

NUNAVUT HANSARD

UNEDITED TRANSCRIPT

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27, 2025

IQALUIT, NUNAVUT

Hansard is not a verbatim transcript of the debates of the House. It is a transcript *in extenso*. In the case of repetition or for a number of other reasons, such as more specific identification, it is acceptable to make changes so that anyone reading Hansard will get the meaning of what was said. Those who edit Hansard have an obligation to make a sentence more readable since there is a difference between the spoken and the written word. *Debates*, September 20, 1983, p. 27299.

Beauchesne's 6th edition, citation 55

Corrections:

PLEASE RETURN ANY CORRECTIONS TO THE CLERK OR DEPUTY CLERK

Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

Speaker

Hon. Tony Akoak
(Gjoa Haven)

Hon. David Akeeagok
(Quttiktuq)

Minister of Justice; Minister for Labour; Minister responsible for the Human Rights Tribunal; Minister of Economic Development and Transportation; Minister responsible for Nunavut Business Credit Corporation; Minister responsible for Nunavut Development Corporation; Minister responsible for Mines; Minister responsible for Trade; Minister responsible for Mines

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

Premier; Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs; Minister of Culture and Heritage; Minister of Indigenous Affairs; Minister responsible for Immigration; Minister responsible for the Utility Rates Review Council; Minister responsible for Seniors; Minister of Languages

Bobby Anavilok
(Kugluktuk)

Janet Brewster
(Iqaluit-Sinaa)

Hon. Pamela Gross
(Cambridge Bay)
Deputy Premier; Minister of Education; Minister of Human Resources; Minister Responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission

George Hickes
(Iqaluit-Tasiluk)

Deputy Speaker; Chair of the Committee of the Whole

Hon. David Joanasi
(South Baffin)

Government House Leader; Minister of Community and Government Services; Minister of Environment; Minister of Energy

Joelie Kaernerik
(Amittuq)

Mary Killiktee
(Uqqummiut)

Hon. Lorne Kusugak
(Rankin Inlet South)

Minister of Finance; Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation; Minister responsible for Liquor and Cannabis Commission; Minister responsible for Liquor and Cannabis Board

Adam Lightstone
(Iqaluit-Manirajak)

Hon. John Main
(Arviat North-Whale Cove)

Minister of Health; Minister responsible for Suicide Prevention; Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation

Solomon Malliki
(Aivilik)

Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk
(Pangnirtung)

Minister of Family Services; Minister responsible for the Status of Women; Minister responsible for Homelessness; Minister Responsible for Poverty Reduction; Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College

Karen Nutarak
(Tununiq)

Daniel Qavvik
(Hudson Bay)

Joanna Quassa
(Aggu)

Inagayuk Quqqiaq
(Netsilik)

Alexander Sammurtok
(Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet)

Joe Savikataaq
(Arviat South)

Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole

Craig Simailak
(Baker Lake)

Officers

Clerk
Stephen Innuksuk

Deputy Clerk
Nancy Tupik

Clerk's Assistant Law Clerk Sergeant-at-Arms Hansard Production
Kooyoo Nooshoota Michael Chandler Eemeelayou Arnaquq Uqausirmit Uqausirmut Inc.

*926 Sivumugiaq Street,
Iqaluit, Nunavut X0A 3H0
Tel (867) 975-5000 Fax (867) 975-5190 Toll-Free (877) 334-7266
Website: www.assembly.nu.ca*

Table of Contents

Opening Prayer.....	1
Ministers' Statements	1
Members' Statements	5
Returns to Oral Questions	9
Oral Questions.....	9
Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters.....	34
Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters	35
Report of the Committee of the Whole	73
Orders of the Day	74

A.

Daily References

Thursday, February 27, 2025 1

B.

Ministers' Statements

537 – 6(2): Minister Absent from the House (Joanasie)..... 1
538 – 6(2): Update on Rankin Inlet Construction (Nakashuk)..... 1
539 – 6(2): Ground Search and Rescue Collaboration (Joanasie)..... 2
540 – 6(2): Partnerships with Winnipeg Art Gallery (Akeegok, P)..... 3
541 – 6(2): Nunavut 3000 Support (Nakashuk) 4

C.

Members' Statements

740 – 6(2): Speaking in Inuktitut Language (Killiktee) 5
741 – 6 (2): New Ice Rink System for Kugluktuk (Anavilok) 6
742 – 6(2): Qamaniqtuag Visit (Simailak) 6
743 – 6(2): Birthday Greetings (Gross)..... 7
744 – 6(2): Jon Lindell Hockey Tournament (Main)..... 7
745 – 6(2): Relocation Apology (Joanasie) 8

D.

Return to Oral Questions

1102 – 6(2): PY Discrepancies (Kusugak) 9

E.

Oral Questions

1117 – 6(2): Inuit Language in Government (Killiktee).....	9
1118 – 6(2): Elder Van Update (Savikataaq)	12
1119 – 6(2): Elder Vans (Sammurtok).....	14
1120 – 6(2): Solid Waste Management (Quassa)	15
1121 – 6(2): Environmental Contamination and Regulation (Kaerner)	17
1122 – 6(2): Housing Construction in Kugluktuk (Anavilok).....	19
1123 – 6(2): Solid Waste Management (Quqqiaq)	20
1124 – 6(2): Nunavut Housing Corporation Activities in the Kivalliq (Malliki)	22
1125 – 6(2): Child Sexual Abuse (Lightstone).....	24
1126 – 6(2): Transboundary Issues in the Kivalliq (Simailak).....	26
1127 – 6(2): Nutrition North Canada Program (Brewster).....	27
1128 – 6(2): Number of Homes and Cabins Contributed (Hickes)	30
1129 – 6(2): Elder Vans (Savikataaq).....	32
1130 – 6(2): Inuit Games (Simailak).....	33

F.

Bills

Bill 70 - Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2025-2026 - Consideration in Committee	36
---	----

Iqaluit, Nunavut
Thursday, February 27, 2025

Members Present:

Hon. P.J. Akeagok, Hon. Tony Akoak, Mr. Bobby Anavilok, Ms. Janet Brewster, Hon. Pamela Gross, Mr. George Hickes, Hon. David Joanasie, Mr. Joeline Kaerner, Ms. Mary Killiktee, Hon. Lorne Kusugak, Mr. Adam Lightstone, Hon. John Main, Mr. Solomon Malliki, Hon. Margaret Nakashuk, Hon. Joanna Quassa, Mr. Inagayuk Quqqiaq, Mr. Alexander Sammurtok, Mr. Joe Savikataaq, Hon. Craig Simailak.

>>*House commenced at 13:31*

Item 1: Opening Prayer

Speaker (Hon. Tony Akoak) (interpretation): (no interpretation)

>>*Prayer*

Speaker's Statement

Speaker (interpretation): (no interpretation) Item 2, Ministers' Statements. Hon. Government House Leader, Mr. Joanasie.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

Minister's Statement 537 – 6(2): Minister Absent from the House

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good afternoon, my colleagues and Nunavummiut. I wish to advise members that the Hon. David Akeagok will be absent today from the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister's Statement. Hon. Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, Ms. Nakashuk.

Minister's Statement 538 – 6(2): Update on Rankin Inlet Construction

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good afternoon, my colleagues and Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to update members on the construction of three Nunavut Arctic College student residence duplexes in Rankin Inlet by the Sanatuliqsarvik trades school students. These duplexes are the result of an agreement signed last May between Nunavut Arctic College, Nunavut Housing Corporation, and Pewapun Construction Limited.

Prior to the start of construction, College students met with Pewapun officials to review blueprints for the designs of the duplexes. I can confirm that blueprint reading is a course in the Skilled Trades Worker Program at Sanatuliqsarvik.

Mr. Speaker, construction is well underway. The initial phase was supported by students learning about the foundations of their respective construction trades' programs. Students who demonstrate competencies will return to the project to continue the next phase of building.

I thank Housing Minister Lorne Kusugak and his team for their ongoing support for this project. The Nunavut Housing Corporation provided the lots for the duplexes and continues to offer trades and project management support when required.

Hands-on building opportunities like this allow Sanatuliqsarvik students to gain real life work experience while collecting hours of learning with Red Seal instructor support. This supports the students on their apprenticeship journey.

Qujannamiik, Mr. Speaker.

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

Minister's Statement 539 – 6(2): Ground Search and Rescue Collaboration

Hon. David Joanasie: Mr. Speaker, ground search and rescue is a critical service essential to protecting our community members while out on the land. My department works to reinforce this connection as a lifeline for those in need and for the dedicated ground search and rescue teams.

Mr. Speaker, Nunavut Emergency Management, is committed to incorporating community consultation into the development of both Ground Search and Rescue Policy and programing. Together with our partners we are actively taking steps to make community informed decisions and improve operations. Recent activity includes:

- Working with the Department of Finance, successfully amending the *Income Tax Act* to extend tax credits to Search and Rescue Volunteers.
- Collaborating with Indigenous Services Canada and the Nunavut Association of Municipalities, to successfully kick off the Community Safety Liaison Pilot program that will provide funding for up to seven communities to participate.
- Coordinating with academic partners to host the first Nunavut Ground Search and Rescue Forum and co-host the second Nunavut Search and Rescue Roundtable.
- Working with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police "V" Division, we have enhanced response capacity to active search and rescue operations which have

- included the deployment of specialized human resources, drones and police dogs, and
- With the support of our local search and rescue partners, we have improved our processes enabling more effective communication and response by the Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary, the Joint Rescue Coordination Centre, the Canadian Rangers and private air support for active searches.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, I recognize that the challenging work of our community volunteers can take a toll on personal wellbeing. Considering this, my department has worked to ensure access to mental health support for each of our Search and Rescue volunteers.

I want to thank our local search and rescue teams for the commitment, ingenuity and resilience each one of them brings in the service of our communities. Thank you.

Qujannamiik, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Minister's Statement. Hon. Minister of Culture and Heritage, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Minister's Statement 540 – 6(2): Partnerships with Winnipeg Art Gallery

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share with my colleagues important updates regarding our ongoing collaboration with the Winnipeg Art Gallery-*Qaumajuq*.

In November, I visited the Winnipeg Art Gallery, which currently houses the Government of Nunavut's arts collection, the collaboration between the Winnipeg Art Gallery and the department has been mutually beneficial. We continue to work together on several key initiatives and are committed to providing training and creating opportunities for heritage workers and artists from Nunavut. Jointly, we facilitate the long-term care of art through loan agreements, exhibit opportunities, and collections management. These efforts ensure Nunavut's cultural treasures are preserved and accessible for generations to come.

Mr. Speaker, last year, my department, in collaboration with the Winnipeg Art Gallery, launched the Artist-in-Residence Program. This initiative offers Nunavut Inuit artists a four-week immersive experience at the Winnipeg Art Gallery, providing access to studio space, mentorship and an opportunity to promote the Government of Nunavut's Inuit art collection.

I am pleased to announce this year's successful participants, one from each region. Please join me in congratulating Martha Siqiniq Aupaluktuq-Hickes from Baker Lake, Andrew John Palomgayak from Gjoa Haven, and Jamisie Ittulu from Pond Inlet. These talented

artists will have the opportunity to refine their skills and expand their knowledge in a supportive and dynamic environment.

Mr. Speaker, through strategic partnerships with the Winnipeg Art Gallery, we are providing opportunities to Nunavut Inuit artists that help foster the growth of Inuit art, culture, and knowledge. This program supports emerging artists and strengthens the connection between Nunavut and the broader artistic world, ensuring Nunavut art is celebrated on a national and international stage.

This initiative directly aligns with the Katujjiluta mandate to diversify local economies. By providing artists access to a major platform like the Winnipeg Art Gallery, we are not only supporting their personal growth but also creating opportunities to increase revenue for local artists. Through exposure and engagement in this program, artists are able to expand their networks, leading to potential sales, and ultimately increasing their economic opportunities.

Qujannamiik, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Minister's Statement. Hon. Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

Minister's Statement 541 – 6(2): Nunavut 3000 Support

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to highlight the continued efforts to improve access to trades training and certification for Nunavummiut. Family Services is a proud partner in the Nunavut 3000 initiative. The Career Development division developed a training plan that provides an opportunity for significant training in the building trades and in developing new approaches to certifying workers. The training plan is being applied to all construction companies within the Nunavut 3000 initiative.

Through the Memorandum of Understanding on Construction Trades Training for Housing Development, Family Services' training plan provides tangible, ongoing benefits for individuals, communities, and the economy, resulting in the construction of much-needed housing units. The plan provides support mechanisms to develop participants' skills and employability to the highest level possible while striving to remove existing barriers for trades certification.

Family Services is also implementing initiatives within the training plan including the Skillplan Supervisor Mentorship and Mentee Workshops, Building Trades Helper certification, and trades tutoring and supports through a partnership with United for Literacy.

Qujannamiik, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Item 3, Members' Statements. Before we proceed with members' statements, I advise members that the member for Tununig will be absent from today's sitting and tomorrow. Member's Statement. Member for Uqqummiut Ms. Killiktee.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 740 – 6(2): Speaking in Inuktitut Language

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon to the people of Uqqummiut and also to the people of Nunavut, and also to the people of Clyde River. I just want to inform you and let you know that I will be coming up to the community during the weekend and I will want to see the people that I am with.

I rise today, Mr. Speaker, to talk about in regards to Inuktitut language. We hear Inuktitut language has to be utilized and speak more Inuktitut. I have noticed in the House that Inuktitut language, when we're speaking Inuktitut language and there seems to be more impatience happening. I'm not talking about that it's happening every day, but it seems like they're not listening to us more in the House; that's why we speak English. I will speak English so that I will be understood, and that has to be repeated in the House.

I have been thinking, in the House, how fast do we need to speak in Inuktitut in the House. And if you're going to speak Inuktitut, we have time. It's good that it's timed and we can utilize that time to speak Inuktitut for two days.

