

Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Tuesday, March 27, 2012 — 1:00 p.m.

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

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

Speaker: We will now proceed with the Order Paper. Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In remembrance of John Gould

Mr. Silver: I rise on behalf of the Legislative Assembly today to pay tribute to the life of Dawson City pioneer John Gould. John was born in Dawson City in 1919. As a boy, John lived at the family mining camp at Nugget Hill, just off Hunker Creek Road. John worked with his father at a mine until 1958. He also worked part time at the mine during the 13 years he worked for Parks Canada at Klondike National Historic Sites. He retired from Parks Canada in 1980 and returned to mining with his son, Peter.

John was a walking encyclopedia of the history of Dawson City and the mining industry in the Yukon. He loved to share his knowledge of the history and worked tirelessly to preserve Klondike heritage. He spent countless hours over the decades actively involved with the Dawson City Museum. In the 1990s he travelled as a Klondike ambassador, accompanying a major travelling exhibit developed by the Dawson City Museum to points all over the continent.

John was a member of the Yukon Order of Pioneers, the Dawson branch of the Royal Canadian Legion, founding member of the Klondike Sun newspaper and a key member of the Klondike Centennial Society. He advocated the placement of a statue on the Dawson waterfront that honoured the miners, and he saw it accomplished. He was instrumental in establishing the Ridge Road Heritage Trail and the 2011 revival and expansion of the Dawson claim interpretive site.

John was a mentor to many; a kind and gentle man who always had time to help others in their quest for the Klondike or knowledge of mining. He was very involved in the community and many facets of Dawson's history.

He gave so much of himself to his town and to the community of Dawson, and he will certainly be missed. He is gone from us, but with his passion for history and preservation, he has left the Klondike and the Yukon with a wealth of knowledge about our history and for that we are truly grateful.

To his son Peter, his daughter Suzanne and his grandchildren, we wish to extend our deepest condolences on your loss. Rest in peace, John Gould.

In recognition of National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month

Hon. Mr. Graham: I rise in the House today on behalf of all members to acknowledge that March is National Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month in Canada. Colorectal

cancer is the fourth most commonly diagnosed cancer in Canada, and the second most common cause of cancer death. However, with early detection, colorectal cancer may be highly treatable, and there is a 96-percent success rate for treating the disease.

The risk of developing this cancer may be lowered by eating healthy, exercising regularly, avoiding smoking and alcohol, and having regular screening tests. However, people with these habits, or who are over 50 years of age, or who have a family history are at a higher risk and should get screened.

Early detection is a key step in preventing this cancer. Patients who experience symptoms related to colorectal cancer, or who are at a higher risk of developing the cancer, are encouraged to be screened as soon as possible. Anyone interested in screening should talk to their doctor about the screening tests that are available.

The Colorectal Cancer Association of Canada, along with the Canadian Cancer Society, has been working to raise awareness of prevention and early detection of this type of cancer.

We would like to acknowledge their work and encourage Yukoners to lower their risk of developing colorectal cancer by making healthy life choices and having regular screening tests.

Speaker: Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Mr. Barr: I would like to introduce soon-to-be Tagish resident, Mary Ann Lewis and neighbour on Crag Lake, Suzanne Picot, and from Whitehorse, Diana Griffith and Gerry Whitley.

Applause

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Speaker: The Chair has for tabling the report of the Chief Electoral Officer of Yukon on the 2011 general election. This report is prepared pursuant to section 315 of the *Elections Act*.

Are there any further returns or documents for tabling?

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: Today I have the Queen's Printer Agency's Annual Report for 2010-11 for tabling.

Speaker: Are there any further returns or documents for tabling?

Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motion?

NOTICES OF MOTION

Ms. McLeod: I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to use the 2012-13 budget to invest \$2 million in widening and repaving the Takhini Hot Springs Road.

Mr. Hassard: I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to support the local airline industry by using the 2012-13 budget to extend water and sewer services to the south commercial area at the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport.

Mr. Tredger: I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to follow the example of our neighbours in Alaska and compile detailed annual statistic reports on the mineral resource sector and a mine-by-mine breakdown listing relevant information including, but not limited to:

- (1) royalties paid and the value of deductions;
- (2) resident Yukoners employed and filing income taxes in the territory;
- (3) non-residents employed, including temporary foreign workers;
- (4) corporate income tax paid to the Government of Yukon;
- (5) contributions to community development;
- (6) Government of Yukon expenditures related to infrastructure, regulating and monitoring, and other matters; and
- (7) values of security for remediation.

Mr. Silver: I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources to locate the Yukon Placer Secretariat office in Dawson City as:

- (1) Yukon government operations and employment opportunities should extend to communities beyond Whitehorse whenever appropriate;
- (2) Yukon government services are best provided when informed by the needs and expertise of its clients;
- (3) Yukon government services should be provided as directly as possible to the people using these services; and
- (4) about 410 Yukoners are employed in the territory's 140 placer mining operations, and most active placer mining operations are in the Dawson mining district.

Speaker: Are there any statements by ministers?
This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Whistle-blower protection legislation

Ms. Hanson: Last week, the government indicated that they were interested in moving forward with whistle-blower legislation. I now ask the Premier to outline the government's plan and timeline to move forward with whistle-blower protection.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: As I articulated on the floor of the Legislature a number of times for the members opposite, the government is very much looking forward to moving forward with whistle-blower protection in collaboration with the members of the Official Opposition. In fact, we did receive confirmation from the New Democratic caucus. Unfortunately, we did not receive confirmation from the Liberal Party caucus.

There is much work to be done before we submit our findings to the Legislative Assembly on the outcome of that review, but we certainly are committed to it.

Ms. Hanson: Public servants want rules to protect them from dismissal or intimidation if they witness and report wrongdoing. The Third Party's position is well known to this House, and, quite frankly, it's irrelevant. It is this government that has the power to act and the means at its disposal. The government said they wanted to convene a select committee which would use the work of the previous committee as its starting point. This is important work. So I'm asking: Why has the government not brought forward a motion in this House to strike a whistle-blower committee?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: First of all, I would like to just point out for the members opposite that, in fact, certain protections already exist for Yukon public service employees. Protections can be found in the *Public Service Act*, the collective agreement between the Government of Yukon and the Public Service Alliance of Canada, and, of course, through the workplace harassment prevention resolution policy. Likewise, the government's internal audit services policy and the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* also deal with disclosure, but don't necessarily address protecting those who specifically disclose information, and, hence, that is, in fact, why we are committed toward meeting whistle-blower protection.

So, I understand that, in speaking with the House Leader earlier this week that, in fact, we are preparing a motion and it will be tabled in the Legislature very soon.

Ms. Hanson: Mr. Speaker, that's great to hear. We in fact did send a letter on March 20, and I hope the minister has looked at it. We crafted a motion and encouraged the government to either use that motion or discuss it with us so that we can collaboratively work together to get this whistle-blower protection — the work already done incorporated into the work that needs to be done. I still ask: What's the timeline and when will we see this legislation tabled in the House? Is there a commitment to having whistle-blower legislation tabled in this Legislative Assembly in the fall sitting?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Again, as I articulated on the floor of the Legislature last week and many times before that as well, the government does not wish to pre-empt the outcome of the work of the select committee. We look forward to convening the select committee and in fact, as I understand, that was put forward by way of our Government House Leader to the opposition's respective House Leaders at this morning's meeting.

A motion will be put forward on the floor of the Legislature and we certainly look forward to proceeding with work as to what in fact whistle-blower protection will define — what is and what is not legitimate whistle-blowing. In fact, it will look at processes whistle-blowers should have to follow in exposing improper actions. We will be looking at what consequences there may be for those who choose to attempt to retaliate against whistle-blowers, as well as persons who perhaps recklessly or maliciously blow the whistle on others.

These and other issues will in fact form the basis of the select committee, and we look forward to doing that good work.

Question re: Minimum wage

Mr. Barr: According to a government announcement yesterday, the minimum wage rate will rise from \$9 per hour to \$9.27 per hour on April 1, 2012, due to a three-percent rise in the consumer price index. That is 27 cents, Mr. Speaker. The NDP has been clear in calling for an immediate raise of the minimum wage to at least \$10 an hour. This is hardly a living wage, but it is a start.

Does this government support raising the minimum wage to at least \$10 an hour?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I just want to add that the increase to the minimum wage that was recently announced is in fact an annual increase that takes place each year on April 1 that is directly tied to the consumer price index. Of course, in response to the member opposite's question, we very much recognize the inadequacy of Yukon's minimum wage as it currently stands. That is in fact why our government on November 24, 2011, requested the Employment Standards Board to conduct and seek input from stakeholders and conduct a review of Yukon's minimum wage. We support and respect the process, and we certainly look forward to the outcome of that review.

Mr. Barr: At nine bucks an hour, the Yukon has the lowest minimum wage in Canada — add 27 cents, and we'd still be the lowest. Six provinces and territories are at \$10 or more, with Nunavut the highest at \$11. New Brunswick's rate will jump to \$10 on April 1. We know the Employment Standards Board began a review of the rates in November, but has yet to conclude and make a recommendation on change. That has been four months. When do we expect the board to report, and can this government provide some assurance that the minimum wage rate will very soon rise to a more livable wage?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Make no debate about it, we believe and we certainly recognize that Yukon's minimum wage rate has now fallen below that of all other Canadian jurisdictions, and that is why this government launched the review. We certainly asked the Employment Standards Board to conduct its good work to review Yukon's minimum wage. That was submitted to the board on November 24 of last year. That work is currently underway, and we have asked that they seek input from stakeholders in conducting that full review of the minimum wage.

Again, Mr. Speaker, we recognize the shortfalls of Yukon's minimum wage, and we are very much committed to adhering to the recommendations of the board.

Mr. Barr: I don't know how many members in here have earned minimum wage, but I was one of them, and I know how hard it is — the struggle of living from paycheque to paycheque, paying the bills and raising a family.

Workers on minimum wage aren't buying boats and condos. They aren't buying second homes in Arizona, and little boosts to their income provide a little comfort and go directly into the local economy — for food, for housing or a trip to the pool. The Premier has talked a lot about prosperity, but I know a lot of Yukoners who are not sharing in these prosperous times. Will this government commit to immediately raising the Yukon's shamefully low minimum wage rate — the lowest in Canada — to at least \$10 an hour?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Mr. Speaker, I would just like to point out that it was this government that actually conducted the last review of Yukon's minimum wage, which took place in 2005, when it was not only increased, but an annual inflationary factor was added, based on the consumer price index, which we have just seen as of April 1.

Mr. Speaker, we recognize that there are shortfalls when it comes to Yukon's current minimum wage and that is why we initiated a review on November 24, 2011.

That work is before the Employment Standards Board. We have asked the board to conduct a consultation with its respective stakeholders to complete its comprehensive review of the Yukon's minimum wage. We look forward to receiving the outcome of those deliberations. When it comes to addressing issues pertaining to poverty in the territory, the government remains committed. When it comes to delivering on affordable and accessible child care, when it comes to delivering a continuum of housing options for Yukoners, when it comes to enhancements to our income tax rates; when it comes to increasing social assistance rates, increasing rates for foster care parents — may there be no mistake that the Government of Yukon is very much committed to delivering these services.

Question re: Dawson City recreation centre

Mr. Silver: Last fall I reminded the government of their promise to build a new recreation centre in Dawson City. Dawson City is a vibrant, close-knit and active community. We appreciate the government's commitment to our recreation infrastructure and, as with any new and exciting developments, community members want to know more. The first token shovelful of sod was turned last summer. There was no reason to leave the ground fallow after that, so I assume the government has immediate plans to get this project underway.

The town is definitely ready. After being asked to participate in the sod-turning ceremony, members of the hockey and curling club went to the city asking for support in striking a steering committee. When can residents expect construction to begin in earnest?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I thank the member opposite for bringing forward the question. As I already reiterated on the floor of the Legislature last year, as I seem to recall, the Government of Yukon is certainly committed to enhancing recreation improvements to not only infrastructure in Dawson City, but toward communities throughout the territory. In fact, as evidence would show, within this year's budget there are dollars for replacement of the Ross River recreation centre. When it comes to Dawson City and meeting its recreational improvements, the Government of Yukon has also committed to delivering \$4 million over five years in terms of putting forward upgrades to its current recreational facility needs and in terms of moving forward on a particular new facility.

Mr. Silver: Shortly before this sitting began, the Community Services minister announced that the community of Ross River would receive \$7 million for a new recreation centre. Design and construction is to be underway this spring and completion is expected in 2013. This means that only three years would have passed from the recognition of the need for a new recreation facility to the doors opening. The need for a

new recreation infrastructure in Dawson City has been apparent for much longer than that. At the 2006 election, the Member for Klondike promised a new rec centre. In advance of the 2011 election, the member was joined by the former Community Services minister and the Mayor of Dawson and promoted it again.

When will the new rec centre open its doors in Dawson?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: When it comes to improving our recreational infrastructure in the territory, not only have we committed to delivering on a replacement of the Ross River recreation centre, but we have also delivered on a new Mayo recreation centre for the Village of Mayo. Likewise, we have committed to upgrades to the Teslin recreation centre, and we have delivered on that. Likewise, we have delivered in Marsh Lake and many other communities, I might add.

So when it comes to Dawson City, there is a \$4-million contribution agreement that remains currently in place for upgrades for the current facility that is in place in Dawson City if it is the desire of the City of Dawson, in collaboration with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, with members of the community, and many others to seek funding toward the replacement of that facility. That, too, is under the purview of the City of Dawson when it comes to the use of this funding, so again, \$4 million over five years — that money does remain in place, and we certainly look forward to continuing to work with the City of Dawson.

Mr. Silver: As I have said, the residents of Klondike appreciate the government's contributions to infrastructure in rural communities. We appreciate them even more when the investments are made in collaboration with the community and take full advantage of the community's unique and comprehensive self-knowledge. Just last week, Public Service Commissioner's Staff Development branch had a workshop on decentralization of government, from the authors of *The Starfish and the Spider*. They suggested government start using decentralized bottom-up approaches instead of one centralized command and control centre. The author suggested that decision-makers and leaders sit down with everybody from the janitors who clean the legislative toilets, to the children who go to the schools in the communities.

Would the minister provide specifics on how the government will apply decentralization, rebuild trust with my constituents and make a commitment to build a recreation centre in Dawson?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I can give the member this, and that is this government's commitment to continuing to invest in all of our Yukon communities.

When it comes to the City of Dawson, this Government of Yukon has contributed over \$45-million worth of community infrastructure in the City of Dawson alone. That does not even take into consideration \$653,000 for the McDonald Lodge replacement planning. That doesn't take into consideration the School of Visual Arts that the government committed to and actually implemented. It doesn't take into consideration the hospital that is currently underway in the member opposite's community. It also doesn't take into consideration many other improvements, such as improvements to the recreation centre

— all of which, I might add, the member opposite voted against.

Question re: Affordable housing

Ms. White: The Lot 262 tender plan is to provide 30 units of affordable housing, available, hopefully, before the winter of 2013, with affordable rental rates guaranteed only for 15 years. Is this the government's entire plan to deal with Yukon's immediate housing crisis?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: If the member had noted what we have said and the announcements we've made, we've identified that the approach we're taking on Lot 262 is a first step in taking an innovative approach to developing land within the city.

