinet. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. We are on Human Resources. Human Resource Operations. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$16,140,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Page D-5. Human Resources. Strategic Human Resource Management. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$10,559,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Page D-5. Human Resources. Strategic Human Resources Management. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$10,559,000. Agreed? Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I understand that it is Saturday; I want to get out of here, but I have to ask a few questions first. The minister had previously mentioned that there is a presentation planned in the near future for all DMs and the ADMs in the GN about the new Department of HR. I wonder if it is possible to arrange a similar presentation for the members. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Just a moment, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The DM and ADM workplace workshop was geared towards... The objective of that was dealing with respectful workplace environment, and harassment, and stuff like that. That's what was geared towards, but if my colleges would like to get an orientation from

our department in terms of whatever, I'm sure we could arrange that when my colleagues wish; maybe Thursday? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will move onto my next topic and it's with regard to restricted competitions. I believe that they were first introduced in 2015 and was intended to assist with Inuit employment levels. I was wondering if the minister believes that the current restriction competition for GN employees only, would create any barriers for Inuit applying for those positions, which may not be employed with the GN.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I could have Ms. Kolola respond to that, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Ms. Kolola.

Ms. Kolola: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The restricted competitions as you had mentioned are followed in three criteria; Nunavut Inuit only, Nunavut Inuit by location, or GN employees.

The request is put forth right now to the associate DM to process the competition with restrictions. Current GN employee restriction is sometimes used to fill positions internally, giving GN employees priority, but if you're a current Inuk GN employee, you would be able to apply on it. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Looking at the most recent annual report, the restricted competitions are not quite frequently used when you compare it to the total number of competitions, but what I have noticed is that restricted competitions for GN employees only make up a large portion of the restricted competition use.

I have heard a few complaints from constituents that are Inuit that want to be employed with the GN but were unable to apply for positions for which they could have been qualified to do and it was due to the fact that it was restricted to GN employees only.

I was curious: what type of criteria is used when a department advertises a position for GN employees only? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have been studying the manuals, procedures, and books in terms of everything to do with HR. I'm not quite up to speed on the details of that, if I could have Ms. Kolola respond to that, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Kolola.

Ms. Kolola (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Restricted competitions by GN employees only can be used for positions that rely heavily on GN processes that current GN employees may have experience in, and having that option of GN employees applying on restricted competitions can also fill vacancies sooner, from what I understand. *Qujannamiik*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. From what I understand, the restricted GN employees only is used to, I guess, expedite the process, but like I had said, some of my constituents who are beneficiaries that would love to apply to that job but were pretty much screened out do not think that restricted to GN employees only is really helping the GN achieve Article 23 and Inuit employment representation.

I have a request that I would like to put forward and I would like to request that the minister review the policy surrounding that specific restriction and see how necessary it is and going forward, if it could be limited or less widely used. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. At the outset, I said that I really look forward to some input and some ideas in all these areas, and I will take that as input and we will bring it forward and take a good look at it, Mr. Chairman. It's a good suggestion. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Looking at the business plan on page 48, the first priority in 2018-19 was that the department had updated guidelines for the Summer Student Employment Equity Program. I was curious what guidelines were updated. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: One moment, please, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Some of the things we're looking at is making improvements into reference checks, centralizing staffing of some positions, and as for the Summer Student Employment Program, a consultant has been hired to suggest policy and procedural changes. That would increase efficiencies and these will be considered in 2019-20. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Concerning the summer student program, this program does such a great job with providing experience to our youth, and I am not sure if this program has ever seen an increase in the budget.

And, I'm pretty sure that the public service annual report states that it's continuously used, that the entire budget is used every year in the Department of Finance has covered the deficit from within. So, I would like to recommend that the minister look into reviewing this program and potentially coming back next year with an increase. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I look forward to that too. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With regards to the summer student program, I was wondering if there's any collaboration between the department and Family Services financial systems for Nunavut students programs.

If there's any sort of coordination where the two departments share information? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Not that we are aware of, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have another recommendation. I think it would be great if the two departments did work collaboratively and if on the FANS application, it would state that your contact info may be shared with the summer student program so that you can contact those students directly or if the FANS department would be able to send out mass emails to those students.

