

**Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Thursday, May 3, 2012 — 1:00 p.m.**

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

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

Withdrawal of motions

Speaker: The Chair wishes to inform the House of a change that has been made to the Order Paper. Motion No. 25, standing in the name of the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, has been removed from the Order Paper as it is similar to Motion No. 198, which the House adopted yesterday.

We will proceed at this time with the Order Paper. Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In recognition of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Month

Hon. Mr. Graham: I rise today, Mr. Speaker, to ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the month of May as Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Month. Multiple sclerosis is a chronic, often disabling disease of the brain and spinal cord. It is the most common neurological disease of young adults of Canada, with most people diagnosed between the ages of 15 and 40. It is estimated in Canada today that there are between 55,000 to 75,000 Canadians afflicted with this disease. The unpredictable effect of MS lasts a lifetime.

While the majority of people living with MS are diagnosed with relapsing remitting MS, more than half will develop secondary progressive MS within 10 years of their diagnosis, and up to 90 percent of the people afflicted with this disease will develop progressive MS within 25 years of their diagnosis.

Fortunately, at the national level, the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada offers services to people affected by MS that can help them maintain their quality of life and deal with the issues related to this disease. The services and programs include information and referral, supportive counselling, self-help and support groups, financial assistance, and recreation and social programs.

Local communities, though, need these resources as well, since Canada has one of the highest rates of MS in the world. In Yukon, we estimate that about 140 individuals are living with MS. The terrible thing about MS is it affects every person differently. One day a person can feel great and the next day they are either extremely fatigued, or experience double vision or other noticeable afflictions. For people living with progressive MS, their symptoms may worsen day to day or plateau for weeks at a time. The need to find answers about MS is urgent and I am very pleased that the Yukon will be participating in the liberation therapy trials in Albany, New York, later this summer. On April 30, the application process in the Yukon closed and next, 10 individuals will be selected from the applications received to move to the next stage, which is an interview process with Saskatchewan Health. We hope that between

five and seven Yukoners will ultimately make it through the final stages of this double-blind clinical study. Not only will this hopefully help these individuals, but it will help in the global search for answers. I would like to point out that on June 10, the local MS Society will host the Scotiabank MS walk to raise funds and awareness to help support the people in the Yukon who are affected by MS, while at the same time, funding groundbreaking research into the cause and cure of this disease. I know I will be there on behalf of my constituents, and I hope to see as many of you as can make it.

Multiple sclerosis is challenging and life-changing. We all have a role to play in providing support for these people and finding answers.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mr. Graham: At the same time, perhaps I can take this opportunity to introduce guest Jenny Roberts, the president of the local Multiple Sclerosis Society.

Applause

In recognition of World Press Freedom Day

Ms. Moorcroft: On behalf of the New Democrat Official Opposition, I rise to pay tribute today to World Press Freedom Day. The United Nations General Assembly declared May 3 to be World Press Freedom Day to raise awareness of the importance of freedom of the press and remind governments of their duty to respect and uphold the right to freedom of expression enshrined under article 19 of the *Universal Declaration on Human Rights*.

Internationally, journalism is an increasingly dangerous profession. To date this year, 22 journalists have died on the job, according to the press freedom barometer compiled and maintained by Reporters Without Borders. Mexico, a favourite winter vacation destination for many Yukoners, ranks 149 out of 179 in the press freedom barometer. Mexico is one of the hemisphere's most dangerous countries for the media.

Today we remember Brad Will. On October 27, 2006, Brad Will was killed in the midst of a very large teachers' strike in Oaxaca, Mexico. Brad was videotaping near a barricade erected by pro-strike protesters when he was shot twice.

Many witnesses bravely came forward in an atmosphere of state violence and testified about the paramilitaries firing into the group of demonstrators at the time Brad Will was shot. These paramilitaries are well known to Mexican authorities and seen in photographs shooting toward Will. Despite this knowledge, Will's murderers have yet to be imprisoned, while witnesses, some of whom helped him when he was shot, are being hounded by the local and federal Mexican government.

As of January 2010, Oaxaca activist Juan Manuel Martinez Moreno has been incarcerated for over a year, falsely accused of Brad's murder. An open letter to honour the memory of Will and support the Oaxacan people's efforts to establish a popular government that recognizes local traditions and values was signed by many academics and activists including Noam Chomsky, David Graeber, Naomi Klein, Michael Moore, Arundhati Roy, Starhawk and Howard Zinn.

The front-line of freedom of expression is shifting to on-line. Amnesty International senior director, Widney Brown,

says that, “States are attacking on-line journalists and activists because they are realizing how these courageous individuals can effectively use the Internet to challenge them.”

In Canada, threats to press freedom are of course different from those in the developing world. Journalists working in Canada do not disappear when they write stories critical of governments, the military and the elites. Press freedom in Canada is challenged by concentrated corporate ownership of the press, through communications management by public relations and through censorship and the internalized self-censorship that results. The 1980 Royal Commission on Newspapers, chaired by Tom Kent, looked into media ownership and convergence. When he reported in 2002 on progress for the Royal Commission, Mr. Kent remarked that the state of affairs was worse, that fewer companies owned more media outlets and that this did not bode well for press freedom and for our democracy.

On this day, we pay tribute to those who get to the bottom of the story. We’re fortunate in the Yukon to have many media outlets that strive to uphold the highest journalistic standards. We pay tribute to those who persevere and are driven to expose the truth to the light of day so the public gets the real story.

In recognition of James E. Marker and Hawkins Cheezies

Ms. White: I rise on behalf of the Official Opposition to pay tribute to James E. Marker who died at his home in Belleville, Ontario yesterday at the age of 90. Mr. Marker was the man who invented Cheezies, the quintessential Canadian snack. Cheezies are made and sold in Canada by W.T. Hawkins Ltd. They are made from Canadian-grown corn and coated with real Canadian cheddar.

Cheezies were invented after the Second World War and produced initially in Tweed, Ontario, until a fire burned down the original plant in 1956. Production then was moved to a factory in Belleville, Ontario. Cheezies have been produced in that same factory ever since and continue to be sold across Canada. Mr. Speaker, Cheezies have graced many a Yukon campfire, picnic, hunting trip or even a road trip. They are orange, salty, crunchy, and delicious and, in a pinch, can be used as fire starter. They have inspired many knock-offs, but there is only one Cheezie. The company claims that just like snowflakes, no two are alike.

This tribute is not about our fondness for this Canadian snack, but that of Mr. Marker’s vision. He believed that Canadian companies are capable of long legacies and that successful products can be wholly made in Canada by Canadians. It is on this basis that we pay tribute to the memory of Mr. James E. Marker, who, along with W.T. Hawkins Ltd., created a uniquely Canadian snack.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Ms. Moorcroft: I am very pleased today to welcome to the gallery the grade 4 and 5 class from Golden Horn Elementary School; their teacher, Ms. Grace Snider; teacher-

librarian, Ms. Judy Mones; and my grandson, Damien, who has been present here in the gallery before, as have some of his classmates. I ask all members to join me in welcoming them.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: With your indulgence, I would like to introduce my son, Taylor Pasloski, who has just returned from the University of Saskatchewan, where I think he is one semester away from his degree in geological engineering.

Applause

Speaker: I would like to introduce Conrad Tiedeman, who is just back from graduating from King’s University College in Edmonton with a degree in political science, with aspirations to go on to a master’s degree. I would caution all members here to watch yourselves — you are being watched.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any reports or documents for tabling?

Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions for presentation?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motion?

NOTICES OF MOTION

Ms. Stick: I am going to try to move the motion I withdrew yesterday. I give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Department of Health and Social Services to assist families caring for adult children with disabilities and to implement inclusion for adult children with disabilities by:

(1) providing a range of day programs for adults living with disabilities;

(2) expanding respite care; and

(3) developing a policy in response to the needs of aging caregivers of adults living with disabilities.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to review current mental health services with a view to:

(1) coordinating services among all affected government departments;

(2) broadening services to include partnerships with NGOs; and

(3) expanding services to respond to needs of all ages from youth to seniors.

Speaker: Is there a statement by a minister?

This brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Affordable housing

Ms. White: The housing crisis is the number 1 issue in the Yukon today. This government said it was serious about tackling the crisis and getting more affordable housing units out quickly. They had a plan — an innovative approach, they

said. Lot 262 was the answer. Lot 262 has been the mantra to every question on affordable housing asked in this House. Some contractors said the Yukon Party's innovative approach was complicated and not worth their while. The two companies that submitted a bid to build the Yukon Party's innovative approach were both rejected.

Why were the bids rejected and how does the government plan to rescue their innovative approach for Lot 262?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I would like to thank the member opposite for the question.

As we indicated in announcing the process that we entered into with Lot 262, it was an innovative process. It is something that has been done in other jurisdictions to proceed in a manner that leverages government assets in that type of manner. We were entering into an innovative approach to see how it worked in the Yukon. There was strong private sector interest expressed last fall.

The bids that were submitted did not meet the minimum terms of the tender package, so we will be reviewing the situation, including talking to those who indicated an interest in this property last fall, to try to get a clear understanding of why they did not submit bids — whether it was factors such as the increase in properties that are available right now in the housing market; uncertainty related to the city zoning process, site conditions or tender specifications. Once we evaluate that, we will determine next steps for Lot 262.

Ms. White: The Yukon Party government's innovative approach to address the woeful lack of affordable housing in the territory was to put land up for bid to the private sector with certain conditions. The government said that they were going to use this approach for Lot 262 — evaluate the process and employ — and I quote: "similar approaches to other titled property owned by the Yukon government within the City of Whitehorse."

This approach seems to be in danger of failure, and there is a need to reflect and evaluate. Yukoners want to hear what this government has learned and hear how it intends to use the tools at its disposal to get affordable units built sooner rather than later.

Mr. Speaker, what has this government learned from the Lot 262 process, and how will this lead to solutions that will result in the construction of affordable housing units as soon as possible?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: What I would point out is that one of the factors we were aware of, and that always exists in trying a new approach, is you have to evaluate how well that works.

In this particular case, there were very strong private sector interests last fall when we did the expression-of-interest stage on Lot 262. At this point in time, we are reviewing the situation, including talking to those who indicated an interest in this property last fall to try to get a clear understanding of why they didn't submit a bid — whether there were factors, such as the significant increase to the number of properties that are available on the housing market now, or that are in development right now, whether there were factors related to the city's process and the conditions that they would apply, whether there were factors related to the site, or whether there were factors

related to the tender specifications. We will be doing that review and evaluating it and then determining the next steps for Lot 262. Again, as I indicated to the member, this type of approach has been used in other jurisdictions to place specific conditions around government assets, such as land.

But despite the strong private sector interest we received last fall during the development of the approach, neither of the bids that were submitted were eligible.

Ms. White: The real issue is the housing crisis and the lack of affordable rental housing for Yukoners. The Yukon Party government put a lot of faith in the success of Lot 262 as their solution, which now appears to be off the rails. We were promised a housing solution for the end of 2013. Meanwhile, this government has \$13 million in federal, affordable housing dollars sitting in their bank account. The Yukon Party has presided over this housing crisis. It watched from the sidelines as the crisis built and its private sector solution now appears to have failed.

When will the Yukon people see real action? When will Yukoners struggling to find affordable housing or struggling to pay for rising rent see some leadership from this government?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: To begin with, I must correct the record of the member's statement and remind the member that, in fact, this government has acted in the past and will continue to do so in the future with the significant investment in social housing stock — in fact more than any previous government has done. There was an increase of some 40 percent in social housing stock through Yukon Housing Corporation during the previous mandates. There is continued investment under the leadership of my colleague, the Minister responsible for Yukon Housing Corporation, and my colleague, the Minister of Community Services, has, in this year's budget, approximately \$35 million for investment in developing land.

The approach with Lot 262 was one that we identified as an innovative approach that we would put forward and evaluate also what we received through it. Unfortunately, despite the strong interest we received from the private sector last fall during the expressions-of-interest stage, we received only two bids; neither bid met the minimum eligibility requirements. They asked for subsidies that were far beyond the scope of the tender, so we will be evaluating the situation, including talking to those who indicated interest last fall to determine why they didn't submit bids — whether it was factors such as the increase of properties that are on the market and under development right now, uncertainty related to the city process, site conditions or details of the tender specifications.

Question re: Mental health services for youth

Ms. Stick: Mr. Speaker, it is Mental Health Week across Canada. Many are not aware that 18 percent of young people suffer from a mental health disorder. Suicide is the number two killer of youth between 14 and 25 years, and 90 percent of those who commit suicide have a diagnosable mental illness. Young children in Yukon also experience many mental health illnesses, including mood and anxiety disorders, eating disorders, attention deficit disorders and schizophrenia.

Currently, there is no legislation or regulations specifically looking at the diagnosis and treatment of children and youth

with mental illness besides the broad *Mental Health Act*. This is something the Yukon's Child and Youth Advocate has called for. Can the minister tell us how the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate's recommendations have been followed up on?

Hon. Mr. Graham: The Department of Health and Social Services is currently in the process of developing a mental health strategy or plan, which would be a comprehensive piece of work that would involve and impact many services within our department. Other stakeholders, as well as the public, will be invited to comment on this as time goes along. The government recognizes the importance of good mental health, not only in our adult population but in children as well. To this end, we've directed the department to develop this mental health framework and have it prepared as quickly as possible.

Ms. Stick: I thank the minister for his answer. As we know, mental health concerns are not confined just to Whitehorse. In our communities we have dedicated nurses, teachers and regional workers trying to provide a range of services such as child protection, social assistance, justice and health care emergencies, to name a few. Many try but are not trained to provide the mental health supports that children and adults and their families might require.

Can the minister tell the House how this government will assist the professionals in the communities with training to assist in the assessment, treatment and support of mental health illness?

Hon. Mr. Graham: I am not sure if the member opposite is aware, but a couple of years ago, as part of the THSSI funding from Ottawa, a number of rural communities received mental health workers. Not all communities received these workers; in fact, some were stationed in communities and had responsibility to travel from community to community. This program was slated to end in 2012 this year, on April 1; however, we were successful in having funding extended until 2014.

At the present time, we are going to evaluate the first few years of this program and see how it met the needs of these rural communities. At the end of 2014, we will be in a position to have something in place.

Ms. Stick: I am pleased to hear of the continued funding. It is important to our communities that people be able to receive the support and care that they need in their homes. We are also aware that some individuals involved in the criminal justice system also suffer from mental illness. Many of these individuals are in and out of our jails on a regular basis. Their mental illness may be a symptom of their addictions or their mental illness, when not treated, leads them into trouble with the law. While in jail, some are treated with medications that may help with their mental illness, and some receive the support and structure they need to function, but upon leaving, planning is poor and often non-existent, and soon enough, they are back in our jails. Can the minister tell us how individuals with mental illness in the justice system and, in particular, in our correctional system, are being assessed, treated and supported?

Hon. Mr. Graham: Our initiatives in the past have included hiring a youth mental health clinician. This person

does assessments of folks with mental problems. We also have an early intervention system for those individuals diagnosed or recognized as having psychosis. We've also expanded the out-of-territory support for those with complex needs as they apply to children. This was not previously available and, in fact, it was only available to those in custody. It has now been expanded to all people in the territory. So, between those three things, we're attempting to address some of the problems stated by the member opposite.

