

NUNAVUT HANSARD

UNEDITED TRANSCRIPT

THURSDAY, MARCH 6, 2025

IQALUIT, NUNAVUT

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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 Kaerner
(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)

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(Hudson Bay)

Joanna Quassa
(Aggu)

Inagayuk Quqqiaq
(Netsilik)

Alexander Sammurtok
(Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet)

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Iqaluit, Nunavut
Thursday, March 6, 2025

Members Present:

Hon. David Akeeagok, Hon. P.J. Akeeagok, Hon. Tony Akoak, Mr. Bobby Anavilok, 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, Ms. Karen Nutarak, Hon. Joanna Quassa, Mr. Inagayuk Quqqiaq, Mr. Alexander Sammurtok, Mr. Joe Savikataaq, Hon. Craig Simailak.

>>*House commenced at 10:00*

Item 1: Opening Prayer

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

>>*Prayer*

Speaker's Statement

Speaker (interpretation): (no interpretation) Item 2, Ministers' Statements. Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, Ms. Nakashuk.

Item 2: Ministers' Statements

Minister's Statement 558 – 6(2): Midterm Mark for University Partnership

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, my colleagues, and also to the people, Nunavummiut, and also to the people of Pangnirtung.

Mr. Speaker, November 2024 signaled the five-year mark of the partnership between Nunavut Arctic College and Memorial University of Newfoundland and Labrador. In the five years since the partnership began, two important programs emerged: the Nunavut Teacher Education Program and the Bachelor of Social Work Program. These are important programs, but the partnership also provides the College with important operational supports.

Memorial University's Centre for Innovation in Teaching and Learning supports Brightspace, the College's Learning Management System, that enables instructors and students to interact virtually for remote learning. It also provides support for technology, strategic development, training, and troubleshooting for staff and students while the College grows this vital part of its operations.

Juniper House, Memorial's Indigenous Student Resource Centre, inspired the College to develop its own online tutoring platform to support tutoring scheduling and to facilitate online tutoring sessions. College students continue to receive tutoring support from individuals across the territory, but also in partnership with Memorial University.

Mr. Speaker, the partnership has also allowed the College to build its research capabilities. With funding from ArcticNet's North2North program, the College was able to review how research in Nunavut represents Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, explore best practices from the Igloodik Oral History project, and explore ways to have this collection actively used in College programs.

Mr. Speaker, the support provided by Memorial University has allowed the College to grow, change, and expand. I am confident this growth will continue into the next five years of this partnership.

Qujannamiik, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Minister's Statement. Hon. Minister of Economic Development and Transportation, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Minister's Statement 559 – 6(2): Invest North of 60 Mining Initiative, Strengthening Nunavut's Mining Future

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to announce that Nunavut, alongside the territorial governments of the Yukon and the Northwest Territories, are launching Invest North of 60. This three-year pan-territorial initiative, supported by CanNor, is designed to attract investment in our mining sector, raise awareness of our resource potential, and strengthen collaboration with key stakeholders—including Indigenous governments, regulators, and industry leaders.

The initiative officially launched at this year's Prospectors & Developers Association of Canada Convention in Toronto over the weekend. PDAC is the world's premier mineral exploration and mining event. Over the next three years, Invest North of 60 will leverage national and global platforms to engage investors, showcase Nunavut's mining opportunities, and secure new partnerships that will drive long-term economic growth for our territory.

Mr. Speaker, this initiative demonstrates the strength of pan-territorial collaboration. By working together with Yukon, the Northwest Territories, and our federal partners at CanNor, we ensure that Nunavut remains competitive in the global mining sector. Our government is committed to sustainable and responsible resource development—development that respects our land, creates economic opportunities for Nunavummiut,

and builds a strong foundation for future generations. With Invest North of 60, we are taking an important step toward realizing that vision.

Qujannamiik, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister's Statement. Hon. Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

Minister's Statement 560 – 6(2): Health Specific Privacy Legislation Consultations

Hon. John Main: Mr. Speaker, the Department of Health is committed to developing legislation that supports the rights of individuals while also enabling the delivery of high-quality healthcare services. Ensuring we have clear, modern, and effective legislation for the collection, use, and disclosure of personal health information is a key priority.

To achieve this, the Department of Health has undertaken a comprehensive internal and external consultation process to gather valuable input from Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, internal consultations within the Department of Health began in December 2022 and continued through April 2023. These discussions have provided crucial insights into how health information is currently managed and how it can be improved.

Consultations with other Government of Nunavut departments are being conducted alongside the public consultation process.

The external consultation process officially began in May 2024. Our approach included an online survey, which received 138 responses over 4 months. Additionally, community consultations were held in Arviat, Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet, Kugluktuk, and Qikiqtarjuaq. We plan to return to Whale Cove and Cambridge Bay this March after our initial consultations were canceled.

The next major step is for work to begin on drafting a Legislative Proposal. However, given the complexity of this work, the new legislation will not be introduced within the current government's mandate. Nonetheless, this initiative remains a priority for Health and will lay the foundation for improved protection and accessibility of Nunavummiut's personal health information.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank all those who have participated in the consultations so far. Your input is guiding us towards a modern and effective framework for personal health information. We will continue to keep Nunavummiut informed as this important work progresses. *Matna*.

Speaker: Minister's Statement. Hon. Minister of Education, Ms. Gross.

Minister's Statement 561 – 6(2): Congratulations Diane Kunnuk - Your Voice is Power

Hon. Pamela Gross: *Ublaku*, Mr. Speaker, and good morning to all of the Nunavummiut that are listening across our territory, and those in particular in Igloolik, as we have a special congratulations in order, Mr. Speaker. I am proud to stand in this House today to celebrate a significant accomplishment from an exceptional Nunavut student.

Diane Kunnuk is a Grade 11 student from Iglulik High School. She has made history as one of two national winners of the 2024 Your Voice is Power music competition.

>> *Applause*

Her creativity, hard work, and deep connection to her culture earned her this incredible achievement and a \$5,000 scholarship.

Mr. Speaker, Diane's winning remix blended elements of house, funk, and pop music with powerful lyrics from Indigenous artists Jayli Wolf and Dakota Bear. Through her music, she shared an important message about the lasting impact of colonial policies that separated Indigenous children from their families. Her work is not only artistically impressive but also deeply meaningful.

The Your Voice is Power competition is a collaboration between Amazon Music and TakingITGlobal that challenges students across Canada to express themselves through music while learning coding skills and exploring Indigenous histories and cultures. With over 25,000 participants this year, Diane's success is truly remarkable.

Mr. Speaker, behind every outstanding achievement, is support and encouragement. I want to acknowledge Diane's teacher, Dawna Stewart, for recognizing and nurturing her talent. Diane's success inspires her peers and all young people in Nunavut.

Diane, we are proud of you and are honoured to have you and your mother, Rebecca, here in the Assembly today. Keep following your passion—you are making a real impact.

Quana, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Congratulations, Ms. Kunnuk. We are proud of you. Minister's Statement. Hon. Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

Minister's Statement 562 – 6(2): Certification of Career Development Officers

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to announce our committed effort to implementing specialized training for Career Development Officers and Apprenticeship Officers to strengthen their capacity in their frontline work.

Family Services is working with the Canadian Career Development Foundation and Implicit Career Search to provide our regional staff with formalized training to enhance service delivery, build capacity, and equip our staff with standardized skills and certifications aligned with National Career Development Practitioner standards.

The training is being provided in all three of Nunavut's regions, reaching 17 Career Development staff. Five more courses are planned, and successful completion of these courses can lead to Career Practitioner Certification. Family Services currently has three staff who hold their Career Practitioner Certification.

Mr. Speaker, these programs foster employee engagement, improve job satisfaction, and contribute to organizational success by aligning individual aspirations with business objectives.

Qujannamiik, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Minister's Statement. Hon. Minister of Justice, Mr. David Akeegok.

Minister's Statement 563 – 6(2): Aaqqigiarvik Correctional Healing Facility Cooking Skills Program

Hon. David Akeegok (interpretation): Mr. Speaker, I rise today to share an inspiring initiative from the Aaqqigiarvik Correctional Healing Facility, which has partnered with Teaching Nunavut to provide correctional clients with valuable professional experience through the Basic Cooking Skills Program. This Program not only equips clients with essential culinary skills but also sets them on the path to achieving their apprenticeship as cooks, enabling them to develop careers and assisting with their rehabilitation.

The first round of the Basic Cooking Skills Program was successfully conducted in June 2024, and the second round started in the Fall of 2024. The Program has been a collaborative effort, involving both Correctional staff and clients and has fostered a supportive environment for learning and personal growth.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the impact of this program extends beyond the Facility's walls, and I would like to highlight two events that demonstrate the power of community engagement and skill development.

During the holiday season, the Facility's clients and kitchen staff delivered a festive turkey feast to the students and staff at Joamie Elementary School in Iqaluit. Witnessing the joy and gratitude on their faces was a heartfelt moment for everyone involved. The Corrections staff and clients also expressed immense pride in having the opportunity to give back to the community.

Additionally, as part of the Program, the Aaqqigiarvik Correctional Healing Facility hosted a special Elders' Christmas feast, which saw a great turnout. The event was filled with warmth and community spirit, from preparing and serving delicious meals to providing transportation and assistance to Elders in need. The celebration featured games and even a surprise visit from Santa, bringing festive cheer to all attendees.

Mr. Speaker, as these events demonstrate, the Basic Cooking Skills Program is not just about learning to cook. It is about building confidence, fostering connections, and creating meaningful opportunities for our clients to improve their own circumstances while also contributing positively to society.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Item 3, Members' Statements. Member for Tununiq, Ms. Nutarak.

Item 3: Members' Statements

Member's Statement 766 – 6(2): Culture Programs in Pond Inlet

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This morning, our community in Pond Inlet, I wanted to express my pride about it. People in our community don't just sit around and do nothing. Every night and every day there's always sewing happening and something is always happening and somebody's always making something.

I was thinking about the sewing program instructors. They do it at night, where elders have sewing programs for younger people, making mittens and parkas for adults and making tents. And also the alcohol education committee are having young people make seal hooks and harpoons and they also made *qamutiq*. And also our precious elders, they meet every Thursday in Pond Inlet. So they don't just sit around. Every day there's always something happening.

I would like to thank them for doing that, because they have a lot of activities and they are volunteers who do that. And I wanted to remember them this morning. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Member's Statement. Member for Amittuq, Mr. Kaernerck.

Member's Statement 767 – 6(2): Arctic Security and Sovereignty

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, colleagues and ministers, and everybody in Nunavut.

This morning I rise, Mr. Speaker, about the Arctic. There is a lot of interest now in the Arctic, because of what's happening in the other parts of the world, with wars happening, and everybody is aware of the oil, and mining exploration is very important now in Nunavut, and that's why I'm rising today, although I have mentioned it a number of times and I asked the Nunavut premier questions to ask him to make sure the Arctic can be protected.

I would like to say, Mr. Speaker, in the federal government, the Conservative government leader went to Iqaluit to speak, and he said if he became the Prime Minister he would look at Iqaluit. And when I asked the Nunavut premier about that and asked him if he spoke to the premier and the premier said no, and the response I got was the people in the Arctic need to express themselves, and representing Igloodik and Hall Beach, I tried to do that.

If we can imagine or not imagine but really see the Amittuq area, it's in the middle of Nunavut, and if we look to our hearts, it's divided, if we can look at our hearts, Kitikmeot, Kivallummiut, high Arctic and the Keewatin. I think it would make sense if the protecting of the Arctic is done by the military and also utilize the Rangers in the communities.

And that's why I rise today. How can the smaller communities through finances or through infrastructure. Things should be created in our area.

And I would like permission to conclude my statement.

Chairman: Member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are none. Please proceed, Mr. Kaernerck.

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Thank you very much, my colleagues. This is very important now, and it's becoming more and more dangerous. And start worrying about armies coming or something. And I would like to say last month in Hall Beach there was a plane from France that arrived, and that jet was really huge. So I would like to say, Mr. Speaker, in Hall Beach in Sanirajak the federal government used almost \$10 million to improve the airstrip, and after it got improved, we have certain expectations if there

might be money available not just from the federal government, Nunavut government, maybe from the defence department can start to do some of the work. And I think that should be considered as well.

Looking at the lack of jobs in our community, this would really benefit Igloolik and Sanirajak and Hall Beach, not just the two communities, but all of Nunavut.

That's what I wanted to say. At question period I will have some questions to the premier about the Arctic sovereignty and independence. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Chairman: Member Statement. Member for Aggu, Ms. Quassa.

Member's Statement 768 – 6(2): Congratulations

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (no interpretation). Congratulations.

Speaker: Member's Statement. Member for Uqqummiut, Ms. Killiktee.

Member's Statement 769 – 6(2): Search and Rescue

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): I say good morning to everybody in Nunavut. On February 11 there was something that happened that I would like to talk about. There was a missing hunter in my constituency of Clyde River, and they were notified by the hunters that one of the hunters did not return. That person is a real hunter and he left on February 10 with some hunters and they went hunting where they wanted to go. However, this one hunter did not return. He didn't go back to their camp, and so the hunters started looking for him, because he was taking too long to come back. Only when daylight came they found him, and he had an accident. So the search and rescue were notified during a blizzard and they started searching right away.

Mr. Speaker, I want to say what I was told the person said, he was injured and there was a helicopter. He asked if he could be picked up by a helicopter, and I may be able to come back home alive; and I don't think I'm going to make it by skidoo. That's what the hunter said.

Because of that happening, there was no helicopter available. They had to take him back to Clyde River by snowmobile during a blizzard, and that person lost his life on the way to the community of Clyde River. That person died from his accident.

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

Speaker: 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 to my colleagues for allowing me to complete my statement. This is a very important thing that happened. They lost a person, and I have his family in my mind and the children that are left behind.

What I want to say, Mr. Speaker, at question period I will have a question to the Community and Government Services minister about search and rescue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Item 4, Returns to Oral Questions. Item 5, Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Cambridge Bay, Ms. Gross.

Item 5: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery

Hon. Pamela Gross: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It is my honour and pleasure to recognize a few visitors in the gallery this morning. As I mentioned in my minister's statement, we have a special young lady here in Iqaluit, and I believe this is her first time in our Legislative Assembly. Diane Kunnuk, who is award-winning recipient of the 2024 Your Voice is Power music competition. Please stand, Diane. She's accompanied by her mother, Rebecca Kunnuk. They have both travelled here from Igloolik, and we thank them for coming to the House on a special occasion to recognize them, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Hon. Pamela Gross: I also have two colleagues in the House Mr. Speaker if it wasn't for them they help in so many ways, and they helped to arrange this special visit. I would like to thank our Assistant Deputy Minister, Mr. Bill Cooper, and also our new-to-our-department and the first time to recognize him here in the House our manager of communications, John Manzo. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Welcome to your Assembly. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery, Mr. Kaernerck.

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I usually don't recognize visitors in the gallery and Diane Kunnuk is mentioned and her mother Rebecca Kunnuk. I would like to welcome them and I'm proud that she has been recognized. Both are from my constituents and both are here. Let us be proud of them and show appreciation. Diane and Rebecca, welcome to the House. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>Applause

Speaker: Welcome to your Assembly. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Baker Lake, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I too would like to recognize Bill Cooper. He's no stranger to the north; actually, he has been up north for a few decades now, which is good to see. He was a teacher, a principal, worked at the Kivalliq school operations, and now as the minister mentioned, he's the assistant deputy minister for the Department of Education.

Most people don't know he and I have been neighbours for a couple decades now. We live right across the road from each other, and over the years we've had a few chats outside while I was doing errands or he was doing errands. We would have a quick little chat for a break as well. I'm sad they will be a fewer and further apart, those chats, but I'm glad he is here, because he will continue to help serve Nunavummiut. Please welcome Mr. Cooper to the House, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

>> *Applause*

Speaker: Welcome to your House. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Member for Aggu, Ms. Quassa.

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I did mention their names, but I would like to welcome them again, Diane and her mother. Her mother, we call her Aluru (ph). Welcome, both of you. Thank you.

Speaker: Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Before going to item 6, if I can advise the House that member for Iqaluit-Sinaa will not be here this morning due to illness.

Item 6, Oral Questions. Apologies; papers are out of place this morning. Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Lightstone.

Item 6: Oral Questions

Oral Question 1173 – 6(2): Update on the 24 Condo Units

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister responsible for Nunavut Housing Corporation regarding the GN staff condo program.

Mr. Speaker, this program which was released in 2017 is an issue that I brought up on numerous occasions over the years. The objective of this condo program was to provide affordable home ownership options for GN staff, and it was intended to increase retention rates and decrease dependence on subsidized housing in the territory.

Can the minister provide an update on the status of the 24 condo units in the plateau subdivision. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the sale is going good and the sale of the units are almost complete. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm glad to hear that the sales are almost complete in the plateau subdivision. I'll pick up on that later.

I would like to follow up. For my next question I would like to ask the minister if he would be able to provide an update on the more controversial 36 units at the Road to Nowhere staff condo program. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the condo 17, as it's described, was dissolved in May 2024 and they were all converted to staff housing units. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Chairman: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Last April, in April 2024 there was an article published about this matter. Mr. Speaker, there were some interest, several employees had expressed interest in purchasing these condo units in the Road to Nowhere subdivision, and in December 2019, 11 families had moved into those units. More recently two of those families and Government of Nunavut employees have gotten so far as to signing a contractual purchase agreement, and then were subsequently told that the condo was being dissolved and they are unable to purchase these units.

Mr. Speaker, I don't understand how that sort of treatment of GN employees is considered increasing retention rates and decreasing dependency on subsidized staff housing.

Mr. Speaker I would like to ask: How was it, how did it come about that the Government of Nunavut, sorry the Nunavut Housing Corporation decided to dissolve Condo Corporation 17 and tell these potential homeowners that they can no longer purchase the homes that they are currently living in? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. There isn't time in the question period to go through all the details of those, but Mr. Speaker, there was a lot of work and discussion between the individuals that were wanting to purchase the units. There were some other issues that arose that did not allow to complete condo 17 units. Everybody, all those that were interested were offered units elsewhere, as in the condo 16 units. The corporation had met with and spoke with the proponents that were near the final stages of the agreement. That meeting happened between the corporation and the individuals, Mr. Speaker. The corporation moved forward with turning those condo 17 into staff housing units.

As my colleague understands, there has been some very serious issues around a staff housing shortage in the city, and that played part of a role in that, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

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

Oral Question 1174 – 6(2): Arctic Sovereignty and Security

Mr. Savikataaq (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good afternoon, Arviammiut. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I would like to question the premier this morning about the joint statement from Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and the Government of Nunavut, and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated providing a road map to securing Canada's Arctic sovereignty and security.

Mr. Speaker, I have some questions on it. On the second page, further down there, it says "unlocking Nunavut's economic potential in critical minerals." There has been a lot of talk of critical minerals being needed.

I would like to ask the premier. The first question is how long does it take, on average, before a mine from one day, want to open it up, until it's opened up and it is operational? Thank you, Mr. Speaker. And minerals are needed generally in a short span, so that's why I ask. How long is the average time for a mine to open up in Nunavut? Thank you.

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

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again I want to thank my colleague for his question on something that's very important right now as we're seeing the threat of tariff that's been put on us through the President Trump. There's been a lot more discussions of what we could do to unlock the economic engine potential we have in the country.

In Nunavut there is incredible wealth in terms of opportunities around critical minerals, so I appreciate the member's question.

I don't have that level of detail specifically on how long a project would be reviewed. We know it goes through a regulatory process, whether it's through the conformities of the Institutions of Public Government, the Nunavut Planning Commission, the Nunavut Water Board and the Nunavut Impact Review Board, and those are determined through those processes.

But to the member's question, I don't know the current average timeline, and I look forward to consulting with the Minister of EDT to see what the current timelines are on existing timelines. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I believe average lengths of time from a mine from when it's open is ten years, and ten years is a long time. Some of these minerals might not be critical anymore, in ten years, but I understand they have to go through the process that we have here in Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, on the national building infrastructure priorities in the same statement, there are four of them: Qikiqtarjuaq port, Arctic security corridor, Grays Bay Road and Port project, Kivalliq Hydro-Fibre Link, Iqaluit hydro-electric project. Mr. Speaker, only one of these is government-led; the other three are Inuit-led projects.

I would like to ask the premier now: What is the cost of each one of these infrastructure priorities that have been put forward? 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.

There is no important relationship that is, that we have with Inuit organizations and I'm very proud to be able to work with the president of Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated on that statement. I think it's a historic one, where we are seeing uncertainty around the world and around the country. Many of the conversations that are happening is what we could do to bring certainty. To have the Indigenous organization, in this case NTI, both mention the nation-building opportunities that we are bringing forward.

And as such, those numbers I don't have with me. It's the projects that are being led by Inuit for Inuit.

The ranges that we do have estimations around them, such as the Kivalliq hydro and Arctic security corridor, the Grays Bay Road and Port and deep sea port, which we have

those numbers, as we are leading those. I can get back to the member as I consult with the Inuit organizations that are leading those work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, earlier my colleague from Amittuq there and Sanirajak mentioned about the Conservative leader wanting to open up an army base here in Iqaluit, if he is elected. The comments that we heard from the premier at that time was that the premier couldn't support something until there was consultation, and my colleague asked if there's consultations. At that time when the party leader was in Iqaluit there was no consultation, but we did hear there was a meeting that happened after.

These four projects, has there been any consultation? Since the premier was opposed to do opening up an army base here due to not consulting northerners, have northerners been consulted about the Qikiqtarjuaq port, Arctic security corridor, Grays Bay Road and port project, the Kivalliq Hydro-Fibre Link, and the Iqaluit hydro project? Because I did hear another one of my colleagues, from Kugluktuk, stating the Arctic security corridor, Grays Bay Road and port project was opposed by the HTO, the hunters and trappers organization in Kugluktuk. I'm wondering what kind of consultations have been done on these four projects that the government is saying they should go ahead. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeegok.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I really appreciate the lines of questioning from my colleague there. Each and every one of those are going through the Institutions of Public Government as we speak. To the very important work on the Arctic security corridor or the Grays Bay Road and Port project, I understand that the proponent West Kitikmeot Gold has committed the proposal through the impact review board and it is through that process that consultation is happening.