Just to remind them of the program and to apply. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think that again, we'll take any suggestions and stuff, but those people who are accessing FANS and going onto post-secondary education or trades and colleges, they are very aware of our summer student programs and summer employment opportunities. We do provide our summer student

program information to all departments, including FANS of the summer student program, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Moving...well, continuing on the lines of summer student program. It is a great program and the first time I really stepped foot in an office was on my first day in the summer student program.

But I was curious if the minister would be willing to expand that program to focus on high school students employment possibilities, throughout the winter months. Right now, high school students do have part-time employment but they're limited to our retail stores and other minimum wage paying employment in our communities.

I think a great way to introduce them to the Government of Nunavut would be to expand this program to include year-round employment to give high school students insight of what it's like working for the Government of Nunavut. I think it would definitely help encourage our youth to plan their futures and have an idea of what they want to do after high school and go onto postsecondary education or trades or whatnot.

I just want to put forth that recommendation and I would like to request the minister to consider it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think there are quite a few opportunities out there in communities for the students to take a look at different career paths and different career opportunities through things like tradeshow and career development days.

I think there are those opportunities, but again, I asked for input and I said that I would take a look at all ideas and input, and one doesn't need to think far to think yes, that's a good idea, and it's a suggestion that we definitely will take a look at and see what we can't do. At the end of the day our youth are benefiting and when our youth are benefiting, it's never a bad thing. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the response, minister. I would like to move on to the next topic. I've noticed that the department has advertised a number of positions and I was wondering if the minister would be able to give us an update on the success of those job advertisements. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Our office has been busy. We do have a number of job ads out and they're progressing at different rates, Mr. Chairman. Ms. Kolola has been very busy and maybe she could elaborate with a bit more detail into where we are on those job advertisements, Mr. Chairman, through you. Thank you.

Chairman: Ms. Kolola.

Ms. Kolola: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that question and recognizing how many competitions we have for the Department of HR. We've been working diligently trying to review the job descriptions and getting out as many competitions as we can. I am happy to report that since the middle of January we have been able to post 14 Department of HR positions, and four more will be coming up in the next week or so. They are in various degrees of competition. Some are in the interview stages and we know that in the competition we can't divulge any information. We do have to go through the process of screening, interviewing, and then we have to wait for the appeal period.

I hope that when we do come back for spring session that we will be able to report more on this. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the response. I'm just curious also, for those 14 positions that have been advertised, have you seen a large number of applicants? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Only four of those positions have closed so far. We're still going through the process on the others, so I can't give much detail other than that, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

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

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I just have a few comments, and maybe one question.

I know we have talked a lot about casuals in this session and I can see both sides. I can see why casuals are needed in terms of filling the short-term needs, but when we're talking about direct appointments, I think my opinion is that we should be posting as many jobs as possible because casuals are flagged often by constituents to MLAs as a way to get around the directive on preferential treatment.

In some cases it could be genuine nepotism or in some cases it's just maybe the appearance of nepotism or the appearance of conflict, but in the case where you have a casual who has been hired through an improper preference being given and then that

person gets direct appointed, then we're baking in the nepotism into an indeterminate position. That's just the other side of the coin.

I just wanted to bring it up because people do see it and people do realize and it's frustrating for people who have gone to school and have gotten certificates and diplomas to see people walk in to a GN job without a posting. When they don't see a posting come out, it really frustrates people and I think it has a negative feedback effect in terms of the need for education.

I would be interested to see the department's work on crunching down on the number of positions that have been vacant for a long time. I don't know what you would call them; the un-fillable positions because we look at them on the org chart for each department, yes, they should be there, but they have never been filled and we're still functioning without them. In terms of re-evaluating those positions, I would be interested to see what you can do.

I guess the whole idea of automated attendance tracking, electronic attendance tracking ties into the whole issue of productivity and performance. When you have two employees working in the same office, one of which is productive and doing their job and the other one was maybe not fulfilling their duties and there are no consequences for non-performance, it has a horrible effect on morale in the office and it has a bad effect on "retainment" of your skilled employees or the ones that are performing.

In terms of going forward, in terms of the performance measure, performance and productivity, I would like to hear the minister's thoughts on how the department is going to work with departments to implement concrete measures to ensure that our public service is placing adequate emphasis on performance and productivity. (interpretation)
Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of that, I have been in positions of managing departments and not in the GN, but it's always a challenge to try to find that fine line between "When is a smoke break not a smoke break" or "You can't punch in at 8:30 and we don't see you 'til twelve o'clock punch-out." There are pros and cons of all this stuff.

