

NUNAVUT HANSARD
UNEDITED TRANSCRIPT
FRIDAY, MARCH 7, 2025
IQALUIT, NUNAVUT

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Beauchesne's 6th edition, citation 55

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Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

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(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)

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(South Baffin)

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

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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

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Bills

Bill 70 – Appropriation (Operations and Maintenance) Act, 2025-2026 –
Consideration in Committee 2

Iqaluit, Nunavut
Friday, March 7, 2025

Members Present:

Hon. David Akeeagok, Hon. P.J. Akeeagok, Hon. Tony Akoak, Mr. Bobby Anavilok, Ms. Janet Brewster, Hon. Pamela Gross, Mr. George Hickes, Hon. David Joanasie, Mr. Joeline Kaernerck, Ms. Mary Killiktee, Hon. Lorne Kusugak, Mr. Adam Lightstone, Hon. John Main, Mr. Solomon Malliki, Hon. Margaret Nakashuk, Ms. Karen Nutarak, 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): Good morning, everyone. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Mr. Speaker, I seek unanimous consent to go directly to item 19 on the order papers. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: The member is seeking unanimous consent to proceed directly to item 19 on the order paper. Are there any nays? There are none.

Item 19, Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters, Bills 43, 50, 64, 67, 69, 70, 71, and 72, with Mr. Hickes in the chair. I ask that all members remain at their desk so that we can proceed directly into the Committee of the Whole. In accordance with the authority provided to me by Motion 44-6(2), the committee will remain in session until it reports itself out. Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>House adjourned and Committee commenced at 10:03

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

Chairman (Mr. George Hickes): Good morning, everyone. I would like to call the committee meeting to order. In Committee of the Whole we have the following items to deal with: Bills 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. Due to unforeseen circumstances, we would like to proceed with Culture and Heritage, Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, Family Services, and the remaining departments. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Are we in agreement we first deal with Culture and Heritage?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister David Akeeagok, do you have officials you would like to have appear before the committee with you? Minister.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes.

Chairman: Does the committee agree to all the minister's officials to appear with him?

Some Members: Agreed.

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

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

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have with me on my right Teresa Hughes and Assistant Deputy Minister Jeannie Arreak-Kullualik. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Qujannamiik, Iksivautalik. I am pleased to appear before you to present the 2025-2026 Business Plan and the 2025-2026 Main Estimates for our Department of Culture and Heritage. I am seeking your support to appropriate \$34.141 million, which represents a 22 per cent increase from the 2024-25 appropriation.

The Department of Culture and Heritage had historically lapsed a significant portion of its annual operating budget, so in 2023-2024 we began more tightly budgeting for that underspending. That budgeting change allowed a \$1.8 million increase to community-driven application-based contribution programs. I am happy to report that this funding is making it into projects in our communities. We have begun the practice of publishing annual our grants and contributions reports. These are included on the department's website for 2022-2023 and 2023-2024.

The proposed 2025-2026 plan includes two further improvements:

- First, an updated accounting structure; and
- an increase to the *Inuit Language Implementation Fund*.

Mr. Chair, the proposed Business Plan and Main Estimates simplifies the department's accounting structure from six branches to three, and from 23 divisions to nine. This does not impact jobs or reporting structures. It is a continuation of our shared work guided by Tunnganarniq and Sulitsiarniq, to make the department's structures more intuitive and approachable. The three proposed branches are:

First, Corporate Management Branch, renamed from Directorate Branch;

The second, Languages Branch, which includes Official Languages, Translation Bureau as well as The Inuit Language Implementation Fund;

And finally the third is the Culture Branch, which encompasses Heritage, Inuit Tunngavingit, and Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit.

Prior to this change, this relatively small department had the second-most-complicated top line accounting structure of any department or agency.

The department's Main Estimates and Business Plans continue to exactly match. The financial information which was previously reported in the Business Plan is now included in Appendix A-III of the Main Estimates.

Iksivautalik, we are proposing a \$6.136 million funding increase. These funds are proposed to be allocated across two areas: \$596,000 towards compensation and benefits, part of the GN-wide pay increase that took effect on September 30, 2024. The remaining \$5.540 million is an increase for the Inuit Language Implementation Fund.

The Inuit Language Implementation Fund is used as a vehicle to improve the delivery of services in Inuktitut and it promote its usage across the territory. These funds contribute to the implementation of the language acts through various departments and public agencies.

Iksivautalik, my department is working diligently to further align with the Katujjiluta vision set forward by this house. I welcome any comments or questions. *Qujannamiik, Iksivautalik*.

Chairman: Thank you. Does the chair of the Standing Committee have opening comments to provide? Ms. Brewster, go ahead.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Chair. *Ullaakuut*, everyone.

I am happy to provide opening comments on behalf of the Standing Committee on Social Wellness on its review of the proposed 2025-2026 Main Estimates and 2025-2026 Business Plan of the Department of Culture and Heritage. The department's proposed 2025-2026 operations and maintenance budget is \$34,141,000. This represents an increase of 21.9 per cent from the 2024-2025 fiscal year. The number of positions in the department remains unchanged from the 2024-2025 fiscal year at 110.8 PYs.

The Department of Culture and Heritage has three branches and nine divisions. This has changed from six branches and 24 divisions since the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

The department's Directorate branch has since changed its name to Corporate Management in the 2025-2026 fiscal year. The department's Official Languages branch has also changed its name to Languages in the 2025-2026 fiscal year.

A number of the Department of Culture and Heritage's responsibilities relate to the preservation, promotion, and utilization of the Inuit language. This includes programs and policies related to language of work, territorial and federal language promotion funds, and the provision of language services within the public sector.

The standing committee notes that the department currently has one outstanding statutory tabling requirement under the *Official Languages Act*. The standing committee encourages the minister to table this report at the earliest opportunity.

Members appreciate that the department has recently published its *2022-2023 Grants and Contributions Annual Report*. This report provides a detailed summary of the projects funded by the department. Members look forward to reviewing future Grants and Contributions annual reports.

Members note that the department's proposed 2025-2026 main estimates includes \$11,328,000 for the operations of its Inuktitut Language Implementation Fund. This represents a 95 per cent increase since the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

During the minister's recent appearance before the standing committee, members questioned how many communities are accessing the department's Community Radio Grant funding. Members had a broad discussion on this issue and encouraged the department to continue to inform communities about the Community Radio Grant funding available.

On October 27, 2023, the Premier of Nunavut tabled *Updated Ministerial Mandate Letters* in the Legislative Assembly. One of the department's priorities is to design Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit sessions for health care professionals. During the minister's recent appearance before the standing committee, Members sought clarification on the status of this priority and the expected timeline for this important work.

Members note that the department's proposed 2025-2026 main estimates includes \$4,263,000 for its Translation Bureau division. The standing committee questioned how many positions in this division are filled, how many are vacant, and where they are located.

Members also note that the department's translation policy expired on December 31, 2014. Members look forward to reviewing the new translation policy.

The government's Uqausivut 2.0 strategy is a five-year implementation plan that outlines a number of objectives with respect to Inuit language use in the fields of learning, work, the delivery of services, as well as the revitalization of the Inuit language. The five-year strategy expired in 2023. However, the department's 2025-2026 business plan indicates that the "implementation plan for Nunavut's language legislation will be updated to reflect completed amendments to the legislation." Members look forward to receiving updates on the status of this very important work.

The standing committee notes that the department delivers information sessions in communities across the territory that advise Nunavummiut about funding resources available to support the promotion, protection, and preservation of Nunavut's culture, heritage, languages, and activities to support elders and youth programming.

The standing committee notes that the Official Languages division budget includes \$1,950,000 in funding for grants and contributions for the 2025-2026 fiscal year. The standing committee appreciates that the department has a number of grants and contributions funding programs to support cultural activities, as well as elders and youth programs across the territory.

The department's proposed 2025-2026 main estimates includes \$1,165,000 for the Heritage Collections division's operation. The Heritage Collections division focuses on "the curatorial management, conservation, operation and program delivery for Nunavut's extensive heritage collections... through exhibits and educational efforts", and "the division also showcases Inuit culture, traditions and history throughout Nunavut, nationally and internationally."

The department's 2025-2026 business plan indicates that the department is working "in partnership with the Inuit Heritage Trust [and] anticipates initially prioritizing repatriating ancestral remains."

During the minister's recent appearance, members had a broad dialogue about this priority and look forward to ongoing updates on this division's work.

Members also received an update on collection management issues, including the status of work to repatriate the territory's heritage collection. Members had a broad discussion

concerning issues related to intellectual property, copyright, and ownership of Indigenous art.

Members note that the department's proposed 2025-2026 main estimates includes \$674,000 for its Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit division. The division "works to ensure Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit is integrated across the government. This division also provides administrative support to the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit Katimajit and chairs the interdepartmental Tuttarviit committee."

Members note that a number of the Tuttarviit departmental seats are currently vacant. Members sought clarification regarding the Tuttarviit's vacant seats and looks forward to the filling of all its seats on a timely basis.

That concludes my opening comments on the proposed 2025-2026 main estimates and 2025-2026 business plan of the Department of Culture and Heritage. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Brewster. Are there any comments to the opening comments? Not seeing any. Please go to page F4, Culture and Heritage, corporate management, total operations and maintenance to be voted on, \$5,301,000. Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good morning, colleagues. Before I go on to ask my questions, happy birthday to (indiscernible), if you're watching. He is my constituency assistant.

Mr. Chairman, I'll go on. Your department's draft 2025-2026 business plan indicates that one of its priorities for the 2024-2025 fiscal year was to "support implementation of the comprehensive elders and seniors strategy."

Your draft business plan indicates that your department is supporting the Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs strategy.

The question is, Mr. Chairman, what specific actions has your department undertaken to support this strategy. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you for that question, Member. It is right we do provide a supporting role specifically in the strategy. It is a key area I'll look at number 40 within the strategy where it identified to look at enhancing supports for elder gathering places in every community, to explore options to secure gathering spaces and facilities in the long term. That's one where Culture and Heritage led it with the support of EIA, Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs in this year.

We provided 398,000 in funding through the applications spaces around elders and youth facilities, contribution programs, and the elder secretariat provided in this business plan will work to coordinate the initiatives to support this action moving forward.

I do have the list of the recipients in terms of who received those types of fundings. That's one component where have we provided that support. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you, Minister, for that information. It's great information, so thank you greatly.

One of the elders brought this to my attention when I visited the community of Kugaaruk. She wanted a place where they can gather, and she had told me that they get tired of staying home, the elders, so she indicated that they need a place to go to in the community of Kugaaruk.

How can the community of Kugaaruk apply for the grants and contributions to make a building where elders, and not just for elders; maybe they can perhaps teach the young people Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit skills.

So how can the community of Kugaaruk as well as Taloyoak, where can they apply or who do they go to for funding? And who can lead the programs, if possible. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again, I thank my colleague's question.

Culture and Heritage does have a program as strictly for facilities. The application for the territory for the year I believe is 600,000. It is through that. We could forward appear application to the member, just so that he has it after.

But there's funding availability for all communities who wish to bring access to facilities, to bring the space for elders and youth to be able to convene and share traditional knowledge or Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, whether it's sewing groups or others as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Chairman, and thank you, Minister, for your great response. I have some great information when I get back to my constituent communities, and I'll be

helping the elders and I'll inform the councillors as well as the mayor in both communities of this great initiative and program availability.

I'll move on, Mr. Chairman. Your department's draft 2025-2026 business plan indicates that one of its priorities for 2024-2025 fiscal year was to explore opportunities to further engage program branches in ongoing promotion efforts. Your department's draft business plan indicates that the department is working to develop an advertising strategy with its various program areas to make the public more aware of the available programs and funding.

The question is, Mr. Chairman, what is the expected timeline for the completion of this work? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again I thank the member for that really good question. We do a lot of outreach, either through formal letters with the hamlets, or NGOs or different groups. We've really worked of actually visiting the communities. I know the member, when I was fortunate enough to go to your community, there's a lot of interest in terms of seeing face to face or the openness around what different types of programs Grants and Contributions provides through the department of Culture and Heritage.

So the department has really engaged in terms of what we could do to go to the communities, in particular to those that haven't applied, or have under-applied for some of the different programs. So there's that.

We write to the municipalities, but also we're working with the NAM, the association for municipalities across the territory. So we are trying everything we can to ensure we spread the news in terms of the great opportunities of grants and contributions. But I would welcome, if there's other suggestions from the members as well if there's an area where we are missing, I would love to hear those suggestions as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for your response. I'll move on about Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit.

Updated ministerial mandate letters were tabled in the Legislative Assembly on October 27, 2023. The mandate letter indicates that one of your department's top priorities is to "design Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit sessions for health care professionals." What is the expected timeline for this work? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I really appreciate the question. To my understanding we are working with the Department of Health to look at that exact schedule. Perhaps if you allow if I could get the Deputy Hughes to be able to provide a bit more in terms of exactly where those timelines are. I know there has been engagement with the department so, Mr. Chair, if you'll allow the deputy to provide more response to that.

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

Ms. Hughes (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We all have to continuously work with the Department of Health on the contents of what will be in the education sessions. There are different modules, TB, the history of TB with the Inuit, and past residential school students. All these have been set up. We're still developing it and we're working with the Department of Health. We're relying on the Department of Health. We do want to complete them before the end of the year. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll move on to my next line of questioning.

In September 2023 the Standing Committee on Legislation held a televised hearing on Nunavut's *Official Languages Act* and the *Language Protection Act*. The Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit appeared before the committee and provided a written submission. Documentation provided by the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit indicated that the independent body recently made structural changes to help support the organization's function.

The question is, Mr. Chairman, what other supports is your department providing the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit to assist it with fulfilling its mandate. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you, Member. To my understanding we are providing human resources. There's someone who's acting as the executive director. And I know further to that we are providing additional resources to ensure that they have the adequate resources to do their very important work, as noted. And during that there's an intern that's an Inuk as well being mentored into that very important role. So we're very proud to see that advancement as it's going through.

To my understanding we also provide resources as they do committee work with governments, and I believe 1.4 million is provided in terms of a contract to provide that service as well. So as a department we do provide the necessary supports to ensure that they work on their mandate. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit implements the Inuit Language Assessment Program. The question is, Mr. Chairman, how many employees are currently waiting for their assessment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Premier Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. 40 is to my understanding. Thank you.

Chairman: Sorry, I'm a little confused. One person across the whole Government of Nunavut is the only person waiting for a language assessment? Sorry, Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I don't think you heard me right. I said 40, four-zero. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: I obviously did not hear you right. Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. For clarification are we going page-by-page review, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This will be my last question and I'll go on to the next page. Which community is the Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit planning to visit to complete these assessments? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Premier Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I believe we do all those assessments online, so it's not the actual visits to the communities in terms of those assessments. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will have further questions when we move to F5. That's it for now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, everybody, and welcome again to the minister and your officials. It's nice to see you all. I'll work backwards with my follow-up questions. I'm happy to hear that these assessments are taking place on line, so just two parts for follow-up.

Minister, you said that there are 40 people waiting for these assessments and I'm wondering if I can just ask a big, long question. How long do the assessments take; are they self-directed; and how long does the team think that it's going to take to get through those assessments? I know that in the past there have been a number of concerns about just how long it takes to get assessments done. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Premier Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It's so nice to have you back, my colleague. It wasn't quite the same without you here around the room, so I was just happy to have you back here. Thank you for those questions.

To my understanding we've heard the importance of the urgency to make sure we catch up. I think there's been a backlog previously, and I know the department has been working really hard to see if we can ensure that we do all the assessments as quickly as we can in terms of that. So I think we have really appreciated the urgency shared to us from committee here.

In terms of how long, we're hoping to do it as quickly as we can. I don't have a specific timeline of when we're hoping to see the backlog of 40 come to zero.

In terms of the other question of how long does it take, I understand it takes about an hour to do the assessments. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you for that, Minister Akeeagok, and thank you it is really nice to be back.

Knowing that there are so many people who have been waiting quite a long time to get their assessments done, can I get an idea of how they're prioritized, is it first come first served and going down the list, or is there some other way that they're being prioritized? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, it's first come first served, is how I understand. Just for comparison as well, I believe there was over four or five hundred at

one point, where we were backlogged, so there have been a lot of new applications that we've been reviewing. That's where I said that I think it was at about 40 to 50 range. So just put it into perspective just how far we've come along.

There's much more work we're doing and we're hoping to take down the number so it becomes zero. It should be zero, and that's really our target.

But to your question, it's first come first served is how the applications are being looked at. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you for that. That's a significant dent in that waiting list, and so I'm really happy to hear that and I'm glad you shared that with us today.

Just one last question on that. When people finally get their assessment done, is there language pay enacted immediately, and is it retroactive to when they first applied? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again, thank you for that very good question. Yes, it is retro pay once the assessment has been done. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you for that response. I know when it comes to ensuring that the public is able to access services in their language of choice, ensuring that we are compensating people for public servants for doing that I think is extremely important, so I'm really happy to hear about that progress.

I'll move on to the Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit sessions for health care professionals. Mr. Chair, I may have missed it, but I know that the question was what is the expected timeline for this work. I know the response spoke about who's being engaged and that it does take time. However, I didn't hear a response to that time, what the timeline is. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Premier Akeegok.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again, I believe the colleague asked the same question as well, and I think the deputy had indicated we are hoping that we will be completed those within this fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you for that clarification. I'm still a little bit slow today, so I appreciate that.

I'm just wondering what sort of information is informing that development. I know that we do have experts and knowledge about ourselves as Inuit, and I know as well that there is a significant amount of research, for example through the Inuit health surveys that took place about the lived experience of Inuit. And I'm wondering if I could hear just a little bit more about what's going into the development of those sessions. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again I thank the member for that question. To my understanding they bring really the lived experience of Inuit, whether you're looking at the tuberculosis epidemic at one point where Inuit were brought down south in terms of the experiences this they went through during that period in our dark history, forced relocations. Even the whole language loss that we've seen.

So it is through that, in terms of the actual lived experiences is how I understand, that's provided in terms of that story of what and how resilient I guess Inuit are. I think it's important to talk about, even though we have that very dark history and the challenges that were faced by our people, that we're very resilient and we're here still and that we're very strong still, even with that experience.

To your question, I understand that's what's covered in those. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In my experience as a public servant our Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit days or IQ days were always a great deal of fun, and made even more fun by seeing the flip that happens when Inuit go on the land with executive members of staff that are often from the south, and seeing the difference in who the professional is now. I don't know how to explain it otherwise.

There's a real value in creating team-building and in creating more of like a mutual respect when we're training professionals around Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit, and it shows the value of having Inuit employees.

I wonder whether or not Inuit employees in the Department of Health specifically are engaged, and whether or not this is looked at as, you know, a major team-building exercise. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Premier Akeegok.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I really appreciate the member's question. I think there are two things I'll provide a response. I think to the member's question, I couldn't agree more that when you see Inuit who are the knowledge holders in their element, in our environment, in the language, whether it's on the land or whether it's the important role as I think you used as when you're out fishing or out hunting, to provide for a community, I couldn't agree more that's one of the best team-building experiences that you could go through. As a hunter myself, the value of sharing, the value of giving back to community, especially to elders, is instilled in us.

But each department, to my understanding, does their own IQ days around that. Specifically to the targeted IQ training to the health care professionals, though, it's really not the IQ day we're focussing. Our target on that particular one I believe to my understanding is we are hoping to reach about 1,200 employees or health-care professionals in our work here. But it's more on the broader historical component, more than I think the very valuable thing that you have mentioned as well. So I just want make sure that there's a difference between the two conversations. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I did use the IQ days as an example. What I was hoping to convey is that Inuit employees have so much knowledge about the people that we're serving, and although there might be a high number of Inuit employees, especially in a professional designated department like the Department of Health, it may be difficult for people who have professional designations to view and value the true, lived experience that Inuit employees bring to that professional table in their work. That's what I was getting at. That's what I would like to see these Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit sessions do, not just inform and contextualize about lived experience, but also to inform about how important what Inuit employees are bringing to the table is. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you for that clarification as well. I agree with you in terms of the immense knowledge that Inuit have in all workplaces. I think that cultural understanding, linguistic understanding is very deep, and to your point, I understand elders are often invited into the IQ days as well when there's departments. There's really no set standard, though. I think to your suggestion, I'll take that. There's currently nothing that I could see where it would be applicable at this moment. But to make it a lot more significant in terms of if there are IQ days, to ensure that there's

always that representative is something perhaps I could take back to see what more we could do.

At this moment I'm not sure how I would be able to apply it, but I'll work with the team to see what more we could do from the view of Culture and Heritage. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you for that, Mr. Premier. I'm wondering whether or not there are these information sessions, have they been developed or are they already under way for other professionals within the Government of Nunavut, such as social workers. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you. I was quickly trying to find the proper briefing note here. Yes, to my understanding there are other departments that are also receiving it. I believe looking at the Department of Family Services and others as well. So to your question, yes, there are other sessions to other departments. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you. That's good to hear. If we could just hear what those departments are. Because I mentioned social workers, but there's also lawyers and Parks type people, people that are interacting with Inuit on a daily basis. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. I believe I might also be valuable to see whether it's a standardized program or whether it's individualized by different departmental needs. Mr. Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I understand it's very tailored to the departments, very specific to it so there is a standard in terms of making sure it comes from there. But each session is very tailored to the departments.