In that case, we're putting the land out and selling it to the private sector with conditions on it that there has to be a minimum number of affordable housing units developed as a result of that end development. Again, we have established a minimum number of affordable housing units that need to be built on this lot, for a period of at least 15 years. That is a fairly significant term of time in terms of a caveat on the property as far as defining what the use can be.

We will certainly evaluate what we see through the tender process of Lot 262 for determining how we might apply similar approaches to disposing of land in the future — again, addressing specific needs such as rental accommodation.

Ms. White: Medium rent, of course, fluctuates according to demand. We have heard of overwhelming interest in an on-line advertisement this week for a cabin with no running water, renting for \$900 a month. When will the government develop a comprehensive strategy to deal with the housing crisis?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Mr. Speaker, I would encourage the member to look in our election platform and the press releases. We had two press releases related specifically to our plan and our strategy for dealing with housing and land availability. Again, I will emphasize, as some of my colleagues have, the fact that we believe that the first step in providing affordable housing is ensuring that there is a sufficient supply of land out there to allow development.

Again, in this case with Lot 262, we have taken an innovative approach, releasing titled land that the government owns within the City of Whitehorse with specific conditions requiring that it be developed for affordable housing. A minimum amount of affordable housing is part of that end development. We will evaluate the success of this. We have a number of titled lots within the City of Whitehorse to which we could apply similar approaches. In fact, we do have a strategy. If the member would read our election platform and read the budget, the member would see the investments, the examples and the fact that we have identified nearly \$35 million in this year's budget alone for land development to address housing needs.

Ms. White: According to CMHC, affordable housing costs less than 30 percent of before-tax household income. Based on the medium rental rate of a one-bedroom apartment costing \$800 a month, affordable housing is only for folks making roughly \$30,000 a year, or more.

What plan, if any, does this government have to meet the housing needs of people making less than \$30,000 a year?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Again, what I would note for the member — if the member has listened in previous days — is that my colleague, the Minister for Yukon Housing Corporation has outlined the significant investments that the government has made in expanding Yukon Housing Corporation's stock which specifically targets that need — an increase of some 40 percent in the number of available Yukon Housing units under the Yukon Party.

Again, as we've identified in this case, through the Lot 262 tender, we're fulfilling a specific election commitment we made to develop this lot and to put it out to the market through a process that sets conditions on that lot. It requires that a minimum number of affordable housing units placed on this property. We look forward to evaluating the success of this approach in determining how we can apply that in other cases with, again as I mentioned, the fact that we have a number of titled lots within the City of Whitehorse where we could apply similar approaches — placing specific conditions through a caveat requiring an end-use, including affordable housing, when necessary. So that's exactly what we're doing. It's all part of addressing the need for housing, including the rental market.

Question re: Affordable housing

Ms. White: The current Yukon government continues to sit on the remaining \$13 million it received from the federal northern housing trust fund. It appears that this government would rather leave housing money in the bank to pad its bottom line instead of investing in affordable housing solutions.

At that same time, Yukon Housing's budget for building housing has been reduced by nearly \$6 million. How can the minister justify sitting on \$13 million federal dollars earmarked for housing and cutting Yukon Housing's capital budget in the midst of a housing crisis?

Hon. Mr. Kent: In response to the member opposite — again, as my colleague, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources mentioned earlier in Question Period today — private affordable rental housing had not been constructed in Whitehorse or, indeed, the Yukon for many years. Previous Yukon Party governments increased that stock by 40 percent to the point now where we have, between new and upgraded housing units, a total of 656 affordable social housing units throughout the Yukon to provide independent living housing for low-income Yukoners.

Again, those were the accomplishments of the previous Yukon Party government. What we have planned for our mandate is clearly outlined in our platform, and many of those projects are reflected in the budget that is before this House today.

Ms. White: Yesterday we heard about this government's moose-capades. Today we hear about a one-off public-private housing development. They have more lots being made available in the all-too-distant future, and a platform is not a strategy B, Mr. Speaker.

The minister spoke, but he did not answer the question. In the context of the current housing crisis, I ask again: how can the minister justify sitting on \$13 million federal dollars ear-

marked for housing and cutting Yukon Housing Corporation's capital budget?

Hon. Mr. Kent: The previous Yukon Party government made substantial investments in housing for Yukoners; \$50 million of federal stimulus was invested to address the housing crisis that we see here in the Yukon. One only has to look through the budget to find the number of housing projects: Kaushee's Place, the women's transition home and work on shelters through the Department of Health and Social Services.

The Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources outlined making land available. Community Services is investing \$35 million in this budget in lot development throughout the Yukon. Of course, there is substantial investment being made by the Yukon Housing Corporation on a number of staff and social housing needs to address the housing needs of Yukoners. We are working all along the housing continuum to address the needs of Yukoners.

Ms. White: We talked yesterday about the economic boom and the number of people coming in for work. So, again, I am going to ask the question. Your refusal to answer the question is disappointing and it speaks to this government's lack of a comprehensive housing strategy.

How are we dealing with the housing crisis as it stands now? How can the minister justify sitting on 13 million federal dollars earmarked for housing and cutting Yukon Housing Corporation's capital budget?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: What I need to identify for the member opposite is the fact that my colleague, the minister responsible for Yukon Housing Corporation, noted that the Yukon Party government has made significant investments in expanding our social housing stock by some 40 percent and also included seniors housing as a component of that, and significant investments are planned if the member reads the budget.

I identified our approach to Lot 262. It was a specific commitment in the election that we would try an innovative approach to this lot. We will evaluate the success of that to determine how we might apply similar approaches to other titled property owned by the Yukon government within the City of Whitehorse, setting specific conditions requiring affordable housing to be developed as a result of that.

My colleague, the Minister of Community Services, has nearly \$35 million in this year's budget for investment in further land development by the Yukon government, including Whistle Bend as a notable example, and projects throughout many areas of the territory. All of these are parts of the approach that we are taking to land availability and housing. For the member to suggest that there isn't a strategy because we put it in a document titled, "Yukon Party Platform: Moving Forward Together," rather than in a document that was orange with "housing strategy" on the front of it simply is not reflective of the facts. We do have a strategy. We are following our commitments to make land available for the Yukoners and to deal with the social housing side as well.

Question re: Child and Family Services Act

Ms. Stick: I pointed out yesterday that under the two-year-old *Child and Family Services Act* there are no regula-

tions. We do have a policy, but this can easily be changed. More importantly, these policies are not readily accessible to the public. This is a vital piece of legislation.

In the stats for 2011-12, Family and Children's Services was utilized by 250 families under Family Services; 680 families under Child Protection. Other program areas include children in care, foster care, adoptive services, youth justice and family supports for children with disabilities. This is important work. Without regulations, families and individuals do not have the information readily at hand.

Can the minister tell us when regulations will be brought into effect for this department?

Hon. Mr. Graham: While the act does allow for the development of regulations, we've found to date that they are not entirely necessary in order for the act to be fully functional. Based on consultation between Legal and Regulatory Services and the Department of Health and Social Services it was determined that policy can be just as effective.

Based on yesterday's questions, I did approach the department with respect to a number of issues here. One of the things that we decided is that the policies will now be put on the website and will be accessible to the public as quickly as possible.

Ms. Stick: I thank the minister for his answer and the work he has already done on this. That's great. Again, I just want to be clear, though, that without regulations, this is what the public needs to look at. They're not aware of options available, such as transition planning and support for youth, leaving care that's available to them to the age of 24. Maybe this goes toward more public awareness, but again, that would be in the regulations.

Can the minister tell us how he expects the public to be aware of services that they could be utilizing for themselves or for their family members without clear and accessible regulations?

Hon. Mr. Graham: When the act was proclaimed in 2010, a public awareness campaign took place at that time. It included information sessions on the act and on the requirement for mandatory reporting with First Nations, NGOs and various community groups. Brochures have since been developed and are available. We continue to offer these sessions as required, and we'll continue to take the opportunity during the day-to-day work of social workers and people within the department to inform people about the details of the act.

Our experience to date has also shown that the policy angle, rather than putting things in regulation, has worked quite well. However, we're going to take a second look at policy that we have developed to date. In situations where policy has not worked, we're perfectly willing to proceed with regulations, and my department is doing an evaluation of that process as we speak.

Ms. Stick: I thank the minister again for his work on this and would just like him to be aware that for many people in our communities, they are not aware that all people are required by law to report suspected child abuse, and it's not just the professionals who come into contact with our kids who are required to do that. Again, this would speak to the public

awareness, and I hope the minister can confirm for us that this will become an important piece of looking at the regulations and public awareness.

Hon. Mr. Graham: As I've said, public awareness is a big part of what we do on a daily basis. Brochures are available. Perhaps in the future we will undertake another public awareness campaign.

To date, I haven't heard a great deal of public requests for that kind of information, but we will play it by ear. If there does appear to be a demand for it, we will proceed to do that as quickly as possible.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

Notice of opposition private members' business

Mr. Tredger: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.2(3), I would like to identify the items standing in name of the Official Opposition to be called on Wednesday, March 28, 2012. They are Motion No. 65, standing in the name of the Member for Whitehorse Centre.

Mr. Silver: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.2(3), I would like to identify the items standing in the name of the Third Party to be called on Wednesday, March 28, 2012. They are Motion No. 80 and Motion No. 84, standing in the name of the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin and the Member for Klondike.

Government House Leader's report on length of sitting

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I rise pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 75(4) to inform the House that the House Leaders have met for the purpose of achieving agreement on the maximum number of sitting days for the current sitting. House Leaders have agreed that the current sitting should be a maximum of 32 sitting days, with the 32nd sitting day being Thursday, May 10, 2012.

Speaker: I declare the current sitting shall be a maximum of 32 sitting days, with the 32nd sitting day being Thursday, May 10, 2012.

We will now proceed with Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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): Committee of the Whole will now come to order. The matter before the Committee is Bill No. 6, *First Appropriation Act, 2012-13*. We are going to con-

tinue debate on Vote 7, Economic Development. Do the members wish a recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

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

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of personal privilege

Chair: The Hon. Member for Klondike, on a point of personal privilege.

Mr. Silver: I rise on a point of personal privilege to correct the information I gave to the House Leader earlier today. Pursuant to the Standing Order 14.2(3), the second motion standing in the name of the Third Party, to be called on Wednesday, March 28, 2012, will be Motion No. 106, standing in the name of the Member for Klondike.

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

Chair: The matter before the Committee is Bill No. 6, *First Appropriation Act, 2012-13*, Vote 7, Economic Development. Hon. Mr. Dixon has the floor with 18 minutes remaining.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: I look forward to getting into the details of this budget with members opposite, but before we do that I'd like to sort of reiterate some of the important points I have made to date about the Department of Economic Development and its budget.

It's a budget that is aimed at creating a strong, healthy, sustainable economy for Yukon, that is based around the development of a private sector economy in Yukon. The guiding document for the Department of Economic Development is, of course, the *Pathways to Prosperity* document. The *Pathways to Prosperity* document outlines the Government of Yukon's vision of a thriving Yukon economy in 2025, grounded in the global economic trends of increasing population, long-term economic growth and rising purchasing power in emerging economies. *Pathways to Prosperity* provides a solid foundation for approaching economic development in Yukon, encouraging the development of wealth-generating industries, promoting business opportunities and increasing benefits to Yukon, while encouraging the development of those enabling factors that allow an economy to succeed. The Department of Economic Development implemented this approach beginning with the creation of strategic goals.

The *Pathways* vision statement is that "The quality of life in Yukon is second to none ... arising from intense global demand for Yukon resources and manufactured products, natural beauty, high levels of investor confidence, a skilled labour force, rewarding career opportunities, strong First Nations participating in the domestic and global economy, safe communities, and a healthy, well-educated populace."

The approach identified in *Pathways* provides the foundation to the departmental strategic plan. The first is enabling strategic and responsible economic projects. Sustainable diversification of the economy will require capturing external wealth, in large part through increasing the numbers of strategic projects and activities ongoing in the territory. This wealth will come from diverse sources, including mining, tourism, research innovation and the film and sound industries.

The second goal is to increase the benefits Yukoners, businesses, First Nations and communities receive from economic projects and activities. That includes, of course, a healthy and thriving Yukon small business sector that will identify and capitalize on economic growth opportunities and will enhance the value of external wealth by circulating those dollars within the Yukon. First Nation governments, communities and businesses will maximize the benefits from wealth-generating strategic projects and activities to improve the quality of life for all Yukoners. Collaboration between stakeholders is a key part of economic development. The department will continue to work with the private sector, First Nation communities and all other levels of government in a coordinated approach to development of the Yukon economy.

The third goal, of course, is to enhance the competitiveness of the Yukon business environment. A number of enabling factors must be in place for the Yukon economy to thrive. A culture of research and innovation will facilitate the entry of larger projects to the territory and support the local economy. Marketing and investment promotion must pursue new avenues and reaffirm existing networks in order to facilitate new investment and expand Yukon's exports. Capacity and workforce development will ensure organizations and citizens are positioned to take advantage of opportunities. Physical infrastructure, including transportation, energy and communications networks will attract and support the growth of the Yukon private sector. Additionally, modern policies and regulations will play a crucial role in improving the quality of life for all Yukoners, while placing Yukon in the best possible position to seize the opportunities from global trends of increasing wealth, population and purchasing power.

A number of our discussions to date have discussed the need and role of Economic Development to diversify the economy in Yukon. I would like to reiterate some of the initiatives we have had to date, in an effort to diversify our economy.

Government of Yukon is continuing to work on the diversification of Yukon's economy by identifying and exploring significant economic development opportunities in the strategic industries, natural resource, tourism and culture, research, innovation and commercialization sectors. Government of Yukon is committed to providing programs and services to support and stimulate the development and growth of Yukon's small- and medium-sized enterprises. The strategic industries development fund supports government's commitment to foster the development of Yukon's strategic industries that have the potential to generate increases in Yukon's economic output.

Government of Yukon continues to work collaboratively with industry to assess the state of the forestry sector, to identify future prospects that encourage development, and to pursue

opportunities that stimulate economic growth and benefit for Yukoners. The Department of Economic Development continues to work with industry stakeholders and the Department of Tourism and Culture to identify opportunities, to encourage growth in Yukon's tourism industry, and to develop new initiatives that include strategy development, business planning, growing revenues and enhancing export readiness.

Government of Yukon is committed to supporting Yukon's research, innovation and commercialization sector — the RIC sector — as an area of prime strategic importance to Yukon's economy. The goal of Yukon's research, innovation and commercialization sector is to enhance Yukon's overall economic self-sufficiency.

The Film and Sound Commission continues to promote and support programs that were created following extensive consultation with the local and national film and sound industries. These programs provide local artists with opportunities to develop their craft, along with encouraging production companies from outside Yukon to film in Yukon, thereby promoting tourism and job opportunities for Yukoners.

