

Whitehorse, Yukon**Tuesday, June 5, 2007 -- 1:00 p.m.**

Speaker: I will now call the House to order. We will proceed at this time with prayers.

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

Speaker: We will proceed at this time with the Order Paper.

Tributes.

TRIBUTES**In recognition of World Environment Day**

Hon. Mr. Fentie: Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize World Environment Day, and this year's theme, "Melting ice -- A hot topic?". It has become increasingly clear to Yukoners that melting ice is indeed a serious issue. The melting of polar ice, glaciers and permafrost raises concern, alarm and of course the need to take action. Perhaps more than ever, it also raises how vitally important the far north is to the health and prosperity of the rest of Canada and the world. We as Yukoners and as a government have always understood this, but we are gratified that the United Nations has chosen to focus this year's World Environment Day on this global phenomenon of climate change creating melting ice here in the north.

Nothing can illustrate more starkly the result of our dependence on fossil fuels and the rising temperature of our planet. We must strive for cleaner and more efficient ways of travelling and heating and lighting our homes.

Around the world there is great anxiety, dissent and some frustration over how we can do this. Here in Yukon we also see a genuine concern that is being put into action. Since Yukon shares the spotlight with our fellow northerners this polar year, there is great opportunity to harness that passion to collaborate and create responsible and innovative solutions.

We must mitigate where we can and adapt where we cannot. We have a responsibility to Yukoners and to the rest of the world. In mitigating and adapting, we must also raise awareness of what opportunities lie before us in Yukon as a result of climate change.

Our government will continue to work toward becoming a leader in climate change research and development. We will make monitoring and data collection a priority to bolster this very development. While playing this pivotal role, we will also show the world that we can reduce our greenhouse gas emissions. This year we have made real progress in converting our fleet of government vehicles to more efficient subcompacts.

We look forward to hearing from Yukoners on how they feel we can all mitigate and adapt to climate change. They will have the chance to set out their desires and priorities as part of the climate change action plan that is now being implemented and developed here in Yukon.

Climate change unites us behind a common cause. It is our hope that we can draw on our collective strength and will to make real changes for a better planet for all. Thank you.

Mr. Fairclough: I rise on behalf of the Official Opposition to pay tribute to World Environment Day. World Environment Day, commemorated each year on June 5, is one of the principal vehicles through which the United Nations stimulates worldwide awareness of the environment and enhances political attention and action. The World Environment Day slogan selected for 2007 is, "Melting ice -- A hot topic?"

In support of International Polar Year, this year's theme focuses on the effects that climate change is having on the polar ecosystems and communities and ensuing consequences around the world. This year's International Polar Year projects will focus on two areas: climate change impacts and adaptation, and healthy northern communities.

The federal government announced it will fund 44 projects including 17 that have ties to the Yukon.

The Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation has been awarded one project that would look at the impacts of climate change on the environment in its traditional territory. The research into the Porcupine caribou herd and other animal populations, vegetation, water quality, volcanic soil and permafrost will be used to examine the health changes in members of the Old Crow community.

Also, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations will lead a study of ancient artifacts discovered alongside Long Ago Person Found, who was uncovered in the Tatshenshini-Alsek Park in 1999. These are just two of the projects that will take place in the Yukon.

World Environment Day continues to bring environmental initiatives to the forefront. It is a day to celebrate the wonder of life on our planet and to protect the balance of nature. We must protect our oceans, preserve our waterways and wetlands, and protect our fragile ecosystem and our endangered species and forests.

We would like to acknowledge the dedication and hard work that Yukoners involved in environmental organizations in this territory contribute every day. We're all guardians of Mother Earth, and we must all do our part to sustain a balanced lifestyle on this planet. I encourage all Yukoners to be responsible citizens and to be respectful of our fragile environment.

Mr. Edzerza: I rise on behalf of the third party to pay tribute to World Environment Day. This is a very important day for us in the Yukon. The focus for World Environment Day this year is on the Arctic and Antarctic. It is said that the polar regions are the earth's climate early warning system, feeling the heat first.

We are very pleased to congratulate the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society on winning a silver medal at the Canadian Environment Awards last night. It is in recognition of the unique Three Rivers project, which introduced Canadians to the Wind, Snake, and Bonnet Plume rivers in our northern territory. Participants travelled the area and then produced art and music, which was published in a beautiful book.

Scientific findings have now put an end to the debate on whether human beings are influencing the climate. The question now is what do we do about it? The weak response of our

federal government to climate change means solutions are even further away, and that makes it imperative that the Yukon be proactive. Political leadership is needed now more than ever. We could put the Yukon on the environmental map, in the forefront of taking on the challenges of climate change. Priorities are education and action, one working with the other.

Government should become an example of what can be done by individuals by using hybrid cars, promoting the use of good insulation, and making less use of carbon fuels, electricity, and water in its own operations, along with a strong commitment to the Kyoto Protocol. Establishing local carbon targets is needed. Matching federal eco-trust money to establish a Yukon carbon fund that would manage Yukon carbon offset credits would be a positive move. We could develop compulsory offset mechanisms for the oil and gas industry.

Researching traditional knowledge, growing organic food and studying the economics of green jobs are all actions we could take in the Yukon. We could follow the lead of some jurisdictions that have made incandescent light bulbs and plastic bags illegal. Support for public transit, not only in Whitehorse but also between Yukon communities, would also go a long way to fight carbon emissions. Most importantly, an emphasis on megaprojects and non-renewable resource development should not be our priority in the north. It is time for us to take the lead in making our precious environment as healthy as we can by promoting and supporting a truly sustainable economy.

Speaker: Are there any further tributes?
Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mr. Rouble: Mr. Speaker, I'd ask all members of the Assembly today to join me in welcoming Mr. Wes Sullivan and Mr. Mike Toews, who are teachers of the grade 11 social studies class at Porter Creek Secondary School. Welcome.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any other introductions of visitors?
Are there any returns or documents for tabling?
Reports of committees.
Are there any petitions?
Are there any bills to be introduced?
Are there any notices of motion?

NOTICES OF MOTION

Mr. Fairclough: Mr. Speaker, I give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to develop a territorial safety standard that promotes the safe use of all-terrain vehicles.

Speaker: Are there any further notices of motion?
Is there a statement by a minister?
This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Court recording contract

Mr. Inverarity: Mr. Speaker, in the Government of Yukon's contract regulations and contracting directive, "contracting authority" is defined as "any government body or government employee having authority pursuant to the *Financial Administration Act* to enter into a contract on behalf of the Government of the Yukon."

When the government completes a tender, the minister responsible usually sends out a confirmation to the successful bidder.

My question to the Minister of Justice: is this government accountable for living up to the authorization letters signed by government ministers?

Hon. Mr. Lang: In reply to the member opposite, we certainly are responsible for anything we sign on a government level, and hopefully the information we get is correct. As a minister, it is our job.

Mr. Inverarity: My question was to the Minister of Justice.

I have an authorization letter signed by the Department of Justice. The letter states, "I am pleased to officially notify you that the joint venture between International Reporting Inc. and Mega Reporting Inc. has been awarded a three-year contract to provide digital court recording services to the Yukon courts beginning April 1, 2004." The authorization letter is dated February 13, 2004, and is signed by the Minister of Justice.

Is the Department of Justice obligated to live up to the terms and conditions sent out in this letter?

Hon. Ms. Horne: The current court recording contract with Total Reporting Service Ltd. commenced on July 1. This has been a standing contract for court recording.

Mr. Inverarity: Mr. Speaker, I wish to file the court recording contract dated March 4, 2004. The contract is between the Government of Yukon and International Reporting Inc., who is identified as the sole contractor. The authorization signed by the Minister of Justice awarded the three-year contract to the joint venture between International Reporting Inc. and Mega Reporting Inc., a Yukon company. The actual court recording contract is between the Government of Yukon and International Reporting Inc. only -- a company based outside the Yukon. There is no mention of Mega Reporting in the contract. The Yukon-based company, Mega Reporting, has been shut out of this contract despite the minister's letter.

Can the minister explain to this business owner how this happened?

Hon. Ms. Horne: A request for proposals was tendered on January 24, 2007 for a contract period from April 1, 2007 to March 31, 2010. The tender closing date was February 14, 2007. Total Reporting Service Ltd., the current contractors, submitted the only proposal in response to the tender. Therefore, it was awarded to Total Reporting.

Question re: Court recording contract

Mr. Inverarity: I think the minister should understand that I'm referring to the previous contract that started in 2004, not 2007. This is old business.

The owner of this business is in the gallery today as a result of the government's failure to follow its own contracting regulations. This Yukon business person was locked out of this contract -- a contract that went south. That was in 2004. Since then, this Yukoner has been forced to endure years of financial hardship, legal costs, cleaning up the mess made by this government's incompetence. Three years have gone by and she still has not received an explanation from the government as to why she was squeezed out of this contract.

Can the Minister of Justice tell us what happened here and what she is going to do about it?

Hon. Ms. Horne: Because of the importance of this issue, I would be pleased to provide a more detailed explanation once I look into it.

Mr. Inverarity: This Yukon business owner has endured meeting after meeting with government in an attempt to determine what happened with the court reporting contract. When she wasn't blown off by ministers that ignored her request, she was given the royal runaround and then led to the nearest exit.

The case in point, Mega Reporting Inc., requested a formal hearing about this contract before the Bid Challenge Committee. In the memo from the Department of Justice, dated August 5, 2005, a government official contacted Mega Reporting about the request. In the memo, the government official stated, "I concluded the call when it was clear that we were not able to either identify or resolve this issue." The issue here is that the government did not follow its own contracting regulations.

What is the Minister of Justice going to do about it?

Hon. Ms. Horne: As the Minister of Justice, this is a new issue to me and it is important to us as a government. It is complex, as you can imagine. I will look into it and I will get back to you with more complete answers when I get the information.

Mr. Inverarity: This is an ongoing fiasco that was caused by this government not living up to a letter signed by the Minister of Justice. For three years, this Yukoner has been asking the government for answers to this question to resolve problems created by the government's mishandling of the contract.

On August 17, 2006, the Yukon Party ministers held a community barbeque. This issue was brought to the attention of the government representatives who were present. After a minister commented that this looked like something that would happen in a banana republic, the ministers in attendance promised to look into this business person's problems and see what they could do. Mr. Speaker, this Yukon business owner is still waiting for that to happen and would like to see the Minister of Justice resolve this issue.

Will the Minister of Justice meet with this business owner and resolve this issue?

Hon. Ms. Horne: As I said, this matter is very important to us. I will provide the member opposite with an accurate and detailed list of the events that led up to this.

Question re: Alcohol and drug addictions

Mr. Edzerza: I have been asking questions for some time now with regard to treatment, and it appears that the minister continues the attempt to skirt around answers here.

Treatment appears to not be a priority of this government - for example, \$2 million toward the Yukon substance abuse action plan versus \$3 million toward a railroad study.

Alcohol and drug addictions are progressive diseases that are not cured in 28 days, believe me. The Premier has been quoted in a newspaper saying that a 28-day treatment program for alcohol addictions is useless for inmates in the territory's correctional facility. If a 28-day treatment program is useless where people are incarcerated and monitored every minute, I wonder how it can be the answer for people who are out in the public.

If the minister agrees with his Premier, does he have an alternative to the one-size-fits-all treatment solution that alcohol and drug services offer today?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: First of all, in reference to the Member for McIntyre-Takhini's reference to the Whitehorse Correctional Centre, I would point out that, under the leadership of the Minister of Justice, the correctional reform planning and discussions are focused on taking the step beyond what in the past has been warehousing inmates to actually dealing with their needs, including mental health counselling and getting treatment for addictions. So the member should be aware that that is work in progress and next steps will be taken in this area.

He suggested that this was not enough. That's why we're taking the next steps.

Again, I have to remind the member opposite that \$2 million in comparison to nothing -- which transpired under the NDP and they went backward when they closed the Crossroads treatment centre. We have taken the steps forward. We revived the 28-day treatment program and we are taking the next steps in this area.

Mr. Edzerza: The most successful public and private addiction treatment centres have a continuum of treatment and include assessments, pre-treatment, treatment and after-care. All these parts are necessary, but after-care is the key to a successful and lasting recovery. As a supervisor of treatment at ADS says, people come out of treatment and end up going back to the same hell they are trying to leave. That is when relapses are most likely to occur. As the supervisor says, some clients come back for treatment seven or eight times.

If we had follow-up care that would cut that relapse rate even by half, it would save a lot of private misery and a lot of public money. What is this government specifically doing to address the obvious need for after-care services for people who are coming out of a 28-day treatment program?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I would point out to the member opposite that we have increased the resources for alcohol and drug services. If the member looks at the budget that is before the House right now, there's an amount in the alcohol and drug services area of \$3.62 million and that is for 41.95 full-time employee positions. This is an increase over the last fiscal year of seven percent and is largely due to the increase of new staff-

ing positions to assist in dealing with the resources there, increasing the level of treatment available and assisting with the therapeutic court and the domestic violence treatment option and the community court obligations we have in place through our relationship with the Department of Justice.

This is a new program in this area. This is a new option in this area and just one of the steps this government has taken and will continue to take in dealing with this area.

Mr. Edzerza: Strategies for relapse prevention must be a part of treatment before a client leaves to go back to his or her former life. Perhaps the minister envisions millions of dollars going into counsellors and support services in every Yukon community. After-care doesn't have to be elaborate or expensive. A little creative imagination and contracts in communities, including friends and family of the client, are all it takes. Some treatment programs set up medical support for after-care, particularly for drug addictions, which can be offered by health centre medical staff.

Every Yukon community has resources such as NNADAP workers and other counsellors ready to assist with after-care. Apart from general training for related professions on a periodic basis, how is the department working with communities to develop the long-term after-care systems that addicted clients need?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I do appreciate the question from the member opposite. I know the importance of this area and I appreciate his question. I do have to point out to the member the steps we have already taken in the area, such as the substance abuse action plan and the community court. The member might want to take a look at our platform to see what we have committed to doing and what we will do for the next step forward in this area, including land-based treatment centres, working to support the operations of the community court, and enhancing the alcohol and drug treatment centres offered through the Sarah Steele treatment centre.

I would have to remind the member opposite that, in working with land-based treatment centres, the member had the opportunity -- and, in fact, was the lead on it through agreement between him and me, supported by caucus -- when he was a minister in this government. He was directed to take the lead but he did not act. We are acting. The Minister of Justice, this government, this caucus and I will act and we will deliver in this area.

Question re: *Family Property and Support Act*

Mr. Cardiff: I would like to offer the Minister of Justice an opportunity to address a question she didn't seem prepared for last week. The minister has had time to consult with her officials since then and I'm sure she can give us a full answer today. When will the minister be proclaiming the amendments to the *Family Property and Support Act* that were passed by the Legislature and given assent in December 1998?

Hon. Ms. Horne: This question is very interesting and I'm sure the member opposite could have answered it himself since it was the NDP government that shelved this legislation being changed in 1998. The real question here is: have Yukoners been prejudiced in their rights? They have not.

Mr. Cardiff: Mr. Speaker, it doesn't matter which government brought in the amendments -- and they weren't shelved; they were given assent and they weren't proclaimed. The fact is that, after more than eight years, they still haven't been proclaimed.

As I mentioned last week, same-sex marriage is the law of the land, yet this act still refers to a marital couple as "a man and a woman".

Other Yukon family laws have been changed and they've got it right, so why can't we bring this act into line with the other legislation? All it's going to take is an OIC, which the Cabinet could pass this week if it wanted to really do it.

