



## Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

### *Speaker*

**Hon. Tony Akoak**  
(Gjoa Haven)

**Hon. David Akeeagok**  
(Quttiktuq)

*Minister of Environment; Minister of Economic  
Development and Transportation; Minister of  
Energy*

**Joelie Kaernerck**  
(Amittuq)

**Mary Killiktee**  
(Uqqummiut)

**Karen Nutarak**  
(Tununiq)

**Daniel Qavvik**  
(Hudson Bay)

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok**  
(Iqaluit-Niaqunngu)

*Premier; Minister of Executive and  
Intergovernmental Affairs; Minister responsible  
for Immigration; Minister responsible for the  
Indigenous Affairs; Minister responsible for the  
Utility Rates Review Council*

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak**  
(Rankin Inlet South)

*Minister of Finance, Chair of the  
Financial Management Board; Minister  
responsible for the Nunavut Housing  
Corporation*

**Hon. Joanna Quassa**  
(Aggu)

*Minister of Culture and Heritage;  
Minister of Languages; Minister  
responsible for Seniors*

**Bobby Anavilok**  
(Kugluktuk)

**Janet Brewster**  
(Iqaluit-Sinaa)

**Hon. Pamela Gross**  
(Cambridge Bay)

*Deputy Premier; Minister of Education; Minister  
responsible for Nunavut Arctic College*

**Adam Lightstone**  
(Iqaluit-Manirajak)

**Hon. John Main**  
(Arviat North-Whale Cove)

*Minister of Health; Minister responsible  
for Suicide Prevention*

**Inagayuk Quqqiaq**  
(Netsilik)

**Alexander Sammurtok**  
(Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield  
Inlet)

**Solomon Malliki**  
(Aivilik)

*Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole*

**Joe Savikataaq**  
(Arviat South)

*Deputy Chair, Committee of the  
Whole*

**George Hikes**  
(Iqaluit-Tasiluk)

*Deputy Speaker and Chair of the Committee of  
the Whole*

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**  
(Pangnirtung)

*Minister of Family Services; Minister  
responsible for Homelessness; Minister of  
Human Resources;*

**Hon. Craig Simailak**  
(Baker Lake)

*Minister of Justice; Minister  
responsible for Labour; Minister  
responsible for the Qulliq Energy  
Corporation*

**Hon. David Joanasic**  
(South Baffin)

*Government House Leader; Minister of  
Community and Government Services*

*Minister responsible for the Status of  
Women; Minister responsible for the  
Workers' Safety and Compensation  
Commission*

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**Iqaluit, Nunavut**  
**Tuesday, February 28, 2023**

**Members Present:**

Hon. David Akeagok, Hon. P.J. Akeagok, Hon. Tony Akoak, Mr. Bobby Anavilok, Hon. Pamela Gross, Mr. George Hickes, Hon. David Joanasié, Mr. Joëlie Kaerner, Ms. Mary Killiktee, Hon. Lorne Kusugak, Mr. Adam Lightstone, Mr. Solomon Malliki, Hon. Margaret Nakashuk, Ms. Karen Nutarak, Mr. Daniel Qavvik, Hon. Joanna Quassa, Mr. Inagayuk Quqqiaq, Mr. Alexander Sammurtok, Mr. Joe Savikataaq, Hon. Craig Simailak.

>>*House commenced at 13:29*

**Item 1: Opening Prayer**

**Speaker** (Hon. Tony Akoak)(interpretation): Good day. Before we proceed, Mr. Simailak, can you say the opening prayer, please.

>>*Prayer*

**Speaker** (interpretation): Good day, my colleagues.

(interpretation ends) Ministers' Statements. Hon. Government House Leader, Mr. Joanasié.

**Item 2: Ministers' Statements**

**Minister's Statement 153 – 6(2): Minister Absent from the House**

**Hon. David Joanasié** (interpretation): Good day, Mr. Speaker and members. I wish to advise members that (interpretation ends) the Hon. John Main (interpretation) will be absent from the House today due to illness. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker**: Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

**Minister's Statement 154 – 6(2): Homelessness Outreach Workers**

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day, my colleagues. I also say "good day" to Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to highlight the work of the Department of Family Services' three homelessness outreach workers located in Cambridge Bay, Rankin Inlet, and Pond Inlet. While only based in three communities, the homelessness outreach workers travel to other communities and have so far provided outreach in Gjoa Haven, Clyde River, and Iqaluit.

The workers help clients navigate and access supports, advocate for them, and deliver emergency relief supports. In 2022 the department funded care packages of winter

clothing, Coleman stoves, and flashlights to 82 clients across the territory. The department funded emergency travel to a shelter or to stay with family in another community to 31 clients and emergency hotel stays were provided for 15 clients.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, there is much work to be done to address Nunavut's housing crisis, but it is with joy that I share that in the last year, six of our clients were allocated more permanent housing, either through public, staff, or private market housing.

I would also like to take this opportunity to share with you the development of a new pilot program at the Uqutaq Society's low-barrier shelter. In early February, Uqutaq began operations of a daytime warming centre from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. Monday to Friday. The warming centre is staffed by two outreach workers and provides a welcoming space that offers food and referral services.

Mr. Speaker, these new outreach programs are providing relief to Nunavummiut navigating through difficult circumstances. I would like to acknowledge the dedication, care, and compassion that the department's homelessness outreach workers bring to their work. I would also like to extend our continued appreciation and recognition of the staff, community organizations, volunteers, and community members who provide shelter, housing and support services to Nunavummiut who are homeless and in crisis.  
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. David Akeeagok.

### **Minister's Statement 155 – 6(2): Cold Weather Testing at the Iqaluit Airport**

**Hon. David Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For decades now, the Iqaluit airport has been the preferred cold weather testing site for major aircraft manufacturers.

(interpretation ends) Apart from the size and layout of the airport, the typical cold, dry and usually calm weather conditions in January and February are ideal for these missions.

Aircraft manufacturers also appreciate the services available in the city, which benefits from the economic spin-offs of having these teams in town during typically slower months.

Hotels rooms, catering, taxis, vehicle rentals, buses, and ground support services all get a boost from having these missions take place, as do our smaller businesses, right down to individual artist and craft workers.

Mr. Speaker, after a number of slow years for cold weather testing activity, I am pleased to say that we have seen an upturn this winter.

Since the end of January, the Iqaluit airport has hosted five missions:

- Airbus conducted two separate campaigns to certify new components in both their A320 NEO and their A321 XLR.
- Beechcraft brought two of their brand new single engine commuter aircraft, the Denali, in for full airframe testing.
- And finally, Cessna conducted cold weather trials on its new 408 Sky Courier utility aircraft.

Mr. Speaker, we are glad to welcome them back. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker:** Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister of Culture and Heritage, Ms. Quassa.

#### **Minister's Statement 156 – 6(2): Black History Month**

**Hon. Joanna Quassa:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I had the privilege of attending the opening ceremony of Black History Month on February 5. This year the Nunavut Black History Society awarded the Right Hon. Michaëlle Jean, our former Governor General, with the Sankofa Lifetime Achievement Award.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Nunavut Black History Society for inviting me to attend the opening ceremony. It was an empowering event and I commend the society for the hard work they put into Black History Month activities. Included in this year's activities are school tours, a film festival, storytelling, performances, discussions, and other activities. I encourage everyone to attend any of the remaining events.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, my department provided funding to the Nunavut Black History Society to support this year's Black History Month. Through Ikajuqtigiinniq and Piliriqatigiinniq, we are exploring our similarities, celebrating our diversity, and remembering our history.

Mr. Speaker, the more we learn about our respective cultures and shared legacies, the more successful we will be developing a more prosperous and thriving territory. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker:** Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.



### **Minister's Statement 157 – 6(2): Update on the Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students Comprehensive Review**

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. Good day, Nunavummiut and all of our colleagues here in the House with us today.

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to share the progress the Department of Education has made on the comprehensive review of the Financial Assistance for Nunavut Students, or FANS, program.

The FANS comprehensive review is being conducted by a strong and dedicated project team made up of GN and NTI representatives, each bringing diverse perspectives to inform their work. Mr. Speaker, the project team has been meeting regularly and their meetings and work are guided by four core principles: collaboration, flexibility, openness, and simplicity.

To inform the review, the project team has conducted a jurisdictional scan of best practices, a student and parent/guardian survey, a media scan, a *Hansard* review, a review of research on post-secondary education success for Inuit, and interviews with numerous stakeholders, including the regional Inuit associations, Nunavut Sivuniksavut, and Nunavut Arctic College.

Mr. Speaker, the project team had three days of successful in-person meetings in Iqaluit, and what is evident from the work done so far is that for our students to be successful in college and university, they need more than just financial support; other types of supports are equally as important.

Mr. Speaker, this comprehensive review is a significant undertaking. While this work is happening, our staff continue to make improvements to the current program. To bolster the FANS program, we hired seven casual employees to support the frontline and administrative work with students and have also implemented bi-weekly follow-ups.

Mr. Speaker, the department worked diligently to address one of the main areas of concern raised by FANS recipients, which was delayed funding after the fall semester. I am pleased to say that this January 2023 our FANS recipients received their winter semester funding on time as we continue to improve the support of our post-secondary students.

Mr. Speaker, the review is expected to be complete this spring and will be used to inform program decisions and amendments to the legislation. I look forward to providing further updates as this very important work progresses. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

**Speaker:** Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission, Ms. Nakashuk.

**Minister's Statement 158 – 6(2): 2023 Assessment Rates**

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for recognizing me again.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission's 2023 assessment rates came into effect January 1, 2023. This year the average employer assessment rate remains steady at \$2.40 for every \$100 of assessable payroll.

To ensure accountability and fairness, the commission uses this base rate as the starting point for setting specific industry rates. These industry rates are based on the claims cost experience of each industry, which means that industries with increasing claims costs see rate increases and those with decreasing claims costs see rate reductions. In 2023, ten industries are seeing rate reductions, while six are seeing rate increases.

The average rate remaining steady demonstrates the commission's strong financial stewardship in these challenging economic times. The current rate of inflation is difficult for all Nunavut employers. The commission recognizes this and works to ensure that rate changes are not adding to the challenge. This year, any rate increases are specific to changes in an industry's claims cost experience. They are not related to increases in the cost of operating the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission.

An employer's assessment rate is directly influenced by the health and safety within their own workplaces and those of their industry peers. Employers can influence their industry by making workplace health and safety a priority. I encourage all employers to have effective safety programs in place to prevent work-related injuries and incidents.  
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker:** Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister of Environment, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Minister's Statement 159 – 6(2): Enforcement Officer Conference**

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to bring to your attention the recent success of our annual enforcement officer conference. This was the first conference that we have been able to hold in person since February 2019. The conference took place here in Iqaluit during the last week of January and first week of February. Every enforcement officer for the Department of Environment took part in this conference, including our conservation officers, environmental protection officers, and our parks officers.

This annual conference is an opportunity for our officers from across the territory to learn new skills that will enable them to provide better services to Nunavummiut in their home communities. This conference also provided an excellent opportunity for team building within and between the department's different divisions.

Mr. Speaker, over the course of the two weeks of the conference, our officers completed training in Wilderness First Aid, personal defensive tactics, spill response, and grading seal skins. These sessions provided opportunities for good discussion on how to improve territorial operations and the delivery of departmental programs.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, the Department of Environment is committed to providing all our officers with the best training possible, while ensuring that the training is specific and relevant to Nunavut. We want to provide the skills and tools they need to ensure their safety in the communities they serve. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker:** Members' Statements. Member for Netsilik, Mr. Quqqiaq.

### Item 3: Members' Statements

#### Member's Statement 204 – 6(2): Athletic Participants from Constituency

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to acknowledge these great athletes who also took part in the 2023 Wood Buffalo Arctic Winter Games.

Mr. Speaker, from Taloyoak we had two, Justin Tungilik and Clifford Jr. Saittuq, who took part in volleyball; and for Kugaaruk, for Arctic Sports, Colin Jr. Inuksaq, Red Anaitok; also for futsal is Billy Nalungiaq, Pauloosie Immingark, and coach Brandon Nartok and Makibi Nartok, who is an official at the Games.

Mr. Speaker, I also wanted to say that life before Nunavut, I had tried to make it into the Arctic Winter Games and I wanted to encourage the youth and tell the youth of today that you have it made today with our own territory of Nunavut and you inspire me all. I still want to go to the Games today. It's something that you guys should be proud of. We have our own territory and it is much easier today to get into the team and to make it to the Arctic Winter Games.

Hats off to you all that went to the Games. All of you have been an inspiration and still, I'm inspired by you all by going to the Games and to be at the Games is inspiring. Nunavummiut, you have it made today. Please take part in programs, please continue schooling, and maybe you will make it on the team and you will get to the Arctic Winter Games, like I still want to get into the team and go to the Arctic Winter Games.

(interpretation) I thank the athletes, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Thank you.

>>Applause

**Speaker:** Members' Statements. Member for Tununiq, Ms. Nutarak.

**Member's Statement 205 – 6(2): Student Volunteers in Pond Inlet**

**Ms. Nutarak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My colleagues, people of Pond Inlet, and Nunavummiut, have a good day.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to recognize the students of Pond Inlet. The students have progressed quite well due to the preparation work done prior to the holiday season. The progression of the students was quite easy to showcase in the classroom, and indeed, it showed as they also made a lot of progress doing their homework.

The teachers and parents negotiated and deliberated on the three subjects the student wanted to work on during the holiday, and these three areas were chosen. First of all, this revolved around the three-week holiday by conducting local exercise workouts with students from grade 4 to 6.

They outlined various children's activities based on this towards children who otherwise had nothing to do during this time, as they noted this fact in our community. As well, the following activities were to conduct Christmas games publicly, and presented their local handicrafts as prizes, such as harpoons, harpoon heads, mittens and other items.

A student voiced their wish to work towards getting the community to work together as part of their vision, so residents could gather to celebrate. They also had *pallavut*, which is to celebrate Inuit hunting success by tossing goods to a crowd. They did that for that for children who caught their first animal in 2022.

The students also learned to negotiate to achieve their goals, and by training from elders to develop their skills, and due to their cooperation, it served as a model since it showed their abilities to provide leadership, and they accomplished their goals by offering personal development options to the local community.

Mr. Speaker, another student stated that we need to be encourage more Inuit when they show their hard work, and express our appreciation towards people who organize events or accomplish certain goals in our communities. It is true we should be encouraging our communities to do more. I would like to recognize the students who were a part of Aulaaqaqtut:

- Austin Aglak
- Sadie Inootik
- Carla Killiktee
- Anthony Maktar
- Candace Palluq
- Janice Panipakoochoo

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

**Speaker:** The member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude her statement. Are there any nays? There is none. Please continue, Ms. Nutarak.

