

**Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Tuesday, May 1, 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 proceed at this time with the Order Paper.

Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In recognition of Sexual Assault Prevention Month

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I rise today on behalf of the Government of Yukon to pay tribute to Sexual Assault Prevention Month, in recognition of the many people who work on a daily basis throughout the year to eradicate sexualized violence and educate the public about violence and sexual assault.

The Canadian statistics on sexual assault show that sexual assault does not affect all Canadians equally. In 2007, data indicated that the highest rate of physical and sexual violence was for adolescents between the ages of 12 and 17 — a rate more than four times that for children under the age of 12.

The difference in the assault rates between adults and children was largely due to rates of sexual assault. Also in 2007, the sexual assault rate for children and youth was over five times higher than it was for adults. In 2010, police reported over 22,000 sexual assaults in Canada, an increase of five percent over that of 2005. It should also be noted that these statistics are not likely to provide the true extent of sexual assault in this country, as these types of offences are particularly less likely to be reported to police.

Statistics like these, nevertheless, emphasize the very severity and the prevalence of sexual assault. As severe as they are, statistics cannot tell us how it feels to experience violence, nor can they tell us what it feels like to be blamed for being a victim of violence. Regrettably, this is all too often a common occurrence, especially for people who have been assaulted by someone they love.

Violence in our communities affects everyone, and therefore requires collective action and a shift in the way we view violence and our attitudes toward those who abuse, as well those who are the subjects of abuse.

Earlier this year, the Yukon government launched a new, anti-violence social marketing campaign entitled, “Am I the Solution?”, which challenges us as Yukoners to think about the issue of violence against women and what we as individuals can do to help influence the end of violence in our communities.

Accompanying print advertisements and the use of social media, radio ads will also be aired on Yukon radio stations throughout the month of May. This campaign is but one way the Government of Yukon is working with the community to address violence. The initiative builds on previous public edu-

cation initiatives that have been undertaken, as well as ongoing policy work, training initiatives and front-line services provided by government agencies and many non-government organizations, including that of women’s organizations.

The Sexual Assault Prevention Month committee, made up of representatives from equality-seeking women’s organizations and government officials, is presenting a series of events and promotional activities that include a panel presentation by Yukon men about how men can stop sexual assault. This year the Sexual Assault Prevention Month committee has also developed posters that address 10 tips to eradicate sexual assault. The 10 tips will also be made into a handbill that will be distributed at the men’s panel, other places in town and posted in the local newspapers.

In closing, I would like to thank all the many individuals involved in these efforts for their continuing work beyond this one month. I encourage everyone to participate in these events and to join the voices of men and women who are taking action to address sexualized violence in our community.

Ms. Moorcroft: I rise on behalf of the Official Opposition to speak about Sexual Assault Prevention Month. Mr. Speaker, how do we, as a society, find ourselves in a state where we even have or need a Sexual Assault Prevention Month? Because women refuse to be silent about abuse any longer. Because women demand freedom and dignity and safety. Because women are entitled to legal, economic and social equality in accordance with our *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. And because, as Statistics Canada found in its 2006 measure of violence against women, “Worldwide violence against women is an impediment to women’s equality. It is perhaps the most widespread and socially tolerated of human rights violations. It both reflects and reinforces inequities between men and women and compromises the health, dignity, security and economy of its victims.”

According to Statistics Canada, women in the Yukon suffer twice as many sexual assaults as women in similar-sized communities in B.C. and Alberta. For aboriginal women, the numbers are even higher.

Here are some stark facts: The victims of reported assaults are most commonly girls and women between the ages of 12 and 24; in recent years, north of 60, girls as young as two and women as old as 83 have been sexually assaulted; 99 percent of sexual assaults are committed by men; and it is estimated that 10 percent or less of women who have been raped report it to the police.

There is no simple solution for this horrifying state of affairs. It is a situation rooted in our isolated geography and our colonial history and it will take the will of the community, not just of government, to change it. But there are areas in which government can be effective at protecting women from sexual violence. Women are at the highest risk of sexual assault when they have no homes — an area in which good policy can do wonders. Available housing at reasonable rents, second-stage housing for women leaving transition homes, residential programs for people with substance abuse problems — all of these

things can help to keep them off the street where they are in danger of sexual assault every day.

Another factor contributing to sexual assault is substance abuse. Men who are drunk or high may be more likely to commit assault and women in the same state are less able to protect themselves.

Here is another area where good policy can make a great difference. Solid, community-based drug and alcohol treatment has been proven to work. We need to make every effort to see that the best possible addictions treatment is available in our communities. Insofar as the government has influence over police services and the law, these agencies can play a role in keeping women safe.

Many women do not trust the criminal justice system. A woman often fears that if she reports a sexual assault, she will face a further affront through the acts and procedures of police, lawyers and judges. Women who report sexual assault are often shamed and blamed in courtrooms and the media, by their families and in communities.

Public awareness campaigns are an important way for government to contribute to women's safety, but too often they place too much of the onus on women to prevent rape: stick with friends, watch each other's drinks, be careful how you dress, mind your body language. Sadly, it often turns out to be the best advice, because if a rapist interprets your actions as consent, in all likelihood, so will a judge.

Sound as this advice may be, it often feels like blame — if only she had not left her drink unattended, worn a short dress, sat astride an exercise ball.

By way of an antidote, the Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre is offering 10 tips for men to avoid rape. Number 10 is the most direct: Don't rape.

The theme of Sexual Assault Prevention Month this year is how men can stop rape. I look forward to the day when neither preventing nor enduring sexual assault will be women's lot in life.

Before I close, I would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank the Minister of Justice. Yesterday during budget debate on the Department of Justice, the minister agreed to meet with Yukon women's groups who have participated in organizing Sexual Assault Prevention Month activities and who have asked for an opportunity to share some ideas with him to see real justice and to achieve a real reduction in rates of sexual assault. We need to work together to ensure that dignity is upheld throughout the journey through the criminal justice system.

Throughout Sexual Assault Prevention Month, there will be radio shows, a public panel, and educational sessions about sexual consent. Women's groups will produce posters and ads explicitly outlining some tactics for men to stop rape. I encourage all members to work to respect women and to work to stop rape, not only during the month of May, but every day of the year. Thank you.

Mr. Silver: I rise on behalf of the Liberal caucus in recognition of Sexual Assault Prevention Month.

Sexual assault is any unwanted act of a sexual nature committed by an individual without the consent of the victim. It is a term that is used to encompass the multitude of ways a person can be violated in a sexual nature against their will. Sexual assault is far more common than one would expect. Every day, across the country, women, men and children suffer the pain and trauma of sexual assault.

Statistics show that one in four women in North America will be sexually assaulted during their lifetime. Unfortunately, of every 100 incidents of sexual assault, only six are reported to police. Only one to two percent of date rape sexual assaults are even reported. Many victims and survivors suffer in silence, fearing retribution, humiliation or lack of support. The trauma of sexual assault can leave scars that will never fully heal and many survivors experience depression, fear and suicidal feelings.

Sexual assault not only harms the victims; it also damages families, communities and our way of life. Though we have come far in the fight to reduce sexual violence, the prevalence of sexual assault remains an affront to our national conscience that we cannot ignore.

It violates the fundamental rights and safety of the people, along with their physical and psychological integrity. We must do more to raise awareness about the realities of sexual assault. We must reaffirm our commitment to continually improving our prevention programs, building public awareness and improving our effectiveness in addressing the needs of survivors of sexual assault.

We must focus on preventing violence by changing attitudes and beliefs that perpetuate it. By joining together, we can pledge to never commit, condone, or remain silent about sexual violence, and in time, we hope to put an end to this devastating crime. Today we pay tribute to those victims who through their strength and courage have survived and are there for support for other victims. We thank the many NGOs and agencies throughout the Yukon who are there for support and counselling. We thank all the front-line workers and counsellors for their dedication and hard work and for their ongoing efforts to raise awareness about sexual assault and violence.

In recognition of National Youth Week

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I rise today on behalf of the House in recognition of National Youth Week, taking place May 1 to 7 of this year. National Youth Week is a time to honour youth for their involvement, achievements and positive contributions they make to our society.

This annual event celebrates youth and their active participation in our community. Whether it is recreation, drama, sports, dance, civic engagement, art, volunteerism or leadership, our young people are involved in meaningful activities that are helping to build a stronger Yukon. During National Youth Week and throughout the year, it is important that the voices of young people are heard and that we encourage them to be engaged and active participants in civic life. Young people face many challenges as they navigate their way through an increasingly complex and interconnected world. Many of today's issues were unheard of a generation ago, and it is important that young people have the tools necessary to meet the

challenges to succeed. As a father of four children who have very quickly become young adults, I reflect on those changes and they certainly are significant and only accelerating for the younger children of the next generation. It is also an exciting time to be young and we all have a role to play in encouraging young people to take advantage of every opportunity available to them and to involve them in the creation of a prosperous and sustainable future for our territory and for our nation.

Yukon government is pleased to provide a number of programs and services that support youth and in turn help build healthy and safe Yukon communities. Youth Directorate's youth investment fund supports many community-driven initiatives aimed at addressing the needs of Yukon youth. These include leadership training, after-school activities, physical activities, cultural events and workshops.

There are a great number of organizations and volunteers in Yukon who provide valuable services and support youth, and I would like to acknowledge the important work that they do. The Boys and Girls Club of Whitehorse, the Youth of Today Society, and the francophone association along with First Nations and municipal governments are among many of the organizations doing work for young people. Yukon government has also been proud to work with the group, Bringing Youth Towards Equality, commonly known as BYTE, on initiatives that empower young people to play an active role in their community. Youth are symbols of the present and the future. We must continue to support them as they grow and develop into the citizens and leaders of tomorrow. In doing so, our communities will be stronger and our economy will benefit. During this week, let us take time to honour the talents, ideas and abilities of the youth in all Yukon communities. During National Youth Week, I ask all members to join me in recognizing the outstanding contributions that youth are making to our territory. Thank you.

In recognition of International Workers Day

Hon. Ms. Hanson: I rise on behalf of the New Democratic Party Official Opposition to pay tribute to May Day, which is also known as International Workers Day. A group called "May Day Yukon" placed a letter to the editor in yesterday's *Whitehorse Star* about the history of May Day and some of the contemporary struggles facing working people in the Yukon and in Canada.

I thank them for their letter and I want to read a few passages. "May Day is the International Workers Day. It is a national holiday in nearly 80 countries in the world, and many others commemorate this day unofficially... May Day started as the commemoration of the Haymarket Massacre, events that occurred in May 1886 in Chicago and that ended in the condemnation of eight innocents, out of whom four were hanged... May Day is the commemoration of past, present and future struggles of the working class against the wealthy few... Every gain the working class got was only attained through political struggles ..." and the formation of unions and strikes — but it was gained and not given. That was from May Day Yukon.

Today, working families across Canada are witnessing the rollback of gains won by previous generations. We only need

to look at the tax on public sector pensions and the plan to change the Canada Pension Plan and raise the retirement age. Look at the prevalence of government bringing back-to-work legislation when workers are on strike or locked out.

Look at the 20,000 federal civil servants getting the pink slip. Look at companies, like Caterpillar in London, Ontario, offering a take-it-or-leave-it, 50-percent wage cut to workers, and then shipping their operations to so-called right-to-work states, like Indiana.

This May Day, we are witnessing an attack on the middle class, for it was through unionization that working families were able to secure the good wages and benefits that enabled them to live a relatively secure life, buy a home, buy a car, save for their children's education and go on a vacation. We see an assault on good jobs and on the middle and working class. This is borne out by research showing the growing gap between rich and poor. Executive and upper management salaries have grown. The middle class is shrinking, and the numbers of poor are growing. Canadians care about this growing gap. A recent survey showed that growing inequality is a major issue on the minds of Canadians. While the assaults continue, we witness that these are good times for those on the higher end of the income scale. How did we get to this point?

Working Canadians coming back from World War II helped build the socially just society that recognized the right to form a union, protections from unemployment, public health care, public pensions and accessible post-secondary education. Past generations fought for it and built the progressive society that is under attack and has been since the 1980s. On May Day, as we recognize the contributions of past generations in building a better, fairer society, we also recognize the need to summon up their example and hard work to oppose the rollbacks and attacks and build a progressive society that we all deserve. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Speaker: Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Ms. Hanson: I ask the House to join me in welcoming Vern Walsh, a Whitehorse educator.

Applause

Ms. White: I ask the House to join me in welcoming Shannon Roszell. She is visiting us from Toronto. She's a PhD student at York University, and we're hoping she stays.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

Are there any reports of committees?
Are there any petitions for presentation?
Are there any bills to be introduced?
Are there any notices of motion?

NOTICES OF MOTION

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

THAT this House establish a select committee on the environment to investigate and recommend ways and means for protecting Yukon environmental and sustainability interests;

THAT the committee analyze and report on the impact of the ongoing overhaul of federal environmental legislation, regulations, enforcement and management, and recommend measures to respond to any potentially negative environmental impacts from recent and pending changes to federal legislation, including but not limited to:

- (1) *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*;
- (2) *Species at Risk Act*;
- (3) *Fisheries Act*;
- (4) *Kyoto Protocol Implementation Act*;

THAT the committee meaningfully consult with individual Yukoners, First Nation governments, environmental research and advocacy groups, environmental scientists, businesses and other stakeholders in the conduct of its work;

THAT the membership of the committee be comprised of equal representation from the government caucus, the Official Opposition caucus and the Third Party caucus to be determined by the Premier, the Leader of the Official Opposition, and the Leader of the Third Party respectively;

THAT the select committee on the environment report to the House its findings and recommendations no later than the 2013 fall sitting of the Legislative Assembly;

THAT the committee have the power to call persons, papers and records and to sit during intersessional periods; and

THAT the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly be responsible for providing the necessary support services to the committee.

Speaker: Is there a statement by a minister?
This brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Peel watershed land use plan

Ms. Hanson: Yukoners went to the polls on October 11, 2011. As they cast their ballots, they thought about the issues near and dear to them. The Peel was one of those key election issues. The Yukon New Democratic Party was clear on the Peel, but the Yukon Party was not clear. They spoke in vague generalities. It would be irresponsible to make a statement on the Peel, said the Premier. The Premier and his Yukon Party team took this message to the Yukon people. They didn't have a position on the Peel, but the facts are finally on the table. The Yukon Party did have a position on the Peel; they just didn't share it with the public. We know the Yukon Party had their position in February 2010, and that they hid their position until after the general election. The Yukon public deserves an explanation.

Why did the Premier hide his position on the Peel until after the election?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Again, what we are seeing here is what has become a pattern from the NDP — they come into the House and they make accusations which have little or no basis in fact. The member very conveniently forgets, sitting at a table at the Environmental Forum on September 27, 2011, and the

debate that went on at that point. The Premier was very clear at that point that we did not believe the recommended plan from the Peel Watershed Planning Commission was an appropriate model. His words were that the cost of implementing the plan could bankrupt the territory. We criticized the Leader of the NDP and the Leader of the Liberal Party for being irresponsible for committing to accept that document. That was our position. We were elected on that basis by Yukoners on October 11.