I've discussed a little at length about our efforts in that sense, and that, I think, is a good summary of the initiatives we've undertaken so far in terms of economic diversification. I would like to highlight, however, one item in this budget, of course, which is the continued support for the Yukon Research Centre and the Yukon Cold Climate Innovation Centre. As I've noted in this House previously, innovation as a whole is being looked to by jurisdictions and governments across North America, and, indeed, the world, as being an important factor in the diversification and development of economies. Innovation is linked quite often to the development of jobs, the creation of wealth and the modernizing of economies across the world.

In the north, and in Yukon specifically, I think we have a tremendous opportunity to capitalize on our cold climate and the uniqueness of our cold climate. It lends itself to a field of research dedicated to developing and enhancing technologies that play into the lives of northerners and Yukoners. Those are related to energy efficiency, to alternative energy, and to technologies that allow Yukoners and northerners to function in our cold climate — not only function, but thrive.

We've discussed at length, I think, in this House so far some of the efforts the Department of Economic Development has made related to the development of small- and medium-sized enterprises. Government of Yukon is committed to providing programs and services to support and stimulate the development and growth of Yukon's small- and medium-sized enterprises. The Department of Economic Development provides business development support and information and advisory services to Yukon's SMEs through partnerships with non-governmental organizations, industry associations and through direct assistance. As a result of several new large resource developments, the Department of Economic Development is identifying options to further maximize benefits of SMEs in Yukon, from these and other economic activities.

The department recently provided \$75,000 to support a business retention and expansion program, which is a Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce initiative. The program will con-

tribute to strengthening economic growth, prosperity and cooperation throughout the territory. The department continues to support Yukon businesses through programming and funded third-party initiatives. The Department of Economic Development supports assistance to small business through various initiatives. The business incentive program promotes the hiring of Yukon residents and manufacturing and use of Yukon goods and services. The business nominee program provides support to foreign workers planning to make a business investment in and immigrate to Yukon. Canada-Yukon Business Service Centre, which is a partnership between Economic Development, the Yukon Chamber of Commerce and the federal government, provides strategic advice and resources to small and medium businesses. Dana Naye Ventures microloan program provides loans for the creation of small and home-based businesses. Dana Naye Ventures business development program provides loans directly to Yukon businesses. The enterprise trade fund supports business development and market expansion of Yukon businesses.

On the regional side, in the north Yukon, which includes the communities of Dawson and Old Crow, north Yukon business advisory outreach program provides mentorship and guidance in business planning, development, marketing strategies, and other related business activities. Yukon business development program, which is a program between the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce and CanNor, provides advisory services to Yukon businesses that are trying to expand into the export market. The Yukon entrepreneur support program provided one-time funding support to two initiatives: the business retention and expansion program, delivered and administered by the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce, and an entrepreneur training program offered by Yukon College.

The Yukon small business investment tax credit program encourages Yukoners to invest in small Yukon corporations. The Yukon venture loan guarantee program is intended to encourage the provision of business financing from commercial lenders by sharing in the risk associated with the loan. You will see a number of these programs and funding programs provided for in the budget that is before the House today. They are aimed at developing an economy that recognizes the importance of the natural resources sector, but tries to ensure that the spinoff from that sector does indeed stick to the Yukon and benefit Yukoners and our local economy.

Yukon is playing an interesting role in the global economy these days. As we look across the globe, we see a number of jurisdictions and areas and regions of the world that aren't as lucky as we are, in terms of the health of our economies. When we look to places like Europe or, indeed, even our neighbour to the south, the United States, we're reminded of the good job we have done in developing our economies responsibly. Of course, the risks to the global economic recovery intensified through 2011, primarily due to concerns about growth prospects for the U.S. and Europe, as I mentioned. Many prominent economic forecasting bodies adjusted their global estimates for 2011 downward. Concerns about global growth prospects are continuing into 2012, with many forecasters calling for growth rates similar to 2011. The Department of Economic Develop-

ment, of course, continues to monitor key statistics and track releases of prominent forecasting agencies to identify any areas of interest for Yukon's economy going forward.

Now in the Yukon context, concern related to continued weakness in the global economy and concerns related to high and rising debt loads in the U.S. and some European countries have helped push gold prices to historic highs, as investors turn to gold as a store of value. Recent promising discoveries and the release of positive drilling results has generated strong interest in Yukon's gold potential. As well, demand for emerging countries — in particular, parts of Asia — is contributing to strong interest in the exploration for and development of Yukon's mineral resources.

Yukon has seen the commencement of production at three mines since 2007, and it finds itself — certainly last year, at its height, I would say, in the midst of a staking rush, with over 114,000 new claims in 2011, well above the previous record of over 83,000 recorded in 2010. While down from the eight percent target of the previous eight years, the Chinese government's official growth forecast of 7.5 percent for 2012 is still reflective of a healthy economy. Strong Chinese growth in the near term should contribute to continued interest and development of Yukon's mineral resources. China's interest in Yukon mineral resources is evidenced by the December 12, 2009 signing of a framework agreement between the Chinese-owned Yunnan Chihong Zinc and Germanium Co. and Selwyn Resources Ltd. The binding agreement provides for Chihong to earn a 50-percent joint venture interest in the Selwyn project by spending \$100 million on exploration and development. Selwyn Chihong has a clear mandate to advance the project to a bankable feasibility study and secure permits required from mine development as soon as reasonably possible.

As noted, Canadian interest rates are expected to remain low for the foreseeable future. Lower interest rates could benefit development in Yukon as businesses and companies take advantage of lower borrowing costs to move forward with development or machinery and equipment purchases. Lower interest rates also benefit individuals in Yukon, as lower interest rates can lower the cost of borrowing and also the interest paid on currently existing debt, with access to cheaper credit and less money being allocated to debt servicing. This could result in an increase in consumer spending.

As noted, the Canadian dollar performed well versus the U.S. dollar throughout 2011. Current expectations are for the Canadian dollar to remain strong into 2012. A strong Canadian dollar reduces the relative cost of purchasing machinery and equipment and other necessary goods for operations located in Canada. This could be beneficial for existing businesses and projects in the territory and help stimulate the development of further economic activity in the territory.

With 65 to 70 percent of the total annual visitation — border crossings, of course, originating from the United States — a weaker U.S. economic recovery could have negative ramifications for Yukon's tourism industry going forward, especially in the near term, so of course we keep our eye keenly fixed on the United States economy, especially in light of the strong contri-

bution that American tourists provide to Yukon's tourism industry.

Now, I would like if I could to delve into some of our budget highlights. There were a number of comments made yesterday; some of course made by the Member for Klondike, which were blatantly inaccurate about our budget. I would like to take the opportunity to correct the member on some of his assertions. He seemed to think that this year, and I quote — he is referring to the Business and Industry Development branch: "This year they will have to do that with 20 percent less money". He is somehow implying that the branch of Business and Industry Development is dealing with 20 percent less money. That is not the case at all. The Business and Industry Development branch has roughly the same amount of funding as it did in the 2011-12 estimates. He indicated that the Regional Economic Development branch would have to do with 12 percent less money — "This year, they will have to do that with 12 percent less money", was his quote. Of course, if we look at the Regional Economic Development branch budget before the House currently, we see an increase in the regional economic development budget for this year. I've explained in the past to members from the NDP caucus the necessity in —

Chair: Order please.

Ms. Hanson: Thank you, Madam Chair. Well, that was fascinating. Yesterday, we left off here and I had asked the minister opposite a question — a simple question — and in response, contrary to what the Premier had said in our discussion about how we anticipated conducting debate on departments and departmental budgets, that none of his ministers had spoken for the 20 minutes. We just witnessed a 20-minute speech — not answering the question, but a reading in of comments, punditry, projections, thoughts — perhaps tangentially related to economic development generally almost anywhere in the world, but not in response to the question respectfully raised. Quite frankly, I am not prepared to go back on that question.

I do want to come back, Madam Chair, on a comment made in general debate yesterday by the Premier and to correct the record. In conversation or in debate yesterday, the Premier fell back on a trick and a pattern that he has employed in the past: sort of saying what he thinks he heard we said, as opposed to what the Official Opposition actually said.

I bring it up because it is an important matter of principle. I'm not bringing this up because it has anything to do with whether or not I care that much personally whether he listens to me, but it's an important principle with respect to the distinction between the public service and the political arm of government.

So, in his comments, he said, "I need to remind" — "I guess, I need to remind, Madam Chair, that in response — the Leader of the Official Opposition, in response to the Auditor General's report — her comments were that the Department of Health and Social Services had no idea what it's doing. I think that's another example of respect or lack thereof. In fact, Madam Chair, if he had been listening to the Leader of the Official Opposition, he would have heard me say that "the Auditor General, not once, but many times, has pointed to that ab-

ject failure of the Yukon Party as government to be able to actually plan,” and went on to say more. It’s an important principle — and I spoke briefly yesterday about this — that there is a principle in the parliamentary system of government in the Westminster model that the civil service and the parliamentary system has no constitutional personality — it means that they’re not to be referred to — or a responsibility distinct from the government of the day.

It is the minister — not the public officials or the government officials — who has the final say, because ultimately in a Parliament or a Legislative Assembly it is the ministers and the government that are held accountable by the people. So they are held accountable to the public and to the Legislative Assembly.

The minister is responsible for everything done in the department, and everything done in the department may be the object of parliamentary or, in this case, legislative scrutiny. So one can hardly overstate the importance of the doctrine of ministerial responsibility, and I would beg the Premier and the ministers opposite to remember that, because this is integral to how we do our government. When we talk about government, we are talking about the government of the day, and they are accountable as ministers and we are accountable as the Official Opposition for holding them to that account.

In their spare time, I would suggest that one of the things the ministers opposite and the Premier, in particular, may want to do is look at some of the excellent works that have been done in recent years and, most recently, a great book by an academic and long-time critic of the public service and the whole relationship between elected governments and the public service, by Donald Savoie, which is, *Breaking the Bargain*. What we have seen increasingly over time is an attempt by many governments — and most particularly since the federal government of Mr. Harper — to move that way, in terms of breaking that bargain between the public service, ministers and Parliament.

I hold strongly to this, Madam Chair. As a long-term public servant, I know how important it is to have the ability to do my job, as I did, and as do many dedicated public servants in the Government of Yukon — to do your job to the utmost of your professional capacity and to be able to speak truth to power because that is the ultimate test of true public service — to be able to say to that minister, “You know what, minister? That’s a helluva good idea from a political point of view; it is lousy public policy,” and to know that you will not be held in lower esteem or that you will not be threatened or jeopardizing your position in government.

So Madam Chair, I just want to make that point clear, as the Leader of the Official Opposition, that the Yukon NDP recognizes the fundamental importance of ministerial accountability and ministerial responsibility, and we’ll continue to hold the ministers opposite to that high bar.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Now I’m not sure that I heard a question in that shrill cacophony, but I will do my best to respond. I believe that we’re here to debate the budget for Economic Development and, of course, the 2012-13 budget for Economic Development. I didn’t rise in the House today to

receive a lecture on parliamentary procedure from the Member for Whitehorse Centre. If I wanted to do that, I would go back and do my PhD instead of come to this House.

Let me take the opportunity, since members opposite have ceded the floor to me, to discuss a little more about the budget for the Department of Economic Development. Now, as I was just saying before, I took the opportunity to correct the record of the Member for Klondike who was citing inaccurately that the budget for the Regional Economic Development branch of the Department of Economic Development had been cut to the tune of 12 percent, he seemed to think. It is puzzling for me because that branch has received an increase in funds of what looks to be roughly \$133,000. If they turned to page 7-4 in the budget, they would see that very clearly.

Anyway, I am sure the members opposite are jumping at the gun to ask some legitimate questions about our budget, as opposed to discussing the Westminster system as a whole and some sort of reference to academics from Ottawa. I will cede the floor, and I look forward to questions on the budget.

Ms. Stick: When speaking about the true benefit of the resource sector boom to the private sector economy, I’d just like to remind the minister that yes, I would agree many businesses have enjoyed economic benefits. It’s a good thing — I’m not saying it isn’t. I would, however, like to remind the minister that groceries are being trucked up the highway from other jurisdictions, bypassing our businesses and heading directly to mining camps. Workers are being flown directly to and from other jurisdictions, directly to mining camps — not even pausing in Whitehorse for an overnight in a local hotel or a meal at one of our great locally owned restaurants.

Not all businesses are included in this boom and not all Yukoners have fair access to jobs. We see that in the rising unemployment rate and the increase by 500 of unemployed Yukoners. We do not have the lowest unemployment rate. We’re not tied with Alberta. In fact, Saskatchewan and Alberta are at five percent, or 1.3 percent lower than the Yukon.

What about a diverse economy? The minister speaks of tourism and numbers remaining the same from 2010 to 2011. To me, I’d call that a flatline. What happened? We’ve seen a huge expansion at the airport, but international flights will be down this year. What is this minister doing to help the Department of Tourism and Culture in encouraging economic diversity?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Of course, the Department of Economic Development continues to work with the Department of Tourism and Culture to promote a strong tourist economy — tourism-based economy. Of course, one of the hot topics lately has been our local air provider, Air North. Of course, last week in the House, we debated a motion and unanimously supported a motion to support Air North. I was upset to hear, of course, that the Leader of the Official Opposition chose not to fly Air North on her recent travels. That was unfortunate, especially given the fact that we had just recently unanimously passed a motion to support Air North. It’s a bit unfortunate.

The department continues to work with the Department of Tourism and Culture to promote a tourist economy. I want to actually take a moment, before I jump to that, to discuss some

of the data force — Yukon labour force numbers. We've talked a little bit about it. Yukon's unemployment remains among the lowest in the country. The labour force as of February 2012 totalled 20,700, which was an increase of 1,200 from February 2011. So that's more people working in the Yukon. Employment totalled 19,400, an increase of 700 from February 2011.

Once again, that is more people working in the territory. The unemployment rate in February 2012 was 6.3 percent, an increase of 2.2 percentage points from 2011. Stats Canada Yukon labour force survey data for 2011 has reported the average Yukon unemployment rate at 5.4 percent, which is down from 6.9 percent in 2010. Yukon's unemployment rate in 2011 was among the lowest in the country and was well below the national average.

In terms of the benefit of the resource sector to our economy, the member opposite made some comments about that. We have discussed at length here the contribution the resource section makes to direct jobs, indirect jobs and local expenditures in our territory. One of the interesting points made as well is that when trying to assess the value of that industry, we turn to government revenue and say, where is the benefit? I have to once again reiterate that while there is benefit to Yukon government revenues in terms of taxes and royalties, the true benefit of having a strong resource sector is having a strong private sector economy. That is indeed what the goal of the Department of Economic Development is: to develop a strong private sector economy. We have seen the private sector flourish over the last couple of years, and we anticipate that it will continue to flourish.

Now the Conference Board of Canada — their centre for the north — has recently issued a report, which I sent to the members opposite, both of my Economic Development critics, I believe. It outlines quite nicely some interesting forecasts around what the Yukon can expect in coming years. Among that data, I would like to note some of the features in that report. It anticipates GDP to increase substantially over the next couple of years. The forecasts of this report go all the way to 2025 and make a number of assumptions about the development of a number of projects in Yukon. Nonetheless, I will note some of the indicators that they look at. The GDP at market prices — they estimate by 2025 our GDP at market price will be \$6.32 billion.