I'm sure that you have noticed that I have been asking my questions in English during oral questions. When I do that, I leave out my Inuktitut-speaking people because of the timing. When I speak Inuktitut it takes longer. And thank you for correcting me, Mr. Speaker, and I'm learning as we proceed. Perhaps Inuktitut language, perhaps people, we don't want to speak Inuktitut; I don't know.

With that, in the future, because Inuktitut language want to speak in Inuktitut in the House is part of our future.

I would like to 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 are none. Please proceed, Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for letting me proceed to complete my statement. Inuktitut language, just because we want to speak, just because we want to be understood, that's can why at times we speak English, and because we are learning to speak in public. That shouldn't stop us from speaking in Inuktitut, because of being afraid of not being understood. We should set it aside in the House. I just wanted to include that during my statement, because Inuktitut language is, we need to speak Inuktitut language. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Member's Statement. Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Anavilok.

Member's Statement 741 – 6 (2): New Ice Rink System for Kugluktuk

Mr. Anavilok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and Kuglukmmit. I just want to say something on the Rankin Inlet elders facility, on it becoming a reality and because I have two constituents in West Embassy Ottawa who possibly can move there so they can be amongst Inuit who they would understand the language.

Upon returning from Kugluktuk for our sitting, I asked the member from Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet Mr. Simailak, because they had the opening ceremonies, there asking if it was recognized, but he mentioned that he wasn't.

After ten years of advocating for it and every sitting raising the issue for the facility, now it's a reality. So Mr. Simailak, I congratulate you. *Quana*, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Member's Statement. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

Member's Statement 742 – 6(2): Qamaniqtuaq Visit

Mr. Simailak (interpretation): Good afternoon, Mr. Speaker, and my colleagues as well, and also to the people who are listening to the proceedings. Have a good day.

Mr. Speaker, during the last fall session, I had asked a question to the Minister for Nunavut Housing Corporation if he could visit the community of Kimmirut, and he agreed to visit that community. I'm still expecting that on February 3 – I would like to appreciate and thank him for coming to Kimmirut on February 3 and to explain to the people of Qamaniqtuaq in regards to having their own, owning their own home, or if they were interested in building their own home and how they can improve their own home. So they were explained those issues to the community of Qamaniqtuaq.

Also, Peter Tapita (ph) for taking part in that visit. I would like to thank you for coming. And Minister Kusugak, he met with the vice chair of the community, or vice mayor, and that visit had been very beneficial to explain to the people of Qamaniqtuaq.

I appreciate you, Minister Kusugak, for coming to the community and explaining to our people. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Member statement. Member for Cambridge Bay, Ms. Gross.

Member's Statement 743 – 6(2): Birthday Greetings

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Quana*, Mr. Speaker, and good afternoon to everyone who is listening across our territory and those across Canada, Mr. Speaker. It's a special day for a few young men in my life. Two of my dear friends both had handsome young boys, in my eyes. They're still young but they're growing into, one is a young man and the other is entering teenage years.

I want to wish Sarik (ph) a happy 21st birthday. May all of your dreams come true, as you enter into this phase of your life of being a post-secondary student and reaching for your dreams. All the best to you, Sarik.

And I also want to wish my Godson Easton (ph) a happy 12th birthday. I hope you have an amazing year and I know you have some exciting adventures ahead of you, with sports and travel, and also in school. I'm very proud of you Easton for all the things that you accomplish in your young years, and may it continue through this year. I love them both very much and wish them a wonderful day. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker: Member's Statement. Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove, Mr. Main.

Member's Statement 744 – 6(2): Jon Lindell Hockey Tournament

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to my colleagues.

On February 7, 8, and 9 in Arviat there was a hockey tournament. It was very enjoyable time, the Jon Lindell Memorial Cup. Every year they hold a hockey game in our community.

I would like to commend the planners and these in (indiscernible) and also the staff. It was very good. It was very enjoyable to watch the hockey and we were cheering on very loudly.

And all those who supported, who sponsored the hockey, the mayor, the hamlet council, Arctic Connection and Lumber Supply and Calm Air. Thank you for sponsoring the tournament as well.

And the referees, Nigel Blutok (ph) and Max MacDonald (ph), and others. I apologize if I forgot the names. Thank you for working very hard. And we needed referees in order to play good hockey. I know that you were very tired after that, because you were working very hard. Thank you very much.

I congratulate the pool A, pool B. There were two winners. I apologize to, I'm sorry, Rankin Inlet won pool B and Arviat played really well, but they were just about to win but Rankin Inlet scored. It was very enjoyable to watch.

Congratulations, Rankin Inlet, and for the winners of the pool A, Whale Cove Arviat team. It was very enjoyable to watch the hockey tournament with the pool A playing hockey and I congratulate all the hockey players and thank the people who came to watch the hockey game. I don't know how we can, we can recognize Gleason Uppahuak, because he has been working very hard and long time to set up the hockey and thank him again. Thank you.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Member's Statement. Member for South Baffin, Mr. Joanasie.

Member's Statement 745 – 6(2): Relocation Apology

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good afternoon to the people of South Baffin.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today at 2 o'clock the federal government's official Gary Anandasangaree will be in Arctic Bay to apologize to relocatees. Back in the 1930s and 1940s the Nunavummiut were relocated into the high Arctic and some of the people from Kinngait, Cape Dorset, Pangnirtung and Pond Inlet, the people from those communities were relocated. Qikiqtani Inuit Association said that they were 52 Inuit that were relocated and 109 dogs were relocated to the high Arctic around Dundas Harbour on Devon Island.

Although this is historic, and the people who lived up there and also the people in the communities have remembered the people that were relocated, and I would like to recognize them, that it's going to be emotionally heartfelt when the minister apologized to the people that were relocated or to the family.

I know this has hurt people in the past, so with healing we can move forward with healing. On behalf of Nunavut government, the federal minister will be apologizing to the people in Arctic Bay, people from Cape Dorset, and although some of the family members that were relocated are no longer alive or they have passed on. I would like to acknowledge them. This apology will be useful and beneficial. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Item 4, Returns to Oral Questions. Hon. Minister of Finance, Mr. Kusugak.

Item 4: Returns to Oral Questions

Return to Oral Question 1102 – 6(2): PY Discrepancies

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a Return to Oral Question 1102 – 6(2) asked by the Member for Arviat South on February 25, 2025 concerning the person-year discrepancies.

Mr. Speaker, this return is quite detailed. I have filed it with the clerk for transcribing into the Hansard for the public record and for distribution for all members. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Do members agree that the returns to oral questions read by Minister of Finance agreed by the members and entered as read? Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Speaker: Item 5, Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Item 6, Oral Questions. Oral Questions. Member for Uqqummiut, Ms. Killiktee.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Oral Question 1117 – 6(2): Inuit Language in Government

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the new Minister of Language, and they concern the use of Inuit language in government.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to be bilingual Inuk woman and I'm proud that Inuktitut is my mother tongue. And it's my right to speak Inuktitut in my home, like everybody else. It's my right to speak Inuktitut in my community. It is my right to speak Inuktitut in my workplace, including this House, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

I understand and recognize how immensely important it is to continue speaking in Inuktitut. Can the new Minister of Language confirm that it is my right to promote of the use of Inuktitut as my language of operation in this government. (interpretation ends)
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Languages, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to thank you for your member's comments and your question. You have every right to use the Inuktitut language anyplace, no matter where you are. It is your right to use your mother tongue. And I also would like to thank you for promoting the use of the Inuktitut language. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker (interpretation): First supplementary, Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Statistics Canada recently published the *Languages in Nunavut* study, based on statistics from the calendar year 2021. This study was conducted in collaboration of the Government of Nunavut's Department of Culture and Heritage.

Mr. Speaker, the study highlights the knowledge and use of the official *Languages in Nunavut*. The study indicates that:

“Younger Inuit were less likely to report Inuktitut as their mother tongue than older Inuit. 65 percent of Inuit under the age of 15 had Inuktitut among their mother tongues, compared with 90 percent of Inuit aged 55 and over.”

Mr. Speaker, prioritizing the intergenerational transfer of Inuktitut in our youth is essential. I'm proud of my colleagues from Kugluktuk and Netsilik who spoke this issue earlier this week.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister clarify how his department is working in collaboration with the Department of Education to strengthen Inuktitut amongst our young population.
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Languages, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to thank you once again and also the other members of the Legislative Assembly.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, the Department of Culture and Heritage set aside funds from the Department of Education to be used at their discretion on promoting the use of the Inuktitut language. It is Culture and Heritage that gives money to the Department of

Education. There's approximately 1.5 million last year and we are trying to increase that this year. It's 2.5 instead of 1.5. I apologize for my mistake.

From what I understand there's approximately 30,000 resources that are made to promote Inuktitut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for your answers.

As you notice, I am still asking questions in English. It's the time. That's the point, that hidden time. These pages that I have are five pages. If I speak in Inuktitut, it will be about six or seven pages. So I'm just explaining that a bit more. And also in respect to my colleagues here, to use less time.

Mr. Speaker, the 2022-2023 Minister of Languages Annual Report was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on November 5th, 2024. Mr. Speaker, this report indicates that the Official Languages Branch:

“...has been entrusted with additional responsibilities such as bolstering the vitality of Inuktitut in Nunavut. This includes the development and coordination of policies and programs, support for the revival of Inuktitut among youth and communities facing languages loss, and the promotion of its usage among all Nunavummiut.”

Can the minister clarify what specific actions his department is currently undertaking to continue to promote Inuktitut as the operational language of this government.
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Languages, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to thank you once again for her questions.

We're not only thinking about the usage of Inuktitut within the government; we are also collaborating with the Inuit organizations and work together to put out resources. It is our right for Inuit to use their language, and also use an official language when speaking to any organization.

We are currently reviewing the *Languages Act* and implementing the recommendations, and also motions that were given to us. So we're currently working on these subjects and looking at how we can strengthen the use of the Inuktitut language and to revitalize the Inuktitut language. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Thank you. Colleagues, I wish to remind all members that our House rules state to keep preamble short and answers to the point, in any of our official languages. Thank you, colleagues.

Oral Questions. Member for Arviat South, Mr. Savikataaq.

Oral Question 1118 – 6(2): Elder Van Update

Mr. Savikataaq: (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and good afternoon to the people of Arviat.

(interpretation ends) I would like to speak today on the elder vans. Mr. Speaker, the announcement was made back in March 2024 that there's going to be elder vans purchased for all the communities in Nunavut, and five of them were purchased and they were I believe delivered to Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet, Cambridge Bay, Pangnirtung, and Coral Harbour.

Can I get an update from the premier on the operation of these elder vans in these five communities. For example, where do they call to get a van for pickup at the elders if they need a ride? Just an update on the operation of these vans. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank my colleague for that question.

As I had mentioned before, the proponent is responsible for the O&M of the elder vans and to my knowledge they aren't currently in operation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that's sad to hear that they are not in operation, as they were delivered in the fall. It shouldn't be a million-dollar photo op if these vans were purchased to be used by elders that we all agree need them in their communities.

Mr. Speaker, since these vans are not operational, and I thank the premier for giving us a copy of the contribution agreement that was signed between the company and the government, and in the agreement I could not find anywhere where it states that these vans have to be operated or when they have to be operated by.

If we can get an update on when these five elder vans will be operated, and if there's any conditions that the proponent that got the vans that cost a million dollars that have a timeline in which they have to have these vans operated. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again I want to thank my colleague for that question.

To my understanding the proponent has had submissions to the federal government and other potential partners to secure the operations and the maintenance of the elder vans. Those proposals have been submitted to the federal government, to my awareness. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I didn't hear an answer to my question. My main question was is the proponent obligated to operate these vans? Is there a timeline where the government has stated to the proponent, these vans will be operational by March 31, 2025; otherwise the \$1 million – well, the million dollars is spent – the vans will be repo-ed by the government?

We can't have these vans just sit forever. I heard the premier saying that the proponent is requesting for funds for O&M. They may or may not get it. I'm reading between the lines that if they don't get it, these vans will not be operational. They are just going to sit there. Wherever they are sitting. I don't know if they are securely stored or just sitting outside.

Now, if I can get a reassurance that these vans will be operating soon. They are needed. They were purchased to be used, not as a lawn ornament.

Mr. Speaker, on this contribution agreement, it's stated this agreement is in effect from April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025. I would just like to get a clear understanding of, once this arrangement agreement is over March 31, 2025, are all the obligations within the agreement terminated? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank my colleague for that question.

Mr. Speaker, there were no timelines that were included in the agreement to ensure the operationalization of the vans, because it depended on securing the operation and maintenance of those vans. And, yes, because all vans have been purchased and the

communities that have been identified by the previous question as well. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1119 – 6(2): Elder Vans

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My questions are almost in the same line as the MLA for Arviat.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister responsible for Seniors, the Premier. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the premier for providing detailed updates supporting documentation on the elders van initiative, which was sent out on March 2024.

Mr. Speaker, in Nunavut's smaller communities like Chesterfield Inlet, the elders have no means of transportation to get their medical appointment or errands or go to the store. Can the premier provide further justification for why Nunavut's three regional centres, Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet, and Cambridge Bay, which already has taxi services and special needs vans, are selected to receive the elders van. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Chairman: Hon. Minister responsible for Seniors, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank my colleague for that question and appreciate the lines of question that I'm getting just shows the importance of how we look at our elders.