Ms. Hanson: Yes, we are very familiar with the criticisms of the Member for Lake Laberge. But, you know, Mr. Speaker, after the dust had settled from the October election, Yukoners were subjected to a communications blitz from the government about their supposed new principles that would guide planning in the Peel. One wonders whether the results would have been different if the Yukon people knew prior to casting their ballot that the Yukon Party's position on the Peel was crafted in February 2010 and hidden before and during the election. In the heat of the election campaign, the Premier said — and I quote: "People have to question those groups and those parties who stated what their position was one or two years ago, before we ever even were close to being through this process, and what kind of leadership, what kind of governments do we want to have?" Real leadership means being open with Yukoners. I would like to hear the Premier explain this kind of leadership — where his statements during the election bear no relationship to the key fact that the Yukon Party had their secret position on the Peel for nearly two years.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: That statement by the Leader of the NDP is a complete invention. There is no basis, in fact, in that statement. The member is well aware that she sat at a table with the Leader of the Yukon Party on September 27, 2011, and heard the criticism that we as the Yukon Party provided to the NDP and the Liberals, making it clear that we believed their position was irresponsible; making it clear that we think that we believe the cost of implementing the commission's proposed plans were simply too high.

The member and her colleagues went door to door and told Yukoners that we weren't going to accept the recommended Peel plan. We have made it clear that we believed that the plan should be modified. We have given an indication for some of the basis we believe some of the modifications should be made on. We will consult with the public, with the communities and First Nations prior to reaching a final decision on this matter, but it's appropriate in entering public consultation that we give an indication for some of the basis on which we believe changes should be made.

As I have said a number of times, one of the things we have indicated is that we believe that the final plan should perhaps be more like the *North Yukon Regional Land Use Plan*, which was jointly approved by the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation and the Yukon government in 2009.

Ms. Hanson: Yesterday, and again today, the minister responsible for land use planning is saying that it's important to give the public an indication of some of the government's thinking, prior to the final round of public consultations on the Peel. The public had a right to know this government's thinking on the future of the *Peel Watershed Regional Land Use*

Plan prior to the general election, but this government withheld its position.

The facts are now on the table. The facts are that in February 2010, the Yukon Party had their own secret plan for the Peel, which they hid before and during the election.

The facts are that they released this plan after the election without alteration, except for a single comma.

This government now has a serious credibility and trust issue with Yukoners. They ran on a promise of open and accountable government, but we know now that this is not how the Yukon Party governs. How will this government rebuild the trust with the Yukon public that has been seriously damaged?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I know the Leader of the NDP every day does her very best to damage the trust Yukoners have in government, but I would point out to the member that, as the member knows full well, out of an 11-member caucus of the Yukon Party government, only one member was in government in February 2010. For the member to suggest that existed is absolutely, totally incorrect and has zero basis in fact and the member should know that.

Again, the member is well aware that we indicated during the election campaign that we thought the costs of implementing the commission's proposed plans were significant and that we criticized the Leader of the NDP and the then Leader of the Liberal Party for being irresponsible for committing to accept the commission's proposed plan. In entering the final stages of the process, we believe it's appropriate that we give indication to the public of some of the basis we believe modifications or potential modifications should be based upon. That is what we have done. Further information will be provided as we enter the consultation phase.

As I said before, one of the changes we have indicated that we think should perhaps be made is that the final plan for the Peel should be perhaps more like the *North Yukon Regional Land Use Plan*, which manages the environmental footprint from all users in a manner that is fair, equitable and balanced. That plan was jointly approved by Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation and Yukon government in 2009.

Question re: Peel watershed land use plan

Mr. Tredger: In order for the land use planning commission to do their job, it is important that they have the information at hand. The documents revealed today show the Yukon Party's eight new principles for rewriting the Peel land use plan were developed over two years ago. The existence of those hidden eight points raises very important concerns. These eight principles were never provided to the Peel Watershed Planning Commission so that the planning commission could attempt to address them.

Will the Premier tell this House why he withheld from the Peel Watershed Planning Commission those principles developed over two years?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Like his leader, the Member for Mayo-Tatchun is again making statements that have zero basis in fact. Again, the Yukon Party caucus is 11 members — the Yukon Party government is 11 members. One member was in government in February of 2010 and nine of the other 10 mem-

bers were elected afterward, some returning to this House and some coming for the first time.

The alleged existence of principles the member is referring to is absolutely, totally without any basis in fact and the member ought to know that.

Mr. Tredger: There is some continuity, I would assume, between governments — I would hope. Mr. Speaker, the Yukon Party government has withheld its position from the Peel Watershed Planning Commission, a position developed well before the final recommended plan was released last summer and was available to the members opposite during the election. This is the plan that the government now attacks. This is completely outrageous. The government had a duty to provide its true position to the planning commission and to the affected First Nation governments. The Yukon Party should have been forthright with voters.

Will the Premier tell this House why anyone would trust the Yukon Party government in any future land use planning processes?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Mr. Speaker, again we have the NDP taking to extremes their practice of coming into this House and making wild accusations that have no basis in reality. The members know that 10 out of 11 members of this caucus were not in government when they claim that guiding principles were developed. The members know — or should know — that the statements they are making here in this House are absolutely without any basis in reality. The members know very well that during the 2011 election campaign, we made it clear that we thought that the costs of implementing the commission's proposed plan could be unacceptably high and we called the NDP and the Liberals irresponsible for committing to accept it. We made it clear then, as we do now, that we believe the plan should be modified in entering the final stages of consultation. We are giving an indication of some of the basis upon which we think potential modification should be based.

One of the things, as I've indicated before and will again, is that we believe that the final plan should perhaps be more like the *North Yukon Regional Land Use Plan*, which manages the footprint from all users in a fair, equitable and balanced manner. That plan was jointly approved by the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation and the Yukon government in 2009. Again, as I've said before in this House, we will continue to follow our obligations under the process prior to making any final decisions.

Mr. Tredger: The facts speak for themselves. Land use planning only works if all parties come forward in an open, honest and constructive manner and put all their cards on the table.

The Yukon Party withheld its true position on the Peel from the planning commission. The Yukon Party withheld its true position on the Peel from the affected First Nation governments. The Yukon Party withheld its true position on the Peel from the public.

During the election, the Premier spoke about the Peel only in generalities while his government's eight principles to redirect the planning process were sitting in his back pocket. This situation is not befitting of an open and honest government.

Will the Premier explain to Yukoners why anyone should trust his government when it withholds its position on such important issues?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Let me remind the member that, as I've stood here a few times and indicated, one of the changes that we believe should be perhaps made to the Peel plan is to make it more like the *North Yukon Regional Land Use Plan*. I would remind the members that the first time the Yukon government told that to the commission was 2006, and that document is in the public forum and has been for years. The members are standing here in this House again and making wild accusations that have no basis in reality and that the members should know very well have no basis in reality.

I would remind the member opposite, again, that in the 2011 election, we were very critical of the NDP and the Liberals for committing to accept the Peel Watershed Planning Commission's proposed plan. We were very clear about the potential costs we thought could be entailed by implementing that plan. Again, the members know very well that we intended to modify the plan. They went door to door and told Yukoners that we were not going to accept the Peel commission's recommended plan. Today, they stand here in the House and pretend they said something different. Mr. Speaker, again the members are disconnected from reality. They should know that very well.

Question re: Korbo Apartments rebuild

Mr. Silver: Mr. Speaker, we have raised the issue of Dawson City's housing shortage in this House before. We know that there is not enough stable, affordable housing for individuals and families, and we have even seen this shortage impact important community programs. The John Korbo Apartments were demolished last fall and that site now lies vacant. The Housing minister has indicated that site remediation will take place this summer and that he is open to discussing further options for this site with community members. There has been great interest in this site.

In light of that interest, could the minister provide an update as to the remediation schedule and, for the record, comment once again on current government plans for that location?

Hon. Mr. Kent: With respect to the Korbo property in Dawson City, as the member indicated, there was, of course, a fuel spill there that requires environmental remediation. I spoke to the chair of the Yukon Housing Corporation Board of Directors as recently as last Friday about this project and asked for an update soon, as to when we can expect the remediation to take place. In the meantime, I also asked them to develop an expression of interest, so that we can identify potential future uses for the Korbo Apartments and to develop that expression of interest, similar to what we have done here with Lot 262 in Whitehorse at a time when the remediation is being conducted, so there is no lag time involved with the development of that property.

Mr. Silver: When covering the John Korbo Apartments demolition last October, a Dawson City reporter included comments from the former Klondike MLA, who was also the former minister responsible for Yukon Housing Corporation. The former member indicated that it was the Housing

Corporation's intent to have low cost, but not subsidized housing built on the John Korbo Apartments site. This was to involve some sort of public/private partnership, with construction to be completed within two years.

Is the current minister aware of such Housing Corporation plans, or if such plans were made for the site in the past and have since been discarded?

Hon. Mr. Kent: Rather than respond to something that was reported in the media, maybe what I could respond to is a July 21 press release, at which time the former minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation mentioned that they wanted to set the stage for a plan to call for expressions of interest from private industry for development that will offer much-needed rental accommodations in the community. I've had similar discussions with the Yukon Housing Corporation Board of Directors about that, and I expect some options to come forward rather soon.

Mr. Silver: We have previously heard from the community groups and a private construction company that were interested in developing mixed-use rental housing at the Korbo site. The Klondike Development Organization has also done some excellent work with regard to researching the local housing situation and cataloguing needs and opportunities. They are ready to submit a proposal to the minister, but are waiting for an announcement on this government's intent with regard to this particular site. The minister has committed to working with community members when it comes to affordable housing in general and with this lot in particular. Will he be willing to share with this community his government's background information on the site, including any studies and development options considered so far?

Hon. Mr. Kent: Again, I've given direction to the Yukon Housing Corporation Board of Directors, through their chair, to update me on a schedule for remediation for the Korbo site, and, at the same time as that remediation is taking place, to develop a call for expressions of interest from private industry for development that will offer much-needed rental accommodations in the community. Of course, when that expression of interest goes out, I expect it to also include options from NGOs and community organizations, such as those the member opposite spoke about, and perhaps not just rental accommodations — we really want to meet the housing needs of the community of Dawson, whether it's social housing, staff housing or rental properties.

I should also mention that although the Korbo Apartments have been torn down, there was a 19-unit social housing complex built in the community to replace it. So we weren't eliminating social housing from the inventory. We were actually replacing it with a brand new unit now located in the community of Dawson.

Question re: Federal budget cuts

Ms. White: Canadians from coast to coast to coast have reacted with sadness, disappointment and even anger at the federal Conservative government's short-sighted cuts to environmental legislation, regulations, enforcement and management. Most Canadians, and indeed, most Yukoners, support small, safe development.

But when there are insufficient safeguards to protect environmental and public interests, reckless development is often the result. Earlier today I introduced a notice of motion calling for the creation of a select committee on the environment to study the impact of these federal cuts on the Yukon and recommend ways we can ensure our environment is protected.

My question is simple. Will the Minister of Environment support our call for the creation of a select committee on the environment to ensure Yukon's interests are protected in the face of federal regulatory changes?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Indeed, we have been aware of a number of changes that have been announced by the federal government relating to a number of issues that include cuts to Parks Canada as well as the potential for cuts — or changes at least — to the federal fisheries process. Yukon government will continue to work with the federal government to ensure that Yukon's environment and projects that go forward in Yukon go forward safely and responsibly. The short answer to the member opposite's question is, "No."

Ms. White: It's disappointing to once again hear the Minister of Environment refusing to take leadership on important environmental issues. The latest federal government attack on Canadian environmental conservation and education was exposed yesterday when we learned of the elimination of more than 1,600 positions within Parks Canada. Those cuts will impact not only the protection of environmentally sensitive areas, but also the recreational enjoyment of our national parks and the tourism opportunities provided by historic sites.

Again, to the Minister of Environment: Will the minister support our call for the creation of a select committee on the environment to ensure that Yukon's interests in special places like Kluane National Park and the Klondike national historic sites are protected from short-sighted federal budget cuts?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: I know that the lead official for Parks Canada in the Yukon has been in touch with our Department of Environment and has indicated to them that there will be no permanent closures of sites or parks in Yukon. There will be some changes to hours and some changes to the operations, but we understand that there won't be any permanent closures.

That being said, the Yukon government Parks staff will continue to provide the excellent service that they have in providing services through our parks and campgrounds that are managed by the Yukon government. Those folks do incredible work and Yukon is home to a number of territorial parks and campgrounds that are world-class.

Ms. White: Again, we have the Minister of Environment refusing to take a stand on the environment. This is a shameful situation. The minister likes to talk about the environment, but what's missing is action. Action means speaking up for the interest of Yukoners and our environment in the face of this federal attack. Action means doing, not just saying.

Mr. Speaker, the federal government is gutting the *Fisheries Act*; the *Species at Risk Act*; the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*; and is slashing funding to departments that protect the environment. We need environmental leadership. Will the Minister of Environment lobby his Conservative

friends in Ottawa to reverse the severe cuts to Canada's environmental protection regime?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: When it comes to ensuring that someone stands up for the environment, and manages Yukon environment and wildlife resources in the Yukon, that is exactly what the Department of Environment has been doing. What we will not be doing is creating some sort of random committee to look at everything under the sun regarding the environment. That is simply a waste of time and a waste of taxpayers' dollars.

What we will continue to do is invest in the Department of Environment, invest in our conservation officer services, invest in the Yukon Research Centre, the Yukon Cold Climate Innovation Centre and a whole slew of other things that are available in the budget that the member and I have been debating over the past several weeks. That is what we are going to do to continue to ensure that Yukon's environment is protected today and for future generations.

Question re: Mount Lorne zoning regulations

Mr. Barr: A week ago, Community Services held a meeting in Mount Lorne. Residents of Mount Lorne hoped that the meeting would result in a commitment to complete a long overdue update of the local area plan, and to address the desire by a majority of residents to subdivide its lots. The residents' hopes were dashed when instead officials were directed to only speak about a new subdivision on the old McGowan farmlands, an idea that a large majority of Mount Lorne does not support.

The residents of Mount Lorne have been very clear about these issues for years: yes to an updated local area plan; yes to subdivision of current residential lots; no to the McGowan subdivision.

Mr. Speaker, why is the minister not listening to the very clear requests from the Hamlet of Mount Lorne?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: First of all, what I have to point out to the Member for Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes is he has his facts wrong in a few areas, including that it is not the Department of Community Services that held the meeting; it was the Land Planning branch, which is part of the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources.

Contrary to what the member said, officials have informed me that as they were supposed to do, they did talk to residents about both the potential subdivision of existing properties and the possibility of developing McGowan option lands. Both were talked about and both, of course, in response to the issues around land availability and housing — identified by members — surely even the NDP can connect the dots between availability of land and availability of housing.

Mr. Barr: I was at that meeting. The residents of Mount Lorne feel the Yukon Party government is trying to ram through a subdivision in a year, attempting to be seen as doing something — anything — to address the housing crisis. Subdivisions take more than one year to plan and develop.

There are no studies on water availability, soil suitability, and percolation of septic fields, for example. Energy, Mines and Resources does not even know the cost of development, let alone the number of potential units. A process of subdividing

existing lots would cost the taxpayers next to nothing because these lots would already be fully serviced.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister explain to this House why he believes a new, rammed through, subdivision would be more cost-effective than allowing subdivision of existing lots?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Again, we began with the Member for Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes having the department wrong. The member also has his facts wrong. At least I'm relying on what officials reported to me and what they were supposed to be presenting to the residents of Mount Lorne and what I, myself, talked to the chair of the local advisory council and another member of that council about, which was the possibility of both opportunities for potentially reducing the minimum lot size to allow subdivision of existing lots and consideration of the possibility of developing the McGowan option lands.