The population estimates increased substantially, as well as employment. We discussed the development of a labour force in the Yukon recently — yesterday, I believe. Of course that's a challenge for us in Economic Development — developing an adequate labour force to meet the needs of our growing economy. It's a challenge faced by jurisdictions and governments across Canada, especially in western Canada. In years past, a number of workers from eastern Canada would come west. We're beginning to see a lessening of that trend as many folks from provinces like Newfoundland travel back to their home provinces as they have local development going on their provinces. Nova Scotia just received, of course, a large ship-building contract and a number of Nova Scotians can now return home. So that increases the pressures on western Canadian economies and indeed, Yukon is among those.

In terms of employment numbers, the Conference Board of Canada predicts that by 2012, there will be about 19,000 workers plus in the territory. Anyway, I don't need to go through the Conference Board of Canada's numbers, Madam Chair. As I said, I sent that report on to the members opposite. I believe those are all the questions, I think. I'll try to catch all of them again and have a response.

Ms. Stick: I don't think any questions were answered there, but that's fine. I'm going to move on.

I was looking at the community development funding, and I would just like to point out that this innovative program was actually established by an NDP government. I want to thank the minister across the way for looking into the matter of a local contractor proclaiming on their business website to have received community development funding. It was brought to the attention of our party by a member of the public who was quite concerned about this funding being awarded to a business. It's important that the public have certainty that these funds are going to groups and communities that are looking for funding. That is where this program is targeted. Today, on checking that website again, I'll just point out to the minister, they are still talking about having been awarded community development funding. I think it has got to be dealt with. That should not be out there, unless this department is, in fact, giving money to businesses.

I was interested to read, also on the Economic Development website, about the Regional Economic Development branch and was curious about this. This branch is to work with First Nations, local governments and community-based organizations to help create economically self-reliant regions and communities. I'd be interested to hear from the minister — and here are the questions: What are the regions? How many staff are assigned to work with these regions? Do any of them actually live there?

What I'm trying to get at here, Madam Chair, is that regional economic development is about jobs and community diversity. Shouldn't this department have staff living and working in these areas?

I would also like to know if regional economic plans have been developed. If so, how many have been completed and where can we look at those? Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: I'll start with the CDF question or comment that the member had. Of course, this is one that we've dealt with outside of this Chamber. I agree that CDF funds shouldn't be going to private businesses. They, indeed, are intended to go to other groups like NGOs and municipal governments — those sorts of groups, not private businesses. In the instance the member refers to, of course, the funds did go to a society — an NGO — and the NGO contracted a private company to do the work for them. The business did not directly receive the funds, of course. We've had staff contact the business in question, and have asked them to make sure that they accurately portray the nature of the CDF on their website, so we are working to address the issue raised by the member.

The Regional Economic Development branch works with a number of groups throughout the Yukon, including First Nations. They work with First Nation governments, as well as

First Nation development corporations. They do, in fact, support a range of activities, from business planning — as the member asked — to project evaluation. They build governance structures through capacity development; they develop strategic direction through strategic planning and economic development planning; and they develop policies that will support economic development. They identify and select worthwhile projects with the First Nations and develop feasibility studies and business plans and establish business ventures.

Economic Development supports aboriginal businesses by funding loan and microloan programs which are managed by Yukon's aboriginal capital corporation, Dana Naye Ventures. Economic Development contributes to regional economic development planning as outlined in chapter 22 of the *Umbrella Final Agreement*. In terms of specific business plans, there are a number that have been conducted with First Nations. With the Na Cho Nyäk Dun Development Corporation, the department is working on creating a strategic plan with the corporation, providing assistance to the Na Cho Nyäk Dun Development Corporation for the Canadian Aboriginal Minerals Association conference. We have also assisted members to attend the Mineral Exploration Roundup in Vancouver. I believe those plans are the property of the First Nation so I am not sure if they are currently available publicly.

The Selkirk Development Corporation — the department has assisted them with the development of the aboriginal power conference. The Carcross-Tagish Development Corporation — the department supported a scoping study for Carcross' economic village concept. The department also assisted with the mountain bike tourism forum focus group and assisted with the Yukon First Nations tourism investment strategy. Once again, I believe that is the property of the First Nation in that case, so I am not sure if it is available publicly.

The Chief Isaac Inc. — the department assisted in the development of a strategic plan preparation in the Chief Isaac Inc. operational review. With the Liard First Nation Development Corporation, the department assisted in the operational review and the establishment of guidelines. The department also assisted with the Kaska energy corporation gathering. With the Carmacks Development Corporation, the department assisted with a mine reclamation workshop. The department also assisted CDC — the Carmacks Development Corporation — to attend the Council for the Advancement of Native Development Officers Conference.

With the Mundessa Development Corporation, the department assisted with the MDC property opportunity analysis. In response to the regions, there aren't fixed regions per se, but they generally tend to be grouped into communities that are in the same general region. I believe there are five staff members in the Regional Economic Development branch and each staff member is responsible for a different geographic region. But once again, it's not a line drawn in the sand somewhere; it's general regions.

Of course the Klondike is lumped in with the north Yukon and we do a number of initiatives there — which I'm sure the Member for Klondike will ask about — so I will save those comments for that question.

Those are the regions, so I think that answered both the member's questions.

Ms. Stick: I would note in our budget that Economic Development is one of the few departments that do not have any statistics accompanying the budget and I wondered if I could get from the minister, please, the number of full-time equivalents in this department and, as well, the number of auxiliary or term positions.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: We certainly could provide those. I don't have them with me today. I could provide them though.

Chair's statement

Chair: Order. I'd just ask the members to be recognized by the Chair.

Ms. Stick: We were told that this was the place to ask these questions. That was very clear from the Premier the other day. This was the place to ask about FTEs and I appreciate that we will get that information as quickly as possible. Along the same lines — this will be my last question, Madam Chair — can the minister please also tell us the number of staff working on communications and the amount of money in that budget area. Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: There are two FTEs in the communications branch of the Department of Economic Development and they are a communications manager and a communications analyst. The line item for that budget is \$224,000 for the communications budget for the Department of Economic Development.

Mr. Silver: I would like to thank the minister for pointing out some of my numbers from yesterday and I just want to reiterate, I'm just reading the Blues here, and I did say that business and industry development is tasked with promoting Yukon for business investment enhancement over medium- and small-sized businesses. This year they will have to do that with 20 percent less money. I would be awfully embarrassed if I didn't get my numbers straight, so I would like to thank him for pointing out that it was on page 74. And I am just going to do a little bit of math here in my head: \$1,084,000 is the estimate for 2012 on that line item and the estimate for 2011 was \$1,437,000.

So, on a quick calculation here, he's right — actually, that's 25 percent less, not 20, so I'd like to thank him for correcting that for me.

Once again, I'm going to leave all of my line items to further on in the day. Also, I want to point out for the record that this is comparing the estimate from 2011-12, and that doesn't take into consideration the two supplementary budgets that are added upon that. As I'm learning — because I am new at this game — mains-to-mains is not necessarily the right way to compare statistics. There's a famous quote — There are lies, there are other kinds of lies, and then there are statistics. I don't know if I can use that here.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

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

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I think for a member to suggest that budget documents brought forward by the government, done by officials and tabled in this House — to characterize them as lies, I think would be contrary to Standing Order 19(h), and I would ask you to have the member withdraw that remark.

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

Mr. Silver: I don't think I was actually prepared to say that the actual budget was lies. I was merely making a comment.

Chair: So we can consider that comment to be withdrawn.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

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

Mr. Elias: I believe the Member for Klondike was simply using a quote to characterize the situation of the comments he was making, not characterizing the budget document as being a lie. So I don't think that there's any point of order. Thank you.

Chair's ruling

Chair: I would caution the members to stay away from language like "lies". Thank you.

Mr. Silver: Thank you, Madam Chair. Like I say, I am new at this game.

I do rise today to lend my support to the officials and the personnel in the Department of Economic Development and the good work that they do. They are charged with enhancing our shared quality of life through a sustainable and competitive territorial economy. In their work, they bring together partners across governments, emerging and core industries, the small business sector, and community stakeholders. Economic Development personnel play a key role in advancing economic diversification in our territory, and we owe them a debt of gratitude for their hard work.

Yukoners know that we must be diligent to build a strong economy, based on many industries, and that can sustain itself and our quality of life, even in the face of opposing economic forces.

We do not yet possess a strong economy today. Government operations remain both the single largest contributor to our GDP and the territory's largest employer. Government is a huge industry in the Yukon, and it is sustainable in Ottawa's hands. That is because 85 percent of this year's Yukon government revenue actually comes from the federal government. The Yukon government can claim some credit for negotiating a portion of these transfers. An economy built on government is not a diversified economy, however. Negotiations for a share of someone else's revenues leave Yukoners' economic future in the hands of a mathematical algorithm designed in Ottawa.

Construction contributes significantly to our economy as well, but in a government town or a government territory, as we are, the construction industry relies heavily on government-funded infrastructure projects. Again, our government-funded infrastructure projects are funded primarily by Ottawa. We will not soon see again the high levels of federal stimulus funding that have artificially boosted our construction industry in recent years.

After government, mining has been and remains a very important part of our economy, as well as our culture. The mining industry brings new wealth into our territory, distinct from our dependent fiscal relationship with the Government of Canada.

We are enjoying a revitalized mining sector today with new jobs and new business opportunities for suppliers and ancillary industries. Exciting things are happening throughout the territory and particularly in my constituency of the Klondike. However, as Yukoners have experienced, we cannot rely entirely on a resource industry that is highly cyclical. Past boom-and-bust cycles have been hard on the Yukon's economy, communities and families. Instead, we must complement our mineral industries with other economic sectors not subject to the same overriding economic influences.

That's where the Department of Economic Development comes in and its personnel take the lead in government economic diversification initiatives. Accordingly, if we value economic diversification, we must provide the department with both the resources and direction its personnel need to do their jobs well. This budget raises concerns about the way economic development is prioritized when it comes to getting government dollars. The inadequacies and missed economic opportunities in the territory raise concerns about the direction and political vision provided to the department.

Madam Chair, I would like to see an economy driven by a healthy private sector and one that expands at the pace that maximizes opportunities for Yukon businesses and workers. We are looking at the budget to see monies allocated for Yukon First Nations, ensuring that they are key partners in this thriving economy. In order for Yukon businesses to sell their products and services to the world, Yukon will need to invest in economic infrastructure, including transportation, energy and telecommunications, as we are told by the Economic Development ministry. We need to ensure that Yukoners have these skills to participate in the global economic markets for the 21st century. Does this budget enable strategic and responsible economic projects? Does it increase the benefits Yukoners receive for economic projects and activities? Does it enhance competitiveness of the Yukon business environment?

If we expect the Department of Economic Development to lead the way to a prosperous and stable territorial economy, we must resource it appropriately. Without money and staff, all we have is a departmental mission statement. Quite frankly, we have already seen plenty of hopeful project announcements from this government without the money or the plans to back them up. That is why we are deeply concerned about the cuts to this department. When I say "cuts", I actually mean increases that are less than average. It's pure mathematics — the standard deviation graph of the increases to the budget has Energy, Mines and Resources on one side — which is the larger-than-average side — and all the other departments, including Economic Development, on the less-than-average side.

The 2012-13 budget provides less money to the department than last year. This is doubly concerning because the total budget amount wasn't even enough then, and the department was forced to get supplementary funding to make it through the

year. The government is cutting over \$2 million from what it cost to run the department last year. Inflation and incremental wage loss — Economic Development has significantly less money to work with. Fewer resources mean a diminishing ability to work toward the stable and prosperous economy. Industry development is cut; industry attraction and marketing is cut; business development is cut; the Film and Sound Commission is cut; capital for the Dana Naye Ventures business development program is cut; First Nations and regional economic development is cut. Is the minister also scaling back on the department's mandate to match its reduced resources? Or are departmental personnel expected to deliver more with less?

In concluding, when we consider this budget, we must ask ourselves several questions: Does this budget enable strategic and responsible economic projects? Does it increase the benefits Yukoners receive for economic projects and activities and does it enhance the competitive of the Yukon's business environment? Ultimately, the question is this: Does the budget benefit Yukoners today and in the future by enabling a prosperous, diversified economy developed through partnerships?

I am encouraged by several projects this budget contains, and I am heartened by the skill and thoughtfulness exercised by the department officials and personnel as they go about their important work. In turn, I urge the minister to listen to Yukoners about how they want their economy to look and provide his department with the resources needed to accomplish these ends.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: I thank you very much. I'm almost at a loss as to where to begin with the remarkable amount of simply ridiculous statements made by the member opposite. I'll start with the first one here — I quote, "We don't have a strong economy". Our economy is the envy of Canada. We've got an incredibly strong economy right now. I would posit that our economy is stronger and more diversified than it has been in the past 50 or 60 years.

The second quote, I have to say, "So when we say 'cuts', we mean 'increases'". I'm perplexed by this one. I'm not sure what the member means here exactly. "When we say 'cuts', we mean 'increases'". I'm at a loss here.

So I'll go through some of the budget and I'll keep my commentary to the budget and I will restrain from giggling with laughter.

I do agree that the capital side of the budget is reduced this year. As I've explained several times in this House, that is as a result of the decrease, mainly due to the competition of the Western Canadian Music Awards, hosted in Whitehorse in November of 2011. That, of course, was \$335,000. \$245,000 of that was recovered from CanNor, and there was a slight decrease to the Dana Naye Ventures business development program of \$18,000. So there is, as you'll see, a very small decrease to the capital side. However, on the O&M side, there is an increase. The net effect of that is that the department's budget is basically the same as it was last year. The Regional Economic Development branch, of course, as I said, was not cut, although the member seems to think that. It was, of course, increased.

Now, in terms of some of the comments around the resource sector — unsurprising, really, from a party that advocated on-line staking during the election in an attempt to, I assume, reduce the level of economic activity in the member's riding.

Obviously, they don't seem to like the benefit of free-entry staking in the region of Dawson.

I guess I will now open it up to questions, if the member has any. I did hear a few questions and I'll try to respond to them. Does this budget allow strategic projects to go forward? Well, the Department of Economic Development does its best to make Yukon an attractive place for the private sector to bring projects forward, but of course, ultimately it is the private sector that brings projects forward, not government. That's something we've been trying to get the members opposite to understand: that the strength of our private sector economy doesn't come from government; it comes from the private sector.

The Conference Board of Canada outlook suggests that in 2011 the private sector's contribution to the economy in terms of Yukon's real GDP was roughly two-thirds. That's just a statistic for the members, I guess. In terms of allowing projects to go forward, as I said, the private sector drives projects forward. Actually, I have to say, I generally agree with the member's statements about the general direction. We are trying to develop a private sector economy.

I think that's what the diatribe we heard was aimed at. I believe that we've done a good job so far at developing a private sector economy and we'll continue to do that going forward. With that, I'll turn it over to the members opposite for questions about the budget specifically.

Ms. White: Thank you, Madam Chair. Just a short question: Is the Department of Economic Development involved in the Mineral Exploration Roundup, and if so, how?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Yes, of course, officials do attend. I myself attended as well. This last Roundup hosted a forum specifically around the transportation sector and targeted ports — industry's ability to access ports to export their materials. Of course, the primary role regarding Roundup, I think, is headed up by the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources. However, Economic Development does send staff and do participate in discussions.