I think with the development of the mental health strategy as we progress we'll be in a position to answer even more of the questions addressed by the member opposite. Thank you.

Question re: Social housing

Mr. Elias: Whitehorse has a significant homelessness problem. The issue has received a lot of attention in recent years and the government has vowed to take steps to provide emergency shelters. Other jurisdictions have had success with wet shelters. Wet shelters do not require sobriety from people who stay there and staff may provide small amounts of alcohol to residents to lower and balance out their alcohol consumption. It is very difficult to get sober when people are living on the street. Many addicts also suffer from mental illness and the dual diagnosis makes it very difficult to get well without reliable housing and support.

In responding to the homelessness problem, is the minister including in his considerations, the creation of a wet shelter in Whitehorse?

Hon. Mr. Graham: I thank the member opposite for the question because this is a question that has come up often in our discussions about where we are proceeding with shelter and housing, or the hard-to-house or people with complex medical needs such as alcoholism or mental problems. We are in the process of looking at the system.

We recognize the fact that there are a couple of wet shelters in Canada at the present time, one in Ottawa and another, Seaton House in Toronto. We've looked at those. We are also aware that as part of the Beaton and Allen report, there was a sobering centre in Winnipeg that they actually visited. We're compiling all of those things. We are not looking at a wet centre at the present time. I know in Whitehorse currently we have what might be termed a "damp" centre which is the Salvation Army centre where people are admitted even though they may be intoxicated, but they're not admitted if they're in possession of alcohol.

So we're looking at all of those things at the present time.

Mr. Elias: I thank the minister for his answer, because it's important that we don't shy away from these difficult issues but try to solve these problems together.

Wet shelters provide significant benefits to users as well as to the community at large. For lifetime alcoholics, a wet shelter is their first step to getting well. Studies show that alcohol consumption plummets — sometimes up to 400 percent — and there are fewer incidents with police, fewer trips to the emergency room and residents report a better quality of life and are more likely to receive immunizations and preventive health care. The community gets benefits from wet shelters, too, as

people are off the street and are not in the hospital or in RCMP custody.

Would the minister agree that most Yukoners would like to see reduced policing and emergency costs and fewer homeless people sleeping on the street?

Hon. Mr. Graham: Anything that resolves those issues would be a plus to us.

I think we also have to recognize that there is a difference between not only the damp shelters, but there are wet shelters and then there is a sobering centre. We have put almost \$645,000 or \$665,000 into the sobering centre at the Sarah Steele Building — the medical detoxification centre. That's a program we want to see up and running before we make any further decisions with respect to wet shelters.

We realize that a wet shelter is something that is intended to offer longer term shelter and a managed alcohol program. Some of the statistics reported by the member opposite are early indicators that it may work. But we have also had statistics from some of the American wet shelters that have shown that, over time, they don't always work as well as they did in the initial stages. We are waiting to look at the information that is compiled over the longer term. Hopefully, then, with the detox centre, we will be in a position to make a well-informed decision.

Mr. Elias: One of the reasons why I'm asking this question on the floor of the House today and is the fact of the matter is that in our territory our citizens are actually dying on the street — our homeless people. That's a fact in our capital city and at some point in time other jurisdictions actually took a calculated risk in the best interests of their citizens, because they had a responsibility to do something.

In their recommendations for addressing acutely intoxicated persons at risk, Dr. Beaton and Chief Allen described how the City of Ottawa provides both wet and dry, or alcohol-free, shelters. Ottawa's wet and dry shelters are close to each other, which means the wet shelter is not further ghettoized. Although access to more supportive levels of housing is preferential, based on clients' demonstrated responsibility, people who stay at the wet shelter are not excluded from those services.

Has the minister heard from individuals and community service organizations in the field that have an opinion or would be supportive of a wet shelter in Whitehorse?

Hon. Mr. Graham: During our conversations with a number of non-government organizations in town, both the minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation and I have heard of organizations within the municipality that support wet centres.

We're still, as I said, investigating the possibility. There are always two sides to every story. We would like to have a little longer experience with some of the shelters outside of the territory. We want to see ourselves compile a few more facts before we make any commitment one way or the other.

Question re: Education forum

Mr. Silver: Over a year ago, the Department of Education put on the First Nations Education Summit and the New Horizons Education Summit, co-hosted with the Council of

Yukon First Nations and Yukon College. One of the objectives of this summit was to develop a rural strategy that would address the unique needs of students outside of Whitehorse. As the minister is aware, Yukon rural students have significantly lower levels of engagement in the school system, and that affects their academic success. The rural strategy is meant to start addressing those problems so that students from Yukon communities can get more out of their education. Can the minister provide an update on what has been accomplished with respect to the rural strategy since April 2011?

Hon. Mr. Kent: We anticipate that rural action plan advisory committee meetings will commence this fall, the fall of 2012.

What I said during debate on the Department of Education earlier in this session is that five areas have been identified as the pillars of the rural action plan, including trades and apprenticeships, human resource practices to support rural schools, First Nation language and culture, community partnerships and programming. We have seen some short-term actions taken already with respect to all five of those pillars. As we work toward the full implementation of the rural action plan, I expect to add more and more short-term measures as we move through that process.

Mr. Silver: Mr. Speaker, there have been a lot of studies and a lot of recommendations when it comes to improving our school system. When it comes to rural students' needs, what we actually need is action. We know that many rural teachers in rural schools want to improve their students' success, but they need leadership from the Department of Education to make this happen. Teachers have relayed to us that this rural strategy has yet to get off the ground. Administrators inform us that they submitted names for committee work through the Association of Yukon School Administrators last fall, but nothing has happened since.

Can the minister tell us how many meetings have taken place with schools to implement rural strategies and what those meetings have produced?

Hon. Mr. Kent: Earlier this year, the department put together a technical team to review and correlate all the data that it has on rural schools, and that data and that work will form the basis of where the advisory committee begins its work this fall. As I mentioned, there are a number of short-term measures that have been worked on going back as far as last year. When we look at First Nation programming, for instance, we can point to the 11 Promethean boards that were just purchased and are being put in place to deal with First Nation language programming.

There is, of course, the experiential education program that is run in Old Crow; there are a number of initiatives across all five pillars that are taking place; and we continue to roll out those short-term initiatives with an eye to fully implement a rural action plan after we hear back from the committee, which, as I mentioned, will start regular meetings this fall.

Mr. Silver: I thank the minister for his commitment to starting these strategies and plans. As the minister is familiar, one of the particular challenges facing the rural schools is engagement. We have a disturbing rate of low engagement, and

we can see that through the fact that a lot of students often do not come to school. Rural students actually missed, on average, 43 days last year, and that is one out of every four school days, as the minister told us earlier on in this session.

Robert Service School, where I had the pleasure of teaching for many years, is often identified as a source of best practices for rural schools. That includes administrative procedures, programming initiatives, and relations with First Nation communities.

What guarantees can the minister provide that the unique expertise of our rural educators will be implemented through these new rural strategies, and when will this work get underway in earnest?

Hon. Mr. Kent: Again, with respect to rural schools and some of the challenges that they face in our communities, the member opposite referenced attendance figures. That is certainly one of the measures where we see some challenges with rural schools. Again, that is something, as I have said before, that is going to take the entire school community to address. We need the work of the department, educators in the communities and the parents. Of course, the parents have to be partners in education when we're delivering this type of programming, no matter if it is in Whitehorse or outside of Whitehorse.

With respect to engaging educators on this, I am certainly in the unique position, as Minister of Education, to have members of both opposition parties who have been rural educators and bring years of experience. It would be a mistake on my part to ignore their expertise, and I look forward to working with them as we go through these rural plans and having them provide meaningful input and engagement as we move to develop the rural action plan.

Question re: French language services

Ms. White: Imaginez qu'il est 23 h, votre jeune enfant commence à avoir de la difficulté à respirer, vous vous précipitez à l'hôpital. Lorsque vous arrivez et que les infirmières et les docteurs réagissent, vous pouvez sentir la tension, mais vous n'avez aucune idée de ce qui se passe. Personne ne peut vous expliquer le problème parce que personne ne parle français. Vous restez là, à vous sentir perdu et effrayé.

No parent is at their best bringing a child to the emergency department late at night. The French Language Services Directorate develops and implements French language service plans. Consultation with the Yukon French-speaking community is part of the directorate's mandate. Can the minister responsible provide an update about its consultation with the French-speaking community, what specific needs were identified and how they are reflected in the French Language Directorate's plans for this year?

Hon. Mr. Graham: I can't speak for the French directorate, but I can speak for the hospital services. The Yukon Hospital Corporation makes every effort to have a French-speaking person on staff at all times in the emergency area. Outside of that service at the hospital that I'm aware of, I don't have much else to add.

Ms. White: Imaginez que l'état de votre vieille mère se met soudainement à détériorer... vous lui demandez pour-

quoi. Elle vous explique que le travailleur qui parlait français ne vient plus. Elle n'arrive pas à communiquer correctement avec le nouveau travailleur pour obtenir les soins dont elle a besoin. Son nouveau travailleur parle seulement anglais.

As they age, many of our elders fall back on familiar knowledge and language from childhood. It is of critical importance that patients understand their medications — proper dosage and possible side effects. Translation services are also very important in moments of crisis — issues of safety or security.

Can the minister responsible tell us what access the French community has to emergency translation services for essential matters including medical issues in and outside of the emergency department, and safety issues that may involve ambulance, fire and police?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I thank the member opposite for her question. Of course, through the work of the French Language Services Directorate, we continue to provide support to all Yukon government departments and corporations through translation, through revision, French web coordination services, enabling the government to keep French-speaking Yukoners very informed about programs and service delivery as prescribed through the various departments.

We continue to work with Yukon's francophone community, as well, in terms of certainly making aware their priorities and articulating those through the respective departments. As you can appreciate, throughout the Government of Yukon, each and every department is responsible for providing those respective services. We recognize that a lot of work has been done in terms of making more services and programs available to francophone citizens in French, but also recognize full well that more needs to be done.

Ms. White: Ces scénarios sont une réalité pour 10 percent de la population. Il y des moments où des informations de base qui peuvent sauver la vie, ne peuvent être transmises à cause d'un manque de service en français. La communauté francophone est une part vitale et grandissante de la population du Yukon.

We are interested in the French Language Services Directorate's funds being used as efficiently as possible according to the priorities of the French community. Mr. Speaker, in its hiring policy, how does the Government of Yukon assist the mandate of the French Language Services Directorate? How does it track the number of staff who are bilingual and willing to be of service when necessary?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Mr. Speaker, when it comes to the French Language Services Directorate, we certainly work very closely with all respective departments, including the Public Service Commission, Department of Health, Department of Community Services and all departments and responsibilities.

We are committed to fulfilling our obligations under the *Languages Act* for provision of French language services for all Yukoners. Certainly, when it comes to staffing bilingual positions, it's very similar for staffing other Yukon government positions in this regard.

When it comes to our directorate we are very engaged in terms of having adopted French language policy, having adopted guidelines for advertising, publishing, and other forms

of communication in French. We have helped establish the interdepartmental committee of French Language Services coordinators in each and every department and agency. We have helped establish an advisory committee on the French Language Services — again, subcommittees of the deputy ministers — and of course we are also working to establish a working group to review bilingual staffing practices in this regard as well.

Question re: Southern Lakes caribou

Ms. Moorcroft: I had the pleasure of meeting with the grade 4 and 5 class from Golden Horn Elementary School earlier this week. That same class is in the gallery today. The students told me about a town hall meeting they acted out that concerned the impacts of possible resource development on the Southern Lakes caribou herd. The Minister of Environment has commented on some aspects of his department's plans to protect the Southern Lakes caribou, but I would like to dig a little deeper today.

Will the minister bring forward a clear plan to address road kills of caribou in the Southern Lakes areas?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Thanks to the member opposite for the question, as well as to the class from Golden Horn for raising the very important issue. We do know that collisions between wildlife and traffic on the highway are a problem.

Indeed, in the southern Yukon, my understanding is that as of 2012, there have been six accidents as a result of collisions between animals and traffic on the highway. That is, of course, a concern for us — both as a safety concern in terms of the traffic, as well as concern for the wildlife themselves. So I'll ask my officials in the Department of Environment — specifically our regional biologist in the southern Yukon — to work with officials in the Department of Highways and Public Works, as well as with First Nations and community members, to attempt to identify problems and solutions for right-of-way management and to reduce attractants near or on highways. It's my hope that these discussions will result in the development of a collaborative strategy to assess effectiveness, increasing driver awareness and reducing attractants.

Ms. Moorcroft: I'd like to thank the minister for his answer. I've heard that between six and 10 Southern Lakes caribou are run over each winter. So, while the Southern Lakes caribou herd is increasing, it is still not out of the woods yet. Over a 10-year period, each caribou cow will produce another 23 caribou. That means if five cows are lost each year to traffic accidents, we have cut the population by more than 100 animals in 10 years.

What I would like to hear from the minister is that in directing his department to develop a plan of action, will he set measurable goals for the reduction of accidents and the loss of caribou? He mentioned more signs during key times of the year when caribou are crossing would be helpful, and I would like to see a pilot project implemented to address salt use on our highways, because the caribou lick the salt on the road.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: The member opposite, and of course the class from Golden Horn are correct: road kills on the Yukon highways are a conservation concern for small woodland caribou herds that are declining or have uncertain status.

Many of their winter ranges intersect with primary highways in Yukon. Of course, as I said, I will ask the regional biologist in southern Yukon to work with the Department of Highways and Public Works, First Nations, and community members to come up with a plan that would include, as the member said, increasing driver awareness through signage, as well as working with the Department of Highways and Public Works to limit or change their use of maintenance products, which attract animals to the highway — anything that we can do to reduce that number.

As I said, my understanding is that six animals have died already this year. Anything that we can do to reduce that number is of benefit to those herds.

Ms. Moorcroft: I appreciate the efforts made by the Department of Environment and by the minister. We do understand that managing wildlife and our interactions with them can be difficult and that plans and projects change.

We also understand that the government needs to speak with other departments, with our partners and with First Nations.

So let me ask the minister this: If this direction that he provides to the department works, will the minister expand it to other areas such as the Rancheria area where the caribou are also killed on the road?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Thanks for the suggestion from the member opposite. I would say yes — if we are successful in this area, it would be only logical to extend that program throughout the Yukon. I would say, though, that in addition, there are a number of things that we continue to do to try to address this issue — brushing in the ditches of the highways, as well as reducing our usage of products that attract animals to the highway and increasing the signage and driver awareness to prevent drivers from having collisions with animals.