The department hosted IQ session in February of last year in Iqaluit on the subject of family dynamics and the genealogy. This session was hosted by Sai Pitseolak. I'm using that as a direct example of what type it was. I don't have a list of all the departments that were provided; maybe through you, Chair, that's something we could write back to, through correspondence, to list exactly where those sessions and which departments as the member had asked. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: That's great. Thank you, I would appreciate that.

I'll move on. The Department of Community Services draft 2025-2026 business plan indicates one of its priorities is to deliver business training through programs for artists, and support their legal rights through collaboration with CARFAC, which is the Canadian Artists' Representation/Le Front des artistes canadiens, I can't say it properly, but I tried.

What specific actions is your department undertaking to support that initiative? I know I've brought up issues about artists' rights and resale rights in the past, and that there's a question about which department kind of has a lead role. It's clear that it's not necessarily Culture and Heritage's lead, but there is a responsibility, I think, to work with other departments on that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again I want to thank the member's question, and her pronunciation, which I won't try to say myself. I'll probably butcher that one.

But yes, we work with the department of EDT right now. Obviously there's a transition that's happening with Community Services. So the department does work hand in hand. That's really within their space. But you're right, there's a lot of collaboration that needs to happen and I know my officials have had discussions around what more we could do.

Recently we did the big announcement of the Artists in Residence with WAG. Apologies for that; the Winnipeg Art Gallery. Just as a demonstration of how we value the incredible work that artists do and to provide them the exposure and a platform to be able to showcase their incredible skills. And so there's a direct connection in terms of the role we do.

EDT is really, leading that space a lot more but we have been in contact with them as well to provide our inputs as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: I really appreciate that work because the expression through the arts of our Culture and Heritage is so important and is really so different from other groups of people in this world. And so it's good to know Culture and Heritage is engaged in that.

Your department's 2024-2026 business plan indicated that the department will continue to work with the Inuit Heritage Trust in exploring various options and best ways to proceed toward the building of a heritage centre. The department is developing a memorandum of understanding with the Inuit Heritage Trust, outlining the process and the roles and responsibilities in the creation of a Nunavut Heritage Centre. I wonder if we can get an update on what the current status of this work is. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Premier Akeegok.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and again I thank the member for that question. I've had the pleasure of immediately from taking on this very important role I feel very privileged to be in this role as Minister responsible for Culture and Heritage, where I immediately met with the Inuit Heritage Trust. They have a huge responsibility, and I have a lot of respect for the role that they have as outlined in the Nunavut agreement. There's a very strong relationship we have.

To the member's question, we're very optimistic to finalize that MOU with Inuit Heritage Trust. I know there's been final works around the draft MOU that is being explored. We're not quite there yet, but I'm very optimistic we will get there very soon. But we do have a very good working relationship with Inuit Heritage Trust, and I look forward to providing an update when we get to that point. We're not quite there yet, but I'm very optimistic we'll get there soon. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good morning, Minister, and to your officials. A couple of quick clarification questions. Earlier when you were responding to giving a response to my colleague Mr. Quqqiaq about elder gathering spaces, I'm wondering what kind of gathering spaces does the department help secure; is that what the department is doing? If I can get further clarification. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. *Ullaakuut*. Great question, my colleague. The onus of space is actually in the hands of the communities. So as every community is very different in terms of what potential spaces they may have, maybe if you allow, because it's going into the program space that I don't have that level of detail. I have the names of the communities that received it, but what type of building are they, is it a hamlet building or is it excess buildings that some committees tap into, I don't have that. Maybe if you allow, if I could get my deputy to provide a bit more in terms of what types that might be through you, Chair.

Chairman: Please proceed, Ms. Hughes.

Ms. Hughes (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are various entities that apply for funding, whether it be municipalities, hamlet councils. The majority of the applicants come from the hamlet council and where they will be using the space. They don't identify the space they will be using, but we know the communities. There's also spaces that they can utilize. Some utilize churches and some utilize school spaces or the library, and also the heritage centres if they have one. So that's where they usually meet, and we provide funding for that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Another clarification question, being responses to my other colleague Ms. Brewster, about Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit and the principles and what not. We all know there are various different I guess "tribes" is what it would be called in English, across Nunavut, and we all have different customs in different sections of Nunavut. I'm wondering how is the department accessing or utilizing all these different customs that the elders could help teach their Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Premier Akeegok.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Sorry, I almost called you Mr. Speaker. Mr. Chair. Again I thank the member for that clarification that he's seeking.

If I understand it right, I think we moved away from the contributions agreement. I think you're referring to the information sessions that we provide. So if I could get a clarification if that's what he's referring to, in terms of the presentation or the sessions that we were talking about earlier just so I provide an accurate response. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I'll try to clarify. So we're using Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit right across the territory. Government of Nunavut, Housing, everyone and we're trying to help preserve our Inuit ways. But right across the territory we all have different tribes, different clans, whatever you want to call it. Like in Baker Lake there's Qairnirmiut, Arvaqtuurmiut, Hauniqtuurmiut and Utkuhikhalingmiut and I don't know what it is in high Arctic, but each area has their own different little customs, different teachings. I'm wondering how the department is helping to access and utilize all these different great learnings, teachings that can be passed on to the territory. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Simailak. Mr. Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you for that clarification. I really appreciate. Just so I understand where you're going with this one, to my understanding, a lot of different Inuit from the whole territory are usually factored in. The selections of where the members are, as an example of appointments and you're right; there's not only cultural but linguistic differences in terms of each region. I know there has been strong push to protect, whether it's Netsilikmuit or other dialectual differences that we see as well.

So I understand the department does really try and factor that in, in terms of ensuring that those differences are recognized as well.

As mentioned in those sessions, those are very tailored specifically to the different departments and it is through that, I would imagine, those would be factored in. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Moving along, your department's draft 2025-2026 business plan indicates that one of its priorities for the 2025-2026 fiscal year is to "plan and deliver grants and contribution information sessions in the Kivalliq community."

Which Kivalliq community is your department considering delivering this information session? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just give me a moment. I have that information. I'm just quickly finding it right now. Apologies, Mr. Chair. The understanding I have is we usually go and prioritize the communities we haven't seen many applications. Most recently I understand we were at Resolute Bay, most recently. We don't have a list of exactly which community is next, but I know the department will look at what and where there's been the least submissions coming from a community, as they are targeting which community to go to. I don't have that list, but those would be the criteria, the factors used to select where do we go from here. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My last question for now is, if the minister doesn't have it on hand right now, if they could provide, through the chair, a listing of where they have gone, when, and how long those sessions were in the communities, along with where they're heading next and when. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Absolutely. We're actually looking at all the grants and contributions right now, to see the uptake or the under-utilization of those. I understand we are looking at the summer-fall to really finalize around that, so I could commit to making sure that we update, as we always do, with the hamlet mayors and others to make sure that we involve the committee members here as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. If I could just add on to that, is there an established budget for these information sessions? And if so, is it expended every year? Mr. Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Really good question. No, those are just internal. There's no dedicated budget, but we know the importance of it, especially in light of the increase that we're hoping to receive in terms of grants and contributions. We haven't seen this level of increase in so many years, but we're very excited to be able to provide those to the communities.

So to your point, yeah, those are internal travel budgets that we're using at the moment. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Following the list of names, Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I would like to thank you also. I would like to ask a question about the budget. There's grants and contributions that you identified so that we can initiate programs for the elders. I think I understood it, but do you have anything budgeted for how much a smaller community can access? Is it on a per capita basis or if there is a policy on how much a community can get? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for that question. We have not identified how much a community can access, but you can make an application from 200 to 600,000 per community or from a community. We don't have any specific policies about how much a community can access, but it's an application process. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you for your response. I found it very interesting when we first started talking about this item. With the communities that have applied for programs in the communities or at initiation of a process or a program in their

community, there must be a process where they have to report back to your department and identify what those monies were used for. Usually when there's a reporting requirement it causes problems for the community accessing further grants. That's the reason why I'm asking that question. What's your process? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Premier Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for that question. Yes, there is a reporting requirement. We have heard that it creates some problems for the community, so we're always looking for easier ways to make a report. Usually a reporting requirement is needed so that we know where the funds are going, what they're used for and so on. If you have any other questions I'm more than open. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): I have another question regarding the elders. In Nunavut in the 25 communities, do all 25 communities have elder committees? Do you have a list of elders committees or an entity specifically set for elders? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Premier Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We did ask that question. As I understand there's 15 elders entities in the communities, and we can also look at which communities they have been establishing in. There are 15 elders committees or boards. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for your response. So it's an indication. Usually elders just wait to be given direction, especially elders. When you interact with elders, you get an understanding that they have are waiting. They have a need but they don't want to disturb anybody, so there's 15 elders committees so that means 20 communities that don't have elder centres. There's also the youth, and the need to set up committees with both the elders and the youth together. We have to make sure we get the information out there, and again there was a mention of community consultation which will be a good avenue to make sure this the communities have these elders committees.

So there's 10 communities that don't have elder centres or, is the information going out? It is something to be considered by your department.

I went to one of my constituent communities over the weekend, and in Clyde River there's a group called Ajauppiaq, elder's committee. They have a place that was built specifically for them. But it's not being utilized anymore, with the direction of the fire marshal's office. They indicated to me that they would like to utilize that building again. And I forget the other group, again, in Clyde River.

There have been applications I think through Iisaaqivik Cultural School and it was something that I found very interesting. This was the second time that I've had a meeting with the Ajauppiaq group. They deal with traditional knowledge, sewing skills, and right now they are in a kamik-making class. They just don't have a proper gathering place that they can call their own, so they have to look around for other places that they can gather. They're doing very well with the programs that they provide to the community.

I would like to ask you if you can provide support to groups such as this. Their little gathering place was specifically be built for a gathering place for the elders. My question is can you go to that community, have a meeting with the Ajauppiaq elders group, and can they apply for funding to reopen their gathering place, and if they have to submit inspection report. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Premier Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for your question. I'm also very pleased that they are providing excellent programs to their communities. Just to add further, I believe it was last year and there were 15 elders groups. It started from five groups to 15, and we can see that they're proceeding.

And with your question, we write to hamlet councils and provide them with grants and contributions that are being made available to the communities especially for the elders. With our department, we are the ones who are waiting to get application forms from the communities and there's possibly three. There's 200,000 to 600,000 money available for gathering places, and heritage facilities up to 1 million, if they wish to see one, and I think through those two programs you can access money. And there's 500,000 that is geared for libraries. So there's different pots of money that they can access.

Usually what they do is make an application and then leverage that money to access other funds. If anybody from Qikiqtarjuaq would like to access some of these monies, they are more than welcome to do so.

Just recently we asked for elders committees and there's \$15,000 set aside specifically for that. Just last year there was 375,000 available, which has been approved by this House, and only 76 percent of it was utilized. There's 286,482 cents. We are urging the committees to make applications. They are there to be utilized by the communities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Following my list of names, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Does the department create any templates for communities to use in accessing funding, whether it's proposals, proposal templates, and importantly for reporting templates, for ease of access to these funds? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Premier Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, the department does provide templates for streamlining the application process, which we heard was a challenge to some, especially when you have small communities of many people doing many things. Realizing that. But to the member's question, yes, there are templates in terms of proper reporting we anticipate back from them to make it easier on the proponents. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That's really good to hear. How are communities made aware that there are templates? I know just listening to the conversation that took place knowing that there's five elders groups, you're up from five to 15 in recent years, and that still leaves a number of communities without that aren't accessing that funding. And I really hear you loud and clear about capacity issues, right, at a community level. It really depends on certain champions to be able to prioritize those kinds of groups.

When the department is communicating with the various stakeholders about these funding opportunities, are they sharing not just information about how much funding is available, but also providing right off the bat those templates so that people can start to fill them out? And are there employees at Culture and Heritage that will actually help the community fill out those forms real time? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Premier Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again, really good question. Yes, immediately upon their acceptance of the grants or the contribution that is there right at the front end. We provide them the templates to ensure that they have every access to be able to have with ease what our expectations are. So immediately, right from the very beginning as they receive their funding they do receive that template. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate that. What I was trying to get down to is whether or not when you're making a community aware about the availability of that funding, are those proposal templates shared with the community? The premier talked about once they have been approved for a grant, having access to these templates. But I'm talking about beforehand that allows them to apply for the funding. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again I thank for the follow-up to that. To my understanding, yes, when we do the community visits we have those available. I'm not sure if they're available immediately online, though, and I think that's what you're getting at. I don't believe we are. I think usually when we're working with a proponent, I was advised that we actually provide our staff as well, especially on the accounting piece to make sure that they have the proper structures and supports that are there.

I don't know to what level of extent we walk them through. I think the onus is still on the applicant to provide a lot of that resource.

But I could take that into consideration in terms of that template of what we expect, because if we are to share that now with the proponents, I don't see why we wouldn't be able to share that.

I'm not committing to immediately doing it, but I'll work with my officials to see if that's something that would be really beneficial or not. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster. Thank you, for that, Premier. I think anything that we do to make it easier for people to access funding will create better outcomes for communities, and it would be great to see elders and youth groups in every single community.

I'll move on to the reorganization within the department, Premier. In your opening remarks you mentioned the three branches that had been impacted. I know it has changed from six branches and 24 divisions down to three branches and nine divisions. If I can get a little bit more information about how all of that change was determined. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Premier Akeegok.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just give me a moment. Just let me quickly just have a quick discussion here.

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Through any exercise around the branches, we work very closely with the Department of Finance through that process as we start looking at the branches. So it went through that exercise.

It was not a big shift. As I mentioned, there's no new PYs or nobody that was moving, it was just a realignment. We understood we wanted to streamline and simplify the structures around, as we're seeing in all other departments as well. I think we've seen it with Education and other new departments that are coming, where we used to have eight to 10 different branches. We've really streamlined. That still fits within the scope, but to your question, we worked internally with Department of Finance. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you for that. Just for clarity I would like to know how many employees were impacted, if any employees received promotions or were demoted. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Premier Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. No impacts were felt with any of the employees that are there, just the collapse of the branches. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So were any reporting relationships impacted at all? Or does everybody just stay the same? I'm trying to get a really clear idea of this. Is it sort of by name that the re-org happened, or were people's job descriptions changed or anything like that? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. So my understanding there were no changes to any job descriptions. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you for that information. I'm a big fan of creating clarity and removing obstacles, so hopefully that re-org actually provides that.

I know that it's probably a small thing for Culture and Heritage, but I'm wondering about whether or not they have an access to information and protection of privacy coordinator in place and whether or not the Culture and Heritage does receive a lot of what they call ATIPP requests. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Premier Akeegok.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thank the member for that question. I understand we have one policy analyst position that shares that responsibility for the ATIPP. I'm not certain in terms of what volume the department has received. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you for that. It's just a little question on that. On February 27, 2023 the Government of Nunavut announced the creation of associate deputy minister positions, which allowed all departments and agencies to assign Inuit into these new positions for a term of three years. I'm wondering will your department be appointing an associate deputy minister. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. No, not at this moment. That's not something that we are considering. Those associate positions, as great as they were, were the term to this government as well. Just realizing that we're just a few months away from the writ dropping, potentially. But I have full confidence with the incredible leadership we have. I have the assistant deputy minister to my left who is Inuk as well, and we have the deputy as well. So I'm comfortable with that. And just with the runway that we have left here, I don't anticipate to be working with the department on that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I understand and appreciate those comments and especially with the duration of time left in this Assembly. However, I do see the promotion of Inuit into deputy level positions as paramount to success in programs and services. While I am happy and I do commend the department for having Inuit in those leadership levels, I see this as an opportunity to build capacity and to acknowledge a person's skills and abilities and potential for moving into those leadership positions, whether it be in the department of Culture and Heritage or in another department.

For me, I would always encourage that. Even though it might be a short time period left for us in this Assembly, it's a long period of time when you're looking at public service and the potential to impact the public service in a greater way. So I would just like to know if the premier would reconsider that, and possibly think about appointing an associate deputy minister for Culture and Heritage. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Premier Akeegok.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thank the member's strong support around seeing more supports to allow Inuit to take on these very important, most senior positions in the public service. I too am a very strong supporter of allowing Inuit the experience and the opportunity to gain these very valuable work-life experiences, as it was intended at the time. As I've mentioned many times in the House, I'm a strong supporter around the associates and have seen the strong success around seeing Inuit advance and then gaining experiences, and then even moving on as well in those roles. But at this point I'm not in a position to reconsider at this point. It's something obviously I'm a very strong supporter.

I will connect with the department again to see what capacity we may need as well. That's that really will be the driving force to see if there's any considerations and whatnot, but at this point I don't see that opening. But I will be open to it and I'll have further discussion with the deputy to see if that's something that we should open up again. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you for that, Mr. Chair. I mean, I'm all for last-ditch efforts, to be honest, when it comes to ensuring that we have a more representative workforce, all jokes aside.

In May 2021 your department submitted a legislative proposal to amend the *Historical Resources Act*. However, your predecessor indicated that due to the COVID-19 pandemic consultations were delayed, and your department could not move forward with this legislative initiative. I'm just wondering when will your department introduce this bill in the House. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I understand we are looking at that within the time frame that we have. I understand we will look at that after devolution, as outlined in that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Are there any impediments related to devolution, aside from the timeline in relation to this act? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Premier Akeegok.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. If you'll allow my deputy to provide a more response to this. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Please proceed, Ms. Hughes.

Ms. Hughes (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We have intended to the review. We thought it was pretty smooth, but however, in our discussions on Inuit Heritage Group, we realized it was a little more complicated, so we extended the time length and we start at this time. It's not really coherent or in accordance with the devolution things that will have to be involved in Heritage and Nunavut archeology paleontologist assessment act. I believe that is the one which has been established by the federal government that we will take on, and it will have to be under the devolution agreement. And upon the review then, that will finally be established. Thank you.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The department just went through a major re-org and we just heard that there wasn't like a great deal of impact on the employees or on the positions, and I wonder, we're hearing I think that this is delayed because there was so much work that needs to be put into it, and I wonder whether or not there is a team in place that has the capacity to work on this, and if not, why it wasn't included in the re-org. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Premier Akeegok.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just want to make a quick clarification; perhaps there is a misunderstanding. We didn't go through a major re-org, we went through an accounting restructuring in terms of collapsing the departments. That's where in our discussions we talked about there was no direct impact in terms of person years or employees. It was merely an accounting collapse of branches around that. So I just wanted to make that clarification, just so that if I misspoke earlier to lead that. So I apologize for that. I just want that to be very clear, that it's just a financial restructuring in terms of the branches that are there. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you for that clarification. That's probably more my mistake than yours.

If I could just hear about who's involved in working on this legislative proposal and whether or not there is the capacity within the department. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We aren't currently working on that particular one. We do have people, Director of Heritage, and then we have the Manager of Heritage Resources as well. So we do have people working on the conversation that we are having. But in terms of the legislative proposal, we aren't working on that, as indicated. That's something we don't foresee with the life of this government until devolution. So that's parked until the next government, if they should so choose to bring that forward as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Following my list of names, Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok: Thank you, Chair. You all know that Kitikmeot west is losing their Inuinnaqtun language. Are there any programs that are happening now, or in the near future to revitalize the language? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Premier Akeegok.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just give me a moment. We're just trying to pull up all the programming that we do, just shifting gears from just the conversation here. Maybe if you allow, through you, get the deputy to talk about all the programmings that are here, because we do have a lot of grants and contributions, and then there's wrap-around supports we are providing to language revitalization and the resource creations and whatnot. If you'll allow, Mr. Chair, to allow Deputy Hughes to be able to speak to this. Thank you.

Chairman: Ms. Hughes, go ahead, please.

Ms. Hughes (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Inuinnaqtun is a language under risk. It's a dialect no longer spoken by the youth. Only the elders 55 and up are the only ones who have Inuinnaqtun. That's what we know. From the review we had, yes, it's in a category under risk.

We provide funding for those in those situations. You probably heard of Kugalalik (ph), that deal a lot with Inuinnaqtun, with the elders and youth that are given sessions. We have elder mentor programs that you probably heard of, and we provide the funding to further educate the youth in their home community. They have a very good program. For only \$75,000 is what's slotted for Inuinnaqtun this past fiscal year.

But we have other programs, whether it be through school or in the community through local groups. For example, Kugalalik, Kitikmeot Heritage Society, that are tireless in their efforts towards this and request funding annually.

We have stated as well as directors what further support we can provide. This is something we are working hard on, not just to give directives, but perhaps to change the

responsibilities, especially in the communities, Cambridge Bay and Kugluktuk in particular, what further supports can be given in those communities.

We know Inuit Tunngavik Association are provided language funding and through co-operation with Tunngavik and Kitikmeot Inuit Association, along with Culture and Heritage, we have to carefully analyze how, as government, we can provide support and not just to give directives.

Also the Department of Education have done a lot of work towards Inuinnaqtun, in terms of school curriculum and many books have been provided, too, in Inuinnaqtun dialect.