Ms. White: Is the department involved at all in Yukon night or does it just do the forums?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: No, I don't believe the Department of Economic Development is directly involved in Yukon night, although I did attend myself.

Ms. Stick: Just one further question before general debate is cleared on Economic Development. I would like a commitment from the minister that he will be able to provide the House with the number of FTEs working for the department and bring back that information tomorrow. Again, I am asking for the total number of FTEs and the number of auxiliaries and casuals.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Of course, I will commit to getting back to the member opposite with the respective data to the best of our ability.

Mr. Elias: I would like to ask the minister if his department is in any way involved in collecting statistics with regard to maximizing the benefits within each individual industry and, if so, how and what statistics are calculated and collected?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Generally we rely on external sources for statistics, like Statistics Canada or the Conference Board of Canada.

Of course, we monitor them closely and do, in fact, work with those external bodies to ensure that we have the most up to date and accurate information possible.

Mr. Elias: If that is the case, then how can the minister stand on his feet and identify where there are gaps that need to be filled, such as housing and a whole bunch of other issues related to the economic boom in our territory? If there is a problem with us maximizing the benefits and we cannot figure out which industry, at what level, whether it is mining, tourism, or trapping for that matter — if he cannot identify the gaps within his own department or within the Yukon territorial government as a whole, how can he identify if we are maximizing the benefit for every dollar earned and every dollar spent within the borders in the Economic Development portfolio? He is going to have to be able to get on his feet and answer those specific questions over the years to come, because they are going to become more and more prevalent.

When we see our food bank used three times more than it usually is used — I just spoke to a gentleman today from Kelowna. He wants to move to the territory, because he is working in one of our mines. He wants to move his family here, spend money here, buy a house here, buy land here, but he cannot do so. He cannot afford it.

The availability of the rental and housing market doesn't allow him to do that. So those are the kinds of statistics we need to develop in our territory if we're going to understand how we're maximizing the benefit from each individual mine that opens up. There's the potential of five to open up within the next decade. So I think if the minister is actually going to be able to show Yukoners, on an industry basis, how each and every Yukoner — whether it's retail sales, whether it's rubber-tire traffic, whether it's housing, whether it's daycares, whether it's small business or anyone, for that matter — is benefiting from the boom in the Yukon, he has to be able to show those kinds of statistics. Those are the things that Yukoners are concerned about, because if we don't have statistics with regard to how we're maximizing the benefit from these various industries, then we don't know if we really are or not. We can't rely on Canada to collect these stats for us. So I'd like to hear a commitment from the minister as to whether he's going to work with his territorial government colleagues and his other ministers to collect this type of data, like they do in other jurisdictions in our country, and like our neighbours in Alaska do, to ensure that we are maximizing the benefit of our taxpayers' dollars that we represent on this side of the House as well.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: The Department of Economic Development does its best to engage with industry and industry associations across sectors to determine the strength of the various sectors of the economy. Of course we can't possibly

account for every dollar in our \$2 billion GDP, but we can get a good sense from industry of how strong their respective industries are. We do our best to engage both bilaterally with specific businesses, as well as industry associations at large. We engage with the Yukon Chamber of Commerce and Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce, as well as several regional community chambers of commerce throughout the Yukon.

In terms of the data, we do work with the Conference Board of Canada, Statistics Canada, and a number of other bodies to assess and analyze the data that's available and do our best to ensure that we have a comprehensive understanding of what's going on in the territory.

There are other departments that do this sort of work as well. I know that the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, for instance, has a much closer relationship with both the agricultural community and forestry community, the mining community and the land development aspects. The Department of Community Services does a lot of work in that aspect as well. We do our best to ensure that we've got accurate data and the Yukon Bureau of Statistics of the Executive Council Office does a lot of work as well.

So the department does its very best to ensure that we have accurate, up-to-date data, and we do our best to communicate to Yukoners about the strength of their economy.

Mr. Elias: I think what I'm trying to advocate for here is that our territorial public government has a role in ensuring, through statistics of its own gathering — whether it be a concerted effort with the business community and industry and First Nations and municipalities — that we're maximizing the benefit of this boom, because should gold go back down to \$202, as it was in the year 2000, I believe, then the pillar of "so goes mining, so goes the Yukon" is going to become a reality here that we're going to have to deal with. So statistics help. I tried to find statistics the other day with regard to violence against women in our territory. Do you think I could find those statistics? They're not readily available. So it's not just the Economic Development minister that needs to do some work here. There are other ministries as well.

I see the Minister of Executive Council Office is listening intently, so maybe he can give direction to the statistics department to ensure that we begin now, as a responsibility of public government, to ensure that these types of valuable statistics are being gathered quickly.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: The Department of Economic Development doesn't collect any stats on the incidence of violence against women. Regarding the other statistics referenced, of course, we do work with the Yukon Bureau of Statistics to make sure that we have the most up-to-date data available. The Department of Economic Development, however — the role we have taken on is primarily analytical. I don't think we'd want to get into the case where we are trying to gather primary statistics ourselves. I'm not sure that would be a good use of the department's time, especially when other institutions like the Yukon Bureau of Statistics and Statistics Can are doing those things as well.

So we do analyze and dissect information as much as we can and try to communicate that to Yukoners so they have a

good understanding of the strength of their economy. I'll take the member's comments as advice, though, and we will, of course, work to improve those analyses.

Mr. Elias: I know I brought up the incidence of family violence in the territory. I have been bringing this up over a number of years now, and I believe I haven't asked the minister this. It has a direct link to the availability of affordable housing. This is just one aspect of the argument here. Can the minister tell me what his department is doing to help curb, in a concerted government effort, the family violence statistics that have gone on for far too long in this territory? If so, does he have any statistics with regard to women and their role in the Department of Economic Development? How is he moving toward ensuring that those family violence statistics are going down and not up, or not becoming stagnant, because everyone knows that the territories — I believe Yukon is second next to Nunavut in terms of family violence. I am advocating that every single government department, as well as First Nation governments, as well as municipal governments and industry and NGOs have a role in curbing these statistics that have gone on for far too long. If the minister could elaborate on what his thoughts are on participating in ensuring that our territory's statistics with regard to family violence are going down and not up and if he has any lightbulb-ish ideas, would he please feel free to put them on the floor of the House today.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: We believe that healthy communities and healthy families are very important to a strong and sustainable economy. However, instances of family violence tend to be housed in the Department of Justice, so perhaps when Justice comes up for debate in the House here the member opposite could continue that very important conversation with the Minister of Justice. I would reiterate though that, as I said, it is important for a healthy economy to have healthy communities and healthy families. Those are indeed very important for Yukon's continued economic growth.

Mr. Elias: I'll give the minister an example. In rural Yukon, we have a single parent with two children who would like to start a bed and breakfast as a business. Single mothers may want to raise their families, plus run a business and let's say have a bed and breakfast in their own homes. Those are the kind of programs that could curb these statistics, especially in rural Yukon. I'm sure all the rural MLAs have dealt with this sometime in their short careers.

Those are the kinds of initiatives that could help curb these family violence statistics. If there is something within the minister's program that could actually be geared toward this type of program, then please let the House know.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Obviously, in rural Yukon, our departmental goals tend to be around developing the economy and developing an economy that does positively impact those rural areas. In the various communities of Yukon, tourism and the resource sector tend to be the areas of focus for the department. Of course, we understand that part of the road to healthy communities and healthy families does include employment and does include working and providing. That's certainly an important role for healthy families. Healthy families and healthy communities do lead to a strong economy as well. In

terms of the role of First Nations, First Nation communities and First Nation governments, we indeed work with First Nation governments and development corporations to ensure that those development opportunities and economic opportunities extend to the regions of Yukon and the remote communities as well as non-remote communities.

I have listed off a number of those already in the House. I do not need to reiterate them, but we are working to ensure that the benefits of our growing economy do extend throughout the Yukon and to rural communities as well as more central hubs like Whitehorse.

Mr. Elias: I will give the minister another example. I have advocated for this on the floor of this House before as well, and I am sure other rural members can attest to this. It regards our oldest industry within the territory and that is trapping. There is an idea out there that is underutilized, and that includes our number-one resources, which include our land, our water and our wildlife. As far as I am concerned, trapping is under the auspices of Economic Development, as well as Environment, and Education. I have advocated for this before on a broader scope — teenagers may end up in the justice system, or who end up dropping out of school for whatever reason, or just decide that they don't fit within the system. I've advocated for economic development initiatives like getting youth out on the land and trapping, using our traplines out there, using our First Nations, getting eyes and ears out on the land, getting the youth out there.

A successful businessperson asked me a couple of years ago, "You know, who would you rather hire? Someone who can get up — a teenager who is 13 years old — at 6 o'clock in the morning in the pitch black, go out on the trapline, or go out and get a load of wood for his grandmother or grandfather, come back and go to work and get things done during the day." That exists out in rural Yukon and it is something that I think can be used through this minister's department if he championed the issue properly with maybe Justice, Education and — what other minister did I mention — Highways and Public Works — throw him in as well. So, I think people see the value of this type of diversification of the economy. It is building solid, good citizens, because the youth out there who live out on the land, who trap and use those resources, don't go and rob little old ladies. I believe I saw a bumper sticker the other day saying that. There is value there, and if we just put some time and energy toward that — this is what I am talking about — about a grassroots diversification of the economy using our oldest industry. As those youth grow up and become adults, they use those skills and abilities, and it is cooperation with — again, with private sector, with the Canadian military, with First Nations, NGOs, et cetera. But it takes leadership from a public government to start this off, because it has a fragile shelf life if we don't have someone taking those types of leadership roles.

These are the kinds of things that are of value and are underutilized, so if the minister can give me some thoughts on that specific issue, I'd appreciate it.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: The funding for the Yukon Trappers Association, the allocation process of traplines and the general

relationship with the trappers as a whole does fall under the Department of Environment, so I will take those comments under advisement and pass them on to the Minister of Environment.

The importance of the trapping industry culturally to First Nations is of course very important, as the member opposite has described. It is something that through the Department of Environment we do work with the First Nations, RICs and other co-management bodies to ensure that trapping opportunities are there for Yukoners. It's not something we do through the Department of Economic Development. The primary relationship with trapping and with the allocation of traplines and with the Trappers Association itself is through the Department of Environment, so I would suggest we perhaps have that discussion under that department's debate.

Mr. Elias: I just can't wait to get into debate of the Department of Environment, because I have folders upon folders to deal with the Environment minister when we get to the Department of Environment.

But again, here's another pillar of diversification of the economy that the Minister of Economic Development talks about time and time again, and that's tourism and wilderness tourism around the territory. Can the minister explain on the floor of the House today how his department is helping — through the tourism industry — wilderness tourism, consumptive and non-consumptive use tourism and wildlife viewing? Is there a plan for the Department of Economic Development to strengthen that pillar within our territory, because it seems to me that in every single Yukon community, every year this seems to be lacking. I think it's a huge industry that could be worked on. I realize there are non-governmental organizations and other associations that have a role to play in this, but again, it takes leadership to diversify of the economy.

I think that a case in point is the Dempster Highway. It's absolutely phenomenal scenery up there at specific times of the year, especially when the wildlife is travelling through. Just in talking to people who live and work up there, including government employees, this is something that is drastically under-utilized. I think that having people out there, even as a niche market, could help out the industry. So that's just one aspect of it. There are people out there who actually want to come and see railroads and a whole bunch of other niche markets. So that's something I think the Minister of Economic Development — I'm sure that he'll be travelling overseas over the period from now until the fall sitting, and I hope he can report back. Even people from Europe and Poland and Germany, during my time over there, expressed a lot of interest in some of the exotic species that we have in our territory, and some of the protected species. I think that people come over here just to see a boreal chickadee, for instance. That's a niche market. People like to see that. I think that the Minister of Economic Development could flesh out some of those things in our natural environment. I've been on the Snake, the Wind, the Bonnet Plume, the Ogilvie and the Hart rivers.

I don't know who else has been on them, but I have been physically on each and every one of them. I see the value of our charismatic megafauna and our clean rivers and lakes and our

living lands. I think the minister has some work to do, so I hope he can get on the floor of the House today and explain what his department is doing to ensure that the pillars of tourism and industry are strengthened to maximize those benefits because I don't see them. If I'm wrong, maybe he can tell me how and where.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: I understand the member opposite is quite familiar with the exotic industry in Poland. I have heard a number of stories anecdotally about that — or sorry, exotic species.

In terms of the Department of Economic Development's relationship with the tourism industry, it is primarily at the entrepreneurial level. The primary industry relationship is through the Department of Tourism and Culture, so the Department of Tourism and Culture obviously maintains those relationships between both the industry associations and the bigger-picture industry. However, the Department of Economic Development does work with entrepreneurs in all sectors, including the tourism and culture industry. We work with entrepreneurs who have new ideas or want to move their business forward and grow their business.

They have access to our programs. The Department of Economic Development provides funding assistance to businesses and organizations in the tourism and cultural industries and sectors through programs delivered through the Film and Sound Commission, the Regional Economic Development branch and the Business and Industry Development branch.

One of the roles that has a distinct tourism value to it, I think, is promoting Yukon's wilderness beauty. We do that through the Film and Sound Commission to market Yukon as a place to record or film a number of programs in — at least movies, TV shows, commercials, and projects of this nature. The film incentive program, of course, consists of five film funding programs. The programs were created in 2005, following extensive consultation with the local and national film and sound industries. These programs provide funding to Yukon producers for projects that have demonstrated commercial potential. The programs also provide financial benefits to production companies from outside Yukon to film in Yukon and hire Yukoners.

One of the film programs under the Film and Sound Commission is the film location incentive, which encourages production companies to film in Yukon and hire and train Yukoners. There are three components to this incentive program: spend-based rebate, travel rebate and training programs. I would also add that the Film and Sound Commission has a wonderful compilation of beautiful scenes and beautiful scenery available in the Yukon and that the film industry could be interested in accessing for their commercials.

We also have the film training initiative. The purpose of the program is to assist Yukon residents to undertake a film production or post-production technical training course or program at a recognized post-secondary institution. The program also assists non-profit societies to create and offer short-term educational pursuits, such as workshops to Yukon filmmakers.

The filmmakers fund provides up to \$8,000 per applicant, which is available to Yukon film and video professionals to

assist them in developing viable careers in businesses or making films and videos for broadcast or commercial release.

The film development fund, which is up to \$35,000 per project, is available to Yukon residents or Yukon corporations to assist with the cost and development of film projects in Yukon.

The film production fund, which is up to \$500,000 per project, is available for Yukon film productions, where a Yukon corporation has had significant financial and creative control of the project. The applicant is required to have marketplace support in the form of a broadcast licence or a film distribution agreement. In this 2012-13 budget before us today, these programs total \$660,000.

As I said, the Yukon Film and Sound Commission does work with the Department of Tourism and Culture, as well as Environment and the Department of Highways and Public Works, as required, in order to facilitate filming in Yukon and sustainable and viable growth in the film sector.

