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**DAY 76**

**Thursday, March 7, 2024**

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**Iqaluit**

**Speaker: The Honourable Tony Akoak, MLA**

## Legislative Assembly of Nunavut

### *Speaker*

**Hon. Tony Akoak**

(Gjoa Haven)

**Hon. David Akeagok**

(Quttiktuq)

*Minister of Economic Development and Transportation; Minister of Justice; Minister responsible for Labour*

**Hon. P.J. Akeagok**

(Iqaluit-Niaqunnguu)

*Premier; Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs; Minister responsible for Immigration; Minister responsible for Indigenous Affairs*

**Bobby Anavilok**

(Kugluktuk)

**Janet Brewster**

(Iqaluit-Sinaa)

**Hon. Pamela Gross**

(Cambridge Bay)

*Deputy Premier; Minister of Culture and Heritage; Minister of Education; Minister of Languages; Minister responsible for Seniors*

**George Hickes**

(Iqaluit-Tasiluk)

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

**Hon. David Joanasie**

(South Baffin)

*Government House Leader; Minister of Community and Government Services; Minister responsible for the Utility Rates Review Council*

**Joelie Kaerner**

(Amittuq)

**Mary Killiktee**

(Uqqummiut)

**Hon. Lorne Kusugak**

(Rankin Inlet South)

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

**Adam Lightstone**

(Iqaluit-Manirajak)

**Hon. John Main**

(Arviat North-Whale Cove)

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

**Solomon Malliki**

(Aivilik)

*Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole*

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**

(Pangnirtung)

*Minister of Family Services; Minister responsible for Homelessness; Minister of Human Resources; Minister responsible for the Status of Women; Minister responsible for the Workers' Safety and Compensation Commission*

**Hon. Karen Nutarak**

(Tununiq)

**Hon. Daniel Qavvik**

(Hudson Bay)

*Minister of Environment; Minister of Energy; Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College*

**Joanna Quassa**

(Aggu)

**Inagayuk Quqqiaq**

(Netsilik)

**Alexander Sammurtok**

(Rankin Inlet North-Chesterfield Inlet)

**Joe Savikataaq**

(Arviat South)

*Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole*

**Craig Simailak**

(Baker Lake)

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**Box 1200**

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**Tel (867) 975-5000 Fax (867) 975-5190 Toll-Free (877) 334-7266**

**Website: [www.assembly.nu.ca](http://www.assembly.nu.ca)**

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**Iqaluit, Nunavut**  
**Thursday, March 7, 2024**

**Members Present:**

Hon. David Akeagok, Hon. P.J. Akeagok, Hon. Tony Akoak, Mr. Bobby Anavilok, Ms. Janet Brewster, Hon. Pamela Gross, Mr. George Hickers, Hon. David Joanasi, Ms. Mary Killiktee, Hon. Lorne Kusugak, Mr. Adam Lightstone, Hon. John Main, Hon. Margaret Nakashuk, Hon. Karen Nutarak, Hon. Daniel Qavvik, Ms. Joanna Quassa, Mr. Inagayuk Quqqiaq, Mr. Alexander Sammurtok, Mr. Joe Savikataaq, Mr. Craig Simailak.

>> *House commenced at 9:59*

**Item 1: Opening Prayer**

**Speaker** (Hon. Tony Akoak) (interpretation): Good morning. Before we proceed, Ms. Quassa, can you say the opening prayer, please.

>> *Prayer*

**Speaker** (interpretation): I say “good morning” to all Nunavummiut, and if my family is watching the proceedings, (interpretation ends) I’m surely missing you all.

Item 2. Ministers’ Statements. Hon. Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeagok.

**Item 2: Ministers’ Statements****Minister’s Statement 404 – 6(2): Elders Strategy**

**Hon. P.J. Akeagok** (interpretation): Good morning. Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say “good morning” to my fellow MLAs and Nunavummiut who are

listening to the proceedings, especially the elders. Mr. Speaker, I also extend a warm welcome to our guests in the gallery. It’s great to see them here in the House.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I rise today to announce the successful completion of the Nunavut Elders and Seniors Strategy.

When it comes to our elders, time is running out. That sense of urgency is something that our government has heard loud and clear from our elders. We need to act now to make their lives better. (interpretation) It was with this urgency in mind that our government took on the work of developing an elders and seniors strategy that addresses the needs of aging Nunavummiut.

(interpretation ends) We have 89 action items identified within the strategy and I am truly happy to announce that we are taking immediate action on one of those items: safe transportation. To that end, we will provide elders’ vans for communities in a phased approach, beginning with five. The vans will allow elders to get to important appointments and to conduct day-to-day tasks such as buying groceries. The first vans will be in communities this sealift season.

Mr. Speaker, the strategy is intended to help fulfill one of the cornerstones of our *Katujjiluta* mandate: aging with dignity. I committed to gathering input from elders across the territory. Between February and May 2023, two elders from each community were invited to take part in the regional gatherings in Rankin Inlet, Cambridge Bay, Iqaluit, Mittimatalik, as well as Ottawa.

I am truly grateful for the time, feedback, and suggestions provided by these 73 elders, and with one of them being here present with us. This strategy would not be possible without them. I am grateful especially to our friends, MLAs Mary Killiktee and Joanna Quassa, for their insight and direction, which shaped this very important work.

Most of our departments and territorial corporations will have a role in implementing these action items, with the goal of serving our elders. We were committed to ensuring this strategy be grounded in broad community perspectives, in addition to being based on elders' real lived experiences, needs, and hopes. I have full confidence that the outcomes will speak for themselves.

I am tabling the "What We Heard" report and the Nunavut Elders and Seniors Strategy later on today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

#### **Minister's Statement 405 – 6(2): Polar Bear Studies in Foxe Basin**

**Hon. Daniel Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, colleagues.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform the Legislative Assembly that my department is planning to begin polar bear research this summer in the Foxe Basin polar bear subpopulation. This subpopulation is a priority for the affected communities in the Kivalliq and Qikiqtaaluk regions.

My department is conducting consultations with the hunters and trappers organizations in Kimmirut, Naujaat, Coral Harbour, Baker Lake, Chesterfield Inlet, Kinngait, Sanirajak, and Igloodik and plans are underway to begin field work in August 2024.

Mr. Speaker, Nunavut is managing 60 percent of the world's polar bears, which is a substantial responsibility. Polar bear research in the Arctic is highly challenging and very expensive. My department, in collaboration with co-management partners and external funding parties, has secured supplemental funding to help offset the high cost of these studies. We will continue to seek external funding and support to enhance these studies so we can provide more information to Nunavummiut as they participate in our co-management regime.

Mr. Speaker, my department will also continue our commitment to the inclusion of *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* in our polar bear research and management decisions. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

#### **Minister's Statement 406 – 6(2): Marriage Licence Issuers**

**Hon. David Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to rise today to highlight important steps that the Department of Justice is taking to make the process for getting married in Nunavut more accessible across the territory.

(interpretation ends) Most couples who want to get married in Nunavut must obtain a marriage licence from an individual appointed by the Minister of Justice. A marriage licence serves as a permit to legalize marriage. With the marriage licence, couples may have their marriage made official in a religious or civil ceremony before a clergy member, Justice of Peace, or other marriage commissioner.

In 2023 the Department of Justice heard from some Nunavut couples that they were struggling to find a marriage licence issuer and that more needed to be done to facilitate easy access to marriage licences across Nunavut.

I am happy to announce today that, in order to ensure each community is served by a marriage licence issuer, the Department of Justice is partnering with the Government Liaison Officer program. Starting in April 2024, Nunavummiut will be able to apply for and obtain a marriage licence from their local government liaison officer.

Government liaison officers, with the support of the Department of Justice, will also be able to provide general information and guidance to members of the public about the marriage process in Nunavut, including how to obtain a marriage certificate as proof of marriage after the ceremony.

Additionally, to ensure that marriage documents can be provided in an effective manner, our government has amended the regulations to eliminate the \$25 administrative fee for obtaining a marriage licence.

(interpretation) The Department of Justice will continue to work to improve

the rules and processes for getting married and will continue to look for ways to improve efficiencies and services in our communities. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

**Minister's Statement 407 – 6(2):  
Labour Market Call for Proposals**

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**

(interpretation): Good morning, my colleagues and I say "good morning" to Nunavummiut.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Family Services is now accepting proposals for targeted employment and training programs to be delivered in the 2024-25 fiscal year. The deadline to submit proposals to the department is March 24, 2024.

Training providers, including non-profit organizations and institutions, municipal corporations, and Inuit organizations, may apply for funding to deliver programs. Priority will be given to training and employment programs for persons with a disability; training and employment programs for out-of-school youth ages 15 to 30; trades training; heavy equipment training; skills training; and employment readiness.

Priority will be given to programs offered in Inuktitut as well as programs proposed to be outside of Iqaluit, Rankin Inlet, and Cambridge Bay. This demonstrates my department's commitment to enhancing community-

level opportunities for all Nunavummiut.  
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Ministers' Statements. Hon. Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, Mr. Qavvik.

**Minister's Statement 408 – 6(2):  
Kinngait Tukisigiarutingat Sikuup  
Mitsaanut**

**Hon. Daniel Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am proud of our language. Inuktut is a rich, diverse language. In knowing this, I am proud today to rise and inform the House of a resource recently published through Nunavut Arctic College Media.

*Kinngait tukisigiarutingat sikuup mitsaanut* is a glossary that was developed in partnership with Kinngait elders, facilitated through initial interviews completed by Pootoogoo Elee and Gita Ljubicic of McMaster University. This project began in 2004 to 2006, and the Inuktut and English spelling and descriptions were verified and refined through workshops that happened between 2009 and 2022. Several Kinngarmiut participated in all stages of this documentation process. It was a real community effort. In September 2023 the college released this book in Kinngait at a community feast and a copy was provided to each household.

This book includes terminology for several phases and stages of sea ice, including freezing and ice breakup, tidal cracks, floe edge, and melting. The glossary includes commonly used terminology and terminology that is not

used as often due to lifestyle changes. All those involved in this project hope this glossary will preserve and encourage the richness of the Inuit language and knowledge of sea ice as a vital part of Inuit knowledge, skill, and life.

The completion of this project was supported through a partnership with the Nunavut Research Institute, the ArcticNet North by North fund, and Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit.

As stated in the glossary, “the terms and descriptions in this glossary have been verified by all authors and editors and have been submitted to the Board of Directors of Inuit Uqausinginnik Taiguusiliuqtiit for approval to be included in future language resources.”

I would like to recognize all elders, language specialists, and community members who worked to make this glossary a reality. The territory's efforts to support Inuktut are richer for your efforts, now and into the future. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Item 3. Members' Statements. Member for Netsilik, Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Item 3: Members' Statements**

**Member's Statement 523 – 6(2):  
Happy Birthday Bob Lyall**

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to say “happy birthday” to my constituency assistant in Taloyoak, so happy birthday, Bob Takolik Lyall. (interpretation) Please enjoy your day today.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I thank Bob Takolik Lyall for doing a great job in informing me at the times that I need and also, when I ask my assistant to get the job done, he gets the job done.

(interpretation) Have a good day, Takolik, during your birthday and I wish you a good day and appreciate everything you do for me, so let the members also have a good day, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Members' Statements.  
Member for Iqaluit-Manirajak, Mr. Lightstone.

**Member's Statement 524 – 6(2):  
Community Corrections Officers**

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I rise today to bring attention to a news article which was published yesterday on *Nunatsiaq News*. The article sheds light on another life lost in Nunavut due to intimate partner violence and another conviction of an individual who was on probation and court orders.

Mr. Speaker, I am concerned that there is insufficient supervision of Nunavummiut who are on parole, probation, or court orders. Mr. Speaker, many of these individuals have been convicted of heinous crimes and are not being held accountable for their actions.

The purpose of probation is to provide offenders with an alternative to incarceration, while still holding them accountable for their actions and ensuring public safety. Probation allows individuals to serve their sentence in the

community under supervision with conditions that they must follow, such as attending counselling, maintaining employment, and refraining from criminal activity. The goal of probation must be to support rehabilitation and reintegration of offenders back into society, while reducing the likelihood of reoffending.

Probation officers, also known as community corrections officers, play a crucial role in Nunavut's criminal justice system by supervising and supporting offenders on probation or conditional sentences. Their primary purpose must be to help offenders successfully reintegrate into society and, more importantly, prevent them from reoffending.

Our community corrections officers must work closely with offenders, assessing their needs, monitoring their progress, and providing them with resources and supports to address their underlying issues, such as substance abuse, mental health issues, or lack of skills necessary to rejoin the workforce.

Our community corrections officers must also ensure that offenders comply with conditions of their probation or sentence and work to hold them accountable for their actions.

Mr. Speaker, my statement is nearly complete and I seek unanimous consent to conclude my statement. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** The member is seeking unanimous consent to conclude his statement. Are there any nays? There are none. Please proceed, Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, colleagues.

Our community corrections officers must ensure that offenders comply with conditions of their probation or sentence and work to hold them accountable for their actions. Ultimately, probation officers must aim to promote the rehabilitation of offenders and enhance community safety.

Mr. Speaker, I am very concerned with the number of individuals who are convicted while on probation and court orders, and I hereby give notice to the Minister of Justice that I will be asking questions on this topic at the appropriate time. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Members' Statements.  
Member for Kugluktuk, Mr. Anavilok.

**Member's Statement 525 – 6(2):  
Coppermine River Concerns**

**Mr. Anavilok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say “good day” to the people of Kugluktuk, Nunavummiut, and my fellow MLAs.

I want to inform Kuglukturmiut that I wish to organize a public meeting about the status of our river, the arctic char population, the local harvesting rates reaching back to 20 years in the past after the Diavik and Ekati mines began. I hope to have this meeting sometime in May.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I want to inform Kuglukturmiut that I would like to have a public meeting regarding our river and the state it's in, in regard to the number of char that is being harvested these past 20 years, dating back to before and after Diavik and

Ekati mines started. I hope to have this meeting sometime in May.  
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Members' Statements.  
Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Brewster.

**Member's Statement 526 – 6(2):  
Recent Deaths at Naja Isabelle  
Home**

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, everyone. Happy birthday, Uncle Bobby.

Mr. Speaker, to begin, I would like to express my deepest respect for the Hon. Minister of Family Services and her team. They have a monumental path before them in addressing the deficiencies of care for our most vulnerable citizens, as noted by the Office of the Auditor General of Canada.

Mr. Speaker, on February 16 the Minister of Family Services notified this House and Nunavummiut that there will be a service review of the Naja Isabelle Home because two young clients passed away, and like the minister, I am also deeply saddened by the deaths of these clients in care.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my condolences to the families and communities of the 12-year-old child and 19-year-old youth who passed away. Though I don't know who they are or which communities they came from, I would like to take this time to offer a few moments of silence in recognition and celebration of their brief lives.

>>*Moment of silence*

Every child matters, Mr. Speaker. Thank you.

**Speaker:** Members' Statements.  
Member for South Baffin, Mr. Joanasie.

**Member's Statement 527 – 6(2):  
World Renowned Works from  
Kinngait**

**Hon. David Joanasie** (interpretation):  
Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We remember those families who have lost their loved ones at any time in Nunavut.

Today, Mr. Speaker, I rise to say that, as we heard on the radio news this morning, there was recognition of an individual in Kinngait coming from Governor General on artistry and printmaking, Shuvinai Ashoona.

Mr. Speaker, Shuvinai is well known as a graphic artist who appeals to many people all around the world. Mr. Speaker, she remembers where Inuit came from and their culture and the big, drastic changes we live in now today and she portrays it in her art. Mr. Speaker, I want to acknowledge her.

The Co-op informed us that Shuvinai is an artist not trying to get recognition and not to get any rewards, but she enjoys her work, her art, and enjoys giving what pleases others, and she does her graphic work to that end.

I would like to recognize Shuvinai and encourage her further and others in our communities who display their beautiful art, and to recognize that. Kinngarmut and other artists around that try for excellence in art around the world. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Members' Statements.  
Member for Iqaluit-Niaqunngu, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

**Member's Statement 528 – 6(2):  
Recognizing Lew Philip**

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok** (interpretation):  
Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I join with my colleague in condolence to families. We remember them by prayer every day, families who lose their loved ones, and others.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today and to recognize our elder in Iqaluit who has committed himself a lot, Mr. Lew Philip, who has come here to visit the House, and I would like to recognize him. He has contributed much to not just Iqaluit residents but Nunavummiut. He is well known for the work he has done here in Iqaluit.

For years, he served as a constable and committed himself, and his children followed in his footsteps. His daughter is recognized here and has advanced through the ranks in the RCMP. He had worked with Arctic College and in the book that we will be putting together. He was involved in that project and he's always trying to look forward in his commitment.

I am always humbled when he speaks, and I would like to recognize him, as he's here today in the House, and the fact that he has well impacted Nunavummiut. Welcome, Mr. Philip.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Members' Statements.  
Member for Quttiktuq, Mr. David Akeeagok.

**Member's Statement 529 – 6(2):  
Arctic Bay Participants at Arctic  
Winter Games**

**Hon. David Akeegok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Before I proceed, I remember my namesake, David, and I remember his family during this difficult time.

Mr. Speaker, our athletes will be going to Alaska on Saturday. There are a quite number of participants from Arctic Bay for the Dene Games that will be played during the Arctic Winter Games.

This individual initiated participation in the Dene Games in the community and he will be playing as a leader and now has been the coach for 10 years and that is Thomas Levi, who will be participating. Playing for the junior males are Lionel Willie, Dominik Qaqqasiq, Lloyd Willie, and Noah Qaunaq. Playing for the juvenile males are David Audlakiak, Adrian Olayuk, Levi Natanine, and Marcus Kigutaq.

The female coaches are Roxanne Kigutak and playing for the junior females are Elvina Natanine, Roxanne Kigutak, Lilian Attagutsiak, and playing for the juvenile females are Lorna Kalluk, Hillary Kines, and Horizon Willie. They will be participating in the Games at Mat-su, Alaska.

I would like to express my pride in them and I hope they will win. They generally win the Dene Games that they have learned, and I'm always proud of the Arctic Bay residents, always trying different sports. Although the Dene Games are not part of our culture, when they learned it, they were able to travel outside to compete. I would like to

congratulate the participants who will be going to the Games in Mat-su, Alaska. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

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

**Member's Statement 530 – 6(2):  
Happy Birthday to Grandchildren**

**Hon. Karen Nutarak** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. First of all, I send my regards to the people of Pond Inlet, my family, and Nunavummiut.

I rise today to celebrate my twin granddaughters' birthday, Siksi and Sarah, who have turned four years old. I wish them a very beautiful day.

I would like to thank the people of Pond Inlet who support me fully and all Nunavummiut. We work very hard to make sure everything goes smoothly and to properly represent our people, our constituents, and all Nunavummiut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Members' Statements.  
Member for Arviat North-Whale Cove,  
Mr. Main.

**Member's Statement 531 – 6(2):  
Recognizing Four Arviat Artists**

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also send my condolences to the families who have lost a loved one and to the people of Arviat and Nunavut.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize four Arviarmiut who were here in Iqaluit during the signing of the devolution agreement by Prime Minister Trudeau, Premier Akeagok, and Nunavut Tunngavik President Aluki Kotierk.

There was a performance by Arviat artists and I would like to recognize Shelton Nipisar, Lois Ujaupiq Suluk, Calvin Pameolik, and David Serkoak.

Mr. Speaker, they each have their own talent and are very well known by the people of Nunavut for being entertainers and performers.

I'll first speak about Shelton. Shelton is a student here in Iqaluit and he's taking interpreter/translator training, but he has a very good talent in dancing and drum dancing and showcasing Inuit culture.

Lois Ujaupiq Suluk is very well-known as a singer, as an entertainer, and coordinating arts and film. She has made a huge contribution.

Calvin Pameolik is a great guitarist and a vocal artist, and even Prime Minister Trudeau danced when Calvin was performing.