**Ms. Nutarak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I was saying, the students were:

- Janine Panipakoochoo
- Myra Peterloosie
- Jason Singoorie
- Joanasie Aglak
- Marisa Idlout
- Susie Simonie
- Jamesie Simonie Jr.
- Lloyd Tigullaraq
- Adele Aglak
- Dilano Atagootak
- Janelle Kunuk
- Sean Pawatualuk
- Grace Simonie

Also, their teacher, who we are extremely proud of, Natasha Simonie, who was able to have this very successful activity move forward. Thank you.

>>*Applause*

**Speaker:** Members' Statements. Member for Arviat South, Mr. Savikataaq.

### **Member's Statement 206 – 6(2): Exchange with Health Minister in the House**

**Mr. Savikataaq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the people of Arviat, I wish you a very good day.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, first I would like to hope that the Minister of Health makes a speedy recovery and that he can come back to the House soon.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to talk about the exchanges that I have had with the Minister of Health. I'm quoting the *Blues*, the *Hansard*, on February 24. The Minister of Health said, referring to myself, I would like to "...invite him to have a constructive conversation, perhaps outside of this House, and we can discuss as much detail as the member would like in terms of constructive dialogue that leads to solutions instead of necessarily other motives...".

Mr. Speaker, our motives as MLA is to get information out to our constituents, to Nunavummiut, so that they can see the information being disseminated here in this House. I didn't ask for any confidential information. I didn't ask for any Cabinet secret documents, or any information that should not come out. The Premier has said many

times that this is a transparent government; that he is going to run a transparent government. Part of being transparent is giving information out here during question period; information that Cabinet members are allowed to give out. I fully understand there is some information that cannot come out. I understand that.

I was asking, Mr. Speaker, whether program funding was going to continue; a straightforward question. That is all. I would like everyone here to know that we should be free to ask whatever questions we want, and the minister should be forthcoming with information, as long as it's information that can be disseminated to the public. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Members' Statements. I have no more names. Item 4. Returns to Oral Questions. Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Mr. Lightstone.

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

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, colleagues. *Ullukkut*, Nunavummiut. It is my honour to recognize a very special guest joining us in the visitor's gallery today. Mr. Speaker, he is no stranger to our Assembly. He has actually been a common sight in the Assembly for most of his life, since he was just six months old.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask members to join me in offering a very warm welcome to Mr. Aiden Ukaliannu Lightstone.

>>Applause

Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank you, members. Mr. Lightstone right here is a very bright young five-year-old. It fills me with joy when I hear compliments from his kindergarten teacher about how surprised she is with Mr. Lightstone's math capabilities. At his young age of five, he is already doing additions and subtractions in his head without showing his work, which does create a bit of a problem when it comes time to marking his assignments, but he is also an exceptional reader, and reading far above his kindergarten level.

Mr. Speaker, it is quite an honour to have Aiden, Mr. Lightstone, joining us in this Assembly today. I just wanted to put it on record that daddy is very proud of you, and quite often I've asked him on a number of occasions what he wants to be when he grows up, and over the years it has changed from doctor to astronaut to teacher, but most recently he's discovered the joy of coding, and now wants to become a computer programmer, and I'm sure he would have no difficulty in securing employment in that field.

With that being said, Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to recognize our very special guest today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

**Speaker:** Welcome to your House, Mr. Aiden Lightstone. Item 6. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, Mr. Hickes.

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

#### **Question 303 – 6(2): Government Office Closures and Residences**

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister responsible for Community and Government Services today. I'm sure it will come as no surprise to the minister with the amount of closures that have been brought forward from government offices across the territory, but especially here in Iqaluit. I think it is an unprecedented amount. I do not ever recall seeing so many closures, and in fact, one of is closed indefinitely from the last notice I saw.

I would just like to get the current status from the minister on the office building situation here in Iqaluit. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the question. It's been a day-to-day situation where government offices here in Iqaluit have been impacted, and as I don't have a current snapshot, but I know it is being tracked on which office buildings are being closed. I know it is being tracked, but I can get a snapshot on this current status update either later today or if not, tomorrow. Mr. Speaker, thank you.

**Speaker:** Your first supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do look forward to that updated information from the minister. A number of residential units, apartment buildings, government offices have been dealing with a lot of freeze-ups, whether it be the water supply or the sewage system freeze-ups. When we hear notices from the City of Iqaluit, they're very clear that the main line is their responsibility, and anything off that main line to the infrastructure is the building owner's or the homeowner's responsibility.

Mr. Speaker, I have talked to a number of plumbers over the last couple of weeks when the very infrequent down time that they have had, and a lot of these water freeze-ups have been caused by not having the supply of water, so it creates a freeze-up situation that a lot of homeowners and obviously the Government of Nunavut, and the commercial businesses have been dealing with. So when we talk about the responsibility of the building owner versus the city's responsibility, they seem to make it fairly clear that it is the homeowner's or the business owner's responsibility, yet the issue itself is stemming from the city's not being able to provide water situation. I would like to get the minister's position on whose responsibility it should lie to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the member for his question. I'm sure many in the city have been impacted. I think this is going on four weeks, if I can recall correctly, some having to be relocated outside of their units; either public housing or staff housing.

In terms of the city infrastructure here, it is city owned and operated. As to whether the main lines or the utilidor connect to each building, whether it's an apartment building or a building like this, our legislature, as to where that line exists on who owns and is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of that infrastructure; my department, we work with not just the city, but the landlords of the affected parties and we will continue to work with our stakeholders and partners.

I understand it is a trying time, and as far as I know, the city will be having an important meeting tonight, which will trigger a lot of next steps going forward. So, we are looking forward to the outcome of the discussions tonight from city. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm sure it will be a very interesting meeting this evening. I have had a number of constituents bring forward their own homeowner concerns, and I understand a lot of apartment building owners and development corporations have been burdened with quite substantial additional expenses due to these freeze-ups.

Mr. Speaker, my last question I would like to ask is: what type of assistance has been requested, if any, or what type of assistance has been offered by the Government of Nunavut to the City of Iqaluit to help get past this nearly month-long issue that we have been dealing with? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I had stated to one of our colleagues who is not here today, my department has received two formal requests for assistance from the city. Both have been in regard to bottled water, and my department has supplied that for the city and its residents on an as when needed basis. Aside from that, my department's Local Government Division has been in regular, multiple times in contact with the city on how we can move forward around the day-to-day situation that has been arising. I can assure my colleagues and Iqalungmiut that my department is doing its utmost and I just ask for more patience.

Like I mentioned, the city is having a council meeting this evening at which point I think there will be a lot more of it done on how our government will be asked to assist in this situation. So, I look forward to the outcome of that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Amittuq, Mr. Kaernerck.



**Question 304 – 6(2): Status of Nunavut 3000 Housing Plan**

**Mr. Kaerner** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day to the people of Amittuq and Nunavut.

I would like to direct my question to the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation regarding *Igluliuqatigiingniq* 3000. As the minister is quite well aware of, I have been quite vocal in advocating for action to address the housing issues, including mould remediation in Sanirajak, Igloolik and Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, in the Igluliuqatigiulluta plan, this plan includes the statistics prepared by the Nunavut Housing Corporation for my riding of Amittuq, for constructing a total of 185 new housing units. These units will include low-cost affordable units, and construction planning.

In my constituency community of Sanirajak as well as in Igloolik, the upcoming years will clarify that the NHC wants to construct 185 new public housing units. Can the minister provide an update or timeline of the construction of new public housing units in both communities as per these plans? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is quite pleasurable to hear of my colleague's plenary study of this new Nunavut 3000 housing plan, and most of the construction plans are broken down into regional plans, as we want to construct housing units in every Nunavut community, in various forms and designs.

The first units use a different design from the later years' construction designs, and we will be requesting copies of the different designs or plans from the construction companies who contract the construction of these units. We will ask for their thoughts on the different requirements, such as we need to build this many units, consisting of various bedroom sizes, such as those they would plan to build in Sanirajak.

We would outline that we want to build those units over a twenty-year period, and to have them companies compete with various designs, such as different exteriors or different number of rooms, costs of construction and the like within the competition.

As well, we will review various blueprints by utilizing the services of NCC, for example, to show the designs of the future housing so that the various plans have certain units with these designs. Perhaps consisting of two blueprint designs?

Back then, we used to just see a single design blueprint under NHC, by showing the planned design and this time, we will also search different approaches perhaps by working in conjunction with these companies, to determine the lowest cost construction designs and materials. Those are some of the issues we are looking into. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your first supplementary, Mr. Kaernerck.

**Mr. Kaernerck** (interpretation): Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I also appreciate the response of the minister for outlining the rough plans for the communities, including the different designs that will result from negotiating and signing an agreement between NCC and NHC to build the units under the Nunavut 3000 housing plan.

Now, the minister is also aware that an essential area related to construction of housing units depends on the availability of local lots, and that a certain number of lots must be available, and due to these reasons, some communities face difficulties when their community lots are not available, as you cannot construct a unit without available lots which this minister knows.

This includes ensuring other factors, so I ask if the minister can detail how the NHC and the CG&S can work together prior to this, to ensure that lots are available both in Sanirajak and Igloolik so those two municipalities can address their lot shortages by developing bigger community development plans? I would like to understand if any preparation work has commenced in this area? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am very happy of the fact that he's asking questions in regard to this because we would all like to understand exactly what's happening. I believe in Nunavut we have the most available land, but the development of the roads, the development of the lots, and also the development of the hydro lines has to be better developed so that they could have services available for each lot. Sometimes in the communities the lots are not readily prepared and developed.

The Department of Community and Government Services and Nunavut Housing Corporation will be consulting, and they do discuss the community government land department. They do have a committee set up for the development of land lots in each municipality.

Two years before the actual construction of the unit, we start to work with the community a year prior to the construction of the buildings, so we try to identify the land to make sure the land is prepared and ready for construction. At this time we are working on the development of the lots before we construct the units.

Once we construct the units and the ground is shifting, it's very difficult, therefore it's better to construct the foundations and prepare the lot plans a couple years before the construction of the actual units. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Kaernerck.

**Mr. Kaernerck** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the minister for his detailing of the issues. Yes, indeed, when lot shortages are the obstacle faced by a hamlet,

and with the turning to multi-plex units to construct multi-unit buildings, some of the units built on the gravel infilling a lake tend to have frost heaves and movement of the gravel causing issues.

In saying that (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I am sure that the minister will agree with me when I say that it's important that Nunavummiut be confident that the proposed community allocations for new housing have been developed in a fair, transparent, and equitable manner, Mr. Speaker.

Now, the Nunavut 3000 plans indicate that 25 units are planned for Sanirajak, and 160 for Igloodik in the *Igluliuqatigiiniq* 3000, on their plan. In saying that, Mr. Speaker, can the minister clearly provide a clear explanation of how these numbers were determined? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is very difficult to determine where to allocate the housing in each community, and we have seen communities that have been waiting for construction of new units for years. Some communities end up waiting on a long list. If they built units, there would be less names on the waiting list.

Mr. Speaker, with regard to the member's question, these are reviewed in the community to find out how many people are on the waiting list for housing. There are many people who are on the waiting list. When they review the waiting list, it becomes evident if there's an individual waiting and they have family as well, even though they are not included in the waiting list.

So therefore, we review the community waiting list, number of people on the waiting list and how many units can be allocated per community. We do actually review them and weigh each fact to make sure that we allocate housing to each community and therefore we do it through an assessment.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Anavilok.

### **Question 305 – 6(2): Wildlife Management in the Kitikmeot**

**Mr. Anavilok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day to the people of Kugluktuk, Nunavummiut and colleagues.

(interpretation ends) My questions are for the Minister of Environment. I want to follow up today on concerns that I have previously raised in the House concerning wildlife management in the Kitikmeot. As the minister is well aware, a major concern in my region is the management of the Dolphin and Union population caribou.

In September 2022 the federal Minister of Environment wrote a letter to the Nunavut Wildlife Management Board in which he formally “accepted the board’s decision to list the Dolphin and Union population of caribou as endangered.” Can the minister clarify what impact this decision will have on the harvesting of the species by hunters from Kugluktuk? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Environment, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The harvest has been set for the Dolphin and Union to be allocated for 105 for the herd. That is done through our management system where we do the surveys, the counts, and then bring forward to our Wildlife Management Board in terms of determining what harvest levels can be sustained for each of the herds and for Dolphin and Union, that is how we made that determination. For the federal government to determine it as a concern, that brings additional tools to help with the caribou herd and that would bring forward more engagement and more management systems to be in place. So I see that as a positive, but it doesn’t necessarily have an impact on the harvest concerns itself. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your first supplementary, Mr. Anavilok.

**Mr. Anavilok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Thank you for the reply.

I’ve received a number of concerns regarding the lack of Government of Nunavut presence at important regional wildlife management meetings regarding such species as the Bathurst and Bluenose herds. Can the minister assure me that his department will make increased efforts to ensure that appropriate officials attend these important meetings in the Kitikmeot or NWT. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Environment, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am part of the government, but it is also when there is too much government, things get bogged down. So for a couple of these major initiatives that are taking place between the Government of Northwest Territories and Nunavut, a lot of it is focused on the users, the hunters and trappers; their expertise and all of the stakeholders that are around it. The Government of Nunavut plays an observer status in those key meetings that take place, but those key meetings are to ensure that the hunters have a say in a lot of these parts of the meetings that need to take place and the government plays a supportive role. For the last meeting that took place, it is purely due to capacity and having to travel somewhere else. Our government will continue to be very supportive on any of these meetings, and also, when it comes to the management, our government takes it very seriously and we go through the appropriate management boards to ensure that these herds are protected and managed properly.

So I want to applaud those users that attend these meetings that is critical that we all play a part in and this one that sometimes the government is not the right avenue. Our hunters

and our stakeholders have key decision making to do when it comes to making sure that everything is there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Anavilok.

**Mr. Anavilok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) As the minister is well aware, I have been advocating for an enhanced wolf and sample collection program, which is a key part of the strategy to reduce predation in vulnerable caribou populations. In his budget address of last week, the Minister of Finance publicly announced that the government will, and I quote: “strengthen the Wolf Sample Collection Program.”

Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased that the government has listened to my hunters on this issue. Can the Minister of Environment confirm how much additional funding will be provided to this important program? (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Environment, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the Minister of Finance for putting these in writing in this budget address. It is critical that our harvesters get more support and more direct support through the sampling program. This is one that I have been working on and thanks to my member for continuing to raise this with me and the communities that surround the Kitikmeot to advocate for a more and better wolf sampling program.