I would also note that from April 1, 2011 to February 1, 2012, the Yukon Film and Sound Commission approved 19 projects for funding under the film incentive programs, providing approximately \$284,630.70 to support the filmmakers. The Government of Yukon continues to work cooperatively with Yukon's film industry in order to provide Yukoners with employment and training opportunities. An example of this is the *Gold Rush* reality television show. I understand there is going to be yet another season in the Dawson region of Yukon, filming a reality television show centred around some rather comical placer miners. There are mixed responses to this from placer miners and from Yukoners, but, in general, I think it certainly has done one thing — it has raised the profile of Yukon as a jurisdiction to visit. I believe it's a very well watched television show in the United States, and of course the United States is a key target tourism market for us.

A number of other films throughout the years have been attracted to the Yukon. One of them was an independent Canadian feature film, *The Mountie*, which had the working title of *Red Coat Justice*. It was filmed in Yukon in the summer of 2009. Yukon and Ontario film producers worked together to produce the film and hired approximately 79 Yukoners in cast and crew roles. *Red Coat Justice* submitted an application for funding, which included a budget of approximately \$800,000 to be spent in Yukon, and they were eligible for support from the Yukon film production fund.

A number of projects have occurred in the Yukon, all of which stem from the good work done by the Yukon Film and Sound Commission, which promotes Yukon's wilderness beauty as an ideal location for the film industry. That being said, also the Regional Economic Development branch, through the community development fund, provides funding to community-based culturally significant projects that contribute to the well-being of communities throughout Yukon. As well, the Business and Industry Development branch is committed to working with stakeholders on initiatives supporting the tourism and cultural industries that include strategy development, business planning, growing revenues and enhancing export readiness.

The Department of Economic Development continues to work with industry stakeholders and the Department of Tourism and Culture to identify opportunities and encourage growth in Yukon's tourism and cultural industry sectors. Economic Development also works with its stakeholders through the provision and support of various funding programs that contribute to tourism and cultural sector projects and initiatives. The department is working with the Council of Yukon First Nations in partnership with CanNor to support the development of the Yukon First Nation cultural sector strategy. In partnership with the Department of Tourism and Culture, Economic Development is assisting the Yukon Art Society to develop a visual arts and crafts sector, situation analysis and sector strategy. The department is working with the Main Street Yukon Society to support the developmental plan to grow the downtown of Whitehorse economy, contributing to a project that will deliver an economic impact analysis specific to the tourism and cultural industry sector. The department recently supported the successful hosting of the BreakOut West festival and Western Canadian Music Awards, which promoted and marketed the talents of Yukon artists and encouraged artists and their followers to visit Yukon. Of course, hosting events like BreakOut West and the Western Canadian Music Awards are excellent feathers in our cap in terms of promoting Yukon as a tourism hub and developing the Yukon tourism and cultural industries.

I think that gives a good overview of the many ways in which the Department of Economic Development works with the Department of Tourism and Culture and other departments to promote the development of the tourism and cultural sectors of our economy.

Mr. Elias: I'll move on to another industry. Over the last, I believe, five years, the Yukon Mine Training Association has been federally funded to be the hub and coordination for not only employment, but education and advocacy for the mining industry. I was just wondering if the minister had any aspirations to look toward the oil and gas industry within our territory and create or help create the same type of training association for the oil and gas industry. This could be another industry or pillar that could be strengthened within our territory if we do it right, we follow all the rules, best practices and ensure that public consultations are held to the highest standard. This is a resource that needs a lot more definition, but we need to do it correctly, and trained Yukoners on the ground could help do this correctly. Is the minister aware of maybe another department that is working toward this? Again, he talks about diversification of our economy.

The strength in the oil and gas sector is diversification of our economy; we just have to do it properly and with care. Can the minister elaborate on the things that he's working toward or is aware of in other departments with regard to the economic diversification and development of the oil and gas industry in our territory?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: The member mentioned the Yukon Mine Training Association. We are committed to enhancing Yukon's economy by supporting innovation in its resource sectors. Currently, the department is providing support to Yukon College to undertake a feasibility study on a centre for

innovation in northern mining. The centre would identify gaps in the labour force, support the training of Yukoners to undertake skilled jobs in industry, and undertake applied mining and exploration research to support innovation efficiencies in northern mining.

Yukon College is the lead on that, but the Department of Economic Development does provide funding and support through the strategic industries fund. I would also say that one of the players, at least in the development of the oil and gas industry in Yukon, is Northern Cross and of course the Department of Economic Development, through its activities in attracting investment from Chinese investors, I think played a role in the development of a partnership between Northern Cross and a Chinese investor, CNOOC, a Chinese national offshore oil and gas company.

In terms of training programs specifically, I would defer to the Department of Education and in terms of the industry development in a broader sense, I would defer that, as well, to the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources.

Mr. Elias: I didn't really hear anything of value in that response from the minister, so I'll change gears here. He did mention investments from China. I do know that there are developing countries — well, obviously — developing nations around the world, such as India and Brazil, that could become partners in our territory as well, not just the Chinese. So I'm wondering if any other nations are on the minister's scope of investment opportunities, especially in terms of Brazil and India — if the minister can elaborate on that as well.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: The member mentioned that he didn't hear anything of value in my last answer, which is unfortunate.

I think that the possibility of a centre of innovation and mining in Yukon would be a tremendously important thing. Too bad the member opposite does not agree. I think the good work done by the college in developing its capacity to provide training to Yukoners is an important thing as well, and I am sorry that the member opposite does not agree with that either.

Point of order

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

Mr. Elias: I would like to refer to Standing Order 19(g) and that the member is imputing false or unavowed motives to another member. I said that there was nothing of value in the context of not answering my question.

Chair's ruling

Chair: There is no point of order. This is a dispute between members.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: After unfortunately dismissing the development of a centre of innovation and mining in the north, the member did ask a question about our target markets. Of course, as I have said previously in days past, we have targeted Canada, in particular the eastern regions and more financial capitals of Canada for investment. We do look to the United States as well. I know that a number of the resources sector companies in the Yukon have received investment from

American companies, so I think that is an indication of some success.

Currently the federal government is negotiating a free-trade agreement with Europe, so we do look to Europe for additional investment as well. Within Asia, we do focus on Asia in a general sense, but primarily our actions have been toward China, as a result of China's monumental economic growth of late. Although Korea is certainly an interesting market and is one that we've seen some investment from as well — it's one that would be on the radar, I would say that. Japan is also an increasingly attractive jurisdiction for investment, so that's one that we'll be looking to as well.

In terms of the other BRIC countries, such as Brazil and India — not Russia, I don't think, but Brazil and India for sure — we've had ongoing examinations of our role and whether or not we should be furthering efforts to attract investment in India and Brazil. The federal government is pursuing a relatively robust trade agenda and it is one that we've been watching intently. The Prime Minister did indicate that India would be a possibility to develop a free-trade relationship with and we think there is potential for Indian investment in Yukon, particularly in our mineral resource sector.

So, yes, we are examining other jurisdictions like India and Brazil. We often engage with these countries and companies from those countries at investor conferences like PDAC or Roundup. We did have the chance to chat with several countries' representatives at PDAC, including, of course, some of the ones I mentioned already.

Mr. Elias: I would like to switch gears here. I understand the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region is under the auspices of the minister, as well. I didn't actually realize that they've created an Arctic component within PNWER. I did briefly mention this to the minister the other day about the agenda items and priorities of the Arctic component within PNWER. For obvious reasons, we try to establish a coordinated effort right from the Arctic Council to all the public governments — the federal government as well as the First Nation governments — to ensure that the position, which is very similar across all the organizations I mentioned, for the protection of the Porcupine caribou calving grounds within the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska is on those Arctic agendas.

Can the minister confirm, or not confirm, that the protection of the calving grounds of the Porcupine caribou herd within the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska is on that agenda? If not, can he seek to put that on the agenda of the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Of course, the member is correct that the Department of Economic Development, and myself as minister, is the lead in terms of dealing with the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region. He is indeed correct that within the PNWER organization we have established an Arctic caucus. Representatives from Alaska, Northwest Territories, and Yukon meet, as the Pacific NorthWest Economic Region organization's Arctic caucus, to identify issues that are important to PNWER's northern jurisdictions and to share best practices, ideas and issues that are significant to northern economic development. The Arctic caucus is a subcommittee of the Pacific

NorthWest Economic Region, obviously, as I said. Most recently the subcommittee met in Washington, D.C. to discuss follow-up issues coming out of previously held forums.

Some of the topics discussed previously are as follows: Arctic infrastructure for development, which includes cable wires, towers; financing for infrastructure development; mining; oil spill response; search and rescue; the Arctic Council; update on Alaska's northern waters task force, which is a development in Alaska at the state level where the state government is undertaking a planning or strategy exercise similar to that undertaken by the three northern territories when we developed the northern strategy or the northern vision.

In terms of the issue of ANWR, the primary focus of this body is economic development, and the decisions made in the Arctic caucus are done on a consensus basis, so it's not primarily up to me what issues we bring up, but the topic of ANWR is something that I could float with my colleagues from Alaska and the Northwest Territories and determine if there's an interest in pursuing that.

At the Yukon government level, we provide funding to the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation for them to advocate to American government and other governments on behalf of their people. But of course, that's something that's done through the Department of Environment. I would also add that I did forget to mention earlier — the member opposite did mention the importance of the Dempster Highway and its beauty and the scenery there. I would note that in the budget highlights, I do see \$900,000 for surfacing, spot repairs and erosion control for the Dempster Highway. So \$900,000 is a significant investment in that important piece of infrastructure. I'm sure the Minister of Highways and Public Works would be happy to explain more about that in his department discussions.

Mr. Elias: I'll wind down my comments here, but it's good to hear that the Minister of Economic Development is participating in the Arctic caucus. I would let him know that sometimes, especially when countries come together to discuss items within the Arctic context, they become very powerful very quickly. That's why I brought this issue up. I have a couple of "asks" for the minister. Should there be a meeting in the Yukon, hopefully I can get invited, maybe as an observer. The other thing is that he does put the protection of the calving grounds of the Porcupine Caribou herd on the agenda.

I understand that sometimes these caucuses work on a consensus basis, and it would be very difficult to get our Alaskan counterparts onside on some of these issues, but it's worth a try, because it does speak volumes when you have a concerted Arctic effort to protect that wonderful resource, the Porcupine Caribou herd. I might add, that herd does have substantial economic development tangibles and has had for decades in the past and will for decades to come. I appreciate the minister's time today. He's becoming well-versed in his fourth month in office, so I look forward to future debates, especially in the Department of Environment. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: I would just highlight that, of course, the Arctic caucus is meeting in Whitehorse in May — I believe it's the 17th and 18th, and I will be contacting both the Official Opposition and the Third Party to provide them with

information about that meeting. I am sure that we will be able to find a role, whether it be, as members opposite suggest, as an observer or some way in which they can engage.

Mr. Silver: I mentioned earlier that a government branch last week had a professional development seminar on a decentralized approach to governance. I commend this initiative and, on that view, I would like to ask the minister if he can speak to his association or his department's association with the KDO — the Klondike Development Organization. As the minister knows, this organization was developed in cooperation with agencies such as the Klondike Visitors Association, the Dawson City Chamber of Commerce, and KIAC — the Klondike Institute of Art and Culture — to name a few.

What plans does the Department of Economic Development have to work on a decentralized approach with such an esteemed organization?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Of course, the Department of Economic Development does support the Klondike Development Organization and does work with a number of stakeholders in the Dawson region. The Department of Economic Development provided funding in 2009-10 to the City of Dawson, which assisted with the partnering of Dawson-based organizations in the establishment of a new community development corporation, the Klondike Development Organization.

In 2010-11, the department continued its support by providing funding to the Klondike Development Organization that assisted in undertaking a pilot implementation of portions of its strategic plan. In 2011-12, Economic Development provided funding under two contribution agreements from the regional economic development fund. The projects are focused on development of economic planning tools and developing regional economic capacity to strengthen the local economy and obtain secondary economic benefit from large resource projects. The department will continue to provide economic development support to the region to encourage economic growth and opportunities that benefit all Yukoners.

The Klondike Development Organization is a not-for-profit organization with participation from the City of Dawson, Dawson City Chamber of Commerce, the Klondike Visitors Association, as the member opposite mentioned, and the Dawson City Arts Society. Chief Isaac Incorporated has indicated it will join as a founding member.

The City of Dawson was funded in 2011-12 to establish Klondike Development Organization in partnership with organizations based in the City of Dawson. Deliverables included a comprehensive document outlining Klondike Development Organization's priorities, strategic objectives, a report outlining the methodology and critical events for establishing, developing and sustaining the corporation over the next three years, a report on board training undertaken, investment opportunities assessment, scoping study, evaluating two identified investment opportunities and development of a funding proposal for submission to targeted funding agencies.

KDO was funded in 2010-11 to undertake selected implementation from the organization's strategic priorities. The deliverables from this project included a business survey and a household survey, market research and analysis on the current

housing market in Dawson City and the surrounding region and how it would impact economic development, along with the full housing strategy for KDO, a report outlining the results of a pilot partnership forum aimed at strengthening communications and partnership among community-building stakeholder organizations and a communication strategy.

One of the current projects funded in 2011-12, or in the previous budget, to develop economic planning tools includes the following deliverables: updated community profile; site availability database for both residential and commercial industrial properties in Dawson; Dawson business inventory, web and printed information on business licences, permits, taxes and services for Dawson-based business; and a report detailing outcomes on new and potential collaboration resulting from at least four partnerships to be coordinated by the organization.

An additional project funded in 2011-12 focuses on developing regional economic capacity to strengthen the local economy and obtain secondary economic benefit from large resource projects and includes the following deliverables: report detailing activities under the pilot enterprise and investment facilitation service; development of a community assistance and mentoring network program; report on community engagement activities; and a project review report — assessing the project and its effectiveness.

The Department of Economic Development works with other departments, including Tourism and Culture, in supporting the KDO. In regard to the most recent developments of the KDO, I am not privy to any information, other than what the member opposite has just provided, so I wouldn't feel comfortable commenting on it, although I would say I look forward to working with the KDO in the future and look forward to whatever information or reports they have that they would like forward to me or to the department to further our relationship.

Ms. White: Earlier, the minister said that he and Economic Development officials attended the Cordilleran Roundup in Vancouver. Can the minister please tell us the total amount spent by the department for all costs associated — airfares, hotels, restaurants — as well as the number of people who were sent?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: I can confirm that the Department of Economic Development had five people, including me, attend the conference. Of course, all five of us made the choice to fly Air North, I would point out.

I believe that, aside from me — the deputy minister, one staff who was focused on First Nation engagement, and two staff who facilitated the conference I mentioned earlier regarding the transportation industry and its relationship with the mineral resources industry, as well as the port facilities. I believe the ports of Skagway, Stewart and Haines were all represented there. As for the more specific questions, that I don't have here today, but of course the staff attending — this would be part of their normal job descriptions, so their time spent there would be as part of their salary, myself included. I think that is all I have for the member opposite right now.