Just recently we worked on a software we can provide in Inuinnaqtun, and that is available for anyone who wants to access that. Perhaps that answers the question. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok: Thank you, Chair. I spoke with some individuals that are very fluent with Inuinnaqtun, and I asked them if they would instruct; they said absolutely they would. There's one that's fluent in the old writing, and there's another one that's with the new writing, like with the Qs and Rs. There's individuals like that that I spoke to that would do instruction. So Kugalalik Heritage Centre would be the ones to like say next week, if they were going to have one next week, are they the ones that do that, or is there a department in Kugluktuk that would spearhead all these, like say evening classes, I think would be great, and even daytime for young students. Do you know of any programs that are going to happen soon, like now or in the very near future? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. As it's a follow-up I'll go directly to Ms. Hughes.

Ms. Hughes (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, you can access our department to provide the funding. The communities are the ones that know. You know your dialect. You know who can teach Inuinnaqtun, and through community cooperation and to see where they can access money. We review those. We provide directives and we want to look at going beyond just providing directives, perhaps through Kugalalik or Kitikmeot heritage societies what further actions we may provide. Yes, we are available. It's the communities who know and have the knowledge to take initiatives, especially in the communities of Kugluktuk and Cambridge Bay. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok: Thank you, Chair. Thank you for that. The people I spoke to that are very fluent, would they be able to apply for the funding and do like say evening classes or day classes? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thanks to the member. Yes, we would love to get in contact with the people you're referring to. And I know our department as well as IUT is always looking at getting more experts, especially on what we could do to preserve. So absolutely. I look forward to connecting with you, perhaps, and if we could get the names.

I know I'm heading to Kugluktuk in the next few weeks as well. I'm really looking forward to that, and I know you've specifically asked for us to meet with Culture and Heritage staff. Our incredible Inuinnaqtun translators and interpreters that are there as well. So I very much look forward to having that face-to-face time when we get to Kugluktuk.

But please forward us those names so we can see what we can do. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok: Thank you, Chair. Thank you for that. Speaking of interpreter-translators, I visit them once in a while and they don't have a manager. They're just individuals working, like interpreters translating but they don't have manager. Is that posted or advertised for a manager? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Premier Akeeagok.

Hon. P.J. Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair and I thank the member for the question. Currently the interpreter-translators within that do report to a director, but specifically to their existing reporting structure, I don't have the most up to date. It is vacant. I'm not exactly sure where it is in the jars or the posting of the job action of that. So I could look into that and get back to the member in terms of where it is in the queue. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok: Thank you, Chair. The department's draft 2025-2026 business plan indicates that it has budgeted \$11.328 million under its language implementation fund for the 2025 fiscal year. What specific new initiatives will be undertaken with this funding? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: I will allow the question, Mr. Anavilok, but that's on the next page. I would like to get this page done, but I will allow the question because it will just come up in the next page anyway. Mr. Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Again I thank the member for that question. I'm looking forward to seeing the first increase we've had in a long time, in terms of that. Much of that increase will be going, as I indicated in the House before, to the Department of Education, in terms of our responsibility through the Education Act. But it's really going to be geared towards the work of creating educational resources in Inuktitut. Specifically of that we are looking at 5.4 million, which was geared towards that.

There's a lot more in there but it's really to allow us to live up to our obligations, bringing bilingual K to 12 curriculum around that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Do you have any more questions on corporate management, Mr. Anavilok?

Mr. Anavilok: I just have one more question. Thank you, Chair. Is your department working with the elementary school in Kugluktuk high schools, any help to revitalize the language either in Kugluktuk or Cambridge Bay? Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That would be my last question.

Chairman: Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank my colleague for that question. No we don't directly work with the schools. We work with the Department of Education, who then works with the schools. We provide the resources to the department, who then in turn creates the resources for the schools. So our relationship is between the two departments, as noted. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. We're on page F4, corporate management. Total operations and maintenance to be voted on \$5,301,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. And we'll move to page F5, Languages. Total operations and maintenance to be voted \$17,563,000. I'm going to recognize the clock and we'll break for lunch. Thank you.

>>Committee recessed from 11:51 to 13:29

Chairman: Thank you. I would like to call the committee meeting back to order. Just before we left, we were on page F5, Branch Summary, Languages, total operations and maintenance to be voted, \$17,563,000. Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll try to make this as short as possible. I do have a lot of questions but I'll make it as short as possible, Mr. Chairman.

I have been talking about the Netsilik dialect in this House, Mr. Speaker, and I have been bringing it to the attention to the Minister responsible for Languages.

Our Kitikmeot Inuit Association, when they do have their annual general meetings, a lot of discussions are being talked about for the language revitalization and a lot has to do with Inuinnaqtun as well as the Netsilik dialect and other dialects in the region of Kitikmeot.

Prior to being elected MLA, I took part in those annual general meetings, and a lot has to do with language revitalization in the Kitikmeot region. I make this as short as possible, Mr. Chairman.

My first question will be, what other initiatives is your department undertaking to support the revitalization of Inuinnaqtun. I will refer to as I've been mentioning, about the Netsilik dialect. Is there Netsilik dialect revitalization taking place as of today? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Premier Akeegok.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Good afternoon, colleagues. It's great to be back here. Thank you for the question, Member.

Specifically to the Natsilingmiut dialect, they're all community-based programming that stems from the grants and contributions, so it is through that that we provide that support, in terms of the potential for either revitalization or the continued use of Netsilik dialect.

I know we've worked with the hamlet in terms of notifying them that there's grants and contributions available for them, if they so wish to apply specifically to that.

I believe we provided an update in terms of the Inuinnaqtun resources that one of your colleagues talked about. I won't go too much in depth because I think the deputy did provide a bit there, but we do work very closely with the Kitikmeot Inuit Association in terms as their important work and their important role. And they have provided us with guidance as well as we discuss whether it's programming or policy as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I stated before, I make it as short as possible. Your department's draft 2025-2026 business plan indicates that one of the

department's priorities for the 2024-2025 fiscal year was to implement a new translation policy, and this one interests me, Mr. Chairman.

The question is, as of today, what specific changes have been made to the translation policy. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. That question was asked this morning. Ms. Hughes responded to it.

Minister, is there anything in addition? That question was asked and answered, Mr. Quqqiaq. Do you have another question?

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My apologies. I'll leave it at that, but I'll make a statement.

Time and time again, Mr. Chairman, I have been asking for translations in the Natsilingmiut dialect, and I'll continue until I succeed in my goals for my constituencies, and mainly for the elders that I represent in this House.

For many great reasons, and this is for Kitikmeot beneficiaries, as a Kitikmeot MLA I feel I have to be their voice in this House, so I will continue for the Netsilik dialect to be implemented, hopefully in the policies, and hopefully one day we'll have translation service in the Netsilik dialect.

For my constituents' information and for the elders' information, we do need to get our language revitalized greatly for all of Nunavut. And I do recognize there are five dialects, and I will refer to all the dialects. I respect every dialect greatly, and I hope that one day I'll see all dialects in this House, Mr. Speaker, for every one of them to have a translator in this House.

I do recognize our neighbours in the NWT, they do have a lot of translators in their House. Hopefully one day we'll have all five dialects this House, Mr. Speaker, to translate for all dialects that are recognized in the Nunavut territory. That is just a statement, Mr. Chairman.

And I hope to see that one day for sure we'll have translation service in all five dialects. Just a statement, Mr. Chairman. I'll leave it at that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Premier, you wanted to respond? Go ahead.

Hon. P.J. Akeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I also thank the member for his comments, because he's pushing towards utilizing Inuktitut language. From his election day to date, he's been pushing towards it and I want everyone to know,

anybody who would like to apply for language services, they can apply. They have 15,000, 100,000 dollars is made available for this because for the languages.

I agree with you that we shouldn't be losing our dialects and language and how hard we have to work to push this through.

So the Department of Culture and Heritage, we are always available, so I urge everyone to apply for funding for the languages. Please direct the people who would like to get translations done in Inuktitut.

I also thank the interpreters for Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun for providing services in Inuktitut and English so that we can have a clear understanding with each other. I just wanted to thank you for your comment. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Following my list of names, Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok: Your department's approved 2024-2026 business plan indicated that the department is "identified the need for departmental reorganization for the Inuinnaqtun revitalization unit. The department is working to review current job descriptions and draft new job descriptions for Inuinnaqtun language revitalization related to submit to job evaluation for review."

What is the status of this work? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair, I want to thank my colleague for that question. We are working with the Department of Human Resources at the moment on specifically that very important work. Thank you Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok: Thank you for that. Your department's draft 2024-2026 business plan indicates that one of its priorities for the 2023-2024 fiscal year was to: "Explore options to ensure staffing and continuing care facilities are provided continuing language training."

What is the expected timeline for the completion of this work? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I don't have that in front of me, but if you allow, perhaps my deputy can provide update in terms of what role we play and what work we have been doing so far specifically on that. So if you allow Deputy Hughes to respond to that.

Chairman: Go ahead, Ms. Hughes, please.

Ms. Hughes (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When we look at this, and we are looking at ways how we can train Inuit languages to the staff of continuing care facilities.

We provide education services using an HR calendar for those who need to further their training in Inuktitut and Inuinnaqtun, so we have provided that service to Embassy West and also to the staff. We have made this available to the staff of Embassy West and also to Larga as well.

We had provided this and made this available to those facilities. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok: Your department's draft 2025-2026 business plan indicates that one of the priorities for the 2024-2025 fiscal year was to "review Uqausivut 2.0 through the lens of the legislation updates."

Your department's draft business plan indicate that "the implementation plan for Nunavut's language legislation will be updated it reflect complete amendments to the legislation."

When will the update to Uqausivut 2.0 be tabled in this House? (interpretation ends)
Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Premier Akeegok.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thank my colleague for that question. The department will still continue to implement the efforts until revised Uqausivut 3.0 is there. So I wanted the assurance that the plan that is there that is still we are still implementing.

In discussions with my officials, I think we are looking at sometime in the fall to be able to bring that updated strategy. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) What specific changes to Uqausivut 2.0 are actively being considered? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. If you allow me to quickly consult with my folks here. Thank you, Mr. Chair. I apologize for that little delay there. I just wanted to confer.

But the strategy, there's really some important work that is already there, so we do see updating and improving the existing ones where we haven't provided the necessary resources around that.

I don't expect much big shifts in terms of what Uqausivut 2.0 has already indicated. I want to reassure the members as well that the review process has started, in terms of looking at ways where we could already see improvements and that that work has already started.

In terms of big changes, I don't expect that. But we will be targeting on what worked and what didn't work and where do we put more resources. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok: Thank you, Chair. Your department's draft 2025-2026 business plan indicates that one of the priorities for the 2024-2025 fiscal year was to implement recommendations and begin legislative process stemming from the review of the *Official Languages Act* and the *Inuit Language Protection Act*.

Your department's draft 2025-2026 business plan indicates that "the department anticipates introducing a bill in the winter 2025 sitting."

However, your department did not introduce a bill for the winter sitting. When will your department introduce this bill? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I thank my colleague for that question. We're just going through that right now. I indicated in the House we have done the article 32 consultations with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, as well as our Inuit partners around that.

So I'm still going full steam, in terms of hoping to bring that, whether it's the spring or the fall was the target. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Your department's draft 2025 main estimate indicate that it has a total of 32.0 positions in its translation bureau. As of today, which positions are vacant? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you for that question. I just wanted to mention I know I said the spring or fall. I am aiming on that legislation for the Spring Sitting, just so I provide a bit more certainty on that. We are working extremely hard to bring that forward. I just wanted to confirm that.

If I understood, there's 13 vacancies right now within that division. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok: Thank you, Chair. This will be my last question. I spoke earlier on revitalization of Inuinnaqtun, and I spoke about the individuals applying for funding. What's the maximum amount that they can apply for? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Could I get a clarification specifically where or what grant or contribution? I probably missed that I was just putting in my ear piece. My apologies, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Anavilok.

Mr. Anavilok: Thank you, Chair. I spoke earlier on individuals applying for funding, if they wanted to help revitalize the Inuinnaqtun in Kugluktuk, and there was funding available, you mentioned.

What's the maximum amount an individual organization can apply for? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I believe as I was discussing with my colleague here individuals, I believe up to \$15,000, but the program has all the way up to 100,000 as well. So it's within that range is where the opportunities are specifically for language, to my understanding. I'm getting a nod here, so thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Following the list of names, Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have a question in regards to languages. In the small communities they have local radio stations, and it's utilized, and the main language or the only language they use is Inuktitut, in my community, anyway.

And here under your grants and contributions, the radio stations, can local radio stations access money from the grants and contributions? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, colleague. Yes, and in Clyde River they have been approved to at \$15,000, Qikiqtarjuaq. And this is the application from the hamlet. And they have been approved for \$10,000.

Over and above that, if anybody else would like to access monies through this, they can do so.

The ones I mentioned in Qikiqtarjuaq and Clyde River are for local radio stations. I'm urging the communities to make applications to access some of these funds. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you very much for your response. Is it for creating jobs, or offices, or both? Can the offices also access some of these funds? Thank you.

Chairman: Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It could either be for employees or for other activities. I believe you also asked questions about equipment. I'll get my deputy to make additional comments, if it's okay with you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Hughes.

Ms. Hughes (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There's a lot of projects that can be used through these grants and contributions, including capital items up to \$600,000

that you can access funds for, be it for computer purchases, ear pieces, chairs or desks and so on.

We do have funds for those purposes, or either to invite elders for sewing groups or classes regarding Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit and for language activities. Our monies are wide open for any projects. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm very glad to hear that. Thank you for that information. And I'm quite pleased that I can inform my two communities, because we utilize the local radio station all the time.

In Clyde River every Saturday they open from 10 to 1, and the elders are there from those hours about giving advice to the community members about child care and about anything.

I was also there on Saturday morning, and I really enjoyed the radio show. That's when I was there for the weekend.

But I have seen radio stations that need renovations or new equipment and so on. Just to make sure that the information is going out there, especially the hamlet council. They're the ones who operate that radio. Possibly because they don't know about the money available, they don't make applications. Their salaries are very, very low, but they're the ones who are the communication link. And their hours are quite short with that.

If we could get that additional information sent out to the hamlet council and to other groups, just to make sure that they access those funds and some of those local radio stations are in dilapidated or old buildings.

So I would like to suggest that your department send out this information to the communities. I'm sure that there will be more applications coming in.

In Clyde River they're trying to move the local radio station. It's an old building that they are utilizing, out at the outskirts of the community. So what they are trying to do is move it from the outskirts to the centre of the community.

So I'll make sure that they get the information. And the hamlet is very crucial to managing their community. I would be very pleased if that information goes to the community.

I don't have a question, but more of a statement. But I can say that this is something that I'm very pleased about. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have no further questions.

Chairman: Premier, you wanted to respond.

Hon. P.J. Akeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, yes, and thank you as well. I'm very happy, too, because these things really improve the communities, and it helps with the spreading of communication. And I've seen that myself with the local radio stations, and especially coming from a small community, I know how important it is.

And in regards to your question, we can send the information to your community and tell them what funding is available. And we're going to have a request here from the House to get the funding for the coming year.

And if we get approved for that, we'll be able to remind the hamlets what's available out there. Thank you for pushing for this information to be spread around. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name I have on my list, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just a couple of follow-up questions on the question regarding the reorganization for the Inuinnaqtun revitalization unit.

Premier, you mentioned you're working with human resources on that. And I'm wondering how many positions are you looking at, and are they under Official Languages Inuit Language Implementation Fund or Translation Bureau. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank my colleague for that very good question. The positions are under the Translations Bureau.

The key area where we are looking at working with the Department of Human Resources is to look at expanding their role.

So it's not just translations or interpretations but on the revitalization front that we know is so important, so it's exploring what more we could be able to do on that hearing the suggestions we hear in the House here, so it's very targeted, but it's existing positions that we have under that bureau. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The premier did mention that there were 13 out of the 32 positions vacant, and I wonder how many of those vacancies are specifically Inuinnaqtun positions. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: We have the list. Let me just, actually it's tabulated for each position so I just have to quickly confirm on the positions. Just give me a second here.

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thanks for allowing us. We have the info, it's just broken down into exact, every position, but we're looking four within that division, but also one from official languages as well tied into that, so five altogether. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I wonder how many of those positions come with housing, and what the barriers are to filling those positions. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Premier Akeegok.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We don't have that level of detail with us right now. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I hope that information can be provided to us at a later date.

I'll just move on to the discussion about Uqausivut 3.0. The premier mentioned in response to the question about specific changes that they're reviewing which necessary resources weren't being provided. I guess that's my question, because the premier said they were looking into which necessary resources weren't provided in 2.0 that made it a little bit harder to implement.

If we can hear a little bit more about what those resources are, so that hopefully we can address those issues. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you to the member for the question. On the first suggestion, I will see what we could do on housing front. I could commit to getting back through correspondence. But we'll look into that specifically of those positions.

To the second part of the question, the review will dictate exactly where those are. As I indicated, the review is just starting in terms of those. But as I indicated, there's not much changes that I do expect, but I really want to let due process go through, in terms of let the officials really dive into what worked, what didn't work to guide the next steps. I'm very open to that, but right now I just want to give respect for that process to happen and I don't want to get ahead of myself here.

I look forward to seeing that completed and then see what recommendations come out of that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think the Inuinnaqtun-specific positions might be a little bit unique, in terms of the needs for housing, because we know that people who speak Inuinnaqtun don't necessarily come from or live in Iqaluit. So in order to recruit people from the Kitikmeot, you might need to provide housing.

I would like to hear about the department's plan or priority in 2025 to track and monitor translation requests and identify ways to continue to improve the quality and efficiencies of translations.

I would like to know what specific actions the department is planning to undertake to support this priority. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the member for the question. We actually have a pretty robust system now, in terms of tracking efficiencies and the quality control checks that are there. Very fortunate to have the incredible public servants who do that very important work.

But from the department's view, that's one where we feel comfortable in terms of having a strong database to be able to track those. Because it's really, you could see the quality, there's check points that are there.

And really the quantity that comes in, there's a lot of demand for translations in particular on all languages. But I think there's a robust system on that one that we feel comfortable with. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: If I may ask then, why is it in the business plan that it's a priority to track and monitor and to take actions, if the department is satisfied with it currently? Why is it in the business plan to continue work on? Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Really good follow-up question. There's always room for improvements, and that's really one where we continue to learn from.

Just recently we did centralize that function, so it's for us to keep monitoring to make sure we are finding deficiencies if there's any to improve upon and to keep up with if there's any new technologies as well.

So I think it's important to always do that check point, but it's really more because we did centralize it, and to learn from that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Go ahead, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. You're really good at anticipating my follow-ups. I just would like to say thank you so much for the last couple of days for receiving my follow-up questions by text as well. I participated from afar a little bit, thanks to you.

What I am curious about, as a former user of the system as a public servant who made many submissions over the years to have translations done, it was often really difficult as a public servant, especially somebody who's not a director-or-above level, to get documents prioritized.

I wonder what mechanism there is in place, if any, right now to help public servants to really be able to push their translation requests through to the end, in a faster manner, because it really does impact the work of our public servants if they have to wait to communicate about a program, project, or any kind of message to the public, if they can't get their work translated quickly. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Prior to my role here when I had worked with NTI as well, I was responsible for the interpretation and translations.

And just actually seeing a lot of the interpreters here, which I've been very fortunate to have known for decades, really, the important work that they all do. I know the stress level that comes with that as well, in terms of the urgency.

To my understanding, I'm not right into the processes of how those documents are submitted, but I've been made aware that there are in the submission, the urgency, the timelines and the size of the documents are factored in. But that's to the level I know.

I hope I've responded to the member's question in terms of looking at the sequencing and how we could move a lot quicker. It's really through that database that we talked about as

well, in terms of utilizing and keeping up with the different new applications that do come and that we're very open to it and it's where the business line number is there, so that we bring that forward.

Just thankful for technology as well. I'm getting quick updates to that. So each department designates who submits requests on a consistency basis. So it really rests within there.

The two top priorities that come are right here in the Legislative Assembly when there's urgent priority documents submitted, and EIA. Those are the two top departments that I've been made aware that get priority for any translations. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. You know, I remember it was sometimes like a bit of a dog fight. I know when I was at Health, we worked with our manager of communications or communications team to push for our translations to get done.

I just wonder if there's a regular meeting that looks at the number of requests and whether or not there's a way to appeal through you comms people or whoever submits it to see your work get translated as quickly as possible when the need arises. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Premier Akeegok.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Those I believe usually arise from within the departments, and it is there. While I can, I just want to plug, just I really encourage Nunavummiut that have gone through the Nunavut Arctic College interpreter-translator program to apply. There's incredible positions that are vacant. This is really a critical function of preserving our language, of our culture.

I just really wanted to plug that in, because we have a limited pool that we're so lucky to have within the bureau and that division. They do some incredible work that we have, but there's some vacancies.

I couldn't stress enough that we need to see more people that speak Inuktitut to go through that program and apply to those positions. We're very eager to have them join the family of the public service.

I just wanted to plug that in as well, because the pool hasn't increased but the volume has been increasing, and we need to make sure that we have adequate people, public servants to be able to provide this critical role here.

So I just wanted to mention that. I know it wasn't questioned, but it's tied directly to this role. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have one quick question for clarification. It's around the exploring options to ensure staff in continuing care facilities are provided targeted language training.