In saying that, our department, the new human resources department will develop and deliver a training program for all GN supervisors and it will include manager orientation. It will also work on performance management, best practices, leave and attendance, respectful workplace, and alternative dispute resolution. I look forward to our department delivering these programs with the supervisors, Mr. Chairman. That should include those issues and concerns that Mr. Main has, because it is real, it's not just perceived out there. I think we've seen this in many departments and in many communities and it's one that I think we need to tackle. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) My last question is the exit surveys are currently optional and is the department going to be looking at ways to make these exit surveys mandatory?

Because it's very important to understand why our employees are leaving and if there is a way to make them mandatory as I think they should be. So, (interpretation) will this be the subject of review and what's going to happen in this area? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think that all we could do with that is it's very hard to make mandatory something, like that, when people leave the job or are terminated or otherwise.

But we will try our best to encourage exit surveys, as it's a very important tool for the government, and we will work with our client departments and try to encourage exit surveys, but it's really hard to make [it] mandatory. And again, if there's any ideas on how to make it mandatory, then please share that with us, but we will encourage and push for more of that.

Again, it is a useful tool to find out why or what people thought of the workplace they were in when they leave. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Mr. Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Maybe you work with the union and where staff is being relocated, tie it to the relocation assistance. I don't know if it is valuable information we have to find a way to get it, or if that's not possible, attach a cheque to it.

You know what? We realize you've left our workforce, but we will send you a \$200 cheque if you fill out this survey. I can't imagine too many people, you know, refusing that offer, so those are just a couple of suggestions. (interpretation) This is just a comment, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Last name on my list for this last page, Mr. Quassa.

>> *Laughter*

Human Resources. Strategic Human Resource Management. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$10,559,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Department Summary. Human Resources. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$26,699,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

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

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. I would like thank the minister and his officials. Minister Kusugak, do you have brief closing comments?

>>*Laughter*

Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: I have an exit comment. Mr. Chairman, I know it's been a long weekend, long Saturday, and I appreciate your time and patience in sitting here with me and talking about my department.

Please get back to me if and when the regular members want to get that briefing, as was suggested by our colleague, again, we will take a look at Hansard. We will take a look at your suggestions and we take them to heart. You have our email contact information, if you have ideas, please share them with us.

We want to be positive going forward. Thank you, it's been a long day for us and I really want to thank Mrs. Kolola for the tremendous work she has put in, in such a very short time, Mr. Chairman.

>>*Applause*

With that, I thank you.

Chairman: Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the officials from the witness table. Mr. Mikkungwak.

Mr. Mikkungwak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I make a motion 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.

Speaker (interpretation): Report of the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Akoak.

Item 20: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Akoak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bill 15 and the 2019-2020 main estimates and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the Report of the Committee of the Whole be agreed to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

An Hon. Member: Agreed.

Speaker: Wait. (interpretation) There is a motion on the floor. Is there a seconder? Thank you, Mr. Kusugak.

>>*Laughter*

The motion is in order. All those in favour of the motion. Thank you. All those opposed. The motion is carried.

Third Reading of Bills. *Orders of the Day*. Mr. Clerk.

Item 22: Orders of the Day

Clerk (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. *Orders of the Day* for March 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 13
- Bill 15
- Bill 16
- Bill 17
- Bill 18
- Bill 20
- Bill 21

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. Before we adjourn, seeing as we have finished another week and are in the weekend, I want to express thanks to all of our employees who are working in this House, as well as the staff upstairs, along with the ministers' assistants, our interpreters especially and our pages, we are extremely grateful to you all.

>>*Applause*

Tomorrow I hope everyone can get some much-needed rest, and for the lucky ones, who are able to spend time with family members, please enjoy your time off with your relatives.

For those of us less fortunate who are without family members and those of us who are here alone without our spouses, or who are here along, we are very thankful to our spouses who have agreed to support us, and for your ongoing support at all times.

>>*Applause*

This House stands adjourned and in accordance with the authority provided to me by Motion 17 – 5(2), we will resume our meeting on Monday, March 11, at 10:00 a.m.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 18:01*