Can the minister explain why this hasn't been done and where the resistance in government is coming from?

Hon. Ms. Horne: I again reiterate: this was shelved by the NDP in 1998; it was shelved by the Liberal Party in the year 2000. Let me share with this Assembly some of the things that we are doing to help Yukoners in the area of family law.

We have the *Yukon Guide to Family Law*. About \$207,000 is allocated for the Yukon under the federal child-centred family justice fund. Funding has been allotted to pay for a part-time project officer position. We have the development of a family law Web site and funding of the updating of the 1995 Yukon Public Legal Education Association *Splitting Up* publication on separation and divorce in the Yukon. The Yukon Legal Services Society provides legal aid services in respect of criminal, youth criminal justice, family and civil matters.

In the near future, I will be making a further announcement with respect to the family law information centre.

Mr. Cardiff: Well, the Premier has taught the Minister of Justice how to play the blame game really well. There's another aspect of the 1998 amendments that we discussed last week. Right now, common-law partners who split up aren't covered by the *Family Property and Support Act*. What this means, Mr. Speaker, is that a couple could live together for years, contributing equally to the family's well-being and assets, but when the relationship ends, one of them could wind up with nothing to show for it. How fair is that?

No doubt the minister has been told that the department had concerns about defining common-law relationships in terms of 12 months of cohabitation, but that's what the Legislature decided in 1998, so why haven't we gotten on with it?

Will the minister direct her officials to prepare an OIC for Cabinet right away so that these amendments to protect same-sex and common-law spouses can be proclaimed into law without further delay?

Hon. Ms. Horne: Again, this was shelved by the NDP in 1998, by the Liberal Party in 2000 -- those two changes to our legislation. We will be looking into this and making good changes, if required.

Question re: *Contracts, scaled for local bidders*

Mr. McRobb: In 1998, the MLA for Watson Lake produced a document called the *Yukon Forest Strategy Planning Framework*. It was an overview of how development should proceed in the Yukon's forest industry. The report, produced by the man who is now Premier, said, "The success of the forest economy can be measured in a number of ways, in-

cluding the number and quality of jobs and business opportunities produced." This report also laid out some principles that government should live by, such as "support and encourage the creation of opportunities for Yukon people to participate in small-scale, sustainable, forest-based businesses." Does the minister now responsible for Yukon forests support these principles laid out by the now Premier when he was forest commissioner?

Mr. Lang: Certainly, we're working with the forest industry throughout the Yukon. The government of the day has finalized the forest management plan for Champagne-Aishihik traditional territory and the Teslin Tlingit traditional territory. We're working with the Kaska Forest Resources Stewardship Council, and we will hopefully get that management plan together. This government is very proactive in the forestry field.

Mr. McRobb: And he avoided the answer.

Mr. Speaker, as we all know, the forest industry has produced very little work for Yukoners during the Yukon Party government's tenure in office, despite the minister's grand announcement that forestry would thrive by 2005. Let's examine an important part of the forestry business: doing the timber layouts. This process spells out where to cut, where not to cut, mapping layouts, volume estimates, et cetera. The government tenders out this work for contractors to bid on. In the past few years, nearly \$600,000 of work has flowed out to companies from B.C. This unfortunate loss from our economy is the direct result of how this minister sets out terms and conditions in government contracts. His approach has basically eliminated Yukon companies from the get-go. Why does the minister insist on sending work south instead of hiring locally, as promised by his boss and himself a moment ago?

Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, in reply to the member opposite, we have wood out in the Champagne-Aishihik area -- a million metres. We have 300,000 feet going out in the Kaska traditional territory. We're working in the Dawson district with an expanded wood resource. We're working with the Teslin Tlingit to put wood out into the marketplace. We've done our job. We put the plans together. We're moving forward in managing the forest, in partnership with the First Nations. This is a very positive thing.

Mr. McRobb: Another non-answer, Mr. Speaker.

Let's zero in on how this government's insensitive approach has hindered the ability of Yukon contractors to compete for these contracts. The minister's department recently called for forestry contractors to perform operational planning for timber harvest projects.

A Yukon forestry contractor, who is with us today in the gallery, tried to bid on some of this work. However, all Yukon companies were essentially disqualified from their chance to bid on the contract because of the large scale of the tender. Instead of breaking down the tender into smaller pieces so local contractors could qualify, the scale of tender was set at a high level that was unprecedented in the territory.

Allow me to quote from the recent Yukon Party election platform: "Where feasible and economical, scale government contracts to encourage bids from Yukon contractors". Why did

the minister not live up to this election commitment to ensure Yukon contractors had a chance to bid on these contracts?

Mr. Lang: To the member opposite, make up your mind. I thought there was no work in the forest industry. Obviously there is something going on.

Question re: Contracts, scaled for local bidders

Mr. McRobb: There is something going on, all right.

The forest commissioner, who is now the Premier, promised to -- and I quote -- "support and encourage the creation of opportunities for Yukon people to participate in small-scale, sustainable, forest-based businesses."

Under his stewardship, this government is doing just the opposite: it insists on writing tender documents at such high levels that Yukon contractors can't qualify to bid. The contractor has revealed to me that the minister promised him he would go to bat for him if re-elected and reassigned to his post.

Now that the minister was re-elected and reassigned, why didn't he keep his election promise to ensure contracts were scaled to allow Yukoners to bid on them?

Mr. Lang: The member opposite again has his facts wrong. We are working with the industry. We are working in Yukon to put the forest industry back where it belongs in the economic mosaic of our territory. We are doing exactly what the member opposite says we are not doing. We are putting tenders out. We are working with the communities to maximize the benefits to the communities from the forest industry. We are doing that throughout the Yukon.

Mr. McRobb: It's a maze, not a mosaic. This isn't the first time this has happened under this Yukon Party government. Only three years ago, nearly \$600,000 of work went south. Now it's happening again. Here's what the Yukon contractor had to say about that: "Section 3.2 disqualifies all Yukoners. This section should be changed to break the contract into smaller pieces to allow Yukon companies with experience doing these small projects the chance to bid. This would allow the three Yukon-based contractors that have been doing forestry work in the Yukon for the past three years to qualify under this section. This happened three years ago in the Watson Lake area when a similar clause eliminated all Yukon forest companies from bidding. We know there will be more of these contracts in the future, and it's happening now."

When is the minister going to make the necessary changes to ensure that Yukon contractors at least have the chance to bid?

Mr. Lang: The member opposite is off-track again. We're talking about a forest industry. We maximize the benefits for the communities and try to get the contracts out at a size that the community can handle. We are getting wood out into the market, out into the communities and working with the industry to maximize local hire and industry. That's what we're doing.

Mr. McRobb: Why do we have the contractor in the gallery, Mr. Speaker? With much fanfare, this Yukon Party government signed the *Champagne and Aishihik Strategic Forest Management Plan*. One of the plan's objectives was to build local capacity. It also set out how a sustainable forest management and a sound forest economy in the region must be based

to a great extent on the capabilities and participation of local people, businesses, organizations and governments. The minister's high scaling of contracts breaks that commitment. It's time this Yukon Party government started living up to its promises. When it promised that local people would benefit, then local people should benefit. Au contraire.

Why has this minister decided not to live up to the commitments of the *Champagne and Aishihik Strategic Forest Management Plan*?

Hon. Mr. Lang: Mr. Speaker, that's the member's opinion. We deal with facts on this side of the table, not opinions. There are more individuals out in the forest than there ever has been.

We do let contracts out and we do try to size them for the local market. But when you let a contract, some people don't get contracts because usually just one company has the contract.

What I'm saying to you, Mr. Speaker, and to the Member for Kluane, is that we are doing exactly what the Member for Kluane says. We are living up to our contractual agreement with the First Nation. We're moving forestry ahead in the Champagne and Aishihik tradition territory; it's happening now and it's going to happen in the future.

Question re: Alcohol consumption statistics

Mr. Cardiff: I have a question for the minister responsible for the Yukon Liquor Corporation. On May 15, the minister gave some rather astonishing answers to a question about alcohol consumption in the Yukon. According to the minister, alcohol sales in the Yukon may be twice the Canadian average but that doesn't mean we drink more than other Canadians. I guess Yukoners may just like to buy booze and take it home and read the labels, or maybe they sit down on the waterfront and pour it in the river to give the salmon a little boost.

What specific studies has the Yukon government done to determine the correlation between alcohol sales by volume and alcohol consumption by Yukon residents? What specific studies have they done?

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: The member opposite uses statistics for support rather than illumination.

It has been very clear in all studies that you cannot correlate sales to consumption. Again I give the example of the average price of a bottle of wine in the Yukon having gone from about \$12 to \$22 in about a year, almost an 85-percent increase.

To believe the member opposite's use of these statistics, we would then make the assumption that, given our sales, our consumption went up 85 percent. This is not true at all and, for the member opposite, the Yukon addictions survey done in 2005 makes those same points.

Mr. Cardiff: The minister's answer was code for the fact that they're doing nothing. In fact, the minister's answers are ludicrous.

Alcohol sales in the Yukon are double what they are in the rest of Canada -- that's sales by volume. The minister wants to throw the dollar value into the equation. According to that logic, there must be a lot of Yukoners buying Dom Perignon

and pouring it down the sink. Maybe he can afford that but I don't know anyone else who can.

If the minister dropped into the liquor store on Second Avenue any afternoon, I'm sure he'd see bottles of Royal Red flying off the shelf, so his argument about the price doesn't cut it.

Apart from some pretty good advertising about not drinking and driving, how much is the Liquor Corporation spending this year on education programs to reduce overall consumption of booze in the Yukon?

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: An interesting document called *The Control and Sale of Alcoholic Beverages in Canada*, which is what the member opposite likes to try to quote from, makes a point on page 6: "Statistics on sales of alcoholic beverages by volume should not be equated with data on consumption."

If we go back to the 2005 Yukon addictions survey -- perhaps, from the member's comments, he is buying different liquor products than I am -- the results of the addictions survey suggest that for the most part differences between Yukon and the rest of Canada are minor regarding the use of alcohol and other drug use. According to the first analysis of the data -- and I quote -- "A major difference is that Yukon's rate of cannabis use is higher than that of Canada."

Mr. Cardiff: Boy, the minister hasn't changed much as far as answering questions.

If this minister really wanted to make a difference, the tools are readily available. The point-of-sale computers in Yukon liquor outlets include precise information about every single purchase. That's how they manage their inventory. If the minister wanted to, he could find out exactly how many millilitres of any given brand of alcohol the Yukon Liquor Corporation sells in any given outlet, on any given day or in any given hour, for that matter. This has nothing to do with the ludicrous claim that the stats are what they are because of rising prices, or because Yukoners are buying a higher quality of product.

By that logic, if we lowered the prices, Mr. Speaker, or we only served rotgut, we could eliminate drinking altogether probably.

He can't use the tourists as an excuse because we are not the only jurisdiction in Canada that has tourists.

As part of his contribution to the substance abuse action plan, will the minister undertake to provide detailed statistics on a monthly basis that show exactly how much beer, wine and spirits Yukoners buy and consume per capita?

Hon. Mr. Kenyon: I think the member opposite confuses volume with fact here. The reality is, yes, all the jurisdictions have tourists. 300,000 tourists -- the great work of our Minister of Tourism and Culture -- in a population of about 34,000 is a very significant number. You can't take a look at sales data in any jurisdiction, from Whitehorse to Mayo to Dawson, and conclude that that has anything to do with the residents of that area.

But I do thank the member opposite for his wonderful comments on our point-of-sales system, which was just implemented a very short time ago. I am glad to hear that he is impressed with the improvements that we have made in that regard.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

Notice of opposition private members' business

Mr. Cardiff: Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 14.2(3), I'd like to identify the motions standing in the name of the third party to be called on Wednesday, June 6, 2007. They are Motion No. 134, standing in the name of the Member for Whitehorse Centre and Motion No. 26, standing in the name of the Member for McIntyre-Takhini.

Mr. McRobb: Mr. Speaker, pursuant to Standing Order 14.2(3), I would like to identify the item standing in the name of the Official Opposition to be called on Wednesday, June 6, 2007. It is Bill No. 103, standing in the name of the Member for Porter Creek South.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Speaker: We'll proceed with Orders of the Day.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Mr. Speaker, I move that the Speaker do now leave the Chair and that the House resolve into Committee of the Whole.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Government House Leader that the Speaker do now leave the Chair and that the House resolve into Committee of the Whole.

Motion agreed to

Speaker leaves the Chair

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Chair: Order please. Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

The matter before the Committee is Bill No. 6, *First Appropriation Act, 2007-08*; Department of Environment, Vote 52.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Recess

Chair: Order please. Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

Bill No. 6 -- *First Appropriation Act, 2007-08* -- continued

Department of Environment -- *continued*

On Parks -- continued

Chair: The matter before the Committee is Bill No. 6, *First Appropriation Act, 2007-08*, Department of Environment, Vote 52.

Hon. Mr. Fentie: I would like to welcome the Official Opposition back to debate on the Department of Environment and, of course, the third party who presented a very constructive approach yesterday. I place great value in that.

We are on a line item where there seems to be some confusion on the part of the Official Opposition over a level of detail

that is adequate. I would suggest to the Official Opposition that a tremendous amount of detail has been provided. In this area of \$2,866,000, I want to begin with demonstrating that when you compare actuals -- and the only actuals we have is 2005-06 -- to our estimated projection of expenditure for fiscal year-end March 31, 2008, there is an eight-percent increase in this area.

Of course one of the areas that that would include is our parks officer enforcement program. That expenditure is part of \$2,866,000, but it also includes the development and maintenance of territorial parks and campground operations. I want to emphasize the word "development". So there is a portion of the \$2,866,000 that would be dedicated to that particular area. As well, there are interpretive programs, special management area planning and parks where expenditures are required.

This encompasses a litany of possible expenditures throughout the course of a fiscal year, and it begins with wages, whether they are permanent, auxiliary on-call or casual. It also includes day-to-day administrative operations like mailing correspondence and the cost of stamps. It includes the cost of fuel required by these various agencies or branches of the Department of Environment. This would be taken out of the \$2,866,000. It would include matters such as lubricants and other items that, through the course of the fiscal year, are required. This allotment encompasses all these types of expenditures. We have provided a great deal of detail -- especially to the Member for Mayo-Tatchun -- with regard to this line item of \$2,866,000.

But there are many other line items of great importance here as we move forward, and in some of the questioning yesterday, the member was confusing capital line items and capital allotments with operation and maintenance allotments. So I'm trying my best to remain focused on the area of debate we're actually at today.

If you look at the overall development of our operation and maintenance budget here, you'll see increases in many of the lines. That is a demonstration of the emphasis we've placed on the department's work. I could go on in further articulation, trying to explain to the member opposite, but I'm trying to encourage him in a very respectful and constructive manner. The fact is that this whole \$2,866,000 estimate for fiscal year 2007-08 may be that amount, and it may change through variances during the course of the year. But what won't change are the areas that this allotment is earmarked for or dedicated to.

I will again go over that. It's for management development and maintenance of parks and campgrounds operations, including the park officer enforcement program and the interpretive programs, other work in parks and required expenditure for special management area planning -- and we'll have to determine through the course of the fiscal year how many of these plans will be worked on, the status and advancement of the overall plan itself.

