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HANSARD

Thursday, March 14, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Nils Clarke

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

2019 Spring Sitting

SPEAKER — Hon. Nils Clarke, MLA, Riverdale North
DEPUTY SPEAKER and CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Don Hutton, MLA, Mayo-Tatchun
DEPUTY CHAIR OF COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE — Ted Adel, MLA, Copperbelt North

CABINET MINISTERS

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PORTFOLIO
Hon. Sandy Silver	Klondike	Premier Minister of the Executive Council Office; Finance
Hon. Ranj Pillai	Porter Creek South	Deputy Premier Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources; Economic Development; Minister responsible for the Yukon Development Corporation and the Yukon Energy Corporation
Hon. Tracy-Anne McPhee	Riverdale South	Government House Leader Minister of Education; Justice
Hon. John Streicker	Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes	Minister of Community Services; Minister responsible for the French Language Services Directorate; Yukon Liquor Corporation and the Yukon Lottery Commission
Hon. Pauline Frost	Vuntut Gwitchin	Minister of Health and Social Services; Environment; Minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation
Hon. Richard Mostyn	Whitehorse West	Minister of Highways and Public Works; the Public Service Commission
Hon. Jeanie Dendys	Mountainview	Minister of Tourism and Culture; Minister responsible for the Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board; Women's Directorate

GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS

Yukon Liberal Party

Ted Adel	Copperbelt North
Paolo Gallina	Porter Creek Centre
Don Hutton	Mayo-Tatchun

OFFICIAL OPPOSITION

Yukon Party

Stacey Hassard	Leader of the Official Opposition Pelly-Nisutlin	Scott Kent	Official Opposition House Leader Copperbelt South
Brad Cathers	Lake Laberge	Patti McLeod	Watson Lake
Wade Istchenko	Kluane	Geraldine Van Bibber	Porter Creek North

THIRD PARTY

New Democratic Party

Liz Hanson	Leader of the Third Party Whitehorse Centre
Kate White	Third Party House Leader Takhini-Kopper King

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Deputy Clerk	Linda Kolody
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Sergeant-at-Arms	Karina Watson
Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms	Harris Cox
Hansard Administrator	Deana Lemke

**Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Thursday, March 14, 2019 — 1:00 p.m.**

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

Prayers

In remembrance of Ken McKinnon

Speaker: I would ask members to remain standing, as well as those in the gallery.

It is the Chair's unfortunate duty to inform the House of the passing of Ken McKinnon.

John Kenneth McKinnon served as Commissioner of Yukon from 1986 until 1995. He was also the MLA for Whitehorse North from 1961 to 1964 and again from 1967 to 1978.

During his time as an MLA, he also served on Yukon's Executive Committee from 1975 to 1978. There will be fulsome tributes to Mr. McKinnon in due course.

At this time, I would like to, on behalf of the House, extend our condolences to Mr. McKinnon's family and friends.

We will now observe a moment of silence.

Moment of silence observed

Withdrawal of motions

Speaker: The Chair wishes to inform the House of a change made to the Order Paper. Motion No. 419, notice of which was given by the Member for Takhini-Kopper King on March 13, 2019, was not placed on today's Notice Paper as the matter referred to in the motion was decided upon during consideration of Motion No. 251, which the House adopted as amended on March 14, 2018.

DAILY ROUTINE

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

Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mr. Silver: I would ask my colleagues to help me in welcoming to the gallery today — with Brian MacDonald from Executive Council Office, we do have Craig McKinnon here who is Ken's son. Our deepest condolences go to you and to your family, sir.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I would like to ask all of us to please welcome to the gallery from the City of Whitehorse, co-host of the 2020 Arctic Winter Games Mayor Dan Curtis, City Manager Linda Rapp, Dinah Lang and Myles Dolphin. We also have Jeff O'Farrell — though I think he might be here as part of the Arctic Winter Games Host Society. As well from the Arctic Winter Games Host Society, we have George Arcand, Lucy Coulthard, Nyla Klugie-Migwans,

Sophie Tremblay-Morissette, Jess Staffen, Meaghan Kimmitt, Danny Macdonald, Geneviève Doyon, Echo Ross, Lindsay Smith, Chris Teiman, Desiree Cook, Carolyn Moore, Moira Lassen, Tamika Knutson, Suzanne Greening and Eileen Melnychuk — if we could welcome them, please.

Applause

Ms. Hanson: I would ask my colleagues to join me in welcoming Justin Lemphers, President of the Yukon Federation of Labour and also an Arctic Winter Games alumnus.

Applause

Mr. Gallina: There are a few long-time friends and colleagues in the gallery today who have been introduced, but if members could join me in welcoming them: Echo Ross, George Arcand and Lucy Coulthard.

We have worked on many projects together, including Arctic Winter Games, the Canada Games and the Olympics. We've had a lot of games experience together, and it's very nice to see you. Welcome to the gallery today.

Applause

Speaker: Any there any further introductions of visitors?

Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In recognition of Arctic Winter Games 2020

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Let me begin with the number one — one year and one day. Tomorrow, we will officially have one year to go until the 2020 Arctic Winter Games and when they come back to Whitehorse. One year and one day to mark 50 years since the Arctic Winter Games began in 1970 and the seventh time Whitehorse will host this event. I'm sure I speak for all Yukoners when I say that we are thrilled to once again have this opportunity to invite the circumpolar world to our capital city.

From March 15 to 21, 2020, youth from across the circumpolar region, including our own Team Yukon, will gather in Whitehorse to compete against their peers and set personal bests, trade a ton of pins and make friendships that will last a lifetime.

In all, we expect about 2,000 athletes to come to Whitehorse to compete in 21 sports — 2,000 strivers, achievers and dreamers. For these five days, cultural contingents from Alaska to Greenland to Nunavik will also perform, sharing their vibrant cultures with each other.

Truly, there is nothing quite like the Arctic Winter Games, which have such a positive impact on our territory's young people, families and communities and on the young people, families and communities of our circumpolar neighbours.

In 2020, for the first time ever, the Government of Yukon will proudly co-host the games alongside our wonderful partner, the City of Whitehorse.

We are also extremely proud of the time and effort that the 2020 Arctic Winter Games Host Society has put into planning for this event so far. As I am sure you can imagine, it takes a lot of work to make this kind of event happen, and I hope that all Yukoners come out to volunteer and cheer.