The reason and the answer to the member's question about why there isn't a detailed design and costs is that detailed design work hasn't been done. There was previous assessment of some possible opportunities for development in that area but we have not done detailed design on a subdivision that we haven't decided yet to proceed with. We are engaged in that public consultation process.

Mr. Barr: During the meeting it was stated by persons from government that they were hoping to have these lands pushed through within the year. The Carcross-Tagish and Kwanlin Dun First Nation final agreements are signed. Both First Nation governments want to do a regional land use plan. This plan would incorporate and build from local area plans. The residents of Mount Lorne have been asking for 12 years for a review of their local area plan, a plan that called for a five-year review after it was finalized in 1995.

Will the minister commit to moving forward and directing his department to begin a long-overdue review of Mount Lorne's local area plan?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: What I have to remind the member is that he himself and his colleagues have stood here repeatedly in this House and talked about housing — said it was a crisis — and have been very emotional in their debate about the shortage of housing. Surely even the NDP can connect the dots between land availability and housing availability. Making land available is absolutely necessary as a first step in housing development. Again, contrary to what the member has stated here in the House and said, we are asking the residents of Mount Lorne about both the opportunity for possibly allowing subdivision of existing lots and the possibility of developing the McGowan option lands. I point out that they want housing to be developed but it would be somewhat hypocritical of the members to argue that housing should be developed, but not in his backyard.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: Member for Copperbelt South, on a point of order.

Ms. Moorcroft: On the point of order, I believe you have ruled in the past that using the word "hypocritical" to de-

scribe the position of a member in this House or a party in the House is out of order.

Speaker: Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, on the point of order.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: On the point of order, I did not accuse the member of being hypocritical. I did say it would be hypocritical of him to argue against housing in his backyard if that's what he was doing while saying housing is in a crisis.

Speaker's statement

Speaker: On the point of order, I'll have a look at the Blues tomorrow and, if a ruling is necessary, I'll give it at that time.

Question re: Education standards

Mr. Tredger: Once again, we have been subjected to the Fraser Institute's report card on secondary schools in the Yukon. The Fraser Institute looks at a very narrow range of criteria. Yukoners know better. For example, we all acknowledge the need for skills training for Yukon students, Yukon parents, First Nations, communities, industry and business have told us that we need to evaluate skills and trades training and bring forth a program. We need to know specific measurable goals and what the results are. We need to know how we are doing and what we are doing to improve. The Fraser Institute doesn't tell us, but the minister may.

Can the minister say whether there are more students involved in skills and trades classes today than there were five years ago?

Hon. Mr. Kent: I don't have that type of information in that level of detail on the floor of the House with me today but I would be happy to provide it to the member opposite another time. I can say that with respect to the Department of Education, the strategic plan developed in 2011 to 2016 laid out goals. The first goal is that everyone who enters school in the Yukon will have the opportunity to successfully complete their education with dignity and purpose, well prepared to enter the next phase in their lives.

That's really what I as minister and what we as the government want to focus on in the next number of years — addressing the goals, initiatives and strategies laid out in the New Horizons plan and move forward with respect to providing the best quality education we can to Yukon students and ensuring that we can contribute to student success with an eye to close and eventually eliminate the gap that exists between students who are high-performing and those that are having difficulties in school.

Mr. Tredger: I commend the minister opposite for that. I would like to help him by suggesting that we develop clear, measurable and specific goals. There are many elements that influence the success or lack thereof in a school. The working relationship between parents, students and the community are acknowledged and critical goals for Yukon education. Report after report has shown that meaningful community and First Nation involvement is essential to improving our education system. This can be measured and given a statistical value. It can be attained with clear, specific and measurable goals.

From the data that he has, can the minister tell the House if parents and First Nation governments feel more involved with their children's education today than they did five years ago?

Hon. Mr. Kent: Again, that level of detail and data I don't bring down to the Legislative Assembly with me on a daily basis, but if it indeed exists, I would be happy to get back to the member opposite with it.

I can tell you that under the goal that I mentioned in my previous answer, the first objective is to increase engagement of parents, families and communities for the purpose of improving student achievement and success. The first strategy speaks to engaging parents, learners and community partners. The second one speaks to engaging Yukon First Nation governments and communities to enhance the success of First Nation students.

There are a number of initiatives that are related to that, including the school growth process, the rural strategy, the tripartite MOU with First Nations, community engagement, supporting the advisory committees — there are a number of initiatives that are taking place and from that will flow the performance measures and the goals that the member opposite spoke about. These objective strategies and initiatives are identified in the five-year strategic plan and I would expect those performance measures to come out in annual plans as we move forward through the New Horizons time frame.

Mr. Tredger: We can no longer let right-wing think-tanks define, within a very narrow range, what is important to Yukoners. We have heard from parents, we have heard from educators and from First Nation governments what is important. We need to be accountable to these stakeholders, not the Fraser Institute. We need to develop our reporting system so we can read about us and what is important to us.

The Auditor General's report stated the need for a long-term plan with specific, measurable goals: our plans and our goals. Will the minister develop a made-in-Yukon report card that measures school success and ensures accountability to Yukon people?

Hon. Mr. Kent: As I have mentioned on the floor in previous answers, we certainly do have the New Horizons document, which is the strategic plan for 2011 to 2016 developed by the Department of Education. A number of documents fed into the development of this plan, going back as far as *Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow*, of 1973, all the way through to the education reform project and the report of the Auditor General of Canada. With respect to what the member opposite has said about the Fraser Institute, of course we don't always agree with recommendations that we get from institutions such as the Fraser Institute or the Broadbent Institute or the David Suzuki Foundation. But what I found troubling about the member's Motion No. 199, tabled yesterday, is that we reject the findings of right-wing think-tanks, which are committed to the pursuit of free choice, competitive markets and less government. So, really, Mr. Speaker, I believe what the member opposite is saying is that we reject the findings of those think-tanks who are committed to anything that the NDP does not believe in.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

Notice of government private members' business

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.2 (7), I would like to identify the items standing in the name of government private members for debate on Wednesday, May 2, 2012. They are Motion No. 197, standing in the name of the Member for Watson Lake, and Motion No. 198, standing in the name of the Member for Pelly-Nisultin.

Speaker: We will now proceed with Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT BILLS

Bill No. 41: *Act to Amend the Land Titles Act and the Condominium Act* — Third Reading

Clerk: Third reading, Bill No. 41, standing in the name of the Hon. Mr. Nixon.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I move that Bill No. 41, entitled *Act to Amend the Land Titles Act and the Condominium Act*, be now read a third time and do pass.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Justice that Bill No. 41, entitled *Act to Amend the Land Titles Act and the Condominium Act*, be now read a third time and do pass.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I spoke previously at second reading and in Committee of the Whole to these amendments to the *Land Titles Act* and the *Condominium Act*. I would like to take a few minutes just to go over what we have accomplished here.

Both prior to the campaign and during the campaign, my colleagues and I heard frequently about issues with the land titles process. We committed in the platform to modernize the land titles process. This bill before us reflects our delivery on that platform commitment. I appreciated the comments in this Assembly when we debated the bill last week on April 26. Our government has a strong commitment to facilitating land development and fostering economic development, and bringing forward these amendments is but one step to remove barriers to development by improving service within the land titles office.

In considering changes to this legislation, we have identified specific, short-term changes that will expedite the work processes and provide greater clarity of information in the land titles office. In addition, this package of amendments is consistent with the objectives of practising good government: practising open, accountable, and fiscally responsible government; providing a better quality of life; and investing in infrastructure here in Yukon.

The objective of these amendments to the *Land Titles Act* and the *Condominium Act* is to improve the operations of the land titles office with changes to the acts that can be done relatively quickly and easily.

Some of the amendments were generated internally and in cooperation with the land titles registrar, and several amendments were identified that would improve the efficiency of the land titles office and could be implemented, as I suggested earlier, relatively easily. Most will help reduce the time needed to

register documents in that office. In addition, officials took suggestions from interested stakeholders who regularly use the land titles office services, including lawyers, surveyors and architects. That group made further suggestions they felt would remove obstacles to land development, and these led to a number of additional amendments.

I'd like to take a little more time to remind this House about the purpose and the function of the land titles office and its role in land development in Yukon. The land titles office operates under the authority of the *Land Titles Act* for titled parcels and the *Condominium Act* for condominium units. Yukon's land titles system is based on the Torrens system devised by Sir Robert Torrens in the mid-1800s — the same system used in the western provinces and northern territories of Canada.

In a Torrens, or land titles, system, all original certificates of title are retained by a government's land titles office and interests against that title, such as mortgages, are registered in the land titles office. The priority of these interests is determined in strict chronological order according to the date they are filed in that office. The registrar keeps a day book to record the exact date and time of that registration, and the originals of these documents and the survey plans are kept in the land titles vault. Our legislation requires a manual, paper-based system for keeping track of registered parcels of land.

When a member of the public registers ownership of a parcel of land, the registrar issues a certificate of title, and the public is entitled to rely on the certificate of title as evidence of the correct state of that title. The fact that the interest is registered on title means that any member of the public has the right to rely on it as a valid interest. As the territory has grown, the value and number of transactions processed by the land titles office has increased dramatically. The value of real estate transactions in Yukon for 2010-11 was just over \$228 million, a 24-percent increase from the year before.

Being out of date, our registration practices are onerous for our citizens to use and they are faced with excessive delays in processing transactions. Yukon averages over 7,000 documents filed annually; however, the nature and complexity of these documents is increasing in complexity.

Let me deal with the seven technical, straightforward amendments. The first addresses the filing of the writs, and I have provided an explanation on record for that. I won't go into the explanations. The second addresses the standard form mortgages. The third addresses duplicate certificates of title. The fourth addresses the transfer of easement to oneself. The fifth addresses the registrar's ability to correct errors. The sixth addresses the hours of operation for the land titles office. The seventh amendment is to the *Condominium Act*.

I want to describe for this House a further initiative to move forward with our intention to improve and modernize the land titles system in Yukon, that being that I have appointed an inspector of land titles pursuant to section 12 of the *Land Titles Act*. As an independent inspector, she has now completed an operational review of the current business procedures of our land titles office in order to identify areas for improvement.

The inspector has, as we know, submitted her final report. It includes many recommendations, which I'm now reviewing in further detail. Ms. Bansley's recommendations address the land titles office business processes, staffing, supporting technology, customer engagement, policies and procedures and considerations for modernizing the system in the long term. Just this morning, we discussed her report, and I can see that the work of developing the responses to her recommendations is already indeed underway.

Our officials have begun a full analysis of these recommendations and the inspector's report will provide a foundation upon which subsequent consultation, expert advice and further analysis will take place to move forward in the modernization of the land titles system.

Some of the significant recommendations address replacing the current computer platform known as LIMS, increasing fees to fund better service, the need for written guidelines to assist users of the land titles office, and introducing a lawyer position and perhaps a surveyor position and a customer advocate in the land titles staffing model.

In closing, I'd like to thank the management and staff in Justice for championing this initiative. I'd also like to thank the registrar, deputy registrars and staff in the land titles office for their good work and willingness to move forward to modernize the land titles system. I'm confident that these amendments that are before you will have the effect of enhancing the operations of the land titles office, removing barriers to development and ensuring that the information on title and the titles themselves are accurate.

Ms. Hanson: I will be very brief because of course the Official Opposition has indicated it will be supporting this bill. I do want to just perhaps place on the record a concern that I had expressed last week in questioning the minister on this bill. He dismissed any concerns or suggestion of concern that the Official Opposition had with respect to the impact of the cuts to the office of the surveyor general in Yukon. I do wish to place on record that those cuts and further investigation are real and will have an impact on the expected efficiencies to be gained.

I appreciate the work that has gone into making the changes here to the land titles process in the Yukon. It is welcome but I would ask if the minister table in this House his contingency plans to mitigate against the impacts — which I am sure were unforeseen at the time the work was being done to draft the amendments to the *Land Titles Act* and *Condominium Act* — that he would table in this House his contingency plans to mitigate any of the unforeseen impediments to modernizing the land titles regime in the Yukon.

Ms. Moorcroft: The New Democratic Official Opposition will support these amendments, as I said at the speech on second reading of the bill. We understand that these amendments are focused on some immediate fixes to improve efficiency. In the longer term, full modernization of the land titles regime will proceed in phases.

Among other ways to improve service, the government will consider new computer systems that will provide the ability to search on-line and will look at better ways to meet the needs of professionals and professional bodies that work with land titles offices, including lawyers, surveyors, architects, assessors, realtors, other members of the Chamber of Commerce, and, of course, vendors and buyers.

The New Democrat caucus commends the government for commissioning the inspector's report, pursuant to the *Land Titles Act*. The Official Opposition also commend the government for its commitment to a careful review of the inspector's report, and we look forward to following up on the observations and recommendations in Ms. Bansley's report.

Mr. Elias: It is a pleasure to rise to speak to this bill in third reading here today. We did go into some length during second reading of the *Act to Amend the Land Titles Act and the Condominium Act* and our comments still stand. We will be supporting this bill as well, and I think that it is important to note that we concur with the bill's purpose and intent. We thank the minister responsible for putting on record in some detail the intent of this piece of legislation and their amendments, and we look forward to the passing of this bill. Thank you.

Speaker: If the member now speaks he will close debate. Does any other member wish to be heard?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: In light of time and I know the Commissioner is waiting, I thank members for the support from all parties on moving forward with these amendments and I look forward to assent. Thank you.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Graham: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Kent: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Agree.

Mr. Hassard: Agree.

Ms. Hanson: Agree.

Mr. Tredger: Agree.

Ms. Moorcroft: Agree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Mr. Barr: Agree.

Mr. Elias: Agree.

Mr. Silver: Agree.

Clerk: The results are 17 yea, nil nay.

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the motion carried and that Bill No. 41 has passed this House.

Bill No. 41 agreed to

Speaker: We are now prepared to receive the Commissioner of Yukon, in his capacity as Lieutenant Governor, to grant assent to the bills which have passed this House.

Commissioner enters the Chamber announced by the Sergeant-at-Arms

ASSENT TO BILLS

Commissioner: Please be seated.

Speaker: Mr. Commissioner, the Assembly has, at its present session, passed certain bills to which, in the name and on behalf of the Assembly, I respectfully request your assent.

Clerk: *Act to Amend the Child Care Act, Business Law Amendment Act, Act to Amend the Land Titles Act and the Condominium Act.*

Commissioner: I hereby assent to the bills as enumerated by the Clerk.

Commissioner leaves the Chamber

Speaker: I will now call the House back to order.

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

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

Motion agreed to

Speaker leaves the Chair

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Chair (Ms. McLeod): Order. Committee of the Whole will now come to order. The matter before the Committee is Bill No. 6, *First Appropriation Act, 2012-13*. We will be returning to the Department of Finance.

Do members wish a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agree.