Mr. Fairclough: We've been asking the Premier for some details on these line items -- to break down the line items with dollar amounts. It has been done in the past, but this Premier, this minister, refuses to do that. He refuses to do that -- a \$6-million line item and he refuses to break that down. Now I know we're dealing with \$2,866,000, or a little less, in the next

line item down, and still the Premier refuses to break that line item down.

At the beginning, when we were in general debate on this budget, the Premier said, "Let's get into the departments. Let's get into line-by-line and there you will receive details."

Guess what? We didn't receive any details from this minister anyway. I asked the minister a simple question -- to break the line item down by dollar amount. He named a few things, like the park officer program. Why not put a dollar amount beside that for O&M costs? That is done in the department. They know which programs cost what.

I asked the minister to break down the cost for O&M for campgrounds. He says, "Go to capital and I'll tell there." I don't believe the minister would tell me what the O&M cost for campgrounds is once we get to campgrounds in capital. It's just not going to happen.

I asked the minister to give me a breakdown in this line item for the cost of wildlife viewing and the minister refuses. He's the only minister in this government -- or ever, I believe -- who refuses to give information to members on this side of the House -- and his own caucus colleagues.

This is what we're going to have to do if we want to get the information. The minister refuses to give it to us so we have to go through ATIPP to get it. Isn't that something? We'd have to get the information through ATIPP. What a process to go through when we could resolve it right here. We could resolve those issues right here and it wouldn't take long. The Premier basically promised in this House that he would do that. We'll go into departments and into line-by-line and we will get the information there -- and it didn't happen.

Where do we go from here, Mr. Chair, with this Premier? What can we get out of the Premier other than the broad, general understanding of this particular line or the one before that? He has never given us a breakdown of any of the line items so far. We asked the minister to stop and have a look at it and give us a breakdown and the dollar amounts for some of these programs that are under this line item. It didn't happen, and that's the unfortunate part. He is the only minister who won't provide it.

I was surprised that the minister also didn't understand some of these line items. For example -- I am speaking to this line item of \$2,866,000 -- when questions have been asked for other line items to be broken down, there were monies in there that the Premier didn't quite know what they were for. It was just-in-case money of over \$100,000. Just in case a university comes up and wants to set up a program, we will have money in this line item -- something I've never seen in here before.

He calls it "miscellaneous partnerships", Mr. Chair. He went on and on about that. He didn't give the dollar amount, but we could see basically the difference between last year's dollar amount in that line item and what's here. It is over \$200,000, and that's a fairly large amount. Again, this year we've seen an increase, like the minister said, of eight percent in this particular line item -- in parks -- and still we cannot get a breakdown. We understand that capital breakdowns are fairly easy to do. I know the departments, in putting together their budget for operation and maintenance, have to put a dollar

amount beside every program that they have to add up to this \$2,866,000. They have to do that. That has been done forever. The Premier knows it but refuses to give us the numbers. Why is this Premier not giving out this number, and we have to go through the route of either sitting down with the department, calling them in later to give us the numbers, which might happen, or going through the process of ATIPP in order to get it. We've already got the run-around through ATIPP when we tried to get information out. It becomes very difficult to squeeze information out of this minister, the Premier.

We've asked the minister a number of times throughout this debate to provide information, and he refuses to do that. If we went into the next line item, Mr. Chair, what line will we get from the minister? Well, it will be a breakdown about what the line item entails but with no dollar amounts attached to it. That's a deliberate action on his part. He deliberately does not give a dollar amount. We know it and we can see it; his colleagues can see it. It's not right. After all, this is the same Premier and minister who said they were going to improve decorum in this House. They wanted to be open and transparent. Didn't we hear in Question Period over and over again that they're open and transparent and we could see all the numbers if we asked for them? Well, this is not happening here and we're disappointed.

So far, the Premier has provided nothing in regard to the monetary breakdown of these line items, other than what they're for. I know the Premier has right in front of him the amount, for example, of O&M for campgrounds. He has it there. I don't know why the Premier is taking this course of action because, when he was on this side of the House, he asked for exactly that and was provided the information on that.

I've asked a number of questions in general debate and have gotten nowhere with this minister. I've called a few people about the action this minister is taking. They weren't surprised and have expressed concern, as we do.

The minister should take that seriously and perhaps talk to his colleagues and get advice from them so he, too, can make improvements in Committee of the Whole debate on his own budget and his own department. We want that; the Official Opposition wants it; the people on this side of the House want information and it's not forthcoming from this minister.

So, what do we do? How do we get this information to our constituents who have been asking about the cost of campgrounds this year versus last year in O&M, and the cost of the park officer program this year versus last year?

What do we tell them? Well, the minister didn't provide it. He actually refuses to provide it. That's how it has been working here. It's frustrating. We're all elected to do a job here -- represent people and the general public -- and the minister, just because they're in government and making decisions, can't get away from that either. He still has to represent his constituents and his community and he needs to provide that information to us on this side of the House.

On one of the line items, the Premier said he was just guessing at the line, at the amount of a particular action. He was just guessing at it. I heard again in this discussion, in read-

ing the Blues, that he'd have to guess. How can the minister guess at what it would cost for the operation and maintenance of the campground or the park officer program? How can he guess? I know he's going to say it's just an estimate, but how is an argument used? I think it was unfortunate on the minister's side because what we were told as the reasons for the Yukon Party bringing their budget forward late in the year is they wanted to do it right. They wanted the numbers to be reflective of what the public is saying; they wanted accuracy. We've got reports from this Yukon Party government that are over two years old and they're still calling for accuracy. Their own numbers and it's his own department.

Chair's statement

Chair: Order please. I'd like to remind all members that we are discussing line-by-line O&M expenditures under Environment. We're in the parks line -- \$2,866,000. I'd like members to just focus on that line and debate that line only, please.

Mr. Fairclough: We want accuracy on the line items - - parks: \$2,866,000. We want accurate numbers; we want numbers.

Every year the government produces the budget, and they are all estimates until the end of the year when we find out what has actually been spent. The numbers we are debating are not at the end of the year. It is right here and now. It's the best job the government can do -- to say what they are going to spend on O&M. I just find it annoying. I find it hard to believe, and we want to see some improvements on the government side to bring those numbers forward.

The Premier had an opportunity in his opening remarks just a few minutes ago to set the record straight and do what he said he wanted done when he was in opposition. It's only right. Why is the Premier changing now? What is the big change? \$2,866,000 -- we on this side of the House feel we are not going to get any answers from the government side and we'd like to move on with debate.

I request the unanimous consent of the Committee to deem all remaining O&M and capital lines in Vote 52, Department of Environment, cleared or carried, as required.

Unanimous consent re deeming all remaining O&M and capital lines in Vote 52, Department of Environment, cleared or carried

Chair: Mr. Fairclough has requested the unanimous consent of the Committee to deem all remaining O&M and capital lines in Vote 52, Department of Environment, cleared or carried, as required. Is there unanimous consent?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: Disagreed.

Chair: Unanimous consent has been denied.

Hon. Mr. Fentie: I think it is time that the Official Opposition recognizes the area of improvement required.

Furthermore, for the member to stand up here and say that they would ATIPP a department's budget for \$2,866,000 to find out how much of that \$2,866,000 went to wages for employees,

to their possible severance and their benefits, to fuel oil and lubricants, to stamps and correspondence -- there is such a thing in this democratic country as frivolous and vexatious.

So, if the members choose to go through ATIPP that is their choice. What we've been doing here is providing the detail relevant to any rational debate in this House. I have given the breakdown for the member opposite in all the areas that this allotment of \$2,866,000 is dedicated to.

It doesn't even make sense that the requirement from the Member for Mayo-Tatchun is for numbers that, in the realm of estimations, aren't actual until an accounting is done at year-end. I ask the member opposite a question -- this again is in the spirit of cooperation and constructiveness: what purpose does it serve the Member for Mayo-Tatchun to understand how many dollars the Department of Environment may spend on buying stamps to mail out letters? What purpose does that serve in representing the public interest? What purpose does it serve for the member opposite to know some dollar value of severance pay, should there be severance pay given out during the course of the year? What does that do to represent the public interest?

The member has made a comment about commitment to this Assembly and, of course, alluded to conduct.

I have another question for the member opposite. Where is that commitment to Yukoners in the last election campaign to exactly that -- conduct, and treating members of this Assembly, officials and Yukoners with respect? This kind of debate is not something that would keep that commitment.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: Mr. Mitchell, on a point of order.

Mr. Mitchell: I believe we are debating the parks line in line-by-line debate on the Department of Environment. I believe that the honourable member is well off topic.

Chair's ruling

Chair: On the point of order, I would like to remind all members once again that we are on the line with the amount \$2,866,000 for parks. I would like all members to keep the debate directly related to that.

Hon. Mr. Fentie: Mr. Chair, I apologize for getting off topic. It has been something that has been predominant in the Official Opposition debate over the last couple of days. If the member is so concerned about the \$2,866,000, I will undertake for the member that, somewhere during the course of the fiscal year, I will ask the department how the expenditure of that \$2,866,000 is going. I'll ask the department how it's going. Do they have enough stamps? Is there a need for a couple of grease tubes to grease a four-wheeler? Do we need a little more gas or maybe a five-gallon jerry can so that we can go out to a campground or a park and undertake our daily operational duties?

Here's the issue, Mr. Chair: the Official Opposition's misunderstanding of operational matters where we on this side of the House, the government, leave in the hands of very capable officials in each and every department, their branches, agencies and so on. We allow them to make those decisions. That's why they are there. They are the front-line people, delivering pro-

grams and services to Yukoners. We're here to deal with policy matters. By policy, this particular area in the operation and maintenance budget for the Department of Environment is for environmental sustainability. It's broken down in my budget document in sections on all the areas that each and every investment in this particular component of the Department of Environment. It's not broken down in the dollar values; it's in the areas they are expended, because, operationally, we allow officials to conduct those expenditures by policy we allot for this particular component of the department's budget -- \$2,866,000. That's an eight-percent increase. The department has made its case, so on a policy level we've increased their funding or their allotment in this area. We'll wait for the Auditor General to do the year-end. The public accounts will be tabled, and the Member for Mayo-Tatchun, if still around, will have a clear insight into each and every dollar that has been expended during the course of the fiscal year, of which we're only in period 3 variance at this point overall. This fiscal year started April 1, 2007.

I'm very pleased with our budget in the department. I'm very pleased with this investment in parks, including the park officer program. As I said, sometime during the fiscal year I'll ask the department how it's going with the expenditure of this \$2,866,000.

Mr. Fairclough: I'd like the minister to ask that too -- how it's going -- and maybe I'll get better insight into this department. We do not want to know the small expenditures of this department. We want to know the big ones -- the operation and maintenance dollar amount for campgrounds. It doesn't have to be broken down beyond that. That's what we've been asking for and the minister refuses to give that.

It's so unfortunate that that's happening. The minister says he'll leave it up to officials to make those decisions. Maybe that's the best thing they can do right now -- leave it up to the officials.

We're asking questions because this is a monetary item and Management Board approves this monetary item we're debating here. We know we won't get any answers from the government at all on any of the line items so, once again, Mr. Chair, I request the unanimous consent of the Committee to deem all remaining O&M and capital lines in Vote 52, Department of Environment, cleared or carried, as required.

Unanimous consent re deeming all remaining O&M and capital lines in Vote 52, Department of Environment, cleared or carried

Chair: Mr. Fairclough has requested the unanimous consent of the Committee to deem all remaining O&M and capital lines in Vote 52, Department of Environment, cleared or carried, as required. Is there unanimous consent?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Unanimous consent has been granted.

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

Total Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$22,315,000 agreed to

On Capital Expenditures

Total Capital Expenditures in the amount of \$2,627,000 agreed to

Department of Environment agreed to

Hon. Mr. Fentie: If we just spend a minute or two, the minister is now gathering up his officials in preparation for debate on the Department of Health and Social Services, so perhaps we could take a break for a few minutes?

Chair: Do members wish to take a brief break while we wait for officials?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: We will recess for about four minutes.

Recess

Chair: Order please. Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

Department of Health and Social Services -- continued

Chair: The matter before the Committee is Bill No. 6, *First Appropriation Act, 2007-08*, Vote 15, Department of Health and Social Services. We will continue with general debate.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: It is a pleasure to rise today and continue the introductory speech for the Department of Health and Social Services in Committee of the Whole.

The total requested for the Department of Health and Social Services in this budget is \$213,899,000, which represents 24.8 percent of the total Yukon government budget. In operation and maintenance, the total requested is \$200,901,000, which is 30.8 percent of the total operation and maintenance budget and is a 14.4-percent increase from the department's total in last year's 2006-07 main estimates, or a total of \$25,278,000. The capital budget has also increased to a level of \$12,998,000, which represents a 62.9-percent increase from the 2006-07 main estimates, totalling \$5,019,000.

Operation and maintenance revenues for the Department of Health and Social Services have also increased. The total expected revenues are \$27,257,000, which is a 41.5-percent increase from the 2006-07 main estimates. The operation and maintenance expenditures, broken up by allotment, show personnel at \$66,463,000, a 6.8-percent increase from the 2006-07 main estimates; other allotments requested a total of \$68,361,000, an 18.7-percent increase from the 2006-07 main estimates.

Transfer payments to third parties have also increased to \$66,077,000, an 18.3-percent increase from the 2006-07 main estimates.

The Department of Health and Social Services is a major contributor toward the government's goal of increasing the quality of life of all Yukoners. It is ingrained in the mission of the department that this is achieved by helping individuals acquire the skills to live responsible, healthy and independent lives and providing a range of accessible, affordable services that assist individuals, families and communities to reach their full potential.

I'd like to highlight that in 2007-08 the Yukon government will receive funding that was committed to the territory at the 2004 First Ministers Conference, which, as members will recall, was the result of the Premier and the other two northern

premiers walking out on the then Prime Minister Chrétien at the First Ministers Conference when the then Prime Minister Chrétien was attempting to lay out an announcement on strengthening health care for a generation. The three northern premiers received historic recognition for walking out, because the per capita funding was inadequate to address the needs of our northern territories with our large regions and sparse populations. There was a need for base funding. In the wake of that, the commitment was made to provide base funding.

As part of that base funding, the Yukon will be receiving \$4.6 million this year through the territorial health access fund, added to by \$1.78 million through the medical travel fund. These funds will be put toward very practical uses that will help ensure that Yukoners have good access to the health services they require, whether that is in the Yukon or outside the territory.

The territorial health access fund plan is an innovative new approach to improve the quality of life for Yukoners through three main goals: to build self-reliant capacity to provide health care services in the territory; to strengthen community-level access to health care services; and to reduce reliance on the health care system over time.

In the 2007-08 main estimates, a total amount of \$4.6 million is allocated to several projects under this initiative that will continue to be funded by the federal government until the fiscal year 2010-11. The bulk of the \$21.6-million territorial health access fund is the \$12.7-million health human resources strategy, which we have discussed in this House in the past. It is a key objective of this government to focus on strengthening our access to health professionals, growing our own Yukoners in positions and attracting to the territory health professionals, including physicians, nurses and others within the broader scope of health professions to address our current needs and adapt to and plan for the needs we anticipate in the future.

This budget this year has \$2,085,770 dedicated for planning and implementation of the health human resources strategy, and we also have a coordinator in place who oversees the progress of the many support programs.

I previously announced the various bursaries that are available to Yukoners to support their educational efforts toward many professions that are needed now and in the future to provide the best health care possible in the Yukon.