Furthermore, I would like to offer, at least at this point, that if there is interest in the classroom at Golden Horn Elementary School, I would be happy to suggest having our biologist visit the classroom and discuss these matters, so that the kids in the classroom can have their input into this process as well.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed. We will now proceed with Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Elias: With your indulgence, Mr. Speaker, I ask that all members in the Assembly join me in welcoming two of my constituents today, Mr. Shawn Bruce and Mr. Peter Abel.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Cathers: 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 (Ms. McLeod): Order. Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

The matter before the Committee today is Bill No. 6, *First Appropriation Act, 2012-13*. We are going to continue general debate on Vote 2, Executive Council Office. Would the members like a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

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

Bill No. 6: *First Appropriation Act, 2012-13* — continued

Chair: The matter before the Committee is Bill No. 6, *First Appropriation Act, 2012-13*. We're continuing general debate on Vote 2, Executive Council Office.

Executive Council Office — continued

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I had the pleasure of presenting information to this House on Tuesday, May 1, about the programs of the Executive Council Office. As I noted then, the Executive Council Office is a central agency with responsibility for supporting Cabinet governance and the effective functioning of government. It also provides corporate leadership and services in a range of areas and works closely with departments to support their work and to ensure overall coordination on broad issues and priorities.

As I described to this House, the Executive Council Office officials are involved in various ways in relationships with other governments within the Yukon, across Canada and internationally. Our engagement in these forums helps to ensure that Yukon is well-positioned to contribute to the Canadian Confederation. During the debate on Tuesday, the members opposite asked some specific questions about various program areas within the ECO. I would like to take a few moments to now provide the information I committed to provide before we turn to further questions about the ECO budget request for 2012-13.

On May 1 in the House, while Bill No. 6, *First Appropriation Act, 2012-13*, Executive Council Office, was being debated, the Leader of the Official Opposition asked some questions, and I'm happy to provide further detailed answers to those questions.

With regard to the *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act*, or YESAA, the three parties — Canada, the Council of Yukon First Nations and Yukon — agreed to initiate a five-year review by May 2008. We're five years after the act came into force. In fact, the review was initiated in April 2008. No specific time was given to complete the review.

A consultant agreed to by the parties submitted an observations and conclusion report to the review steering committee in October 2009. The parties, First Nations and the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board formally met six times, from January 2010 to June 2011, to discuss the report's recommendations. The parties and First Nations have reached agreement, without prejudice, on the majority of the recommendations with less than a handful of outstanding issues that the parties have not yet reached an agreement upon. The review steering committee completed a draft report and members submitted it to their organizations for review and analysis in June of 2011. Based on the responses to the draft review report and the lack of resolution on specific issues, the parties drafted an interim report in April of 2012. Yukon and Canada have agreed to the wording of this report and the Council of Yukon First Nations is currently reviewing it.

The Department of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada is submitting the interim report to its minister for direction on concluding the YESAA five-year review. One-third of the recommendations that came out of the review have been implemented and work continues on addressing the identified issues and improving the YESAA process.

The Leader of the Official Opposition also sought information about the recently established YESAA forum, and I can tell you that the Government of Canada and Yukon, Yukon First Nations, the Council of Yukon First Nations, and the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board are engaged in a working level YESAA forum to address 20 of the issues arising from the five-year review.

The first meeting of the YESAA forum was held on April 11 and 12, 2012. The members in attendance accepted a draft terms of reference to guide the operations of the forum. Formal government acceptance of the terms of reference has not been initiated by the members at this time. The first meeting of the forum dealt with the selection of five issues to be dealt with over the next year and included presentations and discussions about cumulative effects. The five issues were these: education about cumulative effects; involvement of First Nations in the YESAA process outside of the decision-making process; implementing mitigations; preparing guidance documents; and addressing socio-economic mitigations. Future agendas will examine other YESAA-related issues identified in the five-year review process.

In follow-up to another question from the Leader of the Official Opposition about the government no longer including a question about the number of minimum wage earners from the labour force survey, I can provide the following information. The Leader of the Official Opposition probably intended to mean the Yukon business survey, rather than the federal labour force survey. There was a question on minimum wage in the Yukon business survey. The member is correct that the question was recently removed and it might be helpful to provide a bit of history. It was decided in 2008 to include a minimum wage question in the 2008 and 2009 Yukon business survey. This request was made by departments funding the survey. The survey indicated that 98 workers earned minimum wage in 2008 and 37 people earned minimum wage in 2009 out of over

10,000 workers. The question was removed from the 2010 survey as the numbers of people reported being paid a minimum wage were very low in the previous surveys and the departments who sponsored the survey no longer felt that further tracking was required on an ongoing basis.

The departments that were involved in funding the survey and reviewing the questions are Economic Development and Tourism and Education.

On Tuesday, during the ECO debate, the Leader of the Official Opposition asked a question about water use fees and whether there was any change for large scale industrial use of water and water use fees.

There has been no change in fees for 10 years. The water licence fees for industrial, miscellaneous and quartz projects are set according to the quantity of water use licensed, plus the application fee of \$30.

The member opposite also asked if the Land Claims and Implementation Secretariat is currently negotiating any program and service transfer agreements on behalf of Yukon. These are now referred to as the assumption of responsibility agreements, or ARAs. The secretariat is currently negotiating assumption of responsibility agreements around alcohol and drug services. While there are discussions on other matters taking place with First Nation governments, this is right now the only active file.

I think that answers the questions that we had and I'll sit down and see if we have any further questions.

Ms. Hanson: Thank you, Madam Chair, and I thank the minister responsible for Executive Council Office for providing those responses. It's very helpful to get an update on YESAA. When it was negotiated as the development assessment process in the land claims, it was envisioned that this would be an innovative approach to dealing with environmental and socio-economic aspects of assessment of minor and major projects throughout the territory.

It's also encouraging to hear that this five-year review is focusing on some of the issues that people anticipated would need to be addressed as the implementation of YESAA in the territory moves forward — in particular, the issues of cumulative effects and mitigation. Those are incredibly important pieces.

I appreciate the update on the minimum wage from the statistics bureau and certainly we'll want to come back at a future date with respect to a conversation on industrial use of water in the territory. I love the way acronyms change — so now we have PSDAs evolving into ARAs. That's a fun aspect of public service.

I think there are only four elements of the Executive Council Office that remain to be discussed today. I thank the officials for providing updates and additional information with respect to the aspects of the question on the northern strategies funding. I just wanted to — because that triggered a question for me — so, the northern strategy trust was established, I believe, in the mid-2000s.

We see, sort of laced throughout the budget, that it is accessed for different purposes by First Nations and different aspects of the territorial government. I would be interested in

knowing what balance remains of this initial \$40-million investment by Canada?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: While all the money has not yet been spent, all the money has been allocated to projects. There is no more new money for the northern strategy trust at this time. We are waiting for reports back now from the 2011-12 year, but in terms of opportunities for further investment under that strategy, that fund has "sunsetting".

Ms. Hanson: I just have a couple of quick questions with respect to the position that is in the Executive Council Office, as sort of an umbrella that the Executive Council Office forms — the office of the science advisor. From the website, we are told that the office of the science advisor advises on scientific policy and strategy, develops and applies scientific knowledge, and increases scientific awareness and literacy within the Yukon government and Yukon in general.

From that, Madam Chair, I take it that the advisor has two main functions: education and policy work. So I have a couple of questions for the minister. First of all, how has the Yukon science advisor been involved in forming policy and government strategy? Does the Yukon government bring in — and how do they do that — the science advisor when discussing matters of economic, environmental and environmental sustainability?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: As this has been a relatively new role that the government is committed to, I think we can look at a couple of different examples.

One of the roles the science advisor can play is where there is a potential economic impact, such as the pine beetle infestation in British Columbia, and having this individual be able to do the research, and then be able to then provide the support and information to the specific line department to give them advice and counsel.

In terms of the evolution of the policy, I think that we are still, in fact, in the infancy of combining this science and knowledge and then working it into where we are going, in terms of the government policy. I know that the individual has been utilized to be able to be a part of many scientific forums that are going on, both in a learning and a representative responsibility for the Yukon, and being able to bring this back, first to share where we are as a territory, and also to bring back information for us. Certainly, this individual has been active in climate change evaluation issues and International Polar Year Research findings — certainly, sharing information, being responsible for that and advising on future research.

We talked on Tuesday about the Beaufort as well. On issues like that, about the necessity to be able to have the scientific knowledge that's required as well — that position will play an increasing role for us.

Ms. Hanson: I thank the minister for that response. Just one last question, or clarification, on the role of the science advisor then — it sounds to me like it's partially a research function as well. If the government wants to hear what the science advisor has — or is it an expectation that the role of the science advisor is to provide that sort of — well, for want of another term, "honest broker"? Like this is what you need to take into consideration when you are looking at the impact of

this government initiative with respect to climate change or with respect to renewable energy. Where do they get inserted in the process here?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I guess, to clarify, I mean this position isn't actually doing research, but actually is a person who can gather and poll information and look at research that has been done on specific issues wherever those places are within the world that are doing the cutting-edge research on issues that are important to Yukoners.

They're not actually out doing the science, but there on behalf of the government, being able to pull this together to be able to provide the government's departments with this information as it is evolving, because that's what science is. Part of that job then is to gather information that's pertinent — gather the information regarding research, and provide information to senior officials as a result of the information that she has been able to ascertain.

Ms. Hanson: I thank the minister for his response. I just have one area of questioning and then I believe the Member for Takhini-Kopper King has one or two questions as well.

The last area that I have in this is the whole aspect of the administration of public inquiries and plebiscites. The *Public Inquiries Act* indicates that an inquiry can be made into any matter connected with the conduct of the public business of the Yukon, or a public concern.

It's always reassuring to see the approach used, at least indicating that government recognizes that there's a potential for the need of any of these things by marking it with "one dollar", which is a signal that government's aware that there's potential for an expenditure in that area.

My question for the minister is — we've heard requests in light of the fact that there hasn't been a coroner's inquest into the deaths in Porter Creek. What would make the determination that a matter is of sufficient public concern to generate a public inquiry?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: It's an interesting question. I think there are a lot of things that would factor into whether there is a need or not, of an inquiry, and what we're trying to find out. Is there something that we need to find out? I think, in the matter about which the member opposite was speaking, there is still outstanding information we're waiting to hear before making any ultimate decision.

But with regard to public inquiries and plebiscites, to my recollection there has never been a plebiscite in the Yukon. The last public inquiry was in 1997, so 15 years ago was the last public inquiry.

Ms. Hanson: I would just like to probe a little bit further, in terms of what the guiding principles for this government would be with respect to establishing that the nature of an issue is of sufficient public concern to conduct an inquiry.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I think there are a lot of factors that would need to be considered when determining whether or not there should be a public inquiry — how long it will take, what it will cost, what we will learn from it, and is there something we can take away as a result of that? Those would be all of the things that would not be the only determinants of deciding on whether there should be a public inquiry, but certainly

those would be things that the government would need to consider in determining the need for a public inquiry.

Ms. Hanson: I appreciate the minister's response, and I hope that he will take seriously the expressed concerns of many Yukoners about the absolute need for a public inquiry into the issues not solely related to the deaths in Porter Creek, but the issues that gave rise to those deaths.

The last aspect is, of course, that we note that there is, again, a \$1 marker for the notion of always the potential in any democracy, and the *Plebiscite Act* says that, "Whenever it appears to the Commissioner in Executive Council ..." — to government — "that an expression of opinion of the public is necessary or desirable on any matter, the Commissioner in Executive Council may direct by regulation that a plebiscite be held."

I wonder if the minister opposite has given thought to conducting a plebiscite on a matter that seems to have considerable public expressions of interest, that being the Peel River watershed?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I think, in fact, we did on October 11.

Ms. White: I would like to thank the official for being here today. My questions are specifically related toward the Youth Directorate, and that is where I am going to go.

I was on the website and I printed out the page and it talks about the goals: to improve overall services to young people; increase youth awareness of initiatives throughout Yukon; increase youth involvement in programs for youth; help youth contribute to their communities in a positive way; and to improve the health of Yukon youth. I was wondering how one measures those goals.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Evaluation of the Youth Directorate funding programs is an ongoing activity within the Executive Council Office. As recipients of the funding are youth-service providers across the territory, the department has worked directly with these service providers and with interdepartmental committees to ensure accountability is addressed both at the front end of the funding approval process as well as during the life of each project or program funding agreement.

The approach is one that balances accountability with reasonable expectations for reporting. It does not impose a cumbersome process on recipients, recognizing that many are non-governmental organizations run simply by volunteers trying to make a difference. The approach taken is different for those organizations receiving ongoing program funding and those receiving funding that is project-specific. For the ongoing program funding agreements with youth-serving organizations here in Whitehorse, department officials meet with the board of each organization at least once every year and have regular meetings with the executive director of each organization.

At these meetings, department officials are able to provide updates on the strategic objectives that the government funding is to meet and the organization is able to discuss ways in which they can deliver this programming to meet those objectives. It is an opportunity to talk about how accountability for program delivery is being documented and provide suggestions for improvements. In the past couple of years, this has resulted in new forms of reporting the plans of the organization at the be-

gining of the year and also their quarterly financial and program activity reporting. As I mentioned at the beginning, this form of continuous evaluation and improvement has proven successful with these program funding agreements and we will continue to use this process.

For funding programs that are application-driven — the youth investment fund and the youth leadership activities program — evaluation activities are again informal in nature and incremental. Internal to government, both funding programs are supported by interdepartmental committees with representatives from numerous departments. Part of the annual business cycle for each of these committees includes a review of the application forms in advance of the funding period.

Then, as organizations are reporting on their activities, the committee reviews the kinds of programming involved, reported benefits for youth in each community, the extent to which the programs were offered to a broad range of youth in the community, and basically some other local factors, as well. This ongoing evaluation then informs recommendations to the Youth Directorate for changes in the subsequent year. Sponsors of projects are encouraged to actively seek direct feedback from youth participants in the programs offered, as well. So the year-end reports include both quantitative and qualitative feedback on how well the youth thought the objectives of the program were met. Sometimes even the actual hand-written comments on youth evaluation forms are also provided, which certainly provides program administrators with a direct basis on which to assess the impact the programs are having on the youth in the various communities.

Ms. White: I thank the minister for his answers, but I was asking about how the Youth Directorate self-evaluates. One of the goals, for example, is to improve overall services to young people or to increase youth awareness of initiatives throughout the Yukon, so how does the directorate self-measure? How can we be sure that we are increasing youth awareness of initiatives? How is the directorate improving overall services to young people — that kind of self-evaluation?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I think there are a number of ways that can both subjectively and objectively review what's happening. For example, how many people — it's as easy as looking at how many people are looking at the website, what the comments are and the number of comments we get back as a result of program delivery.

Within the component itself, I think as a government we think it is very important that we continue to have an opportunity to look at programs and see whether the programs are meeting their objectives. Are they providing value for Yukoners? Are they providing the most value they can? How do we continue to evolve as I sort of described answering the previous question about the continuous re-evaluation of what we're doing, because it is a very fluid thing, especially with youth. I can speak personally about that, and we will continue look at both subjective and objective ways of evaluation to continue to hopefully address the needs that are out there and provide the funding in a manner that is most efficient and has the best im-

pact for taxpayers' dollars to provide those services and programs for youth.