Mr. Speaker, the elder van was a pilot program, a pilot project that we were able to do. And as I have mentioned in this House, the logistical urgency in terms of bringing the vans into the communities was one of the weights in terms of the selections of which communities got them. And that was the purpose in terms of ensuring that the vans will be able to get to the communities in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I know that one of the partners in the successful proponent of the elders van contract, the Northern Futures Skills Development, is Caribou Cabs which is a taxi company. The proposed documents provided to members state Caribou Cabs is collaborating with Northern Futures Development in their initiative to procure adaptive transportation vehicles for Nunavut communities, and Caribou Cabs ensure reliable, accessible transportation solutions for residents across Nunavut.

Can the minister clarify whether the elders van will be operated on a fee for service basis, like a taxi service? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Seniors, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If I understand the question, the intention is that the program will be free for elders. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the premier has informed the members in this House that in September 2024 all vans were in transit to Iqaluit, Cambridge Bay, Rankin Inlet, Coral Harbour and Pangnirtung. To date, Mr. Speaker, no one in Rankin Inlet has seen the new elder van. They have been asking me whether it will be on the road providing services to the elders.

Can the premier confirm that Rankin Inlet's new elder van has arrived in the community, and if it is there, can he tell us when it will be on the road and start providing transportation to the elder. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Seniors, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again I want to thank my colleague for that question. I just want to correct myself. I called it a program, but it's an initiative and a pilot. I think it's very clear that that differentiation is there.

And yes, all the vans have arrived into the communities that have been identified as part of the conditions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Aggu, Ms. Quassa.

Oral Question 1120 – 6(2): Solid Waste Management

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister of Community and Government Services. As the minister is aware, the community of Igloolik suffered a devastating loss last week when the Kipsigak arena was destroyed by fire.

(interpretation ends) One of the consequences of this disaster has been increased pressure on the community's solid waste facility, given the significant value of debris.

Can the minister indicate how his department is working with the municipality to address issues related to disposal of materials from fire. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to my colleague for asking about things that need to be thrown away.

My department always works with the hamlet of the community on their solid waste sites, like if it's metal garbage. We just ask them to organize their dumps properly. A number of communities, we help them put together how to administer the dumps. We will work with the local municipality on this matter. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Ms. Quassa.

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) As the minister will recall, his department has issued a number of requests for proposals in recent years to develop a Nunavut-wide regional solid waste management plan and a business case for solid waste facility upgrades. Can the minister provide an update today on the status of developing a Nunavut-wide regional solid waste management plan and a business case for solid waste facility upgrades. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my department will continue to work with our partners at the municipal level, but also the Nunavut Associate of Municipalities on solid waste issues, and moving forward we will continue to work with what might be beneficial. There's some communities that have varying needs around how they want to store their waste, and/or also looking at how we're trying to look at if we can divert our waste in the most efficient manner or stockpiling it in a certain way that will optimize and minimize the impact to the local environment, the surrounding area. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Ms. Quassa.

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) As the minister did mention a bit on communities being bundled, Igloolik has been grouped into bundle 3 for the purposes of his department's capital planning.

As the minister is also aware, Igloolik's Integrated Community Sustainability Plan has identified the need for a new incinerator and a new recycling facility to help manage solid waste. I raised this issue with the minister during the Fall Sitting.

Can the minister provide an update today on how the upcoming department reorganization will impact the government's work to identify funding for project requests from municipalities in relation to solid waste management. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. With the three solid waste project bundles that have been approved through Infrastructure Canada, we're looking at a total of \$146 million, around that, to the tune of that. With the realignment reorganization between my department and Economic Development and Transportation these will continue, and the different streams of funding that are allocated to municipalities will continue on that path and ensure that there are no disruptions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Amittuq, Mr. Kaernek.

Oral Question 1121 – 6(2): Environmental Contamination and Regulation

Mr. Kaernek: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the environment minister and I would like to join my colleague representing Aggu paying tribute to the first responders who bravely fought the Kipsigak arena last week.

Mr. Speaker, I'm concerned that the destruction of the arena may result in hazardous waste and environmental contamination in the community of Igloolik.

Can the minister indicate how the Department of Environment is working with the Department of Community and Government Services to minimize environmental contamination as part of the cleanup from this incident. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Environment, Mr. Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for his question.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Environment is the lead in working with other departments, including Community and Government Services, to implement the contaminated sites policy. It's ongoing work where if it's a site that's deemed as a contaminated site we'll have to work through that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Kaernek.

Mr. Kaernek: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the minister just indicated, there's a minimal impact to the contaminant, as it's winter. Once the snow is starting to melt, I'm sure there will be contamination, Mr. Speaker.

Now, the other concern I have, that the municipal dumps, and it will be a combination of questions for the communities that I represent of Igloolik and Sanirajak, Mr. Speaker, the contain of waste oil drums, vehicle batteries, and other materials and substances that are harmful to human health.

As the minister is aware, his department's current business plans indicate that one of priorities is to "develop and work with stakeholders to promote solid waste management program."

Can the minister clarify what long-term plan his department has with the Department of Community and Government Services to remove hazardous waste and toxic substances from Igloolik's and Sanirajak's solid waste. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Environment, Mr. Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My department encourages and continues to work with our partners with the regional and international organizations around exploring solutions for waste reduction and recycling and repurposing efforts, and this also on this side note, we do try to look at how do we store, the standards for storing around hazardous material.

We'll continue to work with the municipalities, including Sanirajak and Igloolik if there's no innovative technologies to use around this or storing such material. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Kaernek.

Mr. Kaernek: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, this contamination is a very serious issue when it comes to the environment, and as the minister is aware, his department is responsible for administering the territorial *Environmental Protection Act*. The Department of Environment's current business plan indicates that one of its priorities is:

"...ensure legislative and regulatory compliance through inspections and enforcement."

Mr. Speaker, can the minister indicate how inspection and enforcement actually his department has undertaken to date in the communities of Igloolik and Sanirajak during the current fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Chairman: Minister of Environment, Mr. Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As with environmental concerns whether it's solid waste or old oil drums or other, we do have protocols and systems in place to

report them and our environment, in consultation with our partners do conduct site inspections and look at what lists are there and do assessments from there and moving on, and take that approach on what to do next. So I continue to work and I'll continue to work with my colleagues and our municipal partners and others around this area. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1122 – 6(2): Housing Construction in Kugluktuk

Mr. Anavilok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister responsible for Nunavut Housing Corporation. As the minister will recall, the Nunavut Housing Corporation announced in January 2024 that 12 new units would begin construction in Kugluktuk. When I raised this issue during our recent Fall Sitting, the minister confirmed that the new building would be a 12-plex and that it was scheduled to be complete in the fall of 2026. Can the minister provide an update today on the status of the project. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, that construction is on schedule, Mr. Speaker, to be completed in the fall of 2026. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. *Quana* for the response. It is good to hear about the training and apprenticeship programs to allow Inuit to gain skills and experience to obtain employment in the trades and construction sectors in the economy. Can the minister confirm how Inuit residents of Kugluktuk are presently working on the 12-plex project in Kugluktuk. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the training component of the building program is very key to its success. In 2023 there was 40 training opportunities presented and our goal this year is to have up to 110 Inuit training in the workforce. Because in Kugluktuk, that construction in the community has just started being ramped up again, I don't have the detail of exactly how many local people are working there right now, but I'm sure I could find out from the contractor and get back to my colleague. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for that response. As the minister is aware, the Nunavut 3000 strategy indicates that a total of 75 new housing units are planned for Kugluktuk. These include 40 public housing units, 30 affordable housing units, and five market housing units. Can the minister indicate how many new units are scheduled to begin construction in the 2025 year. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate that line of questioning. Mr. Speaker, as we speak, the housing corporation is in conversation with Nunavut Construction to see exactly those that we can get, in terms of what numbers will be built in those.

The exciting part about this, Mr. Speaker, is that it's important that not only do we build these plexes, 6, 12, 18-plexes, but it's just as important that we include stand-alone three- and four-bedroom units in the communities. So we're working right now how many and where we could put some of these units, the three- and four-bedroom stand-alone units.

Those are part of the mixed conversation I'm having right now, and I'm very hoping in the upcoming weeks and months that we will be able to give details and those numbers that my colleague is asking about. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1123 – 6(2): Solid Waste Management

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister of Community and Government Services, and they concern the very important issue of solid waste management.

Mr. Speaker, I want to take this opportunity to publicly pay tribute to the municipal employees in Taloyoak and Kugaaruk, and every other Nunavut community, who worked tirelessly at our solid waste facilities. Mr. Speaker, these are not easy jobs but they are absolutely essential.

Mr. Speaker, concerns have been raised with me that the solid waste facilities in my constituencies of Netsilik contain significant amount of hazardous materials and toxic substances.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister provide an update today on how his department is addressing the need to help municipalities clean up and modernize their solid waste facilities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, with the solid waste bundle agreement that we have, we were able to amend the scope of work for that specific source of funding to allow for my department to undertake site-specific upgrades, which encompass site management, reducing risks of leaching due to spring offsite runoff, and trying to prolong the existing life of the existing sites by applying different waste diversion methods.

Mr. Speaker, again, we will continue to work with municipal partners on again optimizing the effective storage and/or how they store their solid waste, and especially when they pose risks; making sure that they are safely done in a manner that doesn't pose a risk to the residents. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, a specific concern that has been raised with me is the need for old vehicles and other machinery to be removed from our dumps and shipped out of the territory.

Mr. Speaker, I have seen this problem with my own eye's and it is clear to me there are environmental contamination risks associated with these types of solid waste during dump fires, which occur all too often in our territory.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, the Government of Nunavut undertook a pilot project in the year 2004 to repatriate end-of-life vehicles to the south. Mr. Speaker, a published report concerning this pilot project indicates that approximately 3,600 tonnes of scrap metal was removed from the Iqaluit dump.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister indicate if his department is considering introducing an end-of-life vehicle repatriation project for communities in the Kitikmeot. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my department continues to try to see. I have heard about the city of Iqaluit diverting some of their waste elsewhere, and if it's something that's viable and doable in other places, we will look at that and we'll consider that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, the government is currently undergoing a significant reorganization process, and I'm looking forward to questioning the new Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut during the Committee of the Whole about the new department's plan to administer a municipal works program that will support municipalities in the areas of waste water and solid waste management.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister describe how the government is currently working with the Nunavut Association of Municipalities to collaborate on ideas for improving solid waste management in our territory. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Nunavut Association of Municipalities has brought forward resolutions around this topic, and my department continues to work with them on how to move forward in this area.

I'll just note that, again, through the reorganization, my department is working with our federal partners to effectively maximize the utility of the capital funding that is in support of municipalities in managing their solid waste sites. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1124 – 6(2): Nunavut Housing Corporation Activities in the Kivalliq

Mr. Malliki: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my questions to the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, during last Thursday's sitting of the Legislative Assembly my colleague from Arviat South tabled a document which he encouraged all members to review with care. This document contains a number of exchange of e-mails between Kivalliq mayors and the Nunavut Housing Corporation.

Mr. Speaker, I am certain my colleague from Arviat South will be very happy to hear that I did review the documents with care, and I now have some questions for the minister.

Mr. Speaker, in his e-mail to the Nunavut Housing Corporation on February 3, the mayor of Coral Harbour, who is no stranger to this House, raised important concerns regarding the status of public housing constructions in the communities. Can the minister provide clear numbers today of how many units are currently under construction in the community of Coral Harbour. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the community of Coral Harbour received a housing package for a 12-plex in the community. The construction of that will be starting this spring, and it's anticipated to be completed by the fall of 2026. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the minister for the answers.

As the minister will recall, the Nunavut Housing Corporation and Nunavut Construction, NCC Development issued an announcement on January 31, 2024 concerning the signing of 2024 annual allocations in purchasing agreements and the number of new units planned to start construction during the year. The announcement indicates that 12 units will begin construction in Coral Harbour and eight units would begin construction in Naujaat.

Can the minister confirm when the 2025 annual allocation and purchasing agreement will be signed with NCC Development, and can he confirm how many new units are planned to start construction in Naujaat and Coral Harbour this year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in Naujaat the 8-plex is being worked on and it should be completed by the fall of 2026.

As I stated in an earlier response to an earlier question on the build of 2025, Mr. Speaker, it is one that we are working on with the Nunavut Construction and I anticipate that I will have final numbers and details in terms of full particulars in the coming weeks and months, and I will be more than happy to share them with my colleagues as soon as I have those available. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. During yesterday's questioning from the Member from Arviat South, the minister stated that there's total construction build housing unit sin Baker Lake, four; Naujaat, a total of 30 units; in Rankin, a total of 54. Can the minister elaborate on when these buildings were constructed. I live there and they were being built while I was campaigning for this seat. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As I responded yesterday, they were probably still being built after you were elected, and after we were elected, and Nunavut 3000 starts from the day we are elected and it includes all those houses were still being built when we got elected and that's where those numbers came from, from the day we got elected, from the day this House started, to the day that this House is replaced by the next one. Those builds will continue, and we count every house that was started and being built and completed during the sitting of this government. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1125 – 6(2): Child Sexual Abuse

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Family Services, and I would like to provide a trigger warning, as the topic will include child sexual abuse. Mr. Speaker, it is a sad reality; we all know it is given on given how frequently we read about child abuse in the media, as they report on court cases.

Mr. Speaker, I've been pressing this issue throughout the life of the entire Sixth Assembly, from our very first briefing with the officials with the Department of Justice during orientation, to our final year and beyond. I've been probing the many departments that are involved in these types of situations, Department of Family Services, Department of Justice, and Department of Health, to try and understand the scope and magnitude of the issue. And for the first time ever, in June 2023, the minister tabled the Department of Family Wellness's Annual Report, which actually finally did include some statistics on the referrals for child sexual abuse.

Mr. Speaker, I cannot express how disappointed I was to see that this information was not included in the two annual reports that the minister had tabled in the fall of 2024.

For my first question, for the benefit of Nunavummiut, I would like to ask, can the minister explain why the Department of Family Services' subsequent annual reports did not include this crucial information on referrals. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for your question in regards to this, (interpretation ends) and I do echo what you're saying in terms why these records were not included in the previous reports.