We are also targeting high school students through career fairs and summer placement opportunities to increase their knowledge about the health professions required in the Yukon and the job opportunities available in those professions. For a young person it is not always easy to make a career choice, but if we can help them by providing information and positive experiences about exciting and rewarding careers in the health field, it will be a benefit for Yukon for years to come.

We are also investing in providing opportunities to enhance current skills of the emergency medical services crew with a nationally recognized level of training. Our ambulance and medevac services become a stronger link in the continuum of quality care from your home, anywhere in the Yukon, to the most advanced tertiary hospital and specialty services.

Local physicians and the hospital are a central part of this continuum. Under the health human resources strategy, we have several initiatives that address people's concerns about access to family physicians.

The members will be aware that last year we announced the family physician incentive program for new graduates, under which, over a five-year period, we provide up to \$50,000 to a recently graduated physician who comes to the Yukon for a period of five years. The payments are rolled out in three payments to provide us some security that the individual will fulfill the contract. Other jurisdictions have had problems with providing up-front cash payments of the entire amount in that, if an individual chooses not to honour the contract, the costs of proceeding with legal action when they are in a different area of the country have been unworkable and not worth the effort. So we have, through this program, provided security to the taxpayers and to the public through that structure as well as by providing the money to assist newly graduated physicians to come to the territory, to buy into a practice, to pay off student debts, to deal with the many costs that are associated with starting out post-medical school.

Additionally, the announcement we recently made about the physician resource strategy is the third component of this -- the second component being the medical education bursary that we provided. Last month, through additional work with the Yukon Medical Association, we put in place four additional areas. The first one is to help renovate and expand space in existing medical clinic buildings to accommodate new physicians with criteria clearly stating that renovations must increase space for at least one new physician who qualifies to have hospital privileges. The second initiative under that announcement provides for start-up funds for physicians looking to establish a practice in the Yukon. I would point out that this is for experienced physicians. It is a complementary announcement to the family physician incentive program for new graduates and is aimed at experienced physicians who might also be looking at the Yukon as a new place to practise and, of course, we would certainly welcome them here.

There is also the requirement under that that they be eligible for hospital privileges. In addition, physicians who are preceptoring resident physicians in the Yukon will also receive a stipend for performing that preceptorship -- that, of course, being when qualified physicians oversee or supervise students during their period of residency after graduation from university, so what you need at the residency period at the tail end of their studies.

Some universities provide funding for that; however, for those that do not, this support will open up the ability for physicians here to act as preceptor to resident physicians during that period of residency without receiving a financial loss as a result of the time involved. The aim of that, of course, is to encourage more local physicians to undertake that role, and after that time, increase the Yukon's access to physicians and to health care professionals.

The final part of the recent third stage announcement -- the fourth component of that announcement -- is the partnering with the Yukon Medical Association to develop recruitment

programs and to develop the marketing strategy to better position ourselves when we're advertising on the national stage to attract those people.

The family physician incentive program for new graduates will be continuing in this year's budget under the health human resources strategy. As well, the collaborative diabetes care program that will eventually include the management of other chronic health challenges that are a priority for Yukon residents will continue to be supported in this year's budget.

Another initiative under the territorial health access fund plan is improving the safety of our health care system. There is now a dedicated position to keep up the emergency preparedness of the department, both on the Health and Social Services side and to ensure that the plans are relevant and up to date. The department will be able to respond to a variety of emergencies, whether it is an influenza pandemic or a major earthquake, and this involves working with other departments. The Department of Community Services Emergency Measures Organization has the lead governmentally for coordinating emergency preparedness. Of course, the Department of Health and Social Services has an important role in supporting that and, in certain cases such as a possible influenza pandemic, preparing for the health side where it will perform a major role.

We have enhanced another area by having a quality control and risk management director in place to ensure the consistency of the practices of the various branches that deliver services to the public. High quality care can only be achieved if all facilities and services operate according to up-to-date standards, and quality is also improved if the people served have the opportunity to provide feedback to the department.

The other important area under that is ensuring the protection of the employee in that area by having consistent standards, procedures and the plans in place to reduce risk to the individual, particularly to front-line service providers.

New and innovative ways to deliver quality health care will include access to a nurse line for which \$90,000 is allocated. It is currently under development. It is where people can get advice to treat minor health problems at home or be referred to the most appropriate service or facility. This is only one of the ways that we can further reach out to rural and remote communities. Another area will be enhancements to our telehealth system, for which there is also money in this year's budget, and additional community supports.

Mental health is often seen as an under-recognized and under-reported issue that can severely impact a person's quality of life. A new mental health counsellor in Dawson City will increase services to rural Yukon, and an early psychosis intervention position will help identify and provide counselling support to youth suffering from mental problems.

Other services in the planning stages include case management, housing and employment coordination and support for persons with serious mental health problems. Again, this will make existing and additional services more available and accessible to the many Yukoners who live in the communities.

Nutrition and physical activity are important not only for quality of life but for the maintenance of personal health. The new community dietitians and several health promotion strate-

gies funded under the territorial health access fund will not only help people to be healthy but will support people to become healthier faster if they are affected by health challenges such as diabetes, high blood pressure, and many others.

Tobacco reduction, of course, is included in these projects. As mentioned previously to members of the House, over the past three years we have significantly increased the investment in tobacco reduction programs such as the QuitPack and the "I love you but..." campaign. Members will be familiar with posters they will have seen on the sides of certain buildings in town as well as, I believe, on buses and bus benches. Certainly the signs have appeared on the windows of businesses that are supporting that as well. The allocation over the past three years has been \$930,000, and it continues to be a priority under the territorial health access fund.

In this budget we also provide substantial funding that supports this government's vision of providing a continuum of care for Yukoners. Many health issues can be taken care of at home with the appropriate supports in place.

I believe my time has run out, so I look forward to questions from members opposite.

Mr. Mitchell: I thank the minister for his opening remarks. If the Chair will indulge me, I also want to wish the minister a happy 30th birthday, which I believe he's celebrating. No? I'm misinformed then. I understood it was his birthday, but we'll wait until the appropriate occasion then.

I want to start by thanking department officials for their briefing and all their hard work. The briefing they provided to us was certainly helpful. I also want to thank every official, right up to and including the deputy minister, for the work they do every day of the year on behalf of Yukoners. I also want to thank all the medical professionals, from the doctors to the nurses, community nurses, emergency medical technicians, ambulance attendants, physiotherapists, the mental health specialists, social workers, dietitians, and the list goes on -- dentists and others. Since they're funded through Health and Social Services, there are also our early childhood educators and childcare workers.

We meet many of these people through our work as the Official Opposition as well as through our everyday existence. They're dedicated to working on behalf of Yukoners. They work long hours under great stress and pressure, and they deserve a lot of credit for the work they do.

There are many issues to discuss in this department. It is the biggest department, by dollar, in the budget. It has almost \$201 million in O&M expenditures and an additional capital expenditure of -- the minister recited it before -- some \$13 million plus. It is a large expenditure. When the minister resumed his opening remarks today, I'm glad he clarified that the increases were main estimates to main estimates, because the other day he didn't actually mention that. He said "from the previous year" and, from the previous year, it's a one-percent increase based on the forecast for the previous year, including all supplementary budgets. Regardless, it's a significant amount of money, and we know that it's put to important work. The minister made reference to a number of items in his opening remarks, including finally seeing the beginning of the flow of

the funds. I think he said there is \$4.6 million to the territorial health access fund and, I think, \$1.78 million -- but I'd have to check the notes -- for the travel fund, and this is important. It will raise some interesting questions as to how we're going to move forward to successfully recruit and retain the medical professionals we need in a highly competitive environment.

In some cases, I know there are programs that are in effect already and that were announced over the past year or so, such as the tuition forgiveness and bursary programs. We are very pleased to see those programs. I first suggested that that approach might be worth pursuing. I think it was on December 6, 2005, which was about one week into my first term of office -- I was elected in a by-election -- and at the time, the minister's predecessor indicated that we couldn't be expected to resolve issues that were beyond our borders, that they were national issues and that to see fruition would take -- I think he said four years or six years. I'm glad that the current minister has recognized that, in fact, one can put these plans into place and try to encourage people immediately upon completing their medical studies -- their residency programs -- to move to Yukon. So there doesn't have to be that big waiting period, because we can be looking at third- and fourth-year residents.

I will thank the current minister for doing that. It does lead to some questions regarding dealing with some of our other shortages. We've heard a great deal in recent months about shortages of nurses and nurse specialists such as operating room nurses, emergency room nurses and intensive care unit nurses, among others. I will be interested in hearing what sort of new strategies -- making use of this health access fund, for example -- the minister is going to bring into place or use to try to get more of these specialists coming to Yukon and staying in Yukon.

I always come back to the fact that although it's often cited that this is a national problem -- the need for more specialists and health care professions is a national and international problem -- but it ultimately does come down to a form of competition. I would state that the Yukon -- as those of us who live and work here know -- is one of, if not the, best places to live in the world. Therefore, the key is to make sure that these choices are affordable for these medical practitioners, because we know they will enjoy our lifestyle here; it's only a question of making sure they can afford the commitment to working here when there are other jurisdictions that have similar programs that they want to put in place.

I know there has been talk of various programs on behalf of nurses -- and there is the nurse mentoring program, for example -- but has there been any thought to trying a similar approach that has been tried or is being tried with the doctors, in terms of the bursaries and the tuition reimbursement, and looking at nurses -- both nurses who are graduating elsewhere we could encourage to come to Yukon who may also have significant loans or bills to pay for their training, as well as encouraging more Yukoners to take on that course of study?

There are some other things that I think could be done and I will raise a couple of them now. The mentoring program and the current use of the health human resources strategy concentrate on paying to send nurses out of the territory to enhance

their training. I am wondering if there is a possibility of enhancing nurse training programs available within Yukon. Is it, in fact, feasible -- I know this would have to be done over time -- to work toward having a full registered nursing program here? We know we can't have a full program because we don't have an accredited university, but is there more that can be done within Yukon?

I know the Yukon Hospital Corporation works at arm's length, and I recognize that. Nevertheless, the funding that goes to the corporation comes through this department.

It's the minister's responsibility to ensure adequate and sufficient funding. One thing I have heard from nurses is that we have some specialists -- I'll use operating room nurses as an example -- who have these qualifications but are working in other areas. They might be willing to work part-time, whether it be one or two days a week, quarter-time or half-time, within Yukon. Recognizing that, at the end of the day, it is a decision for the Yukon Hospital Corporation to make, in order to make a decision, they need the funding to be there. Is there any possibility of providing funding to the Hospital Corporation to provide a benefit package for specialist nurses and other registered nurses to work less than full-time? My understanding is there are people who don't want to work part-time without benefits.

I do understand this is done in other provincial jurisdictions, so it is possible to do it. The example I would provide to the minister is that we do that in the Department of Education for teachers -- teachers work half-time and they get benefits. I know the Department of Education is a direct-line department; here we're dealing more at arm's length, but it ultimately comes down to working cooperatively with the hospital board and providing the funding. There does appear to be adequate funding here. We know that, at least when the main estimates were tabled, we had some \$85 million or \$86 million of surplus.

I know there have been programs announced since then and that will change those figures -- it's always a moveable figure.

I'll ask one more question related to this area, and then I'll allow the minister to respond so we don't put too many out at a time. How many full-time equivalents do we currently have working at Whitehorse General Hospital? Can the minister tell us how many part-time or on-call nurses are available for work?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: First of all, I'd like to thank the Leader of the Official Opposition for his birthday greetings. He is actually off by months. I'm not sure where he got the information, but I appreciate the spirit in which it was intended.

Moving on to the member's questions, first of all, the territorial health access fund -- just to correct the member on a point -- actually began flowing in the last fiscal year.

Also, the member asked about certain operational issues at the hospital, including the total number of RNs working there. I could request that and undertake to get back to the member opposite once I receive the information from the Hospital Corporation. I don't have that number at my fingertips. I would point out to the member opposite that we work with them and we support them on the issues related to nursing at the hospital.

With regard to some suggestion that there have been issues with how things are being dealt with right there and some issues from some doctors and some nurses and that there may be some challenges over there, I have sat down with the president of the Yukon Medical Association and the president of the Yukon Registered Nurses Association and also with the chair of the hospital board. Following discussions with the first two, I requested that the chair of the board -- in discussion there -- put together a working group to take a look at how things are being dealt with in the area of nursing at the hospital and, if there are challenges, to report back to me on how I can assist them.

Of course, whatever the issues are -- if some are operational in nature or if there are any financial linkages -- this government has stepped forward in the past and we will continue to work with Yukon Hospital Corporation to ensure the adequate funding of the hospital.

As I have pointed out in the past, the funding to the hospital has increased under our watch. When the Liberals were in office, the operation and maintenance funding was at the level of \$18 million. We have increased that and last year's operation and maintenance budget was \$32 million. Some of that was one-time funding related to the pension plan and the first investment under that -- again, the investment in the pension plan was an area that was not strictly the Yukon government's responsibility, but had we not stepped forward to address that deficit, we would have had the pension plan de-certified and the employees would, of course, have lost their pensions. Not only would that be patently unfair to them, but it would be a tremendous disincentive to recruitment and retention at the hospital.

The total contribution of the Yukon government will be \$17 million over a 10-year period to address that deficit and, to ensure that things do not happen in the future, we required, as a condition of that contribution, that the Auditor General become the auditor for the Hospital Corporation to provide us with the highest level of financial accountability in the country.

I was pleased that the Auditor General did agree to my request in the letter I wrote asking that they take on that role. So, Mr. Chair, I hope I have addressed some of that for the member opposite.

As far as issues related to nurse studies, there is work ongoing right now between the Department of Health and Social Services and the Department of Education to look at opportunities for enhancing the nurse education programming available. We also have to look at feasibility. Some of the programming suggested, such as a full RN program, would probably be very difficult to operate on a cost-feasible basis in the territory. Something in the area of licensed practical nursing, perhaps with a linkage to another institution to provide a continuum of studies, would more likely be feasible. That work is being looked into right now.

Under the health human resources strategy, the member also referred to the family physician incentive program. I understand the member's desire to take credit for that, but I must remind him that this was a request from Yukoners. I heard it from constituents dating back as early as the 2002 election,

when I was originally elected, including from one of the Yukon's long-serving doctors, who happens to be a constituent of mine. It was also supported by the Yukon Medical Association, in large part due to their request, in a motion they passed at their AGM, which stated, "that the YMA encourage the Government of Yukon to consider repaying portions of a new physician's accumulated debt in return for service to try to improve our ability to attract new graduate physicians to the territory." It was one of the first issues raised by the president of the Yukon Medical Association -- the now past president of the Yukon Medical Association -- at my very first meeting with them as Minister of Health and Social Services.

The member raised the issue of a surplus, and I would point out that running simply on the issue of cash in the bank is how the former Liberal government got into the problem of having to pay overdraft charges to meet payroll and ongoing cash needs. It's important in financial management to take a look at managing the cash on a yearly basis as well as at the out-year's costs of any financial decision, looking at whether a decision is a one-time decision or whether it has implications for the fiscal framework going forward over the next five years. Those are the issues that the government must consider.

We can't simply deal with the issue of whether we still have cash in the bank or cheques left in the chequebook.

Mr. Mitchell: I thank the minister for the questions that he did answer. In the interest of accuracy, since the minister has corrected a couple of things within my question, when I first raised the issue of forgiveness programs -- that being December 6, 2005 -- it was prior to any meeting that this minister would have had with the head of the Yukon Medical Association, either past or present, because he wasn't yet the minister. I was making reference to statements put on the record at that time by his predecessor and actually complimenting this minister for being forward-thinking and looking at it.