Is that going to be client specific, in their dialect, that the employees are learning? There was one time I was asked to translate *qaktonat tutiit* (ph). And to me, the beginning part, *qakton*, means "to take back." But I found out later on that the person was saying "thank you."

The work the department's working on, will it be geared towards the specific client so that it's in their dialect that they are understood and are being understood? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Premier, go ahead.

Hon. P.J. Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I want to thank my colleague for that follow-up question. We do abide by standards, in terms of translation. There are checks and balances, and perhaps there's one or two words I'm not sure if that's the one, whether it fits within that, but I am told that there are standards that we do follow when submissions are made and whatnot.

Most times it's always tied to the availability as well, in terms of providing that expertise. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Page F5, Branch Summary, Languages. Total operations and maintenance to be voted, \$17,563,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to page F6, Culture and Heritage. Culture, total operations and maintenance to be voted, \$11,277,000. Questions? Going once, going twice.

Page F6, Culture, total operations and maintenance to be voted, \$11,277,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to page F3. Culture and Heritage, detail of expenditures to be voted, total operations and maintenance, \$34,144,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree Culture and Heritage is concluded?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Brief closing comments, Premier.

Hon. P.J. Akeagok: Thank you. Just wow. This is the first increase the department has received in so many years, and I just want to say thank you so much to each and every one of you.

It's one of those small but mighty departments, and I'm very proud of the people that are sitting here and those that are around here, and those that are behind us as well doing some incredible work.

I just want to say thank you so much for the support. On the increase, we're very excited to be able to provide as really, an agency that provides and equips and enables an opportunity for language and culture to preserve and to continue to become even stronger. So I just wanted to say thank you for that.

I also would like to thank the incredible interpreter-translators that are really our heroes that keep us going. So I just wanted to say thank you to the members that are here. But those that work for the government as well that are non-stop, and I couldn't be any prouder with the role that they play, and I'm just very thankful for that. So with that, thank you very much, Mr. Chair for that again.

>>*Applause*

Chairman: Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, you can escort the witnesses out. Members, you don't have to stay in your seats, but we're going to take a four- or five-minute break to prepare for the next witnesses. So stay close. Thank you.

>>*Committee recessed from 14:14 to 14:26*

Chairman: Thank you. I would like to call the committee meeting back to order. Minister Nakashuk, do you have officials you would like to have appear with you?

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk: Yes.

Chairman: Thank you. Does the committee agree to allow the minister's witnesses to appear before you?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort them in. Just for the record, Minister, if you could introduce your officials, please.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my right, DM Jonathan Ellsworth; and to my left, Director of Finance.

Chairman: Sorry, can you repeat the last name.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk: My apologies. On my right is my Deputy Minister, Jonathan Ellsworth; on my left is the Director of Corporate Services, Dwayton Tonge.

Chairman: Thank you. As the opening comments have been made already, I'll open the floor to any general comments to the opening comments.

Seeing none, please go to page L4, Family Services. Corporate management, total operations and maintenance to be voted \$6,987,000. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and welcome, Minister, and your officials. I would like to get started by, we know that we receive the 2025 follow-up on Child and Family Services in Nunavut Independent Auditor's Report this week.

Just to start, Minister, could you tell me what your three top priorities in addressing the crisis that we're facing are in the 2025-2026 business plan and budget that we're here to discuss. What are the three top priorities that you're enacting to address this crisis? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Nakasuk.

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

To your question, it's a bit difficult to answer with so many priorities to consider, as Family Services and areas of wellness, in particular family wellness that we are responsible for. There are many categories within that.

Perhaps the biggest priorities are counsellors, community counsellors and training of counsellors in mental health and the well-being of, or rather I say counsellor support for

our staff and our children in Nunavut to be in safe environment, and as we become responsible for the children.

This is one of the first, but there are many issues related to that.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The reason I'm asking that question is because it's really difficult, from my perspective, to get a handle on how to support the department. We know what the baseline is about the state that we're in when it comes to this crisis. We know that there's staffing. We know that there were tracking and data issues. We're being reassured now that the department now knows where children are, which is great.

But we're also hearing that there are, I think there were over 80 priorities listed in one, I can't remember if it was the framework or the action plan, but it's really difficult to put a finger on what exactly the department is prioritizing.

I hear training mental health counsellors and support workers; however, I'm still really not clear on what the priorities are. I'm just going to take a few minutes to gather my thoughts, and I'll just save my time for now, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name I have on my list, Mr. Simailak. Thank you. Go ahead, Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for the member for expressing her thoughts. As she said, it's difficult how to give support to Family Services, with a real need to have Family Services supported and the areas she mentioned what data tracking we do and what data have in areas that are taken out of the territory, and whether they are properly cared for.

And the data that we have not within two years the areas we have tackled and worked hard to achieve, they are not really being focused as be seen as not a priority, but they have been our priority.

The data collected, and the figures to seek more support, with 34 new staff that were approved, and in areas how specifically we supervise that support.

It seems not to be enough, but we have a lot to do. There are so many varied issues with all that we are responsible for, not just as Family Services; we also deal with poverty reduction issues, such as those that we are responsible for. I just wanted to state that.

So as Family Services, not just within the last two years, we have done a lot of work over a number of years, areas we need adjustments and changes that we review. And we have

made progress in making the changes within the work environment. I just wanted to mention that. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you, and I apologize, I didn't notice that you wanted to address. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, Minister, and your officials. The Department of Family Services has struggled to hire and retain staff, especially at the community level.

The business plan indicates on page 166 that the department has eight Inuit employees on internal transfers aimed at broadening their career opportunities.

What specific careers in the Department of Family Services will be available to these employees? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you. Let me just look here on areas of training, education within our staff.

Perhaps my DM can mention the internal transfers. We have 14 who are in transfer assignment, and four in Nunavut, and 15 with direct appointment that we have hired in the year 2024-2025, nine, and two who are taking educational leave and will be returning to their post.

The employees, internal transfer assignments in any which areas they will be assigned, my deputy can elaborate on those if it's in your discretion, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Ellsworth.

Mr. Ellsworth: Thank you, Mr. Chair. If I could have a brief indulgence, Mr. Chair.

Thank you, Mr. Chair. I understand most of the positions are community Social Services workers. I don't have the exact details with me at the present time. I searched my reference materials. I would be happy to report back on what positions those ITAs are for. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Just to be clear on the question, what the member was also asking what specific careers in the Department of Family Services will be available to the eight Inuit employees that are currently on internal transfers. I understand from the deputy minister that he will provide that information at a later date. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Is it known yet if it's successful, and now the department is looking at expanding it to add more Inuit employees in this broadening of career opportunities? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My next question. The Government of Nunavut has committed to support areas of the comprehensive elders and seniors care strategy.

Other than providing benefits to seniors through such ongoing programs as the senior supplementary benefits and senior fuel subsidy programs, in what specific areas did the Department of Family Services take the lead in implementing the strategy? Thank you Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): In regards to elders seniors care strategy, they are taking care of senior citizens supplementary, senior fuel subsidy, and seniors burial benefits.

Those are geared towards senior care strategy and also providing food hampers to the elders. That has been the responsibility of the Family Services, and we've been working on this continually, and by working with the Economic Development and Transportation, by providing funding to the communities and providing funding so that the community can do hunts for the community.

The funding that we are requesting at this time, there are three major programs that we are leading in. Those are the three that we are leading in. Food for elders, it's the responsibility of various departments. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Minister. Along with the senior fuel subsidy, has the department looked at offering a subsidy for seniors for power bills, power usage?

There's a current application from the Qulliq Energy Corporation through the generic application to increase power rates again, so I'm concerned about the elders, especially homeowners, if there's a power subsidy program for seniors through this department. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you. The subsidies for fuel we're now reviewing it at this time, how we can improve the program.

We've never really discussed the topic of electricity subsidy for the seniors, but we are very interested in listening and hearing from other subsidies requests.

But we are now talking about senior fuel subsidy programs and they follow the wage earning amount. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Would the minister be interested into delving into the power subsidy option for seniors in addition to the senior fuel subsidy?

Sorry if I misunderstood earlier in her last response. I'll word it this way: Would the minister be interested in or commit to looking into a senior power subsidy for elders? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) We will take that into consideration. We can't promise anything. At the time, right now we're looking at the senior fuel subsidy program a bit more and how we could better provide it to more elders in the communities, as that also has an income threshold. So we're thinking of that at the moment, but we'll consider the power bills for elders.
Qujannamiik.

Chairman: Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Minister, for the commitment to consider that.

Next question. The department has invested in a new Child and Family Services case management system. When will this system be fully implemented? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for asking that question. As the one that we have been discussing about the case management system has been worked on, and they are using that program called Matrix.

The communities are putting in data for Child and Family Services cases, and the Social Services in the past used to put in the data in through the Family Services, but now the

data input is complete at this time, but the social workers are now being trained to use the case management system.

To date they are starting to utilize the system or the Matrix. today 81 percent of the staff is utilized in that system and they have been trained. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, again Minister. My next question around corporate management, the directorate, I'm looking at the community Social Service workers, the front-line staff and the recent office of the Auditor General audit. They had to do another audit.

I'm wondering, how has the department looked at hearing or listening the concerns of the front-line staff on how the department can make departments to better serve Nunavummiut without fear of being reprimanded by a manager or supervisor? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chair. (interpretation ends) We've had a lot of people contact my office as well as our headquarters office from previous social workers and current social workers, providing some supports or advice on how we can better improve the operations of Family Wellness Division, but I think in the last year, couple years, we've been doing a lot of cleaning, per se. We've had a lot of things we've had to improve on following the OAG report, and I really do feel for a lot of the social workers in the communities that have heard about the OAG report, especially the ones that have worked really hard in the territory.

We've been trying to provide best supports for social workers as well from our headquarters office, and not to forget the ones, we have had staff shortages in the level of reporting for the social workers as well here at the headquarters office. So we have been adding new positions within to ensure there's adequate reporting system for the social workers as well and better supports for them.

We've been doing some changes to better operate the Family Wellness Division. We still have a long way to go, but we're making some lead way in how we can better operate and provide better supports all around. *Qujannamiik.*

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

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. I would first like to ask about the staff housing situation, as that was identified as one of the major recruitment challenges. As of now,

what is your need in staff housing necessary to fill all of the vacancies for social workers in the communities? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk: What we really need is office spaces, and we need staff housing units. Those are the main things that are giving us the barrier not to fill all of the positions in the territory. Those are the main issues. That's about it. *Qujannamiik*.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Minister. In recent years the Nunavut Housing Corporation as part of the Nunavut 3000 had purchased a number of pre-fab and modular units to be shipped up, and they had indicated a number could be potentially transferred to the Department of Family Services. I was wondering if there has been any progress in those discussions. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) That's a very good question. I am certainly willing to share the information in regards to that, and we really do appreciate NHC stepping up to provide modular units.

The modular units are not finished yet. And I did actually visit one in Pangnirtung. They are very nice units.

The next phase, they will be completing those this year, and because of some construction being done in the communities, they will be used by carpenters or whoever might be needing those units.

But after they're done doing their work in the communities, we will talk about how we could better utilize those.

And what we had discussed before was either using those for staff units or community use, whether it be programming or whatever. But I think, looking at the modular units, I think they will be a bit more fitting for staff housing. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Minister. That's another discussion we can pick up at a later date.

My next line of question is going to be with regards to the communications within corporate management. When I was recently in Pond Inlet I was visiting my aunt, who's a retired home owner and was struggling because she wasn't receiving her pensions.

I asked her if she's receiving the senior fuel subsidy, and she wasn't aware of it. So I just want to ask what type of efforts have been made by the communications division to promote the senior fuel subsidy, the day care subsidy, as well as funding supports for apprentices and the ALTs program, the adult learning training support program. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chair. (interpretation ends) We do have career development officers that do travel into the communities to talk about apprenticeship, talking about trades, exams, programs that are offered through the department.

I do know that we do need to do a bit more work in terms of providing more information about the senior fuel subsidy, as well as maybe the day care subsidy.

They do talk a lot about the adult learning training supports for students that are going out to school, so there is some promotion in that way.

We don't have enough career development officers in the communities, and they're usually based in the regional centres. We do have one in Igloolik and here. The others are based in Pangnirtung, Rankin, and Cambridge Bay, Kugluktuk, and Baker Lake, I believe. *Qujannamiik*.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name I have on my list, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I was just back there looking for the February 27 Blues, because I have a note to myself regarding the case management system, which is Matrix. The minister just stated that 81 per cent of staff are using it and have been trained, and I had a note to myself that there was a question on February 27 regarding data, and I recall that the minister stated that accurate data was not provided.

What I'm wondering about is, if this Matrix system is in place and we have 81 per cent of social workers using and inputting into that program, why aren't reports coming out, why isn't it accurate. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) That's a very good question. We also have to take into consideration the Matrix system is a fairly new system that we just started using recently. Of course any employee in the office, there could be some hesitancy in using or trying to get staff trained on something that they're not used to, so it's been taking a bit of time. But it's good to see that 81 per cent of the employees are trained now.

From that we are continuing to provide more data from it. There's still a bit of work that the staff are doing, and more training is to continue always, especially when new staff are coming in, that's going to be a continued thing that the department will have to do.

If you don't mind my deputy replying to that a bit more in detail.

Chairman: Thank you. Please proceed, Mr. Ellsworth.

Mr. Ellsworth: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I will note it's very important to get the data piece correct. We managed to finish the migration of historical data in June 2024, but we ran into some pretty serious compatibility issues with the new framework that's in place within the software solution, Mr. Chair.

However, a decision was made within the Matrix system to create a searchable and indexed repository for all the historical data so it could be searched, accessed through certain key words and such.

The question is why is there still not data. I'm pleased to inform this committee that just this week I saw my first dataset arising from the new system.

As we go through finalizing the development of the searchable repository for the legacy data, we should become more capable of reporting data that is accurate. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am happy to know that historical data has been migrated over, because I know it was launched in December 2023. To me, that doesn't really feel like a very new system, especially given that we know that there is such a high uptake.

I would like to know what the plans are for training, is it 19 per cent of social workers that are left to be trained, and a two-part question: I'm curious to know what that first dataset was, what it captured, what kind of information was reported. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk: If you allow my deputy to respond.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Ellsworth.

Mr. Ellsworth: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We anticipate the remainder of the staff will be trained prior to the end of the fiscal year.

To the second question, Mr. Chair, the kinds of data that I'm seeing in front of me are number of referrals; number of referrals that are screened in; whether or not they met the timeline for 24 hours or 72 responses; the number of referrals that were screened out; the source of the referral; number of alleged child or youth of concern; referrals involving maltreatment; and then the whole list of protection matters that are listed within the framework of the Act.

Mr. Chair, together with additional demographic information, specific data, dates of birth, names, communities, location, count of allegations of maltreatment, maltreatment concern, nature of the maltreatment, among several other data points. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: That's really good news. I'm happy to hear that you do have access to that information. It will go a long way to helping to organize the very important work of child safety, ensuring child safety. Does that data also capture safety audits and their results? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk: Yes.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you. Mr. Chair, I'm scrolling through my list of questions here. When you're talking about referrals and how many are screened in or out, I'm not sure that that means. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you for that question. (interpretation ends) Screening, what the social workers need to do on, what we've been trying to do is

better improve our home visits. Face-to-face visits are a bit more common nowadays. We're really emphasizing that.

But also there are times when screening out kids would be when we know that they don't need to be followed up, or we know they're doing well, the family's doing well, the social worker starts stepping out a bit more. But we do continue to ensure that there's like I said, more face-to-face.

But if you allow, my deputy could also provide a bit more detail about that. *Qujannamiik*.

Chairman: Go ahead, Mr. Ellsworth.

Mr. Ellsworth: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My understanding, Mr. Chair, is that matters that are screened out don't meet the threshold for intervention. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. When it comes to standards and procedures, I know that the Representative for Children and Youth had made 13 recommendations. I won't list them all. I guess my question is how many of the current standards have been revised, updated, implemented, and trained, and if we could hear which ones those are, I would appreciate that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for that question. In our office, the child and youth representative, if it's okay with you, I'll refer this to my deputy.

Chairman: Mr. Ellsworth.

Mr. Ellsworth: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I believe two have been issued and trained on. Those two I believe are the out-of-territory standard and the investigational standard.

I also understand that there are 14 that recently rolled out, Mr. Chair, that have yet to be trained on. However, we do aim to have the standard review completed before summer of this year. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you. At the Standing Committee in April 2024, the Representative of Children and Youth stated the strategic framework did not reflect the current state of

child welfare, and it did not address the fundamental root problems; one was the current service delivery model.

The standing committee encouraged the department through recommendation number 5 to consider the comments and recommendations made by the representative to ensure actions and objectives contained within the strategic plan address root problems, like the service delivery model.

My question is are the revised standards and procedures based on revised service model as recommended by the representative in the standing committee. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for that question. Just last week they were reviewed and sent out. And there was approval for what was sent from Family Services.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Who were they sent out to? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk: I just stated it was sent to the Representative for Children and Youth. *Qujannamiik*.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Are those standards and procedures based on a revised service model? Or are they based on the service model that has been in place for a number of years? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk: It's based on the modern service model.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you. I'm still not a hundred per cent clear on whether or not it's an updated model or not. Yes or no. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: The minister said the modern model. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Sometimes I think my hair is modern, but young people around me tell me it's not.

One of the other issues identified by the Office of the Auditor General was workload, and sorry, I'm not sure that my notes are referring to.

The second measure, human resources structure and capacity, it references a staff-to-client ratio. And so what I wonder is what is the current staff-to-client ratio in terms of how you are building human resources in order to address the workload. And is your current staff-to-client ratio considered an appropriate workload standard. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Ms. Brewster. In comparison to like an industry standard. Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you for that question. (interpretation ends) There has been some talk about, for example, the case load for a social worker, how many clients they are dealing with. What we have really emphasized on is ensuring each social worker has a case of about 12 to 15. So that is pretty normal for all social workers to work on, is that ratio. *Qujannamiik*.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you for that response. I know that we hear a lot about staff burnout, and I'm wondering with that expectation whether or not there are communities where there are social workers who, because of staffing issues, are carrying more than 12 to 15 case loads. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I can't precisely put numbers for each social worker in the communities. The reason I stated that was because that was because we want to ensure that all social workers do have that number of case loads, and if they have more than that, we are really working towards, we are continually working to ensure that our staff here at headquarters or their supervisors are supporting them.

We do understand the burnout that our social workers have, so what we've done in the last year is ensuring that they do get counselling supports and mental health support.

But also they do have more frequent staff meetings virtually, if they're not able to be here. So I know the headquarters has really improved in providing more support to our

community social workers to ensure we have less burnout and more supports.

Qujannamiik.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Minister, you anticipated my follow-up question, which is what is the opportunity for respite for social workers, and I'm hearing frequent staff meetings.

The other thing I would like to hear about is what are the opportunities for debriefing, because we know that sometimes social workers are involved in situations that are emotionally difficult, as well as sometimes they're put in danger.

So I would like to hear about what opportunities they have to debrief.

In these frequent staff meetings, and with that additional support from headquarters staff, is there ever an opportunity for somebody to take over a file, any files from a distance. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk: Thank you. (interpretation ends) That is not something new for the department. We do have to do that at times. But like I mentioned, we've been trained to improve a lot of the training supports for our social workers as well as more support from the headquarters office with the senior staff, from the senior staff.

So we do have a comprehensive training program developed for, manuals, and also there's like you mentioned a lot of heavy cases that they deal with. So there has been a lot more work in terms of providing more training and supporting.

Like I mentioned, we do have a contract to do mental wellness supports for our social workers. I might be missing something here, but I could certainly have my deputy respond more, if you don't mind. *Qujannamiik.*

Chairman: Go ahead, Mr. Ellsworth.

Mr. Ellsworth: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would supplement the minister's response by indicating that we also provide critical incident debriefing through the counselling service that are contracted by Department of Family Services for staff. And we ensure that if a social worker needs respite, we provide support to ensure that they get that respite.

I've stated in this Assembly many times that wellness employees need to be well to be able to do their work, Mr. Chair, and we're working really hard to ensure that there is wellness amongst our staff, and not just the wellness staff; all staff. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It's really important that we are supporting those workers, and I appreciate hearing that.

Can I get just an update on the child abuse and the neglect agreement and whether or not that agreement is in place in all areas that it's meant to be in place. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you for asking that question.

(interpretation ends) The child abuse and neglect response agreement, we have been working quite closely with the departments to reconnect and see where we need to do more work on with other departments that we just recently had an agreement with.

The departments that we are working closely with are Department of Education, Department of Health, Department of Justice, Umingmak, RCMP.

There have been more frequent meetings to ensure what response they would have to do if they see any abuse or neglect by the employees within those departments. And we're expecting to have more communication with the departments to ensure that the agreement is carried forward and not just put on the table.

Those are some of the things that we have been doing. And also we just upgraded, well, I guess with the agreement that we just did with the departments, we will continue to have a third-party resource to ensure that the working group is developing and the Whole of Government Child Sexual Abuse Action Plan is continued. Communication has been made with the RCYO on that. *Qujannamiik*.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you for that update. I would like some reassurance that the part of the child abuse and neglect agreement and reporting of critical injuries and death standard related to children suffering harm and is that in place, being enacted.