With one year and one day to go, the countdown is now on. We think we will have nearly 2,000 volunteers. A shout-out to the Arctic Winter Games Host Society, who has done so much already. Last week, they hosted the international committee and team chefs de mission touring the venues and they announced the mascot, Dach'aw the porcupine, drawn by young Owen McDonald. If you heard him on the radio — Dach'aw is going to be fierce, but not too fierce.

Today they launched the new theme song, *Bring it North*. It is amazing, by the way — I got to hear it this morning and I'm sure all Yukoners will enjoy it. So I encourage all Yukoners to check out the host society's website and find out more about the new video and all the ways we can get involved.

By the way, today we also announced the Arctic Winter Games ambassador, and it is going to be Ms. Jeane Lassen. I am sure every MLA here will get involved in the games. In the meantime, I will count down the days to go until the 2020 opening ceremonies.

Mr. Speaker, in the words of Mr. Ken McKinnon 50 years ago — an athlete with a passion for sport and the first president of the international committee, with a contagious spirit — and I quote: “The first Games is only the beginning of a great concept which will grow to include northern peoples from around the top of the world. It is to this end we look forward as the second Arctic Winter Games is staged in Whitehorse Yukon Territory in March, 1972.”

Applause

Ms. Van Bibber: I rise today on behalf of the Yukon Party Official Opposition to recognize the upcoming 2020 Arctic Winter Games — one year to go.

Next year, from March 15 to 21, a reported 2,000 athletes made up of nine contingents participating in 21 sports will descend upon Whitehorse. We will see athletes compete from across the circumpolar world. It is such an exciting experience for most of these athletes. We look forward to our community having the chance to host the games again.

While giving a tribute to an event that has yet to occur may appear to be an unusual concept, we see it as an opportunity to draw attention to an exciting and invaluable sporting competition in the north.

On this day — only it was a Saturday, March 14, 1970 — according to the *Ulu News*, the day was super warm — above 20 above zero — and the big dignitaries at the opening ceremony was Prime Minister Trudeau — Pierre Elliott — along with the territorial commissioners and a lot of politicians — and, oh yes, the athletes from the Northwest Territories, Alaska and Yukon.

As was mentioned, the first president of the Arctic Winter Games was Ken McKinnon and today, it is with great sadness that we give our condolences to his family. We recognize one

of his many contributions to the Yukon and the north was through sports.

I would also like to recognize another great Yukon athlete, my brother Chester Kelly. He went to his first Arctic Winter Games in 1974 and attended 10 games after that. Chester won 22 ulus of various colours participating in snowshoeing and, in the last few years, in snowshoe biathlon. He was one of the many who gave his all for his territory.

I would like to mention that there's a Business After Hours taking place this evening at Sports Experts to launch the new merchandise and retail space for the upcoming games. It's Saturday, March 16. Volunteer signup begins at the Canada Games Centre. There are so many opportunities for Yukoners to become involved with the games throughout this coming year and through the games. With such an undertaking, there will be no shortage of things to get done and no better time to start thinking about it.

Come on out and see what opportunities are available to you. There will be opportunities to help plan, welcome athletes and guests, and of course, to cheer on our Yukon team. As you can see, we already have the pins so we can start trading.

Together, let's make this one of the greatest Arctic Winter Games since 1970.

Applause

Ms. White: A year from now, the City of Whitehorse will grow by thousands as Yukon hosts the 26th Arctic Winter Games. Since the first games were hosted in Yellowknife in 1970 and then hosted in Whitehorse the first time in 1972, things sure have changed. Just the other day, volunteer organizers and staff from across the circumpolar north inspected Whitehorse's available space to be sure that the plans one had in mind are the plans that will be feasible in said space. They checked out everything from athlete accommodation to sport locations and millions of little things in between.

Imagine taking down, moving, sorting, storing and setting up hundreds of bunk beds, securing mattresses, bedding and everything required for successful accommodations, planning daily events in multiple locations, all with connectivity in mind, to trying to put oneself in the mind of a teenager in 2020 to figure out what downtime activities will be well-received. I can say that, in 1992, karaoke was a very big hit.

These examples don't even begin to reflect the hundreds of hours of meetings that have already happened or the hundreds yet to come. They don't highlight the expert use of schedules, Excel spreadsheets or the ability to multi-task as deadline after deadline comes and goes.

To all of you who have taken to the task of making the 26th Arctic Winter Games in Whitehorse — the seventh time hosting this event — the most memorable possible, we salute you.

Applause

In recognition of Pi Day

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I have the pleasure of delivering two tributes today. This tribute is on behalf of all 3.14 parties. Two tributes — 2 being, of course, the only even prime number. The rest are odd, like those of us who love math — well, not odd, really, but certainly fond of the irrational, like pi — irrational like the golden ratio or the square root of 2, which was the first irrational number discovered by Hippasus in the fifth century BC. Apparently after he discovered it, Hippasus' rational colleagues decided to drown him at sea as punishment for the heresy of a number that just went on and on. Clearly they were not used to political discourse, Mr. Speaker.

3.14159 — both my parents taught math, so this tribute goes out to my sister and brothers and to all those who promote numeracy here in this Legislature and beyond, including the one person I forgot to introduce: Mr. Tim Green, a fellow engineer.

Over the centuries, mathletes, numerophiles and self-described geeks have united — or for the dyslexic, math geeks have untied — discovering the beauty of math, a beauty that melts the boundaries of music, nature and poetry.

3.14159265 — in his poem entitled *Pi*, Wisława Szymborska wrote — and I quote:

The pageant of digits comprising the number pi
doesn't stop at the page's edge.

It goes on across the table, through the air,
over a wall, a leaf, a bird's nest, clouds, straight into the sky,

through all the bottomless, bloated heavens.

Oh how brief — a mouse tail, a pigtail — is the tail of a comet!

How feeble the star's ray, bent by bumping up against space!

While here we have my phone number — it turns out, Mr. Speaker, that as pi goes on and on, eventually you can find your own phone number in the sequence of digits 3.14159265358. I put every one of our MLA business phone numbers into a pi search engine just for the fun of it last night. It turns out that the phone number of the Member for Porter Creek Centre is the first to be found, at 581,581 digits in. The Member for Lake Laberge's office number is next. My phone number appears last, a little shy of 29 million digits in, although it does appear another 22 times in the next 170 million digits or so.