That program, as we speak, our department has the draft policies and programs that are being drafted and as this goes through, sometimes its a long process, but a process that is required. It is going through that process and I’m hoping to have the approved version. Until then, it is right now in draft stage and I would be very happy during Committee of the Whole to dive into this some more. I appreciate the member for his ongoing support for this program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Netsilik, Mr. Quqqiaq.

### **Question 306 – 6(2): Status of Nunavut 3000 Housing Plan**

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation.

As the minister will recall, I have asked a number of questions during our current Legislative Assembly regarding the urgent need for more housing in the communities of Taloyoak and Kugaaruk.

Mr. Speaker, as you know, the inflation and supply chain issues that have impacted the Nunavut Housing Corporation’s public housing tendering process have been very challenging for everyone.

Mr. Speaker, I was very pleased that the government's new Nunavut 3000 Housing plan indicates that up to 100 new public housing units, affordable housing units, and market housing units are planned for Kugaaruk and Taloyoak over the next few years.

Can the minister provide a [clearer] timetable for the construction of the new public housing units in both communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister responsible for Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the member for asking that question.

Mr. Speaker, for the fiscal year 2023-24, the construction will commence during the winter season. There will be 20 units built in Taloyoak and for the fiscal year 2024-25 winter season, another 10 units will be constructed in Kugaaruk. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your first supplementary, Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank you, minister, for your response. As the minister is aware, the Nunavut Housing Corporation recently issued a request for proposals for the design and build of residential multiplexes in the communities of Resolute Bay, Pond Inlet, Kinngait, Pangnirtung, Coral Harbour, and Kugluktuk. Can the minister clarify how these communities were identified for this work? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In the past two years we could not continue with the tenders that we put out because they were too expensive. We want to construct these houses in communities where we were not able to. That is how the communities were chosen. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you minister for your response. Mr. Speaker, as the minister is also aware, Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated has recently announced the creation of a new "Inuit housing entity."

Mr. Speaker, can the minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation clarify what role the Inuit housing entity will have in the design and construction of new public housing units in the territory? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation, Mr. Kusugak.

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the entity that my colleague referenced is not one created by the Government of Nunavut, thereby,

the finances and operations assessment will not be undertaken by the Government of Nunavut. I can't really speak to what this entity's mandate would be.

However, what I can say is: as long as any newly created group can assist in constructing more building units anywhere in Nunavut, even including this new entity our colleague mentioned by NTI, I would gladly accept their help since we all face this shortage of housing units in Nunavut, and all Nunavummiut organizations should work together to build more units, irrespective of if it is for government buildings, for Nunavut Tunngavik Inc., or even by other regional birthright corporations to ensure that Inuit in Nunavut can access more units, God willing, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Laughter*

Mr. Speaker, I feel this inadvertent slip is too humongous as our speaker is not a god, so I will stop my response there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Laughter*

**Speaker** (interpretation): A bit much! (interpretation ends) Oral Questions. Member for Uqqummiut, Ms. Killiktee.

### **Question 307 – 6(2): Income Assistance Policies for Short-term and Casual Workers**

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Family Services.

Mr. Speaker, my reason for this question is due to having two constituency communities which have received this information and I would like to speak to this issue.

(interpretation ends) Coming from my constituents this has been brought to me, to my office, with the struggle with a very real issue of poverty and hunger. When a client who normally depends on income assistance finally finds short-term, casual or seasonal employment (interpretation) are you actually listening to my question? Okay.

>> *Laughter*

I got very worried when I noticed the lack of attention. (interpretation ends) For two or three weeks, their situation is even worse when the job is over.

Can the minister clearly explain why income assistance clients who find short term or casual employment must then wait three months before they can receive income assistance again. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

**Ms. Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for asking that question. With respect to the clients who access income support funding, when they are returning to the office for their monthly reporting of income, the funds received must be looked into by the income support worker.

When the change is miniscule or irrelevant, then the amount they receive for their monthly income support is easier to assess, and this processing allows this. We recognize that this is problematic, especially in light of the inflationary effects on daily costs, such as food prices. So we have conducted more over-arching reviews in light of the increasing costs of purchasing foods.

Further, this past summer we convened a meeting amongst parties specifically on poverty reduction, and in light of inflation causing multiplying effects on overall costs, although this amount is usually reviewed annually in any case, but the income support program is for when they don't have anywhere else to turn to, as income support is supposed to be the last resort for our residents. We strongly encourage clients to seek gainful employment if they are medically able to do so, and if there are jobs available.

In regard to the people who are able to obtain sporadic, short-term employment, a review will be done that evaluates the number of people that live in that particular household. If the additional income is over the allowable household threshold, then the allowance is reduced. Thank you, Mr. Speaker

**Speaker:** Your first supplementary, Ms. Killiktee

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. So this matter is complicated with many variables, however it does not always run the way the minister described it.

If an income support recipient obtains a short-term job, such as if they were replacing someone in the community who is on holiday, then they will end up working for a total of two or three weeks and then won't be employed by that particular department again until the next year. Unfortunately, what happens is that this additional income causes them to be disqualified from receiving income support for the next three months.

I would like to know if that is still the case, as you are the minister for this department. The policy that has been set must be followed, but people must be educated on how the system works because misunderstandings are resulting in people financially suffering, going hungry, and not having anywhere else to turn to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I completely agree with what you are saying. If individuals who are income support recipients obtain short-term jobs, they are going to face deductions if their additional income takes them above the allowable monthly income threshold.



At the beginning of our meeting, the Minister of Finance indicated that they will be asking for an additional \$7 million in funding to be put into the income support program. We do recognize the rate of inflation and the high cost of living in Nunavut, and as I indicated earlier, there are different types of programs.

Ultimately, deductions are calculated by looking at the number of people in one household and the resulting allowable monthly income. This is why it may be that some income support recipients who obtain short-term employment will face deductions, while others will not. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Second, and final supplementary. Ms. Killiktee

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand that, but the problem is with the specific example of an individual who works for two or three weeks in total, usually when they replace a person on holidays. Their wages are set at a casual pay rate, and for short-term employment, an individual may receive a paycheque of around \$1,000 during their brief employment. Since they are now disqualified from receiving income support benefits, this \$1,000 must last them for three months. That is only \$1,000 for three months of living expenses and food. That is not enough, then \$500 would be deducted.

What really causes hardship is when the client has no other income at all for the next three months, and no other place to receive support from over these three months, since they earned some income in that one month over a period of two weeks. They have to then wait for further decisions, so they are unable to reapply until the following month. That's what I am trying to say. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank our colleague for providing that contextual information as I completely understand where you are coming from.

If the client worked during the year for a two-to-three-week period, and when it changes their monthly income allowance amount, we all know that the main purpose of this program is to provide a safety net for individuals unable to support themselves, or who are unable to work gainfully.

The program is mainly for unemployable people, or those with mobility challenges unable to work or be gainfully employed. It is rather unfortunate, but furthermore, within the Department of Family Services division of income support, we continue to search for other options, and we constantly research our programs to determine if any improvements can be made, and this is ongoing.

I also wish to mention the fact that the previous government, if an individual won \$700 in Our preference is to allow flexibility, as in some families, their family allowances also

caused them to have their income support totals slashed. The family allowance disbursements are no longer deducted today.

We are reviewing many of the programs specially to look at improvements, as we prefer to have all residents not be faced with poverty challenges. However, there are several options and recommendations for improvement still under review. This is something we can include in our considerations; however, your statement was quite true as inflation is multiplying all of these costs.

It makes our job here more difficult to deal with this in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Member for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet, Mr. Sammurtok.

**Question 308 – 6(2): Chesterfield Inlet Integrated Community Sustainability Plan**

**Mr. Sammurtok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker and good afternoon to the people of Nunavut and Chesterfield Inlet and Rankin Inlet.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, my questions are to the Minister of Community and Government Services. As the minister is aware, information published by his department indicates that the integrated community sustainability plans are, and I quote: “Community-specific profiles explain the existing infrastructure in each community as well as identify their future infrastructure needs.

Integrated community sustainability plans reflect community goals and priorities identified by the hamlet council and includes the cultural, social, economic and environmental values associated with each community’s infrastructure priorities.”

Mr. Speaker, I’d like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the mayor and council of Chesterfield Inlet for their hard work in developing the community’s plan.

Can the minister indicate what discussions were held in the recent meeting of the Nunavut Association of Municipalities concerning integrated community sustainability plans? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the question. Mr. Speaker, my meetings with the Nunavut Association of Municipalities... It included many different topics, including the capital assets of hamlets and their planning around integrated community sustainability plans, which are used as a way to prioritize which projects go towards capital planning for the community and for the territory.

Mr. Speaker, there were a number of resolutions that came out of the Nunavut Association of Municipalities' annual general meeting. We are prepared to respond to those going forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your first supplementary, Mr. Sammurtok.

**Mr. Sammurtok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Chesterfield Inlet's Integrated Community Sustainability Plan includes approximately 30 specific priorities. The municipality ranked each priority in order of importance to the community. One of the top priorities is a new municipal parking garage.

As the minister aware, his department recently introduced a new Municipal Parking Garage Program policy. Under this policy municipalities may apply for funding for the development of new municipal parking garages. Can the minister confirm if his department has provided application materials to the municipality of Chesterfield Inlet?

**Speaker:** Minister of Community and Government Services, Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the parking garage program my department has rolled out; we are very excited about this and I am sure the municipalities would like to see some important assets being built through this program. In terms of having applications provided to all the hamlets, we do operate in the sense of we do work with every single hamlet in the territory.

Since this is proposal based, we are always in open communication with the administration in Chesterfield. If the member or his constituent needs an actual copy of the form, I would be more than willing to provide that if he so chooses. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Sammurtok.

**Mr. Sammurtok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for his answer, and yes, I would like to get a copy of those forms. Another one of Chesterfield Inlet's top priorities in its Integrated Community Sustainability Plan is the renovation or replacement of its water treatment plant.

As the minister is aware, hundreds of millions of dollars in federal funding has been approved to improve water infrastructure in the capital City of Iqaluit.

Can the minister confirm how his department is working to develop a business case for the renovation or replacement of Chesterfield Inlet's water treatment plant? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Community and Government Services, Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My department, in collaboration with municipalities, tries to identify which communities are at greatest need around their water or wastewater infrastructure needs, and whether or not a treatment plant requires upgrades or new builds.

In terms of a business plan for Chesterfield Inlet, I know that my department had initially planned to try to target funding through the Investing in Canada Infrastructure fund to upgrade the treatment plant in Chesterfield Inlet. However, I believe the upgrades would not have met the new drinking water regulations that are in development, so we are looking at different options to meet the standard for Chesterfield Inlet. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Arviat South, Mr. Savikataaq.

**Question 309 – 6(2): Independent Power Producer Policy**

**Mr. Savikataaq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good day to the people of Arviat.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister will recall, the Qulliq Energy Corporation issued a call for public submissions back in October 2022 concerning the corporation's Independent Power Producer Policy.

In his statement to the House on this initiative, the minister indicated that its purpose is to “allow proponents outside of the utility to generate electrical power from renewable energy systems and sell it directly to the Qulliq Energy Corporation.”

So Mr. Speaker, my question to the speaker... .

>>*Laughter*

Sorry, my question to the minister, can the minister tell the House today which organizations and individuals have made submissions to the Qulliq Energy Corporation concerning the Independent Power Producer Policy? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Mr. Simailak.

**Hon. Craig Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Both of us got questioned today. I thank Mr. MLA for the south there. With regard to who applied for this program, that is an administrative issue. As the minister I am not keeping track of who is all applying. It is not within my purview. That is an administrative issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your first supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I can't believe that the minister stated that it's none of his business, more or less, when the minister made a statement to this House asking for submissions. Mr. Speaker, every department, it is the minister's responsibility. The buck stops at the minister, but I'll go onto my next question.

Mr. Speaker, in his statement to the House, the minister also indicated that, and again I'll quote him directly: "Inuit organizations and municipalities have also been prioritized in this process and will be given the first opportunity to own and operate community-scale installations."

Mr. Speaker, for the record, can the minister confirm that this approach will allow for-profit companies, including subsidiaries of our three regional Inuit organizations, first crack at selling power to the Qulliq Energy Corporation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Mr. Simailak.

**Hon. Craig Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, regional Inuit organizations are their business arms, and municipalities can apply for this program. They have been prioritized along with Inuit firm businesses, whether it's a private Inuk business or not. So those three can apply for this program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The minister has indicated and said that these firms, which are subsidiaries of the regional Inuit organizations, can sell money for profit to the Qulliq Energy Corporation.

So my last question, Mr. Speaker: I'm perfectly okay with providing an opportunity for Nunavut organizations to provide feedback and input to the government on its programs and initiatives. However, it is my understanding that the minister has been formally requested by Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and the three regional organizations to "co-develop" the Independent Power Producer Policy, which in my opinion goes way beyond providing feedback and input.

Mr. Speaker, an organization wants to help write QEC's Independent Power Purchase Policy, and their subsidiaries will be selling power to the Qulliq Energy Corporation. Given that for-profit subsidiaries of the regional Inuit organizations stand to benefit financially from selling power to our territory's publicly-owned utility, can the minister clarify the government's position regarding what appears to me to be a clear conflict of interest? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Mr. Simailak.

**Hon. David Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for his question. It's a bit more complicated than that, I can admit to that. This is something that I inherited that's been ongoing for a number of years now.

Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and the Inuit organizations can submit recommendations, and what not, to government policies. It is the avenue that was taking place and it's continuing on. We haven't really had any meetings at all yet just because of holidays and, most recently, the cyber-attacks. It's a bit more complicated than that, I have to admit, but it's part of Nunavut agreements. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Aivilik, Mr. Malliki.

**Question 310 – 6(2): Naujaat Airport Terminal Building**

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon to my constituents in Coral Harbour and Naujaat.

Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Economic Development and Transportation.

(interpretation ends) As the minister is aware, the community of Naujaat is in urgent need of a new airport terminal building.

Although the Legislative Assembly previously approved millions of dollars in funding towards this project, the government has cancelled a number of tenders because of high bids. Can the minister confirm when the new tender for the Naujaat airport terminal building project will be issued? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Sorry. (interpretation ends) The most recent tender for this project closed early this year. Information published by the government indicates that two bids were received. Can the minister clarify the status of the tendering award process for Naujaat's new airport terminal? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. David Akeegok.

**Hon. David Akeegok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for asking this very important question and I am pleased and I am hoping that through this House we will finally be able to award the contracts. As the tenders for the five airport terminals have closed, we have made the determination to exercise our 60-day notice to allow for us to determine what is going to take place.