David Serkoak, last but not least, is very well known. He's an instructor, a teacher of Inuit culture and traditions, and keeping drum dancing alive by teaching it to young people. I truly thank Mr. Serkoak.

I am proud of all the performers and I enjoyed seeing the talent and recognize those four Arviarmiut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Members' Statements.  
Member for Cambridge Bay, Ms. Gross.

**Member's Statement 532 – 6(2):  
Cambridge Bay Wolverines**

**Hon. Pamela Gross:** *Quana*, Mr. Speaker. Good morning to everybody listening and particularly those in Cambridge Bay.

Mr. Speaker, this morning I want to recognize the Cambridge Bay Wolverines and their recent excursion and trip to Yellowknife to participate in the Cager Tournament. We have sent several teams to the tournament every year and they are always doing so well and wonderful.

I want to recognize the junior Cager boys who participated and took home the gold medal banner and the teammates are:

- Cordell Komak
- David Kaomayok
- Brady Vandenbrink
- Eric Tikhak
- Marcus Mala
- Braxton Maksagak
- Carter Crockatt
- Peter Kilaodlouk
- Kayson Kuliktana
- Josh Kaomayok
- Grayson Maniyogina

I would also like to thank their hard-working and dedicated coaches, Zachary Cziranka-Crooks and Jaiden Maksagak.

Also, I would like to thank the community who stand behind all of our wonderful players, not just the boys but also the female teams as well.

They work hard and they play hard and I know they always have an exceptional and wonderful time travelling and enjoying this tournament. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Item 4. Returns to Oral Questions. Hon. Minister of Family Services, Ms. Nakashuk.

#### **Item 4: Returns to Oral Questions**

##### **Return to Oral Question 718 – 6(2): Children in Residential Care**

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I have a return to Oral Question 718 – 6(2), asked by the Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, George Hickes, on February 26, 2024, concerning the children in residential care.

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

Mr. Speaker, 22 annual facility reviews were completed between January 2023 and January 2024. The Department of Family Services is contracting a third party to conduct site reviews. The department is also submitting a proposal to the federal government to fund six additional social work positions to work with community liaison officers to improve oversight of files, increase repatriation of clients where appropriate, and ensure annual reviews are occurring.

Client liaison officers are expected to meet with clients following the minimum contact requirements outlined in the Department of Family Services' Standard 603 – Placing Children in Foster Care. The department is currently updating all standards. All meetings and contact are required to be documented and reported. Client liaison officers are also expected to conduct annual reviews. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Item 4. Returns to Oral Questions. Hon. Minister of Community and Government Services, Mr. Joanasie.

##### **Return to Oral Question 767 – 6(2): Rankin Inlet Long-term Care Facility**

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a return to Oral Question No. 767 – 6(2), asked by the Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk on March 1, 2024 concerning the Rankin Inlet Long-term Care Facility.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to respond to a question raised by MLA Hickes on March 1, 2024 regarding the long-term care facility that is being constructed in Rankin Inlet.

Mr. Speaker, earlier this sitting, I stated that the project was at 90 percent completion.

Since October 2023, the focus of construction activity has shifted towards completing remaining tasks, ensuring quality and compliance, and preparing the long-term care centre for operational use.

Mr. Speaker, between the months of October 1, 2023 and March 1, 2024, the work that has been completed includes work on both the exterior and interior of the facility.

Mr. Speaker, exterior activities undertaken during this period include the completion of exterior cladding, completion of roofing, initiation and near completion of the fuel tank and generator installation, initiation and completion of concrete work slabs, continuation of installation of windows as well as initiation and near completion of power and telecommunications connections.

Further, construction activities undertaken during this period on the interior of the building include the initiation of door installations, wall finishes, floors, and equipment. Additionally, the continuation of interior walls, sprinkler system, mechanical ventilation and heating units, commissioning controls, electrical rough-ins, and initiation and near completion of the millwork.

Mr. Speaker, the work that was completed during this four-month period will continue through substantial completion. At the point of substantial completion, the facility is essentially finished and can be occupied or utilized for its intended purpose and is handed over to the client department. While minor finishing touches or items may

remain outstanding, the building will meet the requirements outlined in the construction contract. One year after substantial completion typically is when the project would represent 100 percent completion, which represents the end of the warranty phase.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk's ongoing interest in the status of this project. I can confirm that a receiver has been appointed to take over assets and operations of the contractor and carry on business to ensure work on this project continues through to completion.

I am committed to providing members with progress updates on this important project in the coming months. Thank you.

**Speaker:** Item 5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery. Welcome to the Assembly for people visiting. Member for Iqaluit-Tasiluk, Mr. Hickes.

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

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know that Robyn Campbell has been recognized in the Premier's member's statement, but I would like to formally recognize her and welcome her to the Chamber.

Robyn is no stranger to many people here in Iqaluit with all her volunteer work and outreach that she has done and her work with the Annauma Community group. I can't remember the exact name of it, but I know there is a lot of great work and a lot of great philanthropy work that Robyn has been a part of, of supporting services here in the territory.

I would like to welcome her to the House.

I know that Lew Philip was here, Mr. Speaker. I am proud to represent Lew here in the Assembly and I hope I'm continuing to live up to his ideals of my work. Thank you.

>> *Applause*

**Speaker:** Welcome to the Assembly. Item 6. Oral Questions.

Before we start, members, please be mindful of your colleagues, as they do want to ask their questions as well, and keep your preambles short and answers as well.

Oral Questions. Member for Uqqummiut, Ms. Killiktee.

### Item 6: Oral Questions

#### Question 805 – 6(2): Government Liaison Offices

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning to all Nunavummiut.

I rise at this time to direct my questions to... (interpretation ends) *Uqaqtii*, my questions today are for the Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs, and they concern issues related to his department's Government Liaison Office.

(interpretation) Mr. Speaker, there have been a lot of news recently about the difficulties that have been faced by Nunavut athletes trying to apply for passports in time for the Arctic Winter Games. These problems are most evident

in smaller communities, where we face difficulties in obtaining professional-quality photographs that meet security standards.

Can the minister update the House today on what has been done to provide proper training and equipment to government liaison officers in communities so that they can help residents with photographs for official purposes, such as passports and driver's licences? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank my fellow MLA for asking that good question. I do agree with you wholeheartedly. Our government liaison officers have a lot of responsibilities and provide support and services by way of filling out applications with programs for official purposes and driver's licences.

Our liaison officers have an annual meeting and we provide training for them. In my report of November 2023 they were provided training to deal with photographs for official purposes. November 2023 was the time of the last training we provided to those liaison officers. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wouldn't have risen to ask these questions if there was no room for improvement. We are concerned about having delays and

difficulties. I continue to hear concerns from constituents about delays and difficulties in obtaining general identification cards and driver's licences. There is room for improvement.

Can the minister describe how his department's Government Liaison Office is working, to say it in English, (interpretation ends) with the Motor Vehicles Division of the Department of Economic Development and Transportation to improve service delivery? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank my colleague for that question again. Mr. Speaker, I could confirm that there are sometimes delays in terms of applications that are submitted. Obviously, every case is very different. Some are incomplete when we receive them at the GLOs, but I agree with the member that there is always room for improvement and I know there have been some challenges around the expediency. The GLOs provide such a crucial service and it is something I take very seriously.

There is another training opportunity that is coming this month to the GLOs and I could assure the member that I will bring the urgency and the importance of seeing the applications that do come to be seen in an expedited way to ensure that there are no challenges to the members, especially in the smaller communities that are there. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for the information.

Mr. Speaker, I believe that there are many residents of smaller communities, including Qikiqtarjuaq and Clyde River, who would like to receive training in order to be able to take photographs that meet quality and security standards for passports and other official documents. (interpretation ends) Some of these residents might be interested in offering this service as a small business.

Can the minister indicate what plans his department has to work with Nunavut Arctic College to offer photography workshops at community learning centres? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank my colleague for bringing that suggestion forward. I could commit to working with my colleague of Economic Development and Transportation, who provides small business grants and services to encourage anybody in the communities, in particular the small communities, if that is something that they are interested in, to ensure that we allow that opportunity.

The government liaison officers really provide a service where there is a need and at this point in time, I do not foresee them stopping the ability for them to

take the photos either for the driver's licence or the general identification of the members, but I can commit to working with my colleague to see if that's something we could explore within the community, if that is of the wish of the community moving forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Question 806 – 6(2): Ottawa Medical Boarding Home**

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

Mr. Speaker, the Department of Health recently issued a request for proposals for a medical boarding home in Ottawa, Ontario. A number of my constituents stay at the Larga Boarding Home while on medical travel.

Can the minister clarify why new medical boarding home services are being requested when there is already a medical boarding home in Ottawa? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the member for asking that question in regard to this issue. I have not been given any detail in regard to this request for proposals. At this time, I cannot respond to her question, but I will look into it.

It's true that the member is asking about the Larga Baffin in Ottawa that is for

Baffin regional patients who usually stay at that boarding home. We will still continue to use that Larga home and we will be working with the manager of the boarding home. We are always discussing how we can improve the service and what their needs are. We continually work with Larga Baffin. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Quassa** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you, minister, for explaining that further.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I note that the proposed length of the contract for a new medical boarding home in Ottawa is for 20 years. This seems a very long time when we consider that such medical services contracts as medical travel are generally much shorter than that.

Can the minister clarify why the medical boarding home contract is set at 20 years with the possibility of extending it to 30 years? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) With regard to Ottawa, we know that the existing boarding home is at capacity and it is no longer large enough to support the volume of medical travel that we send to that fine city.

In terms of the details around the contract and the duration, there are some potential factors that I could get into, but at this point, in order to follow up

thoroughly with the member, I'll take this question as notice and plan to return additional detail on this matter.  
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Question 807 – 6(2): Response to Report of the Information and Privacy Commissioner**

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Premier, who is the Minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs.

Earlier today, the Information and Privacy Commissioner of Nunavut released his recommendations concerning an access to information request for the third party investigation report that was undertaken last year into the placement of eight Nunavut children in an unlicensed care facility in Alberta.

Mr. Speaker, I am reviewing the Information and Privacy Commissioner's report with care and I am sure that we will have the chance to get into significantly more detail when he appears before us during our upcoming televised standing committee hearing on his annual report. However, it is imperative that the core issues raised in the commissioner's report be addressed now.

My first question to the minister is this: can he clarify and confirm which key stakeholders, including the Representative for Children and Youth, have been provided with a complete and un-redacted copy of the department's

investigation report? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I want to thank my colleague for that question. I think we are aware of how important it is for us to be able to address the root issues that are before us and I had immediately asked for an internal review to the incident that had happened with the Department of Family Services to ensure we learned from that experience.

To the member's question, I just received the letter this morning and I have not yet seen the actual recent letter from the privacy commissioner, but I do look forward to reading the recommendations that do come from that report. Without having read that, I will take this question as notice to ensure that I have that opportunity. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Question taken as notice. Oral Questions. Member for Netsilik, Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Question 808 – 6(2): Paying for Health Services in Other Jurisdictions**

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister of Health.

Mr. Speaker, as the minister may recall, I was very happy about our recent visit to the medical boarding homes in Yellowknife and Winnipeg. Mr. Speaker, it is very good to see how well

Nunavut clients are being cared for when they are in other jurisdictions.

Mr. Speaker, it has been brought to my attention that our colleagues in the Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories are also aware of Nunavut residents receiving care in their territory. Mr. Speaker, a couple of weeks ago, during their winter sitting, questions were asked about the amount of money that Nunavut owes them for health services.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister provide an update on the amount of money that Nunavut owes the Northwest Territories and clarify what steps are being taken to address the situation? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the member for that question. We are grateful to the Government of the Northwest Territories for taking care of Nunavut patients and they welcome the patients. Some patients from the Kitikmeot go to Yellowknife for their maternity leave and also if there are emergency cases. They send the patients to Yellowknife and the hospital over there welcomes the patients. We have been working closely with them continually and I met with the Northwest Territories Minister Semmler, who was just recently selected to be the Minister of Health in the Northwest Territories.

In regard to the member's question, our staff in corporate services and also for services, they are working with the Northwest Territories staff who are

working in that branch and they are continually talking with each other and communicating with each other, but I haven't heard any concerns in regard to Nunavut owing money to the Northwest Territories. The staff are always informed about those matters. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I understand that a significant amount of funding for health services for Inuit is provided through the Non-Insured Health Benefits program. Mr. Speaker, can the minister confirm whether one of the reasons for the debt to the Northwest Territories is due to the level of funding provided through the Non-Insured Health Benefits program? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It's impossible for me to respond to the member's questions at this time because I do not know whether this is the case, but the Northwest Territories and our Nunavut staff have been working continually. However, I have not heard about any concerns about debt to the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Many Nunavummiut also travel to other jurisdictions for health services, including Alberta, Manitoba, Ontario, and Quebec. Mr. Speaker, can the minister advise this House as to whether

Nunavut also owes significant money to those jurisdictions for health services provided to Nunavummiut? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Health, Mr. Main.

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) In terms of what the current status of our account balance, if you want to call it that, with the different receiving jurisdictions is as of this day, I cannot say. However, I can commit to working with my officials to get the level of detail required.

Mr. Speaker, we rely heavily on our receiving jurisdictions, so Ontario, Manitoba, Alberta, as well as the Northwest Territories, due to lack of capacity here in territory. I can say that, to each health minister in each of those jurisdictions, I take the time to thank them and make sure they understand how important it is to Nunavut residents that we have access to their specialized services in their jurisdiction. I haven't heard any concerns from my counterparts, despite quite regular chances to interact with them.

On an annual basis, we do incur significant costs in Ontario, Manitoba, and Alberta. It's just the nature of our health care system. Nunavummiut need the services, the jurisdictions receive them, and then they bill back to us. If you look at this year's budget, for example, or some of the money bills that are in front of us, it indicates that there is an increasing volume of procedures and Nunavummiut obtaining care from our receiving jurisdictions. We make sure that our debts are paid and the costs are recouped by the receiving jurisdictions.

It's important that we maintain a good relationship with all of them, including the NWT. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### **Question 809 – 6(2): Kugluktuk Power Plant**

**Mr. Anavilok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) My questions today are for the Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation.

I want to again revisit the issue of Kugluktuk's new power plant. This is a very important priority for my community, and it is very important that my constituents have clear information.

When I raised this issue last month, the minister confirmed that the Qulliq Energy Corporation has "received approval to enter into contract negotiations with the Kitikmeot Corporation to enable this project to progress."

For the record, can the minister confirm who gave approval for these negotiations to begin? Was it the minister on his own authority, the Board of Directors of the Qulliq Energy Corporation, the cabinet, or the Financial Management Board? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I can confirm that the approval was

received from cabinet. (interpretation)  
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Anavilok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the response. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, the Kitikmeot Corporation plays an important role in the economic development of our region. I want to take this opportunity today to pay tribute to the corporation's employees and management.

Mr. Speaker, the minister previously indicated that the corporation received approval in December 2023 to begin negotiations to design and construct a new power plant for Kugluktuk. Can the minister confirm who is taking part in these negotiations on behalf of the Qulliq Energy Corporation and can he describe what progress has been made to date? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the member for that question. (interpretation ends) In terms of the negotiations with the work with the Kitikmeot Corporation, we are hopeful from the Qulliq Energy Corporation's viewpoint that this will lead to the Kugluktuk power plant project moving forward into construction as soon as possible. The corporation is frustrated that the project hasn't been able to advance to date, despite multiple public tender exercises.

In terms of the work with the Kitikmeot Corporation, the Qulliq Energy Corporation is being represented by our staff and we have been meeting with the Kitikmeot Corporation to discuss and identify areas that need to be worked on in terms of moving towards a potential negotiated contract. However, I don't want to get too deep into the details of the work. I don't want to overshare here in the House because the work with the Kitikmeot Corporation is ongoing.

At this point, I can say that we're hopeful that this will mean that Kugluktuk will finally start to see movement on this project and going towards a more reliable, cleaner, quieter, safer power supply for this community, which is long overdue for a new power plant. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Anavilok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I just want to make a note to the minister that there is a pipeline that goes right through the centre of the community and that's aging too.

The Kitikmeot Corporation and the Qulliq Energy Corporation are committed to providing training and employment opportunities to Inuit in the region. Can the minister assure me that any contract that he approves between the Qulliq Energy Corporation and the Kitikmeot Corporation will contain clear and attainable Inuit training and employment requirements? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) In terms of the process, as I understand it, any potential contract would have to come to the Executive Council for approval, so it wouldn't be my signature alone on it; it would need more. In terms of the process, I believe that's what we would be entering into.

Definitely, Inuit employment is an important piece for the Qulliq Energy Corporation and I know, through past work with the Kitikmeot Corporation, that's also a big focus of theirs. I can't promise anything in terms of specific percentages that we would be looking at, but I can say without a doubt that this is one of the areas that would be scrutinized very carefully before any potential deal would move forward while we work with the Kitikmeot Corporation. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Question 810 – 6(2): Marine Protected Areas**

**Mr. Sammurtok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions today are for the Minister of Environment.

I want to follow up today on issues that I raised during our fall sitting concerning marine protected areas.

As the minister will recall, I asked him questions during the fall sitting about the Southampton Island Area of Interest,

which may lead to the creation of a new marine protected area near the communities of Chesterfield Inlet and Coral Harbour.

At that time, he informed the Legislative Assembly that his department has been participating in a “working level co-development committee” and an “executive-level steering committee.” Can the minister provide an update today on the status of this work? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister of Environment, Mr. Qavvik.

**Hon. Daniel Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the question. Mr. Speaker, the status of the Southampton Island Area of Interest, the consultations are still ongoing and the Department of Environment is included through the consultation process, along with the Government of Canada and also the Kivalliq Inuit Association, along with the community members that are in the vicinity of the Southampton Island Area of Interest for the Nunavut Marine Protected Area Strategy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Sammurtok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the minister will recall, his predecessor informed the Legislative Assembly that the Department of Environment is working to develop a new Protected Area Strategy. Can the minister provide an update on the status of this work and can he indicate when the new strategy will be ready for tabling in the Legislative Assembly? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Environment, Mr. Qavvik.

**Hon. Daniel Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Nunavut Marine Protected Area Strategy is an ongoing documentation that the Department of Environment is working on and we're looking through the documents to implement and revise the documents as the previous document dates back to 2007. Once the Nunavut protected area strategy is available and finalized, I will be able to share that document to the House and to the members. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Sammurtok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. As the minister is aware, the community of Chesterfield Inlet needs new marine infrastructure and more economic development opportunities. For example, the potential for a scallop fishery has been identified by the community, which is a perfect example of a sustainable blue economy initiative.

When I asked the minister during the fall sitting for assurances that his department will oppose any attempt by the federal government to block economic development initiatives such as this, the minister could not provide a clear answer.

Mr. Speaker, I will ask the same question again: will the minister commit to ensuring that his department will oppose any attempt by the federal government to block economic development initiatives that would benefit Chesterfield Inlet? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister of Environment, Mr. Qavvik.

**Hon. Daniel Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the question. Mr. Speaker, the Government of Nunavut, as you all know, is participating in the assessment process of a marine protected area in five different areas in our territory that have been proposed by the Government of Canada and regional Inuit associations. The purpose of the assessment process is to develop an understanding of the feasibility and desirability of the proposed marine protected areas. The assessments consider ecological, economic and social information so that partners and stakeholders can understand the benefits and impacts of the proposed Marine Protected Area Strategy in Nunavut.

I can speak on behalf of our current sixth legislative mandate that we have an ambition of the reinvesting of the blue economy. At this time, our Department of Environment along with the other stakeholders are in the process of consultations. Once those consultations are finalized, the Department of Environment can be in a better position to where we stand as a department and the Government of Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### **Question 811 – 6(2): Cleanup of Fuel Spill in Baker Lake**

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Good morning, all. This morning my questions are for the Minister of Community and Government Services.

Mr. Speaker, back about April 2021, the Petroleum Products Division tank farm in Baker Lake, it was realized there was a gas leak that has been happening for some time and approximately 10,000 litres of gasoline had leaked already. The department did put up 1,700 cubic metres of temporary containment cells back in April 2021. Those containment cells are still there, so I guess it's still temporary three years later.