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

Recess

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

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

Department of Finance — *continued*

Chair: We are carrying on with general debate on Vote 12, Department of Finance.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: On April 30, the NDP leader stated here in the Legislative Assembly, “I mentioned earlier that the Premier uses often this notion that the surplus is the same as some financial assurance for Yukoners.” She also mentioned, “The Yukon NDP has raised the question, on a repeated basis, about the need for — for want of a better term — a rainy day fund. In other jurisdictions there are heritage funds or some sort of a savings account.”

Madam Chair, what is a heritage fund? According to Alberta, the heritage fund is Alberta’s main long-term savings fund. The fund today produces income which supports government programs essential to Albertans like health care and education.

Now if we look at the glossary on pages I and II of the budget document, we will see the definition of both net financial resources and accumulated surplus. Clearly, net financial resources are the savings account that the NDP is looking for. It is the amount of financial assets at a point in time in excess of any outstanding liabilities created by past government activities. The Yukon Party is committed to maintaining a healthy net financial resource. There will be approximately \$101 million in net financial resources by the end of the fiscal year. Like Alberta, this money is intended to support government programs long into the future.

Surplus is one indicator of our financial well-being. Not to put too fine a point on it, in fact, the pre-eminent measure of the government’s financial strength is net debt. We have a net financial resource position of \$101.065 million forecast for year ended March 31, 2013. The Yukon government continues to maintain a healthy financial position and avoid net debt.

Most other Canadian jurisdictions are reporting net debt. This fact alone is significant, but let me phrase this in a different way. Net debt provides an indication of future revenue requirements for the government; that is, net debt provides a measure of the future revenues required to pay for the past. The significance of this should be of comfort to Yukoners. As one of the only jurisdictions in Canada not in a net debt position, it will not be necessary to allocate future revenues to offset or pay for past expenditures. Our government can say we are paying as we go and yes, we do have positive net financial resources to invest in future programs and services. This is significant as it allows our government to be very flexible in timing our investment decisions.

Our very healthy net financial resource position has provided us and will continue to provide our government the opportunity to make significant capital and program investments to the benefit of all Yukoners. Our strong net financial resource position speaks to the future as we move through our mandate. I look forward to leading the Yukon through the various challenges that we may face.

I’m proud of our Yukon Party government’s achievements; We, as Yukoners, continue to be well-positioned.

Madam Chair, net financial resources are the most important indicator of the government’s fiscal health and our net financial resource position is enviable. While most provincial and territorial governments have net debt — meaning they owe more than they are currently capable of paying — this is not the

case in the Yukon. We have the cash and other financial assets to pay off all of our obligations.

One final comment on our financial health: Our government continues to manage the Yukon’s finances over a multi-year horizon. Our government saves when it is prudent to do so and our government makes expenditure investments when it is necessary. We do this on behalf and for the benefit of all Yukoners. As legislators, we need to look beyond the short term and consider the long term. Our government has done this to the benefit of all Yukoners. We have done this without mortgaging the future.

This seems as good a time as any to provide a couple of observations on budgeting. The budget is an annual exercise representing the estimated revenues and the planning expenditures for the year. Tabled with the plan are the anticipated results; most notably highlighted are the projections of an annual surplus of approximately \$80 million and the net financial resource position at year-end of \$101 million.

The key word here is “plan”. As we all know, plans are subject to change. New priorities emerge, and in some cases emergencies need to be addressed, and market and economic conditions can change. I spoke of some of the potential challenges earlier. As we move through the fiscal year, we will continue to make decisions, many of which cannot be anticipated in a budget. I cannot imagine a government that is not willing to review its plan, not willing to make choices, not willing to make decisions that will benefit Yukoners. Our government will not remain static. It will respond as required to meet these challenges. In doing so, it is likely that the fiscal framework will be altered. I truly wish that we had a crystal ball. This discussion would therefore not be necessary.

Our budgets are based on the best information available at the time they are prepared. The budget represents our forecast at a point of time, based on the information that is available. To suggest otherwise is just simply offensive.

It is a certainty that the 2012-13 plan will change and our government will be held accountable to Yukoners through the future supplementary estimates tabled, as required, with the full opportunity for the members opposite to debate those changes.

For the 2012-13 main estimates, in our efforts to be responsive, to provide meaningful reporting in support of open, transparent and accountable government, we incorporated a few presentation changes in our budget documents. I would like to draw the Legislature’s attention to the integration of the operation and maintenance and capital into one document. This allows us to consider the total amounts allocated — O&M plus capital — on a department-by-department or, more specifically, on a program-by-program basis. This disclosure should provide the opportunity to the Legislative Assembly to gain a more complete understanding of specific program and departmental requirements.

The integration of O&M and capital supports the second presentation change implemented for 2012-13. The primary purpose of the annual budget is for the Legislature to provide spending authority, provided as votes through an appropriation bill for a wide range of program, service and capital invest-

ments contemplated by government departments. These are generally understood as the expenditures of the government.

Things are somewhat more complex when we speak of accounting with a calculation of annual surplus requiring that we focus on expenses, not expenditures.

I do not wish to turn this into a discussion about Accounting 101, and I do recognize the Legislature does have meaningful things to discuss. In recognition that this difference may lead to some confusion for the various users of the budget documents, we have provided a summary that reconciles the appropriations, or the spending authorities, to the expenses, the value used for the calculation of surplus. I encourage members to refer to page S-9 of the 2012-13 estimates document. We anticipate that this will lead to a greater understanding of the Yukon government's budget, the appropriation and estimates of expenditures and the year-end public accounts.

Finally, Madam Chair, a few observations on a third presentation change of no small significance. As evidence of our ongoing commitment to transparency and accountability, we have for the first time included in a budget a summary of the consolidated financial information for the Yukon government reporting entity. The consolidated financial summary includes not only the departments identified in the appropriation bill, but also other corporations and agencies that are included in the Yukon government's reporting entity.

This includes the Yukon Hospital Corporation, Yukon College, Yukon Development Corporation, Yukon Housing Corporation and Yukon Liquor Corporation.

While the specific focus will likely remain on the amounts listed in the appropriation bill and the unconsolidated statements, the consolidated report provides legislators and the public a more complete picture of the planned results as will be presented and audited in the 2012-13 public accounts.

This is a significant step forward in our efforts to improve transparency and accountability. Observations have been made from outside sources, such as the Office of the Auditor General, and respected think-tanks, such as C.D. Howe, that the relationship between the budgetary reporting and accounting reporting should be improved. These presentation changes do just that.

Yukon government reporting continues to be an evolving process as accounting standards change. The presentation change incorporated for 2012-13 reflects the Yukon government's commitments to continuous improvement related to transparency, openness and continuity between budget reporting and public accounts reporting.

The last comment that I want to mention is that Standard & Poor's has reaffirmed Yukon's double-A rating, which is recognized globally as very high. As another sidebar, you may have heard that C.D. Howe Institute ranked the Yukon low in terms of budgetary reporting.

While there are issues that are being worked on, the main issue that is driving that ranking is the reporting issue. The C.D. Howe report concerns processes as related to reporting and is not a report on financial health. As you can see, the reporting issue reported by C.D. Howe has no effect on our credit rating from Standard & Poor's. I point this out again in that the

reporting issues are being addressed, and the changes I have just been describing are in terms of ensuring that we continue to provide more transparency and more accountability to Yukoners.

Ms. Hanson: Funny, isn't it, what a difference a few minutes can make. Maybe half an hour ago in Question Period, I sort of had a sense it is like Peter at dawn denying any relationship with the Yukon Party, but suddenly we are talking about our pride in Yukon Party government's achievements. I guess what we will have to do is let the record show what performance will show and what the measure of all Yukoners will be — the assessment of the Finance minister's assertions with respect to the financial performance of this government.

In fact, the point I was making for the Finance minister yesterday had everything to do with reporting as an effective tool for transparency, openness and accountability, and that everything that can be done to assist us as members of this Legislative Assembly on behalf of Yukoners, because that is our job — to be here on behalf of all Yukoners to hold this government to account. That is why open and transparent accounting measures and open and transparent reporting measures are so critical. So I will look forward to seeing immediate progress and sharing of that progress with members of this Legislative Assembly.

I only have a couple of areas of questioning I'd like to raise with the Minister of Finance before I would move on to the line-by-line. One has to do with an area that I am interested in. This may sound strange to you, but it is part of what we do in the Official Opposition and people who take these things seriously — looking at the obligations that government has under all the administrative documents, and the *Financial Administration Manual* requires all departments to have five-year capital financial plans.

You know, we asked for access to the five-year capital plans. It's one thing to see the summary documents that sort of says the amount and what's projected, but in fact the actual plans, when you read the *Financial Administration Manual*, give you a significant insight into the level of detail and the planning that is required. What we were hoping to do was obviate the need to come back through Question Period — sort of doing the "gotcha" thing — and actually see what government is planning and on what basis they made those decisions. But when we asked to see those and used the access to information law to try to access these plans we got a bill for nearly \$8,000. Now, these documents were prepared using taxpayers' dollars — prepared on behalf of taxpayers — and it would only make sense that those people who are elected to represent those taxpayers would have access to that information.

So my question for the Minister of Finance is this: Why aren't these plans publicly available? And, in the interest of financial transparency, will he as Finance minister make these plans available to the public?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I will take the member opposite's comments as a compliment that she is thoroughly excited about the changes that we have made to the budgetary process, in terms of transparency — combining the O&M and the capital together and providing a consolidated report. I am certainly

happy that the opposition finds this a step forward, as I find this a step forward and this government finds this a step forward. We are continuing down a pathway that has been started by the Yukon Party government.

Yes, there has been considerable change in the membership of who represents the Yukon Party government in the Legislative Assembly. But starting in 2002, this government began a path — taking us from the years of destruction to the economy that occurred under the NDP government and the overspending that occurred under the Liberal government — to prosperity.

We are now, a number of years later, really looking at how we can continue to manage and grow that prosperity. I think what the member opposite was asking for is highlighted in the budget package in the small Budget Address book.

I'm actually looking at five years of numbers beginning with the supplementary forecast that occurred at that time when this was published for the current 2011-12 year — the main estimates for 2012-13, then projected estimates for 2013-14, for 2014-15 and for 2015-16. We provided detail for each department and the opposition has enough trouble getting through this, as well. We provide detail on the first year. We give numbers as to what our intent is going forward because, as I've mentioned, plans do change. Sometimes I think it's impossible to say, "Here are exactly the capital investments we're going to make by department in four years from now," because life doesn't work that way. Government doesn't work that way. People's own bank accounts don't work that way. So we give a commitment to the community and to the construction industry, looking at the investments we plan to make — the total dollar amounts of capital investments that we're going to make — and we continue to move forward to ensure that we reinvest in the Yukon, which creates jobs for Yukoners who then have the ability to spend that money here in the Yukon and continue to drive and foster the economy.

Ms. Hanson: Well, if the Minister of Finance had been listening to me, he would have understood. He would have heard me say that I appreciate the fact that in the Budget Address there is that listing going out five years. My point is made exactly by what he just revealed there. He said, "We give a commitment to the community and to the business industry." The community and the business industry would like to know that those commitments will be delivered on. We can use just one small example: F.H. Collins. It was there; it was not there; it's maybe there again.

What we were asking for was public access to the five-year capital financial plans as required under the financial administration manual, which do in fact — if you read that through — set out in considerable detail what's required in terms of descriptive material — both financial assessments and other program community assessments as to the requirements for various capital initiatives, now and into the future. Clearly, the Premier will just continue to spin it his way. That's fine.

I have a last question I would raise before we move into line-by-line debate. This may take one or two supplementaries though, I admit, at this stage because my experience to date has indicated that that's probably true.

The Minister of Finance had talked earlier in his opening comments about the key word being "planning". I'm interested in terms of the planning of the Minister of Finance and the basis of his planning. When he updates the House with respect to the resource revenue-sharing agreements, the changes to the threshold — the current \$3 million and the proposed increase might be parallel to what Northwest Territories might get, if they ever complete a devolution transfer agreement. There are a number of components to this. One is the role and relationship with Yukon First Nations on this and the sharing accord that might exist there.

When does the Finance minister project that the current resource royalty revenues from the Yukon resources would approach the \$3-million threshold? From a planning perspective, when does he project it will approach the upper threshold of — I think it's \$41 million? I would ask him to confirm or clarify that upper limit he has apparently negotiated with the Department of Finance — the Minister of Finance I would hope.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: That's a really easy question to answer. I guess it speaks to the fundamental differences — the NDP think that government controls the economy, and we don't believe that.

We believe that governments can either encourage economic development or they can deter economic development. Can I tell you exactly when we will reach those targets? Absolutely not; there are too many things that are not within the control of the government. I know that the NDP would like to control everything, but unfortunately that's not the case. There are too many factors involved. We're committed to continuing to ensure that we create the right environment. We're committed to ensuring that anything we do going forward makes sound environmental sense. So as to when we will reach those targets, it's very difficult to tell. There are too many things involved. We will continue to work with the private sector to help where we can to remove the barriers and to encourage more investment in this community, in this territory and create more jobs.

Ms. Hanson: The Premier says in this Legislative Assembly on a very regular basis that by opening the territory to private sector investment — The Official Opposition has said it supports a strong, stable and sustainable resource extraction industry. When we do that, this minister and his colleague to his left — which I find kind of funny — might have expounded upon the notion that this territory is on the cusp of a number of operating mines. He goes to the same trade shows and the same industry conferences that the rest of the Yukon goes to — that I have certainly attended and members on the opposite side have attended. There are a number of very detailed presentations made at those conferences with respect to the expected development of mines in the territory, and all mines have one thing in mind: that is to make a return on their investment to their shareholders. We are, as Yukoners, shareholders in those resources as well.

I'm simply asking the Minister of Finance — he must have some idea of when we would begin to see some returns on this significant investment — partially the investment in terms of foregone revenues, in terms of allowing industry to be in this

conducive environment that he is wanting to create, which we share.

That is a wonderful idea, but when we invite people into our homeland say, “Now you can develop it”, we, at some point, must expect some return. What we are simply asking, since we based a lot of the street creds of this Minister of Finance, he has gone and said to the public, “I went to Ottawa. I increased the level of money that we are going to keep here,” — but if there is not any idea of when we are going to keep it, that is kind of a pyrrhic victory, is it not?

I am simply asking the Minister of Finance to tell Yukoners when they might be able to see a return to the Yukon on their natural resource revenues, when that \$3 million might be approached, when the, whatever, \$40 million — I asked him to confirm that, which he did not do, so I am asking him to do that upper threshold — and that would be it.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I guess it does get to be a bit frustrating because we have heard these questions before; we have answered these questions before, quite explicitly. I know that the NDP does not put any value to jobs and what impact that has on our economy. Not to say that jobs do not have any positive, but when we discussed this before, I actually described that in the fiscal year 2010-11, our resource revenues exceeded the \$3-million mark.

In fact, it just came short of \$5 million, at \$4.765 million in the 2010-11 year and will be again exceeded in the 2011-12 year — however, those numbers are not to be confirmed at this point. So, Madam Chair, we’ve had this discussion. We have discussed in this House that we have exceeded the resource revenues. I described this to the member opposite on a previous occasion. In fact, I just find it difficult to see how the NDP doesn’t see the value to the thousands of jobs, the indirect jobs that go along with the direct jobs that occur in the placer mining industry, in the exploration industry, in the mining industry and everything that comes from that — from tire shops to fuel companies to lumber yards to grocery stores to car dealerships to TV stores to everything else that has a massive impact as a result of this industry — the primary industry that this territory has had for more than a century.