Bill 17 is a very important bill for us that needs to be passed here. Once that bill is passed, then we will be able to make a final decision on these, and I seek each member's support on this very important bill. Thank you, Mr. Speaker

**Speaker:** You first supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the response of the minister that we pass Bill 17; I do support that. If that is passed, will the minister confirm the project?

(interpretation ends) Federal funding for the Naujaat airport terminal building project is being particularly provided through the National Trade Corridors Fund. During the Senate of Canada's sitting of October 27, 2022, the federal Minister of Transport publicly stated that his department has invited proponents to provide supplementary submissions to cover cost increases due to inflation and other factors.

Can the minister confirm that his department made a supplementary submission to the federal Department of Transport. Can he indicate what response he received?

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. David Akeegok.

**Hon. David Akeegok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is no secret because of the route that we have to take of going to seek additional funds through Bill 17, we've looked at the tenders and determined that we will need additional funds. As part of that, as part of this whole process, and this is ongoing process is that we will be going to Transport Canada and seeking their 75 percent. We were given the instructions on how to do it with the Minister of Transport Canada and we will be pursuing that for these five ATBs and other National Trades Corridors Fund that have not reached the 75/25. We intend to do that and we are working on that specifically for the five air terminals that are as a part of this one project that we have.

I want to assure the members that we are working diligently to try and ensure that Canada covers their 75 percent for these projects. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I also thank the minister for that clarification.

The share is set through this agreement at 75 percent paid by the federal government and 25 percent paid by the Government of Nunavut, and if members approve the supplementary appropriation here in this House, I would ask if this project would proceed, as I would like it approved and to receive confirmation that this project will move forward? Can this be provided? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. David Akeegok.

**Hon. David Akeegok** (interpretation): Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. This indeed is the prior arrangement, as we feel these are critically essential projects which we want to see completely realized.

This is why we are asking members here to approve this funding appropriation via Bill 17 for this approval of these supplementary funds, and our future projects listed there. This

75/25 ratio, if that is not going to be used, means that we would have to return back to the members for a larger share of supplementary appropriations.

As this is how the overall costs are shared, some projects are also financed solely by the federal government, while other projects fall under this 75/25 share ratio of overall costs, and many of the projects approved by this House are all different, to use this example, the Corrections center had a different agreement.

Although it too was supposed to be set at this 75/25 ratio, the federal government ended up paying roughly for half after all of the tenant improvements were completed, and I would prefer not to return for further supplementary requests, however, I want to be prepared in case we must return, as we must receive legislative approval. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Tununiq, Ms. Nutarak.

### **Question 311 – 6(2): Pond Inlet Water Infrastructure**

**Ms. Nutarak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Community and Government Services, and they concern the issue of Pond Inlet's water infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, his department issued a request for proposals in June 2021 to develop a business case for new water treatment facilities in Pond Inlet, Arctic Bay, and Grise Fiord.

In August 2021, the federal government announced \$1.8 million in funding to support planning for the design and construction of new water treatment facilities in these communities.

Mr. Speaker, I recently had the opportunity to participate in a meeting that the minister held with the Mayor of Pond Inlet concerning the community's new water treatment plant. I thank the minister for personally taking the time to listen.

For the benefit of my constituents who are following our proceedings today, can the minister update the House on the outcome of the meeting? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I thank the member for her question. Mr. Speaker, Pond Inlet's aging water treatment infrastructure has been on our radar for a time now and the schematic design and business case were completed, however, the municipal council had motioned against the site recommended through the business case.

The site chosen by the municipality was not recommended due to increased risk associated with the addition of a transmission pipeline as well as a second pumphouse



building being required. This is in addition to a substantial increase to capital investments, and as a result I believe the municipal council has now looked at rescinding their motion that they had passed before. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your first supplementary, Ms. Nutarak.

**Ms. Nutarak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister, and thank you to those in the Hamlet of Pond Inlet. (interpretation ends) As the minister is very much aware, there have been ongoing issues with water infrastructure in the community, and a new treatment plant is essential. Can the minister provide an updated timeline for the tendering of the new water treatment plant in Pond Inlet? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Subject to there being no unanticipated delays, my department is planning to proceed with the design of the treatment plant in this upcoming fiscal year of 2023-24, and the construction 2024 through to 2026. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your second and final supplementary, Ms. Nutarak.

**Ms. Nutarak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I understand and recognize that the government's resources are limited. Can the minister confirm the estimated budget for the design and construction of Pond Inlet's new water treatment plant and can he confirm how much of the funding is being provided by the federal government? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. According to my briefing material, the treatment plant in Pond Inlet would require approximately \$6,284,000 for the design and construction of the facility. My department is requesting 75 percent of the design and construction through The Green Fund, through the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program, with 25 percent through my department. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Lightstone.

### **Question 312 – 6(2): Business Plan Data**

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my questions to the Premier, as the Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs. Mr. Speaker, the Premier and his staff have the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs as the overall responsibility for compiling the governments business plan for the upcoming fiscal years.

The business plan is a very informative document. The environmental scan section in particular, highlights many demographic, geographic, environmental, and economic features of our territory, some of the challenges that we face, and a number of the social and cultural features that make us unique.

Since 2015, when the government of the day tabled the 2015-2018 business plan, the environmental scan has included information on social assistance, or “income assistance” as it is now known, broken down by the community-level. That is, until now. I would like to ask: can the minister provide a clear explanation of why this useful information is no longer provided in the government’s business plans? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I thank my colleague for asking a very good question. I agree that having reliable, accurate data is crucial in terms of making decisions, and that is something I think that in this House, as we are debating legislation or bills that are before us, it’s imperative we have those data. I can commit to looking into the issue. I understand we have the data. Obviously the environmental scans play a big role supporting the business plan. With that I could commit to looking into how we could incorporate adding that into the environmental scan into next year’s business planning process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your first supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do appreciate the Premier’s commitment to ensure that the current actual data and other related information is up to date and provided not just to the Assembly, but to the public as well. Mr. Speaker, it is still unclear why this information was withheld within the current and previous business plans, but I think it is absolutely imperative that that information is public going forward. Again, I do appreciate the Premier’s commitment on that.

Mr. Speaker, this is the second year in a row that I have been disappointed to see that this community-level breakdown of income assistance recipients is not available. Mr. Speaker, as we all know, informed decisions should be made based on complete, accurate information.

Mr. Speaker, we are being asked to approve main estimates which propose to allocate close to \$60 million in income assistance payments and many more dollars for programs dedicated to encouraging Nunavummiut to move off income assistance and towards self-reliance and independence.

I would like to ask: can the Premier describe how his department decides what information to include in the environmental scan section of the government’s business plan? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

**Hon P.J. Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First off, I would like to acknowledge the incredible leadership of Minister Nakashuk.

With the recent passing of the budget address, that really highlighted importance of individuals that are reliant on income assistance. Just the increase we have seen, which has been debated in this House; the high cost of living that we've seen.

So with that I completely agree that we do need accurate and timely information to be able to make the decisions. I have already committed to looking into this issue, but also provide the member across the information in particular to Iqaluit that he's seeking, because we do have the information. Moving forward, I look forward to incorporating those in the environmental scans as we prepare for the next year's business plans, as we move forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again, I do appreciate the Premier's commitment to provide that information. It's still unclear who makes the decision on what to include in the environmental scan, or why this relevant information was withheld in the current and previous business plans.

Again, Mr. Speaker I do appreciate the commitment. I think this information is not just important to us but to other stakeholders across our territory.

In recognizing the Premier's commitment, I would like to highlight that the income assistance stats have varied throughout the years, but the very first income support data that was included in the GN's business plan environmental scan was quite detailed. It had gone beyond just numbers of individuals by community, but had gone a step further and provided statistics on the heads of households, spouses, and children that are reliant on income support, as well the community's population and the percentage of the population that is reliant on income support.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask that when the Premier looks into this information, if he can commit to also ensuring that future statistics regarding income support recipients in the environmental scans of the business plans is as detailed as the information provided in the 2015 environmental scan. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the point, we do work very closely with the departments in terms of gathering that very important data, but it is really through that partnership between the lead department as well as the EIA to look at the environmental scan.

I am also happy to be able to have the discussion with the member to see how we could improve the business planning process. I think just in the last years we have seen a direct connection to the mandate development and really seeing key target areas. So I look forward to having the continued discussion on how we could improve and look at the specific data of what he is inquiring in terms of the 2015 environmental scan numbers. So I can't commit to that right now, but I look forward to having that conversation from now before the next business planning takes place. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Hudson Bay, Mr. Qavvik.

### **Question 313 – 6(2): Polar Bear Management**

**Mr. Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon to the people of Sanikiluaq. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Environment. The minister is a hunter himself, so he will know where I am coming from.

As the minister is aware, section 9 of the *Wildlife Act* prohibits the harvesting of polar bears that are under three years of age except under certain prescribed circumstances. Mr. Speaker, paragraphs 764 to 767 of the Nunavut Polar Bear Management Plan concerns the issue of age-selective harvesting.

For the benefit of our hunters who are listening today, can the minister provide a clear explanation for why these provisions are in place? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Environment, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There are a lot of provisions that are in place and that has gone through a lot of our co-management partners along with our harvesters in terms of what restrictions will need to be in place in order to have a sound management plan. So that is for certain sizes and that. Those came about through a lot of consultation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your first supplementary, Mr. Qavvik.

**Mr. Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the minister has previously acknowledged, management of the Southern Hudson Bay polar bear subpopulation is a very complex challenge due to the number of different jurisdictions and organizations that are involved.

Can the minister provide an update today on the status of his department's work with other jurisdictions, including Quebec, to conduct new surveys of the number of bears in the subpopulation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Environment, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My department had worked with the Government of Ontario and the Government of Quebec as a lead for the Southern Hudson

Bay polar bear subpopulation in the summer 2021 to update the population estimates. I'm pleased that the population estimates have been finalized and now the next step is for this winter to communicate that with our co-management partners and also to the communities that are affected. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Your second and final supplementary, Mr. Qavvik.

**Mr. Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the minister will recall, I asked him a number of questions during our most recent spring sitting concerning the important issue of polar bear management.

As the minister is aware, the Sanikiluaq Hunters and Trappers Organization and the Qikiqtaaluk Wildlife Board initiated an action last year against the Government of Nunavut in respect to the issue of the polar bear harvest administration and credit calculation system. Can the Minister confirm the status of this dispute? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Environment, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Hon. David Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I won't get into the details as this is part of a judicial review, but I want to assure people from Sanikiluaq, and all our partners that we have on-going meetings and work related to this and that's what we will be continuing to do, and from what my knowledge is that we did provide an accepted the credits that were need for Sanikiluaq towards this. I hope I answered the member's questions on this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Members, be aware that the time allotted for question period is now over. Item 7. Written Questions. Item 8. Returns to Written Questions. Item 9. Replies to Opening Address. Item 10. Replied to Budget Address. Item 11. Petitions. Item 12. Responses to Petitions. Item 13. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters. I recognize the Member for Arviat South, Mr. Savikataaq.

### **Item 13: Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters**

#### **Committee Report 011 – 6(2): Bill 19, An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act**

#### **Committee Report 012 – 6(2): Bill 20, An Act to Amend the Public Service Act**

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wish to report that Bill 19, *An Act to Amend the Income Tax Act*, and Bill 20, *An Act to Amend the Public Service Act*, have been reviewed by the Standing Committee on Legislation and that the bills are ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Thank you. Bill 19 and 20 will be placed on the order paper for Thursday, March 2.

Item 14. Tabling of Documents. Hon. Minister of Languages, Ms. Quassa.

**Item 14: Tabling of Documents**

**Tabled Document 102 – 6(2): 2019-2020 Minister of Languages Annual Report**

**Tabled Document 103 – 6(2): 2020-21 Minister of Languages Annual Report**

**Hon. Joanna Quassa** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to table two reports, the 2019-2020 Minister of Languages Annual Report, and the 2020-21 Minister of Languages Annual Report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Tabling of Documents. Member for Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet, Mr. Sammurtok.

**Tabled Document 104 – 6(2): Safe Place Facility in Chesterfield Inlet**

**Mr. Sammurtok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I wish to table today a document that includes the names and signature of 23 Chesterfield Inlet residents who have written in support of building a new safe space facility for the community. Although this document does not strictly conform to a formal petition under Rule 43, it demonstrates the position of my constituents on this important issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Item 14. Tabling of Documents. Item 15. Notices of Motions. Item 16. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Item 17. Motions. Item 18. First Reading of Bills. Item 19. Second Reading of Bills. Item 20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Bills 16, 17, 18, and 21 with Mr. Hickes in the Chair.

In accordance with the authority provided to me by Motion 14 – 6(2), the committee will stay in session until it reports itself out.

Before we proceed with the Committee of the Whole, we will take a 20-minute break.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

*>>House recessed at 15:20 and Committee resumed at 15:44*

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

**Chairman** (Mr. Hickes): Welcome back. I would like to call the committee meeting to order. In Committee of the Whole we have the following items to deal with: Bills 16, 17, 18, and 21. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) We wish to commence with the review of the main estimates and business plan for the Department of Community and Government Services. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Are we in agreement that we first deal with Bill 18?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Bill 18 – Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2023-2024 –  
Community and Government Services – Consideration in Committee**

**Chairman:** Thank you. I would like to ask Minister Joanasié: do you have officials that you would like to appear before the committee today? Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I do.

**Chairman:** Does the committee agree to let the officials agree before the committee?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** A couple hesitant agrees.

>>*Laughter*

**Chairman:** For the record. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses in.

Let's get the witnesses at the table first. Minister Joanasié, please introduce your officials and proceed with your opening comments.

**Hon. David Joanasié** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is my pleasure to join you here today to review the main estimates and business plan for the Department of Community and Government Services. Joining me here today are: my Deputy Minister, Kyle Seeley, and the Director of Financial Services, Mandy Hickey. (interpretation ends)

Mr. Chairman, as a service department, the Department of Community and Government Services provides a wide range of programs and services to support local governments, non-profit organizations, and Government of Nunavut departments and agencies as we pursue the priorities of the *Katujjiluta* mandate.

For the 2023/2024 fiscal year, the Community and Governments services proposed operations and maintenance budget is \$293,797,000 this is a net increase of \$26,046,000 from last years budget of \$267,751,000 to ensure that the Department of Community and Government Services can continue to provide important services to our client departments, local governments, and non-government organizations.

Our services are provided through five different sections, each responsible for planning and managing different components of the Government of Nunavut's mandate and priorities.

The directorate branch, with a total proposed operating budget of \$13,650,000 for 2024. This branch includes the office of the deputy minister, as well as the departments human resources, financial services, policy and planning, and consumer affairs divisions.