I'm wondering: what's going on with this cleanup project with the Department of Community and Government Services? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the question. Mr. Speaker, my department has been working with the Municipality of Baker Lake on determining the location to build a new land farm to remediate the spill. Mr. Speaker, most of the material required for this project has been secured and they're currently being stored in the community to minimize delays and once the site has been selected, we will be moving forward. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you, minister. In my previous consultation meetings with the previous mayor of the Hamlet of Baker Lake, the Hamlet of Baker Lake did select a site where the land farming would be best suited for Baker Lake. Unfortunately, the Department of Community and Government Services was not agreeable

to this. I'm wondering: where is the department at with agreeing to the best suitable location for the land farm in Baker Lake? Is the department going to go with local knowledge or are they going to keep fighting the Hamlet of Baker Lake on this? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. David Joanasié:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We don't want to fight the municipalities at all and we want to come to a consensus. Mr. Speaker, there is another potential project in Baker Lake that we're looking at, which is a new sewage lagoon. Given that there are different options being explored on both fronts, we will have to see what the best way forward will be, but as of now, we will continue to work with the municipality on this. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you again, minister. Just one final check and balance I would like to find out about, has the department been in direct contact with the Department of Environment as well and also the local hunters and trappers organization? This tank farm is just a couple hundred feet away from our Baker Lake. Is the department in contact with all necessary stakeholders and, if so, who are the stakeholders? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. David Joanasie:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Again thanks for the member on the question. Mr. Speaker, my department, regarding a spill of this nature, we do always go through the procedures around having to contact and/or bring in all the parties involved, the stakeholders. Regarding who exactly is involved, I could agree to bring back some details on that, but these are also relating to regulatory requirements that we want to ensure that there is no risk posed to the residents of Baker Lake and try to mitigate any further hazards. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Question 812 – 6(2): Kugluktuk Power Plant**

**Mr. Savikataaq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I say “good day” to the people of Arviat.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, I would like to continue with the Minister of the Qulliq Energy Corporation where the Member of Kugluktuk left off, but my angle is on the procurement process.

Mr. Speaker, the Kugluktuk power plant project has been cancelled a few times. In the return to oral question back from the previous minister on October 26, it says, “Mr. Speaker, I would like to clarify that the Qulliq Energy Corporation is working with the Kitikmeot Corporation, known as Kit. Corp., to find a contractor to build the power plant. If successful, a tender will not be required because Qulliq Energy Corporation will direct award to Kit. Corp. upon cabinet approval.”

Mr. Speaker, this project is approximately, I believe, about \$39 million and that’s a large sum to sole source and I know that the bids have been unsuccessful. My first question to the minister will be: was Kit. Corp. one of the tenderers in the times that the power plant has been put out to tender? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank the member for that question regarding the tender. The Qulliq Energy Corporation is currently working with the Kitikmeot Corporation. We are working closely together and having discussions.

To your question, then, the detail on the previous tender that was issued is in the process. I don’t have all the details myself; however, we have regulation on procurement and I could say here that with our discussions with the Kitikmeot Corporation, we are going in accordance to the regulations upon approval by the cabinet and the executive upon agreement. We started our discussions.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, maybe just a little bit of difference here that I will point out: it’s a negotiated contract that we are working towards, not a sole source, and there is an important distinction there. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Savikataaq:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That was point exact to the

minister. I wanted to know if the Kit. Corp. was one of the bidders in the past when the two times or three times that the tender went out because if the Kit. Corp. was one of the tender bidders, it would be understandable. The corporation might be negotiating for the best and final offer, but I'm not sure why the minister does not want to answer me whether the Kit. Corp. was one of the bidders because, for example, the Nunavut Housing Corporation has a sole source contract with the NCC Development Corporation. They have a history of building houses, so they negotiated with them on a price.

Does the Kit. Corp. have a history of building power plants? Do they have special insight? I would like to know the reason behind picking the Kit. Corp. What special qualities did the Kit. Corp. have that the Qulliq Energy Corporation went to them and said, "We are unsuccessful in building a power plant, but I believe you can build a power plant within the budget that we have to build a power plant"? What special qualities did the Kit. Corp. have to negotiate a contract to build a power plant in Kugluktuk? Thank you.

**Speaker:** "Kit. Corp." is the Kitikmeot Corporation; acronyms.

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

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I won't get into the specific details here in the House when we still have negotiations of something that had been approved. Previous to negotiations, we were approved and we went according to the policy and we wanted to carry it through right.

We're not looking at all the details. This is still in the works and we note, as government, we have been mandated to Qanuqtuurniq, to seek solutions, and Qanuqtuurniq is something the QEC took on. The tenders we put out were open, although that was the initial start to ensure we move ahead properly to ensure Kugluktuk will get a new power plant. We exercise Qanuqtuurniq, how we may best initiate this in accordance to our policies and in the spirit of working together.

We have utilized Qanuqtuurniq, whether to realize this if it's going to go ahead, but I could say that we want this to proceed properly and this has to be the first. As we know, Kugluktuk residents are tired, and for that reason, we are utilizing Qanuqtuurniq to date and I think that's clear enough. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Savikataaq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not asking the minister for details. What I'm asking for is the Kit. Corp. that may be awarded, what qualities do they have? Why were they selected? How about the others that gave bids for the power plant? Why aren't they part of the discussions? The minister does not respond to that and whether the Kit. Corp. gave a bid and did not respond as to why they were selected or what qualities they have. I don't know, so I'll ask later.

(interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, in the normal procurement process, there is a request for proposals or a public tender put out and it has a date. It opens at a certain date and closes on a certain date.

In this process that the Qulliq Energy Corporation is negotiating with the Kit. Corp., what is the time frame for when negotiations will stop for the plan of a new power plant? Is it indefinite until there is an agreement or is there a time frame, like “Okay, after one year, we’re going to try something else different”? What is the time frame to spend possibly up to \$39 million? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) In terms of getting into the specifics around the cabinet approval, I don’t want to breach cabinet confidence and so I can’t get into the details. I know that the member is very interested in the details. I know he wants to know around the history of the Kitikmeot Corp. They have a website. The Kitikmeot Corp. is very capable, much like their sister or brother development corporations in the Kivalliq and Qikiqtaaluk.

If you look at the development corporations, the Kitikmeot Corporation, for example, they have many different business interests. They have a strong financial footing. In terms of a potential partner for any business venture, I think that you have a fairly strong foundation there and add to the fact that they are Inuit owned, owned by the Inuit of the region. I could see why they have so many successful business ventures, given that backing.

In terms of the time frame for the Kugluktuk power plant in terms of the time frame for the work towards a negotiated contract, I can’t speak to that,

but in terms of the capital project itself, I can say that the time frame is as soon as possible because we know that Kugluktuk wants a new power plant, we know they deserve a new power plant, and for all the reasons that have been discussed here in the House, the Qulliq Energy Corporation is using Qanuqtuurniq to try to make that new power plant a reality. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### **Question 813 – 6(2): Community Corrections Program**

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to begin by sending my condolences to the Kilabuk family and all those who were affected by this horrific and tragic loss of life, especially the two sons and the several grandchildren who have lost a mother and a grandmother.

Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned in my member’s statement, my questions today are for the Minister of Justice.

I am very concerned with the amount of individuals who are convicted while on parole, probation, or court orders in Nunavut. For my first question, I would like to ask if the Minister of Justice also shares my concern. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. David Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I extend my heartfelt condolences to the family who lost their loved one. The family will be

going through hardship for the rest of their lives. Occasionally, they are reminded of the tragedy and we all feel that and I feel for the family of the deceased.

With regard to the question by my colleague, we are constantly thinking up ways on those who have been convicted and who are waiting for their sentence with the numbers we have. We know. We can see that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'm not sure if it was lost in translation, but I'm not quite sure if the minister had indicated whether or not he shares my specific concern over the rates of reoffending and convictions.

Mr. Speaker, as in indicated during my member's statement, our community corrections officers must work closely with offenders, assessing their needs, monitoring their progress, and providing them with resources and support to address underlying issues, such as substance abuse, mental health issues, and a lack of necessary skills to rejoin the workforce. Community corrections officers must also ensure that offenders comply with their conditions of probation or sentence and work to hold them accountable for their actions.

Mr. Speaker, I am also concerned that there is insufficient support and supervision, which is the root cause of reoffending. I would like to ask the minister to commit to enhancing supervision and programming and reintegration to reduce reoffending and

provide in-person supervision and support to stop this needless loss of life that is caused by these individuals who are reoffending. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. David Akeeagok (interpretation):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Our employees are quite familiar with their tasks related to residents going through the incarceration or release process or bailed. They try to work with the people in this area in sincerity, and I am very appreciative of our employees who provide this service.

There are many different types of Inuit who are briefly detained or remanded and then released for a brief while, and they have to follow the orders listed in their release papers, such as activities they are not allowed to indulge in which are written out, and our employees always try their utmost to provide the proper services in all of our communities.

All communities now have positions that are available with some positions still vacant, and wherever there is a vacancy, the community receives the services from an existing employee tasked with providing this temporary service in the communities, but the orders set through the court system are checked by other employees to determine their compliance. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Still, I didn't get a clear

commitment from the Minister of Justice to enhance the supports and supervision for those who are on parole, probation, or court orders.

Mr. Speaker, from the rates of reoffending, it is clear that there is much more need for enhancement in this area. As the minister indicated, there are some vacancies in this area. I would like to ask: is the minister aware of how many communities do not currently have community corrections officers and how many individuals are currently walking about our communities without any much-needed in-person support and supervision that they need?

I do understand that the minister may not have this level of detail on hand, but I encourage the minister to provide a response to oral question for the benefit of the public. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. David Akeeagok** (interpretation): There are currently nine vacant positions and we are planning to create positions in the seven communities, and when there are vacant positions, the community corrections officers are required to visit the other communities so that they can take care of clients. They have a lot of work to do and I am thankful that they fulfill their positions. We provide training for the probation officers and we make sure that they're trained. We look at how we can provide further support to the probation officers. For those affected, for the victims, we're looking at how we can provide further support through our department. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

### **Question 814 – 6(2): Student Graduation Rates**

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct my question to the Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College today.

Mr. Speaker, as we all know, there are different levels of employment with different categories within the Government of Nunavut, and one of the biggest challenging areas is the professional and executive level for Inuit employment.

The first question I would like to ask the minister is: what work is being done to recruit students specifically to degree programs offered at Nunavut Arctic College? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, Mr. Qavvik.

**Hon. Daniel Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for the question. Mr. Speaker, in terms of the degree portions that are offered within the college, Nunavut Arctic College is focusing on recruiting more Inuit in general for the paraprofessional category and also the middle management category, alongside the senior management category. Our main goal and objective for Nunavut Arctic College is to have our students graduate their level of education in any degree of our programs that we offer through Nunavut Arctic College.

We also provide the students preparations to prepare them to work

into the workforce within our territory that they have interest in, and we certainly do our very best to prepare them for employment after graduation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. That wasn't even close to the question that I asked, but I'm going to move on.

Mr. Speaker, I'll start specifically with the Nunavut Teacher Education Program and I'm sure that over the coming days, I'll follow up with other programs, but what is the ratio of students starting the Nunavut Teacher Education Program but not completing and the main factors for these students leaving the program? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, Mr. Qavvik.

**Hon. Daniel Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for that question. Mr. Speaker, the ratio in terms that the member posed, I do not have that level of detail, but from the 2023-24 starting point for Nunavut Arctic College numbers, it started from 157 and as of January, when they entered the winter term, the students are in the range of 147. There are some various reasons that the college lost 10 students, the factors that I don't have details on. The ratio part, I do not have that level of detail with me, but I can certainly get back to the member with more details on that information. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. It has been a topic of discussion for a number of years now on the tracking of graduates at Nunavut Arctic College. From what I understand, there has been a lot of direction given to the college to keep better statistics in their grads.

My next question is I would like to get more information on the ratio of Nunavut Teacher Education Program graduates that work in their field of study. What is the percentage of graduated students that are working in their field of study within the field of education? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, Mr. Qavvik.

**Hon. Daniel Qavvik:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the member to repeat the question so I can better understand the question, please. Thank you.

**Speaker:** Mr. Hickes, please repeat your question.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Absolutely, just to clarify, what I'm looking for is the number of Nunavut Teacher Education Program graduates that are currently working in their field of study within the field of education. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister responsible for Nunavut Arctic College, Mr. Qavvik.

**Hon. Daniel Qavvik:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for that question. There are several communities within the Nunavut Teacher Education Program that are in their final year and they're doing their practicum through

January to May and they have their final studies for the next six weeks.

In terms of the question of how many students are in the education workforce, I can provide more level of detail through a letter to the member. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Iqaluit-Sinaa, Ms. Brewster.

**Question 815 – 6(2): Mine Training Strategy**

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My questions are for the Minister responsible for Mines.

Mr. Speaker, although we have been sitting in extended hours for the past week, I want to begin by reassuring the minister and his colleagues that many of us on this side of the House are doing our best in the evenings and weekends to keep up with annual reports and other documents that the ministers are tabling each day.

Mr. Speaker, I was very happy to see the minister table his department's new Mine Training Strategy last week, and I will be very happy when the minister is in a position to table the updated Arts and Cultural Industries Strategy.

Mr. Speaker, I have listened carefully to the comments that a number of my colleagues have made about the positive impact that mining has had on their communities and I have been inspired by accounts of the increasing number of Inuit women who are building careers in what has traditionally not been a particularly welcoming industry for women.

Can the minister highlight what specific elements of the new Mine Training Strategy will focus on encouraging women to enter the industry and build meaningful careers as skilled tradespeople, professional geologists and managers? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Hon. Minister responsible for Mines, Mr. David Akeagok.

**Hon. David Akeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I thank the member for her questioning on this. It is a very exciting time for the Mine Training Strategy and to start rolling it out and something that I'm looking forward to.

A lot of the work being done that will help complement this is there has been a lot of work towards Inuit going into the mining sector and in particular, women entering into it. Having visited the sites, I have seen progressions where an Inuk woman has started dishwashing and is now driving huge trucks. Those are wonderful achievements to celebrate and those are ones that we will continue to do.

I did not specify women or men in terms of the training strategy, but it encompasses for the holistic. It's also for when we get into partnerships and themes, those are ones to start implementing. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I know a number of women who are tradespeople and I am always inspired by their ability to succeed in an area that's often dominated by a lot of bullying towards them.

On that issue as well, Mr. Speaker, I don't think that it's any secret that the mining industry needs to do more to be a welcoming place for members of the 2SLGBTQQI+ community.

I'm sure that we have all heard horror stories about bullying at mining sites and we need to work with industry to make this a thing of the past.

Can the minister highlight what specific elements of the new Mine Training Strategy will focus on addressing these issues? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister responsible for Mines, Mr. David Akeegok.

**Hon. David Akeegok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Mine Training Strategy does not focus on that aspect, but I want to highlight that our government has memoranda of understanding of the four mines and as part of that, it includes the socio-economic impacts and with that, discussions around the workplace in terms of trying to be welcoming and trying to reduce the number of bullies. It has always been in the forefront in terms of our discussions with the mining company. They are a private sector, but they have a huge role in this and they are very receptive to sort of the areas of concern that we raise, such as what the member just raised. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would just like to encourage the minister to reconsider providing training to address these issues right at the outset. Workplace safety really depends on

ongoing training throughout the span of careers and the sooner and the more often one has training to ensure that safety for all colleagues is extremely important.

Mr. Speaker, there has been discussion in this House about the De Beers Chidliak Project that is under development not too far from Iqaluit. I recognize that the project has a long regulatory road ahead of it and I am hearing concerns that the proponent's focus on remote mining and operation of vehicles is not giving sufficient weight to the need to develop a skilled Inuit workforce.

Can the minister indicate what commitments the De Beers corporation has provided to work with his department in respect to the implementation of the Mine Training Strategy? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Minister responsible for Mines, Mr. David Akeegok.

**Hon. David Akeegok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. In discussions with De Beers, any of the jobs that are coming, as my colleague mentioned, are going to go through a long permitting process. We are having discussions with them in terms of what this is going to look like and how it's going to be, and all of that component is part of our Mine Training Strategy is to identify what positions are coming forward and start planning for it.

I think that some of my member colleagues have mentioned that some of the training has been a little too late. I think that with De Beers, we have this opportunity of making sure that we are upfront and ready for Nunavummiut to

enter into that particular, very specified field. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Oral Questions. Member for Uqqummiut, Ms. Killiktee.

**Question 816 – 6(2): Elders Strategy**

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for recognizing me again. At this time, I would like to direct my question to the Premier in regard to his minister's statement on the Elders Strategy.

I would like to ask a question, especially first of all state that I have much compassion for elders because they have worked so much for us and it is good to pay them back for the good work they did in the past, to keep them comfortable. They should provide a vehicle to the communities this coming summer.

I have a question in regard to that. How did you come to the decision? Have you consulted with the community to make the decision as to where the vehicles will be going to the communities? Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for that good question. I agree with you wholeheartedly that our elders and seniors of Nunavut are very important to us. We wouldn't be here if they didn't work hard on our behalf and I know we have been told that we have to do this urgently. I'll be able to table the report at the appropriate time with our 89 recommendations that were set out in the

report and we want to work on them as a government.

However, in regard to your question, we have been asked to urgently work on this so they can have a vehicle for transportation within the community. This issue has been urgent. We have not identified which communities, but we're working on the policy. We had to do this very fast, due to having to order through the sealift so that we could get disability vehicles for elders' use in Nunavut. That's why we are working on that as urgent. We looked at five communities, but I'm not sure how or which communities they will go to because we have to work on the policy. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for responding to the question that I wanted to pose.

I also want to state that there are five communities... I would like the community of Clyde River to move ahead because there's not any kind of transportation mode for the local elders and there's no hamlet vehicle for them, but it's totally different in the community of Qikiqtarjuaq. The minister can provide support for vehicles, so I would urge the minister to start considering one of my communities, Clyde River, that it be one of the communities to receive the vehicle as a priority.

I don't know how he will respond as well because they have to start planning and with that, have you ever considered

as to who would be responsible at the community level for these vehicles?  
Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I also thank you for that excellent question. First of all, I would like to thank her very much for working on behalf of and representing the elders. She was able to participate when we were reviewing this, and we expect that you will take part while we're working with this issue. Thank you for providing good advice.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, we have not identified either one of the communities that will receive vehicles. We will have to review the policy, but we do want to work with the hamlet council. We will consult with the hamlet councils as to which communities require transportation. Some communities or hamlet councils don't have a vehicle, so we will look at the details of that.

I myself have seen in the communities when I'm invited that some communities don't have any vehicles or mode of transportation, so we will review the policy once it has been established, I expect within the next two months during the session, and our next session that we'll be able to provide and table a report on that. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask another question here. I know that the communities will be receiving large

sealift supplies, including construction material for the building of units, and I don't know if there is any more room available on the ships. Businesses and individuals also order large items like heavy equipment.

With that, I'm urging the minister to start considering. As the minister stated on the next session, we need to start planning for sealift season. It seems like it's evident that we will require more ships to transport the supplies. If you had not already planned for them, if some materials might be late, there could be a delay for two more years if there aren't enough ships to transport them. That's what we're concerned about. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker and my fellow MLA. Yes, that's why we are working on this as urgent. If we don't order right away, we will be late, as the elders asked that we work urgently on that because it's very important. I agree with you that it's an urgent case, and I urge my staff to work on the policy as to how or which community will be receiving vehicles and we will consult with the communities or hamlet councils and my office is open to the hamlet councils.

I cannot tell you which communities will receive the vehicles, but we will need to work on the details of the policy. However, it's evident that we will have to review what they require at the community level. After the review, I'm sure that we will rely on the report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Members, be aware that the time allotted for question period is now over. Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I seek unanimous consent to extend the time allotted for question period. Thank you.