To the member's first comment as well, I will always defend to ensure that Nunavummiut are at the table if decisions are being made for the north by the north, and it's important that we are at those conversations. I've been fortunate to be able to have conversations with Nunavut Tunngavik, with the regional Inuit associations who feel the exact same, that we must be at those tables as those conversations happen.

Further to that we have been having really good discussions with Ottawa, with the Government of Canada, as well as Opposition leader to ensure that any future discussions around investments must stem from the people that reside in the north. And those conversations will be ongoing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Oral questions. Member for Uqqummiut, Ms. Killiktee.

Oral Question 1175 – 6(2): Search and Rescue

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my questions to the Minister of Community and Government Services. They concern the issue of search and rescue in the communities.

Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to the answers that the minister provided yesterday on this subject to my colleague from Aggu and now I also have some questions.

Mr. Speaker, I recently had the opportunity to meet search and rescue volunteers in my constituency of Uqummiut. Mr. Speaker, a long-standing concern that was raised with me (interpretation ends) The federal government permanently station search and rescue as it's in Nunavut including fixed wing aircraft and helicopters. When a major search occurs, aircraft have to be deployed from bases down south. My colleague from Amittuq has also raised this issue.

Can the Minister update the House on what discussions he had made with the federal government on this issue. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasié (interpretation): I would like to thank my colleague for asking questions in regards to search and rescue volunteers. Our department was looking at the pre feasibility study at that time, and a report was produced on our findings and we found that we would have to expend a lot of money in order to set up a base.

The federal government is also looking at three communities that will be used as bases, and they will also be used by the other communities. That that was added by the federal government this morning by Mr. Blair. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That's very interesting to hear. It is something that is needed up here in Nunavut. The search and rescue volunteers do a lot of work when there's a need. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, as the minister is aware, his department is responsible for government's community base search and rescue contribution policy. I heard very clearly from the volunteers in my constituency that they have identified the need for proper equipment and upgraded equipment for the local organizations, including GPS devices, satellite phones and search-capable skidoos. Can the minister describe what enhancements in this area are being considered by his department. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We send our condolences to the member's constituency, because you never know when there's a need to do search and rescue.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, for the safety equipment, my department did do a callout and extended the territorial callout deadline up until December 2021. We had received responses from Kinngait, Baker Lake, Naujaat, Whale Cove, and Taloyoak, but utilizing this information, Nunavut Emergency Management will work to upgrade and replace missing or obsolete safety equipment that our search and rescue volunteers rely on, also working with such like municipalities. Based on those responses that we receive we'll be proceeding with those upgrades and replacing this type of safety equipment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for your response to my question. The minister recently provided on the update to members of the Legislative Assembly concerning search and rescue. I appreciate receiving the information.

The update indicates that his department has been working to create new territorial search and rescue organizations in order to "better support search and rescue teams throughout the territory."

Can the minister describe what resources will be provided to this new organization, and can he indicate when it is expected to be formally established. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank the member for that question. The Nunavut Emergency Management Division did co-host the Nunavut Ground Search and Rescue Roundtable, which brought together all the stakeholders involved, and coordinating, discussing and having an open dialogue about search and rescue efforts across the territory.

With that, through this forum, we have agreed to the creation of a territorial ground search and rescue organization, and this would support all the ground search and rescue teams at the local level. It's continuing to build off the strengths of the teams.

And also we have a partnership with academics that have extensive knowledge in this area and are providing recommendations or any expertise in this area. So I think we're on a good path forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1176 – 6(2): Draft Nunavut Land Use Plan

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions today are for the Minister of Environment, and they again concern the Draft Nunavut Land Use Plan.

Mr. Speaker, I listened very carefully to the answers that the minister provided yesterday on this subject to my colleague from Iqaluit-Tasiluk, and now I have some more questions to ask.

Mr. Speaker, I want to be very clear that I fully support responsible mining. Mr. Speaker, I have seen with my own eyes the economic benefits that well-paying mining jobs bring to families in Nunavut. We cannot be a territory that lives on government handouts.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to be very clear that I fully support protecting our pressure land, water, and wildlife. I have spoken many times about initiatives being lead by the hunters and trappers organizations in my constituency.

During yesterday's oral question period the minister indicated that he is waiting for a final recommendation from his department on whether or not to support the Draft Land Use Plan in its current form.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister provide a clear timeline today for when he expects to receive this recommendation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, as stated, the triparties, the officials from Government of Nunavut, the Government of Canada and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, are planning for a meeting later this month, and following that, I think there will be an indication of the next steps, a path forward. I think at that time we'll have a better indication when the recommendations will be coming forward.

But, Mr. Speaker, I continue to, as the review is ongoing, continue to collect your thoughts and opinions on it, and it's something again we're not taking lightly and we're going through our due diligence process to ensure that all sides of the matters are looked at thoroughly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have also reviewed with care the joint statement that was issued on Tuesday of this week by Canada's energy and mines minister. Mr. Speaker, I also noted that Nunavut's signatories to this joint statement were the Minister of Environment and the Minister of Economic Development.

The joint statement indicated that provinces and territories will work to achieve the acceleration of resource development through more efficient and timely permitting and regulatory processes.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister clearly indicate how the Nunavut Planning Commission, which was responsible for developing the Draft Land Use Plan, will be involved in this work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Environment, Mr. Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. If I may, maybe the statement that came out from that federal or provincial territorial meeting and how it relates to Nunavut Planning Commission's work, as the Institutions of Public Government, their work is going to be ongoing as we look to ratify the Land Use Plan, eventually. And with that I believe the member commented about timely regulatory review and approval. I think that's where the Nunavut Planning Commission will have a role with that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, it is clear to me that the world's focus on critical minerals is getting stronger by the day. Mr. Speaker, I'm sure that I will have more questions at a later time to the Minister responsible for Mines on the opportunities and risk for Nunavut in this sector.

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Environment clearly explain the extent to which the delay in approving the Draft Nunavut Land Use Plan in its current form is related to the issue of accessing and extracting critical minerals. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Environment, Mr. Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I believe that there's no real correlation between them, but again, my department and Economic Development and Transportation, but also our regulatory, the Institutions of Public Government that do review mineral development in our territory, have their processes in place. And on top of that, we do have our legislative requirements, so we'll continue with our work involving all our stakeholders and partners on this, but I thank the member for bringing this to our attention. Thank you.

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

Oral Question 1177 – 6(2): Public Safety in Pond Inlet

Ms. Nutarak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister of Justice and they concern the important issue of public safety in Pond Inlet.

Mr. Speaker, almost a year ago today I last raised the issue of public safety of Pond Inlet in the House. At that time the minister confirmed to me that an additional Royal Canadian Mounted Police officer would be stationed at the detachment in Pond Inlet during the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

Mr. Speaker, we are now nearing the end of 2024-2025 fiscal year. Can the minister confirm if the additional Royal Canadian Mounted Police officer position has been filled in Pond Inlet. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Hon. Minister of Justice, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Pond Inlet detachment for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police does have five members filled at this time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank you, Minister, for the information.

Mr. Speaker, the Nunavut Crime Prevention Strategy was tabled in the House on March 17, 2017. The strategy outlines a vision, principle, and action to address crime prevention in Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, the department's current business plan indicates that one of its priorities for 2025 is to "work in partnership with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to create a crime prevention strategy."

Can the minister clarify how the new crime prevention strategy will differ from the current crime prevention strategy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Chairman: Minister of Justice, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I don't want to go forward in terms of I don't want to dictate what the strategy is going to look like. I think a lot of good work will need to be done as we develop the strategy, and we need to have all the key stakeholders involved in this. I don't want to lay out what will be in the strategy. I

think the strategy needs to be developed as part in working with our key stakeholders. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, Minister. Mr. Speaker, the Nunavut Minister of Justice, Nunavut commanding officer shared directional statement 2022-2025 was tabled in the House on May 31, 2023.

The shared directional statement included five shared priorities between the department and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. One of these priorities is communities at risk. The statement indicates:

“The Royal Canadian Mounted Police will continue to focus efforts on the importation and use of illegal drugs and alcohol to reduce the use for youth at risk.”

Can the minister clarify what specification action his department, in collaboration with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, are currently undertaking to address this important priority. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Justice, Mr. David Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the shared directional statement that we have with the RCMP, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, focuses on a lot of good initiatives that are taking place and I think the one specific on what my member stated is that work is work that our members are doing, in terms of trying to combat the drugs coming into the communities.

I think what we have seen in the recent times now is a lot of focus on taking drugs out of our communities, and that’s something that our Royal Canadian Mounted Police have said that they’re going to continue to work hard on, and it’s something I will continue to support. I thank the member for raising this for awareness. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1178 – 6(2): Arctic Security and Sovereignty

Mr. Kaernerk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning to the people of Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, as I stated before, on the issue of Arctic security and sovereignty. Mr. Speaker during yesterday’s sitting of the house we could clearly hear the sound of military jets flying in the sky above. It reminded us that we live in very uncertain times,

and since the climate change is occurring in the north and the ice melts faster and the ships are travelling more now with global warming for mining purposes.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a quote from the Government of Nunavut on February 10 in regards to the premier's response to federal Conservative's platform. It's going to be a long, good quote.

“While Nunavut has come far in the past 25 years, it is clear that more robust investments are needed to tap into our territory's full potential, and the time has come for Nunavut to extend its nation-building efforts to Arctic and longest coast. Now, given today's global landscape and the circumpolar issues, it is more important to make a significant investment in the Arctic that meets local community needs, forge opportunities for economic development, address reconciliation, and our country's geopolitical interest in Arctic security and sovereignty.”

Now, Mr. Speaker, can the premier confirm that the Government of Nunavut would welcome the increase of a Canadian Forces presence in the riding of Amittuq? 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 always continuing to push the importance of seeing investments come to the territory, and in particular to his community. I just want to recognize just this morning Minister Blair just made an announcement that he has selected three forward operating northern hubs across the north, one in Inuvik, one here in Iqaluit, as well as one in Yellowknife. That was a federal announcement that he was just making this morning, and he had indicated there's much more.

Mr. Speaker, on that note I just want to confirm during that announcement that I stress the importance of seeing more investments. In particular search and rescue is one that I had indicated around what more we could do, and as such I will continue to push for these types of nation-building to occur. But it starts with seeing investments in our communities, and our capabilities, as any ordinary Canadians take for granted down south when you don't have the basic infrastructure and supports around asserting our sovereignty.

So I really appreciate the member's question. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Kaernerck.

Mr. Kaernerck: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I'll let my line of questioning to the announcement from the Minister of National Defence, Minister Blair.

Now, I've been reading with interest on reports of the Canadian security service's recent assessments about our security in the Arctic, and it's very worrying.

Mr. Speaker, as the premier will recall, officials from the Canadian security agency service, which were recognized by the premier in our previous sitting in our gallery here, so in saying that Mr. Speaker, is there an assurance in this House that our government will see regular security briefings and update from the appropriate authorities and agencies, such as the Canadian Security Intelligence Service? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First off, I would like to thank both CSIS and the RCMP, who we work very closely with. And yes, to the member's question, we do provide and receive briefings on our requests, but there's much more we could always do. We've indicated to Minister Blair as well as other government agencies that as northern leaders, especially across the north with the northern territories, that we welcome a lot more briefings when it relates to security concerns. So yes we do provide briefings. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Kaerner.

Mr. Kaerner: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I have been trying to be vocal and advocate for my riding of Amittuq when it comes to the importance of a station in Nunavut, including aircraft and others, such as Uqqummiut member had mentioned about the search and rescue, and I have been also vocal on this issue when it comes to the assets in the riding of Amittuq such as Sanirajak and Igloolik, and also, Mr. Speaker, as well as expanding or upgrading or modernization of our airports and the DEW Lines of Sanirajak. As the premier knows, Sanirajak is in a very strategic location.

Now, in saying that Mr. Speaker, can the premier assure me if there can be a recommendation or input from the northerners of how we can have this modernization of our infrastructure in Sanirajak. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank my colleague for his question. The responsibility of defence falls within the federal government, but what I could commit is bringing forward these concerns directly to the minister when I meet with him.

I have stressed the issues of importance of search and rescue, and we heard the heartfelt statements today, just how directly we are all connected and impacted, and it is through that. But as to the member's question, I can continue to press the minister as we continue to move forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1179 – 6(2): Bulk Fuel Resupply and Storage

Mr. Sammurtok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My questions today are for the Minister of Community and Government Services.

As the minister is aware, the Petroleum Products Division of the Department of Community and Government Services recently awarded a contract valued up to \$1.1 billion for the annual bulk fuel supply. That's a B, billion dollars with a capital B, Mr. Speaker.

As the minister is aware, his department's request for proposals indicated that "for the 2024 supply season the fuel supply and transportation came from the Gulf coast. It was loaded on tankers on the Canadian east coast and transported to Nunavut."

Mr. Speaker, I assume that the department is referring to what I am still calling the Gulf of Mexico, which means the oil refineries in the United States. Some of the oil may have originated from Canada.

Can the minister clarify if Canada's recently announced countertariff will be applied to the upcoming fuel supply for Nunavut, and if so, can he indicate what the price impact will be at the pump for Nunavut consumers. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my department's Petroleum Products Division is in the process of acquiring our fuel resupply for the 2025 season, and with the renewed contract, the \$1.115 billion, this is for a five-year contract period. The contract was awarded to AV Nunavut Fuels and Woodward's Oil Limited, and they had the prior supply and delivery agreement.

My department anticipates the ability to purchase fuel without direct impacts, but again, with the countertariffs, we do, we might see that there are indirect impacts, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

Chairman: First supplementary, Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the minister is aware, his department's request for proposals indicate that the length of the new bulk fuel resupply contract will be for five years. Can the minister clarify how this length of time was determined. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I don't have the exact reasoning why, but I would presume that since the previous contract was structured similarly for a five-year period, I believe that that was the purpose for this five-year contract to be in place.

Mr. Speaker, again, our procurement division and our Petroleum Products Division tried to acquire our fuel at a price that's favourable to Nunavummiut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Sammurtok.

Mr. Sammurtok: As the minister is aware, it is important for all Nunavut communities to have adequate bulk fuel storage facilities, which we commonly refer to as tank farms. Many of our communities are experiencing population growth, including Rankin Inlet. Can the minister indicate what upgrades or expansions are planned for the tank farms in Rankin Inlet and Chesterfield Inlet during the upcoming 2025-2026 fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I appreciate his question, Mr. Speaker. The Petroleum Products Division has been trying to address some of the capacity issues that a few of our communities have experienced, and knowing that in Kangiqtinig, Rankin Inlet, they do have to come in for a top-up of their fuel to last for the remainder of the season.

But, Mr. Speaker, right now we are continuing to do business as usual, and we do have a separate project to go forward with in Arviat for when the time comes, but we're going through that to address Arviat's needs into the future, and we will look at other communities following that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1180 – 6(2): Clean Energy Projects in the Kivalliq

Mr. Malliki: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Minister responsible for Qulliq Energy Corporation.

As the minister will recall, I asked a number of questions during our recent Fall Sitting about clean energy project in Kivalliq including project in communities of Naujaat and Coral Harbour. As the minister is aware, the Ikayuut solar and energy storage project in Naujaat is being lead by Kivalliq Alternative Energies. The Ikayuut project in Naujaat

will involve “the construction of 1.0 plus megawatt solar and battery energy storage facility that will supply 30 per cent of the community’s electricity demand with local produced renewable energy.”

Can the minister provide an update today on how Qulliq Energy Corporation engagement with Naujaat project. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you to my colleague for asking questions like that. I would really like to support the project in Naujaat. I believe it’s going to help. Even the title of the project is going to help.

As Qulliq Corporation we are still working with them, with the Kivalliq Alternative Energy Group and there are different things that are going to be utilized, and we’re starting to utilize them.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, in terms of the status of the Ikayuut project and the work with Qulliq Energy Corporation, the connection impact assessment has been completed for the project. My understanding is that the detailed design is in progress. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Kivalliq Alternative Energy Partnership is also working to develop a solar and energy storage project in Coral Harbour that also aims to provide 30 per cent of the community electricity with local producing clean energy.

Can the minister provide an update today on how the Qulliq Energy Corporation is working with Kivalliq Alternative Energy on Coral Harbour project. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In terms of that project in Coral Harbour, compared to the one in Naujaat, it’s a bit further back, in terms of the planning process. We have received an application from Kivalliq Alternative Energy for the Coral Harbour project.

The information I have here indicates that the connection impact assessment has been paused, upon request of the proponent. So that’s the latest status update for that project.

Whenever the proponent is ready or feeling it is time to resume the connection impact assessment process, we'll certainly be there to work with them. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Malliki.

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

On Monday of this week the Government of Nunavut and Nunavut Tunngavik issued a proposed road map to securing Canada's Arctic sovereignty and security. This announcement identified proposed Kivalliq Hydro-Fibre Link project as "one of our four nation-building infrastructure priorities."

I recognize that Naujaat and Coral Harbour are not currently part of the proposed grid. As the minister will recall, he recently signed a memorandum of understanding with Nukkekik corporation. One of the objectives of the memorandum of understanding is to develop new Kivalliq regional energy plan. Can the minister provide an update today on the status of the work. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister responsible for Qulliq Energy Corporation, Mr. Main.

Hon. John Main (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker, (interpretation ends) and I thank the member for the question. It is quite an exciting time when we hear about nation-building projects like Kivalliq hydro-fibre, as well as Iqaluit hydro project being discussed, and the potential for greater focus and movement forward on major projects through increased partnership with Nunavut Tunngavik is very exciting as well as interest from our federal government.

In terms of the regional energy plan, Qulliq Energy Corporation is participating in that work. We're committed to making sure that considerations, when we're looking at a regional energy plan for the Kivalliq, considerations are being given to the need to modernize our diesel generating infrastructure, which would serve as a backup in the scenario where the Kivalliq Hydro-Fibre Link is established or built.

So in addition to working on the regional energy plan, we're also diligently working away towards a power purchase agreement with the proponents of the Kivalliq Hydro-Fibre Link. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1181 – 6(2): Transboundary Issues in the Kivalliq

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

Mr. Speaker, I have had some opportunity to review the premier's return to my recent questions to him concerning the transboundary issues in the Kivalliq. Mr. Speaker the return raises more questions than it answers. I'm going to focus on three issues today.

Mr. Speaker, the document indicates that:

“The Government of Nunavut is currently working to finalize the Ghotelnene K'odtineh Dene and Athabasca Denesuline implementation plans. The Government of Nunavut will have distinct implementation obligations to fulfill, similar to those under the Nunavut Agreement.”

If ratified after the vote, can the premier clearly describe some of the specific obligations that our government will be taking on. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again I want to thank my colleague for his continued follow-up on this very important issue.

As I had noted, we are in the midst of negotiating the final agreement. I would assume that would clearly outline exactly the different roles we will have. As a government we are, especially with the signing of the devolution agreement, our role of ensuring that consultation with Indigenous organizations, in this case with the Dene, the AD and the GKD, if you don't mind if I am using acronyms, is something that we take very seriously. And after this is concluded is when we roll out exactly what we would do. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the return indicates that the Government of Nunavut will “sign the future final Athabasca Denesuliné and Ghotelnene K'odtineh Dene Agreements under Canada. When the time comes for signing, the approval of the [Nunavut] Cabinet will be required.”

Can the premier clearly explain what is meant by signing the agreements “under Canada”, and can he clearly confirm that a future Nunavut cabinet could decide not to sign the agreements. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again I want to thank my colleague for his question. The Government of Canada and the Government of Nunavut are working in partnership to engage the 13 identified Indigenous organizations, two including here.

Our government is looking forward to continuing our positive and the supportive relationship that we have with Indigenous groups at the borders. As the member is I'm sure fully aware, we can't commit future governments in terms of what to do, but this is something as what we're doing now, working hard to ensure at that we implement and trust the process of the current government's processes to review what's before us. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm a bit confused there. I didn't ask if this government will be directing future governments, I asked if a future of Nunavut cabinet could decide not to sign the agreements; that was my question.

But my last question for now is, from reading the return to oral, it states:

“There are no changes to the territorial boundary of Nunavut. The GKT and AD settlement lands are on what is currently federal Crown land, which is subject to the transfer to the GKD and AD.”

My apologies for using acronyms; I'm reading from what was given back to me, Mr. Speaker.

I'm wondering, for clarification, does that mean we've already lost land, even before devolution is a reality? Can the premier provide a map of what is being proposed under this agreements. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. To the member's question, as I have mentioned, I can't commit future governments to decide what to do or what not to do, whether they would support or not support. That's the understanding I have with the phrased question.

To the second part of the question, I'll have to look into exactly that. I know this is something that's being negotiated through the process so I just want to make sure that I check in with the officials and get back to the member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1182 – 6(2): Addressing Homelessness in Igloolik

Ms. Quassa: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Family Services. Mr. Speaker, the issue of homelessness is a growing concern in many of our communities. I congratulate the Kitikmeot Friendship Society for the successful opening of a men's shelter and women and children's shelter in your community of Gjoa Haven, just a couple weeks ago.

It is my understanding that the Department of Family Services provides support to non-profit groups to establish shelters in communities, although it clearly takes the combined efforts of committed individuals, non-profit groups, funding entities, and others to make it a reality.

Can the minister provide a brief overview of how a community can go about getting a shelter to provide a safe place for those who are homeless. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

(interpretation ends) I think we all face that in every community in terms of homelessness in the communities as well as hidden homelessness that we hear about, and I'm very happy for Gjoa Haven. Mr. Akeegok has advocated for a homeless shelter for many years and it's great to see that come through.