Math, the foundation of philosophy, the chaos of a butterfly, the elegance of fractals, the power of zero, the loneliness of one, the limitlessness of infinity — all tucked neatly into my bicycle, twice the length of the spokes' intention over the circumference of the rim in compression. 3.14, Mr. Speaker — and the geek goes on and the geek goes on.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Mr. Cathers: Mr. Speaker, I have for tabling today a letter addressed to the Minister of Justice from me, dated February 4, 2019, regarding policing priorities.

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

Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill No. 32: *Act to Amend the Securities Act — Introduction and First Reading*

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Mr. Speaker, I move that Bill No. 32, entitled *Act to Amend the Securities Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Speaker: It has been moved by the Minister of Community Services that Bill No. 32, entitled *Act to Amend the Securities Act*, be now introduced and read a first time.

Motion for introduction and first reading of Bill No. 32 agreed to

Speaker: Are there any further bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motions?

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

Mr. Istchenko: I rise to give notice of the following motion for the production of papers:

THAT this House do issue an order for the return of the Yukon government's traffic study and functional plan for the north Alaska Highway.

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

THAT this House urges the Premier of Yukon to demonstrate this government's commitment to protecting all Yukon workers by attending the April 28 National Day of Mourning Ceremony, a day established by Parliament in 1991 to remember and honour those lives lost or those injured in a workplace tragedy and to reaffirm the Yukon government's commitment to improve workplace health and safety across Yukon and to prevent further injuries, illnesses and death.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to update the legislative regime for animal protection and dog control by amending the *Animal Protection Act*.

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

THAT this House urges the Liberal government to revise their spending plans to focus on the needs and priorities of Yukon citizens by taking actions including:

(1) cancelling the \$255,000 increase to the Cabinet office budget;

- (2) cancelling the Premier's raise;
- (3) working with non-governmental organizations funded by the Department of Health and Social Services to determine their needs, and enter into multi-year agreements that appropriately address their current needs; and
- (4) increasing base O&M funding for the Yukon Hospital Corporation, which appears to be growing at less than the rate of inflation again in the 2019-20 fiscal year after funding for new initiatives such as increases for cataract surgery and ophthalmology are removed from the total amount of this line item.

Speaker: Are there any further notices of motions?
Is there a statement by a minister?

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Yukon Housing Corporation fixed-income housing project

Hon. Ms. Frost: Mr. Speaker, we are all well aware of the growing demand for subsidized and affordable housing in Whitehorse. We remain committed to supporting those individuals and families most in need of affordable and safe places they can call home. Our government recognizes that we can maximize how we use existing land owned by Yukon Housing Corporation in order to help more Yukoners in need. That is why today I am pleased to announce that this year, Yukon Housing Corporation will be initiating work toward the development of a multi-unit fixed-income housing project. This will be the first project of its kind in the Yukon.

Fixed-income housing has a diverse tenant base with different income levels and is designed to provide tenants with stability and security, enabling tenants to set down roots and build community. As the minister responsible for Yukon Housing Corporation, I have a clear mandate to increase affordable housing options for Yukoners, and this project directly supports that objective. The location of this proposed development is at 4th Avenue and Jeckell Street in downtown Whitehorse. This lot occupies a prominent position at the south end of town overlooking the Yukon River and is ideally suited to support an expanded and purpose-built social and market housing development.

We have earmarked a total of \$18 million for this project, which includes planning, design and construction of the new building beginning in the spring of 2020. This will mark our Liberal government's most significant investment in housing since taking office. The 4th Avenue and Jeckell Street site will be able to support up to 48 units, depending on the project design and layout. Our plan is to issue a contract for the functional planning and design aspect of the project this coming year. As part of this initiative, we will fully engage our housing partners and stakeholders, the local neighbourhoods and the City of Whitehorse to ensure that this project addresses the needs of the community.

This engagement will also inform more specific project details in terms of the number and types of units and overall project budget as well as future targeted client groups and potential accessibility features.

Mr. Speaker, safe, adequate housing that meets the needs of Yukon families and individuals, particularly vulnerable populations, is a priority of our government and is a key component of healthy communities. This project will support Yukon's economy, generate construction jobs and contribute to addressing the housing shortages in Whitehorse.

Ms. Van Bibber: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to respond.

Mr. Speaker, the first line of the minister's statement says — and I quote: "We are well aware of the growing demand for subsidized and affordable housing in Whitehorse."

She is absolutely correct, but she has forgotten that there is also a growing demand in the rest of the territory besides Whitehorse.

The wait-list for social and senior housing was 105 people in 2016. It has now risen to 270. For the last two and a half years, the wait-list for housing has grown by 157 percent.

The minister's indecision and lack of action has contributed to a housing market where the average price for a home is completely unaffordable for a first-time homebuyer. Her government's carbon tax scheme is also going to increase the price of house construction, making housing even more unaffordable.

It is good that she seems to finally be taking this issue seriously, but I would like to know what analysis she did to suggest that this was the most effective way to spend \$18 million in addressing housing in Whitehorse. I note that even today's announcement says that work isn't set to begin for another full year. Is that work which is going to start in a year the planning, the designing or the building?

Knowing this government's inability to meet project deadlines, this development might not even be done by next election — more delays, Mr. Speaker. Even today's announcement that the minister made with the federal government — that funding is spread over 10 years. We might go through two more prime ministers before we even see all that money.

The minister needs to stop delaying and take more action today to address the wait-list for social and senior housing that has grown from 105 in 2016 to 270 this year.

Ms. White: Mr. Speaker, just before I start, I am seeking clarification on if the minister meant "fixed-income" housing or "mixed-income" housing. I say this because my response is about mixed-income housing, as that is what the statement was. If I am wrong, I am responding to what I thought it was.

I have been incredibly lucky in my time here to have a seniors residence in my riding and the ability to have relationships with an entire building of grandparents. The one thing that many of them have told me over and over is how they wish they were able to live in intergenerational housing. They wish that there were kids around and that it would feel less like the last stop. We appreciate the concept of mixed-income housing, but we encourage the corporation to consider

the value of allowing, or even encouraging, the mix of ages as well.