The second thing would be that I certainly never intimated nor stated that I invented the idea. It was in use in Manitoba, it was in use by the Canadian Armed Forces, it was in use by a number of jurisdictions, as the minister well knows. I was aware of it from having had discussions with the past president of the Yukon Medical Association who, when I asked the question of whether or not he thought this would be a workable strategy here, encouraged me to bring it forward.

Yes, the past president is a constituent of mine, and certainly I had discussions with him, as I have had with the current president of the Yukon Medical Association.

Nobody needs to take credit; it's rather a question of whether or not we can take that model and use it in other areas. That was what I was asking; I am not sure I heard an answer to that.

With regard to the figures the minister is citing, I think the minister refers to the \$18-million under a former Liberal government and, actually, the \$18.1 million budget for the hospital was in 2000-01, which was under the NDP government. I believe the number was \$20.6 million in 2002-03, which was the year the Liberals tabled a budget and carried forward until the government changed in the fall.

I am not sure that is the correct number he is using. I think he should be looking at the last year of the former government, if he is going to make the comparison. Either way, we also know that to say this government is putting more money into this or any program or department than a former government is obviously not all that meaningful, considering there is more revenue that flows now than there was then -- whether that is due to the Premier and his colleagues walking out on a former Prime Minister or due to the hard work of officials over many years in lobbying for additional funding.

I would say that funding has increased over many years; therefore, I would expect that this budget would increase in dollar value to maintain its percentage of the total budget, if nothing else. Having replied to the minister's comments, we still have, even with these programs that have been put in place, a shortage of doctors -- both family practitioners and specialists in some areas -- and we do appreciate that these programs are in place at long last. We're also concerned about a somewhat aging demographic among many of the doctors in our medical communities. I'm wondering if the minister has any comments he can make about how he sees us filling that need because, although there have been programs put into place, we are continuing to lose people to retirement, and in some cases we're losing people because they are taking time away from Yukon. I know of one family physician who is leaving for a year, for example, so there still is a challenge there.

I would ask about some other areas as well. First of all, I would ask where we're at with the long-delayed *Children's Act* review. I think somewhere around a year ago -- in fact it was on May 17, 2006 -- there were references to that and I know that the minister at one point indicated, in response to a question from the now Leader of the Third Party, that no one should presume that this would not be done in legislation, not come forward. In fact, the minister said, "I certainly did not say that the *Children's Act* would not be ready before the next election. The intent is to have it ready for the fall of this year. It had originally been hoped that we would have the *Children's Act* ready by now."

The minister said that on May 16, 2006. He did go on to refer to some bumps in the road, but they were working in partnership with the Council of Yukon First Nations and First Nations in jointly developing the policy changes related to the *Children's Act*, in going forward to the policy forum and jointly performing the legal drafting.

In fact, it wasn't ready before the election. It wasn't tabled after the election during the fall sitting last year. I wonder if the minister can give us an indication as to whether or not he expects it will be ready to be tabled in the fall session this year.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I thank the member for his questions. I would just point out a correction to a piece of information. For the budgetary number he referred to, he did have the correct fiscal year in noting the allocation to the hospital of \$18.1 million, but he referred to it as being an NDP budget, but I would have to remind him the Liberals did bring it forward and pass it. Yes, it was an NDP budget, but that was yet another example of the Liberals regurgitating information that another party came up with -- in that case, the NDP. They did

not recognize the importance of making changes to address what they saw as priorities or perhaps, and far more likely, they simply had no concept of what those priorities should be.

They did give a minor increase in the next fiscal year to the hospital; however, the significant increase to the current level of \$25-million base funding plus capital allocations and, in the 2006-07 year, up to the level of \$32 million with one-time funding to address things such as the pension plan -- this government has increased the hospital budget far more significantly than any previous government.

The member suggested the budget has increased, so that should come along with that. I would remind the member the budget has increased since that time but the Yukon population has not increased that significantly, although it has gone up from where it was under the Liberals' time in office. It has not increased as dramatically as we have increased the funding to that area.

Again, the member made reference to the health human resources strategy and the family physician incentive program for new graduates. I know the member is trying very hard to take credit for this but, again, we have to rely on the facts here and note the request came forward from the Yukon Medical Association, from Yukoners, based on the success of similar programs in other parts of the country. We did our own made-in-Yukon program and it was one of the first actions I took upon coming in as minister responsible for Health and Social Services after I was sworn in, in December 2005.

Also, I would remind the member opposite in terms of the overall budget that we have increased the budget for the Department of Health and Social Services by over \$25 million since last year's operation and maintenance funding, and that is a very significant increase. I would urge the member to take a look through past budgets. I defy him to come up with a time when a government has increased the budget that significantly. This government is committed to investing in the department, to enhancing our services where possible, to maintaining them and to focusing on areas such as health human resources, where we have a need to invest to ensure a strong system into the future.

The member also asked about the *Children's Act* review, and I would point out to the member opposite that there is a need for the Official Opposition to get its lines straight. Some members stand up and criticize the government for consulting too much, others suggest we consult too little, and they really need to figure out what their position is, because there is an obligation for the Official Opposition, not just the government, to have clear and consistent policies to articulate to the Yukon public what their position is and ensure that they actually reflect a clear, coherent position, not simply criticize the government, no matter what it does and, as pointed out in this case, criticizing government for consulting too much with First Nations and then criticizing the government for not consulting enough. They need to get their lines straight on this.

The policy development process is continuing with the Council of Yukon First Nations, and we are very pleased with the *Children's Act* review. Certainly, it took longer than was originally envisioned, but the work has been very successful. I

would point out to the member opposite that many of the issues that have come up in the *Children's Act* review and many of the concerns of First Nations relate to decades of challenges with previous governments and the federal government and the way they were dealt with by government. It relates back to the issue of residential schools and the concerns they have with that. Those things all come out and, as part of the process, some people who provide their input themselves have seen the effect -- and there is a need for healing in that process. There is a need for discussion to take place. Rather than simply ramrodding an act through without agreement and without the proper collaboration and discussion, what we've done is taken the time -- a little bit longer than originally foreseen, but the fact that we are very successfully going along this process is the benefit.

Unlike the Liberals' policy with things such as their aborted attempt at the *Education Act* review, we are committed to doing it right even if it takes a little longer than we had hoped. We would rather ensure that we have an end product that reflects the input of Yukoners, the needs of Yukoners and the appropriate level of discussion rather than simply hitting a timeline but having a bad product. So we are doing the work to get it right, and we look forward to concluding that. I am optimistic that it will be in the not-too-distant future that we will have a final product here.

The *Children's Act* may be completed for the fall session or it might be spring of 2008. Somewhere in there would be the estimate at this point. Again, when we are working in partnership, we have to respect the needs of the partners, the discussion of the partners and the schedules of those partners and ensure that the work takes place and we proceed. Once that is complete, I am confident we will have a very fine final product.

Mr. Mitchell: We are trying to ask questions over here to get answers. Perhaps the minister should avail himself of one of the excellent audiologists working within his department, because I don't think he is hearing the questions quite properly.

In my last question, I specifically said there was no desire to take credit on this side, but rather to indicate that the ideas have come forward from the past and present president of the Yukon Medical Association. I believe I made reference to the Province of Manitoba. I believe I made reference to the Canadian Armed Forces and then I thanked the minister for being responsive to those ideas. The minister then stands up and says he wants to correct the record and make sure that the member doesn't try to take credit. It is really unfortunate that the minister wants to reduce this to partisan politics. He made references to the NDP and Liberals -- and he used the term relating to a process that I don't think we are supposed to use so I won't repeat it -- but in any case, the issue is unfortunate when that is what the minister is interested in doing instead of just answering the questions.

As far as talking about rushed consultations, no one is suggesting the minister rush the consultation. Indeed, the consultations have gone on for some long periods of time. At different times we have heard dissatisfaction from First Nation representatives about the progress of the consultation.

It was the minister himself who indicated in this House that it was his intent -- he said the intent is to have it ready for the fall of this year. If the minister now would like to say that, in making that commitment, he was indicating he wanted to short-circuit the consultation and if it was the minister's indication that what he was doing was rushing to judgement and not having full consultation, then perhaps the minister should have stood up and said he would like to have a shortened consultation and have legislation ready for this fall. But he didn't say that. He said it was his intent to have it for the fall session and now he says that other members are not being consistent with discussions and consultation. He is clearly trying to make references to other issues. Then he says that it's his expectation that somewhere between the fall session of this year and the spring session in 2008 -- so I guess we've narrowed it down to two possible commitments by the minister and we will see which one it is, if either.

The minister didn't respond to the other question I asked regarding whether he was taking any specific notice of the cohort of doctors of a particular generation who are nearing retirement age in terms of the recruitment being done. I would look forward to hearing the minister's response to what sort of uptake the department is seeing to the current programs in place. Perhaps he can give us an indication of how many graduating doctors, doctors completing their residency programs, have indicated they will be coming here this fall to make use of the five-year commitment under the program previously described.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: The member made reference to the aging doctors. I apologize for not catching that in my earlier reply. I would have to make the member aware that sometimes in replying to questions and making notes in reference to his questions, I go through a list and don't always catch them in that response. By shortening the number of questions he asks, the member can assist me in that. I can attempt to better reply to him in all areas.

The member is correct. We do have a demographic of aging doctors, nurses and other health professionals. This the result of a national problem -- and in fact, broader than national problem -- of baby-boomers retiring and the fact that they did not have as many children as we wish they had had. We have that challenge. There's nothing I can do to change that demographic curve. Of course we have to adapt to it; we have to take action to attempt to accommodate that and to change where we need to, how we're doing things, to address that challenge in the retirement of health professionals. I would point out it's affecting other areas of the labour force.

As well, we have the challenge that some of the current shortages we have were, to some extent, caused by a flawed decision back in the 1990s to reduce the number of seats at medical schools across the country in an attempt to control costs. That was a very bad decision and a very unfortunate decision. Though the medical schools have in fact expanded in total seat number to beyond what the capacity had been at that time, we're dealing with a situation of universities and governments trying to play catch-up. Those graduates will be coming on stream in seven or eight years. We're not dealing with some-

thing that occurs immediately, so the actions that are taken by governments and universities today will create a benefit in some situations that we're not going to see until eight years down the road -- in fact, for certain specialties, it will be even longer.

I would point out that this is something that we deal with. We're focused on things such as the family physician incentive program, focused on improving our competitiveness, on the attractiveness of the Yukon as a place for people to relocate, as well as the support that we have provided through the new medical education bursary, which will assist Yukon students to attend medical school. For that bursary we have provided \$10,000 in assistance per year and, if the student enters medical residency in a Yukon family practice, they're eligible for an additional \$15,000 per year. But I point out, just to make the member more fully aware of the situation we're faced with here, we're dealing to some extent with an overall picture. We've rolled out the health human resources strategy. Officials have done an excellent job of rolling it out in very tight timelines but, to roll it out, the initial stages were developed by people who had significant responsibilities in other areas in the department. We did then hire a coordinator for the development of that, but it takes some time to address these things and to roll out all the elements of that.

Last year we put in place significant components such as the medical education bursary, the family physician incentive program for new graduates, the nurse bursary -- the significant increase to that previously existing program, doubling the total amount per recipient and doubling the number of applicants who could be accepted -- as well as the health professions education bursary, which addressed other identified health professions and assisted people from those professions in getting a similar level of support in attending school. Those included as priority under the health professions: pharmacy, physiotherapy, occupational therapy, speech-language pathology, audiology, medical laboratory, medical radiology, dietetics and nutrition, and licensed practical nursing. That, of course, was up to \$5,000 per year per applicant.

Those components, of course, were the first areas, and they were very important areas and ones that we're very pleased to implement. Other areas, such as the nurse mentoring program, which rolled out a few months ago, and the announcement I referred to of the additional support -- we worked with the Yukon Medical Association in assisting them in areas such as being able to expand their clinics to accommodate a new physician. These are important components because, of course, as key as the family physician incentive program for new graduates is in attracting recently graduated physicians, they have to have somewhere to practise out of. While that money might assist some in starting up their own practice, others would be forced to buy into a previously existing practice or operate under partners in an existing family practice. For family practices that were already at capacity, in terms of the building, there is an additional cost to expanding that building.

That is one of the reasons we stepped forward with this next component, which helps the family physicians expand those clinics. That does require an exchange, and it results in a

space for at least one new practising doctor. The two programs taken together give us the ability to improve the attractiveness of the Yukon and ensure there is a space for a new physician who takes part in the family physician incentive program for new graduates or one who takes advantage of the new program focused on getting experienced physicians to come to the Yukon.

Again, another area the member mentioned was consultation. My point to the member, which unfortunately he has not taken, is not specific to the *Children's Act*, but points to the member's general approach and the approach of his caucus of criticizing the government on all areas of consultation. In areas such as the *Children's Act* -- which they have arbitrarily determined, in their view, should have been done quicker -- they determined we are not consulting enough.

It would perhaps be more productive for members to recognize that the government amended the timeline that had originally been set based on the feedback from our partners in consultation that there was a need to take a little more time to discuss these issues. The members could stand up and say, "Good for the government for listening to their partners. Good for the government for taking the time to do it right, to work with them and to not force them to come up with a decision by a specific date when it had been indicated a little more time was necessary to consult with citizens and to work on development of policy and positions related to that area."

But the members continually adopt an inconsistent approach with regard to the issue of consultation. On the one hand, they stand up and criticize the government for too much consultation, and then they criticize the government for not enough consultation. It's not simply an issue of inconsistency with other members of his caucus, it is inconsistency with the Leader of the Official Opposition's own remarks. He really needs to make up his own mind and, in fairness to the Yukon public, adopt a clear and consistent approach with regard to the issue of consultation, and not simply follow their past practice of criticizing the government for doing either too much or not enough, no matter what the government does. That is not what the Yukon public expects of the Official Opposition or any member of this Assembly. They expect a consistent position. They expect members to be factual. They expect members to reflect the full scope of facts and not selectively quote from documents to present an inaccurate perception, and they expect the members on issues of consultation --

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Chair: Mr. Mitchell, on a point of order.

Mr. Mitchell: At this point, when the member makes reference to selectively quoting from documents to create a false or misleading impression, he is now beginning to impute a motive, which the member full well knows he shouldn't be doing under the Standing Order 19(g), "imputes false or unavowed motives to another member".

It's the member's opinion, perhaps that a quote may not reflect the document, but that is all it is -- his opinion.

Chair: Mr. Cathers, on the point of order.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Discussions on what members may or may not be doing have taken place in another context. At this time, I don't believe there is a point of order. I did not specifically name members doing so. I just simply reminded members that the Yukon public expects members not to quote things out of context -- the member himself, his own words.

Chair's ruling

Chair: On the point of order, I would actually like to remind members that I determine whether it is a point of order or not. I believe there is no point of order, but I would like to remind members to not personalize the debate and to keep the debate on the Department of Health and Social Services.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Thank you for your ruling on that. Certainly if I can comfort the member opposite, I was not at that time suggesting a connection. I was reminding the member of the need to reflect a consistent and accurate approach overall. The member himself drew a connection, which is his opinion.