**Speaker:** The member is seeking unanimous consent to extend question period. Are there any nays? There is a nay. Item 7. Written Questions. Item 8. Returns to Written Questions. Item 9. Replies to Opening Address. Item 10. Petitions. Item 11. Responses to Petitions. Item 12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters. Item 13. Tabling of Documents. Hon. Premier of Nunavut, Mr. Pauloosie Akeeagok.

### **Item 13: Tabling of Documents**

#### **Tabled Document 256 – 6(2): Regional Elder Gatherings**

#### **Tabled Document 257 – 6(2): Aging with Dignity – Elders and Seniors Strategy**

**Hon. P.J. Akeeagok:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to be able to table two reports:

1. The “What We Heard Report during the regional elders’ gatherings for the Nunavut Elders Strategy; and
2. The Aging with Dignity – Elders and Seniors Strategy.

Mr. Speaker, the Inuktitut version of the report will be tabled once the translations are complete. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

#### **Tabled Document 258 – 6(2): Community and Government Services’ 2022-23 Grants and Contributions Report**

**Hon. David Joanasie** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am pleased to table Community and Government Services’ 2022-23 Grants and Contributions Report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Tabling of Documents. Hon. Minister responsible for the Qulliq Energy Corporation, Mr. Main.

#### **Tabled Document 259 – 6(2): Qulliq Energy Corporation’s 2020-21 Contracting, Procurement and Leasing Activity Report**

**Hon. John Main** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) I am pleased to table the Qulliq Energy Corporation’s 2020-21 Contracting, Procurement and Leasing Activity Report. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Speaker:** Item 14. Notices of Motions. Item 15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills. Item 16. Motions. Item 17. First Reading of Bills. Item 18. Second Reading of Bills. Item 19. Consideration in Committee of the Whole of Bills and Other Matters. Bills 37, 38, 39, and 40 with Mr. Savikataaq in the Chair.

Before we proceed with the Committee of the Whole, we will break for lunch and report back at 1:30 p.m.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>House recessed at 12:03 and  
Committee resumed at 13:29

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

**Chairman** (Mr. Savikataaq): Good afternoon. I would like to call our Committee of the Whole meeting back to order. In Committee of the Whole, we have the following items to deal with: Bills 37, 38, 39, and 40. What is the wish of the committee? Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We wish to continue with the review of the 2024-25 Main Estimates for the Department of Family Services and then return to the Department of Education and, if time permits, the Department of Justice. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Are we in agreement to deal with Bill 37?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Bill 37 – Appropriation (Operations &  
Maintenance) Act, 2024-2025 –  
Family Services – Consideration in  
Committee**

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

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk:** Yes, please.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Does the committee

agree to let the minister's officials appear before you?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the officials to the witness table.

For the record, Minister Nakashuk, can you please introduce your officials?

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To my right, your left is my Deputy Minister, Jonathan Ellsworth, and to my left, your right is (interpretation ends) Director of Corporate Services, Dwayton Tonge. (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) We're here to do Family Services. Branch Summary of Corporate Management. L-4. Following the list of my names as we're continuing, Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to start off just on the policy side of things and I do know that there was some recent correspondence from the minister, and unfortunately I just don't have it in front of me right now.

When we look at site visits, like in the last year, we went through quite an extensive televised hearing on the Office of the Auditor General report and a lot of commitments were made. Going back to the letter from the Office of the Auditor General to the department from the December of the previous year and we look at some of the very serious concerns that the Office of the Auditor General had in that letter to the department and by the time the hearing

came, it didn't appear as if a lot of action had been done from the concerns on the letter.

I know that we addressed a lot of that during the televised hearing and then subsequently, we are all aware of another issue that arose or another incident that arose or a couple of incidents that arose, and I don't want to go down that path. I know that there is an investigation pending on that, so I'm not going to open the can on that, but generally, there were a lot of concerns raised and then for issues to happen again so closely after there were many commitments by the department to improve services, to improve the level of interaction with children's group homes, as an example, or contracted residential care, and then we're still seeing and hearing issues that come forward on that.

To me, I am concerned that it has been over the many years that there have been reports from the Office of the Auditor General, but a little over a year ago in December 2022, some really direct concerns were raised that the Office of the Auditor General didn't even want to wait for the report to come out, that they wanted to make sure that the department had an opportunity to address some of those crisis concerns.

I would like to get a little bit more information on the policy behind site visits, what triggers a site visit, are there schedules, are the operators informed prior to an inspection happening, and how they go about it. I know that if they are contracted outside the territory, the minister has stated that there are client liaison positions in a few different cities down south, but how often does departmental oversight on those

inspections also occur? I know I'm throwing a whole bunch of questions at the minister here and hopefully they are taking some notes and would be able to respond to them. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you for the question. I know that when we're talking about the OAG report, a lot of things that were mentioned in there that needed to be done and some of them were more urgent than others. When we're talking about how we are overlooking all the clients that we have in and outside of the territory, we have made some changes and it's still a work in progress in terms of how we're trying to ensure that our clients are all communicated to.

Since December 2022, when we're backdating to that time, I have always mentioned the client liaison officers that we had and how we're still trying to put more client liaison officers to ensure that they don't have too many client files and missed opportunities and miss anyone out. We also have a new director that is overlooking those client liaison workers. That's one thing that we are really working towards to improve. As well, they do have a standard policy to ensure that they do a monthly visit or data entry when they are visiting their clients. They do have a breakdown as to when they could follow up on a client to ensure that all the clients are met.

Another thing that was mentioned in the OAG report was the lack of data entry

and that's how some of our clients were being missed out. The Matrix system, the database system, was out of date, so we have updated that, thankfully in agreement through this House. It has taken some time to finally get that going, but we are training our staff to start using that and also entering some data information into the system to ensure that our staff are up to date with all the information that is entered there as well as all the social workers that are working with the clients are entering them.

When I'm talking about clients outside of the territory, most clients that we have, the CLOs will provide the information to the CSS workers in the community that their client is based from. A lot of the communication goes back and forth through there as well through the contract company. Like I mentioned, that's a new system that we're just starting to use, but it's going to really help us to ensure that all the updated information is in there for the clients that we have in care.

If there is anything else I'm missing in terms of policy, if you allow my deputy minister to provide more in-depth information on that, if you allow. (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Ellsworth.

**Mr. Ellsworth:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, members of this committee.

In addition to the information provided by the hon. minister, the department has taken significant steps through the lens of ensuring enhancements in our out-of-territory care arrangement. Some of

those include a centralized tracking system so that we are consistently updating and aware of where the children are and the frequency of visits that are occurring.

With regard to policy, sir, you might recall during the OAG hearings that there was a focus on the standards of the department. Those standards are currently being revised through the lens of modernization, Bill C-92, and in conjunction with the Representative for Children and Youth and other stakeholders in Nunavut.

The first one that we did was the out-of-territory standard and that sort of defines the frequency of those visits. In addition to the importance of ensuring that we have appropriate out-of-territory standards in place to protect and maintain relationships with children in our care, we have also enhanced our communications with our provincial and territorial counterparts.

Essentially there had, in my view, been a breakdown of the relationship between our respective ministries of Family Services, if you will, they're called different things in the other provinces, but more recently we have engaged them through the lens of ensuring that they too are working with us to ensure that the practices of these residential care facilities meet standards.

Mr. Chairman, client liaison officers, of course, as the minister mentioned, play an integral role in this function in terms of ensuring face-to-face time with children who are outside of Nunavut and inside of Nunavut. They work closely with the social worker who has carriage of those files.

What the department has done for the client liaison officers is we have created an unfunded position as a supervisory role. We have also contracted resources to develop clear training for those individuals to ensure that they are fully aware of what is expected of them and to ensure that they are supported. In addition to that, we plan to expand the out-of-territory team.

And lastly, sir, if you will, we recently published revised RFPs with a clear indication of what is required of proponents for in- and out-of-territory residential care. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have all these questions in my head and I don't know which ones to ask first.

Within the response, and I do appreciate the comments from the minister and from Mr. Ellsworth. I know there are adults in care too, and I'm not trying to prefer or portray one as more important than the other, but I think the children in care is a lot more of a vulnerable situation.

There were some questions this morning about the report from the access to information and protection of privacy commissioner, where he had agreed in some causes and not in others on the redaction of details in the document. Obviously the naming of the people that were involved is important.

When you look at some of the systemic issues that have been highlighted, I think

there is a value to some of the information that had been redacted to be really considered, and I know that was the final recommendation of the Commissioner was the government, although it has a right to withhold some of the information that was redacted, they don't have to, but they can release some of that information and open the door a little bit more to help inform, not just us, but the people in the public whose family members are in these situations.

I understand the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs was the lead in that investigation or that internal review, but it was signed off by Family Services' deputy minister and the deputy minister of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs.

I know the report was just released this morning, so I'm not looking for a firm position on what is going on, but I would like to encourage the minister in discussing with officials to look at... . Again, I mentioned the other day open and transparent is just a catchphrase. I think there is some information, or likely, because I haven't been able to see what's behind the blackouts either, I think it's safe to assume that there is some information in there that would be of value to the public.

Moving on, Mr. Chairman, when we're looking at the Child and Family Services legislation, in Section 25 of the *Act* it speaks to "A child protection worker must serve a copy of the originating notice commencing an application for a declaration that a child needs protection, and for a child protection order and an Affidavit in support of the application

on... .”. And it lists a bunch of different, “...the following persons, parents” and such. It says, “If the child is an Inuk child, whichever of the following Inuit organizations the child or the mother or the father of the child is or is eligible to be a member of, the Kitikmeot Inuit Association, the Kivalliq Inuit Organization, or the Qikiqtani Inuit Association, are notified.”

Can the minister explain how that notification occurs? And is it happening in every instance? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you for your question. (interpretation ends) It's a very good question. We do work closely with the Inuit organization, more specifically with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated, because we have to ensure that a lot of the work that we are doing aligns with their Acts as well, policies as well, to ensure that youth are being protected. There are a couple of programs that we work with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated on, and one of them is the adoption one.

There are a couple things that we are working with them. But in terms of looking more into detail of the other Acts that we are trying to work on, as well, we have to work with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated more closely.

In terms of the specific Act that you are mentioning, I would ask that my deputy respond to that, if you allow.

(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Ellsworth.

**Mr. Ellsworth:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The relevant provision that the member referenced places a positive obligation on the department to serve legal notices to the relevant Inuit organizations when any of those apprehensions are made.

I can state with significant confidence that they are served with every application that is brought before the courts, and the reason I can state that, Mr. Chairman, is because when I first became the deputy at the department I took a very close look at the *Act*, obviously, and coming from a legal aid background, I wanted to make sure this we were actually following the letter of the law.

I made specific inquiries with legal counsel on the file and asked them to produce evidence that showed that they were serving Inuit organizations like Kivalliq, Kitikmeot and Qikiqtani Inuit Associations, and they did in fact provide that evidence as satisfactory to my inquiries, sir. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you. I would like to get a little further confirmation from Mr. Ellsworth on the mode of that communication. Was it email? Was it letter? Because we all know, unless, if it's a general email how often those are

checked within an organization. It can be a question if it's a specific person. If they're on leave do those notices get forwarded, we don't know. Or if it's a snail mail, then that can also get lost in the mail. So there's registered mail, there's other options to be able to verify that the deliveries are made. I would like to get a little more detail from Mr. Ellsworth about that, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) As we are on the same line of questioning, I'll go straight to Mr. Ellsworth.

**Mr. Ellsworth:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The rules of court provide that these kinds of documents need to be served personally, but there is a practice directive of the court that also provides that if the respondent agrees to receive them electronically, that they can.

To answer the member's question specifically, I believe QIA receives them electronically, while Kitikmeot and Kivalliq Inuit organizations are personally served with those documents. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Is there any different process or any differences when a child is under conservatorship or public guardian? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Ellsworth.

**Mr. Ellsworth:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe all originating

notices have to be served personally, unless they have that exemption pursuant to the relevant practice directive of the court.

I don't believe that Inuit organizations are required to be served with respect to guardianship applications, I may be mistaken. It is of course not my forte at the present time.

However, I do know from my work at the court that every originating application has to be served personally, and if it's a child, their parents have to be served as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. To follow up on that last comment that Mr. Ellsworth stated, that the parents have to be informed, what would happen in the case where the parental rights are in question or if the parents are deceased? Look at a recent occurrence of a homicide, where a mother and grandmother were recently murdered. Her children, although the parents are probably adult children, but in a case like that where there are still minor children involved, what's the practice in that matter? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) We are still on the same line of questioning. Mr. Ellsworth.

**Mr. Ellsworth:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In that kind of situation, sir, I would imagine it would attract some degree of child protection concern. Part of the formal process, of course, engages

a safety assessment, investigations, and then determining whether or not there's next of kin or family available to take care of those children.

Should the director choose to initiate litigation because of ongoing concerns, or whatever the case might be, if we can't resolve the matter through custom adoption or otherwise, then next of kin would be served in those circumstances, or grandparents would be my expectation. However, certainly the department would first move towards working with family members to ensure those children's safety are protected. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate that information from Mr. Ellsworth, thank you.

Going back to the in-territory care, I know it was brought up fairly recently as well on the closure of the group home here in Iqaluit, in Happy Valley, and I believe at the time the minister stated they were looking at alternative or multi-use, or looking at the usage of that facility. I just wonder if there was any progress made on that.

We want to repatriate or we want to be able to provide care in-territory as much as possible. It's a shame that there is a building sitting there vacant right now, when it could be used for children in need. Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for that question. I think you kind of knew that something was coming up in terms of that building, because we're just about to put out some notice in regard to that.

We've been doing some work in that building to ensure that it's more homier and more welcoming for families, so there's some beds set up to ensure that we also use that because we have seen some situations where some of the social workers are put in hotels with children, so we want to utilize that as well for that, but also utilize it for the community, the city, for children and youth to run some programs.

But we are just about to make it more public because we had to get some work done in that building to fix it up and make it a bit more welcoming in that building. But that announcement is soon to come out. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** If I can get clarification of a ballpark timeline on that announcement? I know the minister said in the near future. That could be tomorrow, next week, next month. I'm seeking clarification. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk:** March 11, 2024.

>> *Laughter*

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Very precise. Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** I thank the minister for that accurate response. With that in mind, and again I don't want to steal the minister's thunder on the announcement coming up. The minister just mentioned a couple of different services that they were looking at providing.

I would like to ask the question: is this going to be operated with internal Government of Nunavut staff or is this going to be a contracted service provider, as it was previously? Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that question. We're going to utilize both, both the Government of Nunavut staff and also contractors, a combination every both. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and welcome, minister and your officials. I would like to go to, with full knowledge that Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs commissioned a report into Everbrite, I'd like to know from the minister whether or not the final report of that investigation was shared with the Representative For Children and Youth? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank the member for the question. Regarding the report and the Representative for Children and Youth, (interpretation ends) we haven't shared that information to them. (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I believe what I heard was that you haven't shared, or Family Services and Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs has not shared that report with the Office of the Representative For Children and Youth. That concerns me, because I think, I do have a copy of the redacted report, and I see that there are a number of recommendations contained in that final report that are redacted.

The reason I think it's important to share it as a first step with the Representative For Children and Youth is because what we want to ensure is that there's accountability for following through on those recommendations.

I suppose my next question is: will the report be shared with the Representative For Children and Youth so that the Representative For Children and Youth can advocate for those youth in care and to advocate to ensure that there's accountability in actioning those recommendations? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you for that question. I do understand. When I stated we haven't shared it I'm saying as a Department of Family Services we haven't shared it to them because it's not our report, it's Executive Intergovernmental Affairs. It is really their decision to provide that information appropriately, as they wish.

We work very closely with the RCYO, and when we're talking about I have to go back to the OAG report, we have been in communication. My deputy minister is in communication with RCYO on a frequent, whether it's email, by phone, like it's all the time that my deputy minister is in contact with the office, so we understand a lot of the concerns brought forward.

We work closely with the RCYO on what we can do to ensure that the advocacy is still there for the children in care, and also that we are accountable for the mistakes that happened within the department.

I think that's clear enough in the investigations and the reports that have come out. There has been a lot of work to be done to correct the mistakes that have been done wrong within the department, but we are really trying to improve a lot of the operations and policies and train more training within our staff to ensure that we are trying to correct what has been done incorrectly.

So that's what I mean. There have been some changes within the department to correct the mistakes, and it's going to be an ongoing thing. It's not going to be a fix in a day, but we have to continue to ensure appropriate training is done within the department, as well as appropriate support is in place for our staff as well. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I would like to advise the members about acronyms. A comment was like NTI we understand, but for the interpreters' sake, and for the viewing audience of Nunavut, they might not know what the acronyms are that are being used. If at all possible, after an acronym, state what it is for. Ms. Brewster, thank you.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, minister, for that response. I fully understand that it's not in your purview to release that report, because it does rest with Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs.

However, even given that very substantive response and the reassurance that action has been taken and things are improving, I'm trying to figure out how to pose this question.

I don't think it would be harmful to have the Representative of Children and Youth be informed enough to help the Department of Family Services remain accountable and continually be accountable. Even without seeing what those recommendations are, one of my concerns is that there are recommendations that go over and above

even what the Office of the Auditor General report has recommended.

I suppose what I will ask is whether or not the minister is advocating to release that report to the Representative for Children and Youth so that that office can help to hold Family Services and the Government of Nunavut accountable. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, member, for your question. (interpretation ends) I do want to state that, it's on a daily basis that I'm in contact with the Premier, and working together to, especially the EIA and our department staff, they're working to improve a lot of things that our department needs to do.

When we're talking about the requests being brought forward, there's no hesitation from our department. We are just at our ten years as a department, and when we're thinking of children at ten years of age, they're not fully grown yet. I have to say, the department never had the support that it needed from the very beginning. I think there's some things that should have been brought forward more in terms of more staff, more supervisory positions to the staff, especially within the Family Wellness Division. I think it could have made that division a bit stronger.

Those are the things that we are really trying to push for to get during this Committee of the Whole meeting, is try and get that staff to come into be more

functional. I'm saying that because when we're talking about the mistakes being done and the lack of supports within, the burnout that we see from our staff, those are things that we don't want to keep responding to emergencies. We need to be proactive. We need to ensure that we are providing the training and the supports to avoid those kind of things.

But in terms of a lot of the things that we need to do, it's an ongoing thing. Working with EIA, that's really up to them and we're going to share as much information as we can from our department, because a lot of the issues are the same, and we're correcting that, just not fast enough. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you, minister, and thank you for that response. I am really happy that the Minister responsible for Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs is here in the room and is listening to this discussion.

Minister, to your knowledge, has the report on that investigation, including the recommendations contained within, been distributed to any other Government of Nunavut departments that have a responsibility to help Family Services take a whole-of-government approach to resolving the issues related to the Auditor General's report and beyond? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**  
(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your question. I have not looked into it, I don't understand what entities outside of Family Services the member is referring to. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, minister. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The interpretation stated that the minister would like to look into where the report has been shared outside of the government.

Just to be clear, the report into the Everbrite situation is the question that I have, whether or not it has been shared interdepartmentally within the Government of Nunavut and the departments that are really important partners with Family Services in taking a whole-of-government approach to addressing the issues of concern related to children, specifically to children in care. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**  
(interpretation): Thank you.  
(interpretation ends) Thank you for the question. Just to go back to that question I'm not aware. I haven't asked, either, which departments it has been provided to, or to all departments. I don't know that. Yeah, that's all I can say.  
(interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm not sure of process here. Is it possible to defer that question to the Premier, who is present? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman:** Thank you. It's up to the Minister of Family Services, Minister Nakashuk, if she wants to defer to the questions to the Minister responsible for EIA. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**  
(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for your question. You can ask the Premier that question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Is the Minister responsible for EIA prepared to respond to the question? Pauloosie Akeeagok.