We know that this government has talked of reasonably priced housing and that we have the lowest unemployment number to date. What isn't discussed is that 30 percent of income earners in Whitehorse earn less than \$30,000 a year. Also rarely mentioned is that the median rent currently sits at \$1,000 a month. Whitehorse currently has a vacancy of 2.9 percent, when all of the statistics say that a healthy vacancy rate generally sits between five and eight percent. Rental accommodations are desperately needed across the spectrum.

We acknowledge that up to 48 new units will be a welcome addition to the rental housing stock in Whitehorse, but it is a drop in the bucket of need. This announcement doesn't begin to address the needs of rental units in communities.

Hon. Ms. Frost: For clarity, the development is looking at a multi-unit faceted facility that looks at a mixed income — addressing generational gaps.

I want to just highlight some of the successes over the years. I think this is a positive story. It is a positive effort to address some of the barriers that we have seen in housing and the continuum of housing.

The Member for Porter Creek North made some comments — a growing demand on the rest of the Yukon and certainly looking at rural Yukon as a key partner and looking at all of our partnerships across the Yukon. We are addressing the wait-lists that we have before us. We have integrated the comments and supports from the various aging populations and the summits that we have had with our seniors — I'm really pleased about that — and also with the housing action plan and the implementation of that and the great work of Yukon in participating and designing a model for Yukon.

Our project on 4th Avenue is part of our work to modernize our approach to social housing. Initiatives such as this directly increase our housing stocks. This development is part of the suite of solutions that we are bringing forward to assist in meeting the housing demands in our territory after many years of neglect.

We have made affordable housing a priority. In the past year alone, our investments in Yukon Housing programs are supporting development commitments of over 400 homes under programs such as the municipality matching grant, rental construction grants, the housing initiative fund, affordable housing programs, First Nation partnerships, rental and secondary suite loans, home ownership loans and other related programs.

We're also addressing housing needs through an increase in rent supplements, our Housing First initiative, funding for a Safe at Home implementation coordinator or manager to act as an access navigator, as well as renovating existing stock. Partnerships are also an important part of our approach to developing affordable housing options.

Through our First Nation housing partnerships, we have been working with First Nations to invest in renovations and new construction of First Nation housing. We also have a

range of partners that we are working with to implement the housing action plan for Yukon. Earlier today, I signed a 10-year agreement with the Government of Canada under the national housing strategy that will invest nearly \$60 million to protect, renew and expand social housing and support Yukon's priorities related to housing repair, construction and affordability.

This new mixed-income housing project is consistent with the goals and objectives of the housing action plan that Yukoners participated in, which guides many of our housing decisions and our work across the Yukon and across the housing continuum. Mixed-income housing will be a new form of affordable community housing offered by the Yukon Housing Corporation. As I said, mixed-income rental units will provide tenants with stability and security, enabling them to set down their roots. In this manner, the project is more financially suitable and aligned with the direction that affordable housing is headed under this national strategy. I'm proud about the investment, I'm really pleased with our partnerships and I look forward to more considerations across the Yukon, in particular, input from Yukon communities.

Speaker: This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Government staffing

Mr. Hassard: In October, the Premier told this Legislature that the Liberals have added 499 FTEs. Last week, the Premier told this Legislature that he was adding an additional 160 new FTEs, and those numbers came straight from the Premier. Those numbers add up to 659 FTEs. This week, the Premier suggested that those numbers were incorrect, even though those numbers came from him.

Yukoners deserve accurate information from all of their elected members. MLAs are their communities' voices in the Legislative Assembly, and when they use their time in the House to spread inaccurate information, that is a real disappointment for Yukoners.

We have heard this narrative from the Liberals before. Consistently, the Liberals have a constant stream of incorrect information.

Mr. Speaker, did the Premier give this House incorrect numbers? If he did, will he apologize for misleading this House?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I appreciate the question from the member opposite. I appreciate him using my words as well.

I do want to make sure Yukoners are not misled, so I will stick to the facts. Since taking office, there has been an increase of 295.9 FTE positions. This information is available through the Yukon Bureau of Statistics. These are actual numbers spanning the calendar years of 2016 to 2018.

We project 160 FTEs will be hired this year, primarily to support Health and Social Services, and have included these positions in the 2019-20 main estimates.

If all of these positions are hired, the total growth to FTEs by the end of the fiscal year that we are just beginning would be over 450 — complete. The government provides services

needed by Yukoners, and demands for many services are increasing, especially as the population grows.

That is a different number from what you would hear from the Yukon Party, which said that we are growing government in the same time frame by 659 new FTEs.

I agree with the member opposite that Yukoners do need to have the facts. The facts here are coming from the mains and also coming from the Bureau of Statistics. These are the facts; these are the correct numbers.

Mr. Hassard: Mr. Speaker, this Premier and his government are developing a reputation of saying one thing in the House and then, when that information is used against them, they claim that it never happened.

We saw the leaked Management Board memo. Despite the media having copies of it, the Premier stuck his head in the sand and pretended it didn't exist. We saw it with the leaked Cabinet agenda. If it doesn't align with his narrative, the Premier claims "fake news".

In October, the Premier stood here in this Legislature and said that his government was adding 499 FTEs. Last week, he said he was adding an additional 160. Mr. Speaker, that is 659 FTEs.

Yukoners get their information from the Premier, and he has an obligation to share accurate information. If that information changes, then he has to let people know.

Will the Premier tell us if the information he gave us before was accurate or if something has changed, why did he not update it?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Mr. Speaker, in 2017, 183.8 FTEs were added. In 2018, 112.1 FTEs were added. Planned FTEs are projections for hire for the next fiscal year. They should not be confused with statistics provided by the Public Service Commission, which reports on the numbers of employees and the number of actual hours worked by Yukon government employees.

These FTEs provide support for Yukoners directly — for many new positions that are on the short term and on the long term. Many of these new positions are short term or recoverable from other governments. The large increase definitely relates to short-term needs in Health and Social Services — some really important positions.

Again, Mr. Speaker, we are telling exactly what the facts are. The Yukon Bureau of Statistics — 295.9 positions to date. This year we are projecting 160 FTEs — we can't be any clearer than that. The members opposite can try their best to make it seem like something is happening that's not, but it's the Yukon Party that has been spreading incorrect information by a plethora of different items, and we are here to correct the record on a regular basis.

Mr. Hassard: I think the Premier seems to have forgotten that we actually record what is said here in this Assembly. Yukoners expect the Premier to come prepared to this House and share accurate information. It's incumbent upon him to get properly briefed on his files, understand them and bring correct information to the floor of this House. If the Premier shares inaccurate information, he needs to update it.