Ms. White: I hope that the minister will provide me with the information on the costs, other than salaries: airfares, hotels and restaurants. Could you tell me also the cost of the

forum or the meeting you talked about? Can you tell us the cost of hosting that?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: I think the event registrations are available publicly and I'm sure they could follow up with the Mining Association of British Columbia to find the event costs. In terms of the budgetary items the member opposite mentions, as a minister, I don't micromanage that level of the department. The expenses of what meals certain members of the staff eat, or whatever, aren't something I particularly look into. The budget as a whole does provide for travel to conferences and the mining Roundup is an example of one of those conferences.

Ms. White: I was assured by the Premier yesterday that all ministers would have the answers to all of our pointed questions; that would be one so I look forward to the answer.

You talked about hosting a conference or the forum — the one that was run by Economic Development. I would like to know the cost of that. So that one particular event that was hosted by the department — can you please tell me the cost of that?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: I'm afraid I don't know the cost of renting the conference room at the hotel. That would be the only cost, I believe, aside from, perhaps, the rental of a speaker unit. I don't have that here today, and, quite frankly, I don't think that's a paramount activity of the department. This was a facilitation between industry — it involved industry components travelling at their own expense to this meeting. Of course, the per diems for the staff are the same as for all staff in all departments. Those would indicate their costs for meals and hotels and other things like that.

Ms. Moorcroft: I would like to say that the minister is responsible for providing information to the members opposite regarding expenditures in his department. The Department of Economic Development — the minister and some of his officials — attended the Cordilleran Roundup in Vancouver. I think it is an entirely appropriate question to know how much the Department of Economic Development spent in order for the departmental officials to attend that conference. Will the minister commit to providing a legislative return with the amount of public funds that were spent for the attendance at the Cordilleran Roundup?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Unfortunately, I don't know what my staff had for breakfast. I don't know what they had for lunch. I don't know what they had for dinner. I do know that the per diems available to staff certainly could be — I think — available, perhaps, through another department. It's not something I'd be providing today through the Department of Economic Development. The costs of attending conferences like this are part of the normal business of the department and something we do as a matter of normal business.

Ms. Moorcroft: Let me be clear. Neither the Member for Takhini-Kopper King nor I are asking what the minister or officials ate for breakfast. We're asking for the total costs — the value, the amount of money — that was spent by the Department of Economic Development in order to attend the Roundup in Vancouver. Was that a commitment to provide an answer by legislative return? If it is, I'm done.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Of course the expenses for last year's Roundup would be in last year's budget. Of course we are here to discuss this year's budget today. I think if the members opposite have questions about our budget, I would be happy to answer them.

Mr. Tredger: We were talking about statistics a little earlier and I was a little bit surprised. One of the things that I would think the Department of Economic Development would do — and I assume they do it, but it may not be readily available — is a cost-benefit analysis of each industry. I would expect that they would analyze each industry and each business to be able to determine how and how much to support. What I am wondering is this: Does the Department of Economic Development look, business-by-business that they are going to support and promote, at things like the direct impact, which could include employment, payroll, revenue-generated services and goods sold by the business or at the business? How much local, territorial, Canadian and international employment is there?

And what are the indirect impacts, such as what are users and employees of the business fending off there in local and regional economies — an example would be hotels or restaurants — as a result of their being employed? The third thing is the induced impacts, including the value of goods and services purchased by money generated by the direct and indirect impacts throughout the regional economy. These are goods and services that may or may not be associated with the business and would otherwise be available. While looking at those benefits to the economy, which every business would provide, I would also look for the costs — again, either direct or indirect — in providing infrastructure for it, which is what is necessary to build in terms of the skills and a cost of oversight.

If I may use an example from a number of years ago — and this is just sort of to indicate what I'm getting at — a number of jurisdictions were looking at having call centres. The benefits of having call centres would be having employment in the area. One of the costs would be putting in high speed access to it and that, so I would think the Department of Economic Development, in conjunction with the local economic development agencies, would be looking at those cost/benefit analyses for each of the industries.

Mr. Minister, has something like that been done on an industry-by-industry basis and can it be shared with us?

Chair: Order. Would the members like a recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Committee of the Whole is recessed for 15 minutes. Thank you.

Recess

Chair: Committee of the Whole will come to order. We'll continue with questions for Economic Development.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: I'll do my best to recall what the question was. With the recess I believe I may have missed some. I believe I recall the member opposite was asking about Economic Development's ability to work with every single individual business to calculate and analyze their infrastructure

requirements and growth perspectives. I would say that I think that's probably stepping out of the —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Chair: Mr. Tredger on a point of order.

Mr. Tredger: He must have misunderstood. It wasn't individual businesses, but it was each sector.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: There does not appear to me to be a point of order, Madam Chair. The member, in fact, did ask about every business, so I think this is a dispute between members.

Chair's ruling

Chair: There is no point of order.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: I will take that reminder of the question though. In terms of specific sectors, the department works with a number of industry associations to look at specific sectors to determine where opportunities may exist. If entrepreneurs or specific businesses have identified areas where they think an opportunity exists, we will often find that they are eligible for funding to develop business plans or a sectoral study to develop the efficacy of such projects.

We work with the chambers of commerce to do this as well. Chambers of commerce often, through their membership, are sufficiently able to identify areas where opportunities do exist opportunities within various sectors.

I would say that, as well, the department itself does, through its normal business and analysis of the economy and analysis of the data available, identifies opportunities where they exist in the economy. When we do that, we do usually provide those to the private sector and, of course, allow the private sector to respond accordingly.

I hope, at least from my recollection of the member opposite's question, that provides some answers.

Chair: Are there any further questions for Economic Development? Seeing none, we'll proceed with line by line on Vote 7, Department of Economic Development, page 7-6.

On Corporate Services

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

On Deputy Minister's Office

Deputy Minister's Office in the amount of \$459,000 agreed to

On Corporate Administration

Corporate Administration in the amount of \$991,000 agreed to

Corporate Services Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$1,450,000 agreed to

On Capital Expenditures

On Information Technology Equipment and Systems Expenditure

Information Technology Equipment and Systems Expenditures in the amount of \$43,000 agreed to

Corporate Services Capital Expenditures in the amount of \$43,000 agreed to

Corporate Services Total Expenditures in the amount of \$1,493,000 agreed to

***On Corporate Planning and Economic Policy
On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures***

On Directorate

Directorate in the amount of \$231,000 agreed to

On Communications

Communications in the amount of \$224,000 agreed to

On Policy and Planning

Policy and Planning in the amount of \$811,000 agreed to

On Business and Economic Research

Business and Economic Research in the amount of \$734,000 agreed to

Corporate Planning and Economic Policy Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$2,000,000 agreed to

On Business and Industry Development

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

On Directorate

Directorate in the amount of \$582,000 agreed to

On Industry Development

Industry Development in the amount of \$2,763,000 agreed to

On Investment Attraction and Marketing

Investment Attraction and Marketing in the amount of \$626,000 agreed to

On Business Development

Ms. Hanson: At the risk of getting another repetition, I will ask simply if I could get an answer to a two-part question. One is that this has been a static amount, so if the emphasis is on increasing the skilled labour force in this territory, how does this correlate; and the second is who keeps the statistics with respect to this program?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: On the Business Development —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Ms. Hanson: Sorry, Madam Chair, I apologize. I'm not at the right place. I thought we were at Business Incentive.

Chair: Thank you.

Business Development in the amount of \$1,096,000 agreed to

On Film and Sound Commission

Film and Sound Commission in the amount of \$1,316,000 agreed to

Business and Industry Development Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$6,383,000 agreed to

On Capital Expenditures

On Business Incentive Program

Ms. Hanson: Now I'm on the right line, Madam Chair. I appreciate the patience there, and my question would still be — so this program is static over the years — just understanding an explanation of that — and what statistics are available with respect to what has been incentivized and to what degree?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: The business incentive program provides rebates to contractors working on eligible government contracts as an incentive to hire Yukon residents and to use Yukon-manufactured products. For eligible government construction contracts, rebates are available to contractors for la-

bour, apprentice, youth and Yukon-manufactured construction materials and products, for goods and services purchased by the Yukon government, rebates for items produced in Yukon and sold directly to Yukon government are available to Yukon manufacturers.

I know that we previously had some questions about the youth and apprentice use of the business incentive programs, so I'll provide some numbers for the members opposite from years past, as I mentioned yesterday. In 2009-10, there were 28 youth — this is the number of youth involved. The amount for that — as a rebate that was provided — was \$39,983.60. For that same year, the number of apprentices was 47. The amount approved there for apprentices was \$89,147.18. For 2010-11, there were 43 youth, for a total amount of \$37,951.56. For apprentices — 34, at a cost of \$15,398.63. As I said before, this is a demand-driven program, so the budget allotment is derived generally on what we anticipate will be available for government contracts in a given year. It's demand-driven, so it could be lower or higher in a year, based on the uptake in the program. But it is demand-driven, so the allocations aren't necessarily what will ultimately be expended. I hope that answers the question.

Ms. Hanson: I do appreciate the minister answering the question that I actually asked at the end of yesterday, which took 20 minutes of long speech to get to that, because I did ask the question with respect to apprentices because he had referenced the \$43,000 in manufacturing rebate, which is where my question left off yesterday, and I didn't get an answer. So now I've got \$43,000, approximately \$80,000 and \$37,000. I'm looking for examples of the sectors that get business incentive programs — the benefit to Yukon's small and medium enterprises. As he has articulated, the objective of this — I understand the demand-driven programs. I have worked in that area as well. So I am simply asking for clarification of those sectors that have benefited — so identify the two or three target populations. It is good to hear that a number of youth have benefited from this and great to hear about apprentices and the small amount — it sounded like the \$43,000 for manufacturing rebates. What about the other \$900,000 and some?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: So the program applies to government construction projects. So any business that is eligible and succeeds in being awarded a government construction project is eligible for this program. Government construction projects range from industries including highways, capital construction of buildings, and any number of goods and services purchased by Yukon government. In order to be eligible for the program, the rebates are available for contractors for labour, apprentices, youth and Yukon manufactured construction materials and products. The companies submit an application for the program as soon as their construction is completed, so oftentimes we have projects completed — or projects ongoing that will be eligible for the program, but aren't provided funding yet because the project isn't eligible until it's completed. So that explains a little bit of why a certain amount is expended at certain times.

I hope that answers the member opposite's question. I'm not entirely clear if that did. I will endeavour to try again if the member opposite wants.

Business Incentive Program in the amount of \$1,050,000 agreed to

On Dana Naye Ventures Business Development Program

Dana Naye Ventures Business Development Program in the amount of \$34,000 agreed to

On Prior Years' Projects

Prior Years' Projects in the amount of nil cleared

Business and Industry Development Capital Expenditures in the amount of \$1,084,000 agreed to

Business and Industry Development Total Expenditures in the amount of \$7,467,000 agreed to

On Regional Economic Development

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

On Directorate

Directorate in the amount of \$315,000 agreed to

On First Nations and Regional Economic Development

First Nations and Regional Economic Development in the amount of \$1,138,000 agreed to

On Community Development Fund

Community Development Fund in the amount of \$3,327,000 agreed to

Regional Development Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$4,780,000 agreed to

On Capital Expenditures

On Prior Years' Projects

Prior Years' Projects in the amount of nil cleared

Chair: Are there any questions regarding revenue?

Regional Economic Development Capital Expenditures in the amount of nil cleared

Regional Development Total Expenditures in the amount of \$4,780,000 agreed to

Department of Economic Development agreed to

Chair: We will proceed to Vote 11, Women's Directorate.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Chair: Recess has been requested for five minutes please.

Recess

Chair: Order please. Committee of the Whole will now come to order. The matter before us is Bill No. 6, *First Appropriation Act, 2012-13*, Vote 11, Women's Directorate.

Women's Directorate

Hon. Ms. Taylor: It is indeed my pleasure to present the Women's Directorate budget for the 2012-13 fiscal year.

I would first like to extend my heartfelt thanks and commend the officials at the Women's Directorate for their continued hard work, for their work toward putting the budget together, and for their continued collaboration with many organizations throughout Yukon and, of course, working throughout

every government department and agency toward advancing women's equality.

Before presenting the details of the budget, I'd just like to highlight a number of initiatives the Women's Directorate has been working on over the past fiscal year, which include the continued administration of the \$300,000 women's equality fund, which provides programming and operational funding to equality-seeking women's organizations and projects; the administration of Yukon Aboriginal Women's Summit supported efforts to secure funding from Canada's northern strategy trust, in partnership with equality-seeking aboriginal women's organizations; and that of overseeing the implementation of projects to address recommendations that flowed from each of the Yukon Aboriginal Women's Summits.

The prevention of violence against aboriginal women fund supported another six community-based projects. The fund is for proposal-driven projects that specifically address the cessation of violence perpetrated toward aboriginal women who face much larger rates of violence than other women. The Women's Directorate and the Yukon Housing Corporation continue their collaborative work on the Whitehorse affordable family housing complex, and it has indeed been a success.

An on-site program coordinator working with services available to support those families and in-house family resource centre has been very pivotal to this innovative housing initiative's success.

With the support of Yukon Housing Corporation, Women's Directorate was able to lead a series of various workshops for tenants to help develop and encourage tenant safety, as well as joint responsibility.

The Women's Directorate continues its work to promote public education and, in fact, early this morning I was pleased to be able to launch a social marketing campaign aimed reducing at violence against women and girls throughout the territory. As I mentioned early this morning, violence against women and children remains an issue of utmost importance to the Government of Yukon, and it's an issue that affects both women and men throughout the territory. As I mentioned earlier, it's an issue that affects our families and has significant costs for our communities.

The particular campaign we launched earlier today is part of a broader strategy — the *Victims of Crime Strategy* that was launched in collaboration with the Department of Justice back in 2009. It is really aimed at getting Yukoners thinking about the issue of violence against women and what men, youth and young families can do to help influence the end of violence in our communities. Of course, part of this very interesting campaign contains a number of hand-drawn images of familiar faces of individuals throughout Yukon — on posters and perhaps even on the sides of buses, radio advertisements, Facebook, the use of other social networks. It is really hoped that the campaign will create a connection to the issue of violence through a means of engagement and less so through a means of judgment.

I would like to just congratulate all of the many individuals who did participate — the inter-agency group that contributed to the development of the campaign. Of course, that group con-

tained a wide variety of individuals, including officials from the Department of Justice, Education, the Women's Directorate, working in collaboration with a number of community representatives, including Kaushee's Place, the women's transition home, and other men, women and youth as well. Congratulations to them. We look forward to seeing the entire campaign roll out — as it has been planned — very strategically over the course of the next several months. We are certainly looking to target a number of various groups.

Madam Chair, also of significance is the work of the Women's Directorate on the development of the second-stage housing initiative, a working collaboration with Kaushee's Place, that will provide 10 transitional units of supportive, secure and affordable housing for approximately 12 to 18 months for women and children who are fleeing abuse. As has been already mentioned a number of times, this investment builds on other housing initiatives in support of families, one of which includes — as I just referenced earlier — the Whitehorse affordable housing initiative, the result of which saw over 30 units made available for single-parent families, of which the lion's share is made up of women and children.

That also includes the addition of second-stage housing units for Help and Hope for Families Society, a women's shelter in Watson Lake that was opened probably about a year and a half ago. I had an opportunity to tour that particular facility with the MLA for Watson Lake and was very impressed with what was made available and the continued programming and other program elements that continue to be delivered by Help and Hope for Families Society.