**Hon P.J. Akeeagok** (interpretation): Yes, thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you, member. The report in regard to the minister, we have met with each other in regard to the details or the contents of the report, and also, we've met with the privacy commissioner. Only those two have seen the report. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's disappointing to hear that trusted members of the public service who are bound by confidentiality in the nature of their work are not being entrusted to see information that can help improve government services. Mr. Chairman, I'm going to leave it at that for the moment. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. According to my list, Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Good afternoon, minister. I've got a few more questions but I would like to begin by addressing the minister's outburst yesterday, which led to us reporting progress early. Discussing matters such as this are tough on us all, but like I said yesterday, it's even more emotionally tolling on you and your staff and all the social workers who deal with this every single day.

I have to admit I was quite shocked when the minister became emotional and stated my question was not legitimate. Just for the record, members are free to ask any questions they want on any topic. I was not asking about the number of pencils and paper clips the department has, but I identified my concern. I did not see positions advertised, given complications that staffing shortages has on Family Wellness Branch and the department being able to meet its obligations in the Child and Family Services Act.

I don't want the minister to take this personally. I have been asking questions in this area as regards child abuse and domestic violence literally since our first orientation in 2017.

Given the very serious issues and allegations that have been brought to light over the last six months, we as a committee are bound to continue to ask these very tough questions during the review of the budget and for the foreseeable future.

Again, I want to ask the minister and any officials not to take these matters personally, and if I had offended you, I do apologize.

Like I said, I do have a few questions. I have had an opportunity to review the Department of Family Services' Family Wellness Strategic Framework, and I was quite pleased with the material that is included in here. So I do appreciate the work that has been put into this, and I do recognize that the minister and the Department of Family Services are working hard to overcome all these matters.

I'm very happy to see plans to create a foster care association for parents, as well as a platform for foster children to support each other. This is tremendous work, and again, I do appreciate that. I do appreciate that the minister and the department have very much taken into consideration members' comments during the review of the OAG report. I was very happy to see the department is going to build further partnerships with Inuit organizations to offer Inuit-specific services, cultural activities, and community connection. I do appreciate that.

I also note that the department is planning to transition from reliance on short-term casuals and contracts to indeterminate Inuit staffing model. And again, I do appreciate that.

Again, I appreciate plans to conduct an interjurisdictional review on residential care costs, and I'm sure we will get into that.

I really appreciate the reference to Bill C-92 *An Act Respecting First Nations, Inuit and Métis Children, Youth and Families* which was passed in 2019 which will affirm Indigenous right to self-government in relation to Child and Family Services.

And I do note on page 11 of the strategic framework that the department has indicated that it is working in partnership with Inuit organizations, Department of Justice, to complete a legislative review and consultation process for the development of a made-in-Nunavut Inuit culturally specific *Child and Family Services Act*.

I'd like to start off with that as my first question. First off, my question is when will the department begin the process of legislative review and consultation process on the *Child and Family Services Act*? Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the explanation. (interpretation ends) Just to back to yesterday, the line of questions that I got from the member was asking how many positions have been advertised, and when we're in corporate services that looks overall in all positions within the department, is my understanding. And one advertisement he had seen, or two in the last year, I want to go back to that line of question. And I didn't mean pen and papers or paper clips. That meant other staff that are not doing Family Wellness work. I didn't take it personally. I'm not the one

that reported progress. I was willing to sit and answer in the House yesterday.

But to go back to what positions have been advertised. In the last year there have been 31 CSSWs. 11 are active. 8 are pending. 12 have been closed and 11 competitions. Of that, 11 competitions that are active, are 1 advertising stage, 2 interview stage, 2 reference stage and 6 being offered in the field process at this time.

Including that as well, the Department of Human Resources has been helping to ensure that our positions, especially with CSSWs, that we've been getting more supports in that area. When we're talking about whole government approach there's been departments that have stepped to ensure there's a way to ensure we are getting more staff within the department. So that is one thing that I notice, that we've had more resumes come in more so in that area.

We have also received 45 non-social worker positions within the department, and that could include our regional director, supervisors, managers, income assistance workers, family wellness workers, corporate services and policy positions.

Those are things that I wanted to mention yesterday, from yesterday's question. In terms of the question, I would ask that the deputy minister respond to that question. (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Ellsworth.

**Mr. Ellsworth:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I remember the question correctly it's the timeline for the initiation of the amendments, or revitalization of the *Child and Family Services Act*. As a matter of course, we filed or are on the cusp of filing a policy intentions paper for the purposes of that work.

In addition, Mr. Chairman, we've also laid the framework for the work plans on the partnership committee working group level. One of the objectives in those work plans, if I may say, is that in fact that piece of the legislation in addition to that legislation we're also looking to revitalize or amend the *Adoptions Act* and *Aboriginal Custom Adoptions Act* as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Mr. Ellsworth. Sounds like your department and the Department of Justice and the other organizations are going to be very busy reviewing and developing those pieces of legislation.

A number of years ago I had applauded the Department of Family Services when at the time it was struggling to fill the community social worker positions, and changed the approach to advertising open until filled, a continuous advertisement for the social worker positions.

I would just like to ask, when did the department end this practice of having that continuous advertising for social

worker positions? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that question. If it's okay, I would like my deputy minister to answer that. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Ellsworth.

**Mr. Ellsworth:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I don't think we've ended that practice. I believe, and I say this lightly, we were struggling with the new website that the GN was bringing online, and as a result there were some hiccups on the HR side of things in terms of ensuring that those pieces were still there.

I too shared your concerns, Mr. Lightstone, when recently I looked at that website and didn't see any Family Services positions, but knowing that we put have put in 45 job action requests, or different documentation, to get that process started.

We're working with our colleagues at HR and the website team to ensure that these pieces are correct, and I believe that's why there's only one income assistance worker position.

If you look two weeks ago Family Services wasn't even on the list. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Ellsworth, for clarifying that. I do feel much better with regard to that issue.

Earlier in the sitting we had Community and Government Services before us and we were discussing potential utilization of GN surplus buildings and they had mentioned that some departments have expressed interest in these surplus assets.

Has the Department of Family Services identified any potential use for any of these surplus buildings? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you for that question. That's a very good question. Our lack of office space problem for social workers is always a concern for us, and the Minister of Community and Government Services, we are always working with that department to look for office space in the communities.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, my apologies. Right now we're trying to get a new office and working with the minister with the old health centre in Kinngait that is no longer being used, and it's going to be renovated and our staff are going to be moving there and it's being worked on. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Let's move on to another line of questioning. With regard to some low-hanging fruit with the strategic framework, as I mentioned, one of the items is to create a foster care association to allow foster parents to, I guess, share their experiences and collaborate on matters, as well as creating a platform for foster children to support each other. Again, very positive and excited to hear this.

Can the minister provide an update on those specific matters, when the department expects to begin would work in this area and potential timelines for progress? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for asking that question. (interpretation ends) When we're talking about how we can better support the foster parents as well as the children in care in our communities, that hasn't stopped. When we're thinking of a community we try and have annual Christmas dinners with families, and parents and guardians as well as the children in care. That's something that we always try and ensure that there's something happening to recognize the foster parents, and connect, discuss together about what they might be going through or provide more information to each other but also, I know it's difficult for children in care, so I think there's a good connection in that.

That's not something formal that we've really put together, but that's something that's always been kind of practised, whether it be during Christmas or foster parents appreciation week. We have that annually. Is it a month or a week? A week that we do have events for foster kids or guardians in the communities. So we try and have something going for the communities in that area.

In terms of association, or something I think the deputy minister could respond more detailed, more clearly and more detailed on that, if you'll allow. (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Ellsworth.

**Mr. Ellsworth:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. With respect to the specific action items of the strategic framework, they are sort of in draft form at the present time from the clinical perspective. However, following consultation we'll have a much clearer picture of that those specific actions will look like. There will be measurables. There will be timelines. There will be metrics to make sure that we are able to succeed and achieve those outcomes.

With regard to a timeline on the association piece, I don't want to set us up to not succeed, so I'll under promise and over deliver, if you will, Mr. Chairman. I would say within a year or so following the launch of our final strategic plan we would be in a place to see the foster care association take some form.

Just for the benefit of the committee, I wanted to note that the department is

currently reviewing its foster care approach in a general sense, and more will come as we go down this path of revitalizing and introspection.

Quite frankly, we need more foster parents in Nunavut. There is a stigma attached in some situations, where it's a challenge for foster parents to take children, particularly where there's violence in the home, because they fear reprisal from parents and others. So we need to think outside the box in terms of how we support foster parents, what the rates of remuneration look like, what resources we make available to them.

I know right now we do have webinars and different in-person services that we provide, but there's definitely more the department can do and there's definitely more the department will do. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Next person on my list, Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have couple of follow-up questions. With the Family Wellness Strategic Framework that the minister tabled recently, it talks about, on page 3 there's a quote from the minister. I'm going back to it for a second here. On page 3, Mr. Chairman, of that report it says "My officials are moving forward with a roadmap that lays out a whole-of-government approach. Meaningful collaboration will be key and work will include all levels of the department in government as well as community and Inuit stakeholders."

With recognition of the response that the Premier had to my neighbour here, Ms. Brewster, I'm very concerned that the investigation report from the Alberta incident isn't being shared with the Ministry of Justice, Health, a number of different departments within the government.

If we're truly trying to take an all-of-government approach to some of these responses, to some of these very serious questions, and often overlapping responsibilities, the strategic framework that the minister tabled recently states a lot of issues. It's not just specific to that one instance, but that one instance is an example of where some of the flaws in the system are.

So if intergovernmental departments don't have the full knowledge available to them, how can they help Family Services accomplish their goals? I would just like to first get a response to that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you for the question. I do recognize the issue, your concern in this, but when we are talking about one instance, when you just stated this one instance that might have happened where more than once now, I think I've always stated from the very beginning that I need more staff within the department. The staff needs more support.

When the OAG report came out, it seemed like that was the thing that really

helped us to get the attention we've been wanting, and I think when we're stating that whole-of-government approach and support the department is getting, we really are getting the support. There's nothing to hide to other departments or the other... . The report itself is detailed. A lot of the same issues that the department has, a lot of the corrections that need to be done, a lot of things that had to be done were still not being done.

When we're talking about the OAG report and other things that might have happened, the OAG report really is the one that really helped us to get the attention it needs, because the department needs that support.

When we're talking about the whole-of-government support, NHC has provided modular units to the Department of Family Services, and four of those units are going into the communities to ensure that we are getting more staff housing support in that area.

We work closely with Justice when we have issues that might arise within the department, and there's very close communication happening all the time with Justice as well, but the Alberta incident is not the only thing that, it's a very serious report and we do understand that, but the OAG report really is the one that really helped us to get that kind of attention. Not that we were ignored, but I think, like I mentioned, we've been trying to push for more supports and I think this really is the point where it was an eye-opener for everyone to say, yeah, we really do need to support this department.

Yes, that's what I could say at this point. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and although I do appreciate the minister's response, I respectfully disagree with a part of it. I think the Office of the Auditor General's report and the one before that and the one before that did bring some highlight to the issues; unfortunately it fell off the radar.

There are no real clear examples in that report. A lot of it is bringing forward issues and concerns, and whether it be anecdotal or proof, there's no proof in the pudding, *per se*, on how they came about getting some of these systemic issues identified.

To me, having an investigation report provided to partner stakeholders, partner departments, gives a real life example of how some of those systemic issues are failing, and just brings real focus. Like again, it's one thing to read about it in a report, it's another thing to read a report where children were potentially put in harm's way, where the department didn't even know where they were, and that the facility wasn't licenced.

Those are real life examples of a case that helps bring more credence to the argument of providing that whole-of-government approach, and calling in resources from some of your ministerial partners and their departments.

I think that, again, I don't need to see the report personally. I still believe that there should be more information put out, as I stated earlier in my first line of questioning, my comment, that way. I still think there's value for the public as well as us and other stakeholders to see less redaction in that report, but I truly believe that internally within the Government of Nunavut, at the DMC level at the very least, that that report is shared with partner departments.

I would just like to get a clarification. With the minister's previous response, it sounded like the minister's not willing to share the report. I think I've laid out a fairly clear justification on why it should be shared internally. I would like to get the minister's position. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) Thank you for that question. I guess with the Office of the Auditor General, when you're stating that there wasn't a lot of "You should do this" kind of thing within the report, they have stated recommendations that previous governments never did anything.

We are trying to clean up those recommendations from this recent report. If this Alberta report and the investigation was done through Family Services, we have no issues in sharing that. It's not our department that did the investigation. I can't provide that to you because it's not something that Family Services did. It's not the investigation

we started. It's not within this department. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I do realize it was the Department of Executive and Intergovernmental Affairs and the Premier himself that called for the investigation to be made. I would think as a government that the Premier would want all participants, or all related departments to that report, informed of the results, and Family Services being the first in line to that information.

I know I can't directly ask the deputy minister a question, but in the minister's perspective or the minister's position on the value, I would like to get the minister's position on recognizing the value of a report of this nature being shared at the deputy minister's committee level, which is the most senior level positions that we have in the Government of Nunavut, to give them a copy of the report so that they can see how their department can assist with solving some of these systemic issues where they might have a part to play. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Just to remind members that this is not a Family Services report and it's not for the minister to share. But if the minister wants to respond to that question from Member Hickes, Minister Nakashuk.

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

Chairman, and thank you for your question on this. We can look further into this.

(interpretation ends) We can certainly commit to try and share that within. Not within, I'm not saying share the report within, I'm saying I'm committed to see where we can go with this. In all honesty, like I said, it's not the Department of Family Services that initiated this investigation. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Like I said, I do appreciate that. I was looking for the minister's position on it, but I'll direct that to the Premier at a more appropriate time.

Going back to the Family Wellness Strategic Framework, although it does have a section on page 6 on the report of Family Services' current actions underway and completed, it speaks of a number of initiatives, but it doesn't give any. It's not a real action plan of giving goals, timelines, expected outcomes.

I would just like to get the minister's response on whether there will be an action plan associated with this strategic framework coming down the pipe? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the question

on this. (interpretation ends) There are quite a few moving parts that we're doing within the department and that the strategic framework that we are working towards to set goals. Like I said, there are different works on the go. If you allow the deputy minister to be more detailed in terms of what we want to get done or timelines, he would be better to answer that. (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Ellsworth.

**Mr. Ellsworth:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the minister has committed, there will be a very detailed and specific action plan associated with the strategic plan when it's finalized.

Members might be curious, "Well, why isn't it a plan already?" The answer is, I just want to share a bit of information so that the members know what we're doing and what we hope to achieve.

This strategic framework lays the groundwork from a clinical, social work perspective with respect to what actions must be taken in response to not only the most recent Auditor General's report, but all of them, and including any other independent report that's been done on our department throughout any locatable document.

Now that we have the strategic framework and we filed the necessary policy intentions paper, our next step is engaging with Inuit organizations, because as we committed, a revised family services and child welfare system has to be reflective of Inuit values and has to be led by Inuit.

The next phase of this process is perhaps the most important, Mr. Chairman, in respect of working with Inuit organizations, communities, families, stakeholders, intergovernmental stakeholders.

Following that extensive and most important engagement, we plan on developing the final strategic plan. Again, it will be work in progress because I suspect along the way there may be times when we need to pivot and we need to change, because our approach is not working.

In addition to those specific action plans there will be timelines associated with each one. There will be specific measurables for each of those specific action items and there will be specific people responsible for carrying out those action items.

Inter to my department at Family Services, everybody's work plans and performance management framework will be defined by this strategic plan as it pertains to Family Wellness, and so there are the significant layers of checks and balances that keep us accountable and transparent, and to be able to share when we're struggling and also to share when we're succeeding.

This plan is not something, as the minister accurately pointed out, that is going to resolve issues within the next six months or a year, or even five years, for that matter, Mr. Chairman, but we are going to continue to work diligently to ensure that it's reflective of Inuit values and that it is implemented in a way that results in meaningful outcomes for

Nunavummiut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Ellsworth is singing music to my ears. Mr. Chairman, I have always been of the opinion that unless there's an action plan associated with a strategic framework with measurables and expected outcomes, you're not going to achieve anything. The issue I have, I think, is how often it gets updated and how often it's given back to members and the accuracy level.

The minister spoke earlier of different reports that came through Family Services long before any of us, or long before some of us were here for one report, and long before any of us were here with the other report.

The problem there, I believe, in my opinion, where it fell off the radar was the action plans as they were coming to the Assemblies where there were so many actions stated as completed. That now, with the benefit of hindsight, with the most recent Office of the Auditor General report those actions weren't completed.

I think it's in some respects not fair to lay it at the feet of previous governments, that they didn't complete everything because they were told they were completed in a lot of cases. I think that's something that we need to recognize and move forward with now.

We've got this opportunity as this action plan comes forward with these outcomes

and with the deadlines and as Mr. Ellsworth, even just the strategic-ness of directing staff and tailoring staff's roles and responsibilities to directly link them to this strategic framework and the upcoming action plan.

And just for the record I wasn't expecting an action plan next week. I do know how this works. The framework needs to be laid out, fleshed out, and then again, having other partners involved and seeing where there's overlapping responsibilities. It's a complex endeavour and I flat out did not begrudge that.

I think there needs to be a regular check-in, a mandatory update to the Assembly, and it doesn't stop during the government transition. That needs to continue, to keep coming forward, so that it doesn't fall off the radar again.

I've used this term before and I love it but I hate it at the same time, but it's the first thing that comes to mind: It's not all unicorns and rainbows. We know that. I think the sooner we recognize that and admit to the challenges we have, either as legislators or as a government, the sooner we acknowledge those challenges and those limitations and work to mitigate that, the faster we're actually going to get results, the more impact that we're going to have on moving forward with some of these initiatives.

Before my time runs out, Mr. Chairman, I've got one last question with regard to the framework that was tabled. In the actions section "Current actions underway" in the second bullet, unfortunately I didn't hear all the response when you were talking about

staffing and job applications that are under work.

In the second bullet, on page 6, it states that some of the actions are underway is filling staff vacancies in the highest need communities first, while the goal of hiring 20 CSSWs by January of 2024.”

We are now into March of 2024. I would like to get an update of how much of those 20 positions have been hired? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that question. (interpretation ends) When we’re saying that we have 47 CSSW positions across Nunavut, as of February 2024, there are 31 positions filled indeterminately and 20 casuals.

The Department of Human Resources has advertised 31 CSSW positions for this fiscal year.

Social worker positions are very important to us and we certainly want to ensure that we continue to advertise and fill the positions needed within the communities, but HR has received requests for staffing 45 non-CSSW positions as well in the territory.

I don’t know if I have answered your question, but these are the current positions being filled within the department or in the works of. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Just before I go to the next person on the list, we will take a 10-minute break.

*>>Committee recessed at 14:46 and resumed at 14:58*

**Chairman:** Good afternoon. I would like to call the committee meeting back to order. We are here to see Family Services. Corporate Management. L-4. The next person on my list is Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to start by making it really clear that when I am listening to the minister’s response in Inuktitut I am listening to the minister, and I also at the same time listen to the interpretation to confirm that I am in my mind hearing the correct thing. I absolutely have utmost respect for the interpreters and appreciate the work that they do.

Having said that, Mr. Chairman, I would like to talk about the appendix to the Framework for Action, Appendix 1, which lays out the family wellness strategic plan and proposed actions for consideration and consultation. It isn’t marked as a draft. However, I feel like maybe this is a draft because when we were talking about a strategic plan, what I don’t see is the partners, the intergovernmental and stakeholder partners.

I would just like a little bit of clarity on whether or not this is a first draft, because there aren’t any key performance indicators listed. The timeline and outcome and indicator of success sections are all blank. If I can

hear from the minister about that I'd appreciate it. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that question. (interpretation ends) The strategic framework, it does outline some of the work, targets that we are setting, and working with the different departments.

The next phase to that is setting those up with the departments more in-depth. Those are to come later, from the framework.

If you allow the deputy minister to respond to that more in detail, if you allow. (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Ellsworth.

**Mr. Ellsworth:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As the minister correctly pointed out, the interdepartmental development of the action plans is part of the next phase, in addition to identifying what key actions are going to be required to form the whole-of-government approach in this that will be developed through this work, through the consultation and engagement framework. In addition to that it will also provide for key performance indicators. We call them indicators of success in this regard.