Considering that the Premier has now told us that the information he shared on FTEs was apparently false, how can Yukoners trust anything he tells them, Mr. Speaker?

Hon. Mr. Silver: The member opposite only listens and hears what he wants to hear. Again, planned FTEs are projections of hires for the next fiscal year; they are planned. The member opposite can make it seem like one thing is happening when other things are truly in the notes, coming out of my mouth. Here are the facts. In 2017, 183.8 FTEs were added — fact. Also fact — in 2018, 112.1 FTEs were added. That's a fact.

Mr. Speaker, this year we are projecting 160 FTEs. I don't know how much clearer I can be than that. Those numbers do not add up to what the Yukon Party would have you believe, which is 659.

We have this many so far — 295.5 FTEs since we took office — but again, we are forecasting — we are projecting — that 160 FTEs will be hired this year, primarily to support Health and Social Services with the finishing of the Whistle Bend continuing care facility.

I guess I would ask the member opposite which of these jobs he wouldn't want to see going forward, but we believe that these are important positions. We have included these positions in the 2019-20 main estimates out there in the public for anybody who wants to get the straight facts coming from the mains and from the discussion here in Hansard.

Question re: Mining sector development

Mr. Kent: On November 15, 2018, the Liberals sent out a news release stating that 2018 exploration expenditures were \$142.6 million. Four days later, on November 19, the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources made a presentation to the Geoscience Forum where they stated that exploration expenditures for 2018 were actually \$114.6 million. A \$28-million drop in exploration expenditures in just four days seems pretty large.

As you know, Mr. Speaker, Yukoners deserve accurate information from their elected members. So can the minister explain why there was such a large discrepancy between what he reported and then what his department told the Geoscience Forum just four days later?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Our exploration expenditure numbers and appraisal numbers are normally provided through the federal government — through NRCan. They are updated throughout the year.

In November of this year, we were provided with numbers that would come — we would get the final balance at the end of the season. As I remember it, the morning when I presented — at that particular point, we had our newest numbers from NRCan. I presented those numbers. I also said that we would get final numbers during the last quarter of the fiscal year, which we did.

We had, at that point, \$249 million. That was the number for expenditures. They came back at the end of the year and told us that we were at \$220 million. That actually was with capital expenditures added in. It was about \$183 million. We always will present the numbers that we get from NRCan, just

as the member opposite did when he was in this role. If there was a change in those, we would present those. There is no difference in practice. We have reached out to NRCan as well to say, “Could you please tell us why there was such a discrepancy?” That is a good question.

Mr. Kent: As I said, the minister issued a press release on the Thursday before the Geoscience Forum stating that the exploration numbers for 2018 were \$142.6 million. On Monday, four days later, his department told the Geoscience Forum that the exploration numbers for 2018 were actually \$114.6 million. Can the minister confirm why the estimates for exploration expenditures in Yukon during 2018 dropped so significantly?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: Once again, there are a tremendous number of presentations that take place — this year, very busy, with the most individuals ever attending the Geoscience Forum, with over 700 attendees. Great advice from the member — I will reach out to see if it was the Yukon Geological Survey, some within minerals — in which particular area there might have been a discrepancy. What we continue to see — and what’s not being said — is that you had the third best season in the history of the Yukon for spending, but we still have a problem with it. One company has changed their investment strategy, but things are really bad.

I think everybody can see through what is happening here. Essentially, there might have been one number that was tabled — I will talk to our staff. As the member opposite knows, our staff are exceptional individuals who work within the department. They provide me with my data. I have full confidence — whether it is in Yukon Geological Survey minerals branch — key people and most of the same people whom the Member for Copperbelt South worked with. We all know that they are fantastic, and they are top of the game in this country in what they do. That is where I get my information. If there was a small discrepancy, I will look into it. Other than that, I just want to commend them and all the work they did this year and in the season that we have had.

Mr. Kent: It was that \$28-million difference that the minister reported on Thursday and then was contradicted by his own officials in a presentation to the Geoscience Forum on Monday. It is quite significant, and we are obviously concerned with the drop in exploration expenditures from the NRCan estimates to what the minister’s own officials were presenting.

While we were at the Mineral Exploration Roundup Conference in Vancouver earlier this year, we heard from a lot of companies that they are frustrated with this government and its lack of action on the mining file. In the face of exploration numbers that appear to be going down, can the minister tell us what additional measures he is taking this year to support exploration for the upcoming season?

Hon. Mr. Silver: We have heard this a couple times from the members opposite: “We’ve heard a guy...” or “Somebody down in Vancouver told us something, and now we are concerned.” This is interesting from a party that said the numbers do not matter, and we would like to look at the

F.H. Collins numbers from back in the member opposite’s tenure as to how far off those discrepancies were.

We are focusing on building a strong economy, and the Minister of Economic Development and of Energy, Mines and Resources is absolutely at the forefront of these efforts. We are focusing on bringing more renewable energy onto our electric grid, and it is the same minister who is leading the way.

These are the priorities that we were elected on, and these are the ones that we are delivering on.

Mr. Speaker, the Yukon has the lowest unemployment rate anywhere in Canada. Our economy is firing on all cylinders. We saw near record numbers of mineral exploration in 2018. We saw the new independent power policy finally getting across the line, and we saw the Yukon Resource Gateway project and the Peel land use project proceeding as well — all of these happening under the leadership of the MLA for Porter Creek South and Deputy Premier. He is focused on results, as are his colleagues.

Question re: Mine closure security

Ms. Hanson: Last fall, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources announced that ownership of the Wolverine mine had changed hands. At the time, the minister indicated that his department would begin discussions with the new owner to ensure that they are in compliance with the quartz mining licence and to pressure them to fulfill their mine security obligations.

Wolverine mine has been in temporary closure for four years now. The Government of Yukon is currently overseeing the care and maintenance along with the construction and set-up of a water treatment system.

Can the minister confirm when he or his officials met with representatives of Wolverine mine’s new owners?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: The Government of Yukon is currently taking action at the Wolverine mine site to address urgent works concerning water management. These activities are being undertaken to ensure the protection of the surrounding environment and the public. The Government of Yukon completed repairs to the tailings storage facility liner in December 2018 and is installing the treatment system to manage the water from the underground mine. The Yukon Zinc Corporation continues to staff the site for ongoing care and maintenance purposes, and the company is cooperating with the Government of Yukon. We continue to closely monitor company activities and inspect the site regularly through our Compliance Monitoring and Inspection branch.