Ms. White: When I was on the website, I was looking under "community support" and I was able to find out which organizations within the City of Whitehorse — Bringing Youth Towards Equality, Youth of Today Society, Boys and Girls Club of Whitehorse and the Comité Espoir Jeunesse — are funded. It talks about how there are other societies in Yukon that are funded. Can you please give me an idea of what organizations are funded outside of the City of Whitehorse?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: As I sort of described earlier, I think it can be application-based, so they entertain applications from — it could be from the municipality, from a group of volunteers, from the First Nation. So groups can look at this funding in a variety of ways and come forward with an application with their idea on how they would like to make a difference. I think it's an opportunity, again, to acknowledge the work that — as I had said, a lot of times these things are being delivered by volunteers themselves — people within their community, who are committed to ensuring that our youth today have things to do and keeping them busy and ensuring that they have the best chances they can to be successful.

In 2012-13, seventeen communities will receive between \$15,000 and \$25,000 — basically based on the size of the community — to apply for community-based programs to help make a difference within their community.

Ms. White: I, too, would like to acknowledge the work that these organizations and these volunteers do. I know that growing up in Whitehorse — back when I was in high school, we had Tim Hortons that was open 24 hours a day, and we had the pool hall. So they offered places to go, but we have come a long way. I acknowledge that, and I'm very thankful.

Are there any other organizations outside of the City of Whitehorse that receive core funding, like the groups that I listed before?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: There isn't but, as I described, I think that it creates that flexibility for people who have an idea within a community to come forward and be able to try things and see how they work in their community and find that uniqueness and I guess a lot of times what they feel that kids are going to buy into and be committed and involved. I think that provides that flexibility with the smaller base that we have and the smaller communities.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

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

Hon. Mr. Dixon: I would like to ask members to join me in welcoming Kluane Adamek, the director of First Nations Education with the Council of Yukon First Nations.

Applause

Ms. White: I was wondering if the minister was aware of the girls group that has been organized in Faro and has been working very hard fundraising for activities. How would a new rising community organization go about seeking core funding from the government through the Youth Directorate?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: At this time, we don't have any organizations outside of Whitehorse that get core funding. As I mentioned, at this point, there is opportunity for individuals or groups within a community to come forward with ideas. As we've always said, we're open to hear what ideas are out there. There is always opportunity to listen to what has been brought forward and whether it's something that we can subscribe to in a manner that can make a difference while ensuring that we continue to be responsible, as well.

The NGO funding policy would provide an evaluation framework from which they could be able to move forward with that. Of course, there are youth investment projects, as well. So there are many streams that there is access to, but I think there is a framework from which interested groups could come forward.

Ms. White: Knowing now that all of the core funding arrives in Whitehorse organizations and that it's up to communities to make the applications to have their programs funded, one of the Youth Directorate's goals is to improve overall services to young people and it's to increase youth involvement in programs for youth. What is being done to reach the communities, to encourage outreach, to encourage communities to help themselves? What steps are being taken to make sure that is covered?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: One of the ministers said that I believe that the group you're talking about in Faro — there was an announcement that they just recently received some funding. So I just thought I would put that on the record.

Because I was listening to two people at one time, I'm going to say that, in terms of outreach applications, there is always youth engagement involved in where we're going and what happens and certainly the opportunity for site visits occurs as well — and I'm probably just going to get the member opposite to ask her next question and then I'll make sure I hear the whole thing this time.

Ms. White: I'm actually just going to go back to that same question, because I think it is relevant. When we talk about the goals of the Youth Directorate — so that's about community involvement and making sure that youth have access to these kinds of programs — what is being done to reach the communities, to encourage community involvement and to encourage outreach in the communities? How are we helping communities help themselves?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: The youth program advisor actually goes out to those communities and in terms of that discussion, the community has to have had that discussion with the youth to ensure that what the youth are saying is what's being brought forward in this outreach program. That advisor goes to the community and it's through the input from the youth within that community where the decisions are made.

Ms. White: That's excellent. Does the advisor go to all communities to see if there are outreach programs or programs that the youth would like to see?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: As I mentioned before, within the community, there needs to be that engagement. They would be able to talk to the youth program advisor by phone as to what

they're doing. The youth program advisor does have a rotation. Actually, the new position started in February of this year.

So, we need to see engagement by the community. That conversation starts on the phone for discussions about what the ideas are and what is the commitment in terms of the consultation with the youth in that community — and then, if we have that, there is opportunity for the advisor to make a trip to the community.

Ms. White: I thank the minister for that answer.

It makes a lot of sense for the communities that are already actively searching for that kind of assistance.

What does the Youth Directorate do for communities that may be lacking that sort of leadership within the community — communities that maybe are not having that conversation with their youth? What role does the Youth Directorate play in assisting those communities becoming more active with their youth populations?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: The position — this person is willing to meet with whomever they can and that would be the First Nation; it could be with municipal government; it could be with the RCMP; it could be with the school; it could be with the recreation person who works in that community — so there are a lot of opportunities so long as we have people who are willing to be engaged.

I got the amount — the Faro Arts and Recreation Association will receive \$4,300 for its Girls Night Out retreat: Preventing violence is what that was. As I mentioned before, there is also funding available via the youth investment fund.

Ms. White: Just to go along that same line, we're still talking about people who are looking for assistance. Is every community in the Yukon affected by grants from the Youth Directorate? Right now, is every community benefiting? For the communities that aren't benefiting, how is the Youth Directorate assisting those communities in engaging their youth?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I think I mentioned it before. I said there were 17 communities receiving between \$15,000 and \$25,000 in funding, based on the size of their community as well.

Part of this is that I want to admire the people within the communities who are making a difference for their community. I think we spoke about this with the Minister of Education as well in terms that I think we all play a role in making sure our children have the best opportunity to have a good education and to be responsible to ensure that we have things for our kids to engage them. So I think that while the government does play a role, it's not the only role in terms of youth engagement. I think there needs to be responsibility by parents and by citizens of the community as well.

So I think it's collectively, and through the efforts that government does — I'm just saying that the government's not responsible. It's not solely their job — and I want to acknowledge those people who go out of their way and put in their time to ensure that youth have those opportunities to keep them on a path for the greatest possibility for success in the future.

Ms. White: So, in that vein — that it's up to the communities to help themselves — does the Youth Directorate put on any kind of information sessions about how they could

go about organizing youth organizations or activities? If we want communities to actively help themselves, how does the Youth Directorate support those community initiatives?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I think there are a number of ways in which the government continues to reach out to support youth and communities. We were just talking about a few of them — involvement with Recreation and Parks Association of Yukon, with the website and working directly with youth service providers, bringing them in as well.

If you want to have a complete list of what's happening we'd be willing to provide you with that information.

Ms. White: That would be great. I can't find that on the website, but it's just curiosity, I guess, and an interest.

I'm going to move on to the youth investment fund. Online I found out that it provides funding to organizations for up to \$5,000 for projects like youth leadership development, training initiatives, substance abuse prevention, peer counselling, skill development programs, recreation and physical activities, and youth camps.

My question is this: When was the youth investment fund last reviewed — for example, the amounts of funding and the eligibility requirements?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: The youth investment fund is an allocation of money that is dedicated to youth projects through an application process. It is supported by the Department of Community Services, Education, Executive Council Office, through the Youth Directorate, Health and Social Services, Justice and the Women's Directorate.

When we talk about youth, we mean people who are under the age of 19. As the member stipulated, organizations can apply for up to \$5,000 per project. Any Yukon organization that is a legal entity can apply. These include registered non-profit organizations in good standing; municipalities and unincorporated communities; First Nation governments or organizations; school committees or councils. Individuals cannot apply directly to the youth investment fund.

Does the youth investment fund approve money for any youth project? The answer to that is no. Money tends to be approved for projects that engage youth in positive opportunities. Common themes for projects include: youth leadership and training initiatives; substance abuse prevention; peer counselling; skill development programs; recreation and physical activities and youth camps. Every youth investment fund project is certainly unique. Projects should include as many of the following items as possible. They create social and recreational opportunities for youth. They should promote self-esteem and positive self image among youth.

They should promote leadership, skill development and training; it should promote increased employment and educational opportunities for youth; it should encourage the development of positive lifestyle choices and have youth play a meaningful part in the planning and, really, the running of the project; build bridges between youth and adults within the community; and involve a variety of people, support and resources from the community and add to what the community already has going for it.

What can you do with the money? You can pay wages; you can provide an honorarium; you can use it for rentals, lease of room space or equipment; program supplies or materials; production of resources, such as pamphlets, posters or manuals; travel within the Yukon or, in some instances, bring speakers or facilitators to the Yukon; travel, meals, actual costs for food, gas and that sort of thing; advertising and promotion of the project; and up to 50 percent toward the purchase of equipment to a maximum of \$1,000, and the equipment must be essential to the project.

The money, I think, is currently at \$102,000. Guidelines are reviewed annually. Funding — I would have to check when it was increased last. It has remained static the last couple of years.

Ms. White: Are there any changes to the youth investment fund anticipated?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: There are no changes this year.

Ms. White: Right now, we are at a pretty interesting point in time, where youth are becoming more involved and more active within communities, within their own communities, within school groups and becoming more aware of the things around them. My questions are more about an advisory role for youth.

How were Yukon youth consulted about legislation, regulations, programs and services that might affect them? How are they given a voice for changes that affect them directly?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I am a bit confused by the question. I am not sure what she is referring to — you know, what we should be informing them about. I do not know whether that, in fact, plays into the role of the Youth Directorate, in terms of what their responsibilities are.

Ms. White: It is a youth question, which falls under the Youth Directorate, I imagine. It is just about taking advantage of their — "their" referring to the youth — experience.

I'm trying to figure out how to say this. For example, a youth in care right now is under the care of the government until they reach 24. But lots of them don't know that. So how do we as government involve them in those discussions? Is there an advisory role for youth within government?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: The Minister of Education says he is currently resurrecting the student advisory council at the school level. We encourage everybody to get engaged. It just goes back to the point that I think, fundamentally, the government does not play a role in everything that we all do. So we're describing some of the great work and some of the opportunities from various funding sources to help youth in all Yukon communities to be able to have the best opportunity in terms of their education and giving them meaningful opportunities that will give them the best chance to be successful in their lives.

We also acknowledge that we as individuals all play a role ourselves in looking after ourselves and ensuring that we are engaged and accessible. Certainly today's generation, more so than any before, has access to information and know where to find things instantaneously when they pull out their iPhone or their BlackBerry and hit the Internet button and go to Google.

I think there are a lot of opportunities today, more so than there has been in the past. I think the communication continues

to be important. I think the good work of the Minister of Education in terms of looking at that opportunity for kids to be more engaged within the schools and with an advisory council are all great steps to help kids, to empower kids and make them feel more confident to be able to move forward and be successful.

Ms. White: I'd like to thank the Minister of Education for his vision there. I believe that by getting the youth involved in decisions that affect them on a daily basis means we're going to have a more engaged school population and hopefully that can start affecting some of the missed days.

We have advisory councils for many matters, where citizens get together to talk about the issues. They review government's plans and the legislative changes that are being proposed. Why don't we have an advisory council on youth issues that would have youth at the table?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I think that we saw it during the election. There are organizations — Bringing Youth Towards Equality — there are a lot of opportunities. There is also that responsibility for individuals to be engaged. I think right now we have a number of sources and we have described a number of different ways in which this government reaches out to hear what the needs are of youth of this community and other communities. We have also talked about the roles and responsibilities of people within the communities to be engaged to help with youth of today — being volunteers or teachers after school or RCMP in their communities. I think that there are a number of ways that we can ensure that we all play our part to give the greatest chance for each individual youth to be as successful and they can be.

Ms. White: If I were to go through the budget and look for other programs — such things as daycare, recreation, sports, dental, mental health, youth justice, transition planning and a whole bunch of other things that are directly in relation to young people — they fall under the Department of Health and Social Services.

My question is this: Why is the Youth Directorate under the Executive Council Office, and not under the Department of Health and Social Services?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I think that there are a lot of times that we could debate why a program exists in this shop or in that shop, so I think that it has existed in Executive Council Office for about the last decade.

As to why it was put there, that predates me. I mean, right now it is historic — that is the reason. I think that the thinking was that this is sort of a corporately driven program, and that is why it was under the umbrella — as the leader of the Official Opposition mentioned — of Executive Council Office, so that is I think the determination. I do not think that it speaks of where it stands in terms of priority, by saying that it needs to be in Health and Social Services versus Executive Council Office. I think that in fact it used to exist in Education.

It's about youth. When we talk about youth and engaging youth, I think we on this side of the House can be proud because we have with us right now — actually, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources I believe was the youngest elected MLA in the Yukon when he was first elected. The Min-

ister of Environment and Economic Development is the youngest minister in the Yukon as well.

I would talk about the involvement and engagement, where possible, with parents and other members within communities or the people in Whitehorse. When I talk about Whitehorse, it could be within Takhini or within Porter Creek. So I think there are people who play that role. Again, I want to acknowledge all of the people who unselfishly go out of their way.

I was actually refereeing the Yukon Invitational Swim Meet last weekend. I have been involved with swimming. With my kids being swimmers, I've been involved with swimming for many years. I have been officiating at international and Olympic trial meets. It was almost a year since I was there last.

But I went to this meet and I saw individuals who are coaching who used to have kids who were swimming in the program, but haven't been in the program now for 10 years. They are still there. Their kids are gone and they have their own lives, but they're still there with the little kids or different abilities. It doesn't matter where we look, we see examples of people who are giving back to their community and reinvesting in today's youth to give them those opportunities. I just, again, want to acknowledge that.

Ms. White: I thank the minister for the stories. So, saying that it has been historically in Executive Council Office because it got put there approximately 10 years ago when it was moved out of Education — just because it's there now and it was there before, is it the best fit to have it within the Executive Council Office, or could it possibly be better served under Health and Social Services?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Those are the kind of decisions that I would interject that if the senior officials felt that that was most warranted and came to discuss that, then those would be things that could be considered. You can always debate the merits of where is the best place. I think that I'm comfortable with where it is. However, if there was a point in time where the officials were to come back to us and say, "Here is a reason why we think that we should make a change," we're always open to that. Today it is in the Executive Council Office and I don't expect any change unless that was warranted or justified and somebody could tell me why. There has always been ways to do things. If we get to that point then we'd be certainly willing to look at that.

Ms. White: Understanding the importance and the value of the Executive Council Office and how it plays this very important role with these different organizations — we saw when we were under the debate of Highways and Public Works when I had questions for the French Language Services Directorate the confusion that ensued. Viewing that the French Language Services Directorate is important and that it also is a centralized agency, is there any thought to moving the French Language Services Directorate from the Department of Highways and Public Works into the Executive Council Office?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Not to date has there been that discussion. I think the same answer applies. Going back to the member's question about the Youth Directorate, I would say that the greatest context for which Youth Directorate is in Executive Council Office is because really it is about a leadership

role. Leadership is under the auspice of Executive Council Office. I think that putting it under Health and Social Services really limits it and sends a message that it's a more defined role. I think that having it under the auspice of Executive Council Office and the leadership role defines it in a much larger degree, if that makes sense, in terms of increasing the scope of what can be done. I think that is one of the valid reasons for continuing to leave it where it is.