I would also like to point out for the members of the committee that, depending on the nature and level of engagement of regional Inuit

organizations and other stakeholders, our path could be very different than what we initially envisioned, in the sense that if Inuit organizations indicate that they want to have delegated authority under the *Act* to provide some Child and Family Services programming, then the strategic plan itself will change pretty significantly in the sense of defining the pathways of how we achieve those outcomes.

To answer the question, the interdepartmental specific actions will come in the next phase and when the strategic plan is tabled it will have everybody's sort of action items, key performance and indicators, measurables, outcomes, and timelines. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There were commitments by both the minister and deputy minister to table and create the strategic plan by the winter sitting. I'd like to know why it didn't happen and why it was a framework that was submitted. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If it's okay with you I would like to refer this question to my deputy minister. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Ellsworth.

**Mr. Ellsworth:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The reason why it's not a strategic plan yet is because we recognize the gravity of the issues that we need to tackle as a government. They are far stretched. They include, obviously, responding to the root causes that the auditor general indicated in their report around funding, staffing, training, housing, facility, and data management.

Recognizing, though, that we needed to first through the clinical lens define what our response or our plan or the framework was going to look like, it required an extensive review of these issues and an extensive review of how the interconnections would work with different departments.

While we did commit to tabling a strategic plan, we recognized following those commitments that the work ahead was significant and it requires a plan that is going to withstand time, a plan that's going to be sustainable over the course of governments, over the course of different bureaucratic processes and such. Mr. Chairman, that is the reason why you have the strategic framework rather than a plan that's actionable.

Lastly, I would say for the record, Mr. Chairman, that this does not suggest that we haven't taken immediate action to respond to some of those findings. It just recognizes the depth to which this plan has to attract success. If we are not successful, we're going to continue to fail Nunavummiut and we're going to be on the receiving end of poor performance audits by the auditor general.

Mr. Chairman, it's our intention to ensure this plan, again, outlives government, outlives people like me in this position, and remains a tool that is used to keep us accountable and keep the department accountable and keep all stakeholders accountable, through the lens of ensuring, again, that we have positive outcomes for Nunavummiut that are sustainable. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I suppose I would like to talk next about human resources. I know it has been touched on already, and I know that there are many factors that impact the ability to bring those human resources on board, including staff housing and the other pulls on the Department of Human Resources in terms of their own staffing levels and ability to run competitions.

I would ask whether or not there has been any consideration into the idea of outsourcing the human resources in order to staff these many vacancies at Family Services. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Thank you for the question. That's a really good question and we have been doing that with Family Services. We've been... . 19 outsourced. Yes, competitions not through Human Resources because of

the need within the department.  
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr.  
Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you.  
Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr.  
Chairman. Thank you for that, minister. I  
think that's a really important step to  
take. I would just like to hear about what  
went into the decision about which of  
those 19 or all of those 19 positions and  
why those 19 positions were outsourced,  
and whether or not there's an overall  
plan that ranks certain positions that  
need to be filled, and whether or not  
there is a plan to outsource more of that,  
more of those competitions? Thank you,  
Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you.  
Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**  
(interpretation): Thank you, Mr.  
Chairman. Thank you for that question.  
The positions and how we determined  
which ones were chosen, I'd like to have  
my deputy minister respond if you're  
okay with that.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you.  
Mr. Ellsworth.

**Mr. Ellsworth:** Thank you, Mr.  
Chairman. I think the translation was a  
little bit behind, but I'll make best efforts  
to respond to the question.

The priority for us initially was social  
workers, so these 19 positions were all  
social work positions. This contract was  
done not through Family Services but  
through Human Resources because there

is still a need to follow the hiring  
practices that are defined within the  
relevant policy and legislative  
framework.

We are deliberating whether or not we  
will continue with this engagement. I  
know that it has been quite successful in  
terms of moving through the processes  
quicker, if you will. I don't have a  
commitment to make to this committee,  
but we are deliberating whether or not  
we will engage either the same firm that  
was engaged initially or a different firm  
through the lens of hiring those most  
priority positions.

Again, those positions are social worker  
positions and support positions for social  
workers such, as family resource  
workers and other smaller type positions.  
Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you.  
Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr.  
Chairman. I wonder whether or not  
Family Services has been able to go  
higher up on the priority list for staff  
housing in order to staff those positions  
and, if not, what is the plan to address  
that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you.  
Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**  
(interpretation): Thank you, Mr.  
Chairman. Thank you for that question.  
Staff housing for social workers are on  
the top priority list and it will continue to  
be the case. Some of the communities do  
not have any available housing at all,  
and as I indicated earlier, some of the

social workers sometimes leave and there's no housing available at that time. The nurses and social workers are at the top priority list. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's a very complex issue, for sure. I see on page 7 of the strategic framework that a quality assurance manager has been recruited. If the minister can talk to us about what the roles and responsibilities of that person or that position, and whether or not that's a new position. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to refer this to my deputy minister if it's okay with you. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Ellsworth.

**Mr. Ellsworth:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The quality assurance manager is an integral part of the check and balance that we have been engaging for out-of-territory and in-territory children in care.

So largely at the present time they're establishing the framework for a quality assurance program whereby we would have the ability to ensure that the work of the out-of-territory desk or the interprovincial desk, as they call it, as well as the work of the client liaison

officers, are in line with standards and procedures.

This position reports directly to the Territorial Director of Child and Family Services, appointed under the relevant provisions of the *Child and Family Services Act*. That position is now filled by an individual who has a master's in social work and who has several years of experience in clinical practice.

This all goes to the immediate actions that we've taken in terms of recognizing the significant need to ensure that there's oversight and checks and balances within the framework of our out-of-territory divisional output, and that's essentially what the quality assurance... . Again, their role is to ensure that folks are following standards and procedures that are set out and they will also play an integral role in ensuring that training and continuing education as it pertains to social work is being offered and being taken by those that should be taking it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think it's really safe to say that a lot of the reasons that we're kind of in this mess is because even when Social Services was with Health and was responsible for caring for children at risk, a lot, or some of the senior officials, senior management, executive level officials did not have any degrees in social work and so didn't know what they didn't know.

My question to the minister is: how many of the executive leadership

positions and senior management positions require either a bachelor's of social work or masters of social work and are the positions currently filled by people with those designations? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): I'll have my deputy respond. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Ellsworth.

**Mr. Ellsworth:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. As I understand it, and I will commit to following up to ensure I'm giving an accurate answer, all regional directors should have a bachelors or master's degree, including the territorial director, which is separate from the regional directors.

You may know that the regional directors are responsible for overseeing operations in each region, whereas the territorial director is the statutorily appointed director who advises on clinical practice and investigations and such. That person requires a degree.

The assistant deputy minister, I don't believe it's a specific degree in social services. However, I can advise the committee that the Assistant Deputy Minister as a social work degree. The territorial director has a master's degree.

We are a little bit short-staffed in the regional director level right now, but I do know that the one regional director that we do have on staff does not have a

social work degree but has other degrees and significant experience in the social services sector. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If memory serves me correctly, I asked last fall whether or not there was a public oversight body that social workers are accountable to and that they can rely on, and I believe the response was no at the time.

As part of this strategic framework and action plan, will there be a movement towards helping to create such a body? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Yes, that's in the works. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you. I'm really happy to hear that. Going back to some of the recent actions underway, I'm just wondering whether or not the Department of Family Services has put into consideration on recruiting a change manager, a change management specialist. I know that there are significant changes that are already taking place, and through this strategic direction there will be incredibly large amounts of change continuing. A change management specialist can help to

ensure that the current team and future team are able to change with this organizational redevelopment and I think that would be important. Is that under consideration? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

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

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Yes.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** I really appreciate the short answers and now I'm scrambling to find the follow-up question. I suppose the next question is really about the implementation plan that should come with these strategic plans and frameworks, and will that implementation plan be a substantive enough plan that it reaches out to all of the intergovernmental partners and right down into individual work plans for accountability, and will it come with funding in order to do the important work? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your question. In regard to what we spoke about, we will deal and work with the plan to implement the plan and we'll start working with them. We'll start rolling out the plan.

Also, if we can get some funding we'll have to write a letter. We'll have to table

it in the House. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. According to my list, Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask a question in regard to your business plan under page 163, that there's going to be a review in 2023-24 for providing food for the elders. They will be providing elders with country food through the Department of Family Services.

It states that you will work with hunters and trappers organizations and consult with them for 2024-25. What stage is it at now? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your question. As stated in the past, according to the mandate we have, at the Department of Economic Development we have been working on that to consult and make sure that we consult with the communities and to provide country food through the hunters and trappers organizations. This has been continuing and we have been going through with that, and also and in our staff, that they have started consulting with the elders as to how, what they would like to see.

We've been asking in Pond Inlet, Arctic Bay and Iqaluit. They have done consultation with the elders on what kind of country food that they should be provided with and what they are craving the most. The elders' sustenance is

mainly on country food, so that's what we've done.

Also, we want to roll it out to the Kitikmeot and Kivalliq. We'll do consultation and question or ask questions to the elders and collect the information. They were going to table in spring or wintertime, but we have delayed it to spring because we are a little bit late in consulting with the elders. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for working on that because you did not just leave it alone. I am very interested to hear and I urge your department to complete this. Your support through your Department of Family Services in the communities, it helps bring the spirits up in the community because some elders don't have any support system. Elders don't really know where to face or ask.

Your department has come out with very good programs to provide support, like experienced workers to provide support to the elders and to the people and they are a very positive work that you do. I know that not everybody is pleased.

I would like to ask about, and Mr. Chairman, if I'm out of line please let me know or maybe it will be in one of the other departments, but I do want to ask a question in regard to the patients that are under income support when they go down south. If the social workers, if the children were apprehended down south a patient who has gone down and lost their child through apprehensions,

have they informed you of such issues? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just to get back to her earlier question in regard to elders, this is along the lines into the report, Elders Strategy. Part of that doing that work.

Yesterday I was asked a question how the Family Services' work is to working along the strategy, so we're part of that and through Department of Family Services we're working on that.

In regard to the patients, my deputy can respond clearer to the member, through you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Ellsworth.

**Mr. Ellsworth**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If I understand the question correctly, it is that what happens when families are down south and their children are apprehended. If that is in fact the question, we have relationships with other child and family services providers in the south. Oftentimes we are notified in these situations and we provide support to those families.

In addition to that, there has been occasion where a contracted legal counsel on our behalf have assisted in ensuring that those children are brought back into Nunavut and that families are provided support.

It's not a common occurrence, but it does happen on occasion. We've seen it happen where families are travelling for perhaps medical purposes and they find themselves in a situation that requires an intervention. An intervention happens by the local child protective services, if you will, and we are engaged. Then we are engaged through the lens of ensuring that those children are well supported, are taken back into Nunavut, and provided support by family and that their parents are also provided support through that program.

I would imagine, however, Mr. Chairman there are situations where we aren't engaged. I imagine that does happen, but certainly when we are engaged, we take the importantly to ensure that services are being provided to those families. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you for explaining that very clearly by answering my question.

Let me move on to something else. On 2023-24 or your priorities, in the last bullet it states that Family Services in regard to helping elders, have ways to help elders, there's \$3 million that is being requested that will be used to help elders with their fuel costs. In 2024-25 have there been any improvements done to that, and if there have been any increases because of price of diesel fuel rose again. The fuel rose a couple of times, and as a homeowner there is usually no subsidies available for

contractors. The elders have to pay for all of their fuel because we buy it alongside them and those of us who are not quite seniors who are homeowners, it's over \$300 and the elder will be buying fuel at the same time and the elder had to pay the same price.

Does the program need more funding? Have you looked at it along those lines? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for asking that good question. We've been discussing this to see how we can adjust it due to the rising prices, and like the member said, fuel prices have risen and it's being reviewed right now. We're trying to do something about that. We may not bring something out soon, but it's part of our plan, and the money that is available for that program. There is still some room in that budget, even if we need to make some changes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Before we move on to Ms. Killiktee, just keep in mind that you have to work through interpreters and don't speak too fast. Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It's good that the program is there and it's good that you never used up all the money. When the elders give you the receipts of the fuel they bought and that's how they can access the program, it's good that there is a program.

Other things have risen in prices after COVID-19. Although we have been told that inflation will slow down at some point or its just going to keep getting worse and worse, in our communities everything seems to be changing in our communities, too, power bills as well and other bills are all going up. It has affected everybody.

Looking at for the actual elders, our parents, once they reach 60 years old, it's written that and sometimes they're not allowed to get extra food money, like the CPP from the federal government because they become eligible for that they're no longer eligible for income support. Just thinking about it, there are people who have never worked and they never contributed to CPP and they probably receive a less amount.

Because of that and from what I have seen in correspondence from you to the committees, through the chairman, Janet Brewster. I have read that letter, an elder is eligible \$300 subsidy per month but for six months. If a person is asked to apply and once they reach 60 they can ask the federal government for elder support and the \$300 subsidy that is available.

Can you make it so that we can understand it so that we can all understand that there are extra subsidies that have been available? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

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

question. It's legislated. We have to follow the legislation and it refers to guaranteed basic income. The federal government gives funding. The government makes the cheques out to the elders who have reached 60 years old, and so that the subsidies to the elders, they do a calculation.

My deputy minister can explain the details better if I'm not really making sense. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Ellsworth.

**Mr. Ellsworth**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Individuals who are 60 or older and who are receiving the federal Old Age Supplement, the Guaranteed Income Supplement or the spousal allowances are eligible for this particular benefit. The benefit, as the minister correctly pointed out, is provided by the Government of Canada and it's provided automatically when taxes are filed.

Although we assist in operating the management of that program, we don't in fact have ownership over those values. While we recognize, perhaps, that it's time for an increase based on inflationary reasons, we remain committed to discussing these issues with our federal counterparts through the lens of ensuring that elders are receiving appropriate financial resources.

In addition to that, I would like to add that the elders strategy places an emphasis on ensuring that the basic income that elders are eligible for is proportionate to the cost of living, recognizing that this cost of living continues to increase for many people in

Nunavut and across Canada, of course, but recognizing that we do need to ensure that elders are well taken care of, not only financially but through programs and resources, is a commitment that this government has made and that the Department of Family Services is prepared to undertake. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for helping us to understand that. It's true that we have to take care of our elders and set up programs for them because they rely on us. When we were growing up we relied on them, and now they rely on us and they're not able to do much on their own and they can't work anymore. Our voices have to be their voices, although they're able to speak, but they are very humble and they don't come and ask for help. They just wait and if they do get help, they're very grateful and if they just get a little bit of help, they make it real big in their minds. We have seen that.

Let us help them and let us lobby on their behalf to get more help for them because they helped us a lot more. We have to concentrate on making sure these programs are set up for the elders. That's a general comment for now. I don't have any more questions. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) That was just a comment. We're here on Family Services. Corporate Management. Total Operations and Maintenance, to be Voted. \$5,588,000. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** Members to go G-5. Family Services. Branch Summary. Family Wellness. Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll be asking some lines of questioning and then I'll have a statement afterwards.

First, I'll start off with funding for the Child Protection Services Division within the department's Family Wellness Branch is projected increase of over \$10 million 2024-25. In addition to increases in compensation and benefits for new staff, an additional \$3 million is budgeted to purchase services as compared to 2023-24.

Now the question, Mr. Chairman: what new services will be purchased with these funds? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for asking that question. This is for personnel and compensation and benefits. They are always added and we have requested for more social workers and we have recognized that some social workers have to work alone in a community, so these are in our efforts to get more than one social worker per community in Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll move on to suicide prevention and post-vention. The line of questioning is: How does Family Services collaborate with other departments to suicide prevention and post-vention? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for asking that question. I can use an example. In a community Family Services is relied on by many people, as well as Department of Health staff. They work together when Inuit are having a hard time, and they try to help them prevent suicide and also look for other ways to help or if they need to go be sent out to through medical or whatnot. So these workers do that on behalf of the Inuit. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The business plan notes on page 169 that one of the department's priorities is to support government efforts in suicide prevention programs "With an emphasis on those that address root causes such as child sexual abuse."

Have all Nunavummiut educators and frontline staff been trained on how to implement the guidelines of the Child Abuse and Neglect Response Agreement when interacting at-risk youth? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your question on this. The Child Neglect Response Agreement, that was revised in 2021 in collaboration of different departments, Health, Justice and Education. I may have missed another department. But with these departments, meetings have taken place to ensure the protocol is implemented and how communications should be laid out. An agreement is forthcoming soon. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of the department's priorities for 2023-24 is to support government's efforts to reinvigorate health and mental health promotion programs.

Now, the question is, Mr. Chairman: What specific activities is Family Services involved in to foster collaboration between government departments? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your question on this. I didn't mention some earlier, Health, for one that works with Family Services on finding more solutions, and also for community activities for youth, areas that work has taken place here in

Iqaluit, and community meetings are taking place with parents, father and son, or if it's mother or daughter, that are there towards healing.

It's Family Services that runs these programs, but there are different initiatives we have, also through food security initiatives and a number of other initiatives that take place. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The business plan notes that the department will develop programming to address gender-based violence. The question is, Mr. Chairman: What types of activities would these programs offer? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your question. (interpretation ends) That's a very good question. As you're aware, we just signed an agreement with the federal government for \$16 million plus to do a gender-based violence agreement for four years. From that we are working directly with Qullit Status of Women as well.

We have agreements in place to provide \$500,000 something a year towards gender-based violence, to ensure that some programs and services are offered under Qullit as well. Also, other means of supports that we are working on such

as running preventative programs or other resources that we might need to work on.

That is what the department is working on with gender-based violence, but I can certainly get my deputy minister to respond more in detail if you like. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Ellsworth.

**Mr. Ellsworth**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is of course a very important program delivery of the Department of Family Services, and in fact it extends beyond Justice.

As part of the gender-based violence programming, we are funding initiatives that are being undertaken by our partners at Justice through the Community Justice Program, in addition to the measures that Minister Nakashuk just mentioned through Qullit Nunavut Status of Women Council.

The pillars of the justice program delivery model are:

- Support for victims, survivors and their families;
- Pillar 2 is prevention;
- Pillar 3 is a responsive justice system; and
- Pillar 4 is implementing Inuit-led approaches to

resolving gender-based violence.

I trust that answers the inquiry, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Quqqiaq.

**Mr. Quqqiaq**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister, for your response, and deputy minister as well. This will be just a statement.

I'm happy to hear that the federal government will provide some funding on this topic that I just discussed. I care for each and every Nunavummiut, all the children, all the youth. We are in this time and age where Internet technology is great and we continue to interact with one another. There's a lot, I'm pretty sure in every house, every family has Internet connectivity. If not, most do, and this is a known fact. There's lots of social media out there, Facebook being one, TikTok, Snapchat, WhatsApp. There might be other applications that we might not know of.

I recommend the Department of Family Services inform the general public of the safety of online communications, especially when it comes to the youth, which is very vulnerable to interact with bullies online and it could lead to a lot of no good.

I encourage the department to reach awareness to Nunavummiut and inform the general public, mostly parents, to at least look at their children's devices. This is very important that we see what our children are doing today when it comes to devices, especially whether

there's a lot of social media, the ones that I described. There may be more. I just want to prevent youth from committing suicide.

I highly recommend the department raise awareness when it comes to bullying and gender-based violence. That's just a statement. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) That was just a statement. I know the minister was listening and will take the words to heart. With that, we will take a 20-minute break.

*>>Committee recessed at 15:53 and resumed at 16:15*

**Chairman**: Good afternoon. I would like to call our meeting back to order. We are here to go through Family Services' operations and maintenance budget. Branch Summary. Family Wellness. The next person on my list: Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lighthouse**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to start off with some questions with regard to the director's annual report on Family Wellness. As I indicated, this was the first time that the figures relating to statistics of reason for referrals was included. It was quite shocking to see the number of children, 700 children, experiencing physical harm and 500 children experiencing sexual harm. Those figures were quite shocking, but I would like to focus on the South Baffin aspect of it, the South Baffin region where are about 90 percent of those referrals are coming from.