I did have the opportunity to sit with the new ownership group at the Mineral Exploration Roundup in Vancouver in January this year with our staff and our team from Energy, Mines and Resources and brought forward the concerns of all Yukoners to the ownership group and the new owners, who had representation from the previous ownership group. We talked about what the lasting effect has been from not just the mine site but to our business community and let them know that we will push to make sure that this is taken care of and the dollars that should be put in place are put in place.

Ms. Hanson: It is good to know that there has been a meeting because a quick background check of the mine owner and their state-owned partners reveals no evidence that either corporation has any experience owning, operating or developing a mine. With its purchase of the mine, Wolverine's new owner has inherited a host of responsibilities — some of them just outlined. Financial and regulatory issues require their immediate attention. We are not attempting to disparage the track record of the new owners. Rather, we are concerned that, without adequate oversight and assurances from the new owner, we could see another repeat of the Yukon Zinc debacle and another four years of government care and maintenance as negotiations are ongoing.

What assurances has this government received from Wolverine's new owners that they will pay the entirety of the outstanding security payments and assume their responsibility when it comes to environmental reporting and monitoring?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: I must say that I am pretty much in complete agreement with the Leader of the Third Party.

Upon this acquisition being completed and these individuals coming to meet with us, those are the concerns. I think I owe it to the Legislative Assembly to share a bit of that dialogue that we had with our officials. Really, that was centred around the fact that I was respectful, as she said we should be, but also the fact that there didn't seem to be a long track record or legacy of running mines. This is not just about opening and running a mine; it's about going into one that has a very difficult situation to deal with.

I have asked our team to ensure that we know and can use all the tools available to us to ensure that the deficit that is in place — the company is required of course to post almost \$25 million in security that was not in place — and that we make sure that the individuals move to cooperate.

I will say that I will look to take the necessary means to protect Yukoners and the Yukon environment as we go through this process.

Ms. Hanson: When the Wolverine mine closed, it was revealed that the government of the day had allowed them to operate without making a number of security payments. The result was that the Yukon government was left on the hook with unpaid environmental liabilities. It does appear that this government doesn't want to repeat the mistakes of the past, but the Wolverine mine has been in temporary closure, as we said, for four years, with constantly shifting conditions on the ground.

In response to a request regarding the adequacy of the Wolverine mine's security last October, the minister stated — and I quote: "First of all, what we're going to do is we're going to get the right number of what it takes to clean this up. Certainly, we don't have that number. There were millions and millions of dollars that were not calculated."

The minister just indicated that they have \$25 million outstanding from the previous estimate.

Can the minister inform this House whether or not a new calculation has taken place? If it has, will the current estimate of \$35 million in security be sufficient to remediate the current and future liabilities of this site?

Hon. Mr. Pillai: A good question from the MLA for Whitehorse Centre. The payment of this additional security of course is a very serious matter for the Government of Yukon. As I always want to state again, we are exploring all options available to ensure the security is provided.

The Government of Yukon has retained PricewaterhouseCoopers to conduct a review of the determination of security for reclamation and closure of the Wolverine mine to ensure that the legislation and policy framework for determining security was properly implemented and to make recommendations on potential improvements to that framework.

The review is expected to be finalized in the near future. I will make a commitment to the Leader of the Third Party that I will go back to the officials. I will reach out tomorrow and I will try to get a time frame on when we can have a discussion around that report.

Thank you for your questions.

Question re: Fish and wildlife population management

Ms. White: On March 2, the Yukon chapter of the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society released an excellent and detailed report, entitled: *Safeguarding Our Ecological Identity: Why the Yukon needs laws that protect species at risk*.

The following week, the Minister of Environment responded in the media by saying — and I quote: "... the Yukon Government is currently working to develop a Yukon Species at Risk Act. This work includes preliminary research and discussions with partners, stakeholders and the public to work toward implementing legislation."

Mr. Speaker, who are these stakeholders, and when and how will the public be engaged in discussions around species at risk legislation?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I would be happy to provide the member opposite with the list. I don't have it in front of me, but I would be happy to provide that list of contacts from the department to the member opposite.

Ms. White: Mr. Speaker, I look forward to that list.

In 1996, this government, along with every jurisdiction in Canada, signed on to the *Accord for the Protection of Species at Risk*. The federal *Species at Risk Act* was then adopted in 2002.

When the Yukon government signed this accord, it agreed to work toward a national approach for protecting species at risk, with the goal of preventing species of Canada from becoming extinct as a consequence of human activity. In 2009, the Department of Environment actually drafted species at risk legislation, yet here we are 10 years later without our own species at risk act.

Mr. Speaker, why does this government continue to discredit work done by professional public servants and external stakeholders and act as though all the work done prior to the 2016 election has no merit?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I would like to assure the member opposite that the Yukon has committed — and is committed

— to working on species at risk regulations in the future. What we do have before us are the means and measures with which to address the concerns that are brought before us. We work with the tools that are available to us with our Yukon Fish and Wildlife Management Board, with our renewable resources councils and with our community partners in addressing the concerns that are brought before us, and we will continue to do that as we evolve as a territory, also recognizing that we have federal regulations that govern particular areas in the Yukon. We're making enhanced areas of protection under the Peel land use process for boreal caribou, and that's defined through a process.

So we are open to addressing the concerns that are brought to our attention and we will continue to work toward a process in the future.

Ms. White: Daily we witness the increasing impacts of climate change on our environment and our wildlife, and still we wait. We know that there are species in Yukon whose numbers are declining, and some species are close to disappearing. This government talks about preliminary research, discussions with stakeholders and the public.

Mr. Speaker, it appears we're no further ahead than when the Yukon government signed the accord in 1996. Yukon government has had 17 years to do studies, to gather baseline information and to consult with Yukoners and stakeholders. We had draft legislation 10 years ago.

Mr. Speaker, when will we see species at risk legislation come before this House?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I'm not at this point going to commit to a timeline, but I will say that we are working toward addressing a specific act for the Yukon. We are working with the tools that we have currently. I'm happy to say that we are doing that with our partners.