However, moving on to other areas, I would again, to finish my point that I was making to the member opposite, urge him and all members of his caucus and indeed all members of the Assembly to ensure that at all times they are reflecting the expectations the Yukon public has of us, that they do not selectively quote facts in a way that conveys an inaccurate impression, that they are at all times factual in their remarks, and that they adopt a clear and consistent policy position on items -- not simply say one day that the government should paint the walls blue and the next day they should paint them pink, since I am staring at our nice yellow walls.

It's just an example. You can't continually flip-flop on your position on an issue as a party and be credible, and be credible as the Official Opposition. The members need to figure out what their opinion is, what their approach is and what they would like the government to do.

Because if the government were to listen to the members' inconsistencies and differing positions on the issues, we would quite frankly go crazy trying to satisfy the members opposite if we were to move one way and then the other. It perhaps explains the Liberals' approach, during their short time in government, and their consistent flip-flop on the issue because, sitting in government, it's very difficult to figure out what the members want because they can't seem to make up their minds.

Mr. Mitchell: I am certainly concerned if the Health and Social Services minister indicates there's a chance that ministers might go crazy. We wouldn't want to see that. It would be unfortunate, but since he already made reference to it, we are fortunate we have excellent mental health professionals working in health care in Yukon. The member may take some comfort from that if he's concerned about the health of any colleague.

Regarding consistency, I would point out to the minister that it's difficult for members of the opposition to find any consistency in the member's commitments or statements. On May 16, 2006 -- it's in *Hansard* on page 6312, and the member may read it himself -- he indicated he hoped to have a *Children's Act* ready by now but his intent was to have it ready for the fall of

2006. He now tells us he hopes to have it ready for either the fall of 2007 or the spring of 2008. In the interest of consistency, the member has offered us three dates over an 18-month period, and that was his attempt at being consistent and accurate.

He made mention of aging doctors in clinics and looking at other alternatives. I would like to make reference to a couple of platforms from the last election. The Liberal platform, which was published midway through the election, had an item under "Improving health services" that said, "work with health care professionals to open a collaborative health care facility in Whitehorse".

I know the members opposite like to tell us there was a consultation called an election and they won, so I will point out that, in the minister's platform -- which was published in the last week of the election campaign -- there was a commitment saying "work with members of the health care community on a pilot project to establish a collaborative care medical practice to help meet the health care needs of Yukon families".

I don't have the NDP platform in front of me, but there are at least two parties that made that commitment. Since the minister sits on the government side, I will ask him what progress is being made, how the consultations are going with the doctors and the nurses, and when we can possibly expect to see such a pilot program. Not for a moment, Mr. Chair, would we want to see the minister cut short a consultation process and not have it be meaningful. So perhaps he can just tell us how the consultation is going, what the schedule is of consulting with the health care professionals involved, and when we can expect to see a pilot program.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I'd like to begin by thanking the member opposite for noting some of the increases that have occurred to mental health under this government's watch, including the creation of a new rural health clinician based out of Dawson City and a new youth clinician based out of Whitehorse. I am glad to see that the member is finally recognizing some of the investments that we're making, as well as, of course, working with the Yukon Family Services Association in the areas where they provide support and counselling in certain communities. There is the adult protection and decision-making legislation that was passed back in the last mandate, which provides people the ability to engage in differing levels of support as they need: from full guardianship under somebody, in the case of someone who is not of sound mind and needs that full level of support, to someone who reaches an age of life where something -- a problem such as Alzheimer's -- can cause a lessening of mental faculties. This provides a basic level, where someone can provide assistance in things like banking transactions and be authorized to work with them in those areas, to full-out guardianship, if it's necessary.

With regard to the *Children's Act*, the member is trying to suggest an inconsistency from the government. I would point out to the member that the timelines that were laid out -- that he's referring to -- were from an earlier time. The government is very clear and consistent. Where we are now, the timeline for the *Children's Act* review completion was delayed beyond what we had initially hoped.

We have been at all times -- and will continue to be -- fully up front and open with the members opposite about the expected timeline for that. The government had been forthcoming and told them our best expectation for the completion of a review, so it is simply unreasonable for the members to suggest that, after experiencing an unexpected delay, it somehow was inappropriate of the government to be forthright in declaring to the opposition when they expected a review to conclude. Members seem to have no comprehension of the fact -- based on the request of a partner in an act review -- that further time may be required to develop the process and further work may need to be completed to ensure due diligence so that the needs and interests of all are considered.

For the member to suggest that amending a timeline based on input from First Nations and from the public is somehow inappropriate is absolutely astounding. It appears to be an attempt by the Liberals to simply find some way to make the government look bad for listening to the public, listening to our First Nation partners and taking the time to get it right. It is good news, not bad news, as the Leader of the Official Opposition is desperately trying to suggest.

The member asked about an interdisciplinary collaborative clinic and referred to the fact that it's in the Liberal platform and asked what consultation has taken place. The member is very well aware of consultation that occurred in 2006 and that one of the people involved in that discussion under the leadership of the government -- I as minister working with the health professionals -- ran as a Liberal candidate and announced their platform using information that the government had shared in that process. He knows very well where that commitment came from, where that action came from. I would encourage him to recognize and consider that in his comments. We've certainly done our work and will continue to. If the member had listened to previous comments that I have made, he would recognize that the Yukon Medical Association has identified that they have concerns with a collaborative practice clinic. They have been advised of course. The government is very committed to moving forward in this area, but we also want to ensure that the Yukon Medical Association's concerns are taken into account.

We want the end product to be a net benefit to the health care system. It is not our intention to destabilize or undermine the family physician clinics. Family physicians and private practices are, and will continue to be, the backbone of primary health care within Whitehorse, Dawson City and Watson Lake. In the other communities, primary health care is provided as first point-of-contact by a community nurse who, in many cases, deals with a substantial portion of the medical needs of the person and deals with getting them to another level of care from a doctor or other health professional, if that need exists.

That will continue to be the system and this collaborative practice clinic, as the government envisions it, must be an enhancement to the system, and we are committed to ensuring it is. It is a component, but it should not destabilize those areas.

We will listen to the Yukon Medical Association, provide them the opportunity to make their concerns and suggestions known, and ensure they are involved at the table, because the government is committed to moving forward in this area. When

concerns are brought forward, we don't engage in the business of trying to force someone to meet our view of things or timelines arbitrarily, as perhaps the member might. We've informed them we want to move forward expeditiously in this area and we will ask them to participate in those discussions, and we will announce the establishment of a clinic and further collaborative practice options at such time as we can. I look forward to that announcement.

Mr. Mitchell: That was an interesting elocution, but I don't think the minister actually answered the question. Interestingly enough, after suggesting earlier one shouldn't take credit for other people's ideas, he's now suggesting the ideas brought forward by the Yukon Registered Nurses Association members, as well as other people, for something that has been tried in many other areas -- a collaborative or cooperative health care interdisciplinary clinic, where you can have doctors, nurses, physiotherapists, pharmacists or perhaps dieticians and other specialists available, so patients can get a full spectrum of care, rather than having to make serial appointments that may have some period of time between them -- he's now suggesting it was somehow his government's idea and seems upset it appeared in the platforms of other parties.

The reason I asked the question is because it appeared in his party's platform. All I asked was how the consultations with the Yukon Medical Association, the Yukon Registered Nurses Association and other health care professionals were going. The answer I got was that it will happen expeditiously and it will happen when it will happen -- sort of an approach of "que sera sera". I would hope the minister could give us slightly more detailed responses than that to some of the questions we ask.

We have a pattern that develops here, Mr. Chair. When we ask things in general debate, the ministers avoid answering the questions and give us speeches on how things could have, would have, should have been done by former governments, and then they say we should go into line-by-line. Then, when we get into line-by-line, they don't really like answering. They tell us they can't be concerned with postage stamps and fuel amounts. So, we don't really get answers at either level of debate but we are going to keep trying because we are patient. Yukoners have asked us to be patient with this government. They have said they know it's very difficult, they know the ministers don't like answering questions, they know that studies are kept under wraps until the government can figure out how to best provide their spin on the information, but we are going to keep asking anyway.

Let's move on to some things the minister has spoken to at various times in this Legislature. The minister made an announcement earlier this spring regarding opening 12 new beds in Copper Ridge Place. The minister may recall that I asked him some questions a year ago, earlier in his term as minister and when he still actually tried to answer questions. We had a discussion about an aging population and what impact there might be on the need for additional beds and additional facilities in Yukon. I suggested that it was sort of a tip-of-the-iceberg scenario where we are not seeing the full extent of what is coming later.

In the minister's own budget documents, among some of the statistics are that, for example, for seniors and the Yukon population aged 55 and over, the percentage change being shown from the 2006-07 forecast and the 2007-08 estimate is a seven-percent increase.

So there is an increase in seniors, according to the figures that are coming. Now, he announced those 12 beds some time ago. We know there must be staffing issues in order to open up that final pod at Copper Ridge Place. I asked about this a year ago, and the minister made reference then to the fact that there was room for an additional 12 beds. Then a year went by. We didn't see that open.

Can the minister tell us when that final section of Copper Ridge Place will be fully operational? How are they doing with the recruitment of the needed health care professionals to fulfill that commitment? Beyond consultation -- I don't think this is a consultation issue -- does the minister have a date at which time those beds will be available?

Chair: Order please. Committee of the Whole will recess for 15 minutes.

Recess

Chair: Order please. Committee of the Whole will now come to order. The matter before the Committee is Bill No. 6, *First Appropriation Act, 2007-08*, Department of Health and Social Services. We will continue with general debate.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Just to go back to where we left off in questioning by the member opposite, the member raised the issue of Copper Ridge Place, and I didn't quite catch everything he said. I was talking to my official here. I'm not sure if the member said it at this time but I think I heard him say -- but I know that another MLA had suggested before that prior to the announcement this spring of opening the remaining wing of Copper Ridge, we had indicated an intent to open it earlier. That of course is not factual. The first announcement of the Copper Ridge wing opening was when I made the announcement -- that would have been in May, last month.

For those 12 beds in that remaining wing, the member asked where we are in terms of hiring for that and a timeline for opening. As far as a timeline for opening, as I stated at the time, as soon as we have the equipment landed and we have the staff hired, the facility will open.

We actually have the registered nurses we need for that, and I am advised that we are currently in the process of hiring seven or eight LPN positions. We have the attendants we need, and we need one therapy assistant. Those are the numbers that I have. Since the member's question, that is the information we have retrieved from human resources at the department, which I hope addresses the member's question.

As far as the exact timeline, it will be in the very near future here but, as laid out at the time, it takes a few months to open up the facility. As soon as we get the beds we need and everything available so we can get it up and running, it will be opened. It is in the process right now and will open as soon as our staff there can get it into operation and up and running.

The member also touched on the issue of a collaborative practice clinic. I have to correct the member opposite. I did not suggest that an interdisciplinary collaborative practice clinic was our idea. The group of seven -- or group of seven minus one, as it has been referred to sometimes because of the reluctance of the YMA lately to engage in discussions -- took the lead role in discussions among the organizations there.

What I was referring to -- and perhaps I was not clear in phrasing it for the member opposite -- is that there was work proceeding within the department under my lead as minister responsible that commenced since I took over the job and the department had done some work. That is the work to which I referred -- that the timelines for discussions and work being done internally was relayed during consultation, parts of it appeared in a Liberal press release as a result of one of their candidates being involved in those discussions, which the member understands, of course, is water under the bridge.

The member should recognize that the government was proceeding with this in the past mandate and we will continue to proceed with this. It needs to have the health professionals involved, and certainly the concern expressed by the YMA is something we want to see resolved.

Once again, we encourage them, and I have urged all health professionals involved to do their work of involving the Yukon Medical Association and encouraged them to sit at the table to ensure we are able to address and resolve any problems they are concerned about. I will stress that the government is committed to moving forward in the establishment of a collaborative practice clinic.

The member also suggested there was a pattern in my responses and in those of other ministers to the questions from the members opposite. I agree with the member that there is a pattern, but it is not the one the member stated. The pattern is we answer the questions. No matter what answer we give or no matter how detailed we are, consistently -- particularly from some members of the opposition -- I am thinking especially, word for word, of the Member for Mayo-Tatchun -- the response is almost always verbatim, "The minister didn't answer the question," no matter how much detail has gone into it. The response consistently from the Official Opposition, in particular, is different variations of, "Well, the minister didn't answer the question."

It doesn't matter how much detail or how much time we put into answering the questions, it is the wording in their cunning script that they have in front of them. They have a specific approach in asking the questions. It seems more indicative of an attempt to paint the government with a certain image rather than engaging in constructive debate and actually getting the information they requested. We are always happy to provide the information, but it's very frustrating when we provide extensive information and the members simply pull out their script and accuse us of not answering the question when they know that is not the case.

Mr. Mitchell: I won't dignify the minister's comments about the Member for Mayo-Tatchun by bothering to respond to that, because he can respond for himself.

As far as some of the references the minister made when he first stood on his feet in response to my previous question about Copper Ridge Place, I would point out to the minister that I did make reference to the minister's previous statements, indicating that he could foresee a need for it. I didn't say that he made a commitment last year as to when it would be. It was actually on May 18 last year. I discussed the aging demographic that I could see even within my own neighbourhood, where many people have three generations living in one house - themselves, their children and their parents -- and inevitably those parents would reach an age where they would need a more intense level of care than living with their adult children could provide. When that time came, it would be very late in the day to start constructing facilities.

At that time, the minister mentioned Macaulay Lodge. He said -- and I quote from *Hansard* from May 18, 2006 in general debate -- "There is one more wing remaining at Copper Ridge Place comprised of some 12 beds, which we are making plans right now to open up. It will have to be acted on probably sometime later this year." That was on May 18, 2006, so it was actually the minister himself that gave us the heads-up that they were making those plans. Sometime later that year, it turned out to be an announcement -- in, I believe, May of this year. It was a year later, but that's fine.

My specific question was only about how that was proceeding. I will accept the minister's answer. That may surprise him, but I am willing to accept his answer that it is going well. I believe he has indicated that the nursing staff has been hired and engaged and it is now just a matter of getting the beds and everything ready. Perhaps when the minister stands on his feet again, he can give us something a little more detailed than "soon" -- as to whether that is in the next couple of months or later this year. I'm glad he is making progress on that.

Regarding seniors care and extended care, I'll ask about the Thomson Centre. That's a building that has gone through a long and somewhat sad history of difficulty. The minister has laid the blame for that at the feet of the former NDP government because it was built under their watch.

But I wonder if the minister can provide me with a few things. How much money has been spent to date trying to address the issues of the roof? At what point did the government become aware of the mould issues, and is there now something more detailed than "in the near future" for a timeline on when we may see that building operational again? To throw in a fourth question, in the minister's last election platform there was, I believe, reference to establishing it as a palliative care centre -- is that still the plan? At what point does the minister expect that to be operational?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Just to correct the member, in his reply he said I had indicated we had the nurses hired for the remaining wing at Copper Ridge Place. In fact, we had the registered nurses hired. For the LPNs, we have seven or eight positions pending -- I need confirmation on that number, because it is seven or eight. The ads are out for hiring right now.

With regard to the Thomson Centre, the member asked how much money had been spent on it to date. I'll have to check that and get back to the member. I don't have the number

at my fingertips right now. I will undertake to get back to him on that.

With the issue of mould being discovered at the Thomson Centre, the appropriate question would be: at which time was mould discovered?