In terms of what kind of supports the department provides, we do work with municipal organizations like the hamlets or non-profit organizations. Our office does provide pretty well an open book on what kind of supports need to be put in place. It also really depends on what the community needs are.

We do provide financial supports as well as operate homeless shelters or any kind of shelter in the community, but also there are supports in place to start building a building or additional building structures, if it's a non-profit organization, or if hamlets do have a building that they could build up to start using it as a shelter. There are different ways to get financial supports from the department. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Ms. Quassa.

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank you for clarifying this program (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, it is very difficult for those who have no place to call home, especially during these darkest and coldest months. A number of homeless

individuals in Igloolik go to the local radio station to be in a warm place for the night. This is not sustainable.

The Department of Family Services has initiated a homelessness outreach program with the homelessness outreach workers who can provide advocacy, referrals, and once support to homeless clients.

Can the minister clarify whether these workers provide support to Igloolimmiut, and if not, can she tell us how homeless individuals in my community can access this program. (interpretation) 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 on this issue. (interpretation ends) Homeless outreach workers are based in a number of communities, and they do provide supports for all the communities throughout Nunavut. For example, they could provide short-term accommodation until they have to go. If they prefer moving to a different shelter, they could be accommodated, and also some items that they could use if they need supports.

But also I want to include the Ikur'raq cabins that I just stated in the House recently. That support could also be done through the hunters organizations. The hamlets could apply to get Ikur'raq cabins, to help support homelessness in the is communities, as that is what the program is for. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Ms. Quassa.

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker and I thank the minister.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, in September 2020 the Minister of Family Services at the time tabled the results of a hidden homelessness survey, focussing on the communities of Pond Inlet, Clyde River, Arviat, and Gjoa Haven. The results were very informative and likely supported the establishment of new shelters.

Will the minister commit to conducting another homelessness survey, and this time include the community of Igloolik? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I think what you are stating with the survey that was done, that was indeed very helpful. When we're talking about Pond Inlet, I am happy to say that they did also recently open a shelter for the community.

This will take a lot of time and money, if we do another survey throughout Nunavut. I can't promise anything for Igloolik, but we will certainly continue providing supports where needed in terms of financial supports to hamlets, non-profit organizations, hunters and trappers organizations who provide supports, especially for homeless shelters in the territory. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Oral Question 1183 – 6(2): Recreation Infrastructure

Mr. Anavilok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (no interpretation)

(interpretation ends) My one question today is for the Minister of Community and Government Services. As I noted in my member statement the hamlet of Kugluktuk has been working to improve recreation in a community by acquiring a new ice rink chiller. The minister's department has a number of programs to provide funding to municipalities. During last fall's sitting in the Legislative Assembly, the House approved \$5 million for a new program entitled "Planning and Design Funding for Local Government Priorities."

Can the minister confirm which of his department's programs provide funding to municipalities for capital improvements to arenas, rinks, and other recreation infrastructure. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, my departments, we have a suite of programs directed for municipalities. Some are block funding. Some application-based, proposal-based. However, we have been following the resolution from the Nunavut Association of Municipalities. My department has met and discussed structuring funding allocations to municipalities, and this is based on consensus received from senior and chief administrative officers which now municipalities will, as well as mayors were involved in this.

They will be receiving funding directly allocated under the Canada Community Building Fund program. So that's directed to municipal assets that they so wish to see. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This morning I called my hamlet office for the progress, and I got some good news on the ice rink chiller.

I just want to thank the CGS department for their support to improve livelihood of young people in the communities of Nunavut. I also want to thank the staff members that were involved in the process of achieving an ice chiller, and that you're helping to improve also the young people of Kugluktuk. Thank you for your efforts. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

Oral Question 1184 – 6(2): Poverty Reduction

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct my question today to the Minister of Family Services as well.

Mr. Speaker, the minister recently tabled the 2023-2024 Report on Poverty Reduction and on page 7, it mentions concerns about elders' access to country food and it states where research has stated that the access to country food for elders increases when funding is provided for full-time hunter positions, young hunters mentorship programs, hunters and trappers associations, and community hunts.

Mr. Speaker, last May the minister made a statement on the House on this topic, where she stated "the time has come to turn these words into actions."

Mr. Speaker can the minister update the House now on these initiatives. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and thank you for your question on this issue.

(interpretation ends) From the Poverty Reduction Roundtable, this was another discussion that was made in October and there have been a lot of activities in terms of what kind of supports we could provide. There has been a number of initiatives that have come through, and one of them is taking young people out hunting, as we have contracted an outfitter in the city here that we're able to go out hunting with the youth and provide country food to some elders. Unfortunately we have not expanded further out.

We have worked with some organizations in the territory that were willing to do the same kind of program, but it also varies how they want to promote or do their service a bit differently.

We also work for Economic Development and Transportation to provide more funding with the hunters and trappers organizations to ensure some elders do get some food, as that has been mentioned a number of times. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: First supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I look forward to further rolling out of some of those initiatives.

Mr. Speaker, also in the 2023-2024 Report on Poverty Reduction on page 5, Nunavut guaranteed basic income is described but no plan is mentioned. In the 2020-2021 procurement activity report, a feasibility study guaranteed basic income contract was listed at a cost of nearly \$900,000, and completed in August 2023. How is this report currently being used by the department? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Just to go back to the last question, I think also I forgot to mention there is a program that's starting in Qikiqtarjuaq which will also, eh, another paid hunter program is being done.

There are a number of things that the department is doing, and there's a lot of things we have to take into consideration and really, when we're talking about your question now, it's going to have to really come to not so much this year, but the future plans of what initiatives we can continue, because it's going to take more work than we had thought. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Second and final supplementary, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I do acknowledge that there's a lot of work, but there's also a lot of money spent on studying basic income in Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, on page 66 of that report that was completed in August 2023, *Basic Income In Nunavut*, it states that:

“At the outset of this project this final report was meant to consist of final recommendations on a basic income program to implement our pilot. At the time of writing the project team is not in a position to make final recommendations in the way we

expected. Instead we hope this report serves as a resource for Department of Family Services to draw on as it moves forward with end up consultations to work with a comprehensive legislative review on income assistance.”

Mr. Speaker, it speaks to soliciting additional funds for new basic income program. I know the minister recently mentioned that there is potential talk of coming become to the house, on looking at further funds, but I think, as the minister described, there’s a lack of clarity on a path forward and that comes from a lack of final recommendations.

I guess my question to the minister would be, taking this report, is the department looking at making some specific recommendations on how to move forward with a guaranteed basic income in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker and thank you for that question. (interpretation ends) Yes, we will certainly continue advocating and providing more supports, but also, when we’re talking about the guaranteed basic income, in order to do that kind of consultation, it’s going to take a lot of money and time. In all honesty it’s about \$180 million when we’re talking about trying to do the full scale of consultation or review on this program itself. But like we’ve mentioned in the House, there’s different initiatives that the department is trying to do and will continue to do.

But like I said, it’s going to take the next government to make full commitment in terms of what could be done.

I think our focus has been a lot in the last, this government, is the OAG report, and there are a lot of things that we haven’t been able to complete and that we hoped on focussing on as well. (interpretation) 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 Committee on Bills and Other Matters.

Item 14, Tabling of Documents. Hon. Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasie.

Item 14: Tabling of Documents

Tabled Document 377 – 6(2): Government of Nunavut’s 2022-2023 Contract Procurement on Leasing Activity Reports

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm pleased to table the Government of Nunavut's 2022-2023 Contract Procurement and Leasing Activity Reports. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: 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 of Committee of the Whole and Other Matters, Bill 43, 50, 64, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71 and 72, with Mr. Savikataaq in the Chair.

And in accordance with the authority provided to me by Motion 44 – 6(2), the committee will stay in session until it reports itself out. Before we proceed we'll take a lunch break and come back at 1:30. Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 11:54 and Committee resumed at 13:30*

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

Chairman (Mr. Joe Savikataaq): Good afternoon. I would like to call this Committee of the Whole in order. In Committee of the Whole we have the following items to deal with: Bill 43, 50, 64, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, and 72. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We wish to continue the review of Bill 70, *Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2025-2026*, and supporting documents with the Nunavut Housing Corporation and if the time permits, with Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, and Family Services. Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Are we in agreement that we first deal with main estimates of the Nunavut Housing Corporation?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Welcome, Minister Kusugak. Do you have any officials that you would like to appear with you? Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and colleagues. I do. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Does the committee agree to have the minister's officials appear before the committee?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses before the witness table.

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

Chairman: *Mat'na.* For the record, Minister Kusugak, can you please introduce your officials for the committee. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My witnesses are no strangers to this House. To my right is Eiryn Devereaux, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Nunavut Housing Corporation and to my right is Sol Vardy, Finance and Corporate Services, Nunavut Housing Corporation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Both the minister and standing committee have done their opening comments. Do any members have general comments before we proceed to the detailed questions? I hear none. Nunavut Housing Corporation is on page M-IV-3, and we're on Nunavut Housing Corporation. It's just one page item. Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. First of all I would like to thank the minister again and acknowledge him for his visit to the community of Taloyoak on February 4, and his officer Mr. Devereaux. Thank you. Just recently there was e-mail correspondence, so I would like to thank Mr. Devereaux and our manager for Taloyoak Housing.

I'll move on to, I just have a question here. How many of the Nunavut Housing Corporation's directorate positions are currently vacant? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you Mr. Chairman. The positions that are vacant we have a total of five, one in executive, two in senior management, and two in middle management roles. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Speaker: *Mat'na.* Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. October 2016 the Minister responsible for the Nunavut Housing Corporation tabled the Blueprint For Action on Housing Implementation Plan for the Government of Nunavut Long Term Comprehensive Housing and Homelessness Strategy. The question is, Mr. Chairman, to what extent has this strategy been replaced by Nunavut 3000 strategy? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, a lot of that work has been ongoing from 2016. Any of that work has been completed and also rolled to work within the Nunavut 3000 plan and implementation of it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I'll move on to another question. I'll leave that for my colleagues, if they have other questions. On April 13, 2022, the federal Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs announced that the 2022 federal budget will invest 300 million to co-develop and launch an urban rural and northern Indigenous housing strategy. The question is, Mr. Chairman, to what extent has the Nunavut Housing Corporation been involved in its development. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, like anything else once the federal government announces something, it takes a while for the ripple effect to reach us. The urban rural and northern announcement, we're still waiting for finalization on that topic with the federal government. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll leave that again for my colleagues, if they have follow-up questions, and I'll move on, Mr. Chairman.

In May 2022 Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated released its "Nunavut Inuit Housing Action Plan." The plan indicated that a new Inuit housing entity will ensure funding is used in the best way to improve housing for Inuit. Community members, municipalities, the Government of Nunavut and the Government of Canada are important partners.

The question is, Mr. Chairman, to what extent is the new Inuit housing entity undertaking work that has previously been under the responsibility of the Nunavut Housing Corporation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's quite simple. There's no work being done with us on that from that NTI. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, I'll leave the follow-up questions for my colleagues on this. And this will be my last one, Mr. Chairman.

The Nunavut Housing Corporation's draft 2025-2026 business plan indicates that the 2024 federal budget introduced several new programs and provided additional funding to existing programs to support the building of affordable housing across Canada. Direct funding to housing in Nunavut has yet to be determined.

The question is, Mr. Chairman, as of today, what is the status of work to determine the amount? That's my last one, Mr. Chairman and I'll have some more questions when we move on to the next page. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Just to remind members there's only one page. There's only one page here. It's a corporation. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, it's nice to see a young new finance minister in our House. It's so healthy to see that we can do that in our Assembly, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, on that, the biggest one we're waiting on in terms of funding, Mr. Chairman, is the UN funding of 25 million. We're waiting to see what happens with that, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for the clarification. I'll move on to the local housing organizations.

The Nunavut Housing Corporation's 2023-2026 business plan indicated that it had engaged a consulting firm to produce a report on local housing organization governance models, to see how the public housing allocation process and organizational structure can be improved. Mr. Chairman, the question is when will the report from this work be ready to be tabled in the Legislative Assembly. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I could just take one step back. When I talk the UN funding, it's a \$4 billion program across the country. Of that, every year we've been getting about \$25 million on that. I just wanted to clarify that.

In terms of the management program and review and tabling, Mr. Chairman, that work continues. It's one that we are communicating with the different housing associations and get their feedback.

There will be nothing to table during the life of this Assembly, but I'm hopeful that the new government will take a look at that and make decisions at that time. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Minister, for your response. I was looking forward for the tabling of the work that's being done as of now, but I'll be following up in the next Legislative Assembly for the Seventh and it will be interesting to me. I'll move on, Mr. Chairman.

The Nunavut Housing Corporation's Draft 2025-2026 Business Plan indicates that in 2023-2024 and 2024-2025 the corporation undertook a full review of the current local governance and delivery model to determine whether improvements can be made. This work included consultation sessions with key stakeholders. The business plan also indicates that will an implementation plan is anticipated to be developed by March 31, 2025.

The question is, Mr. Chairman, what specific changes to local housing organizational governance and organizational structures are being actively considered. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We were hopeful in having it ready by March 2025, but there's been a push back on that for later this summer, Mr. Chairman, on that topic. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Just before I go back to Mr. Quqqiaq, just to clarify, I made a slight mistake here. There is only one votable page, but we do have sections here so we will go by sections so just for clarity we'll go to roman numeral IV-3, which is headquarters, and it's not votable but we will stick to our schedule. Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Okay, thank you, Mr. Chairman. This will be my last one, and this one interests me greatly.

Local housing associations are required under the territorial *Societies Act* to submit annual financial statements and other items to the registrar of societies. The question is, Mr. Chairman, this will be my last one: As of today, which of Nunavut's local housing associations are currently not in good standing and what specific efforts are being made to address the situations? Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That will be my last one.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, there are two communities that are not in good standing at this time, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* We're doing Nunavut Housing Corporation, under headquarters. Next person on my list, Ms. Nutarak.

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

(interpretation ends) The Nunavut Housing Corporation's draft 2025-2026 main estimates indicates that the number of positions located in corporation's Arviat hours is increasing from 10.0 in 2024-2025 fiscal year to 14.0 in the 2024-2025 fiscal year. What new positions are being created and why are they required? *Qujannamiik*, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There is the two new program office for home ownership in Arviat, a senior finance officer position, and a junior project manager position. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na* (interpretation ends) Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the minister. Have you considered for the communities a coordinator or a manager for homeowners? Because homeowners have a hard time finding help and the local housing authority workers are always too busy. Have you considered this? Thank you.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we have. It's titled junior program officer that will be handling homeowners issues. Whenever they need help, that person will be coordinating it. We always say that homeowners need extra help and that we need to strengthen the support that we have for homeowners. So this junior homeowner person will be doing that with the local homeowners. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na* Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, minister. That is very good to hear. And also someone that would be in the community, like for example in Pond Inlet, to have a position in Pond Inlet that can coordinate projects to make sure that

projects are completed properly and make sure all the documents that need to be documented have been documented. And I believe there needs to be a position in the community, because some projects are not completed and then they are just left behind. And there are other projects that have been approved, like for renovations of houses. They don't proceed for like two years, sometimes. Or there could be training done to the local housing authority maintainers to do that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na*. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm glad you asked that question, because I have heard that since I've become minister, that many projects that have been approved by the housing corporation, such as renewing floors and windows, the project gets approved but then they don't have anybody in the community to do the work. We have heard that. We've agreed that there needs to be a position like that in the communities, because they have to look for contractors in the communities and sometimes there's no contractor in the community. So for homes that need to be renovated, we're working on that to make it available, and once that starts, there can be inspectors following them to make sure that projects that were approved were completed and also completed properly. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na* Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak: Thank you Mr. Chairman and thank you to the minister. That's really good to hear. I would like to move on to something else now.

Housing authorities. How shall I say this; parts, like for homeowners. There's no place for them to get parts. But it has become impossible now. They used to have a place where they can buy housing material, and we have to always order those from out of town. We used to be able to buy them from the local housing authority, but now they just order enough for their own maintenance work. Can this be considered by the Nunavut Housing Corporation so that homeowners can get more support. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na*. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That has been utilized more than once. For example, people trying to get insurance for their homes have been notified more than one time that their fuel tank is leaking or may start leaking, and that they should install a new tank, fuel tank, and that community doesn't have any tanks for sale and. And that has happened more than once. Housing corporation has worked with the local housing authority, and if they have an unused fuel tank they have been able to give that to homeowners, and once the sea lift ship arrives they will replace that.

Whenever it's possible, whenever anything like that is not available in the communities, the housing authorities in the communities have said that they have been trying to help

homeowners to get what they need. If they're looking for something like a toilet and if housing authority has toilets, then they can provide them. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* The next person on my list, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll start off with just when we look at the operations and maintenance on a per-unit cost, the costs have been continuing to increase. I remember it used to be like \$22,000 a year, then I think it was nearly \$32,000 a year last year. What's the average cost for operations and maintenance for a unit right now? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* (interpretation) Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Yes, it's a steady bump. It's closer to \$30,000 per year now, in terms of maintaining the units, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman on page 3 of the Chairman's opening comments it speaks to an increased plan for public and staff housing budget of just a hair over \$16 million this year, and it speaks to utility rates, fuel, water, including a specific mention of the water prices here in Iqaluit.

Out of that \$16 million, how much of that, and sorry and it does include in addition we've added additional new public housing units that impact this budget. How much of that budget is for new public housing units? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. A ballpark figure, Mr. Chairman, would be about half of that cost, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Sorry, the minister was too quick with his response. I couldn't get my calculator out, but I'll do that in a moment. I'll come back to it.

I would like to ask a question on the human resources function within the corporation. I know last year there were some human resource positions that were created at the corporation to take over their own hiring. I guess my first question is how many job actions were undertaken in the current fiscal year since those positions were implemented. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Bear with me as we get that number or as close to that number as possible. Just bear with me, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your patience, Mr. Chairman. Staff activities commenced since April 2024, number of competition processes initiated was 48 where 23 were hired, and competitions closed unsuccessful were eight. Number of activity staff process currently under way is 15, and 7 of them are on hold due to housing. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the minister drawing that answer out a little bit because it gave me a time to get my calculator out from the last response.

I would like to go back to when we look at approximately \$8 million in increase for operations and maintenance, and it does say public housing and staff housing, so I'm going to assume that there's both included in there, by rough calculations it's a little over 260 units increase for operations and maintenance out of this budget.

I know I'm treading thin ice here, Mr. Chairman, but when I look at increasing the O&M, operations and maintenance costs for over 260 units, how many units came on line last year? Or this current year? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, yeah, there are approximately 220 extra units. The ballpark was closer to about \$7 million of that. If I could have Mr. Devereaux respond to that question, through you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Devereaux.

Mr. Devereaux: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thank the member for the question. Out of the approximately 15, 6 million increase on the utility side and the cost of public housing units, you're correct that a portion of that is related to our staff housing portfolio and some of the increases on utilities.

The amount that's associated to public housing itself in terms of new units added into the portfolio is around, like the minister said, about 220 plus or minus new units. That would be reflective of the units that we anticipate coming on line in the upcoming 2025-2026 fiscal year. So we have a variety of units. I think members are aware in communities such as Baker Lake; there's 20 units in Arviat and Rankin. So it's those units coming on line in

the upcoming fiscal year and the operating costs associated with them. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank Mr. Devereaux and the minister for the response. When we look at staff housing, there was also a calculation that was always done, which would give an average amount of the subsidy for staff housing. Obviously staff pay rent, but they don't pay the full unit cost. I know that amount used to be around \$14,000 a year. Can the minister indicate how steady that number has been as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It varies so much, depending on the different leases and leasing agreement, but it's around that, 14 to 15. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, and the minister brought up the point of the different type of lease agreements with units that the corporation is leasing on behalf of for staff housing and I do know that some, as we have talked in the past, some have utilities included; some have garbage and water included; some don't. I know there's a variety of different lease agreements that have different types of rent recovery because some obviously have higher expenses than others.

Is there a model that the Nunavut Housing Corporation tries to have, some type of stability in their lease agreements? Or is it up to whoever it is they are leasing from to what parameters they set in their lease contract? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Mr. Chairman, most of these are agreements between the owner, landowner developer, so there is no set parameters in stone but we all try to achieve the same output, I guess, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. From what I recall, staff housing rent amounts are based on the size of the unit, how many square feet or square metres; I can't remember what the calculation is.

When you're looking at different types of leasing, how are those factors of one lease having all utilities and water and everything included with it versus a lease where all that has to be paid by the tenant? Are there different calculations when you calculate the rent charged to the staff member? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, there is. It gets pretty complicated, Mr. Chairman, as one can appreciate, depending on the square footage, the location, the community, and so on. Maybe I could have Mr. Devereaux elaborate a bit more detail around those parameters, if I can, Mr. Chairman, through you.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Devereaux.

Mr. Devereaux: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the member for the question. In terms of staff housing, it's not a rent-geared-to-income type subsidy, it's just as the member stated, it's a straightforward cost per square foot. That's how we derive the rent that GN employees pay.

In behind that we have in the neighbourhood of approximately 1,700 1,800 GN staff housing units. About a third of them are owned and two-thirds are leased, and those leases vary, as the member said, in terms of the compensation of those leases.

But regardless of whether it's an owned unit or a leased unit, that is a gross rent or a net rent and whatever utilities are included or not included in the base rent amounts, the amount that the employee pays is a fixed rent. Obviously it's a subsidized rent, and it doesn't matter whether it's a GN-owned building or a leased building, or what type of lease it is. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister and Mr. Devereaux for that response. I'm going to switch gears a little bit and I'm going to go into in the business plan.

The 2025-2026 indicates one of its priorities has been to monitor the implementation of the updated collection policy, and to provide ongoing support to local housing organizational staff.

The current collection policy was most recently updated just approximately a year ago, and it expires in March 2028. What are the most significant changes that have been made to the collection policy? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You know, the I think the biggest change in that has been the mandatory reduction or deduction of GN employees that are in public housing units, to have that deductions mandatory. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That sounds like a big plane flying over us, or maybe a small fast one that we saw this morning.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister for that response. One of the things that we've seen over the years is the collection amount. It was raised earlier, but the amount keeps increasing and increasing. The minister mentioned that Government of Nunavut staff now can have their rent deducted directly from their paycheque.