Question re: School bus service

Mr. Cathers: Mr. Speaker, over the winter, the government announced that they were increasing fines for people illegally passing school buses, which is news we welcome because parents — including people in my riding — have been asking for increased penalties when people are illegally passing school buses. So we do thank the government for doing that.

Last fall, the ministers will recall that there was a study on the dangers of a lack of seatbelts on school buses. Afterward, the government voted in favour of a Yukon Party motion to begin meeting with stakeholders to assess school bus safety with respect to seatbelts and whether they should be mandatory on school buses.

What has the government done to follow up on this review?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I want to start this afternoon by saying that our children and youth are our greatest assets and are the future of our territory. Their safety and well-being are of primary importance to this government and should be for all Yukoners. We have taken strong action on school bus safety, including increasing fines for passing school buses, which the member noted, and also running a territory-wide

awareness campaign to remind drivers that we must all work to keep children and bus drivers safe, as well as other motor vehicles on the road.

Many members in this Legislature, and the public itself, will see the pamphlets that we also put out to announce the campaign that is going on. We have taken action in the *Motor Vehicles Act* to amend that act and make sure that the fines are higher. I was recently in Montreal with the transport ministers from across the country and spoke about safety on our roads, school bus safety and about seatbelts. I know Minister Garneau federally is a big advocate of putting seatbelts inside our school buses, and I am taking that under advisement. We're working together on a national task force to look at that issue and see how and when we can implement that. I think it's a very good initiative, and we're fully in support.

Mr. Cathers: I do appreciate that the government is looking at that, but there were a lot of words in the minister's response, and they all sounded like this is going to take awhile. I would note that parents are bringing this up as a matter of some urgency, and I would encourage the government to take it seriously in that regard.

When the government agreed to the Yukon Party motion last fall, they committed at the time to also review emergency procedures related to school buses. Of course, every parent wants their children to be safe and arrive in one piece when they get on our school buses as well as when they're waiting for the bus, so reviewing emergency procedures for school buses is another important action that needs to be taken to ensure that we're providing the best for Yukoners and for Yukon children.

Can the government update us on where the review of emergency procedures with respect to school buses is?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: I have to open by taking issue with the preamble. It suggested that we were not acting promptly on this matter, and I think that's absolutely not true. I think we have quite frankly seen the results of the decisive action that this government has taken to act on school bus safety.

Three government ministers have been on the radio — some numerous times — to add our voices of concern to this conversation. We are currently working on a new *Motor Vehicles Act*. The current act is woefully inadequate. I have said that publicly; I'll do it again. We're working very hard to fix that — to increase the fines. We have increased the fines for distracted driving. We have increased the fines for passing school buses negligently. We have increased the fines for speeding in the territory. We have done this work very quickly and decisively.

The people of the territory have a right to be driving on safe roads. We want to encourage all Yukon drivers to be mindful of the rules and to follow the rules when they're driving on Yukon streets to keep our children and bus drivers safe.

Mr. Cathers: Each year, the Minister of Justice sets the policing priorities for the RCMP. What is concerning is that this minister actually dropped references to school bus safety that had been in the letter from the current letter that's in place.

Earlier today, I tabled a copy of my February 4 letter to the Minister of Justice asking her to reinstate references to school bus safety in the letter and to add specific references to safety and enforcement in school zones and around school buses to the policing priorities that this government sets for the RCMP.

Another aspect of school bus and road safety that we have suggested and have heard from parents is the addition of rear-view and dash cams on buses. Is this an area that the government is looking at? Are there actually timelines for the government acting in this area, or is this another thing, like the *Motor Vehicles Act*, that appears to be on the slow road to completion?

Hon. Mr. Mostyn: We are a government that is taking decisive action on many, many fronts to improve the lives of Yukoners, to improve the safety of Yukoners, to improve the wealth and opportunities for Yukoners, to make our communities safer and to make them happier. We have a whole array of issues and initiatives that we have undertaken. The member opposite sits there and criticizes us for doing nothing. We have seen the record of inaction, and we are taking steps to reverse that.

As the member opposite knows, we have a Yukon-wide education campaign through the Department of Highways and Public Works, which includes a mail drop to every Yukon household. We have social media campaigns and radio ads. We are considering options like dash cams that may suit the needs and context of the Yukon to improve school bus safety and enforcement activities, and we will share updates with the school communities as they come available.

This isn't something that is pie in the sky. We are actually taking tangible action, and Yukoners see that. They see the action that we are taking on so many different things. The *Motor Vehicles Act* rewrite — this should have been done years ago. It wasn't; we did it. We didn't have a *Public Airports Act* for a quarter of a century, but this government did that.

We have taken action to revamp the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and a host of other things, and Yukoners appreciate that.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

We will now proceed to Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Mr. Streicker: 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 Acting Government House Leader that the Speaker do now leave the Chair and that the House resolve into Committee of the Whole.

Speaker leaves the Chair

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Chair (Mr. Hutton): I will now call Committee of the Whole to order. The matter before the Committee is Vote 11,

Women's Directorate, in Bill No. 208, entitled *Third Appropriation Act 2018-19*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

Deputy Chair (Mr. Adel): Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

Bill No. 208: *Third Appropriation Act 2018-19* — continued

Deputy Chair: The matter before the Committee is Vote 11, Women's Directorate, in Bill No. 208, entitled *Third Appropriation Act 2018-19*.

Women's Directorate

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Today I am pleased to present the supplementary budget of the Women's Directorate for 2018-19. To begin, I would like to thank Valerie Royle, deputy minister responsible for the Women's Directorate, for being here with us today. This government is committed to furthering the equality of all citizens and ensuring that we all have the opportunity to lead healthy, safe and fulfilling lives.

One of my responsibilities is to help women's organizations obtain the support that they need to fulfill their mandates. Because of this, I wanted to make sure that the Government of Yukon supported annual operational funding to reduce the administrative burden associated with partnership with various levels of government. Our initial efforts to support indigenous women's organizations included the realignment of two funds to create the indigenous women's equality fund, which increased core funding to \$253,000 per year beginning in 2018-19.

This new fund provides ongoing operational funding for the three indigenous women's organizations in Yukon. Operational funds, in contrast to project-based funds, provide stability, flexibility and enable the organizations to better meet the needs of their community. Without stable operational funding, indigenous women's organizations will not be able to attract and retain qualified staff to carry out their work and allow their organizations to consult with governments, women's organizations and other organizations.