Can we be assured that investigations take place in a timely manner when there are any reports related to critical injuries and death? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for asking that question. (interpretation ends) That's the reason why we've had to come together again to ensure this agreement is effective and ensure that all departments have a road to make the report if they ensure there's a proper process for employees to follow, whether it be an Education staff or Department of Health staff or Family Services staff.

This is something that we will certainly have to follow, because we have an outside body that is overlooking this as well. We will continue to work with Representative for Child and Youth to ensure that we are responding well to this agreement. *Qujannamiik*.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just for clarification, I know you mentioned a third party in your previous response and now just an outside body. For clarification, is that the Representative for Children and Youth? Or is there an additional body engaged? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk: If you allow my deputy to respond to that. Thank you.

Chairman: Please proceed, Mr. Ellsworth.

Mr. Ellsworth: Thank you, Mr. Chair. There's a few different bodies involved, Mr. Chair. There is a third-party resource who has assisted us in updating the Child Abuse and Neglect Response Agreement.

Members might recall that during the examination of the Representative for Children and Youth office annual reports, she had made comments that it needs to be re-looked at and include additional information.

We took that advice and operationalized it. The third-party resource worked with all the stakeholders, did jurisdictional scans, finalized the draft. We have shared that with Ms. Bates, the Representative for Children and Youth office. She's provided feedback.

Notwithstanding this sort of amendment process that has been undertaken by the Department of Family Services and its colleagues at Health, Justice and the RCMP and

Omingmuk, we have operationalized the last version of the agreement through the context of developing regular meeting schedules, terms of reference for the partnership.

We will be completing the Sexual Abuse Action Plan before summer of 2025. We plan to have training and communication strategies finalized before spring of 2025, Mr. Chair.

We take this work very seriously, and we have worked diligently to make sure the work will result in positive outcomes and better communication and management matters as it pertains between the Department of Family Services and the relative stakeholders. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you. You just threw in a new action plan, so the Sexual Abuse Action Plan is under development. I wonder what's in place now to ensure action when there's a suspicion. This is a two-part, because I'm running out of time. Are there any other action plans in addition to that under way? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk: If you allow my deputy to respond to that please.

Chairman: Please proceed, Mr. Ellsworth.

Mr. Ellsworth: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The strategic plan of the department makes it very clear that the department needs to do better in referrals and investigations. In the intervening time we've strengthened our relationship with the RCMP. We've created better communication channels within the department to ensure that there's oversight when there are allegations or suspicion of child abuse or neglect, Mr. Chair.

And so there's several actions happening at the present time. Certainly this plan will help to sort of not only identify the specific actions that are required to address the issue Nunavut-wide, but also will prescribe timelines and responsibilities for relevant stakeholders as well, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you for that, Mr. Chair. In the development and way forward, we know that there's a lot of work being done to address issues of concern that are coming up new and fresh. However, what we also know is that there's a possibility that a number of potential abuses fell through the cracks during the lead-up and the creation of this crisis.

And what I wonder is how much of the new work that's being done today is also taking a retrospective look back at issues of concerns that were raised and maybe not followed up on, and whether or not department officials are following up on allegations of abuse or neglect that are two, three, four, five, six, seven, eight years old. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: As it's a direct follow-up I'll go directly to Mr. Ellsworth.

Mr. Ellsworth: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to believe that we have the ability to do so, and certainly if matters come to our attention that we determine weren't adequately followed up we would certainly do so.

I would be committed to instructing staff to do a historical review to determine whether or not there are matters that weren't followed up on appropriately. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Following my list of names, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I would like to go back to the opening remarks on the Standing Committee on Social Wellness. On the second page there, near the bottom it says:

"Members were disappointed to learn the previous initiatives to train and certify Nunavut-based social workers did not meet the employment requirements."

Is that true? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk: That is true. *Qujannamiik.*

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chair. That is really sad news, because if I was enrolled in Arctic College program to become a social worker, and then when I finished my course found I was not qualified to be a social worker, it would be quite disappointing.

I know Family Services is not responsible for Arctic College courses, but any of these students aware that they could not be? It might not be fair. The Minister might not be able to answer it. Were these students aware that they would not qualify to be a social worker after completing the course. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for asking that question (interpretation ends) When the social work program first came out a number of years ago, that was the concern that was brought forward. We've made some major changes in that to ensure that the program itself does fit into the job description, because a lot of that wasn't really done in the beginning of the social work program itself.

A number of years now we have ensured that a lot of the program itself does meet the criteria to fit into the social work field. *Qujannamiik*.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just for clarity, someone that has graduated from the program at Arctic College last year would be qualified to become a social worker? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk: Yes.

Chairman: Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. From the graduating class of last year, how many became social workers? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) We will have to get back to the member on numbers. We are working closely with Nunavut Arctic College, and we continue to have close communication, and myself, to start planning hiring students coming out of social work program. That has been something we've been discussing in the last couple of years, is ensuring that we start hiring more of these students that are just coming out of the program itself.

It's a continuous thing we have to do, but we will certainly get back to the member on that. We did have all the students that are in the course itself right now, they were all summer students in this previous summer working in the communities doing their practicum as well. So I just wanted to update you on that as well. *Qujannamiik*.

Chairman: Thank you. If I may, if you could include how many grads there were, so we can compare to how many became employed with Family Services. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was just going to ask if we could include information for the past three years, so that we could see if there's a trend. I think from listening to the minister, she said a few years since the problem with not being qualified to be a social worker was worked on and corrected.

It would be nice to know, okay, if there's 10 graduates within Nunavut, and all 10 became social workers, great. If there are 10 graduates and only two become social workers, then there's still an issue. So if we can get that information through the Chair to us so that we see the big picture. That's all I have. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

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

Chairman: If I may just have a follow-up. The people that graduated under the old program that wasn't qualified, is there upgrading opportunities, or were there opportunities for those previous grads to be able to take a course or two type thing for them to be able to qualified social workers and be employable with the Department of Family Services? Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Anyone who wants to go back to school is able, and perhaps something could have been done. I cannot speak on those. (interpretation ends) It was before my time, so I don't really know what the history is for that one. *Qujannamiik*.

Chairman: Thank you. We are on page L4, Family Services. Corporate management, total operations and maintenance to be voted \$6,987,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Before we go to page L5, I'm going to recognize the clock and take a 15-minute break. Thank you.

>>Committee recessed from 15:31 to 15:53

Chairman: Thank you. I would like to call the committee meeting back to order. Before we broke, I said we were on page L5, Family Wellness. Total operations and maintenance to be voted, \$120,517,000. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. There's only a couple topics I would like to touch upon, the first being the Matrix solution historical dataset transfer.

The first question I would like to ask is how do the more recent years' referrals compare to the last set of referrals that were published in the, I think it was the 2021-2022 annual report.

So I'm curious about the comparability of the more recent data with that of the last referrals that were tabled. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman (interpretation ends) We haven't done that analysis yet so we can't provide numbers on data.

If you allow, I would like to respond a bit back to Mr. Savikataaq's question. In terms of how many have started working for the department or have become social workers in the territory, the first cohort there were five graduates; three are went on to work for GN Family Services, Justice, and Nunavut Arctic College. Two went on to further their education into master's.

The second cohort had six graduates; two went on to GN, Family Services, and Health. Two are working with a non-profit organization in the territory. One is working for the federal government, and one is focussing to support their family and is considering a role in Nunavut Arctic College in their home community.

The third cohort is set to graduate this fall, and there are 10 students at this current program. Taima.

Chairman: Thank you for that, Minister. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. So the next question I would like to ask with regards to the Matrix system, the minister had mentioned there was inconsistencies with entering information into the new system.

Has the minister had that same issue here in Iqaluit? I guess the question I'm trying to ask is has the Iqaluit social workers been consistently using this Matrix system? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk: Yes.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Minister. So in the last dataset that was published in the annual reports, there was a significant amount of referrals related to physical abuse and sexual abuse. Would the minister be able to provide us with an update today on those referrals here in Iqaluit? Thank you, Chair. Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I will see what we can do. My deputy minister did mention earlier the current entering the new database there has been more entering into the system so we do have numbers, the current clients coming in.

I'm worried about the privacy issue here when it comes to Iqaluit alone, just for concern only. (interpretation) That's all.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. So when it comes to government and privacy matters, that usually means the rule of five. If there's a lower number than five individuals, the government tends to not release information so no one will be identified.

Does that mean that the number of referrals in Iqaluit with regards to physical abuse and sexual abuse is lower than five? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If it's okay for you, I will ask my deputy to respond.

Chairman: Mr. Ellsworth.

Mr. Ellsworth: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The dataset that I was referring to earlier covers the period October 1, 2024 to present. It's not broken down by community in the version that I'm looking at it, but it is below five for South Qikiqtaaluk. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you. Thank you for that response. I'll move on to my next topic.

During our last hearing with the OAG there was a question about a complaints mechanism being required for the Department of Family Services, a complaints mechanism for clients to bring forward concerns that they have with service.

I would like to ask for an update on any progress in that area. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk: If you don't mind allowing my deputy to respond to that, please.

Chairman: Go ahead please, Mr. Ellsworth.

Mr. Ellsworth: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I believe when we had the hearing there were concerns that the current line that was available wasn't being answered or responded to. We reactivated that line. It now terminates at the ADM's assistant desk.

In the longer term, we plan to have several mediums by which people can file complaints, similar to the Patient Relations function of the Department of Health, Mr. Chair.

We anticipate that there will be a social worker manning that line who has a direct connection, Mr. Chair, with the statutory director of family services so that when complaints are lodged or filed that they are assessed through that office and investigated and responded to in accordance with standards, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. When I think of a complaints mechanism, Patient Relations comes to mind with the Department of Health. Within the Family Services unit is there going to be a similar type of model?

There's going to be other complaints coming towards Family Services, not just under the family wellness category. There's income support and apprenticeship and a number of different categories. Is it going to be like a department-wide, like a client services, patient relations type model? Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk: Yes.

Chairman: Thank you. And you mentioned according to the standards. Is there an established set of standards that are going to be utilized under that? Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends): Yes, there will be.

Chairman: I apologize, I missed that, Minister. So you're working on it?

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk: Yeah.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Mr. Lightstone, taima. Mr. Malliki, go ahead please.

Mr. Malliki: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Minister. (interpretation) Welcome, Madam Minister, and your officials.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Lightstone's question regarding health office patient relations, if it's not, what mechanism is being considered. Are you promoting that on social media or TV commercials so people will know where to complain? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you. The phone number for complaints services, we will advertise it later on. I know that we need to re- advertise it again to the public through TV or by way of social media and through Family Services website. It will be publicized that way so that public will know. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki: Thank you, Mr. Chair. (interpretation) I do want the public to well know about that, because some of our constituents usually come to our offices to make a complaint in regards to that, and we relay the concern to the minister when we hear complaints from the public. I do advise your department. I would encourage you to publicize the phone number.

I will be moving on. (interpretation ends) Information in the appendix B of main estimates show funding will be significantly increased in number of programs area of Family Wellness Branch, including Child Protection Service. What new programs or services will be available with additional funding? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Through the Department of Family Services we provide funding to provide support to the communities. The amount differs from each community, yes. One thing that we have been considering as well, I did not want to explain further, but we are going to increase the foster care payments. There are not enough foster parents in Nunavut, so we will advertise that as well and also increase the payment for foster parents. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Madam Minister, for explaining that to me. I also want to state again that sometimes the biological parents put the foster parents in critical danger. Are there any protection for the foster parents? Have you considered that or made any decision on that? Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for asking that question. It contains different issues, like the foster parents, sometimes they get them to meet with each other in a gathering and inform them how we can provide more support. Also the foster children, the youth programs for foster children can be provided to the foster parents and we will provide more funding. Usually we have father-and-son program, mother-and-daughter programs and the parents programs. There's various funding that could be used, not just for one. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you Madam Minister. Also I would like to ask a question in regards to Nunavut adoption. There's usually in all the communities there's adoption. (interpretation ends) The Department of Family Services administers the *Adoption Act* and *Aboriginal Custom Adoption Recognition Act*. One of the department's priorities for 2024-2025 was to review the legislation and formalize Inuit custom adoption practice.

When does the government plan to repeal or replace the *Aboriginal Custom Adoption Recognition Act*, which was inherited from Northwest Territories? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for asking that question as well. We were going to deal with the legislation within this current government, but the report from OAG. Our focus had changed, therefore we can not deal with this during this current government. But the next government will be dealing with the *Adoption Act* and *Child and Family Services Act*, and plus the adoption, though we have started reviewing it. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): I'm sorry, my deputy would like to make a supplement. Thank you.

Chairman: Go ahead, please, Mr. Ellsworth.

Mr. Ellsworth: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just to supplement the minister's response, we did submit policy intentions papers for those pieces of legislation. We have been reviewed and returned back to us. The teams are currently developing what the consultation plans would look like. However, the minister is correct that we likely won't see proposed

legislation in this session of the Legislative Assembly, but we anticipate this priority being maintained in the next session, Mr. Chair. We expect to bring forward a proposal for consideration. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) Thank you, Madam Minister, and your deputy.

Appendix AB16 shows the funding for adoption services will be increased by \$355,000 in 2025-2026. The *2023-2024 Annual Report of Director of Child and Family Services* notes on page 25 that there are 148 custom adoptions registered, while only nine out of 21 custom adoption commissioners attend training session in 2023.

What will be the additional funds for adoption service program will be used for? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you. Can my deputy respond. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Ellsworth, go ahead.

Mr. Ellsworth: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, in addition to maintaining current operations, the plan for the wellness division if you will, Mr. Chair, is to enhance the effectiveness and compliance of the foster care system itself. We plan on optimizing workforce management to better support foster care services. We want to strengthen recruitment and support for foster caregivers.

I know we're talking about adoption commissioners, if I'm not mistaken, Mr. Chair, but all of this work will go as well to the custom adoption pieces to better support the progress that has been made. And it's in line with our strategic plan as well, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. What options are available to individuals who wish to register custom adoption in those communities which do not have a custom adoption commissioner? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The public can look into or call our office in regards to custom adoption. If they want to get support and further get understanding if they can call our office.

Chairman: Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Appendix AB16 of the main estimates indicate that the budget allocated for family-based residential care will be increased by 18 million in 2025-2026. What accounts for this increase? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your question. Through you, I will have my deputy respond. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Ellsworth.

Mr. Ellsworth: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I may need to rely on my colleague, Mr. Tonge, but I will answer to the best of my ability, Mr. Chair. I understand that allocation, some of it is relevant to costs increases for residential care services, generally speaking. That would be the bulk of it, approximately, just under \$15 million. In addition to that I understand the allocation is also directed to in-territory group homes as well. And if the member wishes further details my colleague will be happy to respond, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

Chairman: The member is nodding his head yes, so I'll go right to Mr. Tonge.

Mr. Tonge: Thank you for the question. That summarizes pretty much what the increase is for, the 18 million. So 14.7 million is for increased costs for residential care contracts, and 2.1 million would be for in-territory group homes. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you for that. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the minister and his staff. The business plan notes on page 172 what work is ongoing in the gender-based violence program. What specific initiatives are currently under way in this area? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your question as well. We had signed an MOU a couple of years ago with the federal government on gender-based violence program. This agreement is for four years. We were going to publicize this information to the communities, how we can provide more

support to the communities and also for sexual abuse for the community. Support like if we need to send out a client, that could be used, and also client emergency, if there was an emergency client. And also will be used for training.

We had set aside some funds to be used for training, and also for a sexual assault nurse who would be doing the investigation. We have funding for training for gender-based violence training, and also for the class that needs support, because the clients needs support. That will increase the victim assistance fund and also to have meetings and gatherings and consideration also. And also for mental health injuries, for head injuries. This 200,000 was going to be set aside and through the Family Services department for the office administration work. There are various things that will be used in this. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I would like to thank the minister for that information.

(interpretation ends) The serious issue of child sexual abuse across Nunavut has been raised on a number of occasions. Have all Nunavut front-line staff been trained on how to implement a guideline of the child abuse and neglect response protocol when interacting with high-risk youth? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for that question. We had signed the agreement that outlines all these subjects that you brought up in working with the Department of Health, the Department of Education, the Department of Health, the RCMP, and in Iqaluit we have housing for children where we also include them.

This agreement outlines what takes place and we will be having a number of meetings, because they deal with different types of abuses. We want to make sure that the child is protected. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) The *2022-2023 Annual Report of Director of Child and Family Services* noted on page 20 that there were challenges in obtaining precise figures on child abuse and neglect, but the new case management system launched in November 2023 would allow more accurate data collection. Why is this statistical data still not available on reports of child abuse or neglect? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And as my deputy indicated, we're first of all gathering information and recording the numbers on the number of child abuse and neglect. So this is the first time that we will be able to see more accurate data information following that database.

Chairman: Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I would like to thank the minister. In some of the communities, in the smaller communities they usually do have shelters for victims of abuse. They don't have anywhere to turn to, and because of that, they are sent out to another community, and usually incidents happen in the middle of the night outside of working hours because of alcohol and other things. Can the minister outline what we can do in that situation. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for that question, a very good question. Things happen in a lot of the communities in Nunavut. Our department and the RCMP work together and at times the social workers know where the safe houses are in a community. In cases of these types of incidences, they are informed by the workers where they can turn to. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I will like to thank the minister. Not all Nunavut communities have social workers, either, and those are the communities that they have nowhere to go and that's the reason why I ask that question. Not all Nunavut communities have social workers.

(interpretation ends) The business plan indicates that a number of community social workers have been recruited through a third-party agency. What efforts are being made to recruit the graduates, Nunavut-based applicant in Nunavut Arctic College social working program? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. The minister responded earlier that they have been hiring from the last two graduating classes, and the third is just graduating this year. Mr. Malliki.

Mr. Malliki: I'll rephrase my question, then. Are these social worker students that are taking the course, when they finish their schooling, are they capable of doing the social working job? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Maybe I'll use a comparison like nursing, as an example. They have to go through a mentorship period before they're qualified to work out in communities. Is there something similar for social workers? Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you for that question. (interpretation ends) What we have been discussing in the department is how we can plan on doing more junior social workers just getting in to make them get into the social work field. But also when we're talking about social work courses within Nunavut, or anywhere in Canada, just like nursing, there's some courses that you take as general and there's some courses that you can work on to become more professional at. And some of the social workers may not have the certification for child apprehension, so that's why we have to continue providing training within the workplace as well, to ensure that we get certified social workers. They can be social workers, but there are some things that they are limited to do until they are certified in certain courses. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just to be clear, I think also we heard that some of those students have been working in the department during breaks in schooling; is that correct? Thank you.

Chairman: Yes, the minister stated that all the current students were working as summer students last year. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you for that. I just want to do make sure that we all remembered that. I would like to go back to that question or the response on gender-based violence. Minister Nakashuk, you mentioned I heard the word head injuries in your response, and I would like to hear more about that. Are you talking about traumatic brain injuries? I'm seeing the minister nod yes. I would like to hear more about that program, please. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I didn't include all the contents. If my deputy minister would like to make a supplement. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Ellsworth.

Mr. Ellsworth: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The reference by the minister which I will supplement was to a training conference on concussions and traumatic brain injury resulting from intimate partner violence. I could certainly commit to getting the agenda and the materials for the committee if they so wish, but that was one of the funding allocations was to support that training conference under the gender-based violence

action plan, which was developed with our colleagues at the Department of Justice. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you for that additional information. What we know about concussions and about traumatic brain injuries related to strangulation is that there are ongoing impacts to an individual's health because of that, and the data specifically around strangulation related to intimate partner violence is that a woman who is strangled by her partner is 750 times more likely to be murdered by that person. And so it's very important to me that work is being done to raise awareness, especially for health-care providers and for anybody who responds to those situations is trained on that. So can I ask whether or not this training is provided to social workers. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) We will have to get back to the member on that, because that does include a number of courses that we are requesting for and in terms of other courses being done by social workers. We'll have to get back to the member on that one. *Qujannamiik*.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I know this is a difficult subject to be speaking about; however, it's one that impacts a lot of Nunavummiut, and I wonder as well whether or not part of the training for social workers related to acts of child abuse includes being able to recognize those signs in children as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk: Yes.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. And when responding to allegations of abuse and child neglect, is that severity index included in the responses in order to recognize that as well so that quick action is taken? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk: Yes, most definitely. *Qujannamiik*.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you, Minister, for that. In an earlier response as well regarding facility-based residential care I heard that there's an additional I think it was \$14 million allocated for out-of-territory placements and I would just like to hear more about that, whether or not it's because we're planning on sending more young people out or more people out. If I could hear more about that I would appreciate it. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Facilities like that, that that hold children, we're not looking for more facilities, but the prices of those services are increasing. That's why we're requesting the money like that. And the prices are varying now. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. It concerns me that those prices are skyrocketing, and I would just like to hear more about how that relates to repatriation plans. I know in Cambridge Bay a facility was recently closed down, and of course that might impact the department because they may have to place children outside of the territory because that service isn't available. So I wonder what's being done to work with outside stakeholders to potentially open more of those residential care facilities in the territory. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We tried to make that a priority, to bring them back to their own communities but we're not able to do that for all of them. Some of them are handled by the health department, if they have like a physical handicap or something. And that's the way it is right now. In Nunavut our priority is to find a place in Nunavut where they can take proper care of the children, but right now some clients cannot be brought back to Nunavut because of physical or mental problems. Thank you.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you, Minister, for that. I'm very much aware that sometimes the out-of-territory placement is not related to abuse or neglect, and I still feel like there is an opportunity to bring people back to the territory and I would very much appreciate work being put into that. I know that often, especially when we have a crisis in place now, it's all of our resources can often be pulled away and focused on addressing the crisis. But there is an ongoing need for residential care facilities for

young people and otherwise, and I think it's really important to look at the long term and create opportunities to bring people home.