In addition to departmental, internal, corporate services functions, the community and government services directorate branch financial services division provides procurement, dry-goods resupply and air charter logistics support for all Government of Nunavut departments. The \$13,658,000 proposed operating budget for the directorate branch is \$550,000 more than 2022/2023. This 4.2 percent increase has been driven by the new collective agreement between the Government of Nunavut and the Nunavut Employees Union. The local government services branch provides financial and administrative support to enhance the quality and sustainability of municipal programs and services in Nunavut's 25 communities.

The total proposed operations and maintenance budget for the local government branch in 2023/2024 is \$95,146,000. This is a 7.03 percent increase beyond the \$88,900,000 budget approved for the local government branch in 2022/23. The increases proposed for the local government branch in 2023/2024 are driven by forced growth in the following areas: \$400,000 to offset property tax increases payable to the City of Iqaluit for Government of Nunavut assets in Iqaluit. \$5,228,000 to ensure contribution funding to municipalities that reflects increasing utility costs. \$618,000 to accommodate the change in rate of pay the Government of Nunavut employees working the local government branch. This increase an outcome of the new collective agreement between the Government of Nunavut and the Nunavut Employees Union. Mr. Chairman, of the \$95,146,000 proposed by the department towards the local government branch in 2023-2024 \$77,394,000 of this amount is grants and contributions funding for municipalities, non-profit organizations, and in some cases, individuals.

This funding is used by these organizations to offset their operational costs and support the delivery of the programs and services to Nunavummiut. Subject to approval by the Assembly, 2023-2024 will also mark fifth consecutive year the department has increased its investment into municipalities through the municipal funding program.

Mr. Chairman, in addition to the financial support provided to municipal corporations and non-profit organizations through grants and contributions programs, CGS also provides support directly to stakeholders including municipal officials and administrators. Local government divisions work directly with municipal councils and administrators to ensure they are operating within the relevant legislation and implementing practices in important areas including orientation of municipal councils to their powers and responsibilities under the relevant legislation, monitoring and oversight of financial management practices, introduction and implementation of asset management programs, identification



of municipal infrastructure priorities, maintaining emergency preparedness and response plans, accessing departmental programs and services.

The Local Government Services branch continues to make use of the various online platforms introduced during the pandemic to supplement the more traditional face to face and boots-on-the-ground delivery models used by the local government brand to build and maintain the important relationships with municipalities.

Mr. Chairman, the department's Information Management and Information Technology branch is responsible for managing the Government of Nunavut's core network and communications services. This includes managing the existing and merging hardware software needs of client departments and maintaining the security of Government of Nunavut records and systems.

Mr. Chairman, the Department of Community and Government Services' Information Management and Information Technology branch proposed operations and maintenance budget for 2023-2024 \$51, 768,000. This amount is a net increase of \$7,000,012 from 2022-2023.

Additional funding proposed under the Information Management and Information Technology branch in 2023-2024 will support work in the following areas: \$5,500,000 to provide additional bandwidth to support Government of Nunavut operations using low earth orbit satellites; \$514,000 to create three new PYs as part of establishing the new business functions to support the operation of the Government of Nunavut's fibre network; \$409,000 to accommodate increased software licensing costs for Government of Nunavut users; \$589,000 to accommodate the change in rate of pay to Government of Nunavut employees working in the Information Management and Information Technology branch and again this increase is an outcome of the new collective agreement between the Government of Nunavut and the Nunavut Employee's Unions.

Mr. Chairman, information technology is critical to the effective delivery of government programs and services to Nunavummiut. The 15.67 percent funding increase proposed for the department's Information Management and Information Technology branch as part of the 2023-24 main estimates will help ensure the department has the resources necessary to maintain and enhance critical network services throughout the territory.

Mr. Chairman, Katujjiluta identifies ambitious goals for our government including the construction of housing and long-term care centres. The Infrastructure Branch of the Department of Community and Government Services provides a comprehensive suite of services to all Government of Nunavut departments. These services include: development and oversight of technical standards, capital planning, project management, ongoing building maintenance, inspections, and oversight of all properties and assets owned or leased by the Government of Nunavut.

In addition to facility management functions and oversight of planning, design and construction of Government of Nunavut capital projects, the Infrastructure Branch is

responsible for managing over 750,000 square feet of leased office and warehouse space across the territory.

The proposed 2023-24 operations and maintenance budget for the Infrastructure Branch is \$133,225,000. This is a 10.12 percent increase from the prior year driven primarily by forced growth in the following areas:

- \$10,231,000 to accommodate increasing utility costs for Government of Nunavut buildings, such as schools, health centres, offices, warehouses, and other Government of Nunavut assets;
- \$975,000 to address rising operating costs, property taxes, insurance, and utility rates for GN leased office or warehouse space;
- \$1,319,000 to accommodate the changing rate of pay to Government of Nunavut employees working in the Infrastructure Branch. This increase is an outcome of the new collective agreement between Government of Nunavut and Nunavut Employees Union.

Mr. Chairman, the department's Infrastructure Branch is responsible for ensuring buildings in Nunavut comply with the national codes and regulations established to maximize the useful life of the buildings and to ensure their safe for occupancy. In 2021-22 this work included more than 200 community visits to complete 2300 inspections across the territory and I anticipate these numbers will increase in 2023-24 and in the future as we pursue the priorities of the Katujjiluta mandate and as many of the projects delayed during the pandemic are reinitiated.

Mr. Chairman, the proposed 2023-24 operations and maintenance budget for Infrastructure Branch is \$133,225,000, which includes an additional \$12,238,000 beyond the branch's approved 2022-23 budget. An approval of these funds will ensure the Infrastructure Branch has the resources to address increasing operational costs during the 2023-24 fiscal year.

The Petroleum Products Division is responsible for the purchase, storage, and distribution of fuel to the public, businesses, airlines, and government in Nunavut. Petroleum products purchased by the division in one year are delivered to communities and sold throughout the following year. During the summer and fall of 2022, numerous communities experienced shortages or outages of one or more types of fuel leading to interruptions in service.

To reduce the potential of recurrence of issues face in 2022, the Petroleum Products Division has secured 12.5 percent more fuel to reduce the likelihood of shortages as we move into the 2023 resupply season.

The Petroleum Products Division continues to provide Nunavummiut with fuel prices that are among the lowest in Canada. In 2023-24 the division will manage bulk fuel

purchase, plan and deliver the 2023 fall resupply, and continue to assess long-term fuel storage building capacity needs in communities.

(interpretation) Mr. Chairman, this concludes my opening remarks. I am proud to be the minister of a department that will play an important part of pursuing the priorities of *Katujjiluta* and building healthy, safe communities in Nunavut. I look forward to our discussion this morning and it will be my pleasure to take any questions from the committee. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Does the chair of the standing committee have any opening remarks? Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased to provide opening comments on behalf of the Standing Committee on Community and Economic Development on its review of the proposed 2023-24 main estimates and 2023-2026 business plan of the Department of Community and Government Services. The department's proposed 2023-24 operations and maintenance budget is \$293,797,000. This represents a 9.7 percent increase from the 2022-23 main estimates. The number of departmental positions has increased from 466.0 to 468.0, which represents an increase of 0.4 percent.

Members raised a number of issues and concerns during the minister's recent appearance before the standing committee. Ministerial Mandate Letters were tabled in the Legislative Assembly at its sitting of November 8, 2022. The Minister of Community and Government Services' Mandate Letter indicates that one of the department's priorities is to "Work closely with the departments of Economic Development and Transportation, Human Resources and Finance to develop options, a workplan and a timeline for the realignment of Economic Development and Transportation and Community and Government Services." The standing committee looks forward to being updated on an ongoing basis on the status of this work. The government's most recent quarterly employment report indicates that the majority of the department's positions in its decentralized Pond Inlet and Kinngait offices are currently vacant. As of September 30, 2022, 22 out of 33 positions in the Pond Inlet office were vacant and 14 out of 25 positions in the Kinngait office were vacant. The extent to which the government's "realignment" of the department will include a review of its decentralized positions is unclear.

The department's proposed 2023-24 main estimates include approximately \$72.6 million in funding for a number of different programs that support municipalities. The department's new Community Development Grants and Contribution Policy expires on April 1, 2025. The standing committee continues to encourage the minister to table an annual report in the Legislative Assembly on the administration of the policy.

The department's proposed 2023-24 main estimates include approximately \$4.3 million in funding for seven different programs that support sports and recreation. The department's new Sport and Recreation Grants and Contributions Policy sunsets on September 30, 2026. The department's 2022-2026 business plan indicated that one of its

priorities for the 2022-23 fiscal year was to “develop the accompanying action plan to the *Nunaliit Aulajut Sport, Physical Activity and Recreation Framework*.” Members look forward to reviewing progress in this area

Amendments to the *Consumer Protection Act* were passed by the Legislative Assembly in 2017. These amendments addressed the issue of cheque-cashing fees for government cheques and other matters. The standing committee continues to encourage the department to review the feasibility of regulating payday loans.

The standing committee continues to note the increasing prevalence of charitable and personal fundraising activities undertaken by both organizations and individuals that offer participation in gaming activities that are not necessarily operating under a clear regulatory framework. In some cases, individuals appear to be operating gambling schemes simply as a means of making money. The standing committee continues to encourage the department to ensure that regulations made under the *Lotteries Act* keep pace with changes in this area, and notes that one of its priorities for the 2023-24 fiscal year is to “continue the legislative process to propose amendments to the *Lotteries Act*.”

The *Emergency Measures Act* was passed by the Legislative Assembly in 2007. Sections 5-9 of the legislation provide for the preparation of “emergency management programs” on the part of government institutions and municipal councils. However, although it has been over fifteen years since the legislation was passed, these provisions have still not been brought into force. On November 17, 2022 the department issued Request for Proposals 2022-69: Emergency Response and Business Continuity Planning. The Request for Proposals closed on December 15, 2022. The standing committee will continue to monitor progress in this area.

In recent years, the department’s annual capital estimates have included a number of “funding bundles” for infrastructure related to water, wastewater and solid waste. The department’s draft 2023-2026 business plan indicates that one of its priorities for the 2023-224 fiscal year is to “Engage with key stakeholders to develop an action plan based on the Drinking Water Strategic Framework.” The standing committee will continue to monitor the progress of this work.

A new *Building Code Act* was passed by the Third Legislative Assembly and received Assent on June 8, 2012. Members continue to raise a number of concerns regarding the administration of the legislation as it applies to regulatory requirements in respect to small-scale projects undertaken by homeowners. These concerns have related to such matters as the availability of inspectors in smaller communities. The department’s 2022-2026 business plan indicated that one of its priorities for the 2022-23 fiscal year was to “continue with the strategic review and study on the impacts of the adoption of Nunavut-specific modifications as they apply to existing Nunavut building codes and the National Energy Code of Canada for Buildings.” Members encourage the minister and department to review the legislation with the goal of making it more suitable to Nunavut’s circumstances.

The department's proposed 2023-24 main estimates include \$536,000 in funding for the creation of a new "Telecommunication Commercialization" division within its Information Management and Information Technology Branch. Its specific priorities for the 2023-24 fiscal year are unclear.

The 2017-18 annual report of the Petroleum Products Division was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on March 2, 2021. The 2018-19, 2019-2020, 2020-21, and 2021-22 annual reports have not been tabled. On June 28, 2022, the department issued *Request for Proposals 2022-50: Executive Oversight and Corporate Services of the Petroleum Products Division*. The Request for Proposals closed on August 5, 2022. The standing committee encourages the Minister to table the results of this study at the earliest opportunity.

That concludes my opening comments on the proposed 2023-2024 main estimates and 2023-2026 business plan of the Department of Community and Government Services. (interpretation) Thank you (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Savikataaq. Are there any general comments to the opening comments? Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In your opening comments, on page eight, Petroleum Products Division, it's nice to hear of... My constituent community had run out of gasoline during the time when hunting was great, and it was nice for the department to divert the fuel resupply and I wanted to thank you, minister. Hopefully this issue of concern of running low of fuel or having no more gasoline does not happen again to my constituent community.

My constituent community it was in the season when hunting was great, and my hope is that it won't happen again in the near future or any time soon. I just wanted to thank you for diverting that resupply ship to my constituent community Kugaaruk at the time when hunting was great. My hope is that it does not happen again in the near future. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just wanted to thank the minister. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Any other general comments to the opening comments? Seeing none. Please go to page J-4. We'll continue on with page-by-page review. Department of Community and Government Services. Directorate. Page J-4, \$13,658,000. Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. Welcome to your staff. My first question relates to the minister's mandate letter. (interpretation ends) Ministerial mandate letters were tabled in the Legislative Assembly at the sitting of November 8, 2022.

Your mandate letter indicates that one of your department's priorities is to work closely with the Department of Economic Development and Transportation, Human Resources, and Finance, to develop options, a work plan and timeline for the realignment of Department of Economic Development and Transportation, and Department of

Community and Government Services. What specific changes are being considered? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Joanasia.

**Hon. David Joanasia:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the question. Mr. Chairman, my department along with Economic Development and Transportation and Human Resources, and Finance, are starting to analyze the internal business processes, the budgets, timelines and developing options on how programs and services from each of these departments can be realigned. To date, we have developed a new position, an associate deputy. This position will be situated in Rankin Inlet to oversee this initiative. Right now, we're recruiting for this vacant position. When it's filled, this position will lead the review of the realignment options. We are still waiting to see specifics but it's looking at the programs and services from each of the different impacted departments and how they can be better aligned for delivery into the communities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Malliki.

**Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and I also thank the minister for his response.

(interpretation ends) To what extent will this work be undertaken by departmental employees and to what extent will be undertaken by consultants? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chair:** Thank you, Minister Joanasia.

**Hon. David Joanasia:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's hard to determine what work will be done by who, but at this point, this associate deputy would lead on my department's side, however, we are also working with the consultant in this work.

Some of the specific work we are looking to do, is around financial services, including Vote 4 – Capital Planning and Management. For example, as well as public procurement, supply chains, as well as logistics, human resources functions and policy and consumer affairs. Those of some of the existing operational structures that will be looked at and the workflow from these areas. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chair:** Thank you, next name I have on my list is Ms. Nutarak.

**Nutarak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask this question (interpretation ends) The government's most recent quarterly employment report indicates that the majority of your department's positions in its' decentralized communities – Pond Inlet and Kinngait offices are currently vacant.

As of September 30, 2022, 22 out of 33 positions in Pond Inlet office were vacant, and 14 out of 25 positions in Kinngait office were vacant. What accounts for the high vacancy rate? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chair:** Thank you. Minister Joanasia.