Ms. White: So, using that same leadership lens and that same idea — right now the French Language Services kind of gets lost in the vastness of Highways and Public Works. At one point in time French Language Services Directorate was in the Executive Council Office. Realizing that it has a leadership role to play and that it's a very essential service to the government, are there any thoughts on having that move from the Department of Highways and Public Works into the Executive Council Office?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: As I stated, at this time, there is no interest or discussion regarding changing where any of these programs currently sit within the corporate structure.

Mr. Tredger: In earlier discussions, something that my constituents raised with me came to mind. Perhaps the minister opposite could answer the question: During the five-year review of YESAA — and if you just go back to YESAA; I apologize for missing it when it was up earlier — was there any consideration given to having a designated office in Carmacks? The Carmacks area, as we know, is centre of a lot of industrial activity. A number of people there feel they would be better served, rather than out of Mayo or out of Whitehorse, if there was a designated office in Carmacks. To me, it makes a lot of sense. I wondered whether it had come up during the five-year review and whether any consideration had been given to that, and if not, would some consideration be given to it?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Thanks to the member opposite. The five-year review wasn't doing an evaluation of site locations for where their offices are located. Also, YESAA is actually maintained through the federal offices as it is a federal piece of legislation. So we're not involved in that determination.

Mr. Tredger: Would this government, in their partnership on behalf of the citizens of Carmacks, lobby for such a designated office — or promote it?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I'm not quite sure what we would gain from that. We have an office for each area of the territory. There is one established for that area already. By increasing another office to work within the same jurisdiction is, I suspect, just duplicity — duplication. There's some debate about that word. I think that's probably not something that the federal government at this time would be willing to consider.

Mr. Tredger: Just speaking again for the people in Carmacks, I believe that since the districts were established, there has been a lot of development since then. It appears that the Carmacks area is one of the hubs of activity. We talk about the White Gold area and the Casino area, both of which can be accessed through Carmacks, and in fact are being accessed through Carmacks. Currently, the nearest designated office is in Mayo. The officers there are only able to get down on occa-

sion. The people in Carmacks who are directly affected would benefit from having face-to-face interaction. I believe that the Mayo-Tatchun area and the Dawson area are now some of the centres of most of the industrial activity. It may provide better service for all Yukoners to have those designated offices serving those areas directly. I realize that as the minister stated, it's not solely a Yukon government responsibility, but I would encourage them to take a serious look at that and to encourage the federal government to assess that, if nothing else.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: As I know that the member opposite is aware, most of the input for YESAB is done on-line and so data and required information is done on on-line. I admire the member opposite advocating on behalf of a community in his riding and I would suggest that perhaps he wants to put a pen to paper and write a letter to those authorities who make those decisions and put forward his request.

Chair: Is there any further debate on Vote 2, Executive Council Office? We are going to move to line-by-line.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Madam Chair, I think in the interest of practice in debate here, the Third Party has not asked questions and, in the interest of allowing members time to prepare to ask questions, perhaps we might want to give another moment or two for them to do so.

One comment I would just add while we are waiting to see if the Third Party wishes to provide comments at this time or ask questions of the Premier in general debate on Executive Council Office is just commenting briefly on the previous question that the Premier answered for the Member for Mayo-Tatchun.

I'll point out that the YESA process was set up with one office per assessment district. So, if the Member for Mayo-Tatchun were to write a letter to the federal government asking for an office to be put in Carmacks, that would also, consequentially, mean that if they agreed to his request, it would remove it from Mayo. Again, I think a point that I'd just add to the Premier's comments for the member's consideration is that most of the input and most of the opportunity where people hear about input that's occurred in YESAB, occurs on-line through the YESAB site. I believe the Leader of the Third Party has some questions — or appears to.

Chair: Mr. Elias, do you have questions on the Executive Council Office?

Mr. Elias: A couple.

Chair: Please go ahead.

Mr. Elias: Thank you, Madam Chair. I don't have very much today. Listening over a couple of days and hours of discussion on the Executive Council Office, I had 10 pages of notes, and they've all got checkmarks beside them because all the questions, for the most part, have been asked and answered.

But I do want to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to the staff and the Executive Council Office because they did provide a 13-page departmental overview, as well as some budget highlights that were very informative. We appreciate it, and we thank the staff within the department.

This budget provided for about two percent of the overall Yukon government budget, and the Premier and the minister responsible for the Executive Council Office has already pro-

vided an overview of the department's activities and expenditures. We thank him for his numerous explanations and answers to the questions from the Official Opposition.

Again, we only have a few more days left in this sitting, and I am going to be participating in line-by-line debate, and that is what we look forward to doing today, because I believe that all of the branches were covered and many of my questions were answered by the Premier. Thank you.

Chair: Is there any further general debate?

Then we will go on to line-by-line examination, starting on page 5-8.

On Corporate Services

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

On Cabinet and Management Support

Cabinet and Management Support in the amount of \$1,800,000 agreed to

On Policy

Policy in the amount of \$873,000 agreed to

On Communications

Mr. Elias: Can I ask the Premier for a breakdown for this line item, please?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: The funds are distributed: \$754,000 is for personnel; operating costs are \$145,000. The budget has increased by \$14,000 from the previous year, which is accounted to personnel increases.

Communications in the amount of \$899,000 agreed to

On Bureau of Statistics

Mr. Elias: I would also like a breakdown for this line item and specifically ask the question of how the Bureau of Statistics prioritizes what areas of the government or of the Yukon that it actually collects statistics for and why. How does it make those decisions in terms of collecting statistics?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: There are some core indicators that the Bureau of Statistics uses on an ongoing basis and those are either socially based or economically based.

However, departments within the corporation can come forward requesting information because of something that they're working on, to which they can then be able to provide the data. Sometimes, I think there can actually be requests from outside, as well, for data on the Yukon. For the breakdown, personnel is \$1,009,000 and operating costs are \$105,000. The budget has increased by \$84,000. Personnel costs have increased by \$51,000. The majority of the personnel increase is attributed to an additional 0.5 position, included in the budget on a one-time basis to complete work associated with the 2011 federal census.

Mr. Elias: I thank the Premier for his response. The reason why I brought up the Bureau of Statistics questions is because we, as MLAs, when Yukoners approach us to help solve a problem or an issue — and I'll use women's issues, for instance — the latest statistics that we can find that are valuable to help solve a problem in our territory are from 2006. They're done by the Government of Canada. That's just one instance. All the departments, for that matter, have issues that we try to solve, and the importance of Yukon statistics is very valuable to us as lawmakers to help solve those problems. That's why I asked the question.

Maybe I'll finish off with this — what example can I use? I guess the question is, if we're getting approached by a number of Yukoners about an issue, can we direct or put a motion forward to ask the Bureau of Statistics to collect data on that specific issue?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I want to thank the member opposite for the question. I think there's some validity. Certainly, there are always questions that are out there. I think what has to be borne in mind at any time is that there will always be a cost involved with that, as well, in terms of any time we increase workload and ask for more numbers. I think that that is one of the considerations that needs to be looked at.

Certainly, as the minister responsible for the statistics under Corporate Services, I think that's something that could be brought forward to see whether there is a need for it, or if there is data. Perhaps, as you've mentioned, sometimes we might be able to find the data being delivered through the federal government as well.

Bureau of Statistics in the amount of \$1,114,000 agreed to
Corporate Services Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$4,686,000 agreed to

On Capital Expenditures

On Office Furniture and Equipment

Office Furniture and Equipment in the amount of \$13,000 agreed to

On Information Technology Equipment and Systems

Information Technology Equipment and Systems in the amount of \$44,000 agreed to

On Building Maintenance, Renovations and Space

Ms. Hanson: Just a question, Madam Chair. Does this amount represent the costs associated with moving elements of Executive Council Office into the old library?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Yes, it does.

Building Maintenance, Renovations and Space in the amount of \$57,000 agreed to

Corporate Services Capital Expenditures in the amount of \$114,000 agreed to

Corporate Services Total Expenditures in the amount of \$4,800,000 agreed to

On Land Claims and Implementation Secretariat

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

On Land Claims and Implementation Secretariat

Land Claims and Implementation Secretariat in the amount of \$7,679,000 agreed to

Land Claims and Implementation Secretariat Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$7,679,000 agreed to

On Capital Expenditures

On Land Development Costs

Mr. Elias: Can I get an explanation from the Premier for this? The reason why I am asking is because sometimes land transfers happen for \$1, like they did in my riding, so sometimes this is reflected in the budget.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Capital costs for the Land Claims and Implementation Secretariat could result from three primary areas: ratification of First Nation final agreements, which requires the expensing of settlement land as YTG capital cost;

land related expenses pursuant to settle First Nation agreements; and implementation costs in departments funded through the bilateral agreement.

The \$1 vote authority is requested to allow the department to identify costs later in 2012 or 2013, should additional work be required on the Whitehorse waterfront pursuant to the *Kwanlin Dun First Nation Final Agreement* or should any of the First Nations without settlement agreements reach ratification.

Ms. Hanson: When we were going through, we had considerable debate in this area, but I did not get a breakdown on Other and I am wondering if I could still do that.

Chair: Could you tell me which line?

Ms. Hanson: "Other" on 5-10 where it says "Other" under Summary.

Chair: We just want to finish off with land development costs. Is there any further general debate on land development costs?

Land Development Costs in the amount of one dollar agreed to

Chair: Under "Summary of Appropriation by Allotment", there is a category called "Other" for \$843,000.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I can give you a breakdown of that — employee travel in Yukon, \$15,000; employee travel outside Yukon, \$11,000; other travel in Yukon, \$3,000; contract services, \$32,000; repairs and maintenance, \$5,000; supplies, \$11,000; postage and freight, \$1,000; program materials, \$2,000; communications, \$19,180; non-consumable assets, \$6,000; memberships, \$3,000; printing, \$1,000; and then there is property assessment/taxation/negotiation, \$32,000; supporting First Nation infrastructure developments, \$62,900; First Nation emergency preparedness, \$95,000; First Nation regional economic development and opportunity planning, \$100,000; land claim officer, \$88,874; trapper compensation process, \$25,000; land use planning, \$266,200; consulting renewable resources councils on development of forest regulations, \$10,000; local area planning, \$73,500; management plan for Pickhandle Lake, \$20,000.

What I'm giving you right now are costs associated with implementation projects from other departments. That's what these are. The total of that is just under \$734,000. So they are implementation projects that are already going forward.

Chair: Just for future reference, please, if we are discussing any of the summary data, I would ask that we do it under general debate for that program.

On Prior Years' Projects

Prior Years' Projects in the amount of nil cleared

Land Claims and Implementation Secretariat Capital Expenditures in the amount of one dollar agreed to

Land Claims and Implementation Secretariat Total Expenditures in the amount of \$7,679,000 agreed to

On Intergovernmental Relations

Ms. Hanson: Could I get a breakdown of Other?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Personnel, \$1,021,000; operating costs, \$204,000; and transfer payments, \$55,000.

Ms. Hanson: I can understand the personnel part and the government transfers are itemized on page 5-22. I was asking for a breakdown of Other on page 5-11.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Employee travel in Yukon, \$1,000; employee travel outside of Yukon, \$92,000; contract services, \$48,000; repairs and maintenance, \$1,000; rental expense, \$15,000; supplies, \$5,000; postage and freight, \$1,000; program materials, \$23,000; communications, \$10,670; non-consumable assets, \$3,000; Other, \$1,000; computer work stations, \$1,000; and printing, \$1,000.

Ms. Hanson: I thank the minister.

On Intergovernmental Relations Operations and Maintenance Expenditures

On Intergovernmental Relations

Intergovernmental Relations in the amount of \$1,280,000 agreed to

Intergovernmental Relations Total Expenditures in the amount of \$1,280,000 agreed to

On Government Audit Services

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

On Internal Audit

Internal Audit in the amount of \$563,000 agreed to

Government Audit Services Total Expenditures in the amount of \$563,000 agreed to

On Government Liaison and Capacity Development

Ms. Hanson: Again, I would ask please for a breakdown of Other on page 5-13, which is part of the total of \$956,000? Just the Other please.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Similar expenses, as I have just described in the total of just over \$35,000 — the remainder of this, so \$145,000, relates directly to northern strategy projects. We can provide a breakdown of that if the member wishes. Did the member want me to talk about the travel and the postage and so on?

Ms. Hanson: I would be interested to know the travel, please.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Travel in Yukon was \$4,000; outside Yukon was \$5,000.

Chair: Is there any further general debate?

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

On Governance Liaison and Capacity Development

Governance Liaison and Capacity Development in the amount of \$956,000 agreed to

Governance Liaison and Capacity Development Total Expenditures in the amount of \$956,000 agreed to

On Office of the Commissioner

Chair: Page 5-14, Office of the Commissioner — is there any general debate?

Ms. Hanson: There is a significant increase in Other here. Can we get a breakdown on the Other component on page 5-14?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Other costs have increased by \$83,000. I can give you a breakdown of that. Operations, \$25,000, of which \$8,000 is to increase in-territory travel for visits to two additional Yukon communities, ongoing; \$4,000 to increase out-of-territory travel for the executive assistant to attend the federal-provincial-territorial meeting with the Com-

missioner annually; \$13,000 to increase in various communication supplies, advertising costs, non-consumable assets — that's operations for \$25,000; Commissioner awards for \$12,000 — costs associated with the advisory committee expenses and replenishing the award pin inventory; the next is Commissioner's community events, \$25,000 — inflationary increases on existing events and additional public awareness events, for example, the Christmas open house and \$10,000 for conversion of the event planning for the Commissioner's Klondike Ball from an NGO contribution to a contract, as per their request, ongoing; special projects, one-time of \$20,000; \$5,000 for the history of the Commissioner's project; \$10,000 for the design and production of an Office of the Commissioner pin to be given to past Commissioners; a one-time \$5,000 payment for materials for production of an event record book for archives of the Office of the Commissioner.

Ms. Hanson: If I could get clarification of the \$20,000 special project — what is that?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: There is an ongoing project, the creation of a book depicting the history of the Commissioners of the Yukon, so that is \$5,000 toward that project; \$10,000 toward design and production of the Office of the Commissioner's pin to be given to past Commissioners; one-time \$5,000 for materials for production of an event record book for archives of the Office of the Commissioner, totalling \$20,000.

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

On Office of the Commissioner

Office of the Commissioner in the amount of \$250,000 agreed to

Office of the Commissioner Total Expenditures in the amount of \$250,000 agreed to

On Development Assessment

Chair: Is there any general debate?

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

On Development Assessment

Development Assessment in the amount of \$1,186,000 agreed to

Development Assessment Total Expenditures in the amount of \$1,186,000 agreed to

On Cabinet Offices

Ms. Hanson: If I could get a breakdown of Other, the \$251,000, on page 5-16?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Employee travel in Yukon, \$47,000; employee travel outside Yukon, \$160,000; entertainment, \$2,700; and, communications, \$41,400.