One of the concerns that has been raised in the past is income support residents in subsidized housing falling behind in their rent, and it makes it very difficult for people to catch up when you're on income support. You don't have a lot of extra money at the end of the month, probably none.

And I know it has been talked about in the past, but is part of that discussion also geared towards income support residents? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Mr. Chairman, thank you. That's always so difficult, you know, when we expect all tenants to be paying something. Most of that is paid through right directly from Family Services, and there are people who are going through debt collection and all that, ask of them is make some kind of commitment, if it's five, ten or \$20 a month, less than a dollar a day towards paying down some of that debt. So there's that work that continues. It's a very big struggle to try to do that. And we continue to strive to at least collect some kind of payment from those, so that it doesn't just keep going up. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know it's a very sensitive topic, but at the end of the day when we're talking over \$50 million in receivables, that's a lot of housing units that aren't being built or not able to be built. That's a lot of expected revenue.

On June 1, 2020 Nunavut Housing Corporation issued a request for proposals to undertake a review of the public housing rent scale, and the report from the review was tabled here in the Assembly in September 2021.

One of the recommendations in the report was that the Nunavut Housing Corporation should consider moving to a unit-based rent assessment system. To what extent does the Nunavut Housing Corporation agree with this recommendation, and are they looking at implementing it? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, that recommendation in particular Mr. Chairman, the corporation has and is taking a look at it, but there has been no movement towards it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I thank the minister for that response. I agree with him.

When I look at the 2025-2026 business plan that's in front of us right now, one of the priorities of this upcoming fiscal year is to pursue a new software system for tenant management rent scale, to replace the current aging systems that lack suitability and flexibility. How will the new system benefit local housing organizations and public housing tenants? And I'm going to add, due to recent global situations, will U.S.-based companies be excluded from any tender opportunities? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we're currently working on signing off on a new system, a contract on the new system. And yes, we will go Canada. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* We're on Nunavut Housing Corporation headquarters. Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have some questions concerning the homeowners. For the homeowners, the approved-on areas that have not gone ahead. We're almost at the end of the fiscal year and we're starting a new fiscal year, and those buildings that have not been constructed and not have gone ahead, with no funds available what actions are taken in those cases? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Those approved funds for renovations, those are still for those projects. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So it's like this, a homeowner who has been approved for renovation, if they have not arrived by sea lift whether it be windows, flooring or a fuel tank, an item that has not arrived, although funding is approved, (interpretation ends) do they carry them to the new fiscal year to complete the approved application for renovation or repair? *Qujannamiik.*

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Excuse me Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) Yes, and sometimes when they have not arrived in the sea lift, the next following year, those are carried through. So the funds are still earmarked for the renovations. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): So an approved application, you don't need to apply again, you just wait for your shipment once you have been approved. They are just carried through. I assume then they're in your records and no changes are made? That's my question.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Yes, Mr. Chairman. You don't need to reapply, once they have been approved and until the shipment is made. You may not do the job at that time, but it's not necessary to reapply. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee: Thank you, Chair. And I have another concerning matter that relates to M&I projects. With M&I projects, as well, the housing maintenance looks after the M&I projects, on top of the daily repairing, replacing of the tenants' units.

My question is with the M&I projects that carries on in each community, what happened to the contractors that used to come in back then and now today it's being handled by the local maintenance, when they are so far behind with their repairing and replacing damages with the tenants' units? *Qujannamiik,* Chair.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We deal with C, all of the above. When I contract there are contracts that come in to replace and restore windows and doors, and maybe roof repairs and those M&I contracts. There are cases where a contractor is found and they will do that project. Sometimes it is the local housing association that gets the contract to do that work. So we have combinations and differences of those. Sometimes a contract such as that could be put out and there is no interest to do the work, and then the local housing association would do it. So we have examples of all of the above across our territory. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) My next question is, again for M&I projects, how many program officers, project officers are filled within the housing corporation's headquarters? *Qujannamiik.*

Chairman: *Mat'na.* And if I could just, a clarification for the interpreters' sake, M&I, I believe it's modernization and improvements, but if the minister can confirm that and then answer the question. Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you. I apologize to the interpreters. Yes, it is. Sorry about that.

In terms of the number of project managers and all those, I don't have that. We don't have that information before us. But I'll be more than happy to share it with the House before this session is over. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also apologize for not saying the words. Home improvement programs is what I was referring to, modernization and improvement in homes that are leased.

So this is quite late. I've asked you to come and visit our constituents. Right now the local housing authority has a lot of work to do. Previously we had contractors coming in or housing corporation would have someone come in to do the work. And this is something that you really want to take back. And I just mentioned recently on this issue; perhaps you answered it or I missed your response. How many or are the numbers sufficient in project coordinators? With respect to housing corporation that visit the communities, whether it's in the Baffin region, Kitikmeot and Keewatin, so these projects coordinators, are all of them filled or do we have quite a number of vacancies in the positions that are responsible to do community visits?

Chairman: *Mat'na* Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you. In the south and north of Baffin, Kitikmeot and Kivallummiut and at the headquarters in total, I believe there's between 12 and 16, give or take or there might be one or two that are vacant. But it seems to be adequate. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): And possibly my last question. With the parts that are ordered, for example a homeowner might want to buy some parts so that they can modernize their house, but usually what happens is that some parts are ordered and we have a lot of parts or supplies in our communities, because they're not keeping up with the construction of the houses, and the supplies are all just stacked up. That's just a comment. But I think we have to look into keeping up with the construction in order for the supplies not to get wasted. It's just a comment, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Just a comment. Following my list of names, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Good afternoon. I would like to pick up where I left off during question period, the GN condo program, as it didn't go through the capital process and therefore did not receive capital funds. I would like to ask how much O&M funding was utilized to purchase these units. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We didn't come prepared to answer that question. We don't have that information before us, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. Remaining on that same topic, since the units were purchased in 2017, how much O&M funding was used to maintain these units and how much O&M has been used for the upkeep of these units? More importantly, how much O&M is being budgeted for the upkeep of the units for 2025-2026 fiscal year? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could I get a clarification. Is that for the condo 17 units specifically? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Lightstone, if you can clarify for the minister. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. Thank you for the opportunity to elaborate a bit further. I think more detail, the better. As a number of the plateau condo units have been unsold it would be good to know how much O&M is being used for the upkeep of those units, whether it be the heating or electrical or city bills or the condo fees. But also, more importantly, I would also like to know how much is being budgeted for the Road to Nowhere units as well. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't know if we have that particular fine detail in terms of the two condo units, as my colleague is asking if we have that information before us. But I don't mind if my president can make an attempt to answer what he can out of that, through you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Devereaux.

Mr. Devereaux: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and I thank the member for the question. Yes, we can provide a more comprehensive undertaking on the costs of operating the condo units in both CC16 and CC17 over a period of years. But they really are reflective of what the condo fees are, and those condo fees vary by year, obviously, as operating costs change, in the neighbourhood of \$1,000 to \$1,200 a month per unit.

For any units that we didn't sell effectively NHC was an owner, we would be paying condo fees to that condo corporation. So that's the information that we can provide, because that's really what was undertaken here, was a separate legal entity had operating costs and those operating costs were reflective of the condo fees each year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Devereaux. I would like to focus in on the condo corporation in the Road to Nowhere area. I was wondering if the minister would be able to walk us through the entire process of where we are today, that brought us to where we are today from the 2019 second round of applicants to the date that potential buyers moved in and then the decision to rip up the contractual purchase and sale agreements for those units. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* I'll ask the minister to explain. I'm not sure about the condo unit corporation, but. I'm a bit confused myself. I'll turn it over to Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Yes, Mr. Chairman, we will try.

Let me begin, Mr. Chairman, by saying that when I became the minister of the housing corporation and Mr. Devereaux became the president, we walked into a mess when it many came to the condo unit. I believe it could have been handled a lot better right from the get-go, and we've been trying to clean it up ever since and be respectful of everybody that participated in that from before our time.

It hasn't been an easy one, Mr. Chairman. Things were done before we were there and before we came on, and we've been trying to work with all respect to all parties that were included in dealing with the condo units, right from the get-go.

We know the frustration that the people that wanted to partake in the condo unit program. We have respect for them and their wish to take advantage of what we thought was a great program. I believe if it was handled differently from the start we wouldn't be at the same finish like as we are today.

In saying that, if I could have Mr. Devereaux respond in a little more detail, in terms of where we are today. I don't know if we want to delve into the past, but I think it's important to find out where we are today and how we got here. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Devereaux.

Mr. Devereaux: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for the question. To supplement the minister, the Road to Nowhere condo units, 36 units, none of those units were ever sold, and the Nunavut Housing Corporation had advertised a number of rounds of sales. They did an initial round one of sales, which lead to approximately 13 units being sold in the condo corporation at the plateau.

Then they did a second round of sales a number of years later, and based upon the interest and the demand, they did have a number of people, approximately a dozen, give or take, that expressed in buying additional units. That process was under way before the start of this Sixth Assembly. None of those proposed purchases were concluded, and when we got involved, as the minister said, to try to help move the condo program along, there wasn't huge demand for purchases. So we did a round 3 of sales.

But the decision I think in the last approximately the last year or so to look at the 36 units at the Road to Nowhere and to re-profile them into GN staff housing, that decision was predominantly based upon the growing need for staff housing in Iqaluit, and some of that was predicated by us having to demolish approximately 21 units due to structural concerns. So it was a balance of that and at the same time we didn't have the demand for those advertised rounds of sales for all of the condo units that were unsold.

So we had 36 units in Road to Nowhere and we had another 11 units on the plateau, so the decision was made to re-classify the Road to Nowhere to Government of Nunavut staff housing.

We did have I think it was approximately two to three individuals who were originally interested in purchasing the Road to Nowhere condos, that we extended the offer to them to purchase a condo unit at the plateau at that same low market price. We were advertising these condos for \$250,000, and the reality is the market prices are almost double that. So we extended that offer to those individuals, and provided support for any of them that wanted to purchase units at the plateau.

That's the best I can describe of the current situation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. So the minister had indicated the frustration that a lot of these applicants had gone through, and I think it is somewhat of an understatement. It's at the point that it's aggravation, it's not just frustration. A multiple-year process from application to that final purchase agreement, that was signed and then the decision to just turn around and rip up that sales agreement, the purchase agreement, and offer them a small unit which is far too small for the family's size, as those units that were sold were the larger three-bedroom units.

Again, as this budget of these condos and the upkeep does pertain to the main estimates that we have before us, can you walk us through the entire decision process, that decision to convert them all, all of the Road to Nowhere units to staff housing and then turn around and slap these GN employees by saying okay, you can have the smaller units if you'd like. What other options were considered? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the corporation I believe went to, I believe it was two, maybe two or three, not 16 people, that were interested in buying one of the units or a unit from the Road to Nowhere. The corporation did offer to help them to see if there's anything the corporation can do to help them, if they are interested in the home ownership program or downpayment assistance program, or any other program that the corporation has within its ability has been extended to those that were affected, to see if there's anything we can do to help them achieve home ownership, Mr. Chairman. That extension has been given to those individuals that we've affected that way. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again, that second round of applicants, all those that began the process of expressing interest in purchasing those Road to Nowhere units eventually did diminish, due to the years of going through the application process. Kudos to those three families that did finally make it to the end and were ready to purchase. But again, I can't help but feel empathy for those individuals, the stress that they went through, and the cost that they went through and the amount of grey hairs that they must have gained through this process.

So again, for the benefit of the public and the individuals that were impacted by this decision, can you please tell us what other decisions were considered leading up to this decision of tearing up the contracts and dissolving the corporation? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: I don't know what Mr. Lightstone wants me to say, other than we are very sorry that it didn't work out. That's the down side of things that happen like this. The corporation and the senior staff feel terrible for that. We do feel really bad that that's the way it went, but that's the way that it went, Mr. Chairman, and the corporation has reached out to the individuals to see what the corporation could do to help them with the situation that is before them.

We will continue to. The corporation's door is open to speak with them, and see if there's anything more that the corporation could do to help them gain home ownership.

This is a very sad situation, Mr. Chairman, and there's nobody in this room that's happy about what happened, but it did happen. I'll leave it at that, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. So after the fact that the Nunavut Housing Corporation made the decision to dissolve the corporation and tear up the purchase agreements, what options for assistance were made to these affected GN employees? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe I responded to that. There have been meetings to see what other programs we could help the individuals with, in terms of home ownership. But maybe I could have Mr. Devereaux elaborate a bit more on that, thank you, Mr. Chairman, through you.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Devereaux.

Mr. Devereaux: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the member for the question. A few follow-ups that occurred in that situation being referenced here is first and foremost was to extend the offer to still buy a very affordable home ownership unit, being the 11 that were unsold at the plateau, but certainly realized I think in the case of one, at least, of the individuals impacted, that the condo units for sale that we offered to them were smaller and weren't of interest. And so I understand that.

We did make contact and have a discussion around what other potential options may happen in the future with additional home ownership units that may become available or even if we're looking at bringing some home ownership units into the community, that we wanted to still extend an offer to potentially help the individuals get a unit that was sized more suitably for them. And that's really where it's at. Nothing has progressed beyond the offer that if we can find another home ownership unit, that we would be happy to try to support them into home ownership. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. I'm getting a little frustrated myself, and I just want to ask one last question before I ask that you come back to me before we conclude this page. When the decision was made to tear up the purchase agreements, what type of legal liability does that place NHC, what type of position does it place NHC in with regards to potential legal litigation? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe our legal counsel was involved throughout this process, but I'll let Mr. Devereaux elaborate on that, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Devereaux.

Mr. Devereaux: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thanks for the follow-up. Certainly we did consult with our legal counsel in terms of the existing purchase and sale agreement and the course that we were pursuing to look to dissolve, and had feedback from legal that this is an option that could be pursued. I can't speak to the member's question around what our legal exposure is, other than to say we certainly worked alongside legal throughout the decision-making process.

But again, I'll stress that the reason to move in a different direction was based upon predominantly the need for additional staff housing in Iqaluit, and looking at our portfolio. At the time we just didn't have the demand for the number of unsold condo units, and then that drove the decision to reprofile those particular units while still having 11 units available for sale, in which we offered those people that were impacted by the

Road to Nowhere. But we did seek legal counsel throughout that process. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Next person on the list, Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm going to pick up where Mr. Lightstone left off. How did the decision come about to cancel or to close condo 17 program? I'll start there. How did that decision come about? I know Mr. Devereaux and the minister have both said due to the demand of staff housing, but these are staff looking to purchase. So it wouldn't really have an unbalanced impact. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* As we're on the same topic here, I'll go straight to Mr. Devereaux.

Mr. Devereaux: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the member for the question. The decision, as we've indicated, was predominantly based upon the need to increase the GN housing portfolio, as we had a number of units, we had just demolished 21 units in Iqaluit. So that was the predominant reason for the decision.

But the 36 units Road to Nowhere, it wasn't, I understand the member's comment about it's kind of a wash, but the vast majority of those units weren't occupied by GN staff. A number of them were vacant land we did eventually move some potential purchasers in, but out of the 36 there wasn't 36 GN staff housing tenants in the Road to Nowhere. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In an earlier response the minister stated that they maintain ownership some of condo units and pay the condo fees to the appropriate condo board or entity, how it's structured. Why wasn't that practice taken into the Road to Nowhere condos? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Devereaux.

Mr. Devereaux: Thank you, Mr. Chair. If I could get the member to maybe clarify the question a bit more. Thank you.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Hickes, please clarify your question. Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: In an earlier response the minister said I think the example was \$1,200 a month in condo fees, where if they weren't occupied or by an owned individual, that the other units that the Nunavut Housing Corporation, as Mr. Lightstone asked earlier on what the operations and maintenance of the unsold condos.

If those condo fees are being paid by Nunavut Housing Corporation they are the owner of those units at the moment, until they're sold or whatever. Why didn't in the Road to Nowhere case allow people to purchase that wanted to purchase however many units out of those, and maintain ownership of the remainder and use those for staff housing? Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I hope that was clearer.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Devereaux.

Mr. Devereaux: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thanks for the clarification. I think the only way I can respond is that the decision to dissolve Condo Corp 17, the Road to Nowhere units, was predominantly based on wanting to increase the number of GN staff housing units. I understand the Member's comments around, well, you had roughly eight or ten GN staff who wanted to purchase the units. And remember, too, you know, prior to the time of that decision being made to reprofile those 36 units, we only had two to three that had signed purchase and sale agreements for the Road to Nowhere condos.

So we didn't have the demand there. We had done a round one, a round two of advertising for sales, and when it comes down to it, a period of time, whatever it was, three or six months before the decision was made to reprofile, we only had three individuals wanting to make a purchase at the Road to Nowhere. So the demand was not there and we still had 11 unsold units in the plateau.

So needing more GN-owned staff housing for tenants, not for homeowners, to satisfy that need within the community and the need relative to the department of HR, who was trying put competitions out, the decision was made that we would reprofile those 36 units and still offer GN tenants who wanted to become homeowners the opportunity to purchase the 11 that were still available at the plateau. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I know this happened a number of years ago when these units were purchased, and I do understand there was a lot of complexities of allowing people to move into units without even an agreement in place, in some cases. But at the same time, the people in good faith that signed off on these purchases, have now lost three, four, five years of equity that they could have been building in these units, three, four, or five years of market increasing significantly here in Iqaluit. Some of those condos, like you said, they're being sold for 250, 300,000 dollars, and Mr. Devereaux mentioned that they are probably worth double that now. It's probably closer to triple that in some cases. I'm seeing condos here in the city, six, seven, eight hundred thousand dollars for a condo.

So I recognize it may seem like it's only two or three people that are impacted by this, but it's a significant impact and a significant financial loss for them, too. If somebody is trying to time out their retirement, of planning when and how they are going to retire,

how long they may have to work for to pay off a mortgage, to lose four, five years, that is significant for a family.

I do understand that there was an offer made for other units that were smaller, and just don't fit the size of the family need.

At the time these condos were only open to Government of Nunavut employees, and I do understand that there's a lot of pressure on staff housing, but from what I understood the minister's comments a couple years ago was looking at putting that out to a general, to open season kind of thing for anybody and everybody to be able to apply to purchase remaining condo units, just members of the public, which some may or may not be GN staff, but it still alleviates pressure on housing, because if somebody is in a public housing unit, as an example, and they buy a condo, that is a public housing unit that has opened up for another family to move in.

I would like a little bit more understanding on why the decision was made to just dissolve the Condo Corporation 17, when there could have been other measures to take in place, such as opening it up for sale to the general public, which could have fed the demand for these condos a little bit more. There might not have been enough Government of Nunavut employees interested in purchasing these, but there could have been more members of the public that were interested in purchasing these at a below-market value. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Devereaux.

Mr. Devereaux: Thank you, Mr. Chair and I thank the member for the follow-up. Yeah, a bit to unpack there. The individuals that originally came forward to express an interest in purchasing the units in the Road to Nowhere was approximately ten, give or take. When we became involved and were looking to try to, you know, move the condo sales forward on both the plateau and Road to Nowhere, certainly recognized that there was an existing number of potential purchasers. You know, at the time there was renovations going on as well. That was having an impact on potentially when these units would be sold.

We put out the opportunity to sign purchase and sale agreements originally for a 90-day period, and then we extended it another 90 days and another 90 days. It was a period of anywhere from six to nine months where those ten or so individuals that expressed an interest in purchasing under round two of sales, and we only had two or three signed purchase and sale agreements.

Those two or three are I think the ones at that you are focussing on, and we did try to work with those two to three who had signed purchase and sale agreements to provide them the opportunity to still purchase a very below-market condo up at the plateau for 250-odd-thousand dollars. And I get it, there's a couple that chose not to purchase that very discounted home ownership unit, because they felt it was too small.

The other example you mentioned earlier why didn't we look at other options, we did pursue many options. This wasn't a decision taken lightly. We knew there was a lot of history there. The challenge with the example that you provided, why not keep Condo Corp 17 and sell off whatever, 15 units and maybe housing corp keeps 20 for staff housing, that model was just very, very difficult. Might not be able to happen. The reality is that the condo corp legal entity can decide whether any individual owner, housing corp or somebody else, has the ability to rent out units. It's a mixed model that we knew we would never be able to control. So it was either you kind of keep it as a condo corp and try to sell the units off, or in this case here the decision to reprofile it into GN staff housing.

The last point around opening it up to the broader group, once we got offered that three, six, nine month period of time for those ten families that were involved with the Road to Nowhere purchases and only three had signed purchase and sale agreements, we did advertise another round of sales and we opened that up to the public and happy to report that out of the 11 units that were unsold in the condos on the plateau, that we have now sold I want to say nine, give or take. And one or two hopefully happening in the next number of weeks.

So we did open it up to the broader group and prioritize Inuit. I believe the majority of all those initial purchases are going to Inuit. Some are GN employees. Some aren't GN employees.

So hopefully a successful conclusion to that part of the condo program. And the one or two families that had signed purchase and sale agreements and decided not to purchase at the plateau at that discounted price, we have still reached out and tried to say we'll try to support you if another home ownership opportunity comes around. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I do appreciate where the minister and where the corporation is coming from, but it's still, like Mr. Lightstone, it kind of rankles that these people, I won't say that word. It's a challenging situation.

Mr. Devereaux just said that he has met with these people to look over different opportunities. This is maybe way outside the box, and I don't even know exactly how it could even happen, but are there other units that are under ownership of Nunavut Housing Corporation that are of suitable size, as a good faith gesture, that they may offer to these people that are currently in these units that they're unable to purchase, at book value? At the accounted value, which would be a lot less than market but it's still the value that's on the books for Nunavut Housing Corporation?