Can you confirm which communities are included in the South Baffin region for this report? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation) Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) South Baffin would include Pangnirtung, Iqaluit, Cape Dorset, Kimmirut... . Not Pangnirtung. Four communities.

**Chairman** (interpretation) Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. Another item that was addressed in the annual report was the need to develop a plan to assist youth prior to aging out, and then again during the aging out process. When I was reviewing the Family Wellness Strategic Framework, I'm not sure; I did not see anything in there about that specific aspect. So I just wanted to ask if that could be included in the actual strategic plan once it's drafted? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation) Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for addressing this issue. Family Services clients, the strategic plan is comprehensive. They are not written here, but they will be included in the strategic plan. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation) Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. Earlier Member Hickes had raised a question on page 6 with regard to filling the staff vacancies, 20 social workers by January 2024. But it also indicates that the department will be filling staff vacancies in the highest need communities.

I just want to ask how those communities with the highest needs were determined. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation) Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your question. The communities identified have lacked social workers for a long time or have only seen casuals in the positions, so it states that as a fact. Some communities that require more help than other communities that don't seem to need that much help, and usually based on population with one social worker seem to be given more support. There are variations in which communities need a social worker the most. It depends on the community and the status. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In the report it also indicates that a business case was submitted, it wasn't clear whether that was to the Government of Nunavut or the federal government. Can the minister indicate who the business case was submitted to? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation ends) Thank you for the question. I'm not sure what business case you are referring to. If you could please clarify that. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Please clarify, Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** My apologies, Mr. Chairman. On page 6 in the strategic framework, and I think Member Hickey had alluded to this business case earlier as well. It indicates that action is underway and it has identified submitted business cases for additional resources. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for that question. It's for the government. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Also on page 11 it indicates that the Department of Family Services will be matching financial resources to community needs.

It's uncertain how the department would determine community needs. Will the

department complete caseload analysis prior to determining these needs? Or would it be on the number of social workers and other support staff? Or would it be number of kids in the communities, number of sexual offenders in the communities, reported cases of abuse in the community or number of convictions in the communities?

There's a lot of different ways that you can base community needs on and I just want to see seek some clarification on how that will be allocated. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When we're talking about that specifically, we have to take everything into consideration that you just stated. So when we're trying to request for more supports that's really the base that we use to ensure more supports are concentrated in the community when those are taken into place. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Looking at the items "Actions" that are currently underway on page 6 and 7, I did not see anything with regard to reviewing the caseload of social workers. Has that work already begun? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that question. We have not put that together yet. (interpretation ends) No, we haven't yet. (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. I would like to return to the Global News article that was published on Monday. The questions that I asked, I didn't quite get answers to three specific questions with regard to mechanism to report. For example, when children are out-of-territory, is there any sort of mechanism for them to call the 1-800 number that another member had alluded to, or is there a mechanism in place where families can report instances of suspected harm or non-compliance with the contracts, with contractors? I'd like to start off with that first question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the question. When we're talking about kids in care within the territory it seems to be kind of easier in a lot of ways because usually the mechanisms practised, for example, in Chesterfield Inlet there's a social worker right in the community itself so when there's concerns, that would be one of the things to report to. We also work very closely with staff there, and because they are our clients, there's a communication between the staff on both sides.

Also the families are quite involved with people in care, so we do have communication with the families frequently.

Like I had stated, we have to think about how we can better improve the communication to the department. So at this current time we use a lot of the community contacts. If there's family that wants report to the department, it could be to the family wellness worker, like a social worker in the community, or the headquarters office in Iqaluit, or a regional office. Each region has its own toll-free number. Those are right on the website as well. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. The next question that I asked was in relation to a very serious concern of a young girl that was placed in care out-of-territory who may have been sexually exploited, and that was very shocking to hear about.

Is the department of Family Services aware of any other instances where children in out-of-territory care have been sexually abused or sexually exploited? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for that question. (interpretation ends) I really do agree that this is a very serious incident, and that's something that we certainly

don't want to happen to any of our kids in care in or outside of the territory.

I can't comment to specifics, but I think in every report that is made, the department and the staff ensure that there are proper investigations being done.

Each report could be different, so it may not be that specifically, it could be about something that didn't go well with the service or anything in nature.

But we always ensure that our staff are on top of working closely with the client through the client liaison officers or directly with the CSSWs. The directors are quite involved in all levels of care so I could respond. (interpretation) That's it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Global News article shed a very serious light on a very serious, concerning matter, and an instance in the article stated that Department of Family Services employees were contacted by another children's aid society warning them of these instances that were occurring.

Going back to that question whether or not the Department of Family Services is aware of any other children out-of-territory have been sexually abused or sexually exploited remains to be answered, recognizing that you likely do not have that information before you or you may not have been informed previously.

I would like to ask the minister to look into it and report back to the committee whether or not the Department of Family Services has ever been informed of other instances where young individuals have been exploited. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the question. When we're talking about that specifically out-of-territory sexual exploitation, it is not something that I am aware of, but we are committed to providing more answers at an appropriate time. (interpretation) That's it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The last question I asked, and again, I apologize for asking these very difficult questions. The last question I asked on Monday, a lot of the discussions have been focused on youth and in my last question had identified that there's over, I believe it was 100, adults in care out of territory.

I would like to ask, is the Department of Family Services aware of any instances, occurrences or allegations or reports of abuse that have been suffered by any of these adults in out-of-territory care? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regard to his question, I'm not aware of any situation nor have I heard of any. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of the questions that I had asked during our televised hearing was my concern about the number of children who have been sent out-of-territory, the duration they are sent out-of-territory, and how often, if any, are repatriated.

Since over the last few months has the Department of Family Services begun looking into that specifically? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that question. It is of concern to us at all times how we can repatriate some of our clients, but then some of them are in difficult situations where they have to be provided medical care. But we do repatriate some clients. It's something that we're not going to stop doing. It's an ongoing subject that we have been working on. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the response, minister. I do look forward to finding out

more about how long children have spent out-of-territory.

Again, I'm very concerned that of the 108 adults out of territory, how many of them had aged out of child and youth care or services? Again my concern is of those 108 adults that are in adult care outside of the territory, there's a possibility that some of them could have been there since 1999.

I don't have any more questions. I just want to reiterate the concern over the duration of Nunavummiut that are lost in these facilities down south. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) That was just a comment, so I'll go on to the next person on my list. Ms. Quassa.

**Ms. Quassa** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. (interpretation) The Department of Family Services administers Nunavut's *Adoption Act* and the *Aboriginal Custom Adoption Recognition Act*. One of the department's priorities for 2023-24 was to review the legislation and to "Formalize Inuit custom adoption customs in legislation."

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

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for your question. In regard to the legislation or *Act* that we are now in review process, understand that Department of Family Services doesn't work alone. Therefore we work with Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated and also Inuit organizations as to find out as to what kind of changes we'll make. So that's still in the works. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Quassa.

**Ms. Quassa** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister, for your response and that in Inuit way of adoption, they would just give away the child, though I recognize we need to be more careful in these times.

However, moving on, (interpretation ends) the department's Social Advocacy Division provides \$590,000 in grants and contributions to such organizations as the Rick Hansen Foundation and the Nunavut Disabilities Society. How often does the department review the amounts it contributes to these entities?  
(interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your question as well. Just to get back in regard to adoption legislation, we're now reviewing the legislation but there are different ways of adopting and the adoption is still going on. If anyone

would like to adopt and the ladies, we're still practising Inuit traditional adoption ways and this will not change, but there are other adoptions too, as well. Some need to be amended and some parents can provide their children as adopted through outside of our legislation. So we're now reviewing the contents of the legislation.

In regard to your question for a Nunavut disability society, in regard to Rick Hansen Foundation and with Nunavut Disabilities Society we provide funding or contribute funding to these entities. To date we are still considering on how we can provide more support and we are working on the strategy. Especially the people with disabilities require more assistance, and that's what we feel, especially in the smaller communities. They encounter many problems at the community level, and that's why we're reviewing how we can make improvements on the agreement. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Quassa.

**Ms. Quassa** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. Perhaps those with disabilities in the communities may not be well represented. Do you also consult in the communities with people who have disabilities? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you for the question as well. As I stated earlier,

we're looking at the strategy so that we can think about this and hear from the communities and consult with them. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Ellsworth.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**: No.

>> *Laughter*

**Chairman**: Sorry, I misheard. Ms. Quassa.

**Ms. Quassa** (Interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. I have a question on a newly created position, the territorial manager. (interpretation ends) In 2023-24 the department created the position of Territorial Manager of Quality Assurance to oversee service delivery and ensure compliance with standards. Has the position been filled? If so, what specific compliance issues have they been focusing on? (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you. This was asked before, but we had responded to that question already. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): I think it's a slightly different question, but Ms. Quassa.

**Ms. Quassa** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I apologize I asked it

again. (interpretation ends) One of the department's priorities for 2024-25 is to review and revise current standards and procedures to support culturally respectful interventions within Family Wellness.

When will the review and revision be finalized? (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. If my deputy minister can respond to that question. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) This time it is Mr. Ellsworth.

**Mr. Ellsworth**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I must say you did catch me off guard. I thank the member for the question.

This is perhaps one of the most important undertakings the department is currently going through with respect to updating its standards and procedures. I mentioned earlier in these proceedings that the primary objective or the primary procedure we wanted to focus on was those with respect to children out-of-territory. That has been reviewed by our office and by the Representative For Children and Youth in Nunavut to ensure that it met their standards as well as ours, and will be implemented in April.

The remainder of the standards, Mr. Chairman, will remain under review through the lens of the work and strategic plan and the framework that

arises from it, the implementation of which, I would hope, is within the next six months to a year, but I can't say for certain. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. According to my list, Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think I just have a couple of clarification questions. One of my colleagues was asking about funding for the Child Protection Services Division and an additional \$3 million is budgeted for purchased services. I believe it was towards community social service workers. I'm wondering: is this for indeterminate term employees or agency type social workers? If I understand correctly. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your question. Yes, if our plan goes ahead, we are looking at 31 more indeterminate social worker positions for Nunavut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk, I believe you didn't finish your statement.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Just to explain further, 31 positions, a majority of them are social workers and some will be in headquarters office in Iqaluit under the Family Wellness Division. The positions will be there to make sure that the social workers in the communities receive support. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. On page 169 on the priorities for 2023-24, the third bullet says "Support government efforts to reinvigorate health and mental health promotion programs." Under the status, it says there is "A commitment to supporting United For Life partners in renewing the Nunavut Suicide Prevention Strategy Action Plan."

I'm curious. How would this be gauged if it's working or not working? It's a very sensitive subject. It's regarding suicide prevention. We all want to make sure we're investing the money wisely. I'm wondering, is there a way to gauge if this is working or not what the strategy will be doing, or is doing? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your question. This is a heavy issue to talk about, but to make sure it's operating well, we continually get the communities to know, and also within the Department of Health we work closely with them to provide support, especially for the community programs. But the deputy minister can go into details with that. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Ellsworth.

**Mr. Ellsworth:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Indeed, it's a very heavy subject for many of us.

Mr. Chairman, we have played contributory role in the development of the Government of Nunavut's revised Suicide Prevention Strategy, which I understand is that to launch in the near future, and certainly my input was around the measurability of it and how we can ensure it succeeds.

Much like the Department of Family Services' strategic response, I've contributed that we need to have measures of success, key performance indicators and such, and so while we don't lead this file, we have certainly committed to ensuring that the work that we are doing at Family Services does have a measure and indicator of success.

We'll continue to contribute to the work of the Department of Health and our colleagues there, and certainly we have a very important role in our Family Wellness portfolio to ensure that we're all doing whatever we can to prevent suicide in communities.

To answer your question, the number there doesn't tell you whether or not we're being successful or we will be successful. How we'll be successful is holding each other accountable in ensuring that whatever strategic plan the government comes out with, it is measureable and success can be ensured through those frameworks. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, minister and thank you to the deputy minister as well. I think my last question on this branch. On the same page, 169, there's a budgeted amount for youth support services and it's the same dollar amount over the next few years, up to 2026-27. It is youth initiatives for support services. This is delivered by providing funding to community-led programs across the territory. What kind of programs is it geared towards? If I can get an explanation for my knowledge, and maybe I can bring that back home to my constituency as well. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you, Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I also thank you for asking that question. The Department of Family Services provides funding to the communities for extra support for young people and the money is provided for various projects; switching to English, (interpretation ends) women's initiative grants, men and boys' initiative grants, and youth initiatives.

(interpretation) Communities receive contribution agreements from the Department of Family Services across Nunavut for things like reading material or services for young people and also for operating youth shelters in Cambridge Bay, for example, and six other communities receive help in Nunavut. There are also (interpretation ends) support service agreements and extended service agreements.

(interpretation) There are different programs that are under agreements. Some of them are through the Department of Family Services and some of them are under Poverty Reduction and Career Development. Those are some of the different contribution programs. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Simailak.

**Mr. Simailak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just want to quickly applaud the department for this. Those kind of programs and services do help us with suicide prevention by keeping youth busy. They are getting away from maybe some bad things at home or they are looking out, hanging out with other youth and camaraderie, and getting together and whatnot. So good luck on that part. That's all. I'm done. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) I have no more names on my list under Family Wellness. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm just looking at the Nunavut Child Abuse and Neglect Response Agreement. One of the tenets of the agreement is to provide treatment and support services for victims, their families, and offenders. I just scrolled through the whole list. It has a breakdown of which department and which entity is responsible for what.

I haven't been able to find in this agreement anywhere that states whose responsibility it is to follow up with the

offender outside of the justice system, because what we know is that people who abuse children need help. So if the minister could talk to me about that I'd appreciate it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you for that question. I wasn't quite finished with a response to Mr. Simailak's question on how else we are helping, trying to help the communities. I want to mention this. We do lobby to the federal government for more support money in Nunavut. We all have different lifestyles and live in different communities and there have been things that have been used in the past that seem to be more important than the new programs. The young people seem to carry more issues, so that's why we try to lobby to the federal government or advocate for Nunavut at different levels. But I wanted to mention the part that's for young people.

(interpretation ends) In regard to Ms. Brewster's question on the Child Abuse and Neglect Response Agreement, like I had mentioned, this agreement has been in place since 2021 and we're just in the phase where it's getting renewed.

Like you mentioned, there's the Departments of CGS, Education, Health, Justice, Arctic Child and Youth Foundation, Pauktuutit Women's Group and Embrace Life Council, RCMP, Public Prosecution Services.

(interpretation) Those were the groups that we met with.

Also, how else can we help people in danger or what should we do if a child gets hurt. In the agreement it states that if they witness something like that, then through the workplace there are guidelines that they have to follow. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I didn't quite follow that response. My question, just to be clear, is where in all of this is a designated responsibility to work with the person who is known to have abused a child or who is accused of abusing a child. I'm not talking about the punitive side, I'm talking about healing. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for asking that heavy question, which is true. Men, when they go through that, they seem to have fewer places where they can get help and there doesn't seem to be as much work to help them as the other people. We don't have many programs set for men, but we do use the ones that are there, through Justice and Health departments or through counselling. Family Services can help along those lines, if they don't have enough help available for them in the community.

We also provide funding for men's groups. If they want to do some men's programming we have contribution funding available and the community

can set that up themselves and we just provide the funding.

(interpretation ends) If there's anything I might be forgetting, I can certainly refer to my deputy, if you'll allow. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Speaker** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Ellsworth.

**Mr. Ellsworth:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think we can all recognize that this is a really important facet of any person's journey that has been subject to the criminal justice system. Recognizing that it's likely the reasons they came into contact with the justice system is that they themselves were victims.

To answer the member's question with respect to services that Family Services provides or who provides that service, because it's not articulated within the framework of the Child Abuse and Neglect Response Agreement, I think there are a few pieces that we should be aware of in the sense of once the individual's term is completed, whether it's incarceration or probation or whatever the case might be, we cannot force those individuals to access services, to rehabilitate, to heal. Which, as you know that means that if somebody wants help they likely have to self-identify or self-present.

When they do, I know that, as the minister mentioned, we do provide services. There are counselling services available. But certainly Family Services in the context of the CANRA agreement, it's specifically designed to provide the pathways for the inter-agencies to work

collaboratively to address and reduce the number of times or the likelihood of children being abused.

I know that doesn't answer the member's question; if I had to answer it directly, I would say that falls within everybody's purview, in terms of making sure that we have programs available so that offenders or those who have committed offences against anyone where personal abuse or sexual abuse or violence is at play, we need to make sure that they have access to resources.

Right now the department's focus is of course on children, but I do recognize that we have a role in helping individuals to access programs and services to ensure that if they want help, they can get help. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. You know the reality is that, for generations now, families have been torn apart by abuse, including incest. We talk about intimate partner violence and we focus on that. We know the children are being abused, physically, emotionally, and sexually, and the hard truth is that people we trust are abusing. People that children should be able to have the utmost trust in are abusing them.

I feel like we should have a high level of expertise in this area and that the statement of not being able to compel somebody to seek treatment for what is deviant behaviour that has become normalized.

I personally am a survivor of incest as well as family abuse, and so I know what it takes for a child to be able to have to compartmentalize their thoughts and feelings, of having to continue to have a relationship with a person who has previously harmed them because they want to love and they want to be loved.

And so when I'm asking about where is the responsibility to help to rehabilitate that offender, I don't accept the idea that once that person is out of incarceration or out of the system, because we know that many of those people don't actually get into that system. I know that there are unfounded cases of abuse.

What we need to do is we need to create an opportunity to allow families and children to go through that process without having to go through any court or punitive processes, because when it's somebody that you love, the last thing that you want to do in your little child's mind is to upend your whole family. And the worry that somebody will believe you is at the core of that. If we create opportunities for families to be able to heal together without having to go through that process I think it's really, that could be transformational.

When we talk about the Child Abuse Protocol standards and procedures I'm still not clear whether or not all of the standards that need to be in place are in place, if I can have some reassurance about that. I'm talking about as well I guess out-of-territory placements. Are there standards and protocols that are 100 percent complete that our teams can use as tools? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I thank you. What you talk about is heavy and it's very hard to express and learning to express it as you said.

(interpretation ends) It takes a lot of courage to do that. I appreciate your self-sharing your experience, and I really do agree that when we're talking about how we can better put supports for people who are victims and abusers, it's really hard to kind of balance that, at times.

But I think I have to go back. When I think of the things that Inuit went through, back in the day, even in my lifetime, I see in my grandmother and my family and all of us get together and discuss what the bottom line problem is, what happened, who did it, what does the person say, what does the victim say. I've seen that in my family. We have that open discussion. I think that was the best way for any family to discuss, and to have open dialogue from all levels of parents and children within the household.

Going back to what we are facing right now, there are things that we say it's really a privacy matter for the family. It's a privacy matter for the victim. It's a privacy matter for the accused. And it really comes down to whether they want to or not.

I think that's where the balance or unbalance is, the previous practice and today's practice in terms of acts and regulations, what should be practised

and what shouldn't. But we have to continually learn to incorporate what we can use in our culture and language, because we do see and recognize there are so many people that want to be helped, but so many times the system kind of fails.

Those are things that I do recognize that you are mentioning and I think it's a work in progress for all departments, not just within Family Services but also other departments.

In terms of the other question that you had asked, if you allow the deputy minister to respond. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Ellsworth.

**Mr. Ellsworth:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Department of Family Services is obviously very committed to ensuring that the operation of the Child Abuse and Neglect Response Agreement is fully utilized, recognizing the important role in terms of its use as a tool to create those pathways to ensure that children are protected.

To answer the member's question, I have made it the business of the assistant deputy minister and my colleagues across the relevant GN departments have made it the business of their assistant deputy ministers to ensure that it is operationalized in the spirit and intent with which it was designed.

With respect to the question of out-of-territory standards, I mentioned earlier, Mr. Chairman, that of course this was our primary standard that we wanted to

update and ensure it achieves compliance.