**Hon. David Joanasia:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If you will allow my deputy, who has more detailed information around recruitment, and trying to get some of these vacancies filled. If you'll allow, Mr. Chair, and pass it over to the deputy?

**Chair:** Thank you. Mr. Seeley.

**Mr. Seeley:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. The vacancies in Kinngait and Pond Inlet are two separate situations, these functions in each of those two offices are different, and the contributing factors are different.

In Pond Inlet, we've seen significant turnover in staff with some folks retiring, moving onto their opportunities, and refilling as some of those are the project managers' functions for the entire Baffin region, for everywhere outside of Iqaluit.

So, those project management functions are specialized, such as engineering type positions that have been proven difficult to fill in Pond Inlet, and despite that, we are posting them and actively recruiting for those positions in Pond.

In Kinngait, we've got a different distribution, we got more planning and lands, local government divisions, and some financial functions. We had some longer-term vacancies there, but again, we've had some recent resignations and we are in a staffing process to refill those positions at the earliest opportunity.

In each of those cases, in both offices, we've had some short-term casuals who are in positions in those offices, and getting trained up on the job for some of the less technical positions, but two very different scenarios in each of the two offices. Thank you.

**Chair:** Thank you. Follow-up, Ms. Nutarak?.

**Nutarak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and I thank Mr. Seeley, was it?

>>*Laughter*

I wonder if this is more of an HR question or not, but some of my constituents are (interpretation ends) qualified (interpretation) and competent with proper qualifications but when they applied, their application was sent to Igloolik for a maintenance position or the local CG&S position posted, and the qualifications listed in the RFP were easily covered by their abilities.

When they apply with these qualifications, they are not even sent to the (interpretation ends) interviewing process (interpretation) with no explanation other than their qualifications are inadequate.

In Pond Inlet, we have quite a number of trained individuals, and many of them are very capable workers based on my experience with them, however, government only seems to place obstacles and barriers towards qualified Inuit. I wonder if this is more of an HR question, but this is our experience so I await your response. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chair:** Thank you. HR falls under the directive, so this is the right place for it. Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With respect to people who express interest in working for us, we want to see more applications submitted to the Department of CG&S.

And further, perhaps we require more (interpretation ends) site manager (interpretation) functions, so if they are capable, they could start with a casual position and work their way up by training on-the-job. Some employees are allowed to train on-the-job, and I wonder if I should keep that open instead in her riding. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chair:** Thank you. Ms. Nutarak.

**Nutarak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and I also thank Mr. Joanasié. Another issue relates to new arrivals from the south who deal with our cultural challenges as I wonder if they even receive an orientation about Nunavut, especially when they are new arrivals from the south?

New arrivals to Nunavut should receive an orientation so I ask if this practice is still used? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chair:** Thank you, Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, with respect to our employees under the Government of Nunavut, if they are newly hired or arrivals, an orientation is provided to them, at least based on the reports, about the differences in cultural approaches as well positions dealing with culture need this orientation, at least according to my information. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Nutarak.

**Nutarak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and the minister as well. Now, regarding these qualified Inuit workers who have proven their ability to take on work in the listed position, tend to be replaced by a non-Inuk worker, and many of these new arrivals are floored by the Inuit cultural practices they witness.



It also causes much cultural misunderstanding when these new arrivals assume that our lives are similar so I wanted that highlighted. I want to change tack, and ask a different question. This relates to borrowing funds which was tabled by the government, to say it in English (interpretation ends) Payday loans (interpretation) and I will ask my question in English.

This loan program is heavily utilized by many Nunavummiut which is available to those with internet access. It is also causing problems with the excessive interest rate that is charged for these payday loans.

(interpretation ends) Can the GN regulate payday lenders, and if not, why not?

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chair:** Thank you. Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If the member can bear with me, we need to search for it. Thank you.

I apologize, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I am currently reading the *Consumer Protection Act*, and the terms and restrictions on licensing different types of businesses do not apply to all current businesses working in Nunavut.

So, legislation would need to be reviewed regarding Payday Loan companies, credit card companies and financial institutions. My department is preparing policy intentions to seek Cabinet approval, to conduct consultations in developing a legislative proposal to amend the act. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Nutarak.

**Nutarak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When can we expect this process to commence? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chair:** That's a question right out of my mouth. Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. At this time, I am unable to provide a timeline when it would begin, nonetheless, this forms part of our list of action items for the upcoming year, and when we get to that level of detail then we can provide a notice of the timeline to our colleagues. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chair:** Thank you. Before I move onto the next name on my list, I just have some clarification on a question Ms. Nutarak asked. When we are looking at 36 vacancies between Pond Inlet and Kinngait, Mr. Seeley mentioned that there's a number under our staffing action.

And there are a number that are filled with casual staff at the moment. Would the department be able to provide those detailed numbers, and if not right now, through written correspondence through myself? Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie:** We do have a breakdown of casuals filled by division, which is right now, sitting at 81 positions. Yes, we can follow up through letter, if you'll allow that, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chair:** Thank you, I appreciate that. Next name I have on my list, Mr. Savikataaq.

**Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd just like to go back to revisit the realignment that member Malliki asked, and just for clarification, in case I didn't hear right, did the minister state that they're hiring an associate deputy minister to be positioned in Rankin Inlet to oversee this? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chair:** Thank you, Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The member heard right. Thank you.

**Chair:** Thank you, just a sec. I'll change my chair when you have done your response, Minister. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I wanted to get the clarification before I go to my next question. Will the deputy minister's position be moving to Rankin Inlet? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chair:** Thank you, Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Not that I am aware of. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chair:** I would assume you being the minister and not aware, then that would be a no. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There's always a method to my madness here okay? The reason I asked that is, when the premier did his minister's statement on February the 27<sup>th</sup>, "Creation of Associate Deputy Minister Positions and I quote the statement.

"The new role is structured to enable qualified Nunavut Inuit to assume senior level responsibilities over time and to gain experience in essential skills through a program of mentorship, structured teamwork and focussed preparation. Each associate will shadow and report directly to the deputy head or of a department or agency."

If the deputy minister is not working directly with the associate, then this statement is not true. Can we get an explanation? Thank you.

**Chair:** Thank you, Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This new associate will be still reporting directly to the deputy, even though it is at a distance, there are different reporting structures like this that...we are working within this situation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you minister, and I think, just to avoid confusion; this associate deputy minister position is part of the budget process. Its already a position that is being created to look after what's going to happen with CGS; Community and Government Services, and the Department of Economic Development and the Department of Community and Government Services. So, its separate from the Premiers announcement of the other associate deputy ministers. Hopefully that will alleviate the confusion on this. This is an actual specific position for a specific role, those that were announced by the Premier were on a generic associate deputy minister. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you. I'm confused then. Will the community and government services be hiring two associate deputy ministers then, if this one is in Rankin to do this purpose? Will they be hiring another one to shadow the deputy minister here in Iqaluit? Its clarification whether CGS is hiring one associate deputy minister, or two? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Great question. Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No, we are not anticipating to, hire two associate deputies. This one in Rankin Inlet, since the realignment will also be encompassing the review and executive oversight of the petroleum products division, it makes a lot of sense to have this position based in Rankin Inlet for the time being, with the direct reporting relationship to the deputy here. So, that's how we are trying to proceed on this matter. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. chairman. The reason I was questioning is because it clearly states that this associate deputy minister will be shadowing, and I always thought that shadow means you work directly with and in the same office as the person you are training. I understand reporting directly, there are a lot of positions that report remotely. So, if we could just get an explanation about the shadowing part. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Great question. Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I suppose if the member is questioning the statement from the Premier, I don't know if that's where he wants to go with this. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq, you might want to clarify your question.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. chairman. What I'm questioning is that the Premier's statement says that these associates will be shadowed by either the deputy minister, or the deputy heads of agencies, or crown corporations. I find it very hard to...since the minister stated that they are hiring only one associate DM, there's not going to be two. The DM position is, as far as the minister knows, well, he's not aware of, will not be moving to Rankin. I was questioning the ability of this new associate being shadowed by the deputy minister. Shadowing in my limited experience means, working directly with the individual in your office, to show them the ropes of the job. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Savikataaq. That is why I was trying to avoid the confusion earlier. There are two separate positions. So, the associate deputy minister position that the department is applying for funding for through these proceedings, is different than the one announced by the Premier, that are more of an overarching, interdepartmental, inter-crown agency. I think you are talking about two different positions, and that is where the confusion lies. Minister Joanasie, did you want to confirm that I am correct?

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The statement that my colleague read about, through the Premier's office that was announced, it wasn't my statement *per se* so I'll leave it at that in the sense, but with this associate position that we are creating here, it is quite specialized and unique in the sense that as far as we understand it, Economic Development and Transportation also has a very corresponding position that they would proceed with alongside our associate, and trying to look at options on realigning departmental programs and services from Rankin Inlet, it is going to be a pivotal part of their role in, as I mentioned, petroleum products, but also other functions of our department out of the Rankin Inlet offices. Those functions play a large role so we are trying to be very forthcoming around how we're doing this and we don't want to create further confusion on this matter.

If you want to direct your questions to the Premier on this, I don't know if he is prepared to take them on short notice. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, minister. I don't think we need to go there. These are two separate positions. Maybe just to add a little bit of clarity; the PYs that are being applied for, one of them falls under Petroleum Products Division. Can I get confirmation that this is the position that is being filled for that, or which position out of the three new ones that are in the staffing PYs is that position? Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For this associate deputy, we deactivated a position to help support this creation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. So in the business plan, when we look at the different PYs that are coming in and going out, as an example; with the information that we have at a committee, there are three PYs that are being added to the Telecommunications and Commercialized Division, one PY being added to the Petroleum Products Division, and two PYs being removed from the Facility Management Division.

So I think to allow a little bit more cohesive discussion around these topics, I think adding some clarity to the situation that you're talking about right now, to that information that the committee gets to see so that it avoids this type of confusion going forward. If a position was removed and then a new one was created, if that is tracked with the committee it gives us the ability to be able to follow along without this unnecessary confusion. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This associate deputy minister, is it going to be restricted to Nunavut Inuit? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you. For the associate deputy, we are planning to fill it with a Nunavut Inuk. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Going onto a whole different topic here; in your business plan I know in 2022-23 you had "review *Lotteries Act* and proceed with legislation process to propose potential amendments" and in 2023-24, when your priorities continue, "the legislative process to propose amendments to the *Lotteries Act*."

We all know that on Facebook that there is a lot of, I don't know if they're lotteries I guess, but selling spots and you pay money and get a chance to win. I ask the minister: are those illegal lotteries happening, or are they legal lotteries, or the minister is not sure? Can we just get a clarification? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Going back, the licensed or registered lotteries are the ones that are enforceable through our legislation. When they're not listed through, those don't fall within our jurisdiction. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. If Mr. Savikataaq is confused as I am, I am sure he will have a follow-up question. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just for clarity then, if a person or organization does not have a lottery licence and they hold a function where you pay money and you have a chance to win, which I think by definition is a lottery, if they're not licensed, is the minister stating that it's beyond their control and it's a free-for-all if they don't have a licence? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When they're not licensed, the *Lotteries Act* only applies to either licensed or registered, so if they're not registered or licensed, then they're not enforceable through our legislation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** I'm sorry, Mr. Savikataaq, I've got to intervene here. Why would anyone bother getting the licence? Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under the *Lotteries Act*, the licences are issued through municipalities, some through our Consumer Affairs Division. When an organization or a group of individuals apply, they need a licence to rent a facility or what have you. Those are some of the reasons to get a licence or register through our Consumer Affairs Division. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the minister is muddying the waters. I don't know if the minister is purposely doing it or not, but I asked a very simple question that if a person or organization does not get a lottery licence and they sell spots, I'll take for example, and it's done all the time, people sell spots to win a parka. People pay money, whatever it is, maybe \$20 or \$50 to win a parka and someone is drawn and someone wins a parka. Is that legal or illegal? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As far I understand it, it is not illegal. I might have to seek a legal opinion on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you. If it's not legal, then why is nothing done? Why would anyone get a lottery licence if, as the minister just admitted, selling spots is illegal but nothing is done? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If anyone thinks there are illegal gambling activities, they should contact the RCMP. Our Consumer Affairs Division does not enforce illegal gambling activities, but as part of this process of reviewing the Act, we are looking at these new types of schemes where spots, as the member stated, haven't been looked at since the Act is quite dated. This is to look at the new types of lotteries that are applicable in today's world. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think that there are a couple of issues here, one is the department is saying that if they don't get a licence, it's not within their

mandate. If it's illegal, it's not within their mandate to do anything about it. It has to be reported to the RCMP. If that's the attitude that they took to all their other licensing regimes or policy regimes, then the system wouldn't work very well.

I know the minister said that he is looking at the *Lotteries Act*. It's no point in having a law if it's not going to be enforced. You shouldn't turn a blind eye. If you're going to choose not to follow your own Act, then change it. If the department wants all the game activity, all the spots and bingos and stuff to be not regulated and not have to get licensed, then change the Act to that. I know they're working on it. Will the minister be changing the Act so that people selling spots will not need a licence? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is part of the process where the options will be explored and hear from Nunavummiut as well because there is going to be a community consultation as part of this. There has also been a jurisdictional comparison, looking at some of the work that will go into the legislative review and working with the justice department and legislative division on what would be the regulatory requirements throughout this process. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As selling spots seems to be, as long as you don't buy a licence, it is okay to do, the department won't enforce it; call the RCMP. I'll take that a step further. Would it be alright to have Nevada type cards to raise money if you don't have a licence and the department would do nothing, except ask someone to report it if someone thought that was a crime? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you. If it's not licensed, it's the same thing. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This will be my last comment on this issue here. I highly encourage the minister to do something about lotteries, either change it so it's all legal to do or enforce the law that's there, one of the two. It looks really bad when you have a law but can't or won't enforce it. In one of the consultations, if Nunavummiut say, "Well, we don't think buying spots is gambling and it's good for Nunavut," then maybe that's the way department would go. I don't know where the department is going, but whichever way the department is heading, my recommendation and advice would be: get there quick and get it done so that Nunavummiut know exactly what's legal and not legal in gambling terms. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. That was a good comment. I think it is part of what caught my interest with some of the responses where it's up to people to report, so then it gets into a personal, neighbour versus neighbour or family member versus family potential conflict. I do hope that the minister takes the member's recommendation under consideration. I'll go to my next name, Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you for recognizing me again, Mr. Chairman. I would like to continue questioning about the lottery licenses, about the regulations. Many hamlets handle getting licenses for bingo or other fundraising efforts. Are the hamlets aware of the law? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié** (interpretation): In terms of handling lotteries, the hamlets have been orientated by the Consumer Affairs division, they started in late 2022 to do this, and also meet with groups who generally apply for licenses and also telling them what they're supposed to do and help them understand it.