Is that an option to consider, and would Mr. Devereaux be willing to meet with those tenants again and look at further opportunities, maybe including this one if it's even feasible? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the, not the frustration, but the bad feeling we get inside ourselves when we discuss this. This is not easy for anybody, Mr. Chairman, and it's not easy for people sitting at this table either, Mr. Chairman.

The corporation has reached out to the individuals we're talking about, and we will continue to reach out to them. That is a very good possibility. I believe some discussions have gone around that. We have different programs within the corporation. There's the home ownership program; the downpayment assistance program. There is the lease-to-own program. There's different programs that we do have. The suggestion from Mr. Hickes is one that we have and we will definitely have our senior staff reach out and make sure that the communication is always open. I think it's important that all sides take a look at the possibilities of helping the individuals in this case, and any other individuals out there that are looking to be in their own home.

And the individuals in particular, it's close to home. It's not easy, and we will continue to reach out to ensure that we can do the best we can for the people that are affected negatively by this.

I appreciate the frustration Mr. Hickes and Mr. Lightstone have on this matter. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na* Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I appreciate the Minister's willingness to look at this. I think this is an exceptional circumstance, and I think an exceptional solution may be warranted. I know the Nunavut Housing Corporation isn't in the business of selling off inventory, but I think this is an exceptional case so I think it should be on the table. Just a comment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Is that it, Mr. Hickes? Okay, *Mat'na.* That was just a comment, so I'll go next person on my list. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, Minister and officials. Regarding all of our public housing units we have right across the territory, some of them are from the early 1970s and now we have some brand new ones being built.

Just thinking about it, we must have some old, maybe older water pumps or circulating pumps or whatnot, parts that are needed and break down regularly. Just thinking out loud, I guess, is the corporation beginning to standardize some of the parts they have on hand so that if something breaks down a tenant is not waiting for a part to be flown in? It could be to get the water going or even to get the heat, the furnace going?

I'm asking this because going back to my earlier life when I was with Qulliq Energy Corporation that's the direction the corporation had begun going into, standardizing a bunch of their regular day-to-day parts. And I was just wondering if the Nunavut Housing Corporation and local housing authorities are heading in that direction. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In short, yes, we are. The corporation is heading in that direction. In the past the new housing projects brought with it new-fangled washrooms and toilets and sinks and showers and water pumps and so on. We're working to standardize all of them and the working through our regional offices when they do their annual supply, they're standardizing them across the board. That work is under way. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. I'm glad the corporation is heading in that direction. It might be getting a little into the weeds too much, but is there a timeline when you expect to finish getting rid of all the old materials and starting to use the standardized types of materials, so that tenants are not waiting for parts to be flown in, if that should be the case? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That work continues. As parts wear out we'll replace them with standardized equipment. So it's ongoing. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Following the list of names here, Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Minister and your officials, welcome. (interpretation ends) I am not going to have a whole 10 minutes of questioning, I might have a few questions.

My first question is, looking at local housing authorities, can the minister elaborate on how many of these local housing managers are Inuit. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't have that particular detail, but I believe the majority of them are Inuit, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I didn't really clarify my question. Just looking at his opening comments, he stated that 85 per cent of Inuit working in Nunavut, but if they don't have the numbers how can they assure that they reached 85 per cent? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My colleague asked very specifically how many of them, LHOs, are Inuit in all the communities. I don't have that particular detail, but approximately 80 to 85 per cent of the LHO managers in Nunavut are Inuit. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the minister's opening comments it was stated that there are 45 per cent Inuit employed. And that they needed 35 per cent more Inuit staff as managers. It was stated that they would need to hire 35 per cent more, but let me move on to something else.

Family Services and Nunavut Arctic College has gone into building houses. Has the housing corporation made any plans to have that kind of activity happen in the smaller communities? Thank you.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes. The Department of Family Services and Nunavut Arctic College, we work with them. We want to see houses built in all the communities by working with the two other departments. And it's true, like I say yes to what the member was saying. That's what we would like to see happen in all of Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to the minister for your response. When can we expect it to happen? Can the minister tell us when they will be able to do that through all the municipalities? Thank you.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I can't say what year or what month what will happen, but Nunavut Arctic College and Family Services are working together with the housing corporation, and whenever there are requests from the communities, we try to accommodate them.

We checked with Igloolik, for example, and we started working with them right away, and we will be working with the different Inuit organizations on all the things that we want created in Nunavut. Whenever we start to build a house or a building, there are usually many people that are able to help in the construction. We can use them, we can train them and train them, if necessary. I really want to push for this. We don't want to keep on bringing in staff from the south to build houses. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you, minister, for clarifying that. Regarding molding, I will like to move on to that subject.

Those who are paying rent when they approach housing and they're not listened to, they often express their frustration through social media, like Facebook. And it's only through that they are heard, and even when they have been expressing that the condition of their homes have problems with mold, and it goes to a point where they have illnesses like skin rashes and they really have no recourse.

I think we need to see more attention paid to renters when they demand that mold remediation take place. There are many homes with mold problems. This is more of a comment, just to make it known. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): *Mat'na.* It's more of a comment, but perhaps the minister wishes to respond. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): I totally agree with him. Some mold problems can be a problem and remediation are required. And as housing, we have a program to mold-remediate.

What I want to express is some problem is associated, simple cleaning can take place before it becomes a big problem. And sometimes it's just takes an individual to make steps before the mold problems becomes a major problem. As those of us who rent public housing, cleaning is the problem.

I'm not referring to mold problems that often you don't find and can have problems with your health, and I appreciate my colleague for raising this issue. Mold can be a problem. It can become a big problem, as well, and we have to also make our own steps to ensure mold does not become or spread in the House.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* If I can just remind members that we are in M-IV-3, headquarters. I'm given quite a bit of leeway there's other subjects that are in front, but I've been letting them go. If we can stay on headquarters. The next person on my list, Mr. Kaernerck.

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Oh, no. My comment, Mr. Chairman, is under headquarters, with Arviat is the headquarters. NHC has set up a toll-free number. How is that used? Is it used by homeowners or by government staff? How often is it used, if you have a complaint or whatnot, with respect to individual's homes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Mr. Chairman, thank you. This is going quite smoothly in fact with a toll-free number, when people have problems with their homes or have inquiries. We just recently launched this toll-free 1-844 number, which has gone quite smoothly. In March 2024 we have had 83 calls coming in, with inquiries and other matters relating to housing. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Kaernerck.

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I thank the minister for giving us the numbers. Now, concerning the leasers or those waiting for home ownership, they can call this number. If I have children and I apply for home ownership, is this number set up for those cases? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, and some also call the number, and can also call that a window is broken and have not been fixed. So there are many, many factors that people call about. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

Mr. Kaernerck: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As MLAs we also have individuals government employees who are leasing homes. When you mentioned 83 calls, how many are calling from the government staff or are they calls because of mold problem, or my

home is too small for number of kids I have? Do you have those figures or a breakdown in those areas?

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The toll free number for those in public housing and 83 have called. We don't have a breakdown, whether they work with government or not. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na*. Mr. Kaernerck.

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are a lot of individuals who don't know of the toll-free number. Perhaps those listening, I think many people can be helped through that number.

Moving on to another issue, those who are leasing homes, when their home requires maintenance or there is remediation needed because of mold or a renovation, window problems or the whole house is problematic, how has that gone forward with the toll-free number that you mentioned? If renovation is the subject, whether you're in Hall Beach or Igloolik, how many who are waiting for renovations, is there a number for those individuals living in Hall Beach and Igloolik? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na*. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you. The funds that we put aside for towards renovation is used up annually. Those who have applied are not forgotten. And sometimes their names are put for the following year. That's how that approach has been.

We're trying to look at the moment how the breakdown is with respect to Hall Beach and Igloolik, who have applied.

And to add, the toll-free number I did mention, I was referring to public housing, but it's also for public housing or home ownership and government employees who are in public housing. And this number is for anyone who may want to call, not just go in public housing. My apologies for mentioning that.

For home repair program that he's referring to, in Hall Beach emergency repair program there was no one who applied. We had one who applied for home repair program and Igloolik, going to apply for emergency home program and two for home repair program.

Chairman: *Mat'na*. Mr. Kaernerck.

Mr. Kaerner (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and Thank you for referring back to the toll-free number and its use. These are very interesting, especially for the homeowners. Oftentimes too we have elders who are homeowners and when they do apply, oftentimes their home is quite old and an elder will have to fill the forms. Can they call that toll-free number if I want assistance to do some renovations in my house and it has not been renovated for perhaps 15 years? Are they able to get assistance if they to call that toll-free number. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

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

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Kaerner.

Mr. Kaerner: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's great to hear "definitely" in the response.

(interpretation ends) Now, Mr. Chairman, let me focus on other matters, when it comes to conflict of interest. When it comes to these local boards of director, and when it comes to a final decision-making, have there been any declarations for these conflict of interest whether it comes to providing a new unit? Have there been any declarations for a family member that I have a conflict of interest when it comes to, you know, a conflict of interest? Have there been a local board that approaches that kind of issue when it comes to these new units? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Just for clarity Mr. Kaerner, are you talking about local housing board members? The member has nodded. Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Like any other board function, if there is conflict on any decision-making, it should be declared at the time. That's no different for the local housing associations. They should declare if they have conflict. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Kaerner.

Mr. Kaerner (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and the minister, because we've seen conflict taking place so I raise that again for your response to that.

Mr. Chairman, moving on again, the government and government staff will see an increase in their wages soon. Now, for those areas, oil burner mechanics, carpentry, and the costs, are they going to see an increase there as well or have you looked into the operations area? And this will be my last question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): If I understood I will respond this way. When their wages go up, their rent will also gradually increase. It will not increase altogether, but they would increase if needed.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Kaernerck, does that answer your question or do you want to add? (interpretation ends) Following the list of names, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. I have a couple IEP questions. In the business plan it does make mention of utilization of the Sivuliqtiksat Internship Program, and I do know that is quite unutilized across the GN. I was wondering if you will be able to provide additional details on that. The business plan also makes utilization of internally funded internships. I was wondering if the minister also would also be able to provide details on that program as well. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the questions on that. I will, as much as I can, give details in that. As of September 30, 2024 our overall capacity stands at 77 per cent for 98 of the 127 positions filled within NHC.

Mr. Chairman, what we have in terms of internships and training, we have three. We have an intern programs officer in Cambridge Bay. We have a director of programs intern in Arviat and we have a CDO programs trainee in Kinngait, Mr. Chairman. Those programs are going well in terms of internships. We have one Inuk employee in an internship and one Inuk employee in a training position. We currently have two Inuit employees completing the training initiatives. Both employees are in the Inuit-only GN accredited human resource certificate program.

We are promoting the GN's Hivuliqtikhanut Emerging Leaders Program to Inuit staff whenever possible. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Speaker: *Mat'na.* Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Minister. That's really great to hear. My next question is, I know that LHOs have a lot of trades positions. I was curious if there are any trades positions within the NHC organization. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we do have a few, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Minister. How many Inuit apprentices do you have currently employed within NHC? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't know if we have any within NHC at the time but the local housing organizations do have some within their system. I know when we were in Taloyoak we were there and they had a couple of Inuit journeymen and a couple of trainees in the field. It was so good to see. But I don't believe we have any within our headquarters, but I can double-check and get back to my friend on that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Minister. I guess the last question that I would like to ask is returning to the GN staff condo program. I do appreciate Mr. Hicke making the recommendation to offer an equivalent unit that's currently owned by the corporation.

If I do recall correctly, when the staff condo units were purchased, 60 were allocated for resale while two were added to the staff housing portfolio. I think that was a duplex of three-bedroom units, which would be an ideal alternative.

For my last question, as the condo corporation was dissolved prior to year end, and the purchase of sale agreements were annulled at that point and exposing NHC to litigation with probability of significant losses to the corporation, my last question that I would like to ask is whether or not that contingent liability was recorded into the financial statements and whether or not a note was added to the financial statements as well. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Again, I appreciate the frustrations and what Mr. Lightstone is going through but we're not aware of any significant losses and lawsuits at this time, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* There's an information item, Nunavut Housing Corporation, headquarters, total operations and maintenance \$21,717,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: We're not voting on it, but it's an information item, so we can go on to the next page.

Nunavut Housing Corporation, still information item: Debt Repayment. Any questions on debt repayment? Ms. Killiktee. Sorry, Mr. Kaerner.

Mr. Kaerner (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the debt repayment there's some individuals that were employed and then become unemployed, and because of low income and with the high cost of food, when we look at it, some individuals owe a lot of money, and I'm sure that they look at ways how to repay, because it's quite hard with the high cost of living in the north. For the individuals who have been renting a single house for a long time and of course there has to be renovations and improvements done on the house. Or if they will like to paint their house, for example, or to repair damages, can the tenants do that? For example, if they are not working and they are looking at how they can repay their debt, can they come to an agreement between the individual and the LHO and they repair the damages and in exchange a portion of their debt would be paid for the work he has done on his house?

Chairman: *Mat'na.* I guess I should have been a little more clear; this debt repayment is just questions on CMHC, and it's not housing rental yet. If the minister wants to answer that about housing arrears, we will be coming to that, and I will give you the option, or do you want to wait until it gets there? Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): I could make a very short response. The local housing authority can make a decision on that matter.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Any questions on debt repayment? We're not voting on it, but it's \$10,370,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Next page. It's still an information item, Nunavut Housing Corporation, district office, \$10,560,000. Any questions on district offices? I see none, so we're not voting on this, but total operation and maintenance, \$10,560,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Go to page M-IV-6, Nunavut Housing Corporation information items, Affordable Housing Programs, Public Housing. Anything on public housing? Questions? Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. One of the programs that the Nunavut Housing Corporation had available was the tenant owner program to assist Nunavummiut with attaining home ownership of their public housing units. Last time I had looked into this was a number of years ago, and at that time the housing corporation was still receiving applications under this program but had not approved any. I would like to ask for my first question when this program will be reintroduced and whether or not there NHC has received any interest from public housing tenants with purchasing units. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm glad Mr. Lightstone is asking about this. We had some good discussions around that during our meetings we've had with Mr. Lightstone and some of his colleagues, Mr. Chairman, and this is one of the programs that we wanted to dust the document off the shelves and reintroduce it into the program.

There is a lot of interest out there, just from word of mouth, and from conversations we've had in this Assembly about reintroducing the lease-to-own housing unit program. The excitement is back out there again, and we're looking forward to reintroducing the program with a few touch-ups.

We're talking to some local housing organizations to see if they have units that would fit into this category, and it's exciting to talk about. And yes, the corporation is excited to work with the local housing organizations to reintroduce this program, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, minister. Here in Iqaluit there are so many individuals that have the potential to become homeowners that are quite independent and doing well for themselves, but are completely unable to become homeowners given the market. I was wondering how many units here in Iqaluit have been identified for this potential lease-to-own program. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Mr. Chairman, we hope to have this engagement to start doing lease-to-owns as early as this summer. In terms of Iqaluit, we are not quite there yet, Mr. Chairman, but as our housing stock grows and we are able to move people from, most of the interest on these units will be the stand alone two-, three-, and four-bedroom units. So the plan there would be for a community like Iqaluit is to see if there is interest in certain housing units that are stand alone, let's say a three-bedroom in Happy Valley or something, if there would be interest in that particular unit, then we would definitely

work with the individuals interested, and then moving that family from that unit that currently is in there, if they are not interested in purchasing that unit, to move them to a different unit and then do a lease-to-own with that. It's not very complicated, but it takes a little bit of work. But we're not quite at the stage of identifying which units, but we are well on the way to that, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you. Thank you, Minister. That's exciting to hear that this program will be potentially ready for rollout this summer.

Next question I would like to ask is with regards to the Iqaluit public housing wait list. Just a few years ago it was up to I believe 500, around that area, and then last year I brought up the issue that a number of Iqalummiut were removed from public housing wait list, and it dropped down to about 200, I believe. I would like to ask the minister where Iqaluit sits on the public housing wait list. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In terms of the waiting list for Iqalummiut, it's around 353 on the waiting list, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Minister. The next question I would like to ask with regards to public housing here in Iqaluit is how many units have been identified for demolition and how many units have been demolished and are currently sitting as vacant lots. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, actually the Housing is taking a look at that very thing right now. At spring we're trying to see which units we need to demolish. For the city of Iqaluit, as soon as we have that information, I'll be more than happy to share it with the members from Iqaluit. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Before I go to the next name on my list I'll exercise my discretion and we will take a 20-minute break.

>>*Committee recessed from 15:34 to 16:01*

Chairman: Good afternoon. I would like to reconvene our committee meeting.

We're here dealing with Nunavut Public Housing Association O&M budget. We're on page M-IV-6, Affordable Housing Program, public housing. The next person on my list, Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask about.

(interpretation ends) the Nunavut Housing Corporation's draft 2025-2026 business plan indicates that one of its priorities for the 2025-2026 fiscal year is to "pursue a new software system for tenant management and rent scale to replace the current aging systems that lack suitability and flexibility."

My question is how will the new system benefit local housing organizations and public housing tenants. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It will benefit greatly. It will have a better maintenance and better overall work with the software programs. They will have better record keeping, better maintenance records, Mr. Chairman, than the old system. Thank you.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I hear that with your response that it will be better. Are you saying that it will be easier for the staff? Or more timely and useful? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Like any software program and upgrade to computer systems, once a local housing organization gets used to tell software in the computer it will just make everything a lot easier in terms of record keeping, accounts payable, receivable, keeping track of all that stuff that are necessary. It will be an overall improvement into the computer work, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Moving on, in regards to elders who are over the age of 60 have experienced problems and nothing has improved for some tenants. I know that not all the retrofits can be done, but I do want to make a comment on that. There can be a safety issue with the elders' homes. The tenants who are over the age of 60, they have no rent, so therefore it has a huge impact. It could be lower

or higher, but I do note that you need to consider these, because there are people who have been tenants that have been kicked out because of their arrears.

My question is, if an individual who pays rent, an individual pays rent and if they don't have an agreement or if the individual who lives in the house, can the individual living in the home, do they need to sign an agreement in order to pay a rent from a home. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): If I understood your question, yes, annually. They have to fill out application form as to who is a tenant of the house and also where they work and how much salary they earn, and if there's an individual who lives in that home who has a job, they include the salary to pay for the rent. Also, if an elder doesn't have to pay rent, the elder does not have to pay rent. But the people who reside in the unit, their salary is included for the rent. Thank you. I hope that's clear, Mr. Chairman, if I understood her question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Yes, I understand that clearly, but it's very puzzling when a senior is being kicked out, there's some that have been kicked out and it's still happening today, being kicked out from the house, not permanently but temporarily, maybe when they have an issue in their homes.

But my question now is, under the tenant agreement, are you saying that under that tenant agreement the system is now or has been revised that every household member over the age of 18 years are asked to sign the tenant agreement? Not just the parent, the father or the mother. *Qujannamiik.*

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Mr. Chairman, I never said that, but I believe that the tenant agreements have an area where you have to declare in the household income earners and how much income that they are making. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chair, (interpretation ends) and I'm sorry, I didn't mean to put a word in your mouth about how I said it.

(interpretation) I apologize, I understand that the residents in the unit have to sign a tenant agreement if that's the case. It creates more problems in the household, so I just

wanted to tell you of this concern to make sure that you look into it, this issue, where we lack housing and there's waiting lists, the parents or the grandparents lose their homes because of this and this is increasingly happening. And this is what we hear, so I would like to give this concern to you if you can look at this and look at how we can improve this, if you can initiate some program to these to make sure that we provide support to the parents. Because the parents are very intimidated when they have arrears.

(interpretation ends) Some are tough, some are weak in parenting (interpretation) so that is why I am stating this. This is not a concern, I just wanted to relay this concern to you, because there's a concern in regards to this. I'll leave it at that, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* (interpretation) There was just a comment at this time. (interpretation ends) Affordable Housing Program, public housing (interpretation) I have no more names on the list. Mr. Kaernerck.

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regards to my question that you agreed to it, is there a figure, do you have a figure in regards to the people who have arrears? Do you have any figures for how much arrears they have in Sanirajak and Igloolik? And when people have arrears that Inuit can do repairs in their homes? Do you have a figure as to how many have been approved and not approved? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Approved for what, Mr. Chairman? If he can elaborate.

Chairman (interpretation): Mr. Kaernerck, please rephrase your question. Mr. Kaernerck.

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Earlier I spoke about tenant arrears, that there would be agreements between the tenants. I misunderstood in my earlier question. Yes, local housing associations can agree with the tenant who have arrears if they want to maintain their home and repair their home. How many agreements do you have with the tenants in Igloolik and Sanirajak? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regards to the member's earlier question, if an individual or the tenant have arrears, if they can repair the home and if they can lessen the arrears, the local housing association can make a decision how they can repay their arrears in the community. Like for example, in Sanirajak, if there was \$3.924 million, the total arrears; in Igloolik \$4,990,000 in arrears. There's quite a huge arrears. I believe that's what you wanted to get. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Kaernerck.

Mr. Kaernerck: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That information is not good to hear. When the tenant wants to repair the home and if they have been approved, or in total there's \$8 million in arrears for the two communities. And when they have an agreement with the tenant does Nunavut Housing Corporation need to prove the local housing association's agreement with the tenant with the arrears? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Kaernerck.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's a large, huge sum of money, total arrears, and they are not the least arrears.

Mr. Chairman, the local housing association can make a decision on how the tenant can pay for the arrears. They can set up perhaps a repair, or help construct the unit. The local housing association can make their own decisions how they can try and pay for their arrears. The arrears will be paid for the local housing association, not to Nunavut Housing Corporation. It would help the local housing association but NHC would not be involved. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Kaernerck.

Mr. Kaernerck (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you. I believe my constituents understand that better now, how important it is when they're trying to get into newer houses, I'm sure they look at that situation. I just want to encourage housing corporation maybe this can help benefit the communities and the housing corporation.