As soon as it's finalized and implemented, there is a series of training manuals that come with it. This goes to the fact that we need to ensure that our staff are adequately trained and supported in their training and in their work as it applies to compliance with respect to standards.

Just to go a little further, the department is committed to ensuring that those compliance are followed to their letter, committed to the extent that necessary performance management proceedings will be undertaken should the need arise. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We've got this child abuse protocol. I'm just trying to wrap my head around this, so maybe I'll ask it this way. Which standards that are in place, like for investigations, for example, does that reference the child abuse protocol? I understand that this is kind of a new thing, and I want to make sure it's actually a tool that people are compelled to go back to and use. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your question. (interpretation ends) Within Family Services that does investigation and we do have we work directly with

Department of Health of RCMP and their protocols that our staff have to follow to ensure proper investigations are done.

That's something that we have to keep following because there are policies and acts and regulations in place to do proper investigations. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** My apologies, Mr. Chairman. Again I'm having the same problem where I'm listening to the minister and there's some crossover in terms of listening to the interpretation as well in my ear, so I didn't hear the first part of what the minister said.

Just for confirmation, does the investigation standard or part of the standards manual reference that child abuse protocol? Yes or no? I'm seeing yes, okay. I am happy to hear that because what I know is that often a lot of work is put into developing tools, and they are well informed with educated advice about how to approach a situation. So everything that we do to ensure that people who are working on these issues are compelled to go back to that is really important.

Still on the subject, I'll go back to the subject of child sexual abuse and specifically around incest. What kind of tools does Family Services have for their employees to address these issues?

I ask specifically about incest because one of my other lived experiences is child sexual abuse from strangers and

the impact of the incestual sexual abuse was more difficult to process because it happened more and for longer periods of time. When it's a stranger or somebody who is not in your family, the incident happens and then that person is not there anymore and no longer posing a danger, until maybe not to you individually.

When it comes to incestual sexual abuse, what we know is that the impacts on a child's development are massive. What I want is reassurance that the team of social workers and helpers for those children are armed with the tools that those children need for those adults to help them. Is there a separate set of tools, is my question. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I did respond to some of the questions, but as a question on support provided, my deputy minister can further elaborate those. Thank you. If it's in your discretion, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Ellsworth.

**Mr. Ellsworth**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We recognized early on when we began to introspect on what we need to do to respond to the OAG's report, that we need to provide resources to front-line personnel to ensure they have the skills necessary to detect when there may be situations of incest or sexual abuse.

While we are still continuing to develop our core training, which will be a pretty large piece of our onboarding and such.

In the intervening time, we have had training done through StepWise, which is basically a trauma-informed forensic interview strategy that would provide the interviewer with information around whether or not these kinds of situations are occurring in family.

While that has happened, in the intervening time the long-term goal is to ensure that every social worker through the onboarding process and through their ongoing continuing social work professional development, if you will, is that there's regular updated training opportunities for them so that they have the tools necessary to spot situations where children may be the subject of abuse generally, sexually or otherwise. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster**: Thank you for that response. So currently, are all current social workers trained in investigating child abuse? And if they are not, the deputy minister just alluded to the future. What's the timeline for ensuring that every single social worker has that baseline training? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

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

(interpretation ends) All of the social workers are trained to respond or act upon what they need to do next in that kind of investigation.

Also, with our department here, we are trying to increase more training to ensure that there are more supports in place, to ensure that our staff are fully trained in, whether it be interviewing or stuff like that, that are more detailed.

In all honesty, they know and have experienced it in terms of what steps to go, (interpretation) what they need to know based on their training. Social workers are given more training opportunities that they can use as tools and what actions they may take upon training. You could have variations in their training level, and those who coordinate training within Family Services prepare for these and what improvements may be made in their operations. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. The next name on my list, it's Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I was out earlier so perhaps a question was raised, but here, under business plan 168, adoption services, the amount for 2024-25 fiscal year has decreased a lot. I know you identified that it will be doing more activities, but you have a huge decrease or a cut here. For what reason is that the case? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you for that question. I would like to refer this to our financial person, Mr. Dwayton Tonge. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Tonge.

**Mr. Tonge**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for the question. The amounts of adoption services are usually \$55,000 each year but in 2023-24 we made some internal reallocations based on the amount of funds that were spent throughout the year. We made some internal reallocations of \$300,000 to bring it up to \$355,000.

We anticipate that spending for adoption services will remain at that amount, so going forward we'll be putting it back to \$355,000 going forward. So we will make that reallocation going forward from now on. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for that response. The reason why I brought it up was because I was concerned about it. I had a question (interpretation ends) under the Family Wellness (interpretation) where are you going to implement the *Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit* portion? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk**

(interpretation): Thank you, Mr.

Chairman. Thank you for that very good question. The Department of Family Services, for example, if there was a crisis situation for a child and if they have to be apprehended, the family members are informed about this situation because we know that it's better to place that child within the family circle instead of putting them with an unfamiliar family.

We now have family resource workers who get the additional information required on what's happening within the community. There are also the social workers and the community members who have different knowledge about the people, about the customs, about what a child should be placed when apprehended. So that's included. We make sure that the family is informed in any situation.

There is also the Family Wellness Division where we can provide additional support to the elders, for example, should it be for fuel for the homes or how it can be culturally relevant. That's why we try to provide training so that they can have a grasp of both the cultural customs and also today's society.

If I didn't answer your question please feel free to ask further questions. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Killiktee.

**Ms. Killiktee** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I understand your response, the way I understand it, it's including *Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit*. This is not a question, but I would like to

suggest that the communities have an elders circle or elders committee. Possibly the Department of Family Services can get additional support from the elders circle or committee, and new to each other.

As you said earlier, there's a different culture so different ways practising in a community, and at times we clash. Because of that I think we should be utilizing the entities that have been created within the community and also negotiate or talk with those entities so they can be involved.

(interpretation ends) That is just my thought and my suggestion.

(interpretation) There are entities in the communities that are just waiting to be included. I have no further questions. That's a comment. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): That was just a comment. Following my list of names, Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have a few follow-up questions and just three last topics I'd like to touch upon.

I had referenced the last directors Annual Report on Family Wellness, which was for 2021-22 fiscal year. I would like to ask when will the 2022-23 annual report be tabled? Thank you, Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Kusugak.

>> *Laughter*

**Chairman** (interpretation): My apologies. Minister Nakashuk.

>> *Laughter*

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you. We will be tabling them in the spring session in 2024. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone**: Thank you, minister. I'm glad that will be tabled fairly soon, in the coming months. I do note that is over a full year beyond the end of that fiscal year.

With that being said, I would like to ask if the minister can indicate when the 2023-24 annual report will be completed and when could that possibly be tabled? Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regard to the annual report, it will be tabled in the fall. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. It's important that that information is provided in a timely manner.

Member Hicke had made a comment in the previous, during the OAG report, about the annual reports being in

accordance and rainbows, and focusing on positive development, and didn't necessarily highlight critical incidents that had occurred.

I would just like to recommend that the upcoming annual report is due, and also highlight those more serious, critical incidents as well. It's much better to read about it in the annual report as opposed to through the media or through the Auditor General. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We could factor this in but we also have to know that there's a privacy issue when it comes to individuals and in certain cases they are identifiable when we include them in a report, but we will consider it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone**: Thank you, minister, for the consideration. I would like to move on to the next topic with regard to the Child Abuse and Neglect Response Agreement. When it was created in 2021, I shared my concern that it was a bit too high-level, and brief, at 30 pages.

When I look at other jurisdictions, at BC, sorry, every jurisdiction in Canada has a similar child abuse neglect response agreement, and it's in between all of the same parties, police, social workers, educators, health care professionals, the exact same front-line organizations.

When you look at our 30-page document and compare it to BC's 88 pages and New Brunswick's 150-page, Ontario, they have several of them. They are all 150 pages, at least. Theirs are in much greater detail about if a teacher is under the suspicion of suspected abuse then they're supposed to go to this individual, make a referral to this individual, incorporate Umingmak facility, children advocacy centres.

I think it would strongly benefit everyone involved if our own child abuse and neglect response agreement was also at the same level, very detailed information, so that front-line staff have thorough knowledge of what's expected and how to proceed. I just wanted to make that recommendation.

I also wanted to follow up on another comment made about the unacceptable rates of child abuse that is occurring, and that given that we should be world experts in this area, but we're not, and that's because for far too long people have not been talking about it and not talking leads to no solutions. But I am glad that we are having these discussions here, but the same discussions also need to happen elsewhere, hamlet council, at other organizations, board meetings and so on and so forth.

With the significant rates of abuse that have been identified, I have been pleading with the government to create strategic campaigns to raise awareness and education about this, and giving potential victims the knowledge they need to protect themselves, but more importantly, target initiatives for parents, because they need to know how often this is happening in communities.

I would like to ask the minister to ensure that that specific sort of awareness and education aspect is incorporated into the strategic plan as a means to tackle the root causes that children are facing. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your question. Yes, we can take that and consider it how we can improve it within our strategy. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Lightstone.

**Mr. Lightstone**: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, minister. The sooner we get that out the better. I just hope that that can be done in a timely fashion.

I would like to move on to my last topic. The federal government has conducted a number of Canadian incidence study of reported child abuse and neglect over the last over 20 years in a number of jurisdictions. Ontario has had six of these. Quebec has had four. Alberta has had two. Saskatchewan, Alberta, and the Northwest Territories have each had one.

The significance of this research is quite important. Looking up the Northwest Territories report, which was conducted in 2003, it's 183 pages long and it goes into great detail about the issues that their children are facing.

I just want to highlight, I bring this up because it was the federal government

that funded this study in partnership with the provinces and territories, and I strongly believe that Nunavut would benefit from a similar study. I would like to ask the minister to consider requesting similar federal funding so that we can conduct our own child abuse report, child abuse and neglect report. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Last question.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your question. We are working with the federal government ministers on various issues. Yes, we can also bring these up with them again. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. (interpretation ends) Just following the names on my list, Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just I would like to go back to that story about those children in care that Mr. Lightstone referenced. In the story there was a reference to children or youth being discouraged from speaking Inuktitut and that's, I know that's concerning for everybody here.

What is in the contracts for those service providers to ensure, number one, that children and youth are allowed to speak Inuktitut, or whatever language they please, and what's in those service contracts to enhance their abilities to do so, knowing that when you're in an urban setting and you're not surrounded by Inuit it's so hard to maintain our language. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regard to the member's question, when we hear that kind, it's not good to hear, especially when we talk about Nunavut first language when you're not allowed to speak the language. And they lose their identity, and we're not in support of that.

The out-of-territory care for the clients, if they don't need 24-hour medical care, they receive support through Inuit Tunngavik Incorporation, and also with ITK or Tungasuvvingat Inuit, TI, in Ottawa. There's also one in Winnipeg as well. Those entities usually provide support and they provide recreation time for the Inuit. We try to involve them as well through the contract.

As well, Inuit language, in order to maintain the Inuit language we provide Inuktitut books through the client liaison officers. They have provided support to us and also to the individuals that are under care so through that those are part of our strategy and so that they can provide more support for culture and language maintenance.

I know in some care facilities it's harder for them to speak Inuktitut, but we continually work and continually support that because we are not in support of not being able to speak Inuktitut. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'm busy scribbling down more questions. I sincerely hope that support is actually taking place and that it's sufficient for these young people in care.

On the subject of all of the issues that were brought up or brought to light in that Global News series, I think a really important question to ask is what has been done to address those issues? I know, minister, that you did respond earlier saying these are issues that were occurring some years ago. However, things like the issue I just brought up are extremely concerning.

What actions have been taken or will be taken to address those new issues that we're hearing about throughout that really important news story? Or news series, I guess. It's a series of stories. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In regard to the member's question (interpretation ends) I guess I should explain it a bit more in English. Like I had stated, the client liaison officers are our key communicators into the department as well as the clients, and they really do take into consideration about what needs the child may need within their care.

Another thing that has really pushed and supported and ensure there's some Inuit culturally relevant training or connections with other youth that might be also Inuit is through the

Tungasuvvingat Inuit programs that are run in the urban cities. That's something we always emphasize, to ensure they have continuous contact with other Inuit in the cities.

Also, what we've tried to do is, like I mentioned, CLOs have been really our voices of what the children may need in the cities, whether it be reading materials or other things. Those are things that we are providing more of.

Like I mentioned, we really hear more from client liaison officers on what other things they might need, because it's more difficult, especially when they're in the cities, that there's not enough Inuit language or cultural programs. You see less of that in the cities. So those are things that we try and provide support in.

If there is anything I might have forgotten, my deputy minister may be able to add a bit more. (interpretation) Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Mr. Ellsworth.

**Mr. Ellsworth:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In addition to the minister's comment in response to the inquiry, I would also add that through the revised RFP process and the revised contract framework we will work to ensure that these kinds of situations do not occur going forward.

Of course it's not just about writing on a paper or a contract. We need and have a positive obligation to manage those contracts and to ensure that situations such as this do not arise again in the future.

As the minister mentioned, client liaison officers do have this duty of the face-to-face. There are other engagements that happen with social workers through facility reviews and such.

Again, through a strengthened, not only framework of contractual obligations, training for client liaison officers, training for social workers, better contact with individuals, we aim to ensure that these kinds of realities are not relived in other experiences of children who are in our care, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Ms. Brewster.

**Ms. Brewster:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I suppose I didn't lay out every additional concern that has been raised, and I kind of got like an overarching response, but not one that spoke to the specifics of the issues raised, so I'll just go back to that issue of youth being denied the ability to speak Inuktitut. I just want to acknowledge that that's a really triggering truth and reality for many generations of Inuit, and it's not easy to talk about it.

In that specific instance, we know that it's a concern now. Has a referral been made to the language commissioner to investigate, or is there a plan to refer that issue to the languages commissioner to investigate? I do believe that there is an opportunity to become more informed about that issue, because now it's an issue today. For so many people, for so many generations it was an issue of the past, one associated with residential schools and with tuberculosis sanatoriums and the like. And now it's real. It's today. Even if it was in 2017,

that's this generation. That's our generation.

I would like to know whether or not the languages commissioner has been engaged in that issue and whether or not, if the language commissioner has not been engaged, can we get a commitment for that engagement because it's a really important issue to look into and address and come out with ways of ensuring absolutely that it does not happen again. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. Minister Nakashuk.

**Hon. Margaret Nakashuk** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your question. The Global News had published this information in regard to your comment on this issue was seven years ago, where this occurred seven years ago and this report recently brought out. So now starting to review it and we discussed this. We answered Global News when they did interview us. We have not approved or informed the languages commissioner but we will review this incident. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Thank you. According to my list, Mr. Anavilok is next.

**Mr. Anavilok:** *Quana*, Mr. Chairman. I was going to ask about the income assistance. I guess it's a little too early. Yes? Okay. (interpretation) Thank you.

**Chairman** (interpretation): Wait a moment. (interpretation ends) Just hang on. I made a mistake. I misunderstood. That's for the next page.

Under Family Wellness, I have no more names. Family Services. Branch Summary. Family Wellness. Total Operation. Wellness. \$92,812,000. Agreed?

**Some Members:** Agreed.

**Chairman:** I would like members to go on to the next page there under Income Assistance. The first name I have is I already see the hands up. Mr. Hickes.

**Mr. Hickes:** Thank you. I do have questions on this page, Mr. Chairman, but I recognize the clock and I'm going to move a motion to report progress. Thank you.

**Chairman:** We have a motion on the report to report progress and that motion is non-debatable. All those in favour of the motion. All those opposed. They lose. Motion is carried. I will now rise to report progress and officials may leave the witness table.

**Speaker:** Item 20. Report of the Committee of the Whole. Mr. Savikataaq.

### **Item 20: Report of the Committee of the Whole**

**Mr. Savikataaq** (interpretation): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. (interpretation ends) Mr. Speaker, your committee has been considering Bill 37 and would like to report progress. Mr. Speaker, I move that the Report of the Committee of the Whole be agreed to. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Some Hon. Members:** Question.

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

Item 21. Third Reading of Bills. Item 22. *Orders of the Day*. Mr. Clerk.

### **Item 22: Orders of the Day**

**Clerk** (Mr. Quirke): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. *Orders of the Day* for March 8:

1. Prayer
2. Ministers' Statements
3. Members' Statements
4. Returns to Oral Questions
5. Recognition of Visitors in the Gallery
6. Oral Questions
7. Written Questions
8. Returns to Written Questions
9. Replies to Opening Address
10. Petitions
11. Responses to Petitions
12. Reports of Standing and Special Committees on Bills and Other Matters
13. Tabling of Documents
14. Notices of Motions
15. Notices of Motions for First Reading of Bills
16. Motions

17. First Reading of Bills
18. Second Reading of Bills
19. Consideration in Committee of  
the Whole of Bills and Other  
Matters
  - Bill 37
  - Bill 38
  - Bill 39
  - Bill 40
20. Report of the Committee of the  
Whole
21. Third Reading of Bills
22. Orders of the Day

Thank you.

>>*Applause*

**Speaker:** This House stands adjourned  
until Friday, March 8, at 9 a.m.

Sergeant-at-Arms.

>>*House adjourned at 17:54*

# Appendix – March 7, 2024



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Legislative Assembly of Nunavut  
Assemblée législative du Nunavut

## Return to Oral Question

**Asked by: Mr. George Hickes, MLA for Iqaluit-Tasiluk**

**Asked of: Hon. Margaret Nakashuk, Minister of Family Services**

**Number: Question 718 – 6(2)**

**Date: February 26, 2024**

**Subject: Children in Residential Care**

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Mr. Speaker, I rise today to supplement an answer I gave to Iqaluit-Tasiluk MLA Mr. George Hickes regarding Children in Residential Care. Mr. Speaker, the response is quite long, and I would ask that the response be entered into the record as being read.

Twenty-two annual facility reviews were completed between January 2023 and January 2024. The Department of Family Services is contracting a third party to conduct site reviews. The department is also submitting a proposal to the federal government to fund six additional social work positions to work with community liaison officers to improve oversight of files, increase repatriation of clients where appropriate, and ensure annual reviews are occurring.

Client liaison officers are expected to meet with clients following the minimum contact requirements outlined in the Department of Family Services' Standard 603 – Placing Children in Foster Care. The department is currently updating all standards. All meetings and contact are required to be documented and reported. Client liaison officers are also expected to conduct annual reviews.

Category	Visitation Schedule
Families with Voluntary Services Agreements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One face-to-face contact with the child(ren) receiving services and their family at least once per month. Child(ren) needs to be seen by CSSW.</li> <li>• At least every second visit will be in the home.</li> <li>• One private contact with the child(ren) receiving services every 2 months.</li> </ul>
Families believed in need of protection, but children remain in the home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One face-to-face contact with child(ren) at risk and their family at least once per month. Child(ren) needs to be seen by CSSW.</li> <li>• At least every second visit will be in the home.</li> <li>• One private contact with the child(ren) at-risk every 6 weeks.</li> </ul>
Families where children are NOT living in the home (i.e., in foster care, treatment facility, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One face-to-face contact every month.</li> <li>• At least every second visit will be in the home/facility.</li> </ul>
Children NOT living with their parents, but NOT in in permanent custody of the Director (i.e., not in treatment facilities)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One face-to-face contact with child(ren) and foster family per month. Child(ren) needs to be seen by CSSW.</li> <li>• At least every second visit will be in the home.</li> <li>• One private contact with the child(ren) every 6 weeks.</li> </ul>
Children in treatment or foster facilities in other communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One phone contact at least once per month. Where possible, a local courtesy worker or liaison worker should also meet face-to-face with the client. This is particularly paramount for non-verbal clients. Where there is no liaison worker or courtesy worker, a partner agency may be contracted to provide this function.</li> <li>• At least one written case review from supervising agency every 2 months.</li> </ul>

Children in permanent custody

- One face-to-face contact with child(ren) and foster family at least once per month.
- At least every second visit will be in the home.
- One private contact with the child(ren) every 2 months.