I think those were the follow-ups that I had taken note of, so thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Following my list of names, Mr. Quqqiaq. Bring it back to me. The Minister wanted to respond to that. Go ahead, Minister.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you and thank you for talking about that. I completely believe what you were saying. We don't want to just keep these young people away from Nunavut because they have to be taken care of by the government. We want them to be taken care of properly and safely, and my deputy minister can expand on that. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Ellsworth.

Mr. Ellsworth: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Just to supplement the minister's response, we thankfully received funding in the previous fiscal allotment for a capital planner, which is a fundamental role in terms of developing the necessary framework to start work on in-territory care facilities. In addition to that, Mr. Chair, we recently released an RFP, a request for proposals for in-territory care service provision. We didn't get a lot of uptake, but we did get a couple of service providers who met the necessary criteria of the scope of work for the request for proposals.

We're also continuing our work with Building 534 in Iqaluit, and otherwise, just let's get these assets operational and so that we can seek to achieve a higher level of capacity respecting our ability to keep children in Nunavut.

Mr. Chair, I would just like to finally close my submission by stating that the level of care is really the dependent factor in terms of the cost associated with residential care. I have seen contracts for one child's care who required significant medical care upwards of a million dollars, and so some of these inflationary costs are really beyond the department's control. Certainly I think there's a longer term necessity for the government as a wholly to address this moving forward, and certainly we've started the work through our capital planners and our vision is to keep as few children out of the territory moving forward, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

Chairman: Now Mr. Quqqiaq, go ahead please.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I'll be talking about social services workers and the shelters in the communities that I represent. First of all I'll refer to Kugaaruk. Are there any social workers currently working in the community of Kugaaruk? That's my first question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. They have one social worker right now. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Minister, for your response. I believe there's a shelter in the community of Kugaaruk, and now my question is, Mr. Chairman, is it still being utilized today as of now? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for asking that question. In Kugaaruk right now the women's shelter is still in operation.

Chairman: Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I thank the community of Kugaaruk greatly for the shelter. I hope it continues to be utilized for many years to come.

I'm going to refer to the community of Taloyoak. It's a known fact they do have a social services worker, and according to the correspondence the other day coming from the Nunavut Housing Corporation's officials in correspondence with housing manager for Taloyoak in regards to a unit that the Taloyoak housing tried to acquire. I did receive confirmation that the hamlet of Taloyoak will be utilizing it and they will be turning it into a shelter.

Now my question is, Mr. Chairman, how can the hamlet of Taloyoak apply for funds? Is it from the Department of Family Services? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for asking that question. Family Services have discussions to see the plans the communities want to make, including shelters, and they start to plan how they're going to fund it and operate it and if they're going to buy something then they look to see how else the hamlets can get help, can help with funding.

My assistant usually knows when communities want to plan a shelter or a homeless shelter, because Family Services can help with the operation and maintenance through an agreement. They start to draw up an agreement whether we hear a community is interested. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Quqqaq.

Mr. Quqqaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you, Minister, for your great responses. I applaud the community of Taloyoak's hamlet for trying to get the shelter back up and running for a lot of great reasons, Mr. Chairman.

And now my next question is, when it comes to custom adoptions is there any commissioners in the communities that represent Taloyoak and Kugaaruk? That will be my last question, Mr. Chairman, just for clarification. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk: There are two adoption commissioners in Kugaaruk and one in Taloyoak. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. We're on page L5, Family Wellness. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. I justify one last question I would like to raise. In the OAG report there was two other matters that were brought up, of course the recruitment, but as well as the retention of social workers to improve consistency of service. The second matter was ensuring a safe work environment for those same social workers. I want to ask if there was any sort of recruitment and retention strategy being developed similar to what Education and Department of Health has created, and more specifically retention bonuses to encourage social workers to stay on longer. And with regards to the safe work environments, if there has been consideration to hiring local CSAs to serve as security personnel in family wellness offices. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. That is one of the concerns we get from the communities. We want to make sure our staff are safe, and sometimes our staff are in danger. If something happens within an office, the staff have a plan as to what they're supposed to do if there is an emergency or if someone is in danger in the workplace. They follow along the design of the building. The planning has to do with the design of the building and they set up plans. Sometimes they share offices with the Department of Health or at the nursing station, health centre, or in part of the hamlet office. Sometimes that helps, where they have security, but some of them don't have security. We're going to include office safety in our efforts.

In regards to your question I sort of forget it, but I think my deputy minister can respond to that, if it's okay with you.

Chairman: Mr. Ellsworth.

Mr. Ellsworth: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Of course we take the health, safety, and well-being of our staff as a very serious priority. We've done preliminary work on the occupational health and safety policy that will sort of guide how we address security concerns within communities. It's also part of the strategic action plan, just defining retention strategies.

I had this discussion with the assistant deputy minister last week, about this idea of security guards, because it seems to have been a hot topic at this committee, Mr. Chair. While we feel it may be appropriate in some circumstances, it's her position that it seems to be antithetical to the wellness and sort of social service that we're trying to provide. And certainly in my personal experience as a former peace officer, when I wasn't in uniform or looking like official, I was often able to de-escalate situations much easier than if I were in a uniform.

And so in addition to the occupational health and safety framework that should be finalized before the end of this fiscal period, Mr. Chair, we're also looking at enhanced training for the social workers in de-escalation and these kinds of phenomena to avoid having to resort to security officials in the office.

Lastly, Mr. Chair, I'll just say we've been working closely with our colleagues at CGS, who has a new name now, Mr. Chair, through security features rather than security guards. So for example, barriers where they ought to be, controlled access to office space, and these kinds of security features. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. From my numbers we're on Family Services, Family Wellness, on page L5. Total operations and maintenance to be voted on, \$120,517,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to L6, Branch Summary, Income Assistance. Total operations and maintenance to be voted \$74,057,000. Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The department has implemented a number of reforms to income assistance program in recent years. The business plan indicates that changes to some exemptions for certain types of income are being considered. The question is, Mr. Chairman, how will income assistance clients be impacted by these changes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you. Just hold on. Thank you for your question on the income assistance program, is there certain exemptions. If they have been dealt with the courts, and guaranteed basic income that I did mention that it affects their income assistance because we don't want them impacted. It goes through that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Information on pages III-9 and III-10 of the 2025-2026 business plans, environmental scans show that the number of income assistance clients increased by 323 individuals between 2022-2023 and 2023-2024. Information in the main estimates indicates that the amount allocated for income assistance payments were increased in 2025-2026.

The question is, Mr. Chairman, does the department anticipate a further increase in number of clients in 2025-2026. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for that question. This is uncertain, whether we'll see an increase with clients. It's difficult to say. However, it may be with tariffs, impact or possible impact on Canada-wide economy and we would not be unaffected. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The business plan states on page 176 that the department will be exploring options for strengthening its one client, one plan approach. The question is, Mr. Chairman, how does this approach currently ensure adequate support and services for income assistance clients and what kinds of options are being considered to change its effectiveness. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you. If it's okay with you, I'll ask my deputy to respond.

Chairman: Mr. Ellsworth.

Mr. Ellsworth: Thank you, Mr. Chair. One client, one plan is not a new sort of concept for the Department of Family Services. What we're trying to moving forward enhance how we provide services to income assistance clients and how we can bring in our

colleagues from our career development division as well as wellness, if wellness is a matter that the income assistance client needs assistance with.

In addition we recently received direction from Minister Nakashuk to work with Nunavut Arctic College to identify training opportunities for those who want to participate in training who are subscribers to income assistance. We want to do more work on enhancing how all of those pieces work together to best serve positive total incomes for individuals who are out clients, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Quqqiaq.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, Ellsworth, for your great response. This will be my last one.

A lot of my constituents who try and receive income support, a lot of times the income support worker is not in the office. It's a known fact our regional income support, the director is based in Cambridge Bay and a lot of times the income support workers in Cambridge Bay are not available. Where do my constituents go from there? That's my last question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for your question. We don't want anyone going through those who need income assistance, in particular and the staff needs to make people know they won't be in the office and information where they can call. Often times the office here in Iqaluit is called and the other regional centres, Iqaluit, Cambridge Bay, Pangnirtung, are also able to provide assistance. But you have asked, all different hours they are open, but again, Iqaluit office is able to provide that assistance. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. We are on page L6, Income Assistance. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. Just one topic I want to bring up, and that's the number of youth aging into income support, youth who turn 18 and don't have school or employment that end up joining income support. In the written response, a response to written question there's a total of 288 youth who aged into income support in 2022-2023 fiscal year.

I guess it's a two-part question. Is that about average, 288 from year to year? And second part of the question, if this isn't regularly tracked, have you asked all income support officers to begin flagging individuals who age in, so you can monitor the situation? So a two-part question, is that average, and whether or not income support officers are now tracking. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If it's appropriate for you I would like to ask my deputy to respond. Thank you.

Chairman: Please proceed, Mr. Ellsworth.

Mr. Ellsworth: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I don't have the information in front of me with respect to whether or not there's consistency around the numbers individuals aging into the income assistance. I do know, however, that the central database for income assistance does track this information, and I'm pretty certain that we undertook to build in an additional module, Mr. Chair, that would help us track those who are transitioning out of the income assistance program.

Mr. Chairman, this also goes to my previous comments to Mr. Quqqiaq's question. This one client, one plan initiative that we're undertaking, we hope to actually see people, folks who want to coming out of income assistance program and attending training through the lens of achieving employment in whichever field they wish, Mr. Chair. So certainly we could do the year-over-year analysis if that's the wish of the committee, Mr. Chair, thank you.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you for that response. There was actually one last question I want to ask. I guess that is under career development, sorry. I'm done, thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. We're on page L6 Income Assistance. Total operations and maintenance to be voted \$76,057,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to page L7, Career Development. Total operations and maintenance, \$13,541,000. Safe to say Mr. Lightstone is first on the list. Go ahead, please.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. Just two topics I want to bring up under career development, the first one with regards to ALTs, adult learning and training supports. There are a few communities now that offer driver's education programming, and as not every household has a vehicle, it is quite essential for Nunavummiut to get this driver's education training to assist with their career. First question is whether or not driver's ed is covered or would be covered under this ALTs program. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Yes, they could be.

Speaker: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Minister. The next topic I wanted to cover was with regard to the apprenticeship program. I would like to thank the minister for providing the information to the committee. There was a total of 105 apprentices.

There are two items I would like to flag, the first being the fact that there's only four female apprentices and the second that there's only two apprentices within the Government of Nunavut.

The first part of the question is has the department flagged that as an issue of only four female apprentices, and if the department has any sort of plans in place to try and promote that apprenticeship program amongst young Inuit females. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) I think we all get excited when we see new apprentices coming in, and especially women in trades I think is very exciting. We would certainly love to see more women get into any kind of trade, and I'm not sure what emphasis the department has done to push more women in.

We have been trying to do more of advocacy in terms of getting more students or people to get into different trades through Skills Canada, so we have been working in that area to help promote different kinds of trades, whether it be hairdressing, carpentry, electrician. It really depends.

But I think we had a good turnout in terms of that one for the Skills Canada program, and the other one we have been really trying to work on is Nunavut Housing 3000 as well, to get people into trades.

We have been working closely with Nunavut Arctic College. In Rankin Inlet there has been a pilot project building a house and a couple units over there, so that's been a really good success. So we try and promote trades as much as we can and that's something that I did mention with my DM as well as, using my other hat for Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, talking to the president about what we can work towards to ensure more income assistance clients get out of assistance, if we can push more people into short-term training or even doing GED programs.

There's different options we're talking in that area, so we're hoping to see more community-based programs that could really help clients get into more training at a community level. I'm going a bit far but that's something I just wanted to add.

Qujannamiik.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Minister, that's really great to hear. So it also indicates that there's two apprentices employed within the territorial government. Would you be able to identify which departments they are working for? And when you mentioned Nunavut 3000, that sparked another question. Of the 105 apprentices how many are currently employed with NCC? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We'll have to get back to the member with both questions he asked. *Qujannamiik.*

Chairman: Thank you. Just before I go to my next name, I've been requested to ask for full caucus meeting in the lounge. We're going to take a five-minute break. Thank you.

>>*Committee recessed from 17:05 to 17:14*

Chairman: I am not sure who's watching, but the full caucus meeting is going to be stretching out a little bit more. We'll be about 15 minutes and then we'll be returning. Thank you.

>>*Committee recessed from 17:15 to 17:31*

Chairman: Thank you. I would like to open the meeting back up. Before us we have page L7, Career Development Mr. Lightstone, you still have a line of question going? Taima. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I would like to go roughly around the same line as my colleague did about apprentices. Mr. Lightstone asked how many apprentices NCC Development Corporation had. I would like to know how many registered apprentices are in Arviat, if that information is there, under NCC development corporation. Thank you.

Chairman: So the minister committed to following up with that information. Minister, would you be able to break it down to that level? Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk: We will provide what we can. *Qujannamiik.*

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Can we have the information broken down by community and what trade they're registered under? And if it's possible to get it before the end of this sitting. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk: Yes.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I got a whisper in my ear if we can break it down even further to Inuk and non-Inuk, or beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries. Thank you.

Chairman: I see the minister nodding her head. Taima. Next name I have on my list, Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Staying along the lines of apprenticeship programs and whatnot, in the main estimates, Minister, it is stated emphasis is placed on working with partner organizations ranging from the federal government, Inuit organizations, the private sector, and non-profits in order to develop more accurate labour market information and to design and deliver labour market interventions that support the development of Nunavut's labour force, particularly Inuit participation in the labour force.

I'm wondering, does the department know to what level their partnerships are with these other entities, the federal government and Inuit organizations? Are they helping to develop the labour force with either apprenticeship monies towards their schooling or journey persons to help develop our labour force? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk: *Qujannamiik*, Mr. Speaker. To give you a breakdown on how apprentices get into Department of Family Services career development division, the department is able to provide some wage subsidy programs to any organization that's not government, so it could be hamlet, housing, non-profit organizations to help with covering which subsidy program and if there's apprentice in the employer, for example a plumber, and they put out a position where they want to get an apprentice in, so we do have like four-year agreements with the employer to help with getting the apprentice into school and getting the hours within the workplace. They have to earn enough hours to go

into the first level of training, so they go to eight-week or 10-week technical school. Then after they've passed that we have to do another round of hours to get into the second level.

So we help the employer plus the apprentice with wage subsidy as well as training allowance and travels, child care subsidies, books, tuition. *Qujannamiik.*

Chairman: Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Minister. With the active mining operations happening in Nunavut, Agnico Eagle in the Kivalliq and Baffinland here in the Baffin region, is the department working with the mining sector to help develop the labour force? The minister was talking about the apprenticeship programs. Is there any uptake from the mining sector or subcontractors that are serving the mining sector? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk: Yes, we do, and we get career development officers into the mine site as well, to promote our programs as well as to get some work going in terms of getting some apprentices into certain trades within the mining site or company.

That also includes the heavy equipment operators. We do have training programs for that as well, and also the mining companies also do their own training for heavy equipment operator as well. *Qujannamiik.*

Chairman: Thank you. I have no more names on my list on career development. Total operations and maintenance to be voted \$13,541,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please turn to page L8, poverty reduction. Total operations and maintenance to be voted \$13,423,000. Questions? We're on page L8, poverty reduction. Total operations and maintenance to be voted. Mr. Simailak.

Mr. Simailak: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. How many partners does the department work with to try to reduce poverty? I don't know what they would be, maybe the Abluqta Society in Baker Lake or Kivalliq Inuit Association. Who are all the partners to try to reduce poverty in Nunavut? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Under the Poverty Reduction Division there are a number of funding proposals that we provide core fundings to organizations. I'll give you an example. For the municipality of Baker Lake they have the Community Hunt Program, sharing of hunting and land skills, traditional knowledge which was approved for 27,000.

It really depends on the programs. Some of them could be Baker Lake Prenatal Nutrition Project, and they hired a part-time assistant to help with the cooking classes.

So hamlets, non-profit organizations could apply. We also provide core funding to help with programs as well. So it really varies. But there's really good funding available under this division as well.

Under the same program we do provide others as well, food security initiatives as well as community hubs. There's a number of them. Homelessness initiatives, so homeless shelters or women's shelters we provide funding under that poverty reduction.

Qujannamiik.

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

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I only have one question. In regards to the funding for \$1 million to construct cabins in the communities, I don't want to be misunderstood. I'm not against this program, but I have a concern. I would like to elaborate the concern that I have.

They applied for housing from local housing association, and they have condition ratings and they are using the condition rating for all the applicants for housing and they use that rating and they give them rating numbers. I'm only concerned about if you have considered a thought of what I see with these, the couples with one child or single parents. It seems like we're just going to skip through them. It seems like they will not be included.

I believe that we need to work on this, that the people who will be living in the cabins, if there is no running water and they're going to get a rating for that as well. If there's no furnace, and they will have a full rating as well, will they be able to get a unit, especially the single people who have a child, one or two children.

I'm not against this program, but I believe it contains some issues that can arise as a problem in the future for the people who will be applying for units. Nowadays in the smaller communities the people who live in the cabins, no wonder they have nowhere else to go; they live in a cabin. They are now given a unit. They are more priority than the people who have been on a waiting list for long time because of the rating total. We see some individuals who want to get into cabins so that they can get into the unit faster than

the others. These are the issues that I'm concerned about. If you have thought about it, I want to hear about it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Nakashuk.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for that question. It is a very good question and we have also thought about that, about how we can make it work in the communities.

The federal government has funds available for housing, and we have seen on TV or in the southern places where there's homeless people or have nowhere to go and the federal government has funds available to build small houses or cabins. We have always wanted to access money for housing, so this is how we came up with the solution where the community can build Ikur'raq cabins in the communities for the people on the waiting list.

I understand exactly where you're coming from. We're not trying to hinder the process of getting a house. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: We're on page L8, poverty reduction. Total operations and maintenance, amount to be voted \$13,423,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Go back to page L3. Detail of expenditures, Department of Family Services, total operations and maintenance to be voted \$228,525,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Do members agree we have completed Department of Family Services?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Brief closing comments, Minister.

Hon. Margaret Nakashuk (interpretation): Thank you, colleagues, for your questions, for your very excellent questions. Some things under our responsibilities are quite hard to deal with, but we're looking at making improvements to our programs and services that are provided by the Family Services.

I would like to thank all our employees and also our finance person, who even Department of Health with everything including finances and went over and above to

make sure that everything came along smoothly. And my deputy deals with a lot of heavy responsibilities, but we look ahead.

I thank all the employees of the Department of Family Services for putting together everything in front of you, and your approval is going to help us greatly. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses out. Members remain in your chairs we'll proceed directly to opening comments and wait for new witnesses. Just take a one-minute break.

>>Committee recessed from 17:48 to 17:49

Chairman: Thank you. I will call the committee meeting back to order. I would like to ask Minister Akeegok, do you have officials you would like to appear before the committee? Minister.

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Do committee members agree to allow the witnesses to appear before you?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort them in. Once everyone is settled, Minister, you can introduce your officials and proceed directly to your opening comments.

Hon. David Akeegok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. On my right Christine Ellsworth, and on my left Mobishu Mohamed (ph), finance director.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Today I'm pleased to appear before the Committee of the Whole to present the 2025-2026 main estimates and business plan for the Department of Justice.

The department requests \$173,915,000 for operations and maintenance in the 2025-2026 fiscal year, which represents an increase of \$1,872,000, or 1 per cent, from the 2024-2025 fiscal year.

The requested expenditure includes the following adjustments:

- an increase of \$2.7 million distributed across all relevant Department of Justice divisions to account for salary increases following the Government of Nunavut's public service compensation review. The increases became effective on September 30, 2024.

- Additional funding of \$27,000 for the Office administrator position with the Human Rights Tribunal, which was approved in 2024-25 to improve capacity and better respond to public inquiries.
- An additional \$8,000 related to the Legislative Counsel-Inuktitut position, which was approved in 2024-25. The position is responsible for the Inuktitut versions of Nunavut's legislation, developing Inuktitut-specific drafting standards and providing advice on the integration of Inuit legal traditions into legislation.
- An increase of \$106,000 for ongoing operational support to continue the implementation of the First Nations and Inuit Policing Program.
- A reduction of \$974,000 for one-time start-up funding for the First Nations and Inuit Policing Program that was approved in 2023-24, but which sunsets in 2025-2026.