I have many questions, but I will stop here for now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. According to my list Mr. Malliki is next.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Affordable Housing program, public housing, Rent Scale, I would like to ask if the rent scale is included in the things that have been adjusted or is there a plan to adjust that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Yes, the housing corporation is looking to see if they need to increase the rent.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When will we know if they're going to increase the prices? Will it be during this sitting or at another time? Thank you.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't think that will get settled while this government is still running. I think they will be ready by the fall or the next government. Thank you.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can the minister explain what the rent price may be like in the near future. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I can't say that right now because that hasn't been settled yet. I'm sure it will be settled by the time the new government starts. Thank you.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I asked this question right after I got elected. People in Nunavut, some people don't pay their rent, even though they are renting a house. Can it be applied in Nunavut where tenants don't have to pay their rent? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Are you talking about housing association houses and have nobody pay their rent anymore?

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

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In northern Quebec they don't pay for public housing in northern Quebec. Have the housing corp looked into that? Thank you.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. No. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* I have no more names on my list. Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask a question. (interpretation ends) I would like to ask the minister, what are your priorities under the affordable housing program, seeing the grants and contributions of \$494,952,000. So my question again is what are your priorities? (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you. In regards to housing, it gets very challenging to try to get everybody housing, and one of our biggest priorities is building more houses for Nunavut or in Nunavut. (interpretation ends) That is the biggest of priorities, Mr. Chairman, is to build as many houses in Nunavut as we can of all types, public, private, affordable, everything in that prism. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* I have no more names on my list. We're at Nunavut Housing Corporation. This is just information item, affordable program, public housing. Total operations and maintenance \$194,952,000. We are not voting, but do members agree?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Affordable housing program, staff housing. Mr. Hickers.

Mr. Hickers: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to talk about the staff housing review that was announced three years ago, and I know Nunavut Housing Corporation doesn't have the lead on it but they are a participant in it.

My first question is, it was announced to be done three years ago and we still haven't seen anything on that. Is there a timeline of when that staff housing review is going to be completed? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Unfortunately that's still being worked on, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Hickers.

Mr. Hickers: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In my question I asked for a timeline. Can the minister respond to that, please. Thank you.

Chairman: *Mat'na,* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Mr. Chairman, I don't believe so, but if I could have Mr. Devereaux elaborate, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Devereaux.

Mr. Devereaux: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thank the member for the question. I think when we started the Sixth Assembly and were looking at staff housing, some of challenges, there was a number of more acute issues, higher vacancy, so one of the priorities of both the Nunavut Housing Corporation and Department of Human Resources worked on was try to reduce that volume of vacancy that used to hover around 350 units, plus or minus, and now we're down to half of that.

Also looking at other aspects on how maybe the staff housing program could be improved. The lead on that is the department of HR. We continue to work with them. I know on the radar to bring forward in the next month or so is also to see if there's some options that can be considered to support GN employees who are retiring so they're not forced to make a tough decision to not retire because they would be homeless.

There are a number of things that are ongoing, but I can't speak specifically to a date upon which a review itself, but we certainly have been working on a number of initiatives to try to make improvements to that program. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Mr. Hickes.

Mr. Hickes: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Devereaux kind of proves the point of why the staff housing policy needs to be reviewed, and any changes that are identified need to be made sooner rather than later. I understand the corporation itself is doing some work on this and I know the Department of Finance recently upped the limit of the household allowance, which is another component of the staff housing policy.

Mr. Devereaux just mentioned the very important aspect of retiring Government of Nunavut employees becoming homeless at their retirement, and I know I've brought that up in the House a number of times. There are so many different things that it sounds like are being worked on, but they don't seem to be coordinated, to actually complete the review so that, one, any improvements that are identified can be implemented, instead of piecemealing it together.

I just want to encourage the minister and the housing corporation to work closer with the Minister of Finance and the Minister of HR to get this housing review complete. Again, I think later this week will be three years since it was announced that this review was going to occur. I do understand there's so many different pressing needs, but I think this is important enough that it needs to be coordinated and any improvements that are identified can be implemented to help the recruitment, to help the retention of employees.

I think it's an important factor. Housing is one of the most critical components of somebody's employment here in Nunavut. So I'll leave it at that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think Mr. Hickee hit all the high notes on that one, and we do understand that housing corporation is not the lead department on this. We will continue to work with the lead department and other departments to ensure that the ball keeps moving on this one. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* We're going through the Nunavut Housing Corporation, the Affordable Housing Program, Staff Housing. I have no more names on my list. Ms. Quassa.

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Welcome. (interpretation ends) The corporation's draft 2025-2026 business plan indicates that one of its priorities for the upcoming 2025-2026 fiscal year is to "examine the development of a new homeowner savings program to allow high income public housing tenants to save for the purchase of a home."

Will this program be open to all Nunavut residents, or only employees of the territorial government? (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We're trying that right now. I've said that in the House. In Cambridge Bay for people who are renters for the first time or first-time homeowners we have a subsidy that we're using as a pilot project in the Kitikmeot to find how they get to buy their own homes and we're looking at arrears affecting it. And I think it can run well.

We're imagining that it can be utilized in all of Nunavut, once we find that it runs well and people trying to buy their own homes can be trained on being a homeowner and have a good agreement like that. So that's what we're working on. Thank you.

Chairman: *Mat'na.* Ms. Quassa.

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you to the minister. So now in the communities the local housing authority will be able to point out which house that can be made available for home ownership. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (interpretation): *Mat'na*. The minister talked about this earlier. If the minister wishes, he can repeat what he said. Thank you.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, we can work with the local housing associations or authorities because they're going to be involved in the whole process where some of the housing units, three or four bedroom or plexes which can be released to be made available for home ownership in the communities. So we're working towards that and we're going to have housing associations point out which house may be made available for sale. Maybe the tenant will want to buy the house and if they don't want to purchase that unit that is made available, they can move to another unit and somebody else can buy the House. Thank you.

Chairman: *Mat'na*. Ms. Quassa.

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Nunavut Housing Corporation's Draft 2025-2026 Business Plan indicates that one of its priorities for the upcoming 2025-2026 fiscal year is to analyze potential options for transitioning the staff housing model to end affordable housing model for the Government of Nunavut staff housing. What specific options will be considered? (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na*. Minister Kusugak.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With regards to affordable housing, and when they start rolling out in the communities, we know many of the government staff, once you retire, because they may not have a house to stay, they continue to work. With that, when we start looking at it we can start including them to the new units, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na*. We are going through Nunavut Housing Corporation's operation and maintenance 2025-2026 budget, affordable housing program, staff housing. I have no more names on my list. Total operations and maintenance, 75,656,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: We are not voting on that. Now members go back to page M-II-3, and we are voting on that page.

Nunavut Housing Corporation, details of expenditures to be voted, Nunavut Housing Corporation, total operation and maintenance to be voted, \$285,468,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree we have concluded with the Nunavut Housing Corporation?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Minister Kusugak. Brief closing comments.

Hon. Lorne Kusugak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I thank my colleagues, in particular the committee on housing that we work with and all those who work with Nunavut Housing Corporation that work very hard for our staff. And my team here beside me, along with the interpreters, although I'm not understanding, I am able to comprehend. And again, thank you for a very smooth meeting. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: *Mat'na*. We'll take a five-minute break while we switch ministers and departments.

>>*Committee recessed from 16:32 to 16:41*

Chairman (Mr. George Hickey): Thanks, everyone. I would like to open up the Committee of the Whole meeting again. I would like to ask Minister Joanasié, do you have officials who you would like to have appear before the committee with you? Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chair. If the committee will allow, please. Thank you.

Chairman: It's not just up to me, Minister. Does the committee agree to allow the minister to have his officials appear before him?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort them in. Thank you, minister. For the record, can you please introduce your officials and proceed directly into your opening comments, please. Thank you.

Hon. David Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I am pleased today to be before you as we review the main estimates and business plans for the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut. Here with me their names, my apologies, Deputy Minister Kyle Seeley and Assistant Deputy Minister Amanda Hickey.

Mr. Chairman, Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut was struck with the agreement on infrastructure changes, and has been created as part of the commitment to improve government organized structures.

(interpretation ends) Effective April 1, 2025, Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut will provide a broad array of services ranging from public procurement, capital planning and management of the Government of Nunavut's growing portfolio of infrastructure assets to the management and oversight of the federal funding agreements critical to closing Nunavut's infrastructure gap.

For the 2025-26 fiscal year, the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure proposed operations and maintenance budget is \$262,316,000.

The Department provides services through six different sections, each responsible for planning and managing contributions to various components of the Government of Nunavut's mandate and priorities.

The Directorate Branch includes the office of the Deputy Minister and the department's Policy Division, which oversees the development of departmental policies and legislation and manages the department's communications and access to information and privacy requests.

The proposed operating budget for the Directorate Branch is \$2,040,000. This is a \$297,000 decrease from 2024-2025, driven primarily by the realignment of positions as part of the departmental reorganization.

The Corporate Services Branch is responsible for many of the services the department provides to government departments and the respective branches of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut. The branch is comprised of:

- Financial Services
- Human Resources
- Procurement Logistics, Contract Support, and
- Federal Contributions and Relations.

The Corporate Services Branch's proposed 2025-2026 operating budget is \$13,001,000. This is an increase of \$418,000 from 2024-2025, driven primarily by salary rate increases. This budget supports the department in maintaining effective strategic financial management, developing human resource initiatives, managing federal capital funding agreements, and providing government-wide procurement and logistics services.

Mr. Chair and Members, the Department's Information Management and Technology Branch manages the Government of Nunavut's core network and communications services. This Branch includes the office of the Chief Information Officer, which

oversees client departments' existing and emerging hardware and software needs and maintains the security of the Government of Nunavut records and communication systems.

Mr. Chairman, the Information Management and Technology Branch's proposed Operations and Maintenance Budget for 2025-2026 is \$54,633,000. This net increase of \$1,491,000 from 2024-2025 is driven primarily by additional software licensing costs.

Mr. Chairman, the Government of Nunavut's programs and the services depend on access to facilities and assets owned and leased by the government of Nunavut.

The Infrastructure Branch of the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut provides a comprehensive suite of services to all Government of Nunavut departments, including the development and oversight of technical standards, capital planning and the management of projects, facilities and real property lease agreements on behalf of Government of Nunavut departments.

The proposed 2025-26 Operations and Maintenance budget for the Infrastructure Branch is \$137,787,000. This is a net increase of \$67,000 from 2024-2025. This change is driven primarily by the departmental reorganization and additional funding toward ensuring regulatory compliance and enhanced drinking water quality in communities.

Mr. Chair, the Transportation Branch is responsible for the strategic oversight of the Government of Nunavut's transportation assets and infrastructure, including twenty-four community airports, the Iqaluit International Airport, and a growing portfolio of ports, harbours, and other marine facilities.

Nunavut's transportation infrastructure is an essential component of programs and services offered by each Government of Nunavut department and a vital component of both living in and working in Nunavut's communities.

Nunavut Airports is responsible for operating and maintaining the 24 airports outside Iqaluit. The Airports division ensures that facilities are in regulatory compliance and that staff and equipment meet or exceed federal standards.

The Transportation Branch's proposed Operation and Maintenance budget for 2025-2026 is \$54,855,000. This is a decrease of \$1,229,000 from the Branch's 2024-2025 approved Main Estimates, driven primarily by the departmental reorganization.

The Petroleum Products Division purchases, stores, and distributes fuel to Nunavut's residents, businesses, airlines, and governments. Petroleum Products Division's purchase strategy balances advance purchase with in-year acquisitions to meet the fuel needs of communities reliably and efficiently.

During 2023-2024, Petroleum Products Division leveraged slightly improved market conditions to secure fuel for the 2024 resupply. As a result, Petroleum Products Division maintained fuel prices in 2024-2025, positioning itself to begin deficit recovery of the Petroleum Products Stabilization Fund.

In 2025-2026, the Division will manage bulk fuel purchases, plan, and deliver the 2025 fuel resupply, and continue to assess long-term fuel storage capacity needs in communities. A key priority will be finalizing the request for proposal process for Nunavut's fuel supply and delivery contract, valued at \$1.115 billion over the next five years which we have secured to date.

Mr. Chairman, this concludes my opening comments. I am proud to be the Minister of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut. This department will play an essential part in ensuring the success of the Government of Nunavut's short- and long- term infrastructure plans.

I look forward to our discussion and it will be my pleasure to take any questions from the committee. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister Joanasié. Does the chair of the committee have opening comments to provide? Mr. Savikataaq, go ahead, please.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am pleased to provide opening comments on behalf of the Standing Committee on Community and Economic Development on its review of the proposed 2025-2026 main estimates and business plan of the new Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut.

The new department's proposed operations and maintenance budget is \$262,316,000. Taking into account the transfer of the Government Liaison Office from the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs to the new Department of Community Services, the combined operations and maintenance budgets of the two new departments is only 2.9 per cent higher than the combined 2024-2025 operations and maintenance budgets of the Department of Economic Development and Transportation and the Department of Community and Government Services.

The new Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut has a total of 404.0 positions. Taking into account the transfer of the Government Liaison Office from the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs to the new Department of Community Services, the total number of positions in the two new departments is almost exactly the same as was provided for in the combined 2024-2025 operations and maintenance budgets of the Department of Economic Development and Transportation and the Department of Community and Government Services.

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

The new department includes an Infrastructure Branch. The branch includes a new "Municipal Works" division, which the department's draft 2025-2026 business plan indicates "provides onsite in-community support of municipalities in the areas of regulatory compliance and operational support for the delivery of municipal water, wastewater and solid waste programs and services."

In recent years, the government's annual capital estimates have included a number of "funding bundles" for infrastructure related to water, wastewater and solid waste. The Government of Nunavut's *Drinking Water Strategic Framework* was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on May 29, 2023. The new department's draft 2025-2026 business plan indicates that it "continues working to advance the Drinking Water Action Plan based on the Drinking Water Strategic Framework developed in 2022-2023." Members look forward to ongoing updates on the status of this important work.

A new *Building Code Act* was passed by the Third Legislative Assembly in 2012. Members have raised a number of concerns regarding the administration of the legislation as it applies to regulatory requirements in respect to small-scale projects undertaken by homeowners.

These concerns have related to such matters as the availability of inspectors in smaller communities. Members encourage the minister and the new department to review the legislation with the goal of making it more suitable to Nunavut's circumstances.

The new department includes a Transportation Branch. This branch includes all of the divisions that were previously located in the Transportation Branch of the Department of Economic Development and Transportation, with the exception of the Safety Services Division, which has been transferred to the new Department of Community Services.

The department's *Community Transportation Initiatives Program Policy* was revised in February of 2023 and sunsets on March 31, 2027. Schedule A of the policy details departmental support for "access roads and community marine infrastructure", while Schedule B details departmental support for "community marine infrastructure capital projects". Schedule B was formerly referred to as "small craft harbour contributions". The 2020-2021 annual report on the administration of the program was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on March 7, 2023. The 2021-2022, 2022-2023 and 2023-2024 annual reports have not yet been tabled.

On October 18, 2019, the Government of Nunavut issued a request for proposal for a "Comprehensive Marine Infrastructure Scoping Study." The department's draft 2025-2026 business plan indicates that one of its priorities has been to "develop an implementation plan prioritizing projects and considering departmental resources and

opportunities for increased federal support and participation in marine infrastructure development based on the results of the comprehensive marine infrastructure scoping studies.”.

The business plan also indicates that a “preliminary implementation plan has been developed.” The standing committee continues to encourage the minister to table the final report from the Comprehensive Marine Infrastructure Scoping Study and the related implementation plan in the Legislative Assembly at the earliest opportunity.

The Department of Economic Development and Transportation held community consultations concerning the proposed new Kivalliq Intercommunity Road Project during the 2024 calendar year. The department’s draft 2025-2026 business plan indicates that “the Kivalliq Intercommunity Road study is complete. Next steps are being considered and will be communicated to stakeholders and the public in 2025.” Members look forward to ongoing updates on the status of this important work.

On June 28, 2022, the department issued *Request for Proposals 2022-50: Executive Oversight and Corporate Services of the Petroleum Products Division*. The Request for Proposals closed on August 5, 2022. The standing committee encourages the minister to table the results of this study at the earliest opportunity.

The 2021-2022 annual report of the Petroleum Products Division was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on October 23, 2023. The 2022-2023 annual report has not yet been tabled.

The department’s draft 2025-2026 business plan indicates that one of its priorities for the 2025-2026 fiscal year is to “complete review of management models for the Petroleum Products Division.” The standing committee encourages the minister to table the final report from this review in the Legislative Assembly at the earliest opportunity.

That concludes my opening comments on the proposed 2025-2026 main estimates and business plan of the new Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Savikataaq. I invite any community members to make any general comments to the opening comments. Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I will refer to the information management and technology in my opening comments.

The Information Management and Technology Branch proposed operations and maintenance budget for 2025-2026 is \$54,633,000. That’s a lot of money, so I have to ask. And this net increase of 1,491,000 from 2024-2025 is driven primarily by additional software licensing costs.

Now, my question is, Mr. Chairman, what software are we talking about for the licensing cost. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Sorry, Mr. Quqqiaq, we're just in general comments. I don't have any names for general comments so I will put you first on the list so I will let that question stand. I hope the minister was paying attention. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It's regarding our Microsoft licensing, as well as our cloud-based applications. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. So just I've just allowed that question for now but we're on directorate, page J4 total operations and maintenance to be voted, \$2,040,000. Any questions on page J4? Ms. Quassa.

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and welcome Mr. Minister and your officials.

(interpretation ends) On October 10, 2024, the Government of Nunavut announced the creation of the new Department of Community Services and new Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut. As of today, what is the status of the reorganization process? (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Quassa. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank for the question. We are aiming for April 1 to turn our existing departments and portfolios, if you will, to these new departments, Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut. It's advancing and it goes through multiple phases in preparation for this, but we're on target. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Quassa.

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and Mr. Minister. (interpretation ends) Have any employees declined to be transferred to the new Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut? (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As far as we know, no, there hasn't been any employees that have declined to move departments. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Quassa.

Ms. Quassa (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Minister (interpretation ends) How much as the government spent to date on the reorganization process? (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Going through this transition we do anticipate there will be, I would say we don't have it quantified but we do anticipate there would be some budgetary measures that we would need to be done in support of this transition. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. I think it would be important to go into a little bit more detail on that. The member asked how much has been spent to date, not what's going to be spent or what the cost of this shift is going to take. Maybe if the minister could go into a little bit more detail on what type of work has had to be accomplished, to make this transition to change in departments. Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Maybe I'll touch on it and my deputy can dive deeper. But I think ballpark we're looking at \$1 million plus or minus, but it's all funded from within. If you'll allow my deputy to elaborate. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Go ahead, Mr. Seeley.

Mr. Seeley: Thank you, Mr. Chair. To date the work that has proceeded has included contract services for organizational design for each of the departments, in addition to a complete rebuild of our active directory which is our address book within the GN's internal operating system to realign our address book for all of the staff in their new positions.

That has also required a rebuild of the directory within the new enterprise solution, the Oracle solution which was implemented about three weeks ago.

In addition to that there has been communications work, both internal to staff as well as the development of new signage for all GN institutions and buildings.

This work has been led through an interdepartmental steering committee with contractor support in specialized areas like IMIT and human resources, as well as project management team, a project management team that is overseeing the work flows between the departments. That's another contracting expense. Our current projections to date are in the neighbourhood of \$1 million funded from within the participating departments' budgets. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you for that, Mr. Seeley. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon Minister and to your officials. Staying on the same subject here about how much has been spent so far and maybe it's \$1 million that was funded within. Since it was funded within and \$1 million is a lot of money, did that end up delaying some other project or something that the department was going to be working on a delay or even cancelled? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you Mr. Simailak. Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Chair. No. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki: Thank you, Mr. Chairman (interpretation) and welcome, Mr. Minister, and your officials. Since the departmental restructuring, is there going to be a delay in any types of services that are provided by your department? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We are looking at keeping up with everything, even with the departmental restructuring. We hope to have all the services provided for all of Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Are there going to be any delays in the government operations with the departmental restructuring. What will be delayed? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I can't say whether there are going to be any delays, but we would like to see some acceleration, be it transportation or infrastructure. We're looking at possibly accelerating and no delays in any of the projects by our department. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. On Page J4, total operations and maintenance under Directorate, total amount to be voted on, \$2,040,000. I have no more names. I've got one question, if the Minister will indulge me.

When I go over the net PYs, it comes out to plus one, from what I can see. I think I've identified it as the Assistant Deputy Minister of Transportation. Correct me if I'm wrong, because I don't see a negative one coming from the Department of Economic Development and Transportation. What was the most senior position title under transportation under the current model under Economic Development and Transportation? Is it an executive director or is it an assistant deputy minister? Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It is the Assistant Deputy Minister of Transportation. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Like I said, in my records I don't see a negative coming out of transportation under that, so maybe if I'm mistaken in that one position. So it still comes to a net one position positive. Can the minister tell me what position that is, then. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Hon. David Joanasie: I believe the Minister for Economic Development is willing to respond on the question, Mr. Chair, if you'll allow.

Chairman: Seeing how it's my question, I will definitely allow it. Minister Akeegok.

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, when it's with Economic Development and Transportation, the transportation portion, under the eight, assistant deputy minister, our department funded an assistant deputy intern and we funded that within the Economic Development portion to help with the Transportation. And when this transfer came over, that's the plus one that is being referenced in this.

And for the Economic Development side you don't see a negative because there's also, and I'll be able to have an opportunity to speak with when I'm in the Committee of the Whole, is on other activities. So you can't do the math comparatively with the transportation focused on it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister, for that response. So we're on Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, directorate, page J4. Total operations and maintenance \$2,040,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Before we go to J5, I'm going to recognize the clock and we'll take a 30-minute break. Thank you.

>> *Committee recessed from 17:14 to 17:46*

Chairman: Thank you. I would to call the committee back to order. We are on page J5, Corporate Services. Total operations and maintenance to be voted \$13,001,000. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The department (interpretation), first of all I would like to welcome the Minister and the official.