If my understanding is correct, Mr. Chairman, in October they were supposed to go Hall Beach and Igloolik but due to capacity issues they were not able to. A new plan has to be made for that. Once we start revisiting the communities again, we will hope the hamlets and non-profit organizations will understand the system. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to the minister. I support that, where communities get licenses. They go through hard times when they don't know what's available and what's not available. Some communities are probably confused like that too, so I encourage the minister to visit all the communities about this so that there will be fewer problems.

The next question I would like to ask is, it's not just the hamlets that raised money, we would like them to be oriented. They have to produce reports about their fundraising efforts, and they usually have to fill out forms. I encourage the department to train people to fill those out. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Some communities are granted licenses, like hamlets. We can work them on what their responsibilities are and the responsibilities that they hold. They have to request that Consumer Affairs division. There is information available on it, and perhaps you can encourage your hamlets to do that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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



**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, minister. I wish you luck during our review of the O&M for the Department of Community and Government Services and I hope that it will be as quick and smooth as the Department of Health's.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to start off my questions related to Inuit employment plans. There is a lot of great wording in the Inuit Employment Plan section within CGS' business plan. I do hope that you are able to accomplish all of the objectives that have been set out under the Inuit Employment Plan, but all those great words really don't mean much without action. I'm not saying this to come out across negatively; I'm just pointing out that currently and historically, CGS has had much lower Inuit employment stats than other departments and even at the community level, where communities outside of Iqaluit, departments have much higher rates of Inuit employment generally, but there are a number of communities within CGS that have zero Inuit employment and I just want to highlight that or flag that for next year.

Another significant matter that is essential in attaining a representative workforce is the training and development of our current workforce and key aspects of providing training and qualifications to employees is through transfer assignments and acting assignments. In the public service annual reports, CGS has had very low Inuit stats at the transfer assignment level and I don't think there are any acting assignment stats included in that document, but I was wondering if the minister would be able to provide some updated information with regard to the number of employees utilizing transfer assignments and the number of Inuit employees utilizing transfer assignments, and same information for acting assignments. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** I think, in our department, we currently have 21 internal transfer assignments, of which 11 are Nunavut Inuit. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. That is very great to hear. I was wondering if you might have information regarding the number of acting assignments. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We don't have that level of detail and just understanding too that acting assignments can be very short. Some are also more prolonged. We don't have the details. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. I know Mr. Lightstone had asked this to a number of departments on the committee for social wellness and it's unfortunate that the cabinet colleagues didn't give the economic development department a heads up that this was coming. Mr. Lightstone asked that to each department. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for pointing that out, minister. You're absolutely correct. The acting assignments, which are very short and which are intended to cover off a supervisor's or higher level position while they're on vacation or out of the office otherwise, but acting assignments can go as long as, I think, two years, which is very crucial in allowing employees the experience and qualifications necessary to screen into positions, which is why I think it's very crucial to track the level of Inuit participation at the acting assignment level.

Returning to the Inuit Employment Plan, there are some really great items included in the priorities and something that I really appreciated seeing last year was the delivery of after-school employment initiatives in Nunavut schools. That's something that I think that we really need to prioritize and getting our youth employed in decent paid positions at an early stage to allow them to enter the workforce and encourage them to stay in the workforce as opposed to rely on other social supports.

On page 226 of the business where it mentions the after-school employment initiative, it says that the department has been working on promotional videos to be shared in schools as well as on social media, but I was wondering if the minister might be able to elaborate a bit more on the types or potential programming or employment opportunities that are being considered for students for after school. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We do have an Inuit employment outreach manager position that is helping our department try to promote different opportunities internally. This also includes around career laddering or other training initiatives or available opportunities for progression for advancement. Yes, the afterschool program is just kind of like trying to get a step in the door for our young population to get a sense of what it's like to work in the departments, one of the divisions, Environment. It's just trying to be conducive to a welcoming place to work. We do want to recruit at an early stage, so this kind of plants the seed into any role within the department. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, minister. You had an opportunity with the young Mr. Lightstone that was here earlier today. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. Moving on to my next line of questioning, the Department of Community and Government Services allocated one position in the Sivuliqtiksat internship program and as of September 30, 2022, the most recent report shows that that position in CGS, the internship position, is vacant. I was wondering if the minister would be able to provide an update on that situation and as well as inform the committee when the last time the department had a Sivuliqtiksat intern. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we currently do not have anyone participating within the department on the initiative, but I believe, if I'm not mistaken, I think last year was the last intake. For this, we do need mentors as well for the Sivuliqtiksatsat intern to be interned. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. I encourage the minister to work with your staff to try to make a submission to the Sivuliqtiksatsat program and advertise a position in the coming fiscal year. I'll just flag that for something to follow up on next year.

Now moving away from Inuit employment plans, I would like to switch over to consumer protection. I was just curious if it is a legal requirement for stores to post the price of all their products on their shelves. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you. Interesting question. I wouldn't know the definitive answer, but I would say it would be best practice for any store to show their prices so the consumers know what they're in for. I would have to look further into the details whether or not legislatively they're required to show prices. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. I'll pick up on that at a later date, but sticking on the consumer protection and pricing, it has been brought to my attention that there are some companies in Nunavut that have a three-tiered pricing structure for the same service. It's just a generic service that has different prices depending on the purchaser, whether they're an individual, a municipality, or the Government of Nunavut. I was wondering if the minister is aware of any organizations in Nunavut that practise that three-tiered pricing structure and if there are any means to address it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you. We do have and we have seen examples for municipalities. They do charge water rates or other utility rates for industrial, commercial, or residential. There are different types of rates that we are aware of and the airlines, as another example, do have negotiated rates for cargo or what have you. We are aware of the different rates for different categories and structures. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. I have no more names on my list. We're on page J-4. Directorate. Community and Government Services. Mr. Kaernek, sorry I didn't see you.

**Mr. Kaernek:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good evening, minister and your officials.

Still on the pages for the Consumer Affairs, I think this is a Nunavut-wide issue when it comes to consumer affairs protections. Let's say for instance that I'm shopping at the Northern and let's say I buy the eggs, cereal, milk, all these good, healthy foods, is it up to the company to jack up the prices instantly without the knowledge of these people that "Oh, they're already up; their prices went up"? Is CGS at least looking into those prices being jacked up all the time, especially where there is one store in some communities? It's a Nunavut-wide problem and all the food products come on air charters or freighters and whatnot. Is the department at least working on a strategy on how they can tackle this issue? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Our Consumer Affairs Division, we do have what's called, I think, the Better Business Bureau or for... I mean, any business that is operating in Nunavut has their prices set. We are not in the business of looking at how much a company is making or like if they're making too much out of the backs of Nunavummiut, but there are certain things that Consumer Affairs provides to the public around making sure they have the information they need when they're purchasing as a consumer.

(interpretation) I hope that made sense, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I'm not entirely sure where the member is going at, but that's what I say for now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** If I may, Mr. Kaernek, I think, minister, what the member is looking for is when you look at retail pricing structures in certain businesses, such as retail grocery stores like the Co-ops and North West Company stores, there seems to be a lot of differential pricing. What I believe the member is trying to get to is: what type of oversight does the Department of Community and Government Services, through their Consumer Affairs or Better Business Bureau...? The minister had mentioned that there are some things that a consumer can do. Maybe it might be helpful if the minister could list out some of the options that a consumer would have in bringing forward a complaint on a retail pricing structure of a specific business. Thank you. Mr. Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You just, I guess, brought it up. There is a consumer complaint form that our Consumer Affairs Division... There's a complaints process and information sheets that are available through our websites. There are "Consumer Rights and Responsibilities" and "Know the Facts." There is information around identity theft, even on payday loans. There's quite a bit of information through our Consumer Affairs Division branch that's available. I would be more than happy to share with the members the complaint form, for example, that they can make available to your constituents. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Kaernek.

**Mr. Kaerner:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's what I was going to ask, where that was coming from, with these companies that jack up their prices and especially with people who are on income assistance. It's a Nunavut problem and that's where I was coming from.

I would like to also make a suggestion that I think, from the perspective of the Consumer Affairs and along with the lottery licensing, I would just like to make a suggestion of how they can come up with a strategy when it comes to protecting consumers and also to try to provide some education for how they can run a lottery licence under the *Lotteries Act*. It's just a suggestion, if I can make it, that I think that CGS needs to really look into this strategy of how they can tackle this. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Did you want to comment on that, minister? I know, earlier, you had mentioned through another legislative proposal that you didn't have a timeline, but do you have maybe a general timeline of how soon this legislation would be looked at? Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have a definitive timeline. The initial idea is to have the legislative proposal in place and the consultations would follow through after that, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Next name I have on my list: Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to go back to the earlier question posed earlier concerning positions in Kinngait and Pond Inlet.

The reason I wish to return to that question is because we heard that some positions have been open for 17 months with no successful applicants, longer than a calendar year. Why is that, and what are the underlying factors? Can you explain if it is due to the lack of staff housing or due to the lack of qualified applicants?

These two communities are quite large with large populations and I wish to hear the reasoning why these important positions that could easily feed families are still empty. Yes, we see the written reasons listed by the esteemed consultants or academia, nonetheless, our *Katujjilutaa* mandate speaks to training Inuit to fill important and technical positions.

It is almost like they are using this long-winded process to kill any interest by locals, as some positions are endlessly posted and remain vacant for many years. When this government tries to request employment in certain communities, it seems that we just hear a smidgen of reasoning, while you want our approval immediately.

And this applies to certain initiatives as well, where you want immediate reaction or approval, but the fact that these vacancies are causing domino effects requires resolution that is outside of the bureaucratic processes so I wanted to say that.

Mr. Chairman, why and due to what reasons are these positions remaining vacant. I want actual proof or reasons why this government refuses to respond truthfully when we ask for tangible reasons, as the other question brought up, if you are also unable to respond to it, then it means a comprehensive review of the entire hiring process is needed, so when would you be looking to rectify these issues?

Or will you hire consultants to review the process or your staff to conduct research as to why this process doesn't work. The MLA for Pond Inlet, clarified the issues as most of us know local people who are very qualified people, and we acknowledge their expertise.

Our colleague spoke to that earlier. There are some positions that seem to be set aside for non-residents, at least that is how I understood that. These are my two questions going back. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Ms. Killiktee and I know the minister did commit to providing some detailed information to the committee, as far as how many positions are vacant, which ones they are, which ones are under casual staffing, but if the minister could maybe repeat some of the responses that Mr. Seeley had earlier on some of the specific hiring challenges in those two communities. Mr. Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Perhaps I can start off, but if I can hand it off to my deputy to provide more details, however, many positions that are vacant with that many positions being posted simultaneously, we also need to collaborate with the HR personnel on certain issues.

Further, what exacerbates this is also the limited staff available as the department suffers from vacancies as well, like our department and I assume this creates part of the bottle neck within this process causing excessive timelines when trying to fill certain positions such as managers, and if no managers are hired, that has parallel issues related to the supervisor not hiring their own staff.

I am just using that example, perhaps with your forbearance, Mr. Chairman, if you can allow my deputy minister to speak to this issue, how the hiring process plays out when vacancies continually impact the recruitment process. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Seeley.

**Mr. Seeley:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think the minister has summed it up quite nicely. The number of vacancies we have within this department, not just in the two communities and in the Qikiqtani region, but across the territory, is significant. In order to hire people, we do indeed need hiring managers to initiate the job action, to initiate the staffing process.

It is really important that as we are bringing Nunavummiut into the workforce that they have appropriate management and a good solid introduction to the GN as the employer of choice in the territory. We have taken a couple of different steps this year to expedite our

staffing and we work very closely with the Department of HR to expedite staffing actions utilizing firms to help expedite the hiring process. We do track that very closely.

One of the factors that the member referenced is individuals qualifying to meet in the screening requirements at the community-level to actually get a swing to get a chance at the job. We do have a couple of different onboarding opportunities that we use starting with the afterschool program, moving into some of the casual programs that we use and our very important casual recruitment system that we use across the territory.

We also have online onboarding tools available for new candidates as they do come on to make sure that people know the full values and ethics statements of the GN. We are working on new privacy standards once we get those people in the door, but the member is entirely correct; getting those people in the door is our challenge and the challenge that we need to address is to get more employees working at the department in those communities and others to start providing the important programs and services that they do.

We do certainly have a lot of vacancies and we are looking to address that at the earliest opportunity. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank them for the clarification as I understood some responses earlier, however, I want to ask a clarification question related to the forms entitled in English (interpretation end) screening (interpretation) and how does this impact or how does this screening allow approval as I imagine there is a numbering scale there somewhere. Who made the screening criteria?

How antiquated are these criteria? I wonder if you can elaborate on whether you use new or ancient screening criteria. That is my question for now and I doubt I will ask another question, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The HR department makes the criteria applicable based on the type of position the department requires, as an example, we need to review the rules and regulations, the policies to be used and that is how the process works within the hiring process, with interview questions and screening criteria forwarded by the HR personnel. That is how I understand it, Mr. Chairman, thank you.

**Chairman:** Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Do you actually review the qualification criteria to determine its' applicability to these positions? Are each of these qualifications rated numerically? Why? I wonder if they are not overhyping certain criteria and if these

criteria are publicly available to the members? That is my last comment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** I think what Ms. Killiktee is trying to get to is: how is the work done with human resources, with the department itself, on finding equivalencies and any flexible parameters of qualifications of a position so that more Nunavummiut would be able to screen in and prove their value to accepting a position? Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) As I understand it, for competitions that are put out, there's a hiring panel that is involved and that also works with HR if you're looking at either equivalencies or what have you, and of course the job description plays a big part in the questions that will be asked and how candidates move forward through the process.

We work heavily with HR on these matters and I want to steer clear around their space and our space, so I hope that we will stay... We do have many vacancies that we want to fill as soon as we can and there are processes to follow, though, in these instances, but we're trying to expedite different ways to fill the vacancies in a more timely manner. (interpretation) I hope that makes sense, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. The last name I have on my list under page J-4 is Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You can rule me out of order if I have gone too far or if I jumped again. It is to my understanding that Community and Government Services provides the building and maintenance to the schools and to the health centre. Just recently the fuel spill in the Netsilik School has caused the community of Taloyoak to be out of school for quite some time now. February 7 was the fuel spill in the Netsilik School and to my understanding, the fuel spillage was caused by human error and the human error was by a person that's not from the community. How does the department do the contract work within the communities? That's my question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Quqqiaq, it is a relevant question, it is covered on page J-7, but if this is your only question under this topic, I'll allow it, Minister Joanasie, just to save time later.

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If you will allow my deputy to respond on the question. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Mr. Seeley.