Mr. Chair, this concludes my opening comments. I would be pleased to answer questions from the committee members. Thank you.

Chairman: Thank you. Does the chair of the standing committee have any opening comments to provide? Please proceed, Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. I'm happy to provide the opening comments on behalf of the Standing Committee Social Wellness on its review of the proposed the 2025-2026 main estimates and business plan for the Department of Justice.

The department's proposed operations and maintenance budget is \$173,915,000. This represents a 1 per cent increase from the 2024-2025 fiscal year. The total number of positions in the department is decreasing from 477 to 476. This change is accounted for by three fewer positions in the department's Directorate Division, and two additional positions in the department's Community Justice Division.

The standing committee notes that the department currently has a number of outstanding statutory tabling requirements under the *Family Abuse Intervention Act*, the *Human Rights Act*, the *Legal Profession Act*, the *Legal Services Act*, the *Unlawful Property Forfeiture Act*, and the *Victims of Crime Act*. The standing committee recognizes that a number of these reports are prepared by arm's-length entities, and encourages the department to work closely with them to ensure that they are complying with statutory requirements.

The department's proposed 2025-2026 main estimates include \$944,000 for the operations of the Office of the Chief Coroner. Members note that the department has issued a number of callouts to recruit coroners for all communities in Nunavut. Members raised a number of questions regarding how this office fills its vacancies and what supports the department provides community coroners.

The standing committee notes that new amendments to the *Coroners Act* came into effect on August 31, 2024. Members note that one of the amendments includes a new requirement for the tabling of the Office of the Chief Coroner's annual reports. Members of the Legislative Assembly will have the opportunity to review the office's important work, including recommendations made following such proceedings as coroner's inquests. The standing committee pays tribute to Nunavut's coroners for the important but challenging work they undertake.

The department's proposed 2025-2026 main estimates also include \$69,384,000 for the operations of the Law Enforcement branch. Information contained in the department's business plan indicates that there are 203 Royal Canadian Mounted Police positions located in communities across Nunavut. One of the department's priorities for the fiscal year is to "support the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in recruiting Inuit regular members, civilian members, and public service employees."

The standing committee strongly supports initiatives to recruit more Inuit into the Royal Canadian Mounted Police force. The standing committee also notes with concern recent observations by the Civilian Review and Complaints Commission for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police rendering what it describes as "gross under-resourcing" of detachments.

Members note that on November 20, 2024, the Government of Canada announced that it would be investing \$4 million in Nunavut through the Guns and Gangs Violence Action Fund. The funding will "support efforts by community organizations and law enforcement to combat gun violence and keep Nunavut communities safe."

During the minister's recent appearance, members asked a number of questions regarding specific actions that the department and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police are undertaking to achieve the priority of reducing firearm-related incidents in the territory.

The department's Five-Year Nunavut Crime Prevention Strategy was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on March 14, 2017, and expired in 2022. The standing committee notes that the department's business plan indicates that one of its priorities for the 2025-2026 fiscal year is to "work in partnership with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police to create and implement a crime prevention strategy." Members of the standing committee look forward to receiving further updates on this important work.

On November 8, 2022, the federal Minister of Public Safety and the territorial Minister of Justice released a joint statement regarding the expansion of the First Nation and Inuit Policing Program into Nunavut. The standing committee notes that the government's proposed 2025-2026 business plan indicates that the "implementation of the First Nation and Inuit Policing Program will further expand capacity to build stronger community relationships between the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the communities they

serve. This work helps to identify at-risk individuals and implement preventative measures to stop crime before it happens.”

Members asked a number of questions on the status of this program in Nunavut, including how many positions have been created, and for a financial breakdown of the program. Members look forward to receiving further updates on this important initiative.

The department’s proposed 2025-2026 main estimates include \$4,520,000 for the Community Corrections Division. Community Corrections officers provide “supervision, support, and programming to adult and youth offenders on probation or under conditional sentences.”

Members raised a number of concerns regarding the operations of this division, including the extent to which it is able to fulfill its mandate in communities that do not have resident community corrections officers or where the positions are vacant.

That concludes my opening comments on the proposed 2025-2026 main estimates and business plan for the Department of Justice. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Lightstone. Are there any general comments to the opening comments? Seeing none, please turn to page E4, Department of Justice, directorate. Total operations and maintenance to be voted \$28,047,000. Questions? Once again, page E4 Directorate, Department of Justice, total operations and maintenance to be voted \$28,047,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Turn to page E5, Law Enforcement. Total operations and maintenance to be voted \$69,384,000. Questions? Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. I would first like to begin with questions that I raised during question period with regards to individuals living in Nunavut who are on the National Sex Offender Registry who are non-compliant with the explicit court orders, including refraining from public spaces such as schools, swimming pools, and playgrounds.

It’s quite alarming, the fact that we have a substantial amount of high-risk sex offenders, individuals who have been convicted of so many sexual assault charges that they have been deemed high risk, which is why I think it’s very important to continue to raise this matter.

I would like to ask again, as of today, how many individuals on the National Sex Offender Registry have ever been charged with being non-compliant with their court orders? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Akeegok.

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I had committed during the oral questions that I would do a return to oral. If the member can be patient, either Monday or Tuesday I'm planning to do a return to oral specific to the questions that he raised then and that he raised right now. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Minister. I will await your return to oral question next week. Again, thank you for providing that response through public fashion.

Another topic that I raised earlier during my opening comments was the recent report on the Kinngait incident in 2020, which was recently published by the RCMP Civilian Review and Complaints Commission. One of their findings was very explicit and was related to so many of the matters that occurred throughout that report that it was given its own specific section in the report, and that was the gross under-resourcing and under-staffing of the RCMP.

I was wondering if the minister would like to respond to that specific section that was included in that report. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Akeegok.

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you for the question. That report we are in receipt of and reviewing for this. For the response, that was the response that the department did as it was being reviewed is that since 2013 to 2023 there was a double dollars of resources that were provided to the RCMP, and this is ongoing and in this budget I'm asking for additional funding for the First Nations and Inuit policing to ensure that those resources do come.

I really appreciate in my tenure as the Justice Minister is all the requests that we've had on behalf of the RCMP to seek for more additional funds to resource them have been approved through this House, and also with our working relationship with the Public Safety department, the federal department that does the 25 percent have always been provided. So I'm very appreciative of reports like the civilian complaints that highlights what resources are needed and used that as a tool to help ask for more resources.

For the purpose of this budget, the resources that we are asking for for the RCMP, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, is what should be sufficient to fund the Royal Canadian Mounted Police as we go forward. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: If I could get a clarification, Minister. I thought I heard you say that we received 25 percent funding for RCMP. I thought we were under a 70/30 contract. Minister, if you want to correct the record, please.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Sorry, I'm wearing my other hat, which is usually the 75-25. For the Royal Canadian Mounted Police contract, thank you, Chair it is 70 percent that is paid for in this House and 30 percent paid through the federal government. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. Given Nunavut's crime severity index, which is the highest in Canada, and we've been going back and forth between Nunavut and NWT to share that title, something that of course nobody should be proud of, but given the trend and the increasing rates of crime and severe crime, I don't really feel like the Department of Justice is meeting its obligations under public safety.

The RCMP has 203 officers, or they have the budget for 203 officers, and I was quite shocked when I read the report into Kinngait that the RCMP had submitted numerous business cases to increase their police force so that they could meet public safety needs, and I just could not believe that it was the Government of Nunavut that was the deciding factor in not allowing for sufficient amount of police force members.

I would like to ask the minister if he could respond to that again, the fact that it's clear that with our crime severity index that the RCMP need more officers to ensure public safety. And I guess the next question is: Is 203 members, RCMP officers going to be sufficient to maintain public safety? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Based on my records I believe there's 213 regular members for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. The budget that we do have financed this and that is what we're capable of doing at this point, and this is the budget that we're asking for. From my perspective this is the adequate resource that we do have for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

We do go and seek for additional resources, and one of the good things that has taken place is that there's another, Nunavut has been given the opportunity to participate in the First Nations and Inuit policing, which is going to be an additional resource on top of

what our Royal Canadian Mounted Police has. Adding those up is something from my perspective is this we do have the resources to run the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

I have a very close working relationship with the commander of 'V' Division, and we go through these and try and find ways of solving within the resources that we do have and look through I think from my perspective what we're asking for in this budget is what I would recommend to proceed. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. So given the rates of crime here in Iqaluit, given the fact that our 27 constables working in five- and six-man shifts are barely able to maintain calls and I'm sure there's times when they struggle to meet all of the calls that they receive, it's quite clear that they are under-resourced and under-staffed. They recently stated as much at a monthly report to city council that they don't have enough staff to enforce all of the laws, such as *Traffic Safety Act*.

In this proposed budget which includes 213 officers – thank you for correcting me, Minister – how many of those are going to be constables here in Iqaluit? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the budget versus what's actually in terms of warm bodies are two separate things. I think what the RCMP has in terms of warm bodies to run the operations is very difficult throughout the country. Every division is experiencing some shortage in terms of finding staff and finding RCMP members. They are utilizing reservists in other ways and a very stronger recruitment drive is taking place.

For here, there's a good recruitment drive towards Inuit, of getting Inuit into the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. We witnessed one that just graduated and is now working for one of our detachments.

This is an ongoing issue. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police is no different from any of our other departments in terms of finding warm bodies to fill these funded positions. In terms for Iqaluit detachment, the number that I got for this detachment is 37. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. For the last number of years I've been expressing concerns over the rising rates and trends of crime and violence here in Iqaluit, especially

over spring and summer. I have been raising that in the Leg here with the minister, with yourself and your predecessors, and I have been saying that the RCMP are doing their best. They are under-staffed. They need more resources.

That's why I was so shocked when I read the report where it states that they have documented a number of instances where the RCMP has submitted business cases requesting additional funding for additional positions, and the GN had either denied them or approved less than requested.

I'm glad that you stated that over the 10-year period that the RCMP budget had doubled, but again, over that 10-year period, the number of officers had only increased by 30.

I would like to ask again: Over that 10-year period or even just over the last few years, how many times have the RCMP requested additional positions? I would like to see an exact number. And how many of those positions actually approved? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I don't think it's appropriate for me to respond to that request. Any of our business cases, like any of the department, a lot of the departments have asked for more resources, and we look at it as a cabinet. We look at the whole thing as a whole, in terms of what requests are being made, and what we can fund, and based on this, what we do is privileged as cabinet and Financial Management Board, we make those tough decisions.

When we make these tough decisions, we come to this House and ask for the resources we need right now.

I am here right now in front of you asking for this budget to be approved that is what we find when we go through everybody's request that this is what we can fund within our territorial budgets. And that's what I'll be asking to do.

If we start getting into debates in terms of what other departments have asked for and that, it wouldn't be fair for any minister to say, yeah, I asked for this, but I got this.

As a minister, this is what we all agreed to fund within our budget, and this is the budget that I'm presenting for the Department of Justice. I hope that we do get support for this, because it is a much required need, especially for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. Thank you, Minister. That's fair enough. Hopefully those business cases will be accessible through ATIPP request. That's another alternative that private citizens can utilize.

Moving on, as the Minister stated, there's 213 officers budgeted in this current budget proposal. How much of an increase does that represent and how many of those new positions are going to Iqaluit? Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I don't have a specific in terms of the increase. In my statement I asked for, I did mention that this department will have an increase of one percent overall in the budget, and for this additional resource that's coming, it's going to be a total of 15 new members that will be adding up from 2022 to 2025. It will be up to 15 additional members. That's the number that I currently have. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Mr. Lightstone.

Mr. Lightstone: Thank you, Chair. Just want to make one final comment. Looking at the budget, I do notice that there's a half-a-million-dollar decrease in the budget towards law enforcement. Again I want to remind the minister that we do have the highest crime severity index, and the trend just continues so it is quite alarming that we are actually seeing a budget decrease for law enforcement.

I really hope that going forward that the Government of Nunavut will take the RCMP requests seriously and we will see enhancements to the policing budget going forward. Thank you, Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Following my list of names, Mr. Quqqiaq. My apologies. Go ahead, Minister.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I just wanted to comment on the comment. The decrease that we're proposing here was the startup cost for the First Nations and Inuit program. That's the only thing that's decreasing. The resources that we asked for and that we're adding into are in this budget, and that's something that I'm proud of, that we are seeing more and more First Nations and Inuit policing into this.

Also for the members, I just wanted to state that and thank the member for some very fruitful suggestions that I'll take. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. My apologies, Minister. I didn't notice that you wanted to comment on that. Mr. Quqqiaq, go ahead, please.

Mr. Quqqiaq: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I just have one question, but before I go on to ask my question, I wanted to say something that I frequently say on our local radio from time to time in my constituency. And also, Mr. Chairman, I have this posted on my Netsilik MLA Inagayuk Quqqiaq page, and I have it pinned on top of my page, Mr. Chairman.

“Elders are tired of alcohol and drugs. They should be taken care of. They don’t need to worry about anyone else. If you’re living with an elder, don’t bring drugs around. Don’t give them hard times. They are living their last days of their life. No more broken elders. No more crying elders. Elders should be treated like queens and kings.”

Now my question is, Mr. Chairman, the Government of Nunavut’s draft 2025-2026 business plan indicates in its environmental scan that the government continues to work with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and other partners, including Canada Post and the airlines, to address illegal transportation of drugs and alcohol into our communities. The only question I have, Mr. Chairman: What specific actions has your department undertaken to assist the Royal Canadian Mounted Police on this priority? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chair, I thank the member for quoting what is in his post. I think we need more and more of that throughout the territory, in terms of respecting our elders and making them live in a comfortable place.

I agree that there is a lot of elder abuse that is taking place, and that we need to ensure, but it takes the whole community to do this. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police is one tool and others are different tools. But I really like what the member just quoted, and I think we need to do that for every one of us. I think that’s very good advice that we all need to take, because it is happening and it’s something that shouldn’t.

As family, sometimes as family members we feel like we’re not equipped, but there are different tools to do that, to help elders through that too, such as our emergency protection orders and not just relying on the Royal Canadian Mounted Police or relying on family; there are tools that can be taking place. And I really thank my member for stating that.

In terms of the work that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in terms of combatting drugs and alcohol into our communities, a lot of good efforts are taking place. I think one of the biggest ones that we are doing is that we’ve asked Canada Post for the three mail distribution centres, which is Edmonton, Winnipeg, and Montreal, to resource to seize any alcohol or drugs that are coming in. They’ve done two pilot projects before and it has been successful.

From the 'V' Division commanding officer, Andrew Blackadar, myself as the minister, my deputy minister have all written letters to the post office and in fact the Minister For Public Safety has publicly stated that when the ministers gathered in Yellowknife. I followed up with the new public safety minister just as recently as two weeks or within this month, my conversation with him, and we are trying to get that implemented.

Also on the other side is myself as Justice Minister, I have been trying to work with the transportation side, because there are security check spots here, Ottawa, Winnipeg, Edmonton, and Yellowknife, is to utilize those tools, but those discussions are not as advanced as Canada Post. Those are two examples that I wanted to relay on your question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Next name I have on my list, Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Welcome Minister and your officials. It's nice to see you all here. I just am curious. We've heard about the crime severity index and I'm wondering whether or not there is a lot of work to capture gender-based violence and different violence charges related to those incidences by each community. I have some follow-up questions. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Akeegok.

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, on a monthly basis the Royal Canadian Mounted Police members go to each of the hamlets and the city, or for here the city, and report on which severity, which crimes do take place. Upon request, when it's able to, we can add more data into this from a general, I think from our meetings that we had with the Iqaluit MLAs, and I think there's a section added to those reports.

Those are something that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police are very reactive to these requests. I'm pleased that we are starting to share those reports to my colleagues on a monthly basis. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and Minister. Does that data get broken down between incidents that are found to be unfounded? I know that especially when it comes to sexual assault allegations, often as police investigate further, sometimes because of the nature of the different relationships and different fears that people have around reporting, that they will kind of stop, they will get to a certain point and then they will pull back, which creates I think a lot of allegations that are then deemed to be unfounded. I wonder if that kind of information is broken down and shared. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister.

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I don't know, but I will be able to get that answer. It may be through you, Mr. Chair, it would be appropriate to respond at a later time.

From what I understand and what I've seen, the data that's provided, it doesn't appear to be, but I'm not sure if that data is kept in another place. But for transparency purposes, I'll definitely follow up on the Member's request. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair and thank you, Minister, for that. Can you remind me? I do believe there's a specific unit within 'V' Division that is related to addressing gender based violence and sexual assaults. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Akeegok.

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, there is a specialized investigative team that is dedicated for that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you. I know I'm sort of treading back into the last page, but I know that, Minister, we have had correspondence and exchanges in this House about the establishment of a domestic violence death review committee, as well as a domestic and intimate partner violence review committee. I wonder if that work has moved forward and whether or not that specialized unit is part of that work. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Akeegok.

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, that work is ongoing. There was a delay in 2024, mostly due to that we hired a new chief coroner. But that work is priority for the coroner, and we continue to message that with the coroner. He's planning on getting that moving. From what I got here is that the renewed efforts will be in spring 2025. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair and Minister, for that response. I know that that work with the coroner also included reporting and I appreciate that you're willing to go become to that section and discuss. I wonder if we can hear an update about when those reports through the coroner's office are expected to happen. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Akeegok.

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I don't have the timelines in front of me, but as you know, the coroner is sort of arm's length to the department so I'll relay that to Dr. Michael Foote, who is our chief coroner, and see the timelines that he would be comfortable sharing. I'll follow up on that, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I can't tell you how happy I am to hear that that work is under way. There is so much to be learned from tragic incidents, and anything any information that can be gleaned to improve services and prevent further loss is extremely important and useful.

I'll go back to law enforcement and ask what sort of specific training programs are under way to train officers who are coming to our communities, and specifically in the areas we heard from the Department of Family Services today that there is some gender-based violence funding that's put toward training their workers on traumatic brain injuries related to domestic violence. I wonder if the police are getting that same training, and of course that training also involves, very importantly, recognizing the signs of traumatic brain injury. We know that even a few seconds of occlusion of blood flow to the brain can lead to long-term injury, whether it's apparent immediately or not. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Akeegok.

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police when they do come in, they do get training within. I believe health is our main one. It focusses on mental health first aid, cultural training, initial critical incident response, informal conflict resolution management training, and self-care and resilience training.

The specific training that the member might, that might be related to some of the other training that they get, being part of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. I can confirm that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you. Sorry, I missed that. If I could get some clarification. Just really clearly yes or no: Are they definitely getting that training or are they not? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you. That's good for now.

Chairman: Next name I have on my list, Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask about in regards to the detachments in the community, operations. I'm talking in regards to staff, a member of the staff, not a police officer but who work in the detachment, if you can have Inuk worker who can be providing interpreting or interpreting services.

In the business plan it states that you want to support and provide assistance and to increase this so that they could hire an individual or Inuk. Has moved ahead? I remember vividly that they need to hire staff in the RCMP detachments. What's the status of it? Are you hiring more Inuit? Have you moved forward with this? And which community is it at? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the RCMP detachments in each community have hired non-RCMP officers and they have hired receptionists, or civilians. They have hired civilians to, we are now starting to develop this. There are nine civilians who are working that can speak Inuktitut. For example, there are three civilians working in Iqaluit; in Pangnirtung, one; Coral Harbour and Sanikiluaq. Those communities have hired a civilian.

Also, we want to roll it out to all the communities, and working with the RCMP and when we can, we look at how we can make individuals available who can respond or answer the telephone calls and also so that the people from outside communities, if they need to call that they can call for telephone answering programs. That's how it's set up at this time with the Inuktitut language. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for your response. There are 25 communities, and because of that have you seen any improvement in the services in the communities that have civilians working in the RCMP offices? I don't know how many positions are going to be created in order to provide Inuktitut services by way of the civilians working in that office. Thank you.

Chairman: Minister.

Hon. David Akeegok (interpretation): Thank you. This is a responsibility of the RCMP detachments. They're the ones who create those positions. It's something that our department does but it's the responsibility of the RCMP and working closely together with them. Usually there is open communication and information going back and forth between the two. But we are starting to move the initiative, and when we hear about any positions being created then we make sure that the information is passed on. Thank you.

Chairman: Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's important that the at the community level where there's communication between the community and the detachment to make sure that they are provided services in their language, and the RCMP are involved in interacting with the community that they're based at.

We have to look at providing programs and services that would make the detachments closer to the community. The Inuktitut language is very alive in the Baffin region, and there are a lot more people out there in the communities that require interpreters because of the language difference. I would like your department to look into this subject.

It helps a lot when there's programs and services and interaction between the community and the RCMP. There's also guards that are Inuit based at the detachment. We have seen incidences of deaths at the detachment, and the night guards especially. There's a requirement for them to apply first aid. There has been cases of death at the detachments. Are they provided the proper services? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Akeegok.

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You touched upon providing interpreters. It would be a lot better if we get Inuit RCMP, for example. There's less confrontation between an Inuk and an Inuk RCMP, so I'm urging the Inuit to get recruited and become an RCMP because we work together as Inuit and Inuk RCMP. That's what our goal is.

In regards to first aid, they are provided that training. That is part of their job description. It's a requirement to have first aid certification in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. I would like to touch on a couple things before I go to the next.