I believe it was July of 2006 it was reported to me -- through the work that was done at the departmental level and what had been done at the Thomson Centre -- that the mould problems were addressed and there were some structural issues, such as firewalls, the HVAC system and the nurse-call system that needed upgrading. We knew what those were and we could confidently set a timeline for opening that up, which is what we then announced to the public as we shared the expected time frame. Then in late November -- it might have been early December -- of 2006 we received a revised report through the Property Management Agency that they had discovered more mould at the Thomson Centre and there might be some more structural issues.

This, of course, was not very welcome news; as a result, as has been indicated, we have done some more work internally and just recently commissioned a mould expert from Outside, whose report we are awaiting and which we should be receiving very shortly. I have not received it yet, but that should be pending shortly, and we can provide information to the members when we do.

Once we receive the scope of that, we will have to determine if that fully identifies what needs to be done to address this or if there is a need for a follow-up contract to ensure that we know what the structural issues are -- we can address the structural issues -- and we don't end up with any more unpleasant surprises, particularly once the facility is open and people are in that area.

Palliative care program: yes, in the 2006 election platform we committed to establishing a palliative care unit at Thomson Centre, once we were able to open it. We will still open that once we are able to open Thomson Centre but, prior to that, and as the other portion of the palliative care program, we have already hired a palliative care coordinator and a palliative care volunteer coordinator. Both those positions have been created and both have been hired.

We also have \$368,000 in this year's budget for the development of programming within palliative care, based on non-facility-based programming within the community, working with the Hospice Yukon Society in developing that program and delivering it.

So, again, I'd point out to the members that this is a component that had been intended from the start. While we have not been able to proceed with the Thomson Centre-based portion of the palliative care programming due to the problems of that facility, we are not letting that delay the other areas of the palliative care programming and have allocated \$368,000 in this year's budget, both for programming and for some work in developing the programming. That, of course, has not been in place in the past, so there needs to be some work, both internally and with Hospice Yukon and volunteers.

I hope that has answered the member's questions. Oh, actually, I should just give a little more information in the area of

continuing care. In addition to the \$368,000 for palliative care programming within the department and this year's budget, we have moved forward with some other changes to assist us in addressing the needs of Yukoners in continuing care and seniors care, which are related but not always the same thing. Continuing care sometimes encompasses Yukoners with disabilities.

That, of course, includes the work that is being done in Watson Lake and the development of a multi-level care facility there. It will include the construction of a facility in Dawson City and the opening of the new beds at Copper Ridge, of course.

In addition to these areas, we have funding for seniors services, which includes a significant increase of some \$532,000 for several new positions to support the vision of helping people to stay in the comfort of their own homes as long as possible. As the member will have noted from our 2006 election program, it is our vision to provide people with the ability to remain in their own homes as long as possible and as long as it is safe for them to do so, and they choose to do so, through the enhancement of our home care programs, through addressing those needs and assisting them in remaining there, rather than being forced to move into a continuing care facility.

As I stated, there is \$532,000 in new money for seniors services. The allocation for home care is \$4.176 million, and families who care for their loved ones at home can also benefit from the respite services that are available in the various facilities of the continuing care branch.

A total of \$23.7 million of the department's budget is dedicated to the facilities that provide extended care services for clients across their lifespan when they can no longer be cared for in their homes.

Of course, this is also available in Yukon communities through regional services. I think that's all the information I had for the member. I think I provided the rest in response to his question. I look forward to more questions.

Mr. Mitchell: I thank the minister for his answers. I hope he will pay careful attention. He mentioned before that he was chatting with another minister and missed a portion of the questions.

In his reply, the minister made reference to the Dawson multi-level health care facility. I think he made some reference to when that facility comes into existence. I asked department officials during the briefing whether or not there was any money for planning that facility in this year's budget and I was told no.

Is the minister now suggesting that there is planning money for a Dawson multi-level care facility in this year's budget and that the officials were perhaps not fully cognizant of it? If so, can he tell us how much money that is? Because it's news to us and it may well be good news for the people in Dawson if that facility is back on track again, Mr. Chair. I'm sure you would be happy to head back to Dawson on the weekend and tell your constituents that's the case.

Chair's statement

Chair: I would like to remind all members not to involve the Chair in debate. I am here just to watch over the proceedings of the debate, not to be involved in the debate.

Mr. Mitchell: Thank you for that, Mr. Chair. I will rephrase that and say I am sure the good citizens of Dawson will be happy to learn that this project is back on the go.

Can the minister just clarify that? How much money is in this year's budget for the Dawson multi-level health care facility?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I would point out to the member that I think he is misunderstanding the process here. What will be occurring this year is that, because there have been changes in the process and we have been improving the financial management over time -- it has been a priority from day one to work through the Department of Finance and through Management Board, and we are ever improving our processes -- we will be coming forward with a submission to Management Board to give all members the opportunity to discuss any proposal for planning money that is not included in this year's budget. The reason it was not revoted, I am advised, was the direction of the Management Board Secretariat to simply come forward separately in that area.

I would point out to the member that he's suggesting the project in Dawson City was shelved. It has never been shelved. It's simply that work had commenced on the Watson Lake multi-level care facility; we will be learning from that experience and moving forward to construct a facility in Dawson City to deal with the needs of seniors in that area. I'm sure the MLA for Klondike and I will be very happy to sit down with the good people of Dawson City and with department officials to ensure that, at the end of the day, we have a project that addresses the needs of Dawson citizens. I would point out to the member opposite it's a multi-level care facility -- basically a replacement for McDonald Lodge -- with additional enhancements to reflect the time we're in today. We look forward to coming up with a sound, positive facility that works very well for the people of the Klondike area.

Mr. Mitchell: I would have to say to the minister that there was initially a \$5.2-million facility announced for Dawson. There was money budgeted for such a facility. There was several hundred thousand dollars, I believe -- perhaps more -- spent on design of such a facility and then the facility no longer appears in the budget. You sort of follow the money and, if there's no money there, one has to presume that perhaps that facility is no longer a priority at this time. It's encouraging to hear the minister say that it is something that will go forward. It would be a positive thing to hear when it's going to go forward.

I want to return to the Thomson Centre. The minister indicated the mould issues -- that mould was found. He said at which time mould was discovered and I think he made reference to July of 2006 and then to later in the year. Perhaps it was December -- even November or December -- I think he said that it was very bad news to find that there had been additional mould discovered.

I know he said he's waiting for a study, but I'm presuming that that study has to do with how to address these issues, but can the minister elaborate on what kind of mould was found? Was it black mould or other kinds of mould? Has he received any advice to date on how to eradicate this to levels beyond that which will be of any danger to the clientele who will be in the facility? It's my understanding that some people are more sensitive than others to it and, in particular, seniors, aging people, people who are suffering from any other chronic diseases and people who are ill may be more susceptible.

People who are ill may be more susceptible than a young healthy adult like the minister. I am wondering if the minister has more information he can provide to us about the mould situation.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Regarding the Thomson Centre and the mould, I would inform the member that what the review is supposed to be doing right now is identifying several elements. It is to identify the type of mould, the source of the mould, figuring out what needs to be done to ensure there is no recurrence, and reviewing the last report that was done to provide information on why it did not identify the mould at that time. Ensuring that we have the source identified will, of course, be linked to preventing recurrence. Once that is completed, as I indicated to the member opposite, we hope that it will provide us with all the information we need. There might be a need for a further detailed structural review, depending on that. We will leave that to be seen as to what comes back in that review. There may be a need for follow-up. We hope that we will be able to deal with this sooner rather than later.

The issue of the Thomson Centre has been a very frustrating one for I think every minister who has dealt with it in the wake of the challenges that were identified before. The facility is not that old. It was opened as an example of poor building. It is a good example for any Yukoner, whether government, a private company or private citizen, as to why ignoring the building code is not a sound plan. The government had the authority to ignore its own building code and, unfortunately, under the NDP government of the time, chose to do so in the interests of saving costs. As we can see here today, that was an ill-advised decision and we are dealing with the fall-out from that.

As the member is well aware, it is far cheaper to build a building right the first time than to build it wrong and then fix it. Often the renovations and improvements to deal with the problem begin to approach the original cost. Fortunately, we are not in that situation in this case, as expensive as it has indeed been. It is necessary to effectively build a building and manage the project successfully, so that we ensure it is built to the appropriate codes in the appropriate fashion, or you risk others suffering the results of that -- being the costs down the road.

Mr. Mitchell: I thank the minister for that and I look forward to an update as soon as we have better dates regarding the Thomson Centre and what can be done with the mould issue.

The minister has made reference to it being better to do things right first time than to spend more money later, sort of a penny-wise, pound-foolish scenario.

We have been talking about seniors facilities and multi-level care facilities, so I guess I have to ask the question regarding the status of the Watson Lake multi-level care facility. This was part of the two facilities that were initially forecast to cost some \$5.2 million. I know that the Auditor General had a lot to say about how the project management was done on the Watson Lake facility, and I'm wondering if the minister can give us a new, updated, projected total cost for the Watson Lake multi-level health care facility as well as a projected in-service date?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I have to begin by, first of all, encouraging the Leader of the Official Opposition -- in fact, advising him -- to be cautious how much he takes verbatim from his colleagues.

His colleague who made the assertion that the management of this project was mentioned extensively in the Auditor General's report was quoting from sections of the report that had absolutely nothing to do with this project. The member is absolutely incorrect in stating that there has been a review of this or that it was mentioned as a problem by the Auditor General.

I have to remind the member that the contracting rules -- although it is typically dealt with procedurally, in the interests of simplicity in operations, through our Property Management Agency. It is not a requirement under the procedure and, in fact, sometimes it is delegated out to departments or the department rather retains that control itself rather than putting it through the Property Management Agency. That was the choice in the case of the Watson Lake multi-level care facility, which was in large part due to capacity issues within Property Management Agency and the fact that they were very busy conducting other projects and other works. It was felt that attempting to pile more on their plates would simply result in more delays all round and that it would be more appropriate to have the management dealt with under the Department of Health and Social Services.

Again I have to remind the member opposite that in his reference to the original budget, he is actually referring to the original allocation for the project, not the original budget. I have to remind him that there is a difference between an estimate, an allocation and a budget.

Mr. Mitchell: I thank the minister for his attempt to answer the questions. I guess I will make a couple of attempts to correct the minister's opinion of what we've said, not relying on any other member's statements here, but rather my own reading of documents.

Let me read to the minister from the Budget Address delivered by the Finance minister on March 24, 2005. There are only two sentences here, Mr. Chair, so it won't take long to read them. It says: "The Department of Health and Social Services is planning the construction of two \$5.2-million multi-level care facilities in both Dawson City and Watson Lake. The architectural design phase will be completed this year with final construction expected in 2006-07."

Two sentences in a budget speech are what I am referring to. The first sentence describes them as being two \$5.2-million multi-level care facilities. It doesn't say an initial allocation of \$5.2 million toward the construction of an eventual \$10-million, \$12-million or \$15-million multi-level care facility. I see the Finance minister is paying careful attention because he is remembering what he delivered in that speech on March 24, 2005.

I appreciate the smiles of embarrassment on the other side. However, while the Finance minister chuckles about it, the fact of the matter is that it says "the construction of two \$5.2-million multi-level care facilities". So, I take the Finance minister at his word that that's what his promise to Yukoners was on March 24, 2005.

So far, from that promise, we have one partially completed health care facility in Watson Lake that has used up the vast proportion of the \$5.2 million but is not yet near completion or open or available for seniors in Watson Lake and the surrounding area to avail themselves of it.

What we have is a gleam in the eye of the Health and Social Services minister regarding a future facility in Dawson City for the residents of Klondike, because there isn't even a line item in this year's budget.

As far as expectations, when a budget speech says, "the architectural design phase will be completed this year with final construction expected in 2006-07," we've gone past the expiry date on that budget and on that period of time. So that hasn't been fulfilled.

Regarding the next statement by the Minister of Health and Social Services -- he said that the Auditor General didn't have specific things to say, so I will remind the Health and Social Services minister that, in paragraph 54, the Auditor General said, "The roles and responsibilities for project management staff and the client department were not clearly defined for the multi-level care facilities projects in Watson Lake and Dawson City.

"In September 2003, the department received a work request for the Department of Health and Social Services to initiate a needs assessment, feasibility study and functional program for a care facility in Watson Lake and a review and update of the care facility in Dawson City. While the department was supposed to manage the projects, the project manager was excluded from meetings between the design consultant and the client department.

"The department indicated that the roles, responsibilities, authority and accountability of all parties in the process were not clearly defined. It was essentially participating after the fact, receiving information following meetings between the design consultant and the client department.

"In December 2004, the department recommended that it decline the assignment for these two projects.

"In June 2005, the Minister of Highways and Public Works, on behalf of the department, declined responsibility for the projects."

Now, I think that's a fairly specific series of statements made by the Auditor General of Canada, and I want to indicate to the minister, before he rises to answer them, that none of this

is meant as any disrespect to the individual who was trying to follow the department's recommendations in carrying this out and was working as a contractor and project manager, but rather the inability of the minister and his predecessor to bring these projects in on time and within budget.

So could the minister now answer the question of how much this facility is now intended to cost and when it is expected to be open?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Mr. Chair, I know it's very difficult sometimes to listen to responses. I hope it was merely an error on the part of the member. As I stated, I did not say before that the Auditor General made no mention of these projects. I did point out that statements raised specifically by one of the member's colleagues in Question Period, which he refers to in connection to the Watson Lake multi-level care facility, were not in any way, shape or form relating to that project. That quote was taken out of context, as the members often sloppily do in this House, and it created an inaccurate impression.

The member should also note that the reference he read from the Auditor General's report was a statement of the review of the chronology. I don't read that as being a criticism of the project. The Property Management Agency works with departments. The control was, at that time, out of the Department of Health and Social Services working with the Property Management Agency. Then it was dealt with solely under Health and Social Services through the hiring of private sector contractors.

The member, in reflecting the timelines, should know that there have been a few delays in this process partly due, as the member is aware, to the very tragic situation with the former project manager's untimely passing. That, of course, was a very sad moment and resulted in the need to transfer it over to someone else.

The other thing I should again point out to the member, in terms of his reference to the total cost of the project, is that \$5.2 million was an allocation for the project, not the budget for the project. In terms of the overall size, I am pleased to inform the member that one of the areas that resulted in delays to the project was listening to the people of Watson Lake and listening to the seniors so as to make changes to the facility. This included making an increase to the size of the rooms and a resulting overall increase in the square footage of the facility. Increasing the size of the facility, based on the public comments, resulted in increased costs, beyond what would have occurred with a smaller facility.

The member seems to be suggesting that that is a problem or a bad thing. We regard it as positive that we listened to Yukoners, changed the project to reflect their requests, increased the size according to the feedback heard from the senior citizens of Watson Lake, and as a result the estimate and overall costs of the facility went up, of course. That is, in fact, a positive act: listening to Yukoners, acting on what Yukoners tell us and allocating the money to make it happen.

Despite the fact that those requests from the public are going to cost a little more than originally envisioned, we listened

to them and we are proud to have done so. We listen to the public and we act based on that.

Mr. Mitchell: I hate to disappoint this minister because I know he doesn't like to hear this particular comment, but this time I am forced to say it. The minister did not answer the question. The specific question was: how much is this facility now anticipated to cost and what is the expected in-service date? The minister said he listened to the good citizens of Watson Lake -- and that is a good thing. I believe we have now seen about \$10 million budgeted for this project over a period of years. The minister mentioned increasing the size. Has he doubled the size of the project? What increase in the size of the project has there been? How many additional beds will the project include, or what new features will the project include?