(interpretation ends) Your department's draft 2025-2026 business plan indicates that one of the priorities for 2025-2026 fiscal year is to "implement the department strategy plan to increase service delivered to stakeholders and achieve organizational objectives."

To what extent does the department strategy plan differ from its existing business plan? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasic.

Hon. David Joanasic: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you for the question. This is pertaining to we do undergo periodic strategic planning as things change, as our department is changing as of April 1. This is going to support that work and realigning our priorities based on what our service to other departments are, and so on and so forth. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I thank the Minister for the answers. When will your department strategy plan be tabled in the Legislative Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Joanasic.

Hon. David Joanasic: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It's not intended to be tabled, but we might see, as per the annual business plan cycle, these things might be coming out through that, if that makes sense. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Your department's new Corporate Service Branch includes the Procurement and Logistics Division and the Federal Contributions and Relations Division, both of which were transferred from the Department of Community and Government Services. How many of these division positions are currently filled and how many are currently vacant? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasic.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you. Under the Federal Contributions and Relations we have five PYs. Three are vacant. And then for Procurement and Logistics we have 18 positions, of which three are vacant. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The department draft 2025-2026 business plan indicates that one of the priorities for the 2025-2026 fiscal year is to develop a service delivery parameters for the managing federal contributions program applications and agreements specific to capital projects. What specific actions will be taken to achieve this objective? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chair. With that specific priority, my department is working to formally establish our delivery parameters with regards to the federal contributions and funding program, and it's the mission of staff to work with our client departments and secure. Of course we want new net federal funding investments towards infrastructure within Nunavut on behalf of Nunavummiut, and again, to try to close the infrastructure gap, try to strategically access new and emerging federal programs. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. J5 corporate services, total operations and maintenance to be voted on, \$13 million 1,000 dollars.

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Page J5, Corporate Services. Total operations and maintenance to be voted on, \$13,001,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please skip J6, as there's no amount to be voted on there. Go to page J7 Information Management and Information Technology. Total operations and maintenance to be voted, \$54,633,000. Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, my question is how many of the information management and information technology branches 87 positions are currently vacant. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Maybe if you'll allow, I'll have to come back to the committee with that number. We don't have a specific breakdown. I'll have to do a little bit of calculations here. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. I'm sure your calculator will be busy-busy. I was doing that myself earlier in the day. Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll move on to the next question. Your department's draft 2025-2026 business plan indicates that one of its priorities for the 2025-2026 fiscal year is to investigate options to develop our Government of Nunavut digitization program. The question is, Mr. Chairman, what specific changes to the government's current operations are being actively considered. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As we move into the new fiscal year 2025-2026, my department is working through an Information Governance Committee and we've created a terms of reference. And this is to begin a whole-of-government approach in tackling a complex challenge of our digitization of records, but we have in effect also updated the records and information management policy, and this is going to require the chief information officer to strike a committee composed of GN-wide representatives and begin to set the foundation for a fully digital government going forward. It's going to take while to get there, but this is to initiate the process. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. From the minister's response about the striking committee, when should we see a committee be created? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Sorry, just to clarify, there's already a committee that's been formed, Information and Governance Committee.

If I may go back to the question around vacancies, the Information Management and Technology Branch, 37 positions are currently vacant. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Sorry, it that three-seven? Thank you, Minister. Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Minister, for your response to the first question. Of the 37 vacancies, will they be filled anytime soon? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We are intending to staff as many positions as we can, and some positions are at different stages but we are trying to fill positions as we speak. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: If I may interject for a moment, Mr. Quqqiaq, I know in the past this division has had a lot of trouble filling positions, and if I recall correctly a few years back there was a policy put in place to allow market adjustments to be able to more competitive in the marketplace. I think it was the first fore into that practice from the human resources standpoint to alleviate some of the pressures on so many contractors that were in those positions.

Out of those 37 vacant positions are there currently any contractors working to cover off for those positions? Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As far as I'm concerned my assistant deputy minister advises no, there's no contractors filling in. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you for that. Mr. Quqqiaq, go ahead, please.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll move on to the next question. The 2021-2024 business plan of the Department of Community and Government Services indicated that it was working closely with the industry leader in digitized station on the development of information management digitization standards and potential creation of the information management act. The question is, Mr. Chairman, what is the timeline for introducing new legislation, and to what extent will your department consult with the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner on this. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: Give me a second here. Hold on. My apologies. For that piece of legislation that we're working towards, the policy work will have to come first, but also it will likely have to be the next government that will, if it's the priority of that government to develop that legislative proposal.

And also of course that would be in consultation with Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs as well as Access to Information and Privacy Commissioner. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I've spoke about software earlier, and my question about the software now is any of the software U.S.-based companies? If so, will the GN renew or keep the agreements with the 25 per cent tariffs that the Americans are imposing? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I do recall there was some exchange in the House during question period on this. We are monitoring this very closely and yes, many of our cloud-based or software applications that we rely on are U.S.-based.

But again we need to be mindful around the impacts to our government's operations if we decide to not use any one or a number of our software or cloud-based applications. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll be talking about the Starlink. The Government of Ontario with Rob Ford announcing the cancellation of the Starlink services for the Government of Ontario, will this government cancel any contracts, if they have any contracts with the Starlink services? Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That would be my last one.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I knew this question would come up at some point.

Mr. Chair, Government of Nunavut currently relies quite heavily on the Starlink's low earth orbit services for connectivity. If we are considering halting that, it's going to have a detrimental affect on our services to Nunavummiut and our government's operations. Losing access to the service would result in significant reduction in Internet speed, increased latency, and affect the efficiency of our government's services and our operations.

But again, we're monitoring this closely and working with others to ensure that we minimize risks. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. I was just about to ask about the Starlink situation. When the government first indicated that they were utilizing low earth orbit internet

technology, I applauded the GN for taking that initiative and alleviating the government's and the territory's high Internet costs.

And then shortly, not too long afterwards, the Arctic College came out with an announcement that they are also utilizing an alternative low earth orbit provider; I believe it's Galaxy Broadband. I am not entirely sure. I can't recall exactly.

I'm glad that there is an alternative to Starlink, given the non sense that comes out of that individual.

So I guess it's a two-part question: How many accounts or links does the department currently have utilizing Starlink, and is there potential for the GN to transition to this alternative LEO, or low earth orbit technology or competitor? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Joanasic.

Hon. David Joanasic: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Maybe if you'll allow my deputy to dive into that question, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

Chairman: Go ahead, Mr. Seeley.

Mr. Seeley: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you for the question. The short answer is that there is no quick alternative to transfer over to another low earth orbit provider.

Over the last couple years, as the member has pointed out, we have successfully transferred a lot of the services onto the faster service provided through the low earth orbit satellite providers.

We do buy our bandwidth in bulk from the providers, so as far as the number of accounts go, we have a big account that manages our total bandwidth requirements from the provider.

There are other providers emerging in the market that we are considering, but the transition to another carrier would be a significant undertaking, and given the timeframe that we've been dealing with recent developments, we are still monitoring those to see what the most viable options are to meet our bandwidth needs in the near future, as far as satellite services go. I hope that answers the question. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you for the response. Given that there have been threats to cut Starlink access in Ukraine, to the Ukrainian military and government, I guess there's somewhat of a risk that that could happen here in Canada, given the current situation.

If for some reason at all or at any point in the near future, if Starlink decides to cut connections in Canada, how long would it take for our government to respond in that type of situation? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I suppose to put it, we don't think cut-off is a risk at this point, but we are looking at costs. I'll just say that we are now heavily reliant on Starlink. The only other current viable alternative would be to go back to the geostationary T19V satellite as an option, which would reduce our bandwidth and slower speeds. We know where I'm going with this. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would just like to revisit what Mr. Quqqiaq was asking about the U.S.-based programs and licensing for software.

The Minister replied that they can't just cut them off, and I understand. Plus if there's contracts, there's obligations. But are there any plans to enhance programs, enhance licensing that are not currently being used but that are thinking about being used? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I suppose I'll respond in that sense that again we are working with all parties that could be impacted around the U.S. tariffs.

Our Information Management and Technology Division, through the leadership of our Chief Information Officer, will be going forward with what we need to, and if it means some other suggestions coming from this committee as well, we'll take those into consideration. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Maybe I didn't make myself clear. I'm talking about U.S.-based programming or licensing that would be new to the government.

If the U.S. is putting tariffs, and a lot of the provinces are avoiding U.S. products now, and some of the licensing for some of the software programs, I fully understand that you can't just stop any of them. But will you stop any new enhancement of a program by paying more licensing fee or making a program bigger or newer by paying a U.S.-based company that? Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Just to make sure I understand the question, so Mr. Savikataaq, are you saying of any existing contracts if any further work or any additional increases to that software? Is that what you're going at? Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: More or less. Spending more money to enhance the capabilities of a certain software or program or licensing fee that is not on board right now, that is not being used right now. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you for that clarification. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, and thank you for that clarification. My apologies if I wasn't as clear in my response. But maybe just to start off, I'll say that I think we'll have to rethink and reconsider those options as we go forward, but keeping in mind what's going on around the world.

Again, our procurement division has been trying to be on top of what's going on in our neighbours to the south and across the country as it pertains to licensing software or any new service that we're trying to tap as a government. Maybe if you'll allow, Mr. Chair, through you, my deputy to expand on this. Thank you.

Chairman: Go ahead please, Mr. Seeley.

Mr. Seeley: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think the minister, I'll jump off of his point about generally our procurement. Within the procurement entity of any new services or contract services generally, we are putting additional measures in place to encourage domestic purchases that will include software providers and licensing.

For clarification on existing licensing, the licences that we do obtain for software applications are based on what our business needs are. So we purchase the licences that will support the services and programs of the GN. Any enhancements that would be considered for purchase would be tied to service requirements of the GN.

Our current practice is to continue working on our procurement measures to enhance Canadian domestic or other international purchases to avoid the current tariff situation. I hope that answers the member's question. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My colleague here asked about the Starlink, and you said you have them, you use them, they are handy, they are good, they're fast, and you're going to keep using them, otherwise it's detrimental to the operation. Are there plans to buy more of them, then? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Not at this time. We're not planning on expanding yet. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a couple of quick clarification questions following up on some of the questions asked.

I believe there are currently 37 vacancies in this branch of Information Management and Information Technology. Are any of those new positions?

I'm asking that because, going back to the budget address, there was mention of a hiring freeze, so I'm just looking for some clarification on the 37 vacancies in this branch. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The 37 vacant positions are not new. To go back to where some of the question was, there was some question around where things are at. Fourteen are currently at various stages of staffing, so we are trying to fill some of these, a good portion of these. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Going to the software questions, currently what is the cost to have these software programs? I don't know if you would have that handy. And if the 25 per cent tariff comes into play, what would the new cost be? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thankfully, I have a very good calculator to my right. For the U.S.-based software companies we're looking at right now, the costs of those services that we currently incur is about 5.5 million. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If the 25 per cent tariff comes into play, what would the new cost be? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Twenty-five per cent more. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Mr. Chairman, I was hoping for an actual number, because the minister mentioned he had a very good calculator beside him. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: It would be around \$1.3 million, Mr. Simailak. Go ahead. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Would the department have to come back to this House for a supplementary appropriation ask? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We would try to have to find the funding from within, as necessary, but if and when we have to come through with supplementary appropriation at some point, if necessary. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. I have no more names on my list under this page. J7, Information Management and Information Technology, total operations and maintenance to be voted on, \$54,633,000, agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Page J8, Infrastructure. Total operations and maintenance to be voted, \$137,787,000. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. I would first like to start off with capital projects and the Project Management Division.

Bill 72 that we have before us includes \$280 million worth of carryovers for unspent capital funds from the fiscal year 2024-2025.

Back in October 2023, when we passed the capital budgets for 2024-2025, the budget was 355 million.

So again, we approved \$355 million capital budget and now today we're being asked to carry over \$280 million of it. That's about 78 per cent. So every year the capital carryovers get larger and larger, as do the capital budgets themselves.

But we're at the point where we're carrying over 78 per cent of the capital budget. It's a bit alarming.

So what I would like to ask if we can get an update on the status of the capital projects division and the project management team. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chair. This has been the nature of capital process of having many projects we're adding to, or cost escalations, having to carry over funds, projects having to do with multiple years. It's just kind of the nature of the operations.

But just to add on, the Capital Projects Division, we have 17 positions of which five are vacant currently. Again, these important public servants are trying to do their best under the circumstances. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. One thing that the pandemic taught us is the time value of money and how quickly prices can inflate, and when close to 80 per cent of the budget goes unspent, that prevents other projects from moving forward as well.

So it has just become very alarming at this point that such a significant amount of the budget is being carried over.

Are there any potential ideas in the works to try and reduce that high percentage of capital carryovers? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: If you'll allow through you, I'll have my department respond on that. Thank you.

Chairman: Go ahead please, Mr. Seeley.

Mr. Seeley: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thank the member for this question.

Our capital planning team has been doing a lot of work in this area in the recent weeks and months. The member has correctly pointed out that as the magnitude of the capital plan increases in size, so will our carryovers. They're always proportionally going to increase.

Members have pointed out, and we've noticed on our own that the carryovers have gotten larger and larger. There's a couple of key contributors to that; one is just the growth of the plan. The other piece to that is the actual award of projects in the year that they are tendered. If a tender is not successfully awarded, we naturally carry that funding over until we find a path forward.

We've had a couple of very large-scale projects go out and not be awarded in recent years. That has definitely contributed to the growth of our carryovers.

What we were doing about it is a couple of different approaches. One, we're looking at the timing of procurement timelines when we put out tenders, to make sure they are closing in time, firstly, for sealift and to support the project management and successful execution of the project; but also to give us a fallback for the award of the project if a supp was required.

The second item that we've advanced is taking a look at the cash flows a little bit more closely when they're put forward in the substantiation in the actual cash capital estimates when the projects are brought forward to the House.

Another approach that we're taking is additional statements, professional estimators taking and getting duplicate estimates before projects are tendered out, to make sure that project budgets are aligned with what the market is showing us.

Another approach that we're taking is to take a look at the actual lifecycling budgets within the departments to make sure that those project cash flows are being managed effectively, because in some cases, those are carried over, and in many years, in the maintenance areas.

This work is being led through work at the executive level. Our department has led two workshops in the last month with deputy ministers and assistant deputy ministers to support enhanced capital planning, as TIN comes into force on April 1.

We are working very closely through our Capital Planning Division to maintain and enhance our staffing levels to make sure that these projects are supported moving forward.

The third piece that I'll mention is that by bringing transportation into the same department as infrastructure and information management and information technology, we do expect to see some efficiencies within the project management side and to support some enhanced capital planning.

It is our goal to make sure that we are very transparent in the funding that we're asking for on the capital estimates side of the house, and make sure we're managing that funding

as effectively as we can to make sure as many projects are moving forward on time and on budget as possible. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Seeley. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Mr. Seeley. So one of the major issues is the timing, or awarding of the tender not income the year that it is intended, due to several reasons as you had mentioned.

Can you speak a bit more about the pool of bidders that you typically receive on large scale projects. Do you feel like there's a sufficient number of bidders submitting? Or do you feel like there could be a bit more incentive to bring other companies to start bidding on northern projects? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: If you allow, I think the question was directed to my deputy, through you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Go ahead, Mr. Seeley.

Mr. Seeley: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We would like to see a very competitive market on projects large and small. That includes small businesses in the communities as well as larger capital projects with multiple bidders.

We have taken some additional measures, including doing labour market outreach, to the vendors to identify some of the challenges and barriers that they are seeing that are preventing competition within the market, which is to say more qualified bids on more projects.

That outreach resulted in some very interesting recommendations, including some around the timing, how long bids were at market to inform qualified bids.

So we would like to see more competition. We do see in some cases bids close with very few qualified bids, so we would love to see more competitive market, and we're happy to support them. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. I don't want to try and infringe on our limited pool of opportunities for local businesses and contractors, but when it does come to major projects in excess of \$100 million, that's far out of the scope of current local businesses' expertise.

I really hope that we can find a way to get more interest from bidders to try and increase that competitiveness, in hopes that we can try and curb the rate of the inflationary costs of our capital projects.

But I'll move on to my last topic. This is something I bring up every single year with utility costs continuously going up, especially for electricity.

So I would like to ask the minister for an update from last year's discussion on discussions between his officials and those with QEC on utilizing the Commercial and Institutional Power Producer Program. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I appreciate the member keeps bringing this up. It's an area where my department and I know Qulliq Energy Corporation does have something in place for municipalities and others to try to wean off of diesel and bring in more clean and green energy.

It's something that I know there's more and more interest in this area, and we'll continue, when it's viable and there's an opportunity for partnerships and all that good stuff, we'll try to bring that forward. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Minister. I don't want you to take any offence to this, but I'm going to have to put my foot down. I do not accept that response for the tenth time, or whatever.

It is viable. It is applicable. The Government of Nunavut is, we have already established that the GN is able to utilize the SIP program, and now it's up to the GN to start using it.

So the next question, sorry I'm going to calm down a little bit. The next question is when will the first GN asset bring online their own little SIP project? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Maybe if you'll allow my deputy, and again, I'm not trying to push buttons here with the member. We are trying to find opportunities where we can do this. Again, if you have my deputy elaborate. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Seeley.

Mr. Seeley: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We do have a couple of measures in place on this. So within the planning and design process of any major capital project, the potential for the return on the investment of installing a green energy solution like solar panels is considered. So it is reviewed to see if that installation and startup cost can be feasibly recovered within the projected lifespan of that asset.

As I understand it, there are GN assets with solar cells and other technology already installed in them. I believe there are a couple of schools that have that technology already installed.

The rollout of additional assets on a larger scale has been considered on multiple new assets; however, on many of them it has been ruled out before construction or before the design is completed and before construction is completed, because the return on the investment couldn't be demonstrated.

We do have studies done on this. I would be happy to share those studies to convey exactly what that return on investment looks like.

Second piece to that is that we have established a regular meeting scheduled with QEC to talk about key interdependencies between the GN, specifically through the Department of Community Government Services and Qulliq Energy, to discuss opportunities like alternative energy development systems and some other efficiencies that we have identified between the department and the corporation. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Once thing that we keep hearing, it's cost and cost recovery, but there's also a social expense. I raised this last year, where it doesn't have to just be costs that is taken a look at it. We also have a social responsibility to lower our use of fossil fuels, and if it does cost a little over and above, I do see that as a value there. So I'll leave that as a comment there and I'll go to Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. But again, Mr. Seeley, I'm going to have to strongly disagree. The private sector conducts a very thorough analysis before they make this type of investment, and they deem it worth, the payback is worth the expense, and they pay a lower electricity rate than the government does.

So the GN pays more per kilowatt-hour than the private sector does, and yet for some reason the private sector deems it as a viable economic investment.

So I do not agree with you in what you've just stated, that in all these major capital projects there has been an assessment conducted which has proven that it is not economically viable.

I'll just leave that as a comment. Thank you, Chair.

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

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a question on the branch summary.

(interpretation ends) The Infrastructure Branch is responsible for ensuring the smooth and effective delivery of essential municipal services to the residents of Nunavut.”

Going to the business plan under page 131, bullet 2, it says:

“The department continues to work with Nunavut Housing Corporation through various working groups. Additionally, the department has advanced several surplus assets through the surplus building process. The surplus demolition fund, transferring surplus properties, creates redevelopment and intensification, and also the opportunity to meet with housing and municipal facilities needs.”

Looking at these two from the summary and from the business plan, a question that I have is that under your level with local municipal governments, concerning the oversight of all the abandoned buildings that the owners have abandoned, to me it’s concerning when things have never been done.

And my point, I’ll get to this point: It’s how often do you meet with local municipalities and housing association management, I believe it would be. How often do you carry that to meet with them? I’ll ask that question first and I’ll have more questions after that.
Qujannamiik.

Chairman: Minister Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Just to point out, my department, we have a surplus disposal policy and this is regarding Government of Nunavut assets. So old buildings that belong to any one of our departments. And if let’s say Health surpluses a building, they hand it over to us, it goes through a process and we give first right of refusal to other departments within the government. If there’s no interest, it goes to, we solicit interest from the municipality, and so on and so forth.

We do have regular, our relationship with Nunavut Association of Municipalities and trying to look at these assets that are at the local level. Some, their useful life is completed and it needs to be demolished and/or remediated. So we’ve introduced funding to support that and have done some work in Baker Lake and Cambridge Bay and others to remove old buildings, with the plan of each community wants to see either new houses and/or infrastructure on that lot that the old buildings currently sit on. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With the government-owned surpluses, it seems that's your question was geared towards the government surplus buildings. What about the hamlets? What about the abandoned buildings, for example, abandoned or a building that was owned previously by a deceased person? I'm talking about some surpluses that are not owned by anybody specific. Does the hamlet know what processes they have to go through to demolish surplus building? That's my question. Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and for clarity, you are talking about the surplus materials that have been abandoned? Or for example if it was a retail outlet at one point, and the owners have abandoned those buildings, or if it's owned by a deceased person it would go to that individual's estate. Or possibly, if it was mortgaged then that surplus material would be repossessed by the bank. I'm not exactly sure what you're talking about.

But as the Nunavut government, we only deal with surpluses that that are owned by the government. And to add further, for example, if it was Nunavut Housing Corporation surplus material or Social Services, then they would be responsible, if I understood you correctly. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and I do apologize if I'm not getting across speaking in Inuktitut. But to explain further, because of the Nunavut 3000 project, that's the reason why I'm asking that question. Nunavut 3000 has to have access to lands that they can build on at an accelerated pace. They have been working very hard to date, I'm sure, but there's some old buildings that have to be surplus so that we can make room on the lots that are available. The old buildings that have been abandoned for 15, 20 years, possibly, some abandoned for 10 years.

There are some policies that can be followed by the hamlet council. Those are very good lots. They are on dry ground. The land is not damaged. And they're perfect lots to build new houses. I'm sure you work with the other departments and hamlets. If you look at 131, bullet 2. The reason why I brought this up was because there's a scarcity of lots at the community level. I'll leave it at that, Mr. Chairman.