As you may recall, in the Office of the Auditor General report there were a lot of mentions in terms of not having adequate data entered into the system or the system itself was not sufficient enough. So it is very difficult to put together data that might not be accurate, and it's unfortunate that had been the case prior.

As the member knows, we have been working really hard to put together a lot of things that needed to be corrected within the department, and that's including the database. So we have been doing a lot of corrections in that, and it's unfortunate that accurate data or information was not provided. And it really is because of inaccurate data. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I appreciate the minister bringing up the OAG report that we had last spring, and I'm sure afterwards we were all in anticipation to see much improvement, but given the department's most recent annual reports have not improved, but have actually taken a step back in the amount of information that is provided, Mr. Speaker, I think a simple note that the figures are an approximation would suffice, until such time as the new matrix solution system is fully on line and fully utilized.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I would like to indicate that some information is better than no information.

As the one annual report that did provide information on the rates of child sexual abuse had indicated, 88 percent of those came from one specific region, South Baffin, consisting of Iqaluit, Kimmirut and Kinngait. I would like to ask if the minister can provide an approximation of the number of referrals that the department had received in that region for the fiscal years 2022-2023 and 2023-2024. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for your question.

(interpretation ends) As I have stated, and I will state it again, accurate data was not provided, and if I was to provide inaccuracy or information that might be providing approximate numbers, that will also be misleading; it would either be not enough or way too much, unfortunately.

I will provide what I can, and I've done that to the House and I've provided that to the members when it was requested in the Standing Committees. I will provide what I can to the House, but in terms of trying to provide records that are not accurate, I will not be able to provide that. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is such a significant issue impacting so many children in Nunavut, and with regards to misleading or inaccurate information, again approximation is better than no information, but I'll move on.

Assuming that the majority of the child sexual abuse referrals in the South Baffin were from Iqaluit, I would like to stress again that children here need a safe space. They do have that space during the weekdays at schools, but again, evenings and weekends children are at most risk.

I've asked the Department of Family Services and the minister on several occasions to open or assist in the opening of a youth emergency shelter in the community. I would like to ask the minister for an update on progress today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for your question (interpretation ends) What I'm trying to say is even one is too high, and we all know that. And it's not acceptable by any of the departments.

When I was tabling the information yesterday about the child abuse and neglect response agreement, all departments that we are working with, whether it be Justice, Education, Health, RCMP, Umingmak Centre, we are all trying to improve our service to the children, especially that need it. So we are doing biweekly, bimonthly meetings with all departments to ensure that everybody has an understanding of what processes, procedures to follow, and we are trying to improve more training within the departments to ensure they are able to recognize child abuse or neglect, so there's a lot of things that the departments are doing working together.

We are trying to improve where we need, and that includes the shelter, the group home, the old group home that is here in Iqaluit. That is quite active in terms of providing safe places for children to be in, and also we have professionals that do support in that office to ensure that there are proper supports for children in place, whether it be for temporary care or long-term care, we might need to put children in different homes. But it really depends on case by case.

But all departments are working together to strengthen the support for children, overall. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

Oral Question 1126 – 6(2): Transboundary Issues in the Kivalliq

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are again for the premier and Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs.

Mr. Speaker, with all due respect, I did not receive completely clear answers to my recent questions concerning transboundary issues in the Kivalliq. My constituents deserve clarity, so I will try again.

As the minister will recall, he participated in an announcement that was issued in late November of last year by the federal government concerning transboundary land claims in our region. The announcement indicated land claims agreements have been initialled with First Nations groups.

When I asked about this issue, the premier referred to having signed a memorandum of understanding. Can he describe the main elements of the memorandum of understanding, and is he willing to make a copy of the document publicly available to members of the Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. P.J. Akeegok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member for asking the questions in regard to this. At this time I don't have the details at hand. I would like to take that as notice. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Question taken as notice. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Brewster.

Oral Question 1127 – 6(2): Nutrition North Canada Program

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister responsible for Poverty Reduction.

Mr. Speaker, as you will recall, I asked questions to the Minister of Economic Development during last year's Spring Sitting concerning food security and the federal Nutrition North program. When I revisited the issue during our recent Fall Sitting, he informed the House that his colleague had taken over responsibility for the issue.

Mr. Speaker, earlier this week the former president of Nunavut Tunngavik was appointed by the federal Minister of Northern Affairs to serve as his special representative to lead a review of the Nutrition North Canada program. I congratulate her on her appointment and offer my full personal support as she tackles this critical issue.

Mr. Speaker, the federal announcement indicated that her mandate is to meet with national and regional Indigenous organizations, retailers, transportation providers, and stakeholders to evaluate Nutrition North's effectiveness.

Mr. Speaker, our territory government is responsible for administering millions of dollars in direct funding for families to put food on the table, and significant funding to support our hunters, and foster food security.

I hope that the federal omission of our seat at the table was inadvertent.

Can the minister confirm that she will be meeting with the newly appointed special ministerial representative at the earliest opportunity. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister responsible for Poverty Reduction, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank you for that question. (interpretation ends) I am so happy you asked me that question.

In the ICFI, the First Child Initiative ones, they are all combined with poverty reduction in terms of how those programs have been supporting Nunavummiut. I also want to mention that I've written letters to federal ministers questioning what the plans are for the Child First Initiative, just to put that out there.

But also yesterday I just sent out a letter to Ms. Kotierk in terms of how we can work together on this NNI program. I'm really hoping to get some feedback soon to see what we can work on, but also to continue advocating for this program. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Minister, for that response. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

The federal announcement indicated that the final report of the external review of the Nutrition North Canada program is expected to be delivered in 2026, and Mr. Speaker, I know we can't predict with certainty which party will be leading the federal government at this time next year, although we might have some high hopes, but we can say with certainty that a national election will be held within the coming months.

Mr. Speaker, this week's federal announcement also indicated that Northern Affairs Canada is currently conducting an evaluation of the Nutrition North Canada program, and that the final evaluation report is anticipated for summer 2025 and it will be shared with the public.

I'm not sure, Mr. Speaker, if this parallel work should be described as complementary or redundant in respect to the external review that Ms. Kotierk will be leading, but we should always welcome good data and information. I think we can all agree on that.

Can the minister describe how the Government of Nunavut has been collaborating in this ongoing evaluation process. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Poverty Reduction, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I would like to thank you for that question. (interpretation ends) In the poverty reduction roundtables that we held last year, a lot of it had to do with issues like this, where food prices are skyrocketing and also with the cargo shipping increasing. Everything else that seems to be increasing to support or to try and decrease food costs is becoming harder as the day goes.

But in terms of what programs or discussions do we continue to have, we will continue to advocate to the federal.

I know with the election coming up that has been a bit of a hit, a bit of a miss for us at this time, but we will continue to advocate.

A lot of the discussions that we do have during these kind of poverty reduction roundtables, we do discuss what we can do, in terms of more supports within the territory and that's including putting more supports for hunters or organizations, to put more money in there just so they can provide more food in the communities.

I could further provide you more detail, as I'm forgetting what your question was. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I think I'll just really dial it down, and without any kind of preamble to make it easy for everyone.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister indicate how she will be working with the Department of Economic Development and Transportation and its successor entity to ensure that our concerns regarding the cost of shipping food to Nunavut communities are clearly conveyed as part of the external review process that we've been discussing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Poverty Reduction, Ms. Nunavut Arctic College.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to thank you once again for your questions.

(interpretation ends) We will continue to work with Economic Development and Tourism, definitely, because we do work with that department as well with trying to provide more support for elders, food supports in that area. We continue to work with the local hunters and trappers' organizations throughout Nunavut or non-profit organizations to provide more food into the communities. So we will continue to work together to see what we can come up with.

Just to go back to the other question that you had, we have been continuing to advocate, like I had stated, to the federal government, but also the program delivery reviews, retail accountability, expansion of eligibility items, and improve local food systems and also a number of others. But we will continue to work with the departments stated to ensure that proper supports are in place. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, Mr. Hickes.

Oral Question 1128 – 6(2): Number of Homes and Cabins Contributed

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today I would like to direct to the Minister of Environment on the topic of the renewable energy support policy.

Mr. Speaker, my first question since this policy has been enacted: How many homes and cabins have been approved for coverage and how much budget dollars have been expended. Thank you.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Environment, Mr. Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'll have to find my notes on that specific topic and I'll follow up with the member on it. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I guess one of the downsides to the short preambles.

>>*Laughter*

Mr. Speaker, my next question, and I'm sure the minister is looking for the first information, according to the Schedule 'A' of the contribution to Nunavut Housing Corporation for renewable energy homeowners grant program, the contribution is

provided as a lump sum in the amount of \$172,000 per year, which is one of the reasons in my earlier question I was asking for how much budget dollars have been expended. So if the minister during his search, if he could find out if all those budget dollars are utilized every year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Environment, Mr. Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The program under the renewable energy support policy have supplied Nunavummiut with financial aid for over 300 qualifying projects, and – I stand to be corrected – I believe the funding each year has exceeded the demand. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the minister for that information. If you could maybe break it down and how many are house projects and how many are cabin projects, I would appreciate it.

What I also meant to ask in my second question was what happens to any surplus funds but obviously there is no surplus funds.

In the Department of Environment's support policy it speaks to the \$172,000 being provided as a lump sum, but it says that is a maximum amount. The Minister has just stated that those amounts have been exceeded, so I guess I would be curious to know where those additional funds came from, but I'll move on.

Has the department considered any other projects such as electronic vehicles, whether it be cars, snowmobiles, or scooters to be able to provide support to Nunavummiut to be able to purchase other non-fossil-fuel-use vehicles? Thank you.

Speaker: Minister of Environment Mr. Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To clarify, I meant to say the budget under this program was spent all each year. I'll again stand to be corrected on that.

And with the second part of the question around if we're looking at other potential like electronic vehicles of types, I don't think we're there yet, and they have to be proven to withstand the cold. We'll continue to study that and see if it's viable in our conditions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1129 – 6(2): Elder Vans

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for recognizing me a second time.

I would like to continue where I left off with the premier and the vans, because I don't have the Blues, but to my recollection of the exchange we had, this contribution agreement is in effect from April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025, which is in 32 days. So in 32 days this agreement will expire.

The vans have been purchased. The elder vans have been purchased. The elder vans are not operational. After March 31, does the proponent have any obligations to operate these vans according to this agreement, this million-dollar contribution agreement? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you Mr. Speaker, and again I want to thank my colleague for that question. The agreement was for the purchase of those vans within the time frames that are referenced. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it's sad that it was just a quick thought to purchase these vans and no insight put in on operating these vans. It shouldn't be about announcements and photo ops. If you want to do something, you should start from the beginning and to the end. These vans should have been, okay, we're purchasing them; this is where we're going to get the money to operate them; and this is how they are going to operate.

For example, in the three regional centres, Rankin, Cambridge Bay, and Iqaluit, they have a very good taxi system. Maybe the elders could have got taxi vouchers, and they would be able to go to their appointments or shop groceries now. But these elder vans are not operational.

Are there any conditions that the government has placed on the proponent that these vans have to be operational by a certain date and for a certain period of time? Are these vans have to be operated for five years? Two years? One year? Five years? Ten years? Can we get some insight from the premier on the operation of these elder vans that were so desperately needed. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thanks to the member for that question. At this point we are looking at the supports to the proponent, as I had indicated who will be operationalizing the busses. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, in Iqaluit here, I believe there's an elder s van too, not the ones that the government purchased for the proponent but there's a society with elder vans, who are also competing for operational money to operate their vans. And now we have another company here in Iqaluit asking for operational budgets, too.

The odds of both being given operational money is very slim. If there was only one, in my opinion it would be easier for one of them to get the operational money to run these vans that the elders need.

Can the premier commit to this House when, a date of when these elder vans will be operational in the five communities that got them, so the elders can get to use them, not just look at them parked outside? I don't know if they are parked inside or outside, but maybe the elders walk by, say jeez, it would be nice to go for a ride in that, it's pretty cold walking.

Can the premier give a date of when these five elder vans will be operational for the elders of Nunavut to use. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeegok.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Northern Future Skills Development is currently looking at securing those fundings and it is up to them to secure those funding. We are there to support them as they are seeking the funding to operationalize the vans. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral questions. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

Oral Question 1130 – 6(2): Inuit Games

Mr. Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to ask the Minister of Community and Government Services. There were some Inuit Games held in the Arctic Winter Games. They have the high kick and other games. I ask if this can be included in the games, and did the minister check with the Olympic committee and ask them what Inuit Games are going to be available or played. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to my colleague for asking that question again. Up to now I have not checked into them yet to see if Inuit Games can be introduced in those games. However, the Arctic Winter Games that happens every two years, that's the one we're looking at for 2030. The games may be held in Nunavut and Greenland, and this was already used previously in Greenland. We're going to look to see for the year 2023 to see if Iqaluit and Nuuk can share the games again. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you to the minister. So I would like to ask the minister if Nunavut can be a part of the Olympic committee, because the rest of the world will be able to watch and learn about Inuit Games, and it would be great to watch them. Can the minister commit to say that he's going to be working on this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The major games are held differently. There are the Olympics, and the Arctic Winter Games. They are two different matters, and with the Recreation in Nunavut, it's going to be moved to a different department starting in April.

I have to say no to this one because there's only one month left before the games, and I know that the Recreation division of my department, they look to see where Nunavummiut can take part.

Last month I was able to go to Greenland and I have an expectation that the Arctic Winter Games will be able to be shared again with the major games where Greenland, Alaska, Nunavut and Nunavik take part, perhaps through that venue where Nunavummiut sports teams will be able to strengthen Inuit Games. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Members be aware 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, Replies 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 chair of the Standing Committee on legislation, Mr. Savikataaq.