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

On Ministers

Ministers in the amount of \$251,000 agreed to

On Cabinet Office Personnel

Cabinet Office Personnel in the amount of \$2,414,000 agreed to

Cabinet Office Total Expenditures in the amount of \$2,665,000 agreed to

On Yukon Water Board Secretariat

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

On Yukon Water Board Secretariat

Yukon Water Board Secretariat in the amount of \$1,291,000 agreed to

Yukon Water Board Secretariat Total Expenditures in the amount of \$1,291,000 agreed to

On Youth Directorate

On Operations and Maintenance Expenditures

On Youth Directorate

Youth Directorate in the amount of \$1,342,000 agreed to

Youth Directorate Total Expenditures in the amount of \$1,342,000 agreed to

On Northern Strategy

On Operations and Maintenance Expenditures

On Northern Strategy

Northern Strategy in the amount of \$1,560,000 agreed to

Northern Strategy Total Expenditures in the amount of \$1,560,000 agreed to

On Public Inquiries and Plebiscites

On Operations and Maintenance Expenditures

On Public Inquiries

Public Inquiries in the amount of one dollar agreed to

On Plebiscites

Plebiscites in the amount of one dollar agreed to

Public Inquiries and Plebiscites Total Expenditures in the amount of one dollar agreed to

On Revenues

Revenues cleared

On Government Transfers

Chair: Are there any questions?

Mr. Elias: I already know the answer, but I just want to verify this. I highlighted an item here that says "Intergovernmental Relations — Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation". Can the minister give us a breakdown on this line item, please?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: The member did not say which one, but I think I know. The government is proud to continue its support of the protection of the Porcupine caribou herd in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge for \$50,000. I assume that is the one the member opposite was talking about.

I guess that's all, but underneath is Fathers of Confederation trust, \$5,000 to support national trust and the Confederation Centre of the Arts in Prince Edward Island.

Government Transfers cleared

Chair: Executive Council Office, Changes in Tangible Capital Assets and Amortization on page 5-23. Are there any questions?

Excellent. We are now finished with Executive Council Office. I'm sorry — except for Restricted Funds, page 5-27. Are there any questions?

Now we're done. Thank you.

Executive Council Office agreed to

Chair: We're going to be moving on to Energy, Mines and Resources. The Committee will take a 15-minute recess, please. Thank you.

Recess

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

Department of Energy, Mines and Resources

Chair: We're going to be starting a new department now, Energy, Mines and Resources.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: It's my pleasure to introduce the 2012-13 main estimates for the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources. In beginning my introductory remarks at Committee of the Whole, I'd like to note first of all that the mandate of the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources is to support the sustainable development of Yukon's energy and natural resources in a responsible manner.

This budget provides detail on how Energy, Mines and Resources allocates funds and collects revenue as part of the work to achieve this important goal. I would like to begin by outlining how Energy, Mines and Resources achieves the delicate balance implicit with the department's mandate between economic growth and environmental protection, through legislative policy and operational tools.

Underpinning these efforts is a range of planning initiatives. The Department of Energy, Mines and Resources leads or is directly involved in a number of levels of land and resource planning. These include regional land use planning, local area planning, planned land dispositions, planned forestry, planned agriculture dispositions, and all of this planning, I would note, takes place with considerable First Nation and public participation.

Most resource development activities or projects are subject to assessment through the *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act* before proceeding to regulatory approval. This comprehensive assessment process is intended to ensure that the environmental and socio-economic impacts are identified and mitigated before projects are undertaken.

I would like to briefly note specifically in reference to some of the debate that occurred earlier in the day — I'd like to emphasize to members the fact that the *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act* is a piece of federal legislation. It is the product of the *Umbrella Final Agreement* commitment to the development assessment process as a single window for environmental and socio-economic assessment. This single-window approach has been important to the Yukon's ability to responsibly manage activities since devolution.

It is also something that provinces, other territories and the federal government are looking to as a model of a better way to conduct environmental and socio-economic assessments through a single, clear process with defined timelines for review, participation and information requests that provides a greater level of clarity, both to proponents and those who are interested in a project.

The *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act* has created through that the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board, underneath which falls the designated offices that are operated in a variety of different areas of the Yukon. One thing that I would point out, particularly in reference to questions raised earlier by the Member for

Mayo-Tatchun in debate on the Executive Council Office, is that a considerable amount of work and discussion went into deciding how many assessment areas in Yukon would have, and where those offices would be located. Any change to that would have some impact on assessment ability and clarity for all who must engage in the YESAA process, whether they are proponents, First Nation government, municipal governments or members of the public.

Each of Energy, Mines and Resources' resource sectors — agriculture, energy, forestry, lands, minerals and oil and gas — are covered under a regulatory regime, which is industry-specific and/or falls under laws of general application. Virtually all resource sector activities are regulated in the Yukon under either territorial or federal legislation. Depending on their location, the activities may also be subject to First Nation or municipal bylaws. Once an activity begins, the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources and its staff play a lead role in monitoring and enforcement related to those activities, which include inspections and many other activities that occur in that program area. The regulatory regime for resource development activities includes enforcement and compliance provisions to ensure that proponents comply with terms and conditions in their permits, licences or other authorizations.

The Department of Energy, Mines and Resources' Client Services and Inspections branch is responsible for compliance, monitoring and enforcement of resource development projects. The branch has a staff of professional inspectors who are qualified to ensure that all legal requirements are efficiently and effectively enforced. Careful scrutiny of projects by qualified inspectors is carried out on a regular basis. It is important to emphasize that successfully achieving the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources' resource development goals requires informed and collaborative decision-making. Decisions on resource development projects are not taken in isolation. The Department of Energy, Mines and Resources works with many other government and non-government agencies: Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board assessors; First Nations, both self-governing and those that have not settled a land claim and self-government agreement; and of course, the Yukon public and interested stakeholder groups to make well-informed and balanced decisions on resource development projects that take into account economic, social and environmental interests.

There are many opportunities for interested citizens and affected citizens to review project proposals through the YESAB process prior to projects being approved, particularly during the assessment and the seeking-views and information stage. Requirements for assessors and regulators to provide reasons for decisions and recommendations along with public access to assessment and regulatory documents contributes to transparency and accountability and helps ensure that decisions are justified and in the public interest.

In addition to legislative requirements, there are also policies, standards, guidelines and best management practices, which dictate and guide how natural resource projects are undertaken. The Department of Energy, Mines and Resources

allocations within this current budget before the House reflect these steps and processes, which I have outlined.

Madam Chair, the overall budget for the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources for the 2012-13 fiscal year is \$87.9 million. The operation and maintenance component of the budget is \$86.5 million. The total O&M and capital revenues this year are estimated to be a total \$55.2 million.

I'd like to take a moment to share with members of the Legislative Assembly some of the highlights of the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources' 2012-13 main budget and outline some of the key initiatives the department is leading. In Oil and Gas and Mineral Resources division, first of all, I would note that the Oil and Gas and Mineral Resources division is a significant portion of the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources' budget, with an operation and maintenance allocation of \$64.3 million.

The Yukon economy has had considerable mineral sector growth in the last nine years, and one thing that I would note in pointing that out to the members and providing clarity on this is that, in fact, if members look to the situation the Yukon economy had in 2002 and where it is today, one cannot help but note the fact that the significant growth in the Yukon's mining and exploration sector has had an effect not only on employment within that area but in the spinoff economic benefits to many other sectors of the economy — everything from restaurants and retail and services to any of the variety of products and services that are available to Yukon citizens.

In terms of direct employment numbers, currently 750 people are employed by "hardrock" mines in the Yukon, which are also known as — for clarity for members, I should note that what's referred to as hardrock mines are those that fall under the *Quartz Mining Act*.

The *Placer Mining Act* covers placer gold mining operations, which of course are distinctly different from other mining operations.

Of the 750 people currently employed by hardrock mines in the Yukon, an estimated 490-plus are Yukon residents. Hundreds of other people are also employed indirectly as a result of this industry. I also have to point out in reminding the members of the Yukon's economic situation 10 years ago. Ten years ago we were exporting Yukon children and Yukon tradespeople, not copper concentrates as we are today.

In addition, over 2,500 people are working in placer mining operations and mineral exploration projects throughout the Yukon. The Yukon placer industry, as members will know, was key to the creation of the Yukon through the Klondike Gold Rush in 1898 and led to the establishment of the Yukon as a separate territory in its own right. The placer industry has continued to be a major economic contributor to the Yukon economy throughout the Yukon's history and has been referred to by many as the Yukon's equivalent of the family farm because of the fact that so many of these operations are small operations that are family owned and have relatively few employees.

However, I also have to note that the Yukon's agriculture sector, in its own right, has family farms. But the characterization has been frequently made to the placer mining sector and is really illustrative of the nature of the types of operations

within this sector, and the fact that the owners are typically Yukon citizens, and many of the employees are Yukon citizens. The placer industry continues to contribute significantly to the Yukon's economy. Total dollar value of Yukon placer gold produced in 2011 was approximately \$58.5 million.

Over \$300 million has been spent to develop Yukon Zinc's Wolverine mine, which will see full production this year. Capstone Mining, formerly the Sherwood Copper project at Minto, has been in commercial production for almost five years with great success. All indications support Capstone looking to extend and expand the life of the Minto mine for a significant period of time, which will provide economic benefit, not only to Yukoners employed directly at that mine site and through contractors and sub-contractors but, as we have discussed previously in the House, the royalties from the Capstone mine at Minto go directly to the Selkirk First Nation because that mine is on category A settlement land.

I would point out for the clarity of members that if, in fact, First Nations chose to allow future mining activities to occur on their settlement A lands, where they have both surface and subsurface rights, in those instances, the royalties from those mines would flow directly to whichever First Nation had that settlement land. Again, for clarity, that applies only on category A settlement land. Category B settlement land provides surface rights while subsurface rights remain with the Crown.

In 2011, Alexco commenced production at their Bellekeno mine located in the Keno Hill silver district. The Bellekeno mine will produce up to 2.8 million ounces of silver per year. It's also important to note that Alexco is in the unique role of both an operating mine and doing reclamation work on previous workings done by United Keno Hill mine, as a result of the unique process that had a lot of work by officials, not only in the Yukon government, but also in the federal government, aimed at reaching the solution, which ultimately led to both the receivership process, and the court overseeing the process that led to Alexco purchasing those assets.

But, as a result of the fact that they acquired those assets, one condition is that environmental issues and liabilities that previously existed and were not identified, quantified or being dealt with, have seen both monitoring and inspection and, in fact, action taken to resolve pre-existing environmental liabilities and threats to environment in the area.

Ninety percent of mining exploration in the Yukon is conducted by junior exploration companies that contribute significantly to the Yukon's economic development and growth. In 2008, mineral exploration expenditures were \$110 million; in 2009, \$100 million; and \$160 million for 2010. This compares to the figures for 2002, when the Yukon Party took office, of less than \$7 million being spent on mining exploration. Mining exploration has had a significant economic impact for a number of Yukoners who are either employed directly or provide services to that sector of the economy.

A combination of commodity prices, the world economy and the Yukon investment climate pushed exploration activities for 2011 to over \$300 million by some 107 active exploration companies. Those numbers are large, but their impact is simple. Businesses have customers, employers have revenue to pay

employees and employees have a steady paycheque to support their families.

As I've noted, in addition to direct employment, there is a significant amount of indirect employment related to the provision of services and to people within the retail sectors that sell products to employees from mines and those employed indirectly as a result of mines and mineral exploration. That is, simply put, the real world impact of the growth in Yukon's mineral sector. It's notable that this year we currently forecast 2012 exploration spending to continue to be relatively strong. However, it's worth noting that we do expect spending to be down significantly from its record level in 2011, although it will remain strong compared to previous years.

But the boom in exploration we saw last year was to some extent driven by excitement around projects as White Gold. There has been market adjustment and companies that have not identified good mineral targets within their areas are having more difficulty raising money in the markets at this point in time, so we do anticipate a significant reduction in exploration spending this year. It is also worth noting that a significant amount of the exploration spending that we expect to occur this year appears to be spending that will take place on pursuing identified targets within existing claim areas.

The Yukon is the only one of the three territories to have control of our land, water and other natural resources as a result of the devolution transfer agreement. Devolution — the official date when we took over authority for much of this regulatory responsibility was April 1, 2003. That itself was the result of really decades of work by many Yukoners, both at the political and elected level — and at the departmental level within a great many departments that put many years into pursuing the devolution of federal control to bring more control right here to the Yukon, so that Yukoners, not Ottawa, would have the greatest control over matters within our jurisdiction.

Not only does this enable Yukoners to make important resource decisions, it also helps us to take steps to ensure that the Yukon will not repeat the mistakes of the past, as we take appropriate and responsible steps in regulating our current and future activities.

I believe, Madam Chair, that you are indicating to me that my time is up, so I look forward to continuing my remarks later.

Mr. Tredger: Thank you to the minister opposite for his remarks.

I would like to welcome the official from Energy, Mines and Resources to the Legislature and thank her for coming out.

I rise on behalf of the NDP Official Opposition to debate the budget for Energy, Mines and Resources. I begin by thanking — I am impressed by the scope and volume of work being done by this department, and I appreciate the efforts and the dedication of the many personnel working in the department.

I would like to acknowledge their hard work, their dedication and their professionalism. The Yukon government may have been surprised by the recent interest in oil and gas in the Whitehorse Trough but I wish to thank the personnel from Energy, Mines and Resources who put their personal lives on hold

to organize the many public forums on short notice, picked up the pieces and garnered information from the public.

My comments, questions and thoughts about the EMR budget are intended to bring to light some of the many choices and decisions that are being made and to provide some ideas and suggestions for future areas of focus, planning and direction.

However, in order to do that responsibly and constructively and to fulfill my obligations to the people of Mayo-Tatchun as their representative, and to all Yukoners, as the Energy, Mines and Resources critic, I must have access to information. Other than a one-hour budget briefing, the minister has not allowed me or my colleagues to meet with departmental officials to ask questions about priorities or to put forward my constituents' ideas and concerns.

As the minister opposite suggested and at his direction, I submitted my request for meetings directly to the minister. I remind the minister that I have been waiting since February 1 for a response to my request to meet with Agriculture officials for a briefing and to share some ideas that my constituents had. I have also requested twice since January the 2011-12 Energy, Mines and Resources strategic plan; I still wait. I prefer to work cooperatively with the minister and his department rather than being set in opposition to it. The slow response to requests for documents and reasonable access to government officials impedes my ability to do the job Yukoners elected me to do. I will remind the minister that all parties agreed to do things differently. They agreed to an open and accountable flow of information. I look forward to that and working with the minister opposite as we work together in the future.

The challenge facing the Yukon government and all Yukoners is to maximize the long-term, sustainable benefits to Yukoners of resource development and to minimize its negative impacts on the environment and on our communities. This means representing Yukoners in dealings with the powerful industry as that industry proposes resource extraction opportunities.

The Yukon government must ensure that these developments are managed in a manner consistent with Yukon's long-term economic, social and environment well-being, rather than simply endorsing the present largely unmanaged trajectory as somehow optimal, and loudly condemning any critics of that trajectory as anti-mining. Many policy tools are available to tackle this task of managing our resource boom. Yukoners are in favour of the resource extraction industry, but not at any cost. We need to proceed carefully in order to maximize the benefits of resource developments.