**Mr. Seeley:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I understand the question correctly, there are a couple of different pieces to that. Contractors deliver fuel and that's just a standing agreement of contract services between the Petroleum Products Division and whoever is awarded that contract. The facility maintenance piece is managed through our



infrastructure shop, which is to say the departmental staff responsible for daily building inspections and things like that.

Where there is a human error, in this case, the facility maintenance team would have identified it on site and then would be managing through our project management shop the remediation of the spill site. The contract management review of the standard operating procedures being followed by the contractor or if they weren't followed by the contractor, that's reviewed through the PPD. That contract management piece is done by whichever part of the department is managing those contract services. In this case, we had people inside the building and outside the building. It really does quite depend on the nature of the work that was being done at that time.

I would be happy to provide a little bit more detail on the structure if you would like. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Is this related to the same line of questioning, Mr. Quqqiaq, or is this related to the Directorate on page J-4? Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Seeley, for your answer. I would like it through correspondence so that I can follow up for the winter sitting, if possible. If I get it before the winter sitting is complete, I would like to have it so that I can follow up with my oral questions during the winter sitting.

This is on another topic. I'm going to move on to lottery licensing. Most Nunavummiut know that there is a lot of fundraising through bingos through the lottery licence and they're for a great cause, let's say for example, a fishing derby, a seal derby, and there might be other causes, for a great cause, and we cannot hide from this. There are a lot of funds that are probably being misused.

For that reason, when they're being misused and it's for a great cause and, let's say for example, when they're going to have a fishing derby, a seal derby, or any other events and then that committee decides to stop doing all their fundraising and they have a lot of money on hand, and it appears to me that a lot of the money is being misused and I think we need to look at the lottery licensing.

I think we need to come up with legislation. Maybe in the spring sitting or before the end of the winter sitting, I will be asking questions to the department to try to make changes to the lottery licensing in respect to the communities that do fundraising. It's more just of a comment, but it would be great to have the minister's response on this topic. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's my last question.

**Chairman:** Thank you, Mr. Quqqiaq. The minister has already committed to reviewing that legislation, so I'll leave that as it stands right now. I mean, you may wish to follow up, but at later opportunities. The minister has already committed to looking into that legislation, so I'll leave it at that. We're on page J-4. Community and Government Services. Directorate. \$13,658,000. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Members, please turn to page J-5. Local Government Services. \$95,146,000. Mr. Sammurtok.

**Mr. Sammurtok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Your department's 2022-26 business plan indicates that one of its priorities for the 2022-23 fiscal year was to "develop and deploy the Drinking Water Strategic Framework action plan." Your department's draft 2023-26 business plan indicates on page 213 that "The strategic framework draft has been completed; and development of the Framework Action Plan was paused to allow a shift in focus to drinking water regulations. It is expected the framework action plan can be completed by end of March 2023." As of today, what is the status of this work? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My department is leading the development of the Drinking Water Strategic Framework and will be the lead department in the development of the strategic framework action plan.

Health has been providing support during the development of the strategy and it is expected that Health will continue to provide support on the action plan as well.

Alongside with the Department of Health, the Nunavut Association of Municipalities will also be included in the development of the action plan. The majority of the water systems are managed through municipalities.

We expect that multiple GN departments will require input in the action plan as safe drinking water is a requirement for the successful development of any water infrastructure or program completed in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Sammurtok.

**Mr. Sammurtok:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Your department's 2022-26 business plan indicated that one of its priorities for the 2022-23 fiscal year was to "Continue to work with lead agencies and other stakeholders in the development of a solid waste strategy and solid waste management regulations." Your department's draft 2023-26 business plan indicates on page 214 that although a regionalization study has been completed, "Further progress on this project is delayed due to capacity restraints held by partner stakeholders." Can you clarify what specific capacity restraints are impacting this work? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Basically we are having to work with other regulators in this process, including the Department of Environment, and so once

regulations have been set through that department, it will support our work on the topic that my colleague brought up. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Next name I have on my list: Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Your department's new Community Development Grants and Contributions Policy was approved in November 2020. It was revised in March 2021. It expires on April 1, 2025. What specific changes to the policy is your department currently considering? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If you will allow my deputy to respond to the question. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Please proceed, Mr. Seeley.

**Mr. Seeley:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The policy is currently implemented and we do review it annually based on feedback from municipalities. We are considering some minor amendments to the policy right now based on input from municipalities.

Just specific to some of the eligibility of some projects identified by municipalities and/or eligible funding recipients like non-profit organizations, at this point we haven't initiated a formal consultation on updates to that policy because it is still relatively new, but before the policy does sunset, we will engage with all eligible funding recipients to see if the policy is in line with their current and emerging funding needs, particularly in the area of municipal operating funding and supports in that area. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Seeley, for your response. Your department's draft 2023-24 main estimates and draft 2023-26 business plan indicate that the budget for the Municipal Funding Program will increase by 10.7 percent, from \$49,003,000 in the 2022-23 fiscal year to \$52,231,000 in the 2023-24 fiscal year. How was the amount of this increase determined? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. \$5,228,000 of this increase is driven by fuel price increases as well as electrical rate increases and it's to support the Municipal Funding Program. There is also \$400,000 for grants in lieu of tax. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister, for your response. Your recent letter to the standing committee dated January 10, 2023 indicates that your department “conducted a survey of the human resource needs of non-tax-based municipal corporations in March 2022” and that your department has “determined that additional research will be required to align funding for core municipal positions incorporated within the base funding component of the Municipal Funding Program.” What is the timeline for this work? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We don’t have a defined timeline on this, but we are planning to engage with the Nunavut Association of Municipalities on this matter. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I’m moving on to Sports and Recreation. Your department’s new Sport and Recreation Grants and Contributions Policy was revised in July of 2022 and sunsets on September 30, 2026. What specific improvements to the policies were made? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are very minor revisions to the sports and recreation policy and we did engagements with territorial sports organizations throughout that. We did not get a lot of feedback through that process, so we anticipate that the revisions are quite in line with the work that they do, and I think sports is a very important topic for communities. I encourage... I was very thankful that the member made his statement around sports and Arctic Winter Games. I hope that you one day make it to the Arctic Winter Games. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you minister. My last question is: your department’s draft 2023-2026 business plan indicates on page 214 the action plan for the Nunaliit Aulajut, Nunavut’s Sport, Physical Activity and Recreation Framework “has been developed” and is “awaiting translations.” When will the action plan be ready for tabling in the Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That’s my last question.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you. We are anticipating it for tabling in the spring sitting. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you minister. I’ll go to the next name on my list, Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask about emergency management. (interpretation ends) Nunavut's *Emergency Measures Act* was passed by the Legislative Assembly in 2007. Sections five to nine of the legislation provide for the preparation of, I quote, "emergency management program," end quote, on the part of the government institutions and municipal councils. However, these sections of the legislation have not yet been brought into force. What is the government's current timetable for bringing these sections of the *Emergency Measures Act* into force? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are engaging a contractor in this process and it will depend on having all Government of Nunavut departments' business continuity plans and the management frameworks in place. Maybe I will give... . It is up to a four-month period that we think that it will take that much time to determine when we will be able to comply with sections 5 through 9 of the *Act*. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you, minister. Each community has to make an emergency management plan. They have a certain date where they have to have these completed. Now, have all of these municipalities completed and submitted their emergency management plans? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Mr. Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié** (interpretation): Yes, at the moment the most up-to-date information with regard to the community emergency management plans that have been completed are: Sanirajak, Baker Lake, Chesterfield Inlet, Naujaat, Cambridge Bay, and also Gjoa Haven. So, we try to help these municipalities when they are putting together their emergency management plans and when necessary, we do training through Nunavut Emergency Management. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and I also thank the minister. (interpretation ends) On November 17, 2022 your department issued Request for Proposal 2022-69, Emergency Response Business Continuity Planning. The request for proposal closed on December 15, 2022. Which entities were awarded the contract for this performance? (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The last update is that that RFP was still under review. I believe it might be close to completion. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you, minister. If I can move on to community plans; that is lot development. (interpretation ends) The minister tabled a mandate letter at its sitting of November 08, 2022. Your mandate letter indicated that one of your department's priorities is to, I quote, "collaborate with Nunavut Housing Corporation to support efficient lot development in communities for private land development in housing construction." End quote.

Your department's draft 2023-2026 business plan indicated on page 214 that its Planning and Land Division is, I quote, "working to support development needs across Nunavut and will continue to identify collaborative opportunities with Nunavut Housing Corporation's housing construction plan." What specific opportunities have been identified to date? (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If you'll give me a minute. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My apologies. We have been able to look at, in collaboration with the Nunavut Housing Corporation, around what could be made available through the hamlets, but also looking at density-wise, some lots might be better suited for larger buildings. For example, we have also, in working with municipalities around what granular supply they have to support Nunavut 3000. These are some of the discussions that are continuing, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the communities, CGS has a responsibility for the hamlets in Nunavut. Have all of the communities put together their zoning bylaws, because with the Nunavut 3000 plan, there are going to be so many needs for lots? So have all of the communities done their zoning? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Joanasie.

**Hon. David Joanasie** (interpretation): Thank you. The hamlets have their own zoning bylaws and they work on them themselves, but we help them and we review them, and if necessary, we ask them to change the way they do things or the way they operate. The Nunavut Housing Corporation has outlined which communities that they are ready to do work in. We are starting to looking into the communities that are being planned for the future as well and what we will need to do to get them ready for the future. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

**Mr. Malliki** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and I also thank the minister. So, using the hamlet bylaws, the hamlets usually need help from the government when they

are working on land lots for the coming years. It is part of the responsibility of the hamlets in planning for land lots for the future. I would really like the communities I represent to be helped more with their planning for the future for building lots to ensure that we will have lots available. That will be my final question. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we are very aware of the fact that communities need to be ready when they are going to be building homes. So, we will try and support Coral Harbour and Naujaat and we will try and support all of the communities, including the communities that the member represents. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. The next name I have on my list, Mr. Anavilok.

**Mr. Anavilok:** *Koana*, Mr. Chairman. I just want to go page 211, Local Government Services, on community support. Objective: "Provide operational and capital funding to municipalities to support the planning and delivery of municipal programs and services." I wonder if you could elaborate on municipal programs and services. (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Mr. Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So, each municipality has programs that they deliver for the community; maintaining roads, or providing services for their buildings for public use. This is what it's trying to get at around how each hamlet, they have an amount of people, and all the residents require the water/sewer and those types of services. That's what it's getting at, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Anavilok.

**Mr. Anavilok:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Sometime back I brought up, I think, ambulance services, that there is no paramedic and I think I was forwarded to the health department for that and I was told that the hamlet would have to operate that, not the health centre. Would those be anywhere in the category of this? *Quana*, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I put it basically, hamlets do have the power but are not required to provide ambulance services. We do recognize that there is a need. However, we don't have a dedicated program for ambulance services or funding to support that for hamlets at this time, but our budget right now as it stands, there is close to \$300 million that's dedicated to what we have outlined through our business plan currently.

We know that some communities did receive donations from the south and that was an in-kind donation made to municipalities. There was no funding attached towards the operation and maintenance of those vehicles. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. (interpretation) Are you done? (interpretation ends) Page J-5. Local Government Services. \$95,146,000. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I won't have much here; just something that just stuck out here. On page 214 of the business plan, in one of the bullets there, it says, "Begin collaboration with..." and I know this was touched on, "...the Nunavut Housing Corporation to support efficient lot development and opportunities for private land development and housing construction." Just if the minister can explain the private land development part, are they going to parcel off and give a large chunk of area in the community like down south, where one big, huge developer goes in there and builds a bunch of houses and builds the streets? If I can get something on that. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is to explore if it's an option that the Nunavut Housing Corporation would like to see it go through. It's something that we're looking at and reviewing to see exactly what the member asked, if that's something viable and something that we want to pursue here in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What is the smaller communities' view on this? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you. Each municipality is able to identify their own needs around that and based on their community plans, I think we can get a good idea on how they would like to proceed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just for clarity then, it would have to be part of the community land use plan where right now there are residential lots, commercial lots, and industrial lots. There would have to be a section that they carve out that would say "private development lots." Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Maybe if you will have my deputy respond on the question. Thank you.



**Chairman:** Please proceed, Mr. Seeley.

**Mr. Seeley:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The municipalities maintain authority over administration of municipal land, which is to say that they issue the leases, so they will maintain authority over who is issued leases on municipal land equity or fee simple.

As far as the municipal plan goes, municipalities again would need to pass that plan itself. This exercise identified in the business plan is pointing at our discussions with the NHC on what efficiencies could be realized, if this is viable, if there is an appetite among municipalities to incorporate long-term private leases or developments within their municipal plans. It's a little bit more at that formative stage to advance it, but municipalities, of course, have complete domain over the administration of municipal lands. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Mr. Savikataaq.

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to indulge the committee here, has any municipality made a request to have a land vote, whether you can purchase lands or not, since the last referendum? Thank you.

**Chairman:** Minister Joanasié.

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Not that I'm aware of, nor my deputies. Thank you.

**Chairman:** Thank you. Local Government Services. \$95,146,000. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Thank you. We will go to page J-6. Mr. Kaernerck.

**Mr. Kaernerck:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to report progress. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. There is a motion on the floor to report progress. It's not debatable. All those in favour. All those opposed. Motion carried. I will now rise to report progress to the Speaker.

Oh, my apologies. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses out.

**Speaker:** Report of the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Hickes.

### **Item 21: Report of the Committee of the Whole**

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Your committee has been considering Bill 18 and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the Report of the Committee of the Whole be agreed to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** There is a motion on the floor. Is there a seconder? Mr. Sammurtok. The motion is in order. To the motion.

**Some Hon. Members:** Question.

**Speaker:** All those in favour. Opposed. The motion is carried.

Item 22. Third Reading of Bills. Item 23. *Orders of the Day*. Mr. Ball.

### **Item 23: Orders of the Day**

**Mr. Ball:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to remind members that the Standing Committee on Legislation will meet in the Nanuq Room at 9 a.m. tomorrow.

*Orders of the Day* for March 1, 2023:

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. Replies to Budget Address
11. Petitions
12. Responses to Petitions
13. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters
14. Tabling of Documents
15. Notices of Motions
16. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills

17. Motions

18. First Reading of Bills

19. Second Reading of Bills

20. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters

- Bill 12
- Bill 16
- Bill 17
- Bill 18
- Bill 21

21. Report of the Committee of the Whole

22. Third Reading of Bills

23. Orders of the Day

>>*Applause*

**Speaker:** This House stands adjourned until Wednesday, March 1, at 1:30 p.m.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 18:11*