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

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I wish to report that Bill 64, Post-Secondary Student Support Act, has been reviewed by the Standing Committee on

Legislation and that the Bill as amended and reprinted is ready for consideration in Committee of the Whole. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Do members agree to put Bill 64 on the Orders of the Day for Consideration in Committee of the Whole?

Some Members: Agreed.

Speaker: It is agreed. 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, Bill 64, Bill 70, Bill 71, Bill 72, with Mr. Hickes in the chair.

Before we proceed with Committee of the Whole we'll take a 20-minute break. Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House recess at 15:30 and Committee commenced at 15:47*

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

Chairman (Mr. George Hickes): Good afternoon, everyone. I would like to call the committee meeting to order. In Committee of the Whole we have the following items to deal with: Bill 64, 70, 71, and 72. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, we wish to continue with the review of Bill 70, *Appropriation (Operations And Maintenance) Act, 2025-2026* with the Department of Health, and if time permits, the Department of Education. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Are we in agreement to continue with Department of Health?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister, do you have any officials you would like to appear with you?

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I do. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Does the committee to allow officials to appear with the minister? Thank you.

Some Members: Agreed.

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

**Bill 70 - Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2025-2026 -
Consideration in Committee**

Chairman: And just for the record, if you could introduce your officials, please.

Hon. John Main: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To my right, Deputy Minister Megan Hunt and to my left, acting executive director for corporate services, Rene Tanga. Mut'na.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Welcome. To refresh everybody's memory, we're on page H5, Health Operations. Total operations and maintenance being voted on, \$212,001,000. We left off with Mr. Malliki yesterday. Please continue, Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I want to start off going back to the security services. They have securities in 22 communities, and some of the securities have their Inuit staff in there. I just wanted to know if the Inuit security staff are housed in their community. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I don't have that information in terms of whether the security staff are housed or not.

Looking at the ones that are employed by the contractor, we do have a breakdown in terms of the numbers of Inuit staff. We don't have a breakdown from the contractor in terms of which ones are provided housing and which ones are not. So we have shared the statistics that we do have on security services with the Standing Committee on Social Wellness. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the efforts of the Nunavut government to employ Inuit, the contractors should have to follow the same thing that the Nunavut government has to follow when they're serving under the Nunavut government, and the numbers of Inuit for contractors are always lower than the government.

Has the department looked into this matter to see how the government contractors can have the same amount of Inuit working as the southern hires. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) In terms of benefits that contractors like Scarlet Security could provide to Nunavut residents or Nunavut Inuit, I think our focus has been on the Inuit employment aspect and pushing that, and making sure that that's being supported by the contractors, and by pushing on and encouraging and making clear that we want to see Inuit employment maximized, that should drive contractors like Scarlet Security to look at their compensation and benefits package and it should drive them to give consideration to providing benefits to Inuit employees.

But in terms of compelling them and saying you must provide housing to all your employees, for example, through our contract, that would be new ground. It's not something that is currently stipulated in the contract. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The business that has a contract under the health department, do they have one contract for all of Nunavut or is there a whole bunch of different contracts? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) So for the security services contract that had a two-year contract, that runs until March 2026. And so we will be in the next couple months moving towards preparing the next request for proposals to go out for this service, as we want to put it out well in advance of the contract expiry date to make sure that there's adequate time for other bidders, other companies to submit bids. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With respect to contractors, when they're outside of Nunavut business, the fact that nothing is really arranged with the new contract looming, what is in place, what needs to be in place and what needs to be improved? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

(interpretation ends) as I mentioned previously, we've been seeing success in term of the mentorship aspect of the current contract, and so I think that looking at the next request for proposals process, that would be something we would be looking for in terms of

asking perspective contractors or bidders to give us details around what is your plan for not just recruiting but retaining Inuit employees, and what's your training plan and what is your commitment towards this; it is a major component that would be considered as part of the RFP process.

Looking at the current contract holders, we are now receiving regular updates in terms of statistics and tracking specific types of occurrences within that contract. So we have eyes on, we have a good understanding of what the value or what the service actually is. We have breakdowns of things like use of force, property issues, disruptive behaviour, patrols. So that's something that we would be wanting to see continue. It's important for the department, and ultimately the Assembly to have oversight over this contract. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When you want to see a significant increase under health, that Inuit be considered at equal level so the security people during the contract considerations, will the Inuit staff be considered for housing? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) That is something we can certainly make sure is included in the evaluation of a future request for proposal process.

There are multiple factors that are looked at in terms of who is going to be the successful bidder on any given contract, but as I mentioned, Inuit employment and training plans, that was a component of the current contract that was awarded.

In terms of the two roles, the community security guard is one role, and then the enhanced program security guard is the other role. Pairing two staff together, as I've mentioned, has proven to be effective. And we're hoping to see in the future Inuit employment within that enhanced program security guard role. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for clarifying that, Mr. Minister.

Moving on to (interpretation ends) business plan, page 102 indicates that the department will work towards accrediting the regional health centres.

Have the regional health centres previously gone through an accrediting process? If not, when is it anticipated that this will take place? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) So currently Qikiqtani General Hospital is the only accredited facility in Nunavut, and that goes back quite some time, back to 2009 that Qikiqtani General Hospital has been accredited.

In terms of working towards accreditation for the Rankin Inlet Regional Health Facility as well as Cambridge Bay, it is in our business plan and the first step towards it is to conduct a primer for those regional health facilities, which would be a step towards that full accreditation. There would be recommendations that come out of that primer that would assist us in moving towards full accreditation. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for clarifying that. Again, moving to another topic, the communities nurses or lack thereof in those communities, do we have doctors visiting due to perhaps a lack of nursing? Are there any plans to that effect? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The shortage of health professionals, it affects us on many different levels, in terms of the programming in any given community. Generally the more stable our staffing at the health centre level, the better equipped to offer regular programming to the community without any interruptions in service.

In terms of the physician side of things, we have had some issues in terms of losing physicians and maintaining our competitiveness with our distributions in Canada. However, we're well-staffed on the physician side. Thanks to the hard work of our team lead by Dr. Dewitt. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I appreciate the hard effort of your staff to that effect. Perhaps any consideration on the business plan that all

Nunavut communities that only receive visits, is there any expectations that each community has a physician? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I will allow my deputy to respond. Mut'na.

Chairman: Mr. Malliki. My apologies, Ms. Hunt.

Ms. Hunt: (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the member for the question.

(interpretation ends) So it is very important to us as we know the communities that physician services are complementary to part of team-based primary health care, and so we have physicians that are going into our communities. If we have a physician who is interested in moving to a community – I think we talked about this in the last session – we are definitely very eager to engage with physicians and look at ways to support a physician to move directly into a community.

We also make sure that there's the travelling physicians for the specialty clinics, and then of course virtual access to physicians, nurse practitioners and also some of our specialty and subspecialty physicians that are out of territory with our key hospital partners.
Qujannamiik.

Chairman: Thank you. Now Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for clarifying that as well. Are there any physicians in any Nunavut community where a Nunavut has decided to stay in a community? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) In terms of doctors residing or living in communities, I believe right now we have Rankin, Cambridge Bay, and Iqaluit are the only communities that have doctors living in them full-time. But I will add that, for example – oh, and Kugluktuk, my apologies.

Just because doctor is living in a community doesn't mean that that's the only place they're working. For example, doctors that are living here in Iqaluit, some of them will be assigned a community, say for example Igloolik, and then they will regularly travel to that community.

We do make efforts to have continuity of care, to make sure that patients are not seeing a different doctor every month, because that relationship-building with patients is so important. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is good to hear, or we would want to see more physicians in communities. Would that affect their salary? That is my next question.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) My deputy can explain in terms of the mechanics of how doctors are paid. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Hunt, please.

Ms. Hunt: *Qujannamiik*, Iksivautaq, and thank you to the member for the question. Physicians are paid on an alternative payment contract. So there are a specific number of hours within their contract that make up the total contract and payment amount. *Qujannamiik*.

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

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The long term care facility in Rankin Inlet will soon open to elders from Nunavut. We are aware that the facility will be operated by a third-party contractor, which will be responsible for staffing the facility. Can the minister clarify what is the required Inuit labour content of the contract. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) So as part of the contract there is no specified level, a requirement in terms of a specific percentage that the contractor is required to achieve. Instead, we've chosen to focus on specifics around the efforts and the programs that the contractor will have in place to support Inuit employment. And so they are obliged to provide a monthly report in terms of their Inuit employment percentage, and so there are specifics in the contract around support for Inuit employment but there's not a specific percentage, which is an approach that has also been taken by organizations like Kivalliq Inuit Association and working with major employers like Agnico Eagle Mines. Their benefit agreements also don't specify a percentage. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) At the ribbon-cutting ceremony this past January the mayor of Rankin Inlet stated there will be 45 jobs available at the facility. Can the minister confirm whether the job will be filled by the community members. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) In terms of who those jobs will be filled by, ultimately that's the contractor's responsibility. We have things in the contract that detail activities that the contractor will be undertaking to support Inuit employment. We have high expectations of that contractor to succeed, not just in terms of providing high quality service, but making sure that the maximum benefit goes to residents of Rankin Inlet. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Minister, for the response.

One of the most important reasons for operating a long-term care facility in Nunavut is so that the elders would not have to leave their land and culture so they could continue to speak in Inuktitut and have access to country food, and to make it easier for the families to visit them. What steps will the minister be taking to ensure that Inuit get jobs working in the new long term facility in Rankin Inlet? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) In terms of the contract and the key deliverables, so there are deliverables in here for specifically Kivalliq long-term care facility. Our understanding is that the contractor will be providing subsidized staff housing to all employees, which is a major tool for attraction and retention. They will also be offering a co-op, supporting a co-op program, which will see students brought into the facility. We are unsure if they will be employed or if they would be volunteering. And there's other initiatives within that contract that should support Inuit employment.

However, the fact that the facility is located in a regional centre is something that works against Inuit employment, because there's already so much employment opportunity.

If we look at our facility in Igloolik, for example, we're achieving 84 percent Inuit employment in Igloolik. If we look at our facility in Gjoa Haven, we're achieving a 93 percent Inuit employment. But those are both non-regional-centre facilities where there's maybe a stronger labour market in terms of availability of Inuit staff.

Nonetheless, we will work closely with the contractor to make sure that there's maximum Inuit employment in Rankin. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, (interpretation ends) Minister.

I would like to thank the minister for providing additional information to the committee respecting the old children's school home in Rankin Inlet, which will be renovated to mental health and addiction programming. Can the minister provide an update when does he anticipate the program for mental health and addiction will start to be delivered at the newly renovated facility. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For the day programming delivery, my understanding is that that should be, should be seeing that quite soon. I don't have an exact date in terms of when, but, working with the Community and Government Services, there have been minor repairs to the facility. However, there is that renovation need that still is outstanding for the group home, to see it come on to full use. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Anavilok: Thank you, Chair. I just want to speak on the use of ambulance vehicles in the communities. Yesterday the MLA from Gjoa Haven mentioned on volunteers driving the ambulances and being on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week. I wonder if you could elaborate on how another community might want to get into that situation, and try to help their own communities. And I wonder if that could be shared with me through correspondence also. *Quana*, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) So in terms of emergency ground transportation that's being provided at the community level, over half of the Nunavut communities now have that available. In some communities, in

many communities it's the hamlet, in other communities it's a private business that operates the stretcher service.

Ultimately the payment for the service is through Non-Insured Health Benefits. But the department does have information that we can share with hamlets that are interested in setting that up, and our staff can also arrange to visit and meet and provide support to municipalities or organizations interested in setting this up at the community level. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok: Thank you, Chair. I just want to go on to mental-health nurses. Do all the communities, the number of mental-health nurses in communities, does that go by the size of the population or the number of offices in the nursing facility? (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Generally, yes, the number of mental-health nurses corresponds with the size of the community. However, I should mention that in some communities, especially those that have health centres that are too small, Kugluktuk is a great example; there can be constraints around our staffing that are tied to infrastructure. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok: Thank you, Chair. Through correspondence, some time back I requested for two more positions for mental health nurses, as that was the interest of the head nurse there. I just wanted get an update on that situation. *Quana*, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) And so as part of this budget we're not proposing to increase nursing positions. We are looking for opportunities to increase our staffing on important services, including mental health, so we appreciate the advocacy, though, from the member in terms of raising the need for mental health supports and potentially increased staffing.

As Assistant Deputy Minister Berry mentioned yesterday, making sure that our staff are feeling supported and that they are not being burned out and that they are in a sustainable position where they could remain for many years, that's a big part of improving our health care service delivery in Nunavut. That's where being able to offer things like job

share for including mental-health nurses, that has been, we have breaking new ground with that. We're very excited in terms of whether it could offer, translate into improvements for Nunavummiut. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok: Thank you, Chair. I just want to move on to elder care facilities, let's say stage 1 and 2. Sometime back we had a meet with the SAO and the mayor of Kugluktuk. Most of the communities don't have elder facilities right now, mostly regional, not excluding Gjoa Haven, but if a municipality wanted to try to get it going on their own, just through sources of funding, does your department have any help on that? Or has that come up with your department? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) We know that there is interest from different communities across Nunavut in seeing more elder facilities. Whether a proposal would come to us depends on the type of facility that's being proposed. There's kind of a spectrum between housing, which would be what would be considered a supported housing project, versus a health facility, and there's implications there in terms of the building codes as well as departmental responsibilities.