So I hope now that I have explained this and we’ve discussed this again that the member opposite will have those numbers to understand.

Ms. Hanson: It’s all in fact, Madam Chair. The Minister of Finance, to make a very fine point here, is misleading when he says that those are royalties. Perhaps he’d like to clarify what he meant there.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

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

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Madam Chair, I believe that you have ruled on the term “misleading” on a number of occasions, at least one of which I can directly remember. To certainly state that the Premier has “mislead” the House is certainly contrary to our Standing Orders. I believe it’s 19(g) if I’m correct.

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

Ms. Hanson: Madam Chair, on the point of order, perhaps there’s another phrase that I could use that’s not speak-

ing about “misleading”. Perhaps it’s “confused.” I’m not sure. I find his interpretation of the issue confusing.

Chair’s ruling

Chair: It is my opinion that there is a point of order and the use of the word “misleading” is out of order.

Ms. Hanson: Madam Chair, I ask the Minister of Finance to perhaps outline where he gets his source of data, because when I look at page 9-18 in the budget book, the quartz mining fees and leases are \$2 million, but that’s not royalties. The royalties for oil and gas are \$200,000. The placer mining fees are \$255,000. Coal leases, permits and royalties — if he is using this \$3,348,000 outlined there, where is he talking about royalties? That was the issue that I was raising.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Throughout this discussion — I guess that’s the confusion that the NDP is having — we have been talking about resource revenues. I think the Blues will reflect the fact that she, on many occasions through this conversation, has been talking about resource revenues. That is exactly what I have been talking to. I think that before we can have a healthy debate on this, we have to ensure that the member opposite understands the definitions and the differences between the terminologies.

I’m trying to find a way to say this that wouldn’t be overruled on a point of order, but I think we continue to see in this House the lack of regard and lack of respect from the Leader of the NDP in the manner —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

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

Ms. White: “19(h) charges another member” — oh, no, that’s the wrong one. “19(g) imputes false or unavowed motives to another member.”

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

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I think the term “lack of respect” does not impute such a description.

Chair’s statement

Chair: Without reviewing the Blues — because I can’t quite recall the exact terminology — I’m going to just say that the debate is getting very personal. I would request that members stick to the numbers. Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I will continue to say that while the member opposite says one thing, she talks about another thing. In fact the total lack of understanding is obvious when she begins to make the comparisons to this proposed agreement to what is happening in the Northwest Territories, because quite frankly it’s almost like comparing apples to oranges.

While there are some similarities in contextual manner, there are some vast differences. We already have a devolution transfer agreement. We already have devolution. We had in place an agreement — an agreement that this government was able to renegotiate with the Government of Canada for the benefit of all Yukoners and all Canadians. As we grow an economy here, it is to the benefit of Canada as well and the fact

that they share in own-source revenues that we create, so all Canada gets to benefit.

I know that the Leader of the NDP found that humorous, but in fact it's because of them not understanding the financial impact, because this side of the House is trying to create an environment where we can promote and see more responsible investment, responsible development, and the opposite side of the House would like to legislate and regulate every aspect of our life.

Ms. Hanson: Seeing that the Minister of Finance is unable to answer questions about numbers, we will move on perhaps to line-by-line.

Mr. Elias: I would just — I do not even know where to begin — try to have an achievement-oriented atmosphere here.

I guess I want to start by thanking the Finance officials within the department, because at the beginning of this session they provided some budget function and key terminology back in March to all of the new MLAs. I really appreciate that, because it went over some definitions with regard to the mains and budget estimates, O&M expenditures, capital expenditures, the supps, what it meant in the terminology between annual surplus and deficit net financial position, and the list goes on and on and on. I will put it on the record that it did assist my colleague, the Member for Klondike, in understanding the terminology that is used in the House. I want to thank the Finance officials for their good work once again in ensuring that the level of debate in the House is as factual as possible.

Madam Chair, I have some comments for the Department of Finance today. I will keep them brief and I'll try to keep them on topic. As the Premier wishes from time to time, I also wish that I had a crystal ball, not only for political reasons, but sometimes for other reasons as well. I'm sure Yukoners appreciate the profound and wide-ranging exchange of opinions today and yesterday. However, in my opinion, there are better uses of our time in the House, because we have only seven days left in this Legislative Assembly. In my experience and opinion, it just simply won't be enough to cover all aspects of the 2012-13 Yukon government budget.

Of particular interest to our caucus is to get to the Department of Health. It's the largest allocation and one of the most important priority items that Yukoners would like to hear members of this Assembly debating. That is a priority for our caucus as well. We won't be using any of our time today to discuss past administrations of any political stripe or dredge up financial boondoggles from 20 years ago, because I've said this on the floor of the House before that I refuse to accept credit or criticism, for that matter, for any of the decisions past governments did, because I wasn't a part of those decisions nor did I help create the climate under which those decisions were made.

Discussing what one political party did in 1993 and how it pertains to 2012, quite frankly, matters very little to me. So it's our hope we can bring this debate back on course, conduct ourselves the way that we promised Yukoners we would conduct ourselves, and work through the departments identified as being this afternoon's business.

The Department of Finance itself has a relatively small budget of less than \$8 million for the year. It consumes less than one percent of the government's resources. Most of that \$8 million is for personnel costs. The second largest item includes government flow-through transfers, such as the Yukon child benefit and the research and development tax credit. The small budget belies the importance of the department and we appreciate the good work of the officials there. They gather the information that allows government to make and carry out decisions and allows the public to keep informed about those operations.

Last month, when responding to the budget in general, my colleague, the Member for Klondike, pointed out that a budget is a statement of intent. It ranks different government priorities by the dollars allocated to them. Government is forced to balance — giving individual programs and departments the money they need to operate with balancing the overall budget — so that Yukoners' money isn't spent recklessly.

Certain areas in this budget have been particularly subject to constraints this year. The Public Schools branch will get less money than it did last year. They will apply the money they get to prepare over 5,000 kindergarten, elementary and secondary students for higher education for careers and for life.

In this budget, Family and Children's Services will get an increase of 3.5 percent, which works out to about 1.5 percent after inflation. They will use that modest increase to serve over 100 families, over 500 children in unsafe home situations and 150 newborns and their families, as well as providing other important services.

Tourism and Culture is getting less money than it spent last year, including for the marketing operations office.

Economic Development is getting less money than last year, including for Business and Industry Development and Regional Economic Development.

We appreciate the challenges of applying limited funds to serve a growing population with increasingly complex needs. We see a great deal in this budget that we can support, and we believe in lending our voices loudly when it comes to those items. Obviously, we also call it like we see it when we don't agree with line items in the budget.

My comments today are meant to remind all members that when we create a budget we make choices. Just as with the budget, I hope that we will make good choices in debate today and, with that, I conclude my comments and look forward to going line by line.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I respect what the member opposite had to say and I thank the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin for his comments on the briefings that were provided. I don't know whether it has been done before — a new government coming in and providing briefings by all the deputy ministers across the corporations for the members opposite to be able to assist them and really set the tone, in terms of how we are moving forward. We discussed some of the transparency things — the changes we have made to the budget — so I want to thank the member opposite for his comments on our decision to do that and how much they appreciated that being done.

As for his comment about — you know, not looking back to what has happened in the past and not having any real interest in that — it reminds me of an old saying: that if we don't remember history, we are doomed to make the same mistakes.

So I think we need to continue to remind Yukoners of what the historical value was of past performances. So I think that, while I respect the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin's comments, I think there is an obligation to ensure that we don't make those mistakes again.

As I mentioned at the beginning of Department of Finance in Committee of the Whole, the Department of Finance's budget constitutes 0.68 percent of the entire budget — less than one percent. We have now probably spent at least three or four hours on Finance. I have said across the House, repeated times that the opposition has the opportunity to use their time and to budget their time wisely to ensure that they have the opportunity to deal with all the departments they want to deal with. It's another example of reminding Yukoners of history and the fact that some parties just have trouble budgeting.

As for the comments that were raised, I'd like to clarify for the record that all the departments received an increase in O&M this year over last year's budget. This, again, was a record budget, in terms of services and programs that the government is delivering to Yukoners. Across the board, all the departments had increases.

As for comments regarding specific departments or programs in relation to Education and, I think, Family and Children's Services, which relates to the Department of Health and Social Services — either the opportunity will exist or already has existed for the ministers to be able to debate those questions within the appropriate department.

I have stated for the record many times that I am excited and proud of the team we have here on this side of the House and the superior ability of our ministers to deliver on the mandates and the responsibilities they have, and they have my utmost confidence.

Chair: Is there any further general debate? We're going to proceed, line by line, on Vote 12, starting on page 11-6.

On Treasury

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

On Administration

Administration in the amount of \$896,000 agreed to

On Financial Operations and Revenue Services

Financial Operations and Revenue Services in the amount of \$3,355,000 agreed to

On Fiscal Relations

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

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Travel out of territory, \$22,615; supplies, \$5,880; postage and freight, \$294; professional, \$55,000; and salaries, for \$152,496.

Fiscal Relations in the amount of \$236,000 agreed to

On Management Board Secretariat

Mr. Elias: Can I get a breakdown, please?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Travel in territory, \$4,000; travel out of territory, \$23,475; professional, \$55,000; supplies, \$13,720; postage, \$294; advertising, \$2,250; training, \$3,000;

memberships, \$1,000; printing, \$40,200; other, \$860; and salaries, \$1,847,126.

Management Board Secretariat in the amount of \$1,755,000 agreed to

On Banking Services

Banking Services in the amount of \$1,015,000 agreed to

On Public Utilities Income Tax Transfer

Public Utilities Income Tax Transfer in the amount of \$213,000 agreed to

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I just would like to go back to the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin's last request for detail on the Management Board Secretariat.

Unanimous consent re: revisiting a line

Chair: Yes, you may do that with unanimous consent. Is there unanimous consent to return to it?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

On Management Board Secretariat — revisited

Chair: There appears to be unanimous consent.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: What I did, Madam Chair, is that I read the total of Fiscal Relations and Management Board Secretariat combined. They were the totals that I gave. So what I give you for revenue for Fiscal Relations was correct. However, Management Board Secretariat numbers actually included the \$236,000. For the record then, the \$1.755 million is as follows: travel in territory is \$4,000; travel out of the territory is \$860; supplies is \$7,840; advertising is \$2,250; training is \$3,000; memberships is \$1,000; printing is \$40,200; other is \$860; and salaries are \$1,694,630.

Management Board Secretariat in the amount of \$1,755,000 agreed to

Treasury Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$7,470,000 agreed to

On Capital Expenditures

On Information Technology Equipment and Systems

Information, Technology and Systems in the amount of \$12,000 agreed to

On Prior Years' Projects

Prior Years' Projects in the amount of nil cleared

Treasury Capital Expenditures in the amount of \$12,000 agreed to

Treasury Total Expenditures in the amount of \$7,482,000 agreed to

On Workers' Compensation Supplementary Benefits

Ms. Hanson: Just a question for the minister. Is this increased by CPI or what is the rate of increase for this benefit?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I did actually mention it, I think, in my initial statement when we went into Finance in Committee of the Whole. Workers' Compensation Supplementary Benefits program in the amount of \$426,000 is legislated under an act of similar name.

It provides supplements to benefits paid to workers who are insured by private insurers prior to the Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board coming into existence. These supplements bring the benefits these workers receive up to the sums that would be paid, had they been covered by the board.

Ms. Hanson: I heard the minister the first time he said that. I was simply asking him to clarify what the indices for increases are. Is it consumer price index? How does it increase? I'm just asking him to tell me how it increases. What's the basis for the increase? I don't believe it's volume. I'm just asking if there's a price indicator that would tell us how it goes up.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I think for a full account of that, we'd probably have to talk to the minister responsible for Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board. However, I believe it's based on the rates that are being paid.

These people were people who were insured by private insurers prior to the creation of the Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board. They now fall under those auspices and basically what we're doing is covering the difference from what the private insurance is paying to what they're actually getting from Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board. I do see that the estimate for 2012-13 remains exactly the same as the forecast for 2011-12, which is \$426,000.

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

On Supplementary Pensions

Supplementary Pensions in the amount of \$426,000 agreed to

Workers' Compensation Supplementary Benefits Total Expenditures in the amount of \$426,000 agreed to

On Revenues

Mr. Elias: I have a couple of questions here for the Premier and they are with regard to the lines Fuel Oil Tax — Diesel and Fuel Oil Tax — Other. A couple of questions: How is the Yukon compared to the rest of the northern jurisdictions and jurisdictions in maybe even Alaska, if he has those statistics? And where is the gasoline tax represented in this budget in terms of taxation revenue income for the government?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: What I can say is that when it comes to fuel tax, either on diesel or other, we have the lowest taxes in the country. I can give you a quick scan starting first with diesel. Cents per litre: Newfoundland, 16.5 cents per litre for diesel; P.E.I., 20.2 cents; New Brunswick, 19.2 cents; Nova Scotia, 15.4 cents; Quebec, 18.2 cents; Ontario, 14.3 cents; Manitoba, 11.5 cents; Saskatchewan, 15 cents; Alberta, 9 cents; British Columbia, 21.39 cents; Northwest Territories, 9.1 cents; Nunavut, 9.1 cents; and Yukon, 7.2 cents.

For gasoline, cents per litre: Newfoundland, 16.5 cents; Prince Edward Island, 15.8 cents; New Brunswick 13.6 cents; Nova Scotia, 15.5 cents; Quebec, 17.2 cents; Ontario, 14.7 cents; Manitoba, 11.5 cents; Saskatchewan, 15 cents; Alberta, 9 cents; British Columbia, 20.06 cents; Northwest Territories, 10.7 cents; Nunavut, 10.7 cents; and Yukon, 6.2 cents.

Mr. Elias: I appreciate the Premier's answer to my question. I've been asked a couple of times now by various Yukoners throughout the years about the accountability structure, or the lack thereof, with regard to what some people consider the fluctuations of home heating fuel and gasoline, especially, in our territory. What they ask me to ask the minister is, in terms of accountability to the public, if there was — I believe that this happened in Alberta a couple of years ago where there was a public forum and petroleum producers, petroleum reps and federal and provincial representatives came to the

public forum — everybody in industry — and they were able to field questions from the general public in terms of why things are the way they are.

Is the Premier aware of these types of public forums?

I am calling them a public forum — I might be wrong. It might be some other way to hear from the public. I know they exist, and this could be something that we might be able to do in the territory. It is an idea about having some sort of accountability to the public, explaining why the prices fluctuate, how they fluctuate, who is responsible for what tax, and the administration of these types of issues. I will leave that question for the Premier.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I thank the member opposite for the question. The answer, in terms of the taxes applicable to heating fuel in the Yukon, is very easy because it is zero. We have no tax on heating fuel in the Yukon, so what we exist with is a market situation in terms of what the market is bearing. Of course, that says something that this government feels strongly: that it is not a win situation to get into that game, and there has been a lot of historical record to back that up.

I would like to mention that we also do not charge any tax on diesel that is used for power generation. In fact, if we look over at Northwest Territories, their diesel tax applies to electrical generation as well. We do not put tax on diesel for power generation. I'd also mention that there is no tax on propane, for any use. There also isn't a territorial tax on propane.