Second, I am sorry, but I can't let the minister's statement stand that that was simply an allocation. The Finance minister said the Department of Health and Social Services is planning the construction of two \$5.2-million multi-level care facilities in both Dawson City and Watson Lake. This Finance minister is very careful with his words, and I have every confidence that if he had wanted to say that the Department of Health and Social Services is allocating, this year, an initial \$5.2 million for each of two projects, that's what he would have said. He wouldn't have described them as \$5.2-million multi-level care facilities because he is too good a money manager for that. I'm sure the Finance minister would have been careful with his words. If that was only supposed to be the beginning of an endless amount of money being spent, he would have told us, but he didn't. Again, how much is it going to cost and when will it be open?

I guess I will throw a third question in so the minister can answer it, as well. There has been some discussion of code issues with the existing hospital. I believe I've seen department documents that were tabled in this House that indicated it could cost up to \$6 million to address those code issues.

How many of those issues are going to be addressed or is there simply going to be a firewall between the two facilities left indefinitely and we'll carry forward with that other building as is?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Here we go again in debate about the difference between an allocation and an estimate. I have to point out to the member that the amount he is referring to is an allocation. I also pointed out to the member that the estimate for the project cost changed based on listening to the good citizens of Watson Lake, the senior citizens, and by significantly increasing the size of the rooms and the overall facility size as a result of that. That, of course, increased the costs, but that is a good thing. That is listening to Yukoners. That is acting on what they tell us and we are pleased to do that.

I am pleased to see that in his last question he didn't suggest that was a problem, which is a change for the opposition and I am pleased to see that he recognized that this government is stepping forward to put our money where our mouth is, so to speak, and to address the needs of Yukon's citizens based on public consultation.

With regard to the issue of the connection of the multi-level care facility and the hospital, there will be a firewall be-

tween them. Code issues at the hospital will be dealt with as a separate project at a separate time. In answer to what might be in the member's next question, I would point out that at one time there was a suggestion to have doors between the two facilities, so there was work done and there was architectural work done related to identifying what the code issues were at the hospital. That was included under this project. It was, however, decided that the code issues at the hospital would be significant enough that they should be addressed as a separate project at a separate time. That is why there was money initially under this project spent to address not only the issue of the construction of the new facility, but identifying issues at the existing hospital. The decision was made that a firewall needed to be put in place to keep the facility separate and to deal with code issues separately. Not to minimize the code issues -- the report is very clear that the code issues are largely issues of evolving building codes and are not in any way, shape or form presenting a risk to people in the hospital if it continues to operate, and there is no reason it cannot continue to operate, so it will continue to operate and code issues will be considered at a separate time under a separate project. But to address the member's confusion, that is why at an earlier stage there was some review done of the hospital, but the hospital is not part of the multi-level care facility project right now.

Mr. Mitchell: I appreciate that the minister -- while he has not been successful in answering very many of the questions asked -- is now trying to anticipate questions and answer the questions not yet asked. Since I hate to disappoint him, I'll ask the question. The document previously filed here indicated a consultant services contract for the Watson Lake multi-level care facility. It said the project consisted of the following general components: phase 1 was the new seniors assisted living complex to the east of the current hospital with an estimated construction of \$3,800,000. This phase would be constructed initially only to the stage where phase 2 work was to take over.

Phase 2 was the provision of temporary hospital and health services functions within the seniors assisted living complex shell prior to it being completed and occupied by the seniors. This would allow relocation and continuation of medical services in Watson Lake while the renovation and rehabilitation of the current hospital building was completed. Estimated construction budget of this phase was \$1,500,000. That brings us up to \$5.3 million for phases 1 and 2. So the minister is taking notes.

Phase 3 was renovation to the existing hospital building to bring the facility up to the current National Building Code of Canada, to 1995 standards, with an estimated construction budget of \$6 million.

Phase 4 was to remove the temporary construction facilities provided for the hospital within the seniors assisted living space and completion of the necessary work to allow occupancy of the seniors facility by the seniors. This was an estimated construction budget of \$700,000. That would bring us to a round number of \$12 million.

My question for the minister: how much money has been spent to date? How much money does the minister expect -- or has he been informed -- will be spent before the project is com-

pleted to whatever stage he's now going to complete it, without addressing the code issues, but simply the issues of the multi-level health care facility. I see that his colleague, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources and Highways and Public Works is nodding, saying it's a good question. Just answer the question and we can move on. He agrees. How much is going to be spent, how much has been spent and when is the project due to be completed and available for seniors in Watson Lake and the surrounding area to move into?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: The contract the member is citing from the document he is referring to refers to an earlier option that was considered in dealing with an approach to construct a multi-level care facility, using it as a temporary hospital while the existing Watson Lake hospital is moved into the multi-level care facility, and then moving it back. That option turned out to be prohibitively expensive. I would point out that further work identified it as being more expensive than the number the member came up with, so that option was ruled out.

The other reason for ruling that option out is it would have resulted in a long delay of actually getting a facility for seniors, which is the objective here. The code issues with the Watson Lake hospital are issues largely dealing with changes in the building code. While there is some merit to making some improvements and bringing it up to code, for the obvious reasons, the advice is also very clear that it is not in any way, shape or form a problem that is going to prevent us from continuing to operate the hospital as it has been throughout its entire lifetime.

In reference to the member's remark, I would point out that what we have allocated -- I am just trying to pull the number for the member on what we have spent to date and what is in this year's budget. I think the member will find some of those numbers in front of him in the budget document, but we will pull the remaining number and get back to him on that.

I think the member opposite is confused about the overall approach here and doesn't recognize the difference between the two approaches. A general contract is the more common approach -- but not the only approach -- to building large projects and deals with a single budget allocation and a big tender package for one contract. Construction management is a different process. The merits of construction management are that it allows the party doing the constructing -- in this case, the government -- to adapt to things that are discovered during the construction, including the public input to which I previously referred, and to make changes based upon that. That's a benefit to that process. In that process you deal with overall estimates for the project; you don't deal with a lump-sum tender package.

I know that's maybe difficult for the member to see in there. I am not trying to be insulting to him in this, but I am pointing out that it is different from what is typically done. But the specific reason for going with construction management in the case of the Watson Lake multi-level care facility was to address the needs of rural Yukon.

It was also a fact that, at the time the initial work began on the facility, this government had come in following years under the NDP and Liberal watches. The Yukon was facing a very dismal economic picture with very little work available for

Yukoners, and there was a tremendous flow of Yukoners out of the territory because of a lack of work.

A specific reason for going with construction management was to break this package down to manageable tender packages so that contractors in Watson Lake would be able to bid on them. There was no specific requirement for them to be from Watson Lake, but the larger contracts often exclude rural Yukon companies and there was a tremendous need for work in rural Yukon at that time, lest we face the loss of thousands more Yukoners, like the 4,000 who left under the NDP and Liberal watches.

The approach in here was to provide the ability for the "little guy," whether they be from rural Yukon, or from Whitehorse, or another area of rural Yukon other than Watson Lake, to have the opportunity to submit a bid and, if they submitted the lowest bid, to employ Yukoners in that community and proceed forward in a sound economic manner.

I would point out that if the member took the opportunity to actually read the contracting regulations, there is a specific reference in the contracting regulations and specific provisions set out that are designed to create the opportunity and, in fact, the preference for ensuring that the needs of Yukoners, particularly in rural areas, are addressed through the roll-out of contracts and tendering. This is entirely in line with the spirit of intent of the contracting regulations and was a necessary approach, in this context, to provide the ability for the little guy in rural Yukon to have the opportunity to take part in this project.

Mr. Mitchell: For the minister's benefit and information, I have looked at the contract regulations, and I am aware that there is more than one way to oversee a project.

Let me refer to the Public Accounts Committee report because I asked a specific question about this. Since the minister is indicating that this is a preferable way to oversee something, I asked an assistant deputy minister in the Department of Highways and Public Works, under transportation, capital programs and property management this question: "Is there actually any sort of process in place for making a determination to decline responsibility for a project, or is it simply sort of the hot potato, thanks-but-no-thanks approach on an ad hoc basis? Is there a set of standards that you require of a department in order to continue and maintain project management that is the norm?"

The assistant deputy minister, making every effort to answer on behalf of the department but recognizing that he was being perhaps forced to answer for failures by ministers, said, "Yes, there is a contractual relationship between the project manager and the design consultant. It is a legal relationship. I believe that once the control over that has been broken and the communication between those two entities -- the owner/project manager on behalf of the Government of Yukon and the design consultant -- or the general contractor, for that matter, because there is a contractual relationship between the project manager and the general contractor, as well -- once that relationship is broken and the project manager can no longer be held accountable for what is happening, I believe the department has a responsibility to identify whether they can carry on or not. In this instance, the department felt it should not be held accountable for the decisions that were being made."

That's a case of a department official indicating that they don't want to be held accountable for decisions that were being made.

If the Chair will indulge me, I have one more short excerpt to read. I said, "I don't want to get into the political" -- because under the Public Accounts Committee that is not our role -- "so I will be careful how I phrase the questions. From that experience, has the department put additional measures into place to try to prevent that situation from developing in the future?"

The assistant deputy minister replied, "We haven't put any extra controls into place because we felt it was a one-off experience."

I certainly hope that it was a one-off experience because I certainly don't want to ever see that repeated again.

Since we are now in the political arena -- we are in the Legislative Assembly where we are asking questions of ministers responsible -- I will ask the minister: has this minister changed the way in which he is managing this project? Has he put controls in place so that it will be back on the rails and we will not have to go through this kind of experience again? It was an experience for which department officials didn't feel they had to be answerable.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: It is unfortunate to see -- not for the first time -- the Leader of the Official Opposition politicizing the Public Accounts Committee and tremendously eroding its ability to engage in effective discussions and operations, which is supposed to be focused on dealing with how government directions were carried out -- whether that indeed was followed and the accountability of that afterward.

The former Leader of the Official Opposition, the Member for Whitehorse Centre, understood that very well and tremendous work was carried on by the Public Accounts Committee, revived under this government's last mandate. It is unfortunate that ever since we saw a change in the Leader of the Official Opposition, both the Leader of the Official Opposition and the Member for Porter Creek South have made highly political comments around this area, and the Member for Kluane has been added to this as well.

Chair's statement

Chair: I'd like to remind all members not to personalize the debate. I have let a lot go this afternoon, and I do feel that the debate is definitely becoming more personal.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Let me, while respecting your ruling, point out simply that certain members of the Official Opposition caucus have engaged in politicizing excerpts of the Public Accounts Committee report, excerpts of the Auditor General's report and reflecting it in a manner that doesn't reflect what was discussed.

I would urge him to be a little more careful, because it would be very unfortunate to see this Public Accounts Committee not continue with the great successes that were achieved over the last mandate when the then Leader of the Official Opposition, the Member for Whitehorse Centre, was there. At that time both the Official Opposition and the third party, as well as government members, understood that the Public Accounts Committee was to focus on accountability. They did not politi-

cize excerpts from it. They didn't come up with a document and then simply use it as a political instrument in ways it was not intended.

In fairness to officials, I would urge the Leader of the Official Opposition to be careful in the extent to which he draws them into the debate, particularly when they are taken out of context. As Minister of the Department of Health and Social Services, I have not had the opportunity to fully review the Public Accounts Committee's report on the Auditor General's report into the Department of Highways and Public Works. Other time commitments have prevented me from doing so.

I have not had the opportunity to see what the member is referring to, so I will not criticize the manner in which he is bringing it forward or quoting from it. I will simply say that the references that he makes that he says are coming from an official do not jibe with the facts. Therefore, I find it hard to believe that the member is reading that report correctly or understood what was being asked. I would have to take out that report and look at that to be certain.

Let me inform the member of the facts. The facts are that the issue of who was a contracting authority was a decision made by the then Minister of Health and Social Services, my predecessor, and the then Minister of Highways and Public Works in discussion with Cabinet colleagues. That decision was made largely based on the issue of capacity within the Property Management Agency to handle the project and the desire to ensure it did not impede the flow of other projects going forward in doing so.

Also, earlier comments that the member made in, I believe, his last remarks were confusing when he referred to these statements -- the difference between who is the contracting authority versus the issue of what the contract model is. Perhaps it is simply a case of the member being mistaken on this issue and not understanding the excerpts that he is quoting and what the reference was to.

I will attempt to explain it for the member to enhance his understanding here. The issue of a contracting authority -- that is the issue that was referred to. Contracting authority, in this case for the Watson Lake multi-level care facility, is dealt with through the Department of Health and Social Services. That is an option under the contracting regulations whereby, though typically the Property Management Agency becomes the contracting authority under these contracts, departments have the option of dealing with it directly. The choice at the ministerial level was to do so.

The issue of a contract model is the issue of whether you proceed with a general contract, which is the more common model, or a construction management approach, as was undertaken with this facility.

I have to remind the member opposite -- contrary to his comments -- that was the approach that was taken -- not based on any discussions between departments and preferences of Property Management Agency, as the member appeared to be alluding to, but the decision to proceed with a construction management model was to provide the opportunity to the little guy in rural Yukon -- the small contractors in the community of

Watson Lake and elsewhere in Yukon, should they choose -- the opportunity to bid on tenders.

Dealing with a large, multi-million dollar general contract -- because of bonding requirements and bid requirements -- immediately excludes small contractors and leaves it to large contractors only. It does not provide the ability for contractors to bid on components.

At that time, I would remind the member that there were a number of large contracts out that large companies were dealing with through a general contract, so it was not an issue of depriving them of the opportunity. They would be able to bid on the smaller projects as well, but it was to provide an opportunity to those -- who might otherwise be excluded -- to take part in the significant capital investments that were being made at that time in Yukon as a whole, giving the ability to see some local benefit should their bid be the most competitive at that time.

I have the information the member asked for, as to what has been put forward for this project. Prior to this year, we had a \$2.9-million expenditure, and added to this is \$6.944 million in this year's budget. The total estimated for this project is just under \$10 million. Again, I have to remind the member opposite that we deal with current estimates in the whole process here and in the construction management model. We are certainly hoping that it will come in close to the project estimate, but it is not a tender package so there is a possibility that estimates can go up or down from that. End costs may come in higher or lower than estimated at this point. We will of course update members if we have any changes up or down in the project, or if it comes in exactly on the current budgetary estimate. We will provide that information to the members.

Mr. Chair, seeing the time, I move that you report progress.

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Cathers that we report progress.

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: Disagreed.

Motion agreed to

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I move that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Chair: Mr. Cathers has moved that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

Motion agreed to

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Chair: On a point of order, Mr. Fairclough.

Mr. Fairclough: Mr. Chair, you can see the clock right in front of you. We have 10 minutes of time to debate this budget. There is no need to move progress. We should be using the time that we have available. The House leader should be doing the hard work of debating this budget in this House.

Chair's ruling

Chair: There is no point of order. The motion has carried.

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

May the House have a report from the Chair of Committee of the Whole?

Chair's report

Mr. Nordick: Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 6, *First Appropriation Act, 2007-08*, and directed me to report progress.

Speaker: You have heard the report of the Chair of Committee of the Whole. Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I move that the House do now adjourn.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Government House Leader that the House do now adjourn.

Motion agreed to

Speaker: This House stands adjourned until 1:00 p.m. tomorrow.

The House adjourned at 5:24 p.m.

The following document was filed June 5, 2007:

07-1-20

Court Recording Contract (dated March 4, 2004) between the Government of Yukon and International Reporting Inc. (Inverarity)