Much of our increasing mineral activity is occurring in more remote areas. While these areas may seem empty and sparsely populated, they are home to many Yukoners. These lands have value and there are already a variety of activities occurring there. They are home to our First Nations; they are home to our communities. For thousands of years they have been occupied. They are the basis for the trapping industry, the outfitting industry, for wilderness tourism, for placer miners, for recreational users, for spiritual users.

To the citizens of Yukon, land use planning is of paramount importance. The recent outcry over the potential oil and gas development highlighted the need for a dialogue with Yukoners about the whole oil and gas regime in the territory. What is happening — a sense of urgency is missing. This must become a government priority. Leadership is needed before it is too late. We are in the midst of a resurgent mining boom. The value of commodities has soared at the same time as the cost of capital is inexpensive, although the recent shakiness in the markets and available capital has emphasized how precarious this boom really is. Today, there are over 200,000 active claims in the Yukon. Last summer's staking rush is now leading to increased exploration — the next phase.

Indeed, YESAB is receiving approximately one new application per working day. This increased interest in our resources is occurring at the same time as there is a growing awareness that our land and our wilderness — our vast, pristine spaces — have become unique in the world.

The Peel River watershed is one of the last remaining, relatively untouched watersheds in the world. Can we assure our children and our children's children that it will remain such a legacy for them? Many Yukoners are feeling concerned about the pace of development. Yukoners are asking: What risks are we taking? What shortcuts are we taking? How do we ensure the integrity of our land and of our water?

Many Yukoners want to pause and take a breath. Responsible personnel in the government, both privately and publicly, are managing, but they are stressed or stretched — but through their dedication and hard work they are managing. Our businesses are managing. They're struggling with housing for their employees, and they're struggling with employees and hiring of them. Many businesses are having to borrow money and expand to compete with the incoming businesses from out of the territory. They're keeping up. In construction, they're competing and expanding. One thing that happens, though, is that as they expand, they need to borrow money. They need to expand to compete. It leaves them in a very precarious position — risks of increasing interest rates and risks of the mining companies leaving — and leaves them very vulnerable to changes. I know the Yukon Party is opposed to regulation and would like industry to regulate themselves. But the role of government is to manage —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Chair: Order please. Mr. Cathers, on a point of order.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Madam Chair, the member is imputing motive that certainly does not reflect the government's position, saying we are "opposed to regulation and would like industry to regulate themselves." That is absolutely incorrect and I would ask you to have the member withdraw that.

Chair: Ms. Moorcroft, on the point of order.

Ms. Moorcroft: I don't think that there is a point of order here. The member just made a statement that the Yukon Party is reluctant to make regulations and we do, in fact, hear the members opposite responding in Question Period with that statement frequently.

Chair's ruling

Chair: There is no point of order. This is a disagreement between members. Thank you.

Mr. Tredger: I know the Yukon Party would like industry to regulate themselves, but the role of government is to manage development to ensure Yukoners benefit and our environment is protected — our well-being is protected. Part of the government's job is to regulate with an eye to protect the public's health and safety, to protect other resources, to protect the environment and to ensure fairness. Responsible mining companies are asking for regulation to ensure that all companies follow practices that respect the integrity of Yukon people, land and water. They want to know that they will not be at a competitive disadvantage when they mine with integrity.

It is important that information flows freely to all parties as we move ahead. Trust and democracy need openness, accountability and to believe in the process. Unfortunately, the government's decision in the handling of the Peel River watershed has created much distrust and uncertainty. Many are questioning the government's ability to truly represent all parties and move forward. Successful land use planning requires that all parties at the table place their cards on the table in order to achieve consensus. When one party changes the rules and brings forth new criteria late in the game, the process loses the trust of all. Yukoners are wondering what happened to the \$1.5 million and seven years of hard work. The consensus building is being tossed away by overriding agreed-to processes for the land use planning. This has created a great deal of uncertainty.

As I work through this budget, my support, concerns, questions and suggestions will reflect what questions, ideas and concerns arose as I looked at the Yukon Energy, Mines and Resources' budget, as well as what I've heard from my constituents. Their stories are not unique. They're repeated across the Yukon from Lansing on the Stewart River, up toward the headwaters, to the Rackla Range, to Scroggie Creek, to Bouvette's Landing at the mouth of the Stewart, to Thistle Creek, Mount Nansen, Casino and Keno. The people living in these communities and these areas all have stories and all are experiencing, first-hand the changes that are happening to their landscape. Their questions, their concerns, reflect and direct my lines of questioning.

We are looking for sustainable, long-term management for the benefit of all Yukoners, now and in future generations — for our land and our water. Mining can happen with integrity. Mining can work hand in hand with other users of the land.

But if we do not insist that it happens, what value are jobs if we destroy what we all hold dear in the process? What steps are we taking to mediate risk to our environment? What footprint are we going to leave? What happens when we use up our non-renewable resources? What will we have to replace them?

Yukoners want to know that their way of life, the land that they hold dear, will be protected and available for future generations. Yukoners want to ensure resource development benefits Yukon in general and local communities. We want to know about the \$300 million being spent on resource development — how much will stick here? What will we see of it in 50 years?

What are we doing to ensure that the mining companies shopping locally, are promoting our agricultural industry and buying their groceries locally?

One of the concerns I heard is the belief that mining is different today from what it was in the past. Yes, it is. It has changed, and yet some of the things remain the same. Placer miners are long-term residents. Their children attend our schools; they shop in our stores; they go hunting; they go quad-ing; and they go hiking. In a sense, they are good corporate citizens. They have been, as the minister opposite mentioned, key to Yukon development over a long period of time. However, with the increase in value of gold, more of the placer miners are coming in from out of territory. They're spending the mining season here and returning to their homes out of territory. That can be good but that can also create problems, as they don't have the connection to the land that long-term residents do.

I'll just pull another example — Capstone Mining.

It's a mine that is traded on the Toronto Stock Exchange. Over 400 million shares are held around the world. Their head office is in Vancouver. Their mission statement: "Capstone is focused on profitability, a growing production profile, and operating in a safe and responsible manner." I know Capstone means well. They have put a lot of time and effort into the territory, but they are a large company and their first priority is to make money. They have been good corporate citizens. They have shown a willingness to work with the community, with Selkirk First Nation, and with the Yukon government. But like many mining operations, it has changed hands many times, from staking to production. It has changed mine managers. Many of their workers are not from the Yukon and certainly not living in the area — they are in and out. They don't have a long-term vested interest.

Mining intensity, scope and scale have increased. Head offices are far away. Casino will be a massive operation. The power needed will equal all the power currently used in Whitehorse.

Should something go wrong — should there be an accident, should the price of commodities drop, should there be a crash in the climate of investment — the sheer scale of the activity has a huge effect on Yukon business and environment. While we know more about reclamation and mining companies, mining companies are developing progressive reclamation techniques. What happens if there is a crash or an accident? Will we be saddling future Yukoners with a crippling debt to quickly make a profit now?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: To begin with, in responding to the Member for Mayo-Tatchun, I want to note that I take his points with regard to suggesting that the Yukon government has no interest in regulating and just wants companies to regulate themselves as being offensive, not only to myself and the government, but the many employees within who are focused on fulfilling their job to complete regulations and on updating regulations in areas where appropriate as well.

There have also been significant steps taken. In fact, the member was talking about progressive reclamation that's employed. I would point out that, in large part, some of the

changes in mining practices have been brought about through the good work of department officials and changes to policies around security and reclamation.

Back under the federal watch, for years, mines such as Faro were allowed to operate and at the end of it, the government did not have appropriate security in place. If the company went bankrupt, as happened when Faro went out of business — in those types of situations, we were left holding the bag, for lack of a better term, on the environmental liability related to Faro. That is on the federal government's books. I would point out for the members — lest they be tempted, as they have in the past, to characterize the Faro environmental liability as being the industry norm — that, in fact, the Faro mine site is the largest environmental liability on the Government of Canada's books — the very largest in the country.

So what I want to emphasize in responding to the member's concerns is that through the security policy, the Yukon government takes security from mines for the work they are doing, to encourage them to do reclamation while they are underway.

This has happened in the case with the Minto mine, under the ownership of Sherwood and then Capstone. They have done reclamation of previous areas, and upon doing reclaiming in certain areas and putting organic matter back on top, reseeding it, et cetera and meeting appropriate reclamation requirements, the incentive that they are given is that they are given a portion of their security deposit back. So it encourages them not to leave that liability until the end of the mine life. It gives them an incentive to do it right then. I point out that is working and that is because of the good work of government officials as regulators.

So again, what I do have to point out — the member making reference to regulations. We have seen the NDP call for a wide number of legislation and regulations on a wide variety of topics. I point out that, as a few of my colleagues have noted, it seems, at times, that the NDP sees legislation and regulations as the solution to everything. They see it as the solution for every problem or perceived program, when, in fact, sometimes policy tools or other matters can be a better way for government to proceed.

There are also areas in people's private lives where they are not putting others at peril or endangering public health or the environment. There are many who would argue that perhaps people should be left some of the freedoms that were guaranteed to them since the Magna Carta was signed in 1215 and have been protected through the *British North America Act*, the Diefenbaker bill of rights and the *Canadian Constitution Act*, including our current *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.

Now moving on more specifically to other matters in responding to the member's concerns, I do have to note that the member's reference to information and access to officials is not correct. I would think that he should be aware of that. In response to the request the Member for Mayo-Tatchun presented to meet with officials of the Agriculture branch to provide them his policy input and provide constituent requests to them directly, I informed him that is not the way the process works. That is considered political interference. The members have

stood up and supported whistle-blower legislation, but the members need to themselves recognize there is a good reason why long-standing parliamentary practice under governments of every stripe are in fact to direct requests from MLAs through the ministers' offices.

The same applies to government MLAs. If I have an issue related to something within the Department of Highways and Public Works, I don't pick up the phone and call the grader operator. I don't make the request at a departmental level. I talk to the minister or I talk to the minister's executive assistant or have my staff contact them or write them a letter. I make that request to them going through the appropriate channels, and the minister and department staff respond to that.

Again, for the member's specific point about his request to sit down with the Agriculture branch officials and talk to them about what he would like the government to do in response to his constituents' views on agriculture development in his area is not an appropriate engagement between MLAs and department staff. If the member has policy proposals, constituency casework or questions, I would encourage him to provide them to me either in this House or through a letter, or the member can call me on the phone or we could meet to discuss those matters. There is an appropriate way to proceed and I would encourage the member to follow that. I know the member is a relatively new member of the Assembly. I know there's a bit of a learning curve.

I would encourage him, in his lack of familiarity with the process, not to be quite so quick to rush to judgment of others and, if the process works a little differently than he thought it did, not to be so quick to assume that someone else is not willing to work with him.

Without dwelling too much on that point, I would note to the member that it's important that they don't do inadequate research, jump to conclusions and rush to accusations, as we have seen in the past. If the member looks to his left to the Third Party, and asks the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin about how I have responded in the past to constituency casework of his, I would note that in fact an experiential learning program funded in Old Crow was done as a pilot project by my immediate predecessor. It had not been intended to be continued but, at the request of the member, we continued funding for that program. I talked to the member; he made the request. It seemed to me to be a reasonable request and we continued the funding. That's just one example, but I'd rather return to matters related to the department budget than engage in that.

I would again note to the member that if they want to provide input for policy matters, or have constituency casework, those matters are appropriately directed through the minister's office.

I also note that the member's assertion that I didn't respond to his request is inaccurate. I responded to it twice. He sent me a third e-mail that essentially stated what the second one had stated and I'm not sure that I did reply to that one because I saw it as him rearguing the point that I had already answered twice. I believe I responded to both of his e-mails on the same day I had in fact received them.

Moving on, I would note a few areas related to achieving balanced development. The Department of Energy, Mines and Resources' mandate is to responsibly manage and support the sustainable development of Yukon's energy and natural resources. We achieve this balance between economic growth and environmental protection through several legislative policy and operational means. We seek, not only to reduce or eliminate adverse effects related to resource development, but to enhance its many social, economic, and sometimes, environmental benefits. Specifically on the topic of regulation and legislation, I would note that the inclusion of a community economic development expense allowance within the current regulations under the *Quartz Mining Act* — that encourages companies to invest in projects like Capstone's commitment to a daycare in Pelly Crossing — was something that was done by this government under me as minister at the time. It was not only a regulatory step, but is one aimed directly at encouraging companies to contribute financially to the well-being of communities in the area near their mine.

The Yukon government undertakes or is involved in land and resource planning at a number of levels, including regional land use planning, local area planning, planned land dispositions, planned forestry, planned agriculture. All of this planning, as I noted, takes place with considerable First Nation and public participation. Most resource developments or projects are subject to the *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act*, YESAA, before they can proceed to regulatory approvals. This comprehensive assessment process ensures that environmental and socio-economic impacts are identified and mitigated before projects are undertaken.

Again, some of the other notes that I have related to regulatory development — I think I have already provided to the member. I would also note that in moving on to other areas related to the budget, I will continue with some of my introductory remarks, which I did not have time to complete.

The 2012-13 budget includes a \$50.7-million allocation for assessment in abandoned mines, which is nearly double the 2011-12 estimate. Nearly 100 percent of this allocation is directly recovered from the Government of Canada. The Yukon government leads efforts to address environmental issues at the Faro mine.

This includes managing ongoing site operations, known as care and maintenance, and developing and implementing a long-term remediation plan. Now that a preferred remediation option has been selected for the Faro mine, a detailed design is being developed and the scale of the remediation plan has grown considerably since the early conceptual plan. The budget increases reflect escalations in site remediation and care and maintenance and cost estimates that have come from an increased project understanding and definition.

It is anticipated that the remediation plan will be submitted to the YESAA process in 2014, with construction beginning in 2018 and lasting for at least 15 years. Ongoing care and maintenance activities at the Faro mine deliver on the Yukon government's responsibility to protect health and safety and the environment. Care and maintenance includes an innovative approach to promote First Nation and Yukoner participation

through training, employment and business opportunities. The recently procured Faro care and maintenance contractor, Tlichon Engineering and Environmental Services Ltd., is a 100-percent First Nation-owned business.

This past winter, affected Yukon First Nations entered into a profit-sharing arrangement with the new care and maintenance contractor, effectively becoming a partner in the delivery of care and maintenance at Faro.

Underlying these efforts is the commitment to develop and implement cost-effective approaches to protect the environment and human health and safety at the former Faro mine, while maximizing training, employment and business opportunities within the Yukon.

Since 2004, the Yukon government has provided over \$7 million to the affected Yukon First Nations to support their participation in the Faro mine remediation project. Affected Yukon First Nation businesses received over \$2 million of the subcontracts, 571 person-days of direct employment and \$250,000 of training opportunities as a result, as part of major remediation works completed in 2010.

One point I'd like to note to the members opposite is in fact in terms of the impact of federal mistakes made in not properly managing mines in previous eras — again noting in fairness to the federal government that the understanding of how or what constituted responsibly managing mine projects was very different back in the era when Faro began than it is today — but the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources and me as minister see very directly the costs associated with regulators failing to appropriately regulate mine projects. That is why both within the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources and other involved Yukon government departments, every effort in managing mines and the security and reclamation policy is directed toward ensuring that we do not have another significant environmental liability like Faro emerge on Yukon's watch.