The building project — when it comes to this particular initiative, second-stage housing — will be led by Kaushee's Place with a great deal of technical assistance and support provided by the government that will eventually see Kaushee's Place owning and operating the facility. I just want to say that this initiative has been in the works for some time, and I certainly wish to thank members of the staff and wish to recognize the board of directors that oversees the Yukon Women's Transition Home Society and their collective efforts in bringing this project to fruition.

These are just but a few of the highlights of some of the accomplishments of the Women's Directorate over the past year.

Moving forward to the budget highlights for 2012-13, the Women's Directorate operation and maintenance budget is just over \$1.8 million. The capital is just over \$3 million. The budget includes an overall increase of \$7,000 in personnel, which includes an increase of \$19,000 for collective agreement, managers' market, merit increases, a decrease of \$10,000 for one-time funding for maternity leave top-up; a decrease of \$11,000 for one-time funding for 2010-11 to backfill for the director; and an increase of \$9,000 for long-term disability premium increases, as well as an increase of \$50,000 for the 2010-11 forecast.

Further, there is an overall increase of \$115,000 in "Other", which includes the following: an increase of \$63,000 for a carry forward for the marketing campaign; an increase of \$15,000 for the National Aboriginal Women's Summit; an in-

crease of \$10,000 for program evaluation training; an increase of \$10,000 for the annual women's group meeting; an increase of \$20,000 for Yukon Aboriginal Women's Summits; increase of \$6,000 for ongoing costs for Internet capacity and server; and a decrease of \$9,000 for revote from 2011-12 for the National Aboriginal Women's Forum.

There is an overall decrease of \$176,000 in transfer payments, which includes primarily a decrease of \$213,000 in the aboriginal women's program via northern strategy funding.

Year 3, which we are about to embark on — 2012-13 of the aboriginal women's program — is \$51,000 which is a reduction of \$133,000, as I mentioned earlier. There is also a reduction of the \$80,000 revote from 2011-12, which is removed in this year that we are debating. This funding is for the implementation of recommendations from the Aboriginal Women's Summits that have been ongoing for some time.

It also includes an increase of \$37,000, which includes \$45,000 for additional funds for year 2 of 2011-12 funding and a reduction of \$8,000 for a revote from 2011-12 for the prevention of violence against aboriginal women funding.

There is an overall increase of \$24,000 in program delivery, which is the result of an increase of \$7,000 in personnel, including an increase of \$19,000 for collective agreement and managers' market and merit increases. Again, there is a decrease of \$10,000 for one-time funding for maternity leave top-up; a decrease of \$11,000 for one-time funding from 2010-11 for backfill for the director; and an increase of \$9,000 for long-term disability premium increases.

As I mentioned, there is an increase for ongoing costs for Internet and an increase of \$10,000 for evaluation training.

There is also an overall increase of \$108,000 in public education, which includes an increase of the carry-forward of funding from the year before, 2011-12, for social marketing campaign; an increase of \$10,000 for annual women's group meeting; the increase of \$45,000 for additional funds for year 2 for the prevention of violence against aboriginal women fund; and a decrease of \$8,000 for the revote from 2011-12 for the prevention of violence against aboriginal women fund.

As I mentioned, there is also an overall decrease in policy, research and development, which includes an increase of \$20,000 for Yukon Aboriginal Women's Summits; an increase of \$15,000 for National Aboriginal Women's Summits; a decrease of \$9,000 for a revote in 2011-12 for the national aboriginal women's forum; the decrease of \$133,000 — as I mentioned earlier, as year 3 of the aboriginal women's program is \$51,000, which is a reduction from the year previous; and a decrease of \$80,000 for a revote from 2011-12 for the Yukon Aboriginal Women's Summits funding.

With that, I will conclude my remarks so that members can respond accordingly. Thank you.

Ms. White: I would just like to start by thanking the public servants for their excellent briefing the other day. It was very helpful. I'll stay away from the questions that I asked and got answered by you guys, and will concentrate on other matters. I'm going to start by seeking confirmation that the mandate of the Women's Directorate, as established by the NDP government in 1985, is a central agency to provide a policy

lens on all government initiatives, be they housing strategies, justice initiatives or social inclusion strategies; that they be implemented with the policy lens from the perspective of Yukon women and are intended to ensure that all Yukon government policy and legislation is developed with a view to the economic, legal and social equality of women. Can the minister outline how this policy objective is achieved?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: It's with great pleasure that I'm able to speak to the mandate of the Women's Directorate and some of the work that it does provide and in addition to what my opening remarks had to say. I did want to say that it was actually on April 1, 2003, that the Women's Directorate was fully restored to its previous status prior to the renewal initiative that was adopted by the previous Liberal government.

That's a very important point because when the Liberal administration was there, the Women's Directorate — somewhat very similar to the Department of Economic Development and the Department of Tourism and Culture — really lost its status accordingly. So we were pleased to be able to restore it to its previous status. That means that the director of the Women's Directorate continues to report directly to the minister on all program matters and has the full financial responsibility for the directorate. The director also has delegated authority in accordance with the *Public Service Act* to administer personnel matters.

Since that time — fast-forward — there have been a whole host of initiatives. Of course, as I mentioned in my opening remarks, the Women's Directorate's primary mandate is for the purpose of advancing women's equality, whether it is on the legal, economic, or the social front.

Of course we do that in a number of different ways through policy initiatives — whether it's gender-inclusive analyses; whether it's through training initiatives in collaboration with other front-line departments, primarily Department of Justice, for example, especially when we work through implementing recommendations from the police report, for example — and, of course, the ongoing work when it comes to working with Victim Services, as well as providing advice and collaborative services with Justice on providing support for those who perpetrate violence against women.

We provide a number of other initiatives, of course, when it comes to housing. I won't go over that at great length, but Women's Directorate has played a very integral role in the development of the Whitehorse affordable housing initiative, for example, in years previous. I know that when I was the minister responsible for Women's Directorate a number of years back — not that long ago, but years back — it was first put to the forefront that that was, in fact, the largest pressure that was reported by the Yukon Housing Corporation — a need for housing — safe and accessible, affordable housing. That was pertaining to single-parent families. Since then, we've seen that particular initiative come to fruition.

I had an opportunity to tour that facility during their annual Christmas gathering. It was very impressive indeed. As I mentioned, the Women's Directorate continues to work very closely with Yukon Housing Corporation on making programs and including workshops available for the tenants as well. I

think it has been working very well. It is a one-of-a kind initiative, and something that we very much support.

Likewise, as I mentioned, on the second-stage housing front, the Women's Directorate works with other women's shelters throughout the territory, whether it be in Dawson City, Watson Lake or here in Whitehorse with Kaushee's Place, the women's transition home. Of course, we are working very closely on the development of the second-stage housing initiative that will accommodate many more families who are fleeing abusive relationships. That makes up the continuum of housing options that continue to be made available by the Government of Yukon.

As a mechanism for funding, we have and continue to administer a number of different funds in support of women's equality. As I mentioned, prevention of violence against aboriginal women was a fund that we actually launched a number of years ago and then the previous minister responsible was able to double that fund to \$200,000 annually.

Likewise, women's equality fund — I was also able to help introduce that fund at the time. There weren't any funding mechanisms available from any of the previous governments in support of women's equality-seeking organizations, so women's equality fund — we not only introduced it, but we also increased it recently from \$175,000 to \$300,000 per annum and we also issue it on a three-year basis, providing that multi-year funding mechanism. That's also very well-received by organizations.

We have also been able to double the women's community projects funding from \$5,000 to \$10,000, again with open applications. We continue to fund the women's advocate, which is currently housed at Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre and of course we also, I believe, through the Department of Health and Social Services, provide assistance for rural pregnant moms coming into the City of Whitehorse and looking for housing for a short-term basis, in terms of getting ready for delivering healthy babies.

We, as I mentioned, work with a number of different organizations. Aboriginal women — violence against aboriginal women has been identified as a core priority of the Women's Directorate. Of course, we have participated and helped the participation of many aboriginal women throughout the territory to take part in a number of Aboriginal Women's Summits, both at the national level, as well as here in the territory — whether that was in Watson Lake or Whitehorse — which led to a number of recommendations. Of course, we are working in collaboration with a number of various aboriginal women's organizations to implement those very recommendations, many of which are comprised in the budget we are currently debating.

As I mentioned in my remarks, we are planning to co-host the second Yukon Aboriginal Women's Summit later on this year so that we can review those recommendations that were made in 2007, look at the responses that have been delivered today and develop ways of further moving forward together. As I mentioned, of course, this is in support of aboriginal women's organizations, and delivering community-based projects that

are delivered and that come from aboriginal women themselves in response to community-specific issues or challenges.

We have been able to make funding available through the prevention of violence against aboriginal women fund. Of course, since 2004, I am pleased to say that we have contributed well over \$1 million to that particular fund. Last fall, six aboriginal women were awarded recognition by their communities through the aboriginal women's role model program — another great program that was developed by the Women's Directorate. I know a few years back, one of the positions that we were able to incorporate within the Women's Directorate was a position specifically dedicated to collaborating with aboriginal women's organizations and aboriginal women throughout the communities. I think it has worked very well. That position has evolved and I think the position has been very much received in terms of building capacity in our communities in continuing to respond to the needs and priorities of aboriginal women.

As I mentioned, when we talk about women's health, we are working in collaboration with the Department of Health and Social Services on a number of different fronts, whether it is improving treatment and support for Yukon girls and women with substance abuse problems and addictions. Again, we are providing front-line service providers with the opportunity for training that focuses on key gender differences and the experiences of substance abuse and addiction.

We have been working in the Department of Education as well as the Department of Economic Development — one great example is the collaboration with Yukon Women in Trades and Technology and the college on the development and implementation of a full-time, 16-week trades exploration course for women. It has grown by leaps and bounds, and the Women's Directorate continues to participate in the annual Young Women Exploring Trades conference for grade 8 girls, which has been a tremendous success and has helped further the engagement of rural girls throughout the territory to become more interested and more engaged and possibly become young trades individuals in their careers.

When it comes to that organization, we were pleased to provide a total of about \$150,000 from 2010 to 2013, again, through the women's equality fund. It is another example of funding in support of women in trades.

In terms of justice, we have been and continue to work with the Department of Justice on the delivery of the *Victims of Crime Strategy* and — as members opposite may or may not be familiar — we have committed to just over \$1.3 million in support of the implementation of the strategy for the next three years, which includes the social marketing campaign that was launched earlier today in support of the public education campaign to address violence in our communities.

We lead and we partner with many other government departments on programs that are focused on prevention of violence against women and continue to invest throughout the Government of Yukon in this regard. Likewise, we continue to also work with the community on the international front. We were able to attend the review — the Hague Convention — to eliminate all discrimination against women back in 2009 and

recently as well. We were able to highlight some of the work that has been done in the north in response to northern priorities when it comes to women, women's economic security, and women's equality in general.

There are a number of other items that I could certainly reflect on, but those are just some examples of how the Women's Directorate is working in collaboration to advance women's equality throughout the Government of Yukon.

Ms. White: I'm just going to touch on a bunch of different things and then get down to questions after.

I was involved with Women in Trades and Technology for a really long time and I appreciate the work they do. I've been the master of ceremonies multiple times at the day events with the young women, and it's always very inspiring and moving to see them go from kind of shy wallflowers in the morning to fully engaged by the afternoon, and I've always really appreciated that. I was also, as a tradesperson — it was unfortunate that there wasn't an organization like that to help support me in my endeavours of trying to work my way through my apprenticeship, and I appreciate all the work that they do now for women who are in the trades or are looking to become journeymen.

One thing I'll touch on is women in corrections and how near and dear that is to my heart. I spent two years at the correctional facility as a life skills coach in the role of a cooking instructor. Often, when I think about women's issues, I wonder about the women that I had with me in corrections. One of the concerns I have is — what happens once they leave corrections? I think sometimes that's a point that's often forgotten. The men have an institution like the Adult Resource Centre, run by the Salvation Army, and they have the option of going to a fully staffed, supported environment once they leave, whereas once the women leave corrections, they are just put back into the same situations they left. That is often very vexing from the standpoint of someone who was there to support them throughout.

Does the minister at all see the role of the Women's Directorate in instituting a facility similar to the ARC for women once they leave corrections?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: You know, when it comes to women in trades, I want to congratulate Women in Trades and Technology. Their organization has been instrumental in engaging women of all ages. I think they have done a great job continuing to build capacity in each of our communities. If there is one thing we have learned over the last number of years it's that with the great economic success in the territory, we do need to draw from all groups and all ages, all walks of life, all sexes, when it comes to interest in the trades and technology. I think we are able to do just that so that we can invest in our own Yukoners and be creative as to how we can engage women in trades to help fill that niche market. Again, that is in fact one of the reasons why the Government of Yukon — our government — was able to employ the women's equality fund that is made available to organizations like Yukon Women in Trades and Technology.

As I mentioned, there is approximately \$150,000 — I believe it lapses within the next year — which also helps support

their ongoing work through the college and helps sponsor their annual one-day conference, as I mentioned earlier.

When it comes to women in corrections — and I just want to go back a few years ago, when the Government of Yukon chose to launch the corrections redevelopment project. It wasn't simply just about working to build a facility that would have a revolving door, but it was about trying to find a facility that would reduce recidivism in our community and help address some of the root causes of crime. I know that our government has been working on all facets in addressing poverty and inequality, whether it is between women and men, aboriginal women and others. One of the things that we were able to do was go to work with many, many stakeholders on correction reform and that led to a new *Corrections Act*, which put a lot of focus on First Nation governments and working with their respective communities to be able to help address corrections rehabilitation programming services.

Of course, that has also led to a new facility that was opened just recently by the Minister of Justice, which now has very suitable and adequate living facilities for women who are in corrections. In addition to that, we had been able to work with organizations such as Elizabeth Fry Society, and in fact, through the women's equality fund, as I mentioned earlier, we've been able to provide roughly \$120,000 in three-year funding that lapses in the next year. So we continue to work with that organization in providing funding to help build capacity and to help provide that advocacy service on behalf of women in corrections. Of course, we continue to work with the Department of Justice in implementing the recommendations coming from the police review, as well as the *Victims of Crime Strategy* and the corrections redevelopment. There is a whole host of various recommendations and initiatives that continue to be underway, many of which have already started.

Again, we do remain committed to working in collaboration with a number of different organizations and throughout the Government of Yukon to address issues such as this.

Ms. White: Madam Chair, seeing the time, I move that we adjourn debate on Bill No. 6, *First Appropriation Act, 2012-13*, and that you report progress.

Chair: It has been moved by Ms. White that the Chair adjourn debate and report progress on Bill No. 6, *First Appropriation Act, 2012-13*.

Motion agreed to

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

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

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: Order please. 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 of the Chair of Committee of the Whole. Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

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

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

Motion agreed to

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

The House adjourned at 5:26 p.m.

The following Sessional Paper was tabled March 27, 2012:

33-1-34

General Election 2011: the Report of the Chief Electoral Officer of Yukon (Speaker Laxton)

The following document was filed March 27, 2012:

33-1-10

Queen's Printer Agency 2010/2011 Annual Report (Istchenko)