One thing that jumped out at me is the department's five-year Nunavut Crime Prevention Strategy expired three years ago. What is the expected timeline for tabling a five-year Nunavut crime prevention strategy, and how will the new strategy differ from the old strategy? Minister.

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the crime prevention strategy that the department and Royal Canadian Mounted Police are working on as part of the shared directional statement touches on a number of things. What I think is going to be different, one of the focus we're having would be on the firearms safety, and another one is on alcohol-involved crime and how to reduce that. Those are within that and that's the work that's being done, the work that's being developed at this point.

As it's being developed, I don't have a firm what's going to be different or what's going to be in it, but I wanted to share some of the examples that is in that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister, you just mentioned it's being worked on. Is there a timeline of when that strategy is going to be complete? Minister.

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, on our business plan we do identify it as working on it in this fiscal year and I hope that it does get done on this fiscal year in terms of that's the timeline that I would like to see, and I'll stress for that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Maybe I'll word it this way: Is the new strategy going to be complete before the end of the life of this government? Minister.

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I can't commit to that, as the work is being developed as we speak. That's going to determine sort of the timeline within this fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Just one more topic I would like to touch on. The Therapeutic Justice Program last year, it was mentioned it was going to be rolled out to additional communities. Was that roll-out successful and is there any anticipated other communities that it's going to be rolled out this fiscal year? Minister.

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Wonderful work is being done right now. I believe our staff is visiting the community of Igloolik as they have narrowed down a few communities. Our staff is going to visit the few communities that they have, I don't have the list of which communities they have narrowed it down to, but it is at the community consultation stage now where we tasked our staff to go to communities.

As of this morning our two MLAs our members of Legislative Assembly did get a letter indicating that from our staff. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. We are on page E5, law enforcement. Total operations and maintenance to be voted, \$69,384,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to page E6. Lawyer support services. Total operations and maintenance to be voted, \$5,356,000. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Minister, your department's draft 2025-2026 business plan indicates that the budget for the legislation division will increase by \$112,000 from \$2,143,000 in 2024-2025 fiscal year to \$2,255,000 in 2025-2026 fiscal year, which is an increase of about 5.2 percent. I wonder, how was the amount of this increase determined.

Chairman: Minister Akeegok.

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are two ways that it's getting increased. The first is the salary dollars that were increased as part of that staff, and the other one is what was on my opening comments, was the \$8,000 increase for the Legislative Council into Inuktitut. That is the increase. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you for that. Your department's draft 2025-2026 business plan indicates that the budget for the legal and constitutional law division will increase by 112,000 from \$2,996,000 in 2024-2025 to 3.1 million in 2025-2026 fiscal year, which is about 3.5 percent. And I wonder as well how was that amount determined? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Akeegok.

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, those are reflective of the salary increases that were announced in September. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Minister, your department's draft 2025-2026 business plan indicates one of its priorities for the 2024-2025 was to provide legislative drafting and translation services required for devolution. Your department's draft business plan indicates that the legislation division plans to complete the drafting of most of the English versions of the bills required for devolution by the end of the current fiscal year,

to support consultation efforts in 2025-2026; and other language versions of the bills and regulations have been scheduled for future years.

What is the expected timeline for your department to complete drafting bills and regulations in Inuktitut and French? And before that, can you let us know whether you're on track to translate those legislative bills that are required to support consultation efforts. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the Legislative Division targets the completion to occur on April 1, 2027. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Go ahead.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Sorry, Mr. Chair. Before April 2027. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Sorry, I slipped two things in there. Will these translations, is April 2027 in time enough to support consultation efforts in 2025-2026 related to devolution? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. At this time, yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Following my list of names, Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Your department's draft 2025-2026 business plan indicates that one of its priorities for 2025 is to assist departments requesting the incorporation of Inuit social values into their legislation; to do so in a precise manner so that they can ensure that their programs and services are more relevant, and that their Inuit social values statements are more fulsome. What is the expected timeline for the completion of this work? Thank you, Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think you heard my deputy minister. This fiscal year. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for the response.

(interpretation ends) Your department's draft 2025-2026 business plan indicates that one of its priorities for 2025 is to reduce external costs spent on litigation by recruiting and retaining support staff with the capacity to provide administration support on small and mid-sized litigation matters. The question is what other options is your department considering to address ongoing complex litigation matters. (interpretation ends) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. If we can't do it internal, the option is could do contract services. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Killiktee. Taima. I don't have any other names on this list. Go ahead, Ms. Killiktee. You came up with another one.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You said that you will get the work done. Who would do the work, about my previous question? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: (interpretation) Thank you. Whenever things get confusing and we need help, we get professional contractors and then have the work done by contract. That's what how we get help in response to Ms. Killiktee's question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. Page E6, lawyer support services. Total operations and maintenance to be voted \$5,356,000 agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Before I go to the next page, I intended to make a comment at the end of the law enforcement branch, so I'll say it here. The minister doesn't need to respond.

I know he mentioned in one of his responses that about 500,000 of the budget reduction was due to the planning for First Nations and Inuit policing dollars coming in. I had made a comment when that partnership was first announced that I had hoped the department would not offset budget from the First Nations policing dollars, that they would continue to contribute the Government of Nunavut's portion to help accelerate any other programs, whether it be hiring more officers or more housing or whatever the cases may be.

I would just like to encourage the minister or the department in future budgets to maintain the level of funding, to potentially increase the productivity of future ongoing plans for the department. Just for the record, it was \$868,000 reduction, so there was some additional reductions in there. I'm not going to get into it; we're long past that page, but I wanted to raise that comment to the minister.

We'll now go to page E7. Registry and Court Services. Total operations and maintenance to be voted \$15,323,000. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Minister, your department's draft 2025-2026 business plan indicates one of its priorities for the 2024-2025 was to develop a joint integrated courts and corrections record management and information system which will integrate records management and information sharing between various Department of Justice divisions and stakeholders. I would like more information about who those various stakeholders are. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, that work is progressing very well and we're in discussions with one of the jurisdictions. For fear of making the wrong province, I'm going to say that it also within one of our provinces where they do have very similar software, and it's something that is key, the main stakeholder that we're in discussions with at this point. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Can we get an idea of what are that timeline for completion is? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you. For these kind of projects we don't have a specific timeline, but it is our anticipation we would try and get this within this fiscal year. That's one of our plans, is to get it through. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair and thank you, Minister. I'm just still really not clear of what the information sharing actually is, and how it will improve the system. If I can get an idea that would be great. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, the current ones that we are using are very old database and I'm not sure which ones, but we're trying to ensure that the two divisions, it's Corrections and Courts and to some extent the RCMP, the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, is to talk to each other through this database because they each have their own database and it doesn't necessarily talk to each other. And so information about a client in Corrections should be the same in the courts and should be in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

That software is designed so that it has a holistic information that each of the branches can use for their, the tools that they use. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Thank you, Minister. Does whatever system you're working on, bringing together, does it work with the Oracle system, with the new system that's being implemented? Or is it something completely separate and does it need to be compatible? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister.

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and no, it's not compatible to that. The information that's required would be specific for these three branches. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. We are on page E7, Registry and Court Services. Total amount being appropriated, \$15,323,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Please turn to page E8, Corrections. Total operations and maintenance to be voted, \$48,757,000. Questions? I'll give the members a moment to get to the page. Page E8, Department of Justice, Corrections. Total operations and maintenance to be voted, \$48,757,000. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm wondering if the replacement, your department's draft 2025-2026 business plan indicates that for 2024 the fiscal year was to begin planning for replacement of the legacy Corrections information system with an appropriate secure and robust system. Is that the system that we were just talking about? Okay, great.

I guess a good question would be, Minister, you did mention that you're looking at another jurisdiction system and I wonder how it would be amended to be appropriate. How would it be amended to be Nunavut-specific? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, that is one of the reasons why I cannot provide a definitive timeline, is that we need to make sure those things are incorporated. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Ms. Brewster: I'll move on to the priority for the 2024-2025 fiscal year, which was to conduct a review of the Gladue-informed practices in custody facilities and community corrections. I just wonder, Minister, if you can tell us what practices are currently being used in custody facilities and community corrections, if any. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, the Gladue-informed, that's focused for the Indigenous clients. That's the program that they are using within the Nunavut correctional facilities and their sentence in their communities, so that's what we're using, that program. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Minister, I was wondering what the findings of that review were. I understand what Gladue-informed practices are. I would just like to know what the department found in reviewing the implementation of those practices for the Indigenous inmates that are in our system. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, if I may, could I commit to providing that detail through you, Mr. Chair, at a later time? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster, is that sufficient for the minister to provide it in writing? Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Yes, it is. Thank you. Sorry, Minister, I did miss your response because I was in the midst of another conversation. I apologize for that.

A question about youth. Your department's 2025-2026 business plan indicates community corrections officers provide supervision support and programming to adult and youth offenders on probation or under conditional sentences. I wonder, how does your department provide support and supervision of I guess both adult and youth offenders who live in communities who do not have a resident community corrections officer? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister.

Hon. David Akeegok. Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, we utilize our parole officers throughout the communities to do that function. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. What types of programming do your Community Corrections Division provide to adult and youth offenders? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Akeegok.

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. There's a variety of programs that are being offered. Last week I did a minister's statement specifically on one of them, which is the basic cooking course. That's there. There's also literacy. There's a number of wonderful programs that our Corrections are doing in order to support our clients. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Minister, who is Justice partnering at with the community level on that? I know there's Angutiit and there are all sorts of different prevention programs. I wonder if young people and even adult offenders are being channeled in the direction of really good, healthy programming that happens in the community.

I know that for many reasons we can and should take a different approach to people who are in the justice system, especially in terms of uplifting people who are on a destructive path. I would like to hear more about that and how our Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit is focussing on that, or used to focus on uplifting people. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister.

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, our parole officers work closely with the community justice outreach workers. There are a number of programs that are developed that are targeted to help and assist, and it varies from community to community, but it's one that they look at what's within the community that can be utilized, whether it's Arctic College or, as you mentioned, Angutiit, and other programs that community justice has credited. So using those, and also if they are in more need, then we rely on our community justice committees to help with some of these, in order to ensure that we have resources around to help support our clients thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm really happy to hear that that work continues. Just for my clarity, are community corrections officers the same thing as parole officers? Or are those interchangeable? Okay I'm seeing nodding of yes. So can I ask how many communities don't have those officers in place. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Minister.

Hon. David Akeeagok: For the community corrections officer positions that do not have, a list of communities is Chesterfield Inlet, Coral Harbour, Grise Fiord, Kugaaruk, Naujaat, Qikiqtarjuaq, Resolute Bay, Sanirajak, and Whale Cove. In saying that, I do want to say we do have regional staff along with community corrections that are in the other communities that, when needed, they assist those that don't have it. And when we do have clients in the communities, they are directed to a community corrections officer outside of the community through phone or through Zoom are the two options that do take place. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Are those vacancies? Or do each of those communities have a position on the operations chart? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. They are vacancies. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

Ms. Brewster: Thank you. How many of those positions are going out for competition? And if there are any that aren't going out to competition, why aren't they going out to competition? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman (Mr. Solomon Malliki): Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I believe all of them have gone through competition. If that's not the right information I'll follow up. Any of our vacancies do go through the competitions. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Brewster? That's all. Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My question concerns the community justice committees. Do you know if they are being properly utilized? Are they being utilized by the courts. Is law enforcement utilizing them? If they are, or do you have any reports concerning the justice committees who are involved in measures with clients? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you. There are differences in the communities with respect to justice committees, but they are intended to be properly utilized. Some have problems with lack of staff, perhaps, and on occasion that's a problem. When any workshop is required we try and provide those to fully utilize the justice committees.

I believe in justice committees, as a minister. In particular with problems associated with the youth, we have the committees working with them, and they are fully utilized in that area. I've delegated or directed my staff, if we don't have, a lack of utilizing of these committees, let's use them. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman (Mr. George Hickey): Thank you. Ms. Killiktee.

Ms. Killiktee (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And again, thank you for the support you provide in your directive. However, I would like to ask also, as the minister, whether you can work with to urge or to remind, I should say, in discussion with and encourage the Queen's prosecutor on the individuals who have been charged and during, before any court proceedings, in fact. That is my question. Because I think it's noticeable. This needs to move ahead.

When you go to the courts and listen in, in some cases some can be handed to justice committees and we have so many of those. But I think they are under-utilized in fact. I think they are under-utilized, the justice committees.

To ask again, the Queen's prosecutor, could you perhaps urge to take steps in this area or are you already doing so? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Minister Akeeagok.

Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, through my staff that is something that I have given directives, and what did you call them, Queen's prosecutors, yes, to work with them. And justice committee, justice outreach workers or community corrections officers, when they are given workshops are made known of the justice committees, and also to enhance their skills.

Also I should be a voice, too. I agree with you and I will make an effort to state so thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you. We are on Community Justice. Total operations and maintenance to be voted on, \$7,048,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Thank you. Please go to page E3. Detail of expenditures to be voted, Department of Justice, total operations and maintenance to be voted, \$173,915,000. Agreed?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Does the committee agree that the Department of Justice is concluded?

Some Members: Agreed.

Chairman: Brief closing comments, Minister.

Hon. David Akeegok (interpretation): I thank everyone for the support and approval, and will do due diligence to make positive efforts. Upon approval we always make more effort to do so.

I would like to also thank my staff for their hard work and the areas we want to make initiatives, on we'll continue. Perhaps I'll end that there Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

Chairman: Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses out. Members, please remain in your seat. We'll proceed directly with the next department.

Minister Akeegok, you can proceed with opening comments.

Hon. David Akeegok: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, next year marks a significant shift in our government's structure. As of April 1, the Department of Economic Development and Transportation and the Department of Community and Government Services will realign into two new departments: Transportation and Infrastructure Nunavut, and Community Services. This change reflects our commitment to strengthening communities and improving service delivery across Nunavut.

Today I am pleased to present the 2025-2026 Operations and Maintenance Budget and Business Plan for the Department of Community Services. This upcoming year will be a transformative one. While our structure is changing, our commitment remains the same:

strengthening communities, improving service delivery, and ensuring Nunavummiut have access to the support they rely on.

The new department will bring together a range of programs under four main areas:

- First, Service Nunavut will simplify and streamline access to government services for Nunavummiut. This includes the Government Liaison Officers, Motor Vehicles, Consumer Affairs, and Safety Services, making it easier for individuals, businesses, and communities to interact with government programs.
- Second, Supporting Communities will strengthen local governments by providing training, funding, and resources to municipalities. These areas includes Community Development, Planning and Lands, Nunavut Emergency Management, and Sport and Recreation, ensuring that communities have the support they need to deliver essential programs.
- The third area, Supporting Economies, will continue the work of Economic Development by promoting business growth, tourism, fisheries and sealing, and resource development.

Regional economic development offices will remain in Pond Inlet, Pangnirtung, Rankin Inlet, and Kugluktuk, and we will continue funding agreements with the Nunavut Development Corporation and the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation.

Finally, Corporate Management will ensure the department runs effectively, providing leadership, financial management, and policy support, all while aligning with the Katujjiluta mandate.

Mr. Chair, I now turn to the proposed budget for the Department of Community Services. For 2025-26, we are proposing a budget of \$162 million. Of this:

- \$109 million is designated for grants and contributions directly supporting municipalities, businesses, and community organizations.
- \$37 million is allocated to compensation and benefits, ensuring we have staff in place to deliver key programs and services.
- And \$15 million is allocated to operational items that support the department in providing services to Nunavummiut.

The majority of the department's budget, \$104 million, or 63 per cent, is allocated to supporting communities, ensuring that funding is directed to municipal operations, local government support, and emergency management.

Approximately \$37 million is allocated to supporting economies, to enhance the quality of life and independence of Nunavummiut by developing diverse and sustainable economic opportunities.

Approximately \$13 million is allocated to Service Nunavut, supporting the transition as we bring key services together under one umbrella to improve accessibility for Nunavummiut.

Corporate Management is allocated \$8 million, ensuring the department has the necessary financial, policy, and administrative capacity to fulfill its mandate.

This budget provides the resources needed to strengthen Nunavut's economy, empower local governments, and improve services for all Nunavummiut. Through the Department of Community Services, we are laying the foundation for sustainable growth, economic opportunity, and community well-being.

That concludes my opening comments, and I welcome any questions from the members. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman: Thank you, Minister. Does the chair of the Standing Committee have any comments to provide? Go ahead, Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: Thank you, Mr. Chair. 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 Community Services.

The new department's proposed operations and maintenance budget is \$163,378,000. Taking into account the transfer of the Government Liaison Office from the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, the combined operations and maintenance budgets of the government's 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 Community Services has a total of 262 positions.

Taking into account the transfer of the Government Liaison Office from the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, 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 budget 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's organizational structure includes the new Service Nunavut Branch, which includes the Safety Services Division. The new department's draft 2025-2026 business plan indicates that the division "provides the private and public sectors with electrical, elevator, boiler and gas inspection services. The division is responsible for the issuance of building, occupation, and demolition and occupancy permits. This includes consultations and the enforcement of relevant regulations and acts." The standing committee encourages the minister to begin the practice of tabling an annual report on the activities of this division.

Information in the report would complement that which is currently contained in the annual reports of the Office of the Fire Marshal and Nunavut Emergency Management.

The proposed 2025-2026 main estimates of the new department include over \$86.5 million in grants and contribution funding for municipal and sports-related programs. The Department of Community and Government Services' 2022-2023 annual report on grants and contributions spending was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on March 7, 2024. The standing committee encourages the new department to continue the practice of tabling these reports.

The department's draft 2025-2026 business plan indicates that one of its priorities for the 2025-2026 fiscal year is to "begin a comprehensive review of the Municipal Water and Sewage Subsidy Program to evaluate its effectiveness and identify opportunities for improvements in service delivery to municipalities."

Members look forward to ongoing updates on the status of this important work.

The new department's draft 2025-2026 business plan indicates that it has "committed to supporting the Nunavut Association of Municipalities in conducting a preliminary review of the *Hamlets Act* and the *Cities, Towns and Villages Act*. Funding has been provided to assist NAM in identifying municipal priorities related to the legislation as an initial step in the legislative review process." Members also look forward to ongoing updates on the status of this important work.

The Department of Economic Development and Transportation administered a number of policies which will fall under the responsibility of the new Department of Community Services.

The standing committee notes that a number of the new department's policies including the Strategic Investments Program Policy and the Country Food Distribution Policy have expired or sunsetted. The Nunavut Economic Development Strategy was released in June 2003 and reached the end of its ten-year life in the spring of 2013, over a decade ago.

The Mandate Letter for the Minister responsible for Economic Development indicated that one of the government's priorities has been to "finalize the Mine Training Strategy"

and “refresh strategic plans for sustainable economic development and the diversification in all sectors, including the Fisheries and Sealing Strategy, Pamautit, the Arts and Cultural Industries Strategy and the Tourism Strategy.”

The standing committee notes that the 2023-2028 Fisheries and Sealing Division Strategic Plan was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on November 3, 2023.

On June 8, 2016, the Government of Nunavut’s Report on the Review and Reform of Income Assistance and Economic Development was tabled in the Legislative Assembly. The report indicated that the government would “place a greater focus on job creation when reviewing departmental programs.” The new Department of Community Services’ proposed 2025-2026 main estimates include a total of approximately \$22.9 million in grants and contributions expenditures for economic development.

The standing committee supports the department placing a greater emphasis on job creation in smaller communities, especially in relation to funding that is provided to for-profit businesses. A number of policies administered by the new department contain specific annual reporting and tabling requirements regarding the administration of these programs. However, these reporting and tabling requirements are not currently being met in all cases. These include annual reports under its Strategic Investments Program Policy and Country Food Distribution Program Policy.

The proposed 2025-2026 main estimates of the new department include \$3.358 million in core funding for the Nunavut Development Corporation and \$900,000 in core funding for the Nunavut Business Credit Corporation.

The 2023-2024 Ministerial Letters of Expectation to the boards of directors of the government’s five major public agencies and territorial corporations were tabled in the Legislative Assembly by the Minister of Finance on November 3, 2023. Responses to the Letters of Expectation were subsequently tabled during the 2024 winter and spring sittings of the House. Members were recently advised that the practice of preparing Ministerial Letters of Expectation has been discontinued.

The Department of Finance’s 2024-2026 business plan indicated that it had been “working with territorial corporations on developing Memoranda of Understanding through the Territorial Corporations Committee.” The standing committee encourages the government to ensure that these new governance tools include strategic direction to the relevant public agencies and that they be renewed and tabled in the Legislative Assembly on an annual basis.

That concludes my opening comments on the proposed 2025-2026 main estimates and business plan of the new Department of Community Services. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Chairman: Thank you, Mr. Savikataaq. Mr. Savikataaq.

Mr. Savikataaq: 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 at 19:41 and House resumed at 19:42*

Speaker: Item 20, Report of the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Hickes.

Item 20: 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? The birthday boy, Mr. Main.

>>*Laughter*

The motion is carried. Item 21, 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. March 10 *Orders of the Day*: We will start at 9 o'clock in the morning.

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 Marh 10 at 9:00 a.m. Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 19:44*