But in terms of Kugluktuk's interest, it's something that if we were approached and they had a proposal they were looking for advice on, we are very interested in working with municipalities, whether it's on elder care, whether it's on mental health, whether it's on public health issues. Those are important relationships to us. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Just before I go to the next name on my list, I just want to follow up with one of the questions that Mr. Anavilok asked on the ambulances, and the minister responded that NIHB typically covers the expense. What about for non-Inuit? Does extended health benefits cover ambulance costs? Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I believe so. We have encountered the odd; it hasn't been very regularly, but I believe that is a scenario that we have encountered and extended health benefits was able to cover that. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Good to know. Thank you, Minister. The next name I have on my list, Mr. Simailak. Sorry, I didn't realize he had left the room. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. So I would like to pick up where I left off yesterday. I sort of jumped the gun and started asking health operations questions while we were still under directorate.

Yesterday I touched upon two of the five topics that I wanted to get into, and the first was the need for in-territory local cancer treatment. This is an issue that I've heard on numerous occasions about the struggles that Nunavummiut have to face when they have to travel frequently for cancer treatment. I think it was something like every three weeks they have to go down for another round of treatment. And this is meanwhile one of the most toughest physical and emotional moments in their lives.

Just for the benefit of the committee would you be able to describe what are the types of treatments that these individuals go through. I think the foremost common cancers in Nunavut are lung, colorectal, breast, and prostate. If maybe if you just pick one of those and walk us through what it's like going through this process of cancer treatment out of territory for them. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Yes, so it can vary widely depending on the patient's diagnosis. Generally it begins with screening and diagnosis, and then following diagnosis there would be a treatment plan that would be discussed and agreed upon between the patient and their care provider.

The most common types of treatment are chemo and radiation. There can be surgeries involved. There can be longer stays in the south.

At of the journey we look to support Nunavummiut who are dealing with cancer, and so it can involve many different staff members or parts of the department as well as service providers like boarding homes, case management through our partners in the south. We understand it's very stressful and it can be very difficult for Nunavummiut and we try support them as best we can. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Minister. With regards to screening and diagnosis and surgery, that's for the most part I assume the shorter trips down. But the more challenging parts are for the radiation and chemotherapy treatments. So when will the Department of Health potentially be able to provide that type of treatment in territory? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) so we are currently able to provide limited types of treatment in Nunavut. For example, if it's a drug that's delivered through injection, we're able to support that in some cases. But most, the vast majority of cancer treatment is out of territory.

We do have the ability to do more. We've put forward a business case for this. We were not successful in securing the funds required, but the work of Dr. DeWitt as well as the other dedicated staff within the department, just looking for ways for deliver care closer to home and reduce travel.

Virtual care is also benefitting some cancer patients, in terms of reducing the amount of times they have to physically travel in and out of territory. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Maybe just to help the discussion, it might be of value to talk about some of the cancer treatments that are available, for what types of cancers. I remember there was an announcement five or six years ago on stomach cancer and other cancers that are being treated here in the territory. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I don't have that information here in front of me, but if you'll allow me to swap witnesses, that would be helpful. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Does the committee agree to allow the witnesses to swap witnesses out?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go ahead. Thank you for the record, Minister, if you could introduce your new official.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With me I have Assistant Deputy Minister of Operations Jennifer Berry. Upon further consideration, I think in terms of this specific types of cancer treatment that can be delivered in Nunavut, that's not detailed information that I have here with me, but I can commit to providing that back to the committee at a later date, if you'll allow. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Hopefully I didn't derail your train of thought, Mr. Lightstone. Please proceed.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. I do appreciate all the minister's comments as well as the chair's intervention as well.

Again, just raising how difficult and challenging it is for Nunavummiut to travel for these types of cancer treatment, I am glad that the department has considered this already and has submitted a business case. It's unfortunate it was not approved at the time but I hope

that in the near future it will be approved, given, again, how much of an improvement that can have on the lives of so many Nunavummiut that are going through that.

My next question is what is the actual cost estimate associated with providing those types of chemo and radiation therapy. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) In terms of breaking out the numbers and the costs specifically for chemo and radiation, that's not information that we currently have compiled. Looking at an individual cancer patient, they could travel for diagnosis; they could travel for treatment; and they could travel for follow-up. But in terms of our tracking of the costs associated with that specific patient, it would be difficult to pull that specific information out of our records. However, I can commit to looking at what's available.

In terms of the use of virtual care for oncology we have total, these are not patients necessarily, but we have supported a total of 49 clinical sessions tied to oncology. That's in the six months from April 1, 2024 to November 30, 2024. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. I do thank the minister for committing to look into the numbers, but I was more curious about the actual cost estimate in the business case that the Department of Health had submitted to Finance. Can the minister tell us how much that cost estimate would be. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. And I think the scope of care that would be anticipated in that business case would help to the cost analysis. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main: We have detailed information about the business cases that were approved because that's what we're presenting here to the Assembly. I can certainly go back and dig that information out. However, we want to respect the budgetary process and that we're bringing forward the businesses cases that were approved.

We are working with the Ottawa hospital to explore setting up a satellite cancer care site, and in terms of radiology here in the territory, we would be looking at specialized equipment, specialized staff. We would require an expansion in terms of the infrastructure side. So it would not be a low cost initiative. However, it is one that we are looking at and seeking support for. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Minister. I'll move on to my next topic. I would like to follow up on Ms. Brewster's line of questioning yesterday with regards to midwives. If I recall, Ms. Brewster had asked if the minister was aware of the current amount of midwives employed in the territory. I would like to ask if the minister has had an opportunity to find that figure.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So the number of midwives that are registered to work in Nunavut are 24, and I'll have to check a note that I sent to MLA Brewster. Sorry, 28. Thank you. Out of that number 12 of those midwives have worked in Nunavut in the last year. So in terms of the number of staff or midwives that are here in the territory, it depends, there are some that are coming and going on a casual basis, and we also have job-share positions that we are expecting to fill in terms of midwifery.

And yet, in terms of supporting that function, we're really excited that we've hired the chief midwifery officer, which is a person who is leading or helping to lead the rebuild of the program in Nunavut. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: It's very welcome news. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Minister. So I would like to refer back to an article that I read in the year 2021 when multiple Inuit midwives in Rankin Inlet had quit in protest. I would like to ask if they have ever been rehired or if and whether or not they are still employed within the Department of Health. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) In terms of those individuals and the factors that led to them leaving the department, those are considerations that, you know, things that we are taking into account as we're working to rebuild the program. Several different components have to be changed or be rebuilt at the same time. One side is our legislation. The other side is our training framework for midwives. And then the third part I think is around our employment conditions and requirements on our employees.

We want it to be sustainable profession for Inuit and Nunavummiut, and so we respected that individuals who chose to leave the profession. However, one of them is working with the University of Manitoba in terms of an Inuit training plan, which would benefit the department and the territory eventually. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you, Minister. I'll leave that for my Rankin Inlet colleague to follow up on.

I would like to follow up on another topic Ms. Brewster had brought up the other day during Question Period, with regards to water testing for opioids and other hard drugs. The minister had made a response about anecdotal evidence with regards to overdoses and clients coming in with psychosis.

I was wondering if the minister would be able to further expand on that, as the department does have a health information unit now which has the capabilities of following that information. Can the minister indicate how often or how many overdoses that we see at QGH, or people coming in with psychosis, which is likely related to opioids or other hard drugs. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of numbers that we can share publicly, you know, the numbers are not well compiled, specifically in terms of the number of incidents when we have individuals coming in requiring medical attention for non-prescribed Fentanyl, which is an overdose or potential overdose or being in distress from hard drug use. So in terms of the numbers and the prevalence in Nunavut, it's largely anecdotal at this point.

We do want to get a better grip on the prevalence, based on statistics, but it's not something that's currently being tracked and compiled. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. I'll move on to my last line of questioning, again on the contracting of security in at QGH and other health centres.

I would like to thank the minister for hiring casuals employed by the Department of Health to help alleviate the cost pressures of the contracting-out of security. I would like to ask, is there any plans to sort of expand internal security services as opposed to utilizing contracted security. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) In terms of expanding our own staff side as opposed to the contractor side, we have started some of that. However, we have to keep in mind that in terms of our own workforce and

our own staff we have constraints such as the lack of staff housing that we run up against, and in a roundabout way when we go to a contractor, we are, I don't want to say offloading, but we're relying on the contractor to deal with housing side of things.

In terms of the timeliness and the availability of the staff to provide the service, we really appreciate that. But we understand concerns from members and questions from members around the cost of the services and the value for money aspect. So we are looking for ways to improve this service and we're trying control the costs, too.

We may be having to pull back some services and reduce security services in some communities to make sure we're staying within our budgets. We understand that we can't be continually overspending, and we understand the concerns from members in terms of the budget. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. So given that the department has already hired casuals internally in communities to fulfil the security in health centres, it's obvious that there are people in the communities capable of doing this, especially in those health centres that have the lower security requirements.

By offloading housing onto the contractor I'm going to assume that without any housing communities are just putting them into hotels, which is adding to the millions of dollars in security contracting.

I would like to put forward a recommendation for the minister: Given that the Department of Justice does have a two-week period for their Corrections staff, two-week orientation where they learn de-escalation and safety tactics, I would like to ask the minister to commit to talking to the Minister of Justice about this, and potentially utilizing that two-week orientation so that the department can then hire their own security staff as opposed to spending tens of millions of dollars on security. So I would like to ask for that commitment. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I can commit to that. We're starting the wheels in motion in terms of looking at alternative ways to deliver the service, it's out of recognition of the cost. So we know this service is essential, it's beneficial, but what's the most cost effective way to do it. And those I can commit to the member's suggestion. ((interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Minister. I would just like to return back to the anecdotal evidence with overdoses and psychosis related to opioids and other hard drugs. I was curious if the department tracks the administration of naloxone. I understand that's a very useful marker of overdose activity. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If you'll allow Ms. Berry to respond. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Go ahead please Ms. Berry.

Ms. Berry (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

(interpretation ends) Currently there isn't a mechanism for us to track when it's used. As well, being able to decipher that data so it actually tells a story is another part that has to be worked out, because if somebody comes in unresponsive, naloxone is one of those drugs that we might give because you don't know why they are unresponsive. And so there's a number of treatments that we do right away, and so sometimes naloxone won't work.

So even being able to do the counts of how many we have used or what our ordering pattern is doesn't necessarily mean it's related to a toxic drug overdose. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good afternoon, Minister, and to your staff. Before we stray too far from security guards, I would like to do my questions around security guards at health centres. I believe earlier the minister mentioned there would be a training program for security guards in Nunavut, if I heard correctly. When will that training program begin? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) If the member is asking about the mentorship component under the current contract, that's something that's ongoing. What's typically done is an enhanced guard staff is paired with a community guard staff and then there are a number of modules that they work through with the trainee: code of conduct, security practices and techniques, report writing, fundamental duties, legal topics and definitions, use of force, as well as a module around introduction to Scarlet Security as a company. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you, Minister. Through this training program and the mentorship from Scarlet Security's enhanced guards will that lead to Nunavummiut attaining that designation of being an enhanced security guard or something similar? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) That's a great question. I mean, the typical requirements for the staff members who are filling the enhanced guards role are retired law enforcement, and so in terms of being able to meet the requirements to fill that position, ultimately it's up to the contractor to decide if an individual is qualified to fill the role. But I do have additional details on it, if the member is interested (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, I am interested in the additional details. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I think the biggest requirement around the enhanced guard position is that they require at least 15 years in law enforcement, plus prior experience working in Indigenous communities. I hope that provides a bit more detail. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Is it further broken down for like five years' experience, ten years' experience, 15 years' experience? Are there different levels to add up to enhanced level type security guard? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main: Not currently. The current contract states a minimum of 15 years in Canadian law enforcement. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Sorry, I'm just to confirm, there's also regular security guards that are used in health centres. Is there a minimum requirement for that category? The member is asking for the different levels or different categories of security guards. To my knowledge,

there's only the two, the advanced and the regular. So maybe if the minister could explain the minimum requirements for a regular security person. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) So there's experience requirements for the community security guard is general security experience preferred. And there's also in terms of qualification experience with individuals affected by mental illness, drugs or alcohol. That's under the community guard role.

The physical and mental demands are long hours, handling aggressive individuals, and assisting medical staff. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you for that information. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the responses. Is the Department of Health through the security firm working on a made-in-Nunavut training program that will be used for decades to come, so that we can eventually get away from perhaps outside security firms. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: And maybe our own security legislation? Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Those are both excellent points. That scoping out and look for alternatives, that is something that the department is undertaking and is planning to undertake with our partners, sister or brother departments.

In terms of now and the services that are being provided today and tomorrow and next week, we're in this contract until 2026. But we recognize that in terms of the price point, the budget considerations that we need to give a good hard look at what alternatives exist.

Can we provide the same service at a cheaper cost without compromising safety and security of staff and parents. That would be I think the big question to answer. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you, Minister. That's where I believe the made-in-Nunavut training program would come into place, so that we ensure that everything is set up properly so that local Nunavut guards would have all the training and be able to handle de-escalation techniques and whatnot, which is why I brought it up.

Hopefully the department will take that into consideration and put that into the brains behind the brains that work on all that stuff and start thinking about it.

Next question I have, Mr. Chair. Regarding security guards at the health centres, who determines housing is needed for the security guard? Is it Scarlet Security or is it the Department of Health? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) It would be the contractor. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Minister. So theoretically if you have a Nunavummiut local security guard that's one of the hidden homeless and couch-surfing, they could end up in a hotel room? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) So that would be the contractor's decision to make.

In terms of the Inuit staff that we have working in the security services with the contractor, in Arctic Bay, there are five; Kimmirut, there are five; Pond Inlet, there are five; Nauyasat, there are four; Rankin Inlet, there are five; Cambridge Bay, five; Gjoa Haven, one; and Kugluktuk, four.