I want to acknowledge and respect the concerns the member has and the concerns that some of his constituents and other Yukoners may have about mine operations and to treat those concerns, whether well-informed or misinformed, with the respect that those concerns deserve. I do also have to point out that some of the assertions the member and his colleagues have made about the views of the government at the elected level and the government at the departmental level within Energy, Mines and Resources particularly, are really quite unfair to officials who are involved in those issues —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Chair: Ms. White, on a point of order.

Ms. White: On the point of order, 19(g) imputes false or unavowed motives. We on this side never talk about staff. It's ministerial responsibility that goes from the top down. We speak about our concerns with the ministerial aspect —

Chair: Can you quote which section —

Ms. White: 19(g). The member is imputing false motives.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: On the point of order, I believe this is a dispute between members. I was referring to comments

the members have made about operations of the department that fall within the roles of officials. I said that I believe those characterizations are unfair.

Chair's ruling

Chair: There is no point of order. This is a dispute between members. The Hon. Member for Lake Laberge has the floor.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Thank you, Madam Chair.

So again, what I would note, continuing my comments, is the fact that the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources' staff, in their role as the regulator of the industry, treat their responsibility very seriously. Within the Assessment and Abandoned Mines branch, we see very directly every day the costs associated with what happens when government as a regulator — in this case, under the federal government's watch — does not take appropriate steps to manage a mine, to take appropriate security and ensure that it is responsibly and effectively managed. The posting of security is something that is required, not only for workings at the mine, but the Yukon government has taken steps — in some cases, including the Yukon Zinc project — to in fact require security for roads put into mining projects that require those roads be reclaimed at the end of that project's life, and also has taken security for roads, including in that particular case that I mentioned.

At the moment, the total security that the Yukon government holds under the *Quartz Mining Act* and under the *Waters Act* for mining projects is in the tens of millions of dollars and is a very significant change from the way these projects were managed in the past.

Another point that I would note, in reference to characterizations that members have made in the past — by members I mean the NDP; the Third Party, in fairness to them, have not made similar characterizations. The NDP have made characterizations that suggest that in the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, the same people are responsible for promotion and regulation. I would point out that that is incorrect. The Client Services and Inspections branch is separate from the Sustainable Resources branch; separate from Oil and Gas and Mineral Resources; separate from Energy and Corporate Policy; and that is for a very good reason — to protect the independence of those enforcement officials from those who are involved in other matters related to the permitting of projects.

A significant part of the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources' abilities to ensure that the Yukon will not be faced with any more environmental legacies like Faro is led by the Client Services and Inspection branch. Client Services and Inspections is allocated \$6.3 million in this budget, an increase of approximately \$300,000 from the 2011-12 allocation. This increase reflects additional funds that will enable the branch's team of 50 staff members to conduct more inspections, travel to more sites, sample more water and better monitor resource activities across the Yukon. Client Services and Inspections inspectors work diligently to ensure that all requirements under legislation and regulation are enforced in a timely and professional manner. Careful scrutiny by qualified inspectors is ap-

plied to activity authorized under mining, water, fisheries, timber and land legislation and regulations.

Energy, Mines and Resources inspection and enforcement activity is governed by policy, principles and regulations and is consistent with the practices of all responsible, modern, regulatory law enforcement agencies. Energy, Mines and Resources is organized to ensure that Client Services and Inspections can fulfill its mandate neutrally and objectively. Client Services and Inspections provides services to the public and maintains an effective field presence by staffing offices in eight Yukon communities. Each sector in the resource economy is provided with detailed information on how the regulatory and enforcement regime for their industry is applied.

Madam Chair, I believe you're indicating to me that I'm running out of time to continue my remarks.

Mr. Tredger: In the interest of getting through a few questions, I will just move on. At the beginning of the Energy, Mines and Resources budget it states — and I believe the minister has reiterated this a couple of times — “to responsibly manage Yukon's natural resources and ensure integrated resource and land use.” It seems to me that in order to do that, we would need to have land use planning in place.

My questions for the minister are these: Do we have a strategic plan? How many people are working on this? What land use planning area is up next? When can we expect results on that? Are there timelines? I believe they're working on the Dawson regional land use plan. What resources are dedicated to fulfilling the *Umbrella Final Agreement* obligations under land use planning? Finally, what other regions are on the list to proceed with this?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: In responding to the member's questions, what I would note is that the member seems to attach a real — what's the term for it? The member seems to be focused only on regional land use planning without understanding the fact that it is, in fact, activities conducted in the context of regional land use plans and other regulatory steps and initiatives that really relate to managing the activities on the ground.

Again, for the member, I'd point out that, in fact, if applications come forward through the YESA process, environmental concerns are reviewed, socio-economic concerns are reviewed, a recommendation is made by the YESAA designated office or executive committee, if it's an executive committee screening, and then government makes a decision on it. It's far from an open situation, as the member appears to perceive, where companies can go do anything they want and no one will say anything about their activities or provide them with any restrictions. That is certainly not the case.

One thing I would point out to the member, in terms of land planning is, in fact, a number of steps that have been taken by the government that stand in contrast to lack of land planning under previous governments, including the NDP, that we have taken a number of steps with local area plans and zoning.

I won't get into all of the details these activities in the interest of time, although I could provide the members with further information about these activities if they're interested. We've done local area planning or zoning and significant changes. Let me rephrase that. We've done either local area

planning — new local area planning, new zoning or significant changes to existing local area plans and zoning in the Mount Lorne area and the Golden Horn development area. The Marsh Lake area is underway right now. M'Clintock Place development area, Madam Chair, has pre-existing zoning.

There are other areas that are included in local area planning. The Carcross development area is underway. The Hamlet of Ibex — we put in the zoning regulation in 2005 at the request of the hamlet council. There were also changes made to it in 2007, 2009, July 2010, and August 2011.

Hot Springs Road development area — the zoning was significantly amended — I don't have that date in front of me, but I believe it was either 2004 or 2005.

The Mayo Road development area was an area that I would point out, in fact, under the last NDP government — if the members will excuse the reference — was sitting dormant. The work had commenced but had not been concluded. We put in place the first zoning regulations for the Mayo Road area in 2005.

The Deep Creek area got their first set of zoning regulations last year, in July 2011. Other areas that I would note as we have just recently announced and will soon be commencing: Fox Lake local area planning process and work is underway within the west Dawson area as well. These are just a few of the areas where work has been undertaken in recent years. The local area planning does provide a greater level of detail, and zoning provides a greater level of regulation than the regional land use plan does. That being said, I would point out that not only has this government committed to regional land use planning, but the *Umbrella Final Agreement* was approved in 1993. When the NDP were in power and the Liberals were in power they did not produce a single regional land use plan. The Yukon Party is the only party in government that has actually gotten a regional land use plan, the North Yukon Regional Land Use Plan, which was jointly approved by the Yukon government and the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation in 2009.

If members will forgive me saying so, I note that I had the honour of being minister responsible at the time. I would also like to credit my predecessor in that role and officials within Energy, Mines and Resources, the Department of Environment, the Executive Council Office and other departments that contributed to that for the many hours that went in from Yukon government staff in many departments — and that went in, of course, on the First Nation's side, from the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation.

Stepping back to the previous topic, I'd like to point out that, in terms of contributions from mining companies, that the Capstone mine contributes \$60,000 annually to the Yukon Hospital Foundation and that mining companies and mining service companies make up the majority of the corporate donors of the Yukon Hospital Foundation. I'd like to acknowledge that and also give credit to my colleague, the minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation, the Minister of Education, for reminding me of that fact and for the efforts that he put in as executive director at the Yukon Hospital Foundation in pursuing some of those commitments. So I thank

him for that and recognize that contribution by companies to new health equipment for Yukon citizens.

To touch briefly on a few other matters, I would note that Energy, Mines and Resources, Sustainable Resources branch, includes a diverse range of responsibilities and economic sectors, spanning land management and planning, agriculture and forestry. The 2012-13 estimate for this area allocates \$8.8 million for operation and maintenance, and \$1 million for capital. Last year, Yukon entered a new era for forest management in with the *Forest Resources Act* and accompanying regulation being proclaimed. The act and regulation are intended to support viable and sustainable forest-based industries, while recognizing the importance of forests to the Yukon way of life. The new regulation includes strong commitments to planning and compliance and provides forest managers with the tools they need to manage Yukon's forest resources for their long-term health. The new forest regime reflects a strong commitment to the forest industry, in terms of providing secure tenure opportunities and a transparent and fair allocation process. Now, the regime has established a formal working relationship with Yukon First Nations to address their specific forest planning and development needs.

The collaborative approach with Yukon First Nations is also reflected in the work of the Land Management branch. The 2012-13 estimate includes an \$800,000 capital allocation to support a unique land development project in Teslin. Energy, Mines and Resources, working in partnership with the Teslin Tlingit Council, has been moving forward to make both settlement and Yukon government land available to the public. This project has been underway for a number of years and the increased allocation this year is to enable completion of roadwork on the Sawmill Road residential project.

I would also just briefly note that determining the next steps in some of the nature of future activities in that area and other planning within the Teslin area, may require some adjustments. The Member for Pelly-Nisutlin has brought to my attention the concerns and requests of a number of his constituents to have the Yukon government consider making land available through fee simple title instead of lease in some of the areas that had been planned. That is something that we are considering and look forward to hearing from both the Village of Teslin and the Teslin Tlingit Council prior to making the adjustments.

Again, I want to thank my colleague from Pelly-Nisutlin for bringing forward the input of his constituents, and I look forward to determining whether adjustments should be made to that project.

That project is just one example of the many land projects currently being led by the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources as part of our commitment to make land available to Yukoners. Energy, Mines and Resources is working with the Department of Community Services, First Nations and municipalities across the territory to ensure there is an established inventory of land available.

I will note briefly without returning at length to our debate yesterday on the motion brought forward by the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin regarding agriculture, that in fact agricultural

land development has been an important part of the work done by the Yukon government in making land available to Yukoners. There are currently 59 agreements for sale for agricultural land and, as I mentioned yesterday in my remarks, without the change that came largely at the request of my constituents — as I've noted before, most of the Yukon's farming is within the riding of Lake Laberge — a change was made in the 2006 agriculture policy to the pricing policy for the sale of agricultural land. Previously, for the first parcel acquired by someone, they had to put in development activities and investments worth twice the value of the land.

That did a couple of things. It made the price of land very high. It also provided a disadvantage to new farmers because farmers who developed subsequent parcels of land after the first one were allowed to develop at a one-for-one pricing policy, whereas new entrants to the business — into that sector — were required to put in twice that amount. So that change was made to the current one-for-one pricing policy as it's referred to.

As I noted yesterday, without that change being made with the significant increase in the price of land that has occurred, not only with the price of agricultural land having climbed further higher — but it is doubtful and unlikely that many of those 59 agricultural dispositions that we currently have under agreement for sale would have occurred because of that unaffordable price.

I would point out in reference to some of the criticisms that are commonly made by the New Democratic Party that it was actually under the NDP that that two-for-one pricing policy was put in place. We cut the cost of land — of developing agricultural land and becoming a new farmer for new people, especially young farmers entering the agriculture sector. We cut that cost in half and made land more affordable to Yukon citizens wishing to become farmers.

That supports the goals of increasing the production of local Yukon food and improving food security. I would also note in briefly talking about agriculture that since I had an opportunity to talk at greater length to my colleague's motion yesterday that continued forward with commitments that we made during the 2011 election campaign that important steps that we will be taking in keeping with our commitment to Yukoners during the 2011 election campaign in support of the agriculture sector include the following: working with farmers and industry associations to implement the *Multi-Year Development Plan for Yukon Agriculture and Agri-Food*; developing a Yukon-grown food policy aimed at significantly increasing the production and use of locally grown vegetables, meat and food products; supporting the development of agriculture infrastructure that improves food security; facilitating access to markets and encouraging local production of food; and supporting the development of local markets for Yukon products through measures including supporting the Fireweed Community Market and working with Yukon farmers to conduct agricultural research.

I would note for anyone reading *Hansard* that I provided many remarks relevant to budgetary allocations in motion debate yesterday, so I will not talk at greater length on agriculture at this time.

What I would also like to note in other matters related to the budget — in the energy and corporate policy division, supporting Energy, Mines and Resources resource management responsibility, the energy and corporate policy and communications division has been allocated \$3.9 million in this budget. A key part of this division's work is the programs and services provided by the Energy Solutions Centre. The Energy Solutions Centre has been allocated \$1.2 million in the 2012-13 budget. One of the main roles of the Energy Solution Centre is to implement action items within the energy strategy for Yukon. Developed through extensive consultation with stakeholders, the public and other governments and through extensive work by staff, the energy strategy for Yukon provides important guidance for how we produce, conserve and use energy in the Yukon. The overarching strategy will lead to many of our action items to ensure Yukon's energy resources are managed in a planned and careful manner.

In addition to developing a number of policies identified in the strategy and including an independent power production policy and a net metering policy, the Energy Solutions Centre also provides support directly to Yukoners through a range of innovative programs and services. This includes the Yukon government's energy efficiency initiatives — the good energy program — which focuses on products that represent a significant opportunity for energy reduction in the Yukon, including household appliances, heating appliances and renewable energy technologies.

Analysis of the 1,015 rebates provided to participants during the 2010-11 fiscal year show that the program is having a real impact. The Energy Star rated household and heating appliances purchased through this program represent a total savings of approximately \$100,000 per year and more than \$1.5 million over the lifespan of the appliances. These savings mean real money staying in the pockets of program participants, and this includes the cost savings of the reduction of 51,000 litres of heating fuel saved per year and 470,000 kilowatt hours a year of savings in electrical energy by program participants.

Providing rebates on the purchase of energy-efficient products, the good energy program is an important element in the Yukon government's efforts to help Yukoners lower their energy costs and manage the demands on Yukon's energy supply. The Department of Energy, Mines and Resources play an important role in building a strong, diversified economy that will benefit all Yukoners.

Madam Chair, again, in my remarks, I have only touched on a small portion of the initiatives undertaken by the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources and our staff. A few other areas that I would like to mention, without spending significant amount of time on in general debate, include the Yukon Geological Survey, the Placer Secretariat, the Oil and Gas branch, the Agriculture branch, and I note that Yukoners receive the benefits of the tremendous staff, technical expertise, and professionalism provided by the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources in managing the challenges and opportunities provided by the current strength of the Yukon's economy and the strong interest in Yukon's natural resources.

Achieving the balance between economic growth and environmental responsibility through the sustainable development of Yukon's natural resources would not be possible without the dedication of Energy, Mines and Resources staff, and I thank them for their work.

This concludes my introductory comments for the 2012-13 main estimates for Energy, Mines and Resources.

Madam Chair, seeing the time, I move that we report progress.

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

Motion agreed to

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

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

Motion agreed to

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

Ms. McLeod: Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 6, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2012-13*, and directed me to report progress.

Speaker: You have heard the report from 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. on Monday.

The House adjourned at 5:22 p.m.