Mr. Elias: I thank the Premier for his answers, and it's just the concept of public accountability I'm talking about here, where you provide the opportunity for John and Jane Doe Yukon citizens to actually sit down and hear from industry representatives, government representatives and all the players who have a role in the cost when someone goes to the pump or receives any type of petroleum product. I know it has been done in other jurisdictions, and it might be a good idea to do here, just to explain to the general citizen as to why prices are the way they are, why they fluctuate, and it might alleviate some of the public concern out there.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: You know, that is a difficult question because I think we could apply the same thing to bread or basically anything else.

I do know that once in awhile, I'll see a sticker at the pumps that says "Here's the breakdown of what your gasoline price is, what percentage goes to refinement, marketing," — whatever they are. I think that certainly the opportunity for education is a good one. I think that is certainly something in which it would be difficult for this government to intervene.

Revenues cleared

On Government Transfers

Government Transfers cleared

On Changes in Tangible Capital Assets and Amortization

Changes in Tangible Capital Assets and Amortization cleared

Department of Finance agreed to

Chair: Thank you everyone. We're through the Department of Finance.

We will be moving on to Executive Council Office. In the meantime, Committee of the Whole will recess for 15 minutes.

Recess

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

Executive Council Office

Chair: We are into Vote 2, Executive Council Office, and opening general debate.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I'm pleased to introduce the budget for the Executive Council Office for 2012-13. Executive Council Office budget forecasts overall operation and maintenance spending of \$23,572,000 and capital spending of \$114,000, which amounts to, I believe, less than 3 percent of the government's budget.

On the O&M side, this represents a modest 1.7-percent increase that covers personnel and operating cost increases together with changes in funding levels for a number of transfer payment agreements under the administration of the department.

As this is my first opportunity to present a budget for the Executive Council Office, I would like to share with members opposite some of the details of each of the program areas displayed in the main estimates. This will help provide the context for a wide range of services this department provides in supporting the public governance infrastructure within the government and managing our relationships with other governments, either directly or through collaborative work with other departments.

The Executive Council Office is the central agency with responsibility for supporting Cabinet governance and the effective functioning of government. It also provides corporate leadership and services in a range of areas and works closely with departments to support their work and ensure overall coordination on broad issues and priorities. Areas for which the Executive Council Office provides leadership include the negotiation and implementation of the First Nation final and self-government agreements; First Nation relations and First Nation capacity development; internal audits; Yukon government responsibilities related to the *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act* and the collection and publication of statistical information.

ECO provides non-partisan advice to the Premier and Cabinet in order to facilitate Cabinet decision-making in the best interests of Yukon and the Yukon public. The deputy minister, in her role as the secretary to Cabinet, is responsible for managing the Cabinet process and ensuring the Premier and ministers receive high quality, comprehensive advice with respect to decisions before Cabinet.

The deputy minister, in addition to being the senior manager of the department, has a key role in providing advice and guidance to the Premier, ministers and government departments. This responsibility includes working with the Premier and ministers to communicate and support implementation of government priorities; coordinating the policy and management

aspects of the government's priorities; providing advice to the Premier, ministers and government departments on corporate policy and management issues; and coordinating effective, two-way communication between the government and the public service.

Executive Council Office supports the development and maintenance of effective relationships with other governments, primarily through the work of the three branches: Land Claims and Implementation Secretariat, Governance Liaison and Capacity Development, and Intergovernmental Relations.

The Land Claims and Implementation Secretariat is responsible for providing leadership, advising and supporting departments in their work with First Nation relations, negotiations and implementations. In this role, it's primary responsibilities are these: to provide advice and analyses to the minister, Cabinet and senior officials on the negotiation, implementation and First Nation relation policies, strategies and consultation issues; lead negotiations in cooperation with affected departments, including agreements about land claims and/or self-government and reconciliation; lead Yukon implementation of the final and self-government agreements; support departments through provision of information, analysis, advice, and, as required, direct participation and assistance in First Nation relations through interpreting agreements and applicable law policy and mandates; work with departments to develop policy and mandates regarding new aspects of First Nations; and work with the departments to coordinate internally regarding First Nation relations, including design and delivery of programs to provide information, training and education to employees.

The Governance Liaison and Capacity Development branch serves as the primary liaison and advisor in working with First Nations, Yukon government departments and the Government of Canada on First Nations capacity development and governance initiatives. In addition, this branch works with Canada and First Nation governments in supporting the Yukon Forum and the intergovernmental forum.

The work of the Intergovernmental Relations branch is to maintain effective relations with provincial, territorial, federal, northern regional and international governments in order to advance the politic, social, cultural, economic and environmental priorities of Yukon. In fulfilling this objective, Intergovernmental Relations, or IGR, coordinates the relations with other governments external to Yukon to ensure they are carried out in a consistent and effective manner by providing strategic advice and support to facilitate the Premier's participation in First Ministers meetings, meetings of the Council of the Federation and other intergovernmental forums; advising, assisting and consulting with departments on a wide range of intergovernmental meetings, agreements and activities; working with and for government departments in promoting and advocating for Yukon's key interests in Ottawa; and representing Yukon at key policy and other forums related to intergovernmental issues and opportunities.

The Office of Protocol organizes and coordinates diplomatic visits, state ceremonies and official honours.

A common theme throughout my previous comments is the leadership and advisory role played by the Executive Council Office within the organization. This role extends to several other branches about which I would like to provide some brief information.

The Development Assessment branch is the lead agency with Yukon government for administering the *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act*, or YESAA. In this role, the branch provides corporate leadership and assistance to departments with respect to the assessment of environmental and socio-economic effects; assists government departments in fulfilling their roles under YESAA; represents the Yukon government as a decision body on major projects; provides policy guidance for YESAA implementation issues; and acts as the government's principal contact for assessors from the Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Board, interested parties, and other governments.

Government Audit Services carries out audits and provides advisory services to assist departments in improving the efficiency, effectiveness, economy and accountability of Yukon government programs.

In fulfilling its responsibilities, the branch provides services in accordance with the annual audit plan established by the audit committee and examines the adequacy of internal financial and management controls throughout the government. Government Audit Services shares information and coordinates its activities with the Office of the Auditor General to ensure proper audit coverage and minimize duplication of efforts.

The Yukon Bureau of Statistics is the government centre for reliable information, research and statistical services in support of decision-making by the Yukon government, other clients and the public. The bureau's primary responsibilities include making readily available timely, demographic, economic and social statistical information; publishing major reports on Yukon-specific information in areas of public interest, such as the economy, health, population and tourism; maintaining an up-to-date resource centre as a Statistics Canada focal point; providing access to national and international statistical information; assisting members of the public, private sector researchers and businesses in locating, understanding and using statistical information and providing professional research services to support departmental policy initiatives and program evaluation.

The public website hosts a wide variety of information about different aspects of Yukon society and economic indicators. Regular reports are generated, some through own-source research and others through the analysis conducted by Statistics Canada.

I would like to speak briefly about the work of two other program areas that touch the lives of many Yukoners on a daily basis through the programs offered.

The main objectives of the Youth Directorate are to provide youth with supports to become involved in social, economic and cultural activities; support organizations serving youth; and provide advice to decision-makers related to the appropriate programming for youth. Supporting youth is principally accomplished by increasing awareness of available pro-

grams and services, involving youth and developing programs directed toward them and providing opportunities for youth to contribute to their communities.

The Youth Directorate provides support for youth leadership initiatives across the territory through a number of year-round funding programs.

The Water Board Secretariat provides professional and administrative support to the Yukon Water Board, an independent administrative tribunal established under the *Waters Act*. Yukon Water Board is responsible for issuing licences for the use of water and/or the deposit of waste into water. To meet these responsibilities, the Water Board Secretariat assists applicants and intervenors with their participation in the board's public process, provides the board with licensing recommendations and professional expertise on policy, procedural and technical issues, translates the board's decisions into enforceable licences and comprehensive reasons for decisions, and maintains a public register of water licences, applications and related information.

Three other service groups in Executive Council Office also play a corporate support role within the organization. All these activities are listed in the budget under the program entitled "Corporate Services."

The Policy and Planning branch facilitates the Cabinet decision-making process by providing advice, analyses and other services to Cabinet and its committees. It plays a corporate role in developing and coordinating policy and supporting strategic planning and other initiatives of the interdepartmental nature. The Communications branch has both a departmental and corporate leadership role in meeting government communication needs. Its primary responsibilities are as follows: to provide government-wide communication services, including media analysis and review and distribution of Yukon government news releases; to support the Cabinet decision-making process by working with departments and through the communications review committee to ensure effective communication strategies; to carry out the Commissioner's and the Executive Council Office's communication activities and support the Cabinet communications advisor in meeting the communication needs of the Premier and Cabinet office; to develop, lead and/or coordinate multi-departmental communication initiatives to promote Cabinet goals and major governmental initiatives; to provide advice and guidance for departments to ensure effective government communications, media relations, public consultation and advertising; and to manage Yukon government's web presence to improve and enhance the information available to users of the site and to provide guidance on social media initiatives.

The office of the science advisor provides the Yukon government on scientific matters by providing strategic direction and policy advice on corporate science interests. The office promotes and supports science-based decision-making across government and raises awareness of science initiatives and findings that support and advance Yukon government priorities.

The office works to build scientific capacity and literacy within the Yukon government and Yukon. The science advisor

represents Yukon government's interest in intergovernmental science forums and coordinates and identifies opportunities to assess, apply or develop scientific knowledge.

The primary focus is on building strong partnerships and ensuring that the Yukon government helps develop and implement scientific solutions that improve Yukoners' quality of life.

Last, but certainly not least, like other departments, the operations of the Executive Council Office are supported by a team of human resource professionals and a finance and administration group. The Human Resources unit provides leadership and support services to the Executive Council Office employees and supervisors for a broad range of human resource management functions. It also provides advice and support to the Cabinet offices and the Women's Directorate on human resources matters.

The Finance and Administration team is responsible for managing the internal financial activities for the department and coordinating administrative systems and information management support services to meet department operational requirements. The branch provides budgetary financial and administrative services to the department and to the Cabinet offices and supports management in the delivery of departmental programs.

With that introduction about the range of services provided by the public servants in the Executive Council Office, I would like to now provide some comments about the supporting budget requests for this department. As members are aware, a large part of the Executive Council Office budget is corporate funding allocated to other departments, other governments and organizations throughout the year through transfer payments. For example, the Executive Council Office is responsible for the allocation of Yukon government's land claims implementation funding and YESAA funding. In addition, the Executive Council Office is accountable for funding provided under the northern strategy trust to First Nations where they are the lead on projects approved by the Yukon Forum.

The total amount of money provided through this type of transfer totals \$7,595,000, or 32.4 percent of the department's O&M budget. In addition, almost \$3.5 million has been requested to support the Office of the Commissioner, the Cabinet offices and the operations of the Yukon Water Board. This represents 14.7 percent of the O&M request for the department.

Let me now focus on the programs of the Executive Council Office itself, beginning with the Youth Directorate. This directorate will be providing over \$1.1 million in funding. The program is directed at youth-serving organizations to develop youth leadership skills and provide program delivery support around the Yukon. This represents another almost five percent of the total O&M budget. This budget request includes \$660,000 in direct funding to non-governmental organizations serving youth, including Bringing Youth Towards Equality, or BYTE, the Boys and Girls Club of Whitehorse and the Youth of Today Society.

In addition, the francophone youth organization will receive a contribution of \$25,000 to support their activities focusing on youth in an active francophone community. Projects supporting youth at the grassroots level will be made possible

through \$102,000, which has again been allocated to the youth investment fund. This fund has two intakes a year for larger projects, as well as opportunities to apply throughout the year for small amounts of funding. We anticipate that this program will be fully subscribed as it has been in past years.

Community organizations or other governments will receive a combined total of \$320,000 to work with youth and deliver activities on a year-round basis in Yukon communities. In the past year, the Youth Directorate asked community organizations how we could improve the delivery of this program. In response, the Youth Directorate has modified this funding program, now called the youth leadership activities program. It now offers year-round funding communities can direct during times of the year when youth programming is most needed. This brings with it a reduced administrative overhead and greater flexibility. In addition, two short-term positions have been combined into a single youth program advisor position to provide year-round contact —

Chair: Order please.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: — and support. Okay, this is my last sentence.

Ms. Hanson: I'd like to thank the officials from the Executive Council Office for the briefing they provided to the Official Opposition prior to budget debate, which represented, I think, not all, but a number of the elements that make up ECO. It was helpful for us and gave us some background, as the Premier has just outlined in some detail — and some details, as well, on some aspects of the proposed initiatives for the current year budget.

I don't intend to go into any lengthy opening remarks. I do have some questions in each of the areas of the Executive Council Office because I think this is, as I think the Premier was alluding to, really the nexus of the intergovernmental relationship, whether that's the relationship we are all working to make effective — the new and evolving relationship with Yukon First Nations, or indeed, the circumpolar relationship — the federal-provincial-territorial relationship. It all comes together in this hub, which is the Executive Council Office.

I'm just sort of going through in the order of how the book is laid out for us. I just wanted to ask the Minister of Finance with respect to the Land Claims and Implementation Secretariat, which is a component of the Executive Council Office, which the Minister of Finance is responsible for — the Premier. Let's call him the Premier today. The Premier, who is responsible for the Executive Council Office — and I'd like to talk about the Land Claims and Implementation Secretariat, an element of that. My colleague from Vuntut Gwitchin just threw me off there for a second.

The Land Claims and Implementation Secretariat is responsible, as part of the obligations I see outlined as the implementation of settlement or final agreements — interesting language we're using these days — with Yukon First Nations. One of those aspects — and it's noted in the overview that was provided to the members — is funding with respect to land use planning.

We have the north Peel done, and we've begun — we're sort of in debate about the Peel, and we have work begun on

the Dawson planning commission. I'd ask the minister about what it says here, that the Teslin planning commission will be funded this fiscal year. I'd like confirmation that the Teslin planning commission has been created or when the timeline for that will be. We have, I believe, eight land use plans to be completed. If the minister, the Premier, could outline for the House what he foresees as the timeline for completing all land use plans pursuant to the First Nation final agreements, given that some of these are outstanding. Teslin's agreement came into effect in 1995, so it would just be helpful to have a sense of what the planning horizon for this government is with respect to land use planning.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: If the question is when will all eight plans be finished, I can as much answer that one, I guess, as I could on when will we reach the \$41 million on royalties from the mining industry. It's too difficult to be able to say, but what I can say is that since inception in 1993, while all three parties have been in government since that time, it has only been the Yukon Party that has accomplished a land use plan — the north Yukon plan. We are in the final stages leading into the final round of consultation on the Peel. We have moved forward already with the Klondike, and so that is three with five more remaining. We will be looking at how we move forward on those; however, I will not be able to commit a time as to when it will be. I will also note that Energy, Mines and Resources is actually the lead on the land use planning, and that Executive Council Office actually just provides the funding for it.

Having answered that, I have about a page left on my introductory remarks and so I am just going to finish that.

We have two short-term positions that we have combined in a single youth program advisor position to provide a year-round contact and support for community organizations interfacing with the Youth Directorate.