So I list those numbers off just to show that there are Inuit who are gaining employment through this contract. I realize there's still work that can be done in terms of increasing Inuit employment, but there are Inuit currently employed in that security function. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chair. If the minister also has the numbers on hand, how many are non-Nunavummiut working as security in these health centres? That would be appreciated. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) In terms of the numbers of enhanced staff, the precise number is difficult to come to, because some of these staff are working rotational shifts. So if the member would allow

us to compile the person-years-equivalent, we might get a more accurate number to the Committee. (Interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, we would appreciate it if it could be brought back to the Committee through the Chair, that information.

The next question regarding staff housing for – or security guards that are flown in. In the end, I'm assuming it's the Government of Nunavut Health Department that's paying for these hotel rooms. If I can get confirmation through the contracting that they have. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

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

Chairman: Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Would the department consider down the road when we get this training program set up we no longer need to fly in security guards to keep housing the security guards in hotels, if they are homeless. Because doing that as soon as possible would get rid of having to pay airfare and per diems for security guards that are flown in. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Looking down the road at a GN-run security guard program, it depends on whether it would be held by the Department of Health or whether it would be responsibility through another government department. Right now we don't use hotels; it's the contractor who will lease units for their staff.

We would love to be able to provide staff housing to all of our incredible staff within the Department of Health, but that is not feasible at this point in time, given the constraints.

I mentioned yesterday we have over 50 nursing positions that we cannot even put out to posting because of lack of staff housing: Are we going to offer a staff unit to a security guard or to a nurse? They are both important positions. My personal, I'm going to skew towards the nurse because that's the person who keeps the health centre open, in many cases. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I understand where the minister is coming from, but currently when the department is flying in security guards I have seen them staying at the hotels, which the Department of Health is paying for in the end through the contract.

So if we get to the point where we no longer need to fly in enhanced security guards, you would be saying the cost of airfare plus per diems. I'm assuming it's at least \$180 per day per diem. You take that out of the equation, there's money there. You take those out of the equation, you can put the local guards into hotels, at least until housing units is available, maybe, or they can rent from the private sector.

It's something you can consider and I'm hoping the minister would be looking into it because you will be saving the cost of airfare plus per deems. Would the minister be to look into that. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) And so in terms of the use of hotels, my understanding is that the contractor's use of hotels has been in cases where contracts are just established and there's not enough time to secure a housing unit.

In terms of looking at alternatives to flying in staff, that's something we are interested in. It's something we would like to see.

But I think in terms of the larger conversation that needs to happen, look at policing, for example, why are we unable to – you know, why are the number of new recruits into policing so low over the past decades?

I think if we're talking about security, we're talking about a role of – these positions are high stress. It requires some quite specialized skills. And if we're going to look at alternatives it would need to be set up in a way to work for people who know many of the individuals that they're dealing with. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would appreciate if the minister would stick to the scope of the discussion right now. I'm talking about the health centre security guards, not the RCMP officers. I'm looking at trying to come up with solutions or suggestions to increase Nunavut employment and save the cost of flying in enhanced

security guards and saving the cost of per diems. I would appreciate if the minister would stick to that and not other departments that are not in the department's scope of work.

Would the minister look into my question, would the minister look into making that happening so that we maybe house local Nunavummiut in hotels for a time period because we would be saving the cost of airfare and per diems if we can get to the level of the training program are not having to fly in enhanced security guards. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I certainly understand the desire to see costs come down, in terms of the security services function and, you know, we've already committed or made clear that we are wanting to look at alternatives and look at ways to continue providing this service while looking for ways to lower costs.

So the current contract that we are in right now and trying to stick to the budget, as the member suggested sticking to this budget, the contract's in place until March 31, 2026. So through this budgetary process, we are requesting the funds to support the contract which does have a mentorship component.

And from what we understand, it's working quite well, in terms of having the enhanced security guards who have the experience, law enforcement experience, working alongside a community guard and providing some mentorship in order for the community guards to increase their skill levels, experience, and work towards advancement in the field. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I understand stick to the budget. I also mentioned to begin to the plan for the future so in the upcoming fiscal year the department can begin to plan on how we can stop having to fly in enhanced security guards from outside the territory in this upcoming budget.

The department, I believe, can start planning and working on it. That's all I'm asking for right now. Can I get a commitment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (Interpretation ends) I'll give the member the same commitment I gave to Member Lightstone, which is that we

will be starting to scope out options around alternative approaches. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Moving along regarding health centre operations, health operations, it has been a number of months now, maybe even over a year now when people in Baker Lake are calling in wanting to make an appointment with the nurse. And it has been happening I'm pretty sure over a year now where we call in, the receptionist says, "We'll get the nurse on call to call you back."

Sometimes it takes 12 hours, sometimes it's not until the next day to do a phone triage with the nurse on call. And then it takes a bit of time to try to convince the nurse on call that you would like to be seen.

To prevent any privacy issues I'll use myself as an example. Last spring while I was hunting by snowmobile, I did a big jump by accident with my snowmobile, and I almost dislocated my right shoulder, and it still bugs me. So last month I called on a Monday morning, and it took me convincing her to be seen by the nurse to ask for x-rays, and I was seen Friday afternoon. So I called Monday, and I was finally seen Friday.

So going forward, what is the department doing to better provide quicker service with being seen by either a paramedic or a nurse at the local level. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Slow down in your motocross stunts there, Mr. Simailak.

>>*Laughter*

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I agree with the Chairman there. But, you know, in terms of the ability to be seen and the ability to provide timely service to Nunavummiut, that's something that we take very seriously.

The biggest challenge we've had over the past couple years, as members know, has been staffing. And Ms. Hunt, as well as Ms. Berry have done incredible work in stabilizing the numbers.

Our critical staffing measures have been effective, we believe, in terms of reducing, or not relying as much on agency and paramedic staff. That's where we are concerned with the critical staffing measures set to sunset. In the upcoming fiscal year, we're concerned that that's going to mean we'll slide back into using more agency staff and seeing less indeterminate and casual staff.

I know Baker Lake has been challenged, but I hope that answers the question, is that the single biggest factor in terms of the timeliness of service has been our staffing, and we want to keep making progress and see numbers going in the right direction.
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Minister. Yesterday there was talk about pilot projects and hours of operations at health centres.

There's a pilot project done in Baker Lake which sounds like was not the results they want, the department wanted, so they are doing other hours of operations I think in health centres.

What were the results of these pilot projects and what's the plan going forward? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) Ms. Berry is eager to provide an answer.

Ms. Berry: Very. Thank you.

Mr. **Chairman:** Slow down, Ms. Berry. Go ahead, please.

Ms. Berry: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So we took the Baker Lake model and then we'd evaluated it. Trying to learn from the staff there what worked well, what didn't, what were we trying to achieve.

It was hard because the evaluation took place after many of the staff were there when it first launched were no longer working there.

However, that's what created the basis for our current pilot project. The pilot site is too early to have the evaluation data, because they just launched in the falltime, and then during the Christmas break period we had to pause the pilot projects.

Our plan is to be putting interim reports together internally, which will show which areas that they have been effective. But it also helps us to change what we're doing in real time, to see if we can either improve access, improve staff wellness or reduce overtime.
Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Next question. Regarding home care staff in Baker Lake, it's around supports and training. Is there more training being done or offered so that they can better serve their clients, whether they be elders or people that had – maybe they're stroke victims that have mobility issues. I know some of the home care workers in Baker requested training, but is that being done. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. With the same line of question I'll go directly to Ms. Berry.

Ms. Berry: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So there will be more training coming for the home care workers. We actually created a home care educator position a couple years ago. Housing constraints didn't allow us to get the position posted and filled, but we have since received approval through the telework policy Department of HR to be able to hire out of territory.

As well, under the territorial home and long-term care program, they also have recently hired an educator that will support home care workers as well as those that are working in our elders and continuing care centres. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My next question is around patient relations regarding health operations and whatnot. I'm wondering, is there a common theme of the complaints? Like, is the majority let's say 100 out of 500 is the same type of complaint. Was that noticed? And what's being done to address these, if there is common themes of complaints, what's being done to address them so that it does not keep happening. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) There is a mechanism in terms of common complaints and to feed them back into the system.

A good example might be our work with boarding home operators. If we see a number of complaints about a specific aspects of a boarding home, say it's too much noise in the evenings in a specific boarding home, Office of Patient Relations would feed that information to Programs and Standards which would then work with the contractor in terms of we're getting, you know, one of the regular meetings, troubleshooting, why are we getting all these noise complaints, how can you work to address these.

There are some issues that are one-offs but Patient Relations does an excellent job of identifying systematic issues. (interpretation) Thank you Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Kaernerk: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good evening. I don't have a lot of questions, but let me start out with the money that was received from the Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, 5 million, and it's towards renovating the Arviat elders home. And 500,000 will be spent on building assessment of the continuous care centres in both Gjoa Haven and Igloolik.

My first question, Mr. Chairman, was there any assessment, a building assessment for those two continuous care centres in Igloolik and Gjoa Haven facilities have been complete, or what is happening there with the building assessment under this fund. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

(interpretation ends) So the building condition assessments for Igloolik and Gjoa Haven are I think the first step in our work on those facilities, and those will be undertaken using that funding from Nunavut Tunngavik, which we very much appreciate and take the opportunity to thank them for their contribution. It's been very difficult for the department to secure capital funding to advance all of the wonderful projects we want to see happen. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Kaernerk.

Mr. Kaernerk: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Does the department have a timeframe, or when will the building assessment be completed, or has it been started? Can you give me a timeframe of when will they be completed or has it been completed. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Kaernerk. I actually allowed the first question just to get some of the basic information out, but it is a capital topic, so I'm going to shut it down and you can try another venue. Mr. Kaernerk, do you have any O&M-related questions?

Mr. Kaernerk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A building assessment should be, you know, it's under the health operations, but I'll move on.

Now, trying to stick with the O&M here. When will the department and NTI, who will decide or how will it decide when the renovation will be needed at Igloolik and Gjoa Haven continuous care centre. Now, I believe that would be under Operations, right? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. I'll let it slide for now, but try and find another line of questioning. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) So we have an elders working group ... oh, my time is running here. The elders working group we have with Nunavut Tunngavik would be I think providing guidance, in terms of potential work on facilities, and we are very happy to have Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated as a partner, not just on elder care, but public health as well as nutrition-related medical travel related. So thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Main. Mr. Kaerner.

Mr. Kaerner: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Let me refresh. Let me move on to the hot topic here, the security firms.

Minister Main had stated that these guards, security guards are on a rotation shift, four weeks on, four weeks off.

Now, with the recommendations from the Iqaluit-Manirajak Mr. Lightstone and Baker Lake MLAs, I would have a disagreement with that training with the Department of Justice because due to a fact that these guards at the Baffin Correctional Centre, they deal with inmates, and so I kind of disagree on that matter, but I would like to see these newly hired security guards at the health centres.

Would the minister be in agreement that when it comes to the contract services and for the training and workforce development, would there be any possibility for these new guards, let's say Inuit security guards – I know it's impossible but anything it possible when you put your mind to it, so let me try and be clear, Mr. Chairman.

Would it be possible for these newly hired be sent down for four weeks shift for their training or work or development how to handle or de-escalate any violence in the health centre, not at the Baffin Correctional Centre but in the health centre, of how they can manage or de-escalate them when it comes to mental health issues?

Would the minister be in agreement with me to have the Department of Health or the Scarlet company to send those newly hired security down south for four weeks training before anything can be made in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) We can definitely look into that as part of scoping out alternatives to the current contracted

route. We do want to see more Inuit working in this field and more Nunavummiut, less reliance on the rotational staff, but it is a longer term initiative.

It's not impossible but it wouldn't happen overnight. It may require legislation, in terms of the role and establishing that role. There would be a number of different aspects to scope out as part of looking for alternatives. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Kaernerck.

Mr. Kaernerck: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As I made a secure legislation on that matter, but that can be something that can be an alternative for the department to look into. When it comes to these security guards being sent from down south and everything is paid, all the expenses are paid and probably can be the same thing happen just as vice versa; a person from Nunavut going down for training and having a workforce development training. So just a suggestion, and just food for thought.

Moving on with my other question, Mr. Chairman. The department has hired a chief of midwifery, and on the first time that was my subject on how we can create positions locally. Is that something that the department is looking into the future, that there will be midwives in each community that can be trained, since they have hired this chief midwifery position. Is that something in the plans. That's going to be my last question for now and have the other colleagues have a question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Berry can respond better than I can. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If you'll allow.

Chairman: Thank you. Go ahead, please.

Ms. Berry: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Member, for the question. So midwifery has been a long sight of ours for a number of years, and the hiring of the Chief Midwifery Officer was the very first step towards really making movement towards re-establishing midwifery in the territory.

So part of that, there's many layers that have to happen to support increased midwifery in communities. We're happy that in Igloolik specifically there's been a casual midwife who has been rotating in and out on a regular basis for the last couple of years really supporting the maternal and newborn programming and good outcomes for moms and babes.

But in order for that expansion to happen, there's a few things that we have began the planning or underway. One is around the development of an Inuit training program for midwifery.

The program that used to be offered at Arctic College had stopped quite a few years ago, so we're exploring ways able to offer Inuit midwifery training programs that will be more sustainable and really reflect cultural practices, cultural beliefs. It will be designed around our context.

And as the minister had mentioned earlier, one of our Inuit midwives that used to work in Rankin Inlet is working for the University of Manitoba, who we have partnered with for this training program. The other big piece that needs to happen is updating the *Midwifery Act*.

The legislation right now has a number of barriers in it to be able to have full-time midwives in communities. One of those big ones is that you are required to have a certain number of births in your registration period, in order to be able to re-register that year and maintain your licence.

What we were noticing previously when we had full-time midwives is that we would have to make arrangements in other jurisdictions for practicums so they could deliver more babies to meet the registration requirements.