Speaker: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to thank you for that information. Mr. Chairman, to make it more clear, if we're talking about the

public housing or staff housing, we also deal with that through the government services, and it's also the responsibility of Nunavut Housing Corporation. I can say, either in Clyde River or Qikiqtarjuaq, we can work with the hamlet councils in those communities. We'll make sure that we get to the bottom of this issue. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. We're on page J8, Infrastructure. Total operations and maintenance to be voted on \$137,787,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to J9, transportation. Total operations and maintenance to be voted on \$54,855,000. Any questions? Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and good afternoon minister. (interpretation ends) Your department's draft 2025-2025 business plan indicates that one of its priorities has been to implement changes to Iqaluit and Pond Inlet's marine facility operations based on previously completed evaluations. What were the main conclusion of these evaluations and what specific changes are being actively considered? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The department is currently collecting this information and we'll inform on the way we plan on operating it more effectively. Maybe if you'll have my deputy expand on this point. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Go ahead, Mr. Seeley.

Mr. Seeley: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you, Minister. So the review that's completed, an annual review of operations, is to make sure things like the timing of arrivals, the amount of space required on shore, offloading times, and perhaps the timing of when the vessels are coming into the community. Those items are tracked to review and plan out the following year's resupply.

Those findings I guess are relayed back to the carriers, and that helps inform their arrival schedule and the offloading schedule to make sure that we're not having any undue down time in the communities and it's a safe and effective resupply.

The other consideration that we're going to be tracking moving forward is the fuel resupply occurring in and around the same time. It's just one more vessel in the area offloading. So that's tracked annually and that's used to plan the operations for the upcoming year. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Mr. Seeley. As I heard before in Pond Inlet, the marine facility needed correcting. It had to go to the deeper ocean. It was on the shallow water. It was just left like that. I was wondering if that's the case. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: I'll get my deputy to respond. Thank you.

Chairman: Go ahead, please, Mr. Seeley.

Mr. Seeley: Thank you, Mr. Chair. If I understood the question, it had to do with vessels being able to navigate the area in and around Pond Inlet, shallow waters and deep water, I guess, stationing of those ships. So those are the sort of challenges that we tracked and monitored within the annual review to make sure they are planned for in the upcoming year.

If there are any kind of material changes that need to be made, those are things that would be tracked and planned for to make any kind of modifications to the site if that was a consideration.

So again the priority is just about tracking those operations and modifying the planning to make sure it's more effective in the upcoming year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Seeley. I was informed that there was a mistake in making the port. It was supposed to be in the deeper water, but they had made a mistake and made it too close to the shallow water. Is that true? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Chairman: As it's related to the same question, I'll go directly to Mr. Seeley.

Mr. Seeley: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I believe that the port was built on the site as prescribed within the planning studies. If there are any operational challenges though, I think that those are things that would be considered in the future. But it was built where the port was designed. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Nutarak.

Ms. Nutarak (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and also Mr. Seeley for explaining that. Fisheries vessels should be able to arrive to the port in Pond Inlet, and it was supposed to be deep enough to receive ship vessels, but the port was constructed in the shallow water. My question is you'll be able to rectify this issue sometime in the future, if required. That's my last question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Seeley.

Mr. Seeley: Thank you, Mr. Chair and I thank the member for the clarification. I think I understand the question better now. With the project being completed, any deficiencies in the construction will be addressed with the contractor to make sure the port is operating as designed in the future. So any of those deficiencies would still be managed with the contractors. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Seeley. I'll go to the next name on my list. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On October 18, 2019 the Government of Nunavut issued a request for proposals for a comprehensive marine infrastructure scoping study. The department's draft 2025-2026 business plan indicates that one of its priorities has been to "develop an implementation plan, prioritizing projects and considering departmental resources and opportunities for increased federal support and participation in marine infrastructure development, based on the result of the comprehensive marine infrastructure scoping studies."

The business plan also indicates that a "preliminary implementation plan has been developed."

When will the final report from the comprehensive marine infrastructure scoping study and related implementation plan be tabled in the Legislative Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chair and thanks for the question, Mr. Chair. That continues to be reviewed. There is a draft scoping studies report. Right now I don't think there's any plans to table it. However, the preliminary implementation plan was developed based on the outputs of the scoping studies to date. It's still being refined, and the output of the scoping studies project has already been helpful and is essential for our government's submissions to two calls for proposal under the Transport Canada Oceans Protection Plan. I've been able to secure \$40 million in funding for 13 community sea lift improvement projects. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Would the minister be willing to share that by letter, through the chair, of those 13 communities that he had mentioned? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's a response I like to hear, yes. I would like to hear it more.

Minister, the Legislative Assembly approved 1.060 million in capital carryover funding for the Kivalliq trade corridor study during its winter 2024 sitting. Last year the Department of Economic Development and Transportation held community consultations concerning the proposed new Kivalliq Intercommunity Road Project. Your department's draft 2025-2026 business plan indicates that the Kivalliq Intercommunity Road Study is complete. Next steps are being considered and will be communicated to stakeholders and the public in 2025.

What were the main conclusions of the study and when will its result be tabled in the Legislative Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman feedback that was received through that. It was mostly positive, and there were some concerns, however, around the costs, the feasibility, as well as safety and impacts to wildlife. But overall the five communities regarded the road connection as a clear benefit for the region.

We expect the work to be completed by the end of this fiscal year. We're anticipating that a what we heard, quote-unquote, document summarizing the community engagements, might be circulated sooner. We are expecting that there's going to be something shared with our stakeholders. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you, Minister. We're looking forward to that study and we hope that we can make it a reality, the interconnecting road.

Minister, the Nunavut Transportation Strategy was tabled in the Legislative Assembly in June 2009. Your department's draft 2025-2026 business plan indicates that one of its

priorities has been to “undertake an evaluation of the Nunavut Transportation Strategy, including progress towards completing actions and achieving objectives set out in the strategy.”

The business plan also indicates that the evaluation is complete. Minister, what were the main conclusions of the evaluation? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

>>*Laughter*

Chairman: Thank you. I’ll remind members to please make sure your electronic devices do not interfere with proceedings. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It has been a long day, I know.

The purpose of that evaluation was intended to set the stage for potential renewal of the Nunavut Transportation Strategy if it’s warranted. The evaluation was completed in house and it should help make a case for or against the project to renew that strategy. We are contemplating next steps to take. It involves and there’s a matrix of the 2009 strategy actions and the detailing current status and other pertinent information around the strategic document. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Did the department consult anybody in Baker Lake around this transportation strategy that was being worked on? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I’m not aware what stakeholders were involved. We’re treating it as an internal document, for the time being, but I’m sure we’ll be engaging other folks as and when needed. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Minister, what is your department’s timeline for publishing an updated transportation strategy? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I don’t have rigid timelines, and if we’re going to go full consultation, the work involved, it’s going to be a year or two at least, from my forecast. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. I don't have any more names on my list under this. I just have one question that I would like to address. When we talk about the port here in Iqaluit, there was discussion last year on expanding the site as more of a hub of actually having like warehouse space, and be able to coordinate and marshal cargo to other communities. Can I get an update on that. Thank you, Mr. Joanasie.

Hon. David Joanasie: My apologies. I'll have my deputy. He has a better recollection than I, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Go ahead, Mr. Seeley, please.

Mr. Seeley: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you, Minister. As discussed on I think one of the earlier marine items, the work to review the operations annually is what's informing next steps in the operational plan for the port. There have been discussions on different operating models, just as far as managing safety and loading, offloading, and scheduling.

There is also consideration around designing and building I'll call it a warehouse space, to support offloading equipment and taking it out of the sea can for distribution in the community.

That work is ongoing in the first couple years of operation. We need to make sure that the space out at the port is used as strategically as possible and that the operational plan is going to be safe and sustainable. So continuing to review that with the vendors and with other partners. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. We're on page J9, Transportation. Total operations and maintenance to be voted, \$54,855,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to page J3. Detail of expenditures to be voted, total operations and maintenance to be voted, \$262 million – sorry, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was waiting for J10. I know it's an information item, but normally we're allowed to ask questions on Petroleum Products Division. Can we ask questions on that, Mr. Chair? Thank you.

Chairman: My apologies. Go ahead, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Last year when we were going through the Petroleum Products Division again, I had asked the minister at that time what were the chances of Arviat being a pilot project for selling propane through PPD, bulk propane in

20-pound and 100-pound bottles. The minister said it was very, highly likely. And every time the ship came there I went to the dock, I watched the barges come off and see if there was any propane come off. When I was too busy, I would send my grandkids there to go watch, to make sure to see if propane would come off the dock there, and none appeared.

Can I get an explanation why PPD in Arviat is not selling bulk propane as a pilot project? Because more communities are using propane now than naphtha now.

Chairman: The annual question. Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the mandate of the Petroleum Products Division is to supply and delivery petroleum products in all our communities not served by the private sector, so with that we do know that there's a private market for propane in said community, in Arviat. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If the minister would go to Northern Stores almost any community, the minister would see that there's naphtha being sold at the Northern Store and PPD does sell naphtha. So explanation. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Basically we don't want to be competing with the private sector around what they provide to Nunavummiut at this time. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you. So if the private sector not sell propane, PPD will start selling bulk propane in that community, then? Because there would be no competition, if no one sells it there. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It would remove that barrier, that we currently don't want to compete against the private sector. If there is no private sector activity around propane selling in any of our communities, I think we would look at that more and potentially bring that pilot in. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Minister. I encourage all the MLAs listening here, if their community does not sell propane they can contact the minister and the minister will make it very highly likely that bulk propane will be sold in your community, because more people are. More hunters, more campers are using propane more than they are naphtha. I'll take that as a comment.

My next question will be still with Petroleum Products Division there. The fuel that is purchased, has the fuel for 2025-2026 already been purchased? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So far to date we've secured pricing for approximately 50 per cent of our requirements. We're at 105 million litres. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Where is this fuel, what country is this purchased from? Is it Canada? Is it U.S.? Is it Venezuela? What country is the fuel purchased from, both diesel and gasoline? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We go through the futures contract purchase transaction, and this allows our resupply carriers they can source it from Canadian or other international sources. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: The reason I'm asking all these questions is we know that the tariffs were coming, are coming, and last year, it says for 2024 supply season the fuel supply and transportation came from the Gulf Coast, which I would assume means the U.S. It was loaded onto tankers on the Canadian east coast and transported to Nunavut.

If the fuel is coming from the U.S., a 25 per cent tariff on it, if we use last year's main estimates, it will be in the neighbourhood of an extra \$70 million. Does the minister have any control over where this fuel will be coming from? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again, yes, we are trying to be mindful on what's going on with the tariffs and where we source our fuel from. Again, what I'm in my exchange with Member Sammurtok, we are anticipating that there could be indirect

impacts around this. But for U.S. tariffs, for example if there's a 10 per cent tariff on the Canadian crude, it could drive up the West Texas Intermediate oil prices so that those influences on our fuel costs on remaining purchases are there. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If it was a 10 per cent tariff, that would bring it to about \$27 million extra. Just to confirm, that cost would be passed on to Nunavut customers, correct? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Our buyers would buy it anywhere cheaper that they can find. So again, we try to make the best purchase that is favourable to Nunavummiut. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Generally history repeats itself, so where was the fuel bought from last year? What country? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chair. If you'll have my deputy respond.

Chairman: Go ahead, please, Mr. Seeley.

Mr. Seeley: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Our fuel is purchased from our vendor who sources the fuel from multiple other sources. I think the minister's point earlier is that our buyers have the ability to pivot and buy from other international sources if pricing would be prohibitive. We would buy from a cheaper vendor in another place if it was going to save us money, through our vendor. So our purchases are actually done through our contracted vendor. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And the quality of the gasoline we get, because I believe we get premium grade, winter grade, that quality would not be affected? It doesn't matter where the gasoline is purchased from? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: If you'll have my deputy again respond on this, thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Seeley.

Mr. Seeley: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So the fuel we purchase is bought to specification. We would only buy fuel that's going to meet northern specifications. Any fuel that we do purchase is tested at loading and offloading to make sure it meets the specifications that we paid for. High quality fuel is absolutely critical to our operations up here and we'll continue to test that. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Sometimes persistence pays off, so I'll go back to the propane issue. I'll use Iqaluit for example. The gasoline vendors, the gas stations here buy their fuel from Uksuq, which gets it from the government, just to confirm that first; is that correct? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Correct.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So if a vendor in Arviat wanted to sell propane, PPD would bring in propane to sell to vendors in Arviat, then? It would be no different than what is the system that is used here in Iqaluit?

What's the chances of PPD bringing propane into Arviat as a pilot project to sell to vendors and vendors only, so that we may get a better break on our price? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Joanasié.

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It's an interesting concept and perhaps if we go that route we would have to structure the contract in a way that's presented to with Uksuq, if that's I guess doable. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank, you Mr. Chairman. I would like to get the minister to say that that will be looked into. Last year it was very highly likely that it was coming to Arviat, and it didn't. I want assurance that even more highly likely, maybe highly, highly, highly likely, that this process will happen. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That's my last question.

>> *Laughter*

Chairman: Minister Joanasié, how many likelies are we going to hear?

Hon. David Joanasié: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We'll consider keeping that highly likely there. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Just to be clear, so this is an information only item on page J10 for Petroleum Products Division. Any other questions? Seeing none, there's also an information item on public stores resolving fund. Any questions? I am not seeing any.

Please going to J3, detail of expenditures to be voted, total operations and maintenance to be voted, \$262,316,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree we have concluded with the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut? I am still getting used to this title.

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister, do you have any closing comments?

Hon. David Joanasié: I thank the members for their questions today, and I also thank all my officials both that are here and not, for helping us to go through this exercise. Again, it's been a long day and I appreciate the consideration that we've had today and look forward to the new Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, effective April 1. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Do members agree we have completed Transportation Infrastructure Nunavut?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Witnesses, Sergeant-at-Arms please escort the witnesses out. I will ask members to remain in your seats. We are going to proceed directly with opening comments for Family Services. I'll ask Minister Nakashuk to proceed directly to her opening comments.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

(interpretation ends) I am pleased to be here today before the Committee of the Whole to present and discuss the Proposed 2025-2026 Main Estimates and Business Plan for the Department of Family Services.

Mr. Chair, the department provides a range of programs and services that promote the well-being and self-reliance of Nunavummiut. It prepares individuals for meaningful work through employment readiness programming and supports through a variety of services provided across four client-focused divisions:

First, the Family Wellness Division provides a broad range of support services for children, families, and vulnerable adults who may require protection or other specialized support. The division also provides emergency intervention as well as prevention programs.

Second, the Income Assistance Division includes a variety of benefit programs that provide financial assistance to people 18 years of age and over and their dependents.

Third, the Career Development Division promotes employment training programs, administers funding to clients for these programs, and offers career counselling services.

Fourth, the Poverty Reduction Division coordinates collaboration across government departments and with Inuit organizations on strategic approaches to poverty reduction, food insecurity and homelessness.

Mr. Chair, for 2025-2026, to support the ongoing programs and services provided, the Department of Family Services is proposing an operating budget of \$228.5 million, which represents an increase of 17 per cent, or \$33.5 million over last year's Main Estimates. These increases include:

\$25.9 million towards Family Wellness initiatives to begin the implementation of the Ilagiitsiarniq Strategic Action Plan such as:

- in- and out-of-territory group home services;
- increased supports for our foster care families;
- building capacity;
- improvements to data collection;
- compliance with standards in referrals and investigation; and
- youth support services.

\$2 million for increased funding for income assistance initiatives.

\$1.7 million for career development including workforce development in conjunction with Nunavut Arctic College for the Nunavut 3000 strategy for building houses.

\$300,000 allocated to Corporate Services for internal Human Resource assessments and financial management supports for the department.

\$800,000 for poverty reduction initiatives such as increasing the homelessness budget.

\$1.7 million increase for wage increases related to the changes in the Government of Nunavut's salary grid and a \$1.1 million incremental increase for the new Community Social Service Worker positions that were approved in 2023-2024.

These budget increases reflect the changes the department has undertaken to support vulnerable Nunavummiut who cannot meet their basic needs as they work towards personal well-being.

These increases are a small step towards enabling the department to address the specific concerns regarding inadequate service levels and compliance across the territory.

Mr. Chair, the department recognizes that challenges persist in meeting the growing and diverse needs of Nunavummiut. Gaps in staffing, infrastructure, and specialized resources have impacted the department's ability to deliver consistent and timely services.

The proposed funding increase will help the department improve service delivery by strengthening the workforce, including hiring additional front-line staff, and increasing training opportunities to better equip employees with the tools and knowledge required to address complex client needs.

Furthermore, targeted investments in compliance measures will help ensure that programs and services are delivered in alignment with legislative and policy requirements.

Mr. Chair, this proposed operating budget will also allow the department to support the government's efforts to address the Katujjiluta mandate's commitments and associated GN-wide strategies aimed at improving the health and well-being of Nunavummiut.

I would be happy to respond to questions from Committee members on the Proposed 2025-2026 Main Estimates and Business Plan of the Department of Family Services.
Qujannamiik.

Chairman: Thank you. Does the chair of the Standing Committee have any opening comments to provide? Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. Members of the Standing Committee on Social Wellness have reviewed the 2025-2026 main estimates and business plan of the Department of Family Services. As the Co-Chair of the committee, I will provide some opening remarks.

Chair, the Department of Family Services is proposing an operations and maintenance budget of \$228.5 million for 2025-2026, which represents a 17 per cent increase from the previous budget.

The majority of the department's proposed budget increase will be allocated to its Family Wellness division. Members of the Standing Committee were encouraged to see the department's *Ilagitsiarniq Strategic Action Plan* tabled in the Assembly on October 28, 2024, and support investments in this area.

Members have raised a number of ongoing concerns with respect to many of the issues which were also raised by the Office of the Auditor General of Canada in the 2023 report on *Child and Family Services in Nunavut* and in prior reports. The implementation of the strategic plan must be carefully monitored, and the department must be held accountable for its successes and failures in the delivery of services for some of Nunavut's most vulnerable residents.

One of the key issues raised by the Auditor General, raised by Members of the Legislative Assembly, and raised by such officials as Nunavut's Representative for Children and Youth, has been the department's inability to provide up-to-date and accurate information on the numbers and status of children in its care.

The Standing Committee was very disappointed to note that the most recent annual reports of the Director of Child and Family Services appears to contain even fewer specific details respecting activities undertaken to protect children and youth across the territory than previous reports.

Members had anticipated that the implementation of the department's new Matrix Case Management System, which was initiated over a year ago, would have introduced improvements to the collection and analysis of data respecting children and youth in care.

The Office of the Auditor General of Canada has submitted its *2025 Follow-Up on Child and Family Services in Nunavut*, and members will soon have the opportunity to review that report in detail. Members greatly appreciate the ongoing efforts of the Office of the Auditor General to work with the government to address the very serious systemic issues affecting the well-being and protection of Nunavut's children, youth, and families.

The Department of Family Services provides a wide range of critical services to Nunavummiut who may be vulnerable and who may require additional protections or supports to live safely and comfortably. The Standing Committee recognizes that staffing is a major challenge for the department, especially for the positions of community social services workers, income assistance workers, and family resource workers.

Members have raised concerns respecting the lack of staff in communities outside of the regional centres, ensuring difficulties in communicating with the regional offices or even headquarters when services are not available locally.

While the establishment of the Homelessness Outreach program is a welcome initiative, it also appears to be facing capacity challenges. The committee does appreciate that hiring activities are heavily impacted by the lack of staff housing, and operations in some communities continue to be affected by the lack of office space.

While the Standing Committee appreciates the department's efforts to recruit staff into critical front-line positions, members stress the importance of cultural competency training for all newly hired staff.

Members were disappointed to learn that previous initiatives to train and certify Nunavut-based social workers did not meet the employment requirements, and strongly encourage the department to continue working with Nunavut Arctic College and Memorial University to recruit, train, certify and employ Nunavummiut in the social work field.

The Standing Committee supports the department's work to support community-based initiatives. Members will be carefully monitoring the newly introduced Ikur'raq Cabin Program which is funded by the federal government's Infrastructures and Communities Canada to provide homelessness relief.

It was noted that even with a cabin or similar structure to stay in, individuals and families may still require additional support to meet such needs as heating and maintenance costs which may put an additional strain on government services.

The Department of Family Services delivers a number of programs and resources to assist adults in accessing education and training opportunities to gain employment. The Standing Committee was pleased to receive additional information on the status of the Nunavut Apprenticeship program and fully supports the department's collaboration on the Nunavut 3000 strategy to build houses while providing training-on-the-job opportunities.

The Standing Committee notes that although Income Assistance benefits were increased in 2023, many Nunavummiut still face challenges in meeting the rising costs of living in the territory. Members look forward to receiving details of initiatives that are being considered to provide additional supports to Income Assistance clients.

Members would further appreciate receiving information with respect to what options have been considered for establishing a guaranteed basic income across the territory and look forward to reviewing the results of the department's additional consultations on this topic.

Thank you, Chair. That concludes my opening remarks. I anticipate that individual members will also have questions and comments as we proceed.

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

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

Chairman: Thank you. There's a motion on the floor to report progress that is not subject to debate. All those in favour? Opposed? Motion is carried. I'll now rise to report progress to the speaker.

>>*Committee adjourned and House resumed at 19:29*

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. 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. Sammurtok. The motion is carried.

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

Item 22: Orders of the Day

Mr. Clerk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Committee meeting starts at 10 o'clock, March 7. *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 43
 - Bill 50
 - Bill 64
 - Bill 67
 - Bill 68
 - Bill 69
 - Bill 70
 - Bill 71
 - Bill 72
21. Report of the Committee of the Whole
22. Third Reading of Bills
23. Orders of the Day.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>>*Applause*

Speaker: This House stands adjourned until Friday, March 7, at 10:00 a.m. Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 19:32*