As mentioned in my opening overview comments, the budget for the Land Claims and Implementation Secretariat is a significant part of the total O&M budget for the Executive Council Office. It represents approximately 33 percent. The budget allocation is \$7.68 million. The planned expenditures confirm this government's commitment to working closely with First Nations by funding key personnel and activities within the Yukon government to support implementation of the final land claims and self-government agreements. This funding will total \$2.556 million.

An additional \$3.17 million will be provided to First Nation boards, councils and planning commissions to support their important work as outlined in the agreements. The Governance Liaison and Capacity Development budget includes \$100,000 in funding for the participation of Yukon First Nations in activities directed by the Yukon Forum, as well as the funding required to advance the three northern strategy projects, for which the branch is in the lead. The decrease in budget results from a reduced cash-flow requirement for these northern strategy projects as they are nearing their completion.

A total of \$1,560,000 is allocated for projects approved through the northern strategy. This funding allocation covers projects approved in all three intakes — 2006, 2007 and 2009

— and will flow to First Nations for their work on nine different projects. On the revenue side of the equation, an increase of 11.6 percent is forecast in recoveries from Canada. This relates primarily to the expenditures associated with implementing the land claims agreements. As noted previously, the capital budget for the Executive Council Office is \$114,000. The funds in this request will support the acquisition of computer infrastructure that has reached the end of its life cycle, and an ongoing systems maintenance for web-based public information systems in the department. This year, we will see a requirement for some minor maintenance and construction for several program areas and an allocation for moving expenses associated with the space planning exercise that has commenced.

With these comments, Madam Chair, that's the end of my introductory speech. I want to also at this point acknowledge and thank all the great work and the people who work in the Executive Council Office for their professionalism and the support that they do indeed provide for this wide range of programs supported through Executive Council Office and for the entire corporation.

Ms. Hanson: I didn't realize government was now a corporation.

With respect to the Land Claims and Implementation Secretariat, the question I asked was included in the budget highlights. I was asking the minister whether or not the Teslin land use planning was going to commence in fiscal 2012-13.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: There has been money forecasted. The decision at this point has not been made.

Ms. Hanson: The minister also spoke to the responsibilities — and it sets that out in the objectives under the Land Claims and Implementation Secretariat — but he specifically referenced the negotiations of land claims and self-government agreements. Well, since we know that the mandate for land claims and self-government negotiations elapsed or completed in 2003, could he detail what kinds of negotiations — the subject matter that the Land Claims and Implementation Secretariat is actually engaged in and what agreements have been reached?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: An example would be the YACA agreements that exist for some of the First Nations — the Yukon asset construction agreements. To date they've completed 18 YG capital projects: 15 of them are with Kwanlin Dun and three are with Carcross-Tagish First Nation. The most recently concluded YACA is for the Takhini Hot Springs Road upgrade/Whitehorse Airport water and sewer extension projects that were signed with KDFN on April 26, 2012.

Ms. Hanson: Is the government — is the Land Claims and Implementation Secretariat negotiating program service transfer agreements on behalf of the Yukon government?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: If any First Nations were at that point, the answer would be yes; we would be along with the appropriate department, but first there would have to be that expression from the First Nation.

Ms. Hanson: Just to confirm — the minister is then saying that there are no ongoing PSTA negotiations at the current time?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I will get back to the member opposite and confirm that.

Ms. Hanson: Another really important objective in my mind is the implementation and negotiation of land claims and self-government agreements between government and First Nations. I believe the intention was that we would be profoundly changing the interrelationship between First Nation governments and all levels of the federal and territorial governments. One of the key elements is the ongoing understanding of both elected officials and public servants about exactly what the intentions of the agreements are and what they mean, in terms of how the machinery of government, over time, evolves to reflect the changed relationship. So I note that one of the objectives is to provide ongoing support and advice to departments to understand and interpret final and self-government agreements and to manage their relationships and interactions with all Yukon First Nations.

I'd appreciate if the minister could outline for the House, in concrete terms, examples of the kinds of support that are provided. Are we talking about ongoing professional development or departmental or government orientation courses for employees with respect to understanding these agreements? By some observations, there can be perceived as being somewhat complex, but the reality is that they are incredibly important to the effect of good governance of this territory. So I'd be interested if he could outline both the substance of the work that's done in that context, how that's spread throughout government, and the costs associated with that.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: The short answer to the question is yes, we do provide an orientation for staff. I think it is called "Land Claims 101." It's a program that can be provided to staff. There is no cost associated with that program because it is provided by existing staff. There's also interpretation of law agreements and I think looking at court cases. There's also that opportunity out there as well, and then interest-based negotiations, for a total of approximately \$30,000.

Ms. Hanson: As the Premier outlined during his introductory remarks, the Executive Council Office provides that very necessary coalescence of sort of the government of the whole in terms of advising government and so my question with respect to the land claims and self-government agreements is regarding the approval process for government initiatives through Management Board. Is there a claims and self-government lens applied to any initiative that comes forward?

I'll give you a concrete example because I am not just fishing; I am looking for an answer here. Recently, when the minister responsible for the Yukon Liquor Corporation brought forward amendments to the *Liquor Act*, it was noted that there had been no consequential amendments made to the legislation. Therefore, we were dealing with legislation that was dated and being asked to approve amendments that still included language referring to "bands" — *Indian Act* bands. As we pointed out in discussion in this Legislative Assembly, we have three *Indian Act* bands here. We don't have band lands; we have no reserves. We have land reserved or set aside for First Nations or *Indian Act* bands. If there is a serious intent by government to reflect this new relationship with self-governing First Na-

tions, then one would expect that any new legislative initiatives, any new policy initiatives or objectives of government would be presented to Management Board with a lens that says this will accommodate, this will reflect this new reality. It will tell you as decision-makers that this is not going to ignore the fact that we have now concluded land claims and self-government agreements with 11 First Nations in the Yukon.

So I'm asking the Premier: Has the machinery of government been adapted to reflect this new relationship? When you're making Management Board decisions, is that being factored in? We tried to get it from the minister responsible for the Yukon Liquor Corporation and the Minister of Justice in terms of how we can ensure that in the future, any legislation being brought forward, whether it's amendments — well, I presume with new legislation, it would be drafted to reflect the new relationship. But if there are consequential amendments to new legislation or new amendments, there would be automatic consequential amendments to reflect the new relationship with self-governing First Nations to reflect that we're talking about settlement land, et cetera, et cetera.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: First, as the member opposite and the opposition know, in fact we had unanimous support for the amendment to that act going forward. As was described by the minister responsible for the Yukon Liquor Corporation, discussions, communication was done prior to moving forward with this introduction with the Na Cho Nyäk Dun in terms of describing where we were at the time.

In fact, there was a willingness and an understanding — what we had in this situation was a community and a First Nation who had a problem and there was a solution to that problem and everybody worked together to solve the needs that had arisen at that time.

As for policy initiatives — all policy initiatives that occur are reviewed by the LCIS. That happens all the time. What we had in this situation was an opportunity to address an issue of Na Cho Nyäk Dun First Nation and the Village of Mayo. For us to have retooled that act to be reflective of the modern terminology would have encompassed a very large process in terms of consultation and drafting. The bottom line is that we would not have solved the problem that the community had.

They wanted it dealt with before we got to the spring and the summer season, so that they didn't have to deal with the problem of, for example, public drinking in Galena Park, which isn't a part of the municipality. Of course we acknowledge what the member opposite is describing. We also want to ensure that process doesn't get in the way of ensuring that we're delivering on the will and the requests of the people in Yukon when we can do it. So in this case we abided with the requests of the community to move forward with those changes and as we have described in this House before, where we can, we will always make those changes going forward. We have many pieces of legislation that need to be reviewed and we had made commitments as a government in terms of what our priorities were. We won an election on those priorities and so we will continue to move forward to ensure that we address those issues as committed to by this government and also move for-

ward with other pieces of legislation and really accomplish all that we can through the mandate that is in front of us.

Ms. Hanson: I was not looking for excuses. I was looking for a commitment by the government that future legislation — what we were saying here — Na Cho Nyäk Dun has been self-governing since 1995. Their agreements came into effect February 14, 1995. That's a long time ago — 17 years. This understanding about band land — and it goes back to my question earlier in terms of the efforts made by the Yukon Party government to ensure that all public servants and ministers, who ultimately are responsible for the legislation they bring into this House, understand the new relationship here. So what I'm looking for was an undertaking that an understanding that this relationship is the basis for going forward and that any legislative initiatives that deal with the relationship or any matters that affect First Nations — if we're talking about their land, we're talking about settlement land. If we're talking about the government, we're not talking about a band. We're talking about a First Nations government. So simply put, I don't need to hear the “woulda, coulda, shoulda's” from the past.

I'd like to, if we could, move on to the audit services. I appreciated the minister's brief outline of some of the activities there. I too looked at the material that's available on the website. One of the things I noticed that was fairly clear, as he articulated, it outlined the difference in the relationships and the responsibilities between the Auditor General and the government's Audit Services branch.

I understand that there are a number of audits that can be completed by the government's Audit Services — it could be the compliance audit and operational audits, financial audits and the IT-type of performance audits. My understanding is that there are audit plans developed. So my first questions will be: What is the current audit plan for this fiscal year? Which departments or agencies of the government will be audited? What kind of audit will be performed?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I guess I need to comment on the implied comment that the Leader of the Official Opposition made that we are not respectful or acknowledging the reality of Yukon today with self-government agreements, with modern treaties. Quite honestly, I take offence to that because I think that we work very hard ensuring that we build that relationship. A very good example of that was evidenced just a few days ago with the completion of the Yukon Forum that hadn't happened in almost three years, where we had the Grand Chief of the Council of Yukon First Nations and 12 out of 14 First Nations represented at the forum with a very healthy dialogue and commitment to move forward on many different issues. It was really an example of how we are working together. The example that the member opposite brought up first about the amendment to the *Liquor Act* — that was at the request of the Town of Mayo and the Na Cho Nyäk Dun.

We were more than willing to ensure that we could comply with their request in a timely manner. We will continue to work with Yukon First Nations and, where we have common interests, we will do so through the Yukon Forum. Where there are interests of Yukon in the greater context, we will work together, going to Canada through an intergovernmental forum.

Where there are opportunities to deal with community-based issues, this government will work with First Nations bilaterally. In terms of bilateral agreements, we have working together. We've had many projects where we've supported First Nations — through northern strategies, we second some of their staff to work within our departments to help build their capacity. The list goes on and on. I think it's worth repeating and I'm disappointed that the Leader of the Official Opposition would try to imply anything other than the professional relationship — not just by the government but by the entire corporation. Although the Leader of the NDP hasn't heard of that term, it's one that has been commonly used within government for awhile.

In terms of the audit plan going forward, there is a staffing audit. The completion of the field work for the audit of staffing is targeted for May 2012. There will be an information technology governance and system-risk profile. The project has involved interviews with information technology, IT, personnel and departments and Crown corporations across government on the governance of the IT function in their organizations and on systems that are deemed to be significant or high risk.

Of course, there will be the *Environment Act*. Section 39(2) of the *Environment Act* states: “The performance of the Government of the Yukon in meeting its responsibilities under this Act shall be subject to an audit with respect to its efficiency and fairness.” It has established a time frame of completing this audit every three years.

Ms. Hanson: I believe it's on the website or someplace — perhaps it was in the briefing — that the completed audits are posted within three months of the audit. I just want to have the minister confirm that. Currently, I have found two audits on the website and I want to confirm if there were any others completed during the past fiscal year.

We have the report on the audit of emergency medical services, August 18, 2011, and phase 2 follow-up on the audit of contracts approved by audit committee December 16, 2011. Were those the two audits that were completed the past fiscal year?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: In addition to the ones listed by the member opposite, phase 2 follow-up on pharmacare and extended health benefits program and phase 2 follow-up on report on Lotteries Yukon. Phase 2 reports are listed on the website under the original report.

Ms. Hanson: With respect to the area of Executive Council Office's Intergovernmental Relations, which was, as the minister outlined — we talked a little bit about this important role at the federal, provincial, territorial, international governments and there has been some discussion about the increased activity in the northwest passage, particularly returning to the notion of oil drilling in the Beaufort.

So, I would be interested if the minister could outline for this Legislative Assembly what role he is playing in terms of advocating for Yukon around drilling and with respect to an update on the dispute between Canada and the USA, as this an intergovernmental affairs issue. On the subject with respect to — this is between Canada and Yukon on the subject of royalties, should oil drilling take place in Yukon waters in the Arctic.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: We do have strategic objectives and priority actions for Yukon's interests in the Beaufort. I'd also say that the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources has a representative as well who is involved. Now the strategic objectives and priority actions are to renew the efforts to commence offshore negotiations toward finalizing a shared, offshore management regime and revenue-sharing arrangement with the federal government. This objective is heightened by the significant oil and gas industry interest to renewed exploration in the Beaufort Sea.

The growing interest of the private sector and other governments in the Beaufort requires Yukon to strongly protect its interests. Concluding such an agreement would ensure Yukon's role in offshore oil and gas management is appropriate and clearly defined and that major economic benefits would accrue to Yukon through an equitable share of royalties and revenues, as well as employment, training and business opportunities for Yukoners.

Secondly, it is to monitor and participate where possible in Beaufort boundary discussion and negotiations between Canada and the United States. The result of any border adjustment will have implications for offshore oil and gas royalties and revenues for Yukon and potential benefits in employment and business for Yukoners. Yukon has strong economic interest in the result of any agreement and needs to be involved in the process. I can say that we communicate with the Department of Foreign Affairs and we restate our position and our desire regarding the boundary negotiations, and, of course, our active involvement. We closely monitor the information-gathering and sharing between the United States and Canada to initiate regular bilateral briefings and discussions with Canada. I can tell members also that I actually know that this is on the radar — the border dispute on the 141st is an issue that the Prime Minister of Canada is aware of and has actually spoken of this to me on subsequent different occasions.

The third strategic objective is to protect Yukon's interests in the Beaufort through strategic involvement in shared management forms and also to explore options for the development of infrastructure in the Beaufort region to ensure Yukon is positioned to manage the environmental implications of increased developmental activity in the region, to fill information and communication gaps and encourage effective dialogue with northerners and other governments.

Ms. Hanson: Just to clarify, is the minister saying that we would like to be involved if there were negotiations, or is he saying that there are active negotiations and, if so, could he tell us the timeline for that?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I will defer the details of that to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources when they come up, because it is that department who is the lead on that.

As for timelines, again, I wish I had that crystal ball. We've had a few of those questions, but unfortunately I'm not sure where it is in terms of completion of those negotiations, but certainly the interests of the Beaufort from both an environmental and from an economic perspective are very important issues for this government.

Ms. Hanson: Just to be clear, I want to confirm if there are active negotiations or if it's a future thought. I just was looking for that. It would be lovely to know that there was a timeline if there was, but the question is: Are there active negotiations?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I think I answered it by saying that I am going to defer this to Energy, Mines and Resources because that is the department that has been the lead on that.

Ms. Hanson: Well, the Intergovernmental Relations objectives are: "To coordinate and lead the Government of Yukon's intergovernmental ..." so I assumed the minister would be able to answer that question.

Perhaps we could move to the Governance Liaison and Capacity Development. So the Governance Liaison and Capacity Development branch, as I understand it, does play — and this is a good example from the Official Opposition's perspective of an investment by government, in terms of making that relationship between First Nations and the Government of Yukon, in particular, come to life. You know, when we read about "To lead and coordinate the implementation of a corporate First Nation capacity strategy ...", we do applaud the government for that area and for that investment.