So all that work is already under way. And really our vision or the goal is to not necessarily return birthing to communities, but rather to create a system that provides an informed choice for women if they want to stay in their community and deliver as safe as possible.

So that also includes increasing the training for the nurses that are working in the communities around prenatal care, deliveries and doing whatever we can to reduce risks and also then to allow that option to be more readily available. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I'll be talking about the security services. I did mention it on my Member's Statement, and I did ask questions to the minister responsible for in regards to security services in the communities that I represent in the constituency of Netsilik.

And according to the minister's response earlier, the constituency I represent of Taloyoak and Kugaaruk, Netsilik, they do not have any locals working for security services.

Prior to being elected MLA this was a known fact, we did have locals working in the community of Taloyoak as security service. And I think to my understanding Scarlet Security Services is under contract until March 2026. What I would really like to see is locals working at the health centres as security services.

And for a lot of great reasons there's a huge barrier and gap when it comes to my constituents who are only fluent in Inuktitut, and that is very disturbing, and it's for patient care. And a lot of my constituents, they want to be seen, but due to the fact that security services are there and they cannot speak Inuktitut, and when it comes to that barrier they do not want to be seen any more. It's terrifying. And people do need the care that the health centre provides.

So that being said, Mr. Chairman, will the department commit to at least letting Scarlet Security Service train locals in the community who are fluent in Inuktitut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) If there's any specific incidents that have to be relayed to the department, we can look into those. If there are specific staff members that are causing specific concerns, we can definitely look into those.

In terms of employment of Inuit, the mentorship route is what is currently being offered by the contractor, and we are quite encouraged by the results to date. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's a very huge concern. I think it needs to be looked into as soon as possible. It was brought to my attention many times by my constituent communities, especially Kugaaruk. I reside in Taloyoak. And it's always been posted on social media. And it's very concerning and it hurts me as the MLA and the representative in this House, Mr. Chairman. So I really highly recommend that the department check into it as soon as possible to fill the barriers and the gaps.

I do care for my constituents. When they need the medical service, they need the medical service. So for future consideration, I'm going to continue on the same topic of the security services.

We do have the local Rangers in the communities, and many of them they might be employed. And the ones that are not employed, I'm pretty sure they just need a little more training, and I highly recommend the department consider hiring local Rangers to be security service at every health centre in the community. There are local people that can

take on the job, and the money can stay in the territory, Mr. Chairman, and the main can stay in the communities. And these are fellow Rangers who should be considered greatly with honours. And I hope the Department of Health take this recommendation to at least hire community Rangers in our communities.

So I'm going to move on, Mr. Chairman. When it comes to the ambulance services, we do have ambulance in the community of Taloyoak that's never been started before. It never been utilized. It's just sitting outside. People do see the ambulance and their wish was that it can operate.

Before coming here, it was posted on social media by a constituent that it will be great to see that ambulance being utilized. And I don't know if my community of Kugaaruk that I represent also in this House has an ambulance. But if they do have an ambulance, what I would like to see is can the department recommend that the ambulance service be used by the local fire fighters.

The firefighters are first responders as well. It's a known fact that the firefighters are trained in CPR. What I would like to see, and recommendation to the department is put the firefighters and put the ambulance services together and probably with the department fund that department together with in collaboration with Community and Government Services.

So that being said, Mr. Chairman, does the department know if both of my communities I represent do have the ambulance in the communities. I do know that we have one in Taloyoak. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) So I'll respond to the member's suggestions.

First of all, in terms of recruitment of local Inuit by Scarlet Security, my understanding is that there are opportunities available if individuals are interested in employment. So that's through the contractor.

And in terms of employing Canadian Rangers in the security function, there might be some foundational legal barriers to that, is my understanding.

In terms of the ground transportation issue, we do have a package of information that we can share with organizations like hamlets who are interested in establishing the service in their community.

And so currently Kugaaruk is not listed in terms of the list of communities that have this service. However, I know there are some communities who are lobbying for and succeeding and finding used ambulances from organizations in the south, which can basically donate them to the community or to the organization.

If the fire department is interested in taking that on, I know there's at least one community where it is I believe it's Rankin Inlet where there's a service that's operated through the fire department. So that is within the realm of possibility. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you, Minister, for your response. It would allow me to perhaps maybe I can meet with both of my constituent communities. Maybe I can take that consideration and present it to the council and mayor. So hopefully I believe we can work together on this one, Mr. Chairman.

I'm going to move on to when it comes to calling the health centres. I shared the same concerns as my colleague from Baker Lake. When we do call into the health centre, and this is a known fact that in my community, and it's probably the same in my other constituent community when we do call in, we call the number, and then the answering machine picks up, it's going to tell you to press 1 to get to the operator, and there's another option, then press 3 to get to the nurse on call.

Sometimes, and it's many, many times that elders have hard time talking to the nurse on call, so I want to do bring that to the department's attention that there's a huge barrier and gap when it comes to my constituents wanting to be seen.

And I share the same concern as my colleague. Sometimes it days, sometimes weeks and sometimes even a month. And it's very disturbing and very concerning. So I recommend that the department look into this and fill the barriers and gaps when it comes to medical services.

Maybe what the department can do is make a public service announcement in every community through the community health representative to inform the public that this is the number that you call, and if you can't get through, give them another option to call a number. It's for many great reasons, for emergency.

I'm doing this for the elders, because elders, it's sad that they have to go through this every day, every week, every month. It's been happening far too long. So I'm making a recommendation to the health department at least check into this issue of concern that I brought to this House.

It's just more of a statement, Mr. Chairman. I'll leave the rest to my colleagues for follow-up questions. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Quqqiaq. The minister did want to respond. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) In terms of elders being able to communicate with the health centre staff, that's concerning to hear, whether it's a switchboard issue or a language barrier issue. It's something we can commit to looking into further in terms of Taloyoak.

As I mentioned earlier, in terms of access to care and timeliness of care, the biggest factor and issue we're battling is staffing. That's where the critical staffing measures have been effective, and things are going in a positive direction. That's where we are concerned to see those measures sunsetting.

As currently budgeted we don't want to slide back into relying more and more on contract staff. We don't want to slide back into having more and more closures of health centres. So we want to keep building on the work that's been done. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. The next name I have on my list, Ms. Brewster. Sorry, Mr. Quqqiaq, you said was the last question, so I didn't look back to you. Go ahead, please.

Mr. Quqqiaq: My apologies, Mr. Chairman. I wanted to clarify not just Taloyoak; I also represent Kugaaruk, so I recommend that the department also look into Kugaaruk, as well. Thank you. That is the last one for sure, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: I see the minister nodding his head, so he got your message. Ms. Brewster, go ahead, please.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a couple of follow-up questions. The 28 registered midwives, and 12 I understand are working in Nunavut – sorry, I didn't catch whether or not there was a breakdown about whether or not those are Nunavut Inuit or not. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) So none of the midwives working in the territory are Nunavut Inuit.

We do have one midwife who is an Inuk has been working in a management role within the department. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you for that. Are there specific plans within the new plan that's being developed for recruiting Nunavut Inuit midwives. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Yes. And so as Ms. Berry mentioned earlier, we can't work on recruiting without working on the legislation that midwives are working under.

And so the dedicated territorial midwifery working group, which has been established, is helping to oversee this.

There's a steering committee specifically on the education curriculum topic that's been created. And so the vision is that we would have experienced midwives working with Inuit midwives to work their way into the profession. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On that working group and steering committee, I would like to know what the makeup is and whether or not there are any Inuit midwives on either the working group or the steering committee. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) In terms of the steering committee, it includes Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated. It includes Pauktuutit. It also includes Aqqiumavvik Arviat Wellness Society as well as stakeholders from Government of Nunavut. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Barry. My apologies, I was having a discussion behind the scenes here. When I saw Ms. Barry prepare herself, I thought she was getting ready again. Ms. Brewster, please proceed.

Ms. Brewster: I'm sorry, Minister, I didn't hear whether or not there are any Inuit midwives on that committee, on the committee or working group. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main: Matna. Yes. Matna.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Currently there's a certain number of births required for maintaining registration, and I'm wondering what's the plan and if the number of births are lowered, what are the risks of that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) So under the current legislation for a midwife to maintain their residency in the territory, they would have to will meet the minimum birth numbers.

So under the current legislation, the risk would be that they would not be eligible or not meet the registration requirements. So the recommendation, looking at the legislation alternative way to set things up would be to require proof of clinical hours instead of births.

But, you know, work on the legislation is not complete. It's something that's on the to-do list as part of revitalizing midwifery in Nunavut. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm really excited about this work. I firmly believe that everything we do to bring births home is just going to be really great.

I would like to move on to some questions about surveillance in relation to the number of health centre closures that we've had, as well as the use of paramedics in those situations.

And I just want to commend you as well for the incredible amount of work that has been done to keep so many health centres open in this latest era of lack of staff. I know how much passion goes into that.

So I'm just wondering whether or not the department has been keeping track of morbidity and mortality rates related to those closures. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Ms. Berry as well as Ms. Hunt and their colleagues have been keeping very close track, in terms of closure days, reduced services, emergency services only, and it's in order to see the numbers come down and to see the numbers around full service days increasing for Nunavummiut. Ms. Berry can answer on the morbidity piece. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Go ahead, Ms. Berry.

Ms. Berry: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So there's not one single database that we're creating to track something like that, because there's too many factors to try and include in.

But through our incident reporting system, whenever there's an unexpected death that happened in a community, an incident report gets filed. That incident report is then reviewed by our quality improvement committee. We often will have an urgent teleconference where we have Chief of Staff, Chief Nursing Officer, the directors, the nurse in charge and our quality improvement team. They get on a call and they go through the incident. So we're able to see who's involved in the care.

If there's anything that comes up that's a concern around a practice, then it then goes into our just culture committee, where we review it in greater depth, we compare it against best practices.

And we also have, with our paramedics when we introduce them, we created a number of policies and medical directives to wrap around the services that they're providing.

If incidents come up, then again we have a way through our nursing resource program where we're communicating with the paramedic agency, and we keep track every any practice concerns that come up.

In terms of if we've seen any increase in mortality or morbidity related to the ongoing or introduction of paramedics, the answer is no, not so far, but we don't have any single database.

But from all these pieces we have in place so ensure the quality of services being provided, there hasn't been any flags to that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So what is the – I know the answer to this; I just want it to be said out loud. What is the process for community members who feel like maybe something happened that shouldn't have happened with a loved one, or with their own health that maybe they didn't get seen soon enough because the health centre was closed, or it was staffed by paramedics and they didn't get a diagnosis that may have turned into a disease that they are now fighting long term, and maybe it's gotten worse, what can they do. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) So the two maintain avenues or points of contact, and I thank the member for asking that

question, would be the nurse in charge at the health centre and/or the office of patient relations.

And we encourage individuals to bring specific complaints through those avenues. It can be frustrating to see individuals expressing anger on social media without following up through the available channels such as patient relations.

We want Nunavummiut to bring their concerns. We want to hear those concerns so that we can address them. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think it's really important to note as well that a person doesn't necessarily have to feel complaining or angry about an issue of concern that they have. It is just, correct me if I'm wrong, if I have some concerns about my health related to a closure and I want my case file reviewed, can I have that done without being angry or complaining about it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you Ms. Brewster. Minister Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Absolutely. It's not just complaints, it can be questions. We encourage dialogue between patients and care providers, absolutely. Mut'na.

Chairman: Thank you. Before I go back to Ms. Brewster I'm going to recognize the clock and rise and report progress to the speaker. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses out.

>>*Committee adjourns and House resumes at 17:55*

Speaker: Item 21, Report of the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Hickes.

Item 21: Report of the Committee of the Whole

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It feels good to stand up. Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 70 and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the committee be agreed to. Thank you.

Speaker: The motion is in order. Is there a seconder? Mr. Simailak. The motion is carried.

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

Item 22: Orders of the Day

Mr. Clerk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Tomorrow's meeting starts at 9 o'clock... *Orders of the Day*:

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 Motion
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 64, Post-Secondary Student Support Act
 - Bill 70, Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2025-2026
 - Bill 71, Supplementary Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, No.2, 2024-2025
 - Bill 72, Supplementary Appropriation (Capital) Act, No.1, 2025-2026
 - Report of the Committee of the Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills

22. Orders of the Day.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker: This House stands adjourned until Friday, February 28, at 9:00 a.m. Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 17:57*

Appendix - Feb. 27, 2025

Education received approval for seven new teacher positions early in 2024-25 to maintain the minimum student-teacher ratio and allow for the roll-out of the all-day kindergarten pilot project. Also in 2024-25, Education was approved to add one Early Childhood Officer which is funded through a third-party agreement.

The Nunavut Housing Corporation has a net increase of 3 positions, but these are funded by through a third-party agreement inline with the terms of those agreements.

The Government of Nunavut measures PYs in terms of full-time equivalent positions. For positions which are meant to work less than full time hours, we record a fraction of a full-time equivalent position. For that reason, the position count is not always a whole number.

Question:

"I would like the minister to report back to the House before the end of sitting, preferably within this week, why there's a discrepancy only four PYs and the Business Plan is stating there are 21 new PYs. [...]"

Mr. Speaker, on the same page, page 4 of the Budget Address, it says:

"In 2025-2026 EIA will receive 1 million and four new staff to complement two existing positions that will implement our elders and seniors strategy this year."

Mr. Speaker, also on the business plan on the Main Estimates 2025-2026, page B-1, the Elders Secretariat has four PYs for 2025, and in my math, four new staff plus two existing positions adds up to six. I need an explanation from the Minister of Finance, why there's discrepancy again between the Main Estimates and the Budget Address."

Response:

The four new positions in the 2025-26 Main Estimates are for the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs' new Elders' Secretariat. The remaining two positions referenced in the speech were reprofiled for the new Sustainable Development Division in the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs.