What I am interested in is if the minister could speak to the examples of what activities are done to fulfill those objectives and what kind of evaluation is undertaken to ensure that those objectives are, in fact, being achieved, because we're talking about developing a capacity strategy. So what is a capacity strategy? How do you know if you have achieved it? What kind of ongoing evaluation is carried out under the guise of this Governance Liaison and Capacity Development branch?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: One example is the First Nation Governance and Capacity Development Conference. Since 2008, the Governance Liaison and Capacity Development branch and Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada, with the Council of Yukon First Nations joining in 2010, have co-hosted this annual conference. This conference provides an opportunity for the broader sharing of governance and capacity development tools, highlighting Yukon government and Yukon First Nation projects, First Nation program developments, and sharing of information and lessons learned.

This conference provides an opportunity for the broader sharing of governance and capacity development tools. The primary audience for this conference includes First Nation chiefs, council members, executive directors, as well as senior officials from First Nations, the Yukon and federal governments who are responsible for governance, administration, capacity development, policy, communications, economic development and training.

The conference costs include contracts for venue, conference planning, hospitality, speakers and their travel. I can say on this that I actually had the opportunity and the privilege to speak at this conference not that long ago. I got a chance to chat with some of the guest speakers who came in — very dynamic people who are doing some incredible things in terms of economic development, including the Chief of Osoyoos First Nation in Westbank in the Kelowna area, who has been doing some very innovative things.

I could also speak to some of the projects that are currently underway. In 2007, the Governance Liaison and Capacity Development branch and the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations received \$1.05 million from the northern strategy trust to support the development and delivery of 10 accessible university-transferable and culturally relevant Yukon College governance and public administration courses.

Program goals were to provide relevant professional development opportunities for executive and senior management staff, to enhance the management and operations of northern governments, to offer the full accredited certificate program to First Nation employees in the short term and all interested individuals in the long term. Program qualities are that it is a made-in-the-Yukon approach incorporating local knowledge and experience and recognizes the unique Yukon governance landscape, including shared jurisdictional authority and capacity and ability of both orders of government to implement and administer a variety of agreements, programs and initiatives. Course delivery is condensed to suit the needs of executive and senior management students. In 2009, Yukon and the First Nation of Na Cho Nyäk Dun received \$300,000 from northern strategy trust fund to develop administrative, organizational and operational policies and procedure manuals. This project is built upon best practices in First Nation governance and administration and is intended to be distributed to all Yukon First Nations. To date, this has resulted in the development and production of five governance organizational manuals and three strategic operational guidebooks.

The final outstanding phase of this project includes a broader sharing of lessons learned with all First Nations. In 2007, Carcross-Tagish First Nation and Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation received \$950,000 to develop and share capacity projects on lands and natural resources management. So, Carcross-Tagish First Nation received \$142,000 from the northern strategy trust fund to develop and implement administrative systems and workflow systems to facilitate operations of Carcross-Tagish First Nations heritage and natural resources departments. Vuntut Gwitchin received \$130,000 to develop and distribute a procedures and protocol manual for their natural resources and heritage management department. This manual was shared with all Yukon First Nations, Yukon government departments and the Government of Canada.

Since 2009, Kwanlin Dun has received \$172,000 from the northern strategy trust to develop a generic framework for a Yukon First Nations settlement land management. This includes the following: analyzing the legislation and policies of First Nations who have developed and implemented their land management systems and building on lessons learned; analyzing the data system requirements for land and resource management; compiling existing data for all KDFN community land selections, including interpretations of parcel capacity; assembling data sets, including GIS files; compiling a photo inventory of KDFN land parcels; and creating a predictive ecosystem map, ecosystem plot descriptions, classifications and modelling.

This framework was shared with all Yukon First Nations, Yukon government departments, and the Government of Can-

ada. If the member opposite wants any information about the Yukon College initiative, we can certainly get a copy to her if she wants it.

Ms. Hanson: The only question I would have for the minister responsible for the Executive Council Office is with respect to the executive development program, because he mentioned that it was launched in 2007 with a commitment of \$1.05 million for 10 courses. My question to him is that that is five years — we're into the fifth, I guess. When I look at the actual and forecast expenditures, it's a bit up and down. Was this intended to be something that was a 10-year initiative or a five-year initiative? So where are we at with respect to the completion of the 10 courses and the remaining dollars?

Will that \$1.05 million be exhausted this year or when? I'll ask him that.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: There are three phases to that project. Phase 1 of the certificate included curriculum development and program delivery to Champagne and Aishihik First Nations employees. Approximately 30 percent of the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations staff have participated in the program to date. In 2010, phase 2 opened the program to include all Yukon First Nations. In the fall of 2011, phase 3 expanded to include Yukon government aboriginal employees through the Aboriginal Employees Forum. This provides ongoing professional development opportunities in support of Yukon's representative public service plan obligations within the agreements. There has been a great representation from 10 First Nations as well as CYFN. Course credits are transferable to a number of post-secondary institutions, including Simon Fraser, University of British Columbia, University of Victoria and University of Alberta. Project phases continue with further curriculum development and delivery into 2014. Ultimately, the program will be available to all governments and the general public.

In terms of the dollars, I can tell the member: 2007-08, \$83,000; 2008-09, \$162,000; 2009-10, \$185,000; 2010-11, \$160,000; 2011-12, \$237,000. The forecast for 2012-13 is \$146,000 and the forecast for 2013-14 is \$176,000.

Ms. Hanson: I would just ask the minister if he could clarify where that is then on the — those numbers don't correspond to anything I'm looking at on page 5-22. I am just curious and then we'll move on to something else. There is executive development program 107, 191, 135 and I don't see any of those corresponding to any of that. Maybe there's a rollout that I'm not aware of, or that isn't displayed in the budget documents.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: It is a bit confusing in that the total funding occurs in two different spots for northern strategies. I think the member opposite said she was on page 5-22. There's \$107,000 there and there's an additional \$40,000 that's just in the other vote of \$180,000 — \$40,000 is included in "Other". Under Governance Liaison and Capacity Development, there is a line on page 5-13. Page 5-13 has Other of \$180,000; \$40,000 of that plus the \$107,000 that you see on page 5-22 gives you — as we had mentioned before through this, this is federal money. It's transfer payments from Ottawa.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Chair: Order please. I thought you were done.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I'd just like to add that this is money that is transferred out for the work to be provided — just so we are clear on that.

Ms. Hanson: No, I understood the minister's comments with respect to the delivery and the mode of delivery. My comment had simply been that I think for future reference it might be helpful for display purposes if we could see where the funding for projects is so that we can actually make an assessment because that is part of what we are trying to do here, to determine what we are being asked to look at on behalf of everybody.

The next area would be helpful, if we could just touch on it briefly, because I realize that time flies when you are having fun. We are on the Development Assessment branch.

I noticed that when I go to the website for the Development Assessment branch that it has a statement there that — we all recall this one; we had to be there. There was a five-year review, dated 2007, and the website currently says as of this afternoon that it's scheduled to be completed by May 2008. So I did look sort of through the website, because I was curious, because I quite frankly hadn't paid much attention to the five-year review since I left that area. But if the minister could update this House on the status of the five-year review and when we might see it, if it's completed — when we might see it reflected in the departmental website.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: The Yukon government believes that the five-year review on the *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act*, YESAA, has been a very productive process with tangible outcomes. Officials of the three parties, which are Yukon government, CYFN and Canada, have reached agreement on a vast majority of the 76 recommendations put forward in the draft review report. The review has led to positive administrative and operational changes for the benefits of the overall process.

The parties have also identified mechanisms for working together toward other future improvements to the assessment process. I think that's what you were asking — where we were on it.

There are still some outstanding issues — very few. There has also been the commitment to create a YESAA forum to be able to look at things going forward, to continue to have that dialogue to see how we can continue to improve the process.

Ms. Hanson: It's ironic. The review has taken longer than the act was in effect before it began the review, so we have a five-year review of an act that wasn't even in place for five years before it began. I'm curious — so we don't really have an agreement or a review. The objectives I think were to come with — all parties were going to make whatever recommendations to whatever changes to process and I would hope not necessarily to the legislation. After all, it took, what, 10 years to get that legislation in effect.

So we have a list of outstanding issues and the commitment to a YESAA forum. Could the minister just explain who is the YESAA forum? What mandate does it have? From where does it derive that mandate?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: The forum would include all three: CYFN, Canada and the Yukon government. Senior officials are developing the terms of reference for a YESAA forum which would include an annual analysis and reporting on YESAA.

Ms. Hanson: My final question, I hope, on this: When are the terms of reference targeted to be completed? When would the first annual forum be held?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: My understanding is that this YESAA forum will occur sometime soon actually. The discussion and the forecast was to have it for late spring or early summer. I believe that the first one will occur in the near future. I don't have the exact date though.

Ms. Hanson: I promise this is the final question on this.

Are the terms of reference available and can the minister make them available to the Official Opposition, please?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I think I just said that senior officials are developing the terms of reference for the forum. If we are going to have a forum soon, I would assume that those terms of reference will be available, so I will inquire into them.

Ms. Hanson: I have some questions with respect to the Yukon Water Board. Again, under the Water Board Secretariat, which is housed in Executive Council Office, in reviewing the mandate of the Water Board, I noticed that section 8 of the regulations lists a whole series of water use fees.

That begged the question for me, since we're talking about a budget: How much does the Government of Yukon receive with respect to water use fees? Or what is the revenue for water use fees derived from section 8 of the regulations or the *Waters Act*?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Under revenues, the projection for 2012-13 is \$25,000.

Ms. Hanson: Is there any differentiation? The water fees that I saw there were 100 cubic metres, so is there any change for large-scale industrial use of water and water use fees?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I don't have that information. We can get that information for the member opposite.

Ms. Hanson: I appreciate the minister's undertaking to provide that information with respect to industrial use of water and any charges that might flow from that, since it's water.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Ms. Hanson: Yes, well, I know the Minister of Environment appreciates a little humour once and awhile.

The Water Board is really, to many people's relief, an independent quasi-judicial council. There has been some suggestion in some quarters — I'm curious as to whether the minister has thought about whether or not, from a Government of Yukon perspective, the Water Board should be resourced to conduct inspections, monitoring and ensure licences are being respected? Has there been any thought by this government to go that route, since it is the only independent and sort of quasi-judicial board of that nature?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I think we've sort of had this discussion already and the fact that inspectors under the Depart-

ment of Environment and inspectors under the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources do perform this task. They perform this task as obligated under the legislation and the regulations. They do that with the utmost professionalism and we certainly have all the confidence in their ability to fulfill their obligations.

Ms. Hanson: I can't find the section here, but I understand and realize that the Bureau of Statistics is one of the components of the Executive Council Office. My question for the minister sort of relates to the many hats he wears as the minister responsible for Executive Council Office as well as the Minister of Finance. When we look at the statistics with respect to population in the Yukon, my question for the minister is this: Which is definitive, the Bureau of Statistics population data or the health insurance plan data with respect to population?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I believe that both of those are forecasts. Really, the only true one is the census and with the census, as well, as we've discussed in this House, there is a bit of ambiguity as a result of the challenges we have of living in this very vast geographical space with a very limited population.

Certainly, if the member opposite is interested in finding out how the Bureau of Statistics moves forward and how they come up with their numbers, the member is certainly welcome to see what their methodology is.

Ms. Hanson: I raise this matter because I think it is a cost issue with the territorial government. I would appreciate if the minister opposite could tell me if the Bureau of Statistics numbers are the numbers used for the territorial formula financing agreement, or is it the health insurance plan numbers, or some other?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: The census numbers are used for calculation of TFF.

Ms. Hanson: Well, Madam Chair, the reason there is confusion — I will come back to it with the Minister of Health and Social Services because when I look at the Bureau of Statistics numbers, and then I look at what we're paying for under the health insurance plan, in terms of people who are accessing our programming, there is a significant difference, and that costs us every day. I will come back to that because we hear this data being used to talk about the growth in the territorial government.

It helps with planning for all sorts of different reasons. So it's important to be able to have a clear understanding of how many of us there are.

The Bureau of Statistics does do an amazing amount of work and the data they provide on so many fronts, as I mentioned, is invaluable for those from the private sector, for government policy people, and for NGOs to do planning. But a year or so ago, it was noted that the Bureau of Statistics dropped from its labour force survey the issue of the number of minimum wage workers. So this is similar to what we're seeing in Statistics Canada. We saw yesterday that 650 Statistics Canada people were let go from their jobs. We've seen over the last couple of years at the federal level the changing of data-gathering and the capacity to gather data. One of the challenges

we face is if we don't have the numbers, we can't just prove or disprove claims. And, most recently, it's like, well, nobody earns the minimum wage, as has been suggested by a particularly vocal member of our community.

So my question is how is the decision reached to drop this aspect of important data, in terms of dropping the issue of maintaining or knowing the number of minimum-wage earners — how is that done? Does the government basically have the ability through a letter of expectation — because we do this with other agencies? What's the mechanism of communicating to the bureau whether it should be studying one area or another area of particular interest to government?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I think quite clearly that those decisions do not occur at the political level. The government is not providing a policy statement. The experts in the field — the statisticians — are empowered to address the needs of Yukoners. In fact, if there has been a change in terms of their analysis and what they are analyzing, whether it is in rents or wherever they are going with their statistics, it is certainly not something that is a result of a policy of the government to decide whether or not they will look at how many people are earning minimum wage. So we certainly haven't gone there and have no intention of doing that.

Seeing the time, I move that we report progress.

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Pasloski that the Chair report progress. Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: I declare the motion carried.

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

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

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: I will call the House to order.

May the House have the 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 the *First Appropriation Act, 2012-13*, and directed me to report progress.

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

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

Point of personal privilege

Speaker: Member for Whitehorse Centre, on a point of privilege.

Ms. Hanson: I rise on a point of personal privilege. Earlier today in Question Period, the Member for Mayo-Tatchun and I asked questions of the Premier regarding his party's position on the Peel planning process. In those ques-

tions, we asserted that the government's eight principles on the Peel planning process released in 2012 were in fact authored in 2010.

This assertion was made in good faith, based on a government document we received in response to an access to information request. The Department of Energy, Mines and Resources recently informed us that the document we received contained a serious collation error. Specifically, the eight Peel principles should not have been attached to the preceding document dated February 2010. The Department of Energy, Mines and Resources has apologized for this mistake. Based on this new information, I wish to offer an unqualified apology to the Premier for the assertion we made that we now know to be wholly and unequivocally false.

We always attempt to conduct our business in this House in good faith. We accepted the accuracy of the government document we received and proceeded on that understanding. We sincerely regret this unfortunate situation. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Speaker: We have some other guests that I would like to introduce. Dwaine Froment, Pam London and Myron Doherty are here from Esri Canada doing a conference tomorrow with private and government GIS workers in an effort to improve our GIS capabilities across the Yukon, of which their company has noted on many occasions in the past that the Yukon GIS user community is leading quite often in the forefront of GIS applications and use. We are pleased to have them take some time today to stop by and visit.

Applause

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

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

Motion agreed to

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

The House adjourned at 5:22 p.m.