However, when the indigenous women's equality fund was announced last year, we heard very quickly from indigenous women's organizations that it was just not enough to meet their needs. In fact, members may recall a letter from the indigenous women's organizations that was tabled in this Assembly by the Member for Takhini-Kopper King asserting dissatisfaction with the fund and the process by which it was established.

I met with the Yukon Aboriginal Women's Council, the Whitehorse Aboriginal Women's Circle and the Liard Aboriginal Women's Society to discuss their concerns and to work on additional sources of funding, such as those offered

by the federal government. I have also initiated and maintained ongoing discussions with my federal colleagues about the need to reduce the administrative burden for women's organizations by leveraging resources from both territorial and federal governments.

The Government of Yukon actively pursued the interest and openness demonstrated by the federal ministers to find ways to support our indigenous women's organizations here in Yukon.

I approached Status of Women Canada, now the Department for Women and Gender Equality, to see if resources could be leveraged and funding could be provided jointly to these organizations. As I noted earlier, we are currently providing \$253,000 per year to these organizations through the indigenous women's equality fund. In October 2018, at the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Meeting of Ministers Responsible for the Status of Women we hosted here in Yukon, Minister Maryam Monsef committed to providing funding for 2.5 years, for a total of \$867,500 to support the work of Yukon's indigenous women's organizations related to capacity building. That is a total of over \$1.6 million over three years for these organizations. The result of this outreach was that we were able to increase stability and effectiveness of our organizations here by tapping into new initiatives by the Status of Women Canada flowing their funds through our existing indigenous women's equality funding agreements.

This increased funding recognizes the systemic discrimination that indigenous women's organizations have faced and is a step toward addressing this historical inequality. I am so pleased that we are able to support these three indigenous women's organizations and to access this additional funding over the next two and a half years with the possibility of an additional two years of funding.

All of this brings me to the supplementary budget details that we would like to have approved today to ensure that we can continue to support the incredible grassroots work that indigenous women's organizations do in Yukon, including healing gatherings, outreach to families of missing and murdered indigenous women and girls and service delivery in rural communities.

The supplementary 2018-19 budget before you includes an increase of \$174,000 to the indigenous women's equality fund, which is a half-year of funding from the Status of Women Canada. As the funding was announced midway through the fiscal year of 2018-19, this amount will be fully recoverable from the Government of Canada's Department for Women and Gender Equality and supports the capacity development funding for the three indigenous women's organizations that I have already talked about in detail.

It is appearing in our budget in order to streamline applications and reporting for the indigenous women's organizations, as multiple funding sources with distinct recording requirements have consistently been raised as an administrative barrier for these organizations. I hope you will vote to approve this very worthwhile increase that will not ultimately impact the overall 2018-19 budget.

With that, I would be happy to answer any questions you may have about the Women's Directorate 2018-19 supplementary budget.

Ms. McLeod: I believe I heard the minister say that the \$174,000 in the supplementary budget is strictly for the three aboriginal women's groups that were created — well, not created, but separated out, I guess, from other women's groups last year.

Can she confirm that the money is only for those three funds?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Yes, the \$174,000 that we are talking about today is for the indigenous women's groups in Yukon.

Ms. McLeod: Has the minister received an indication from the non-aboriginal women's groups, such as the Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre, that their funding is sufficient?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: I believe that if the member opposite was paying attention to my budget speech the other day, I did indicate in that speech that we in fact have received confirmation that Victoria Faulkner Women's Centre, Les EssentiElles and the Yukon Status of Women Council will also be receiving dollars through the same capacity-building fund for Yukon. This is really in relation to our good working relationship that we have established with our federal Minister for Women and Gender Equality.

Ms. McLeod: Thanks to the minister for that shot over there.

What is the percentage increase, or what does this amount relate to in terms of percentage of an increase for these three groups?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Thank you to the House for its indulgence as we figured out the math around this.

For 2018-19, it is 36 percent.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Deputy Chair: Order. Could Minister Dendys just either get the mic brought up or just speak a little louder, please?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Chair, for your indulgence to give us a moment to figure out the math.

The increase for 2018-19 is 36 percent.

Ms. McLeod: I guess that's it — because this is a supplementary budget, I don't really have too many questions on this. Obviously, I think we're going to have a much more fulsome debate when we get to the mains. So with that, thank you.

Ms. White: This \$174,000, is it divided equally between the three groups?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Yes, it is.

Ms. White: The minister mentioned that the funding right now was going to cover the next two and a half years, so my question is: What happens at the end of that point? She said that there was the possibility of adding an additional two years, so I just want to know — my assumption is that this is tied into federal funding and it's not actually coming from the territorial government, so it's a flow-through. So what

happens when it runs out if it isn't renewed, and what happens at the end of the two years if it is renewed?

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair. Yes, I indicated that there's a possibility of a two-year extension beyond the two and a half years, and we will work with our federal partners, we will work with our indigenous women's groups and ultimately with all of our equality-seeking groups to ensure that we are able to provide the funding that they require to do the important work on behalf of Yukoners.

Ms. White: Mr. Deputy Chair, I guess the point I was trying to get to was understanding that there's no guarantee that it will go further into the future. To be honest, two and a half years — that's past the next election cycle. So I just wanted to know what the minister and the directorate were doing to ensure that this money carries forward.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Again, we will make every effort to work with our federal partners. We know that there is no guarantee of that funding going beyond the two and a half years, and that time does move very quickly. We see this as a high priority for our department to work with our partners and to ensure that they have the resources that they require to do, again, the important work on behalf of Yukoners.

I'm very committed to working with our equality-seeking groups, and we'll continue to be committed to that.

Ms. White: I guess my question is: Is there a framework or some sort of criteria that are going to be put in place to evaluate as to whether or not it's doing the expected things so that then the minister can take it to the minister of the day — or this minister or whoever is minister can take it forward and say, "Look, this money has really done what it needs to do and we need to make sure that it's being funded" — whether it's for the federal government or the Yukon government — so we're willing to put it on the books for the Yukon government? Will there be a criteria and an evaluation to judge its success so that we can have that funding guaranteed in the future? Then if the answer is positive and that is happening, if we can have those terms of reference, please.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Absolutely, there are criteria and evaluation reporting requirements that we will work with our partners on to ensure that we are providing the best information back to our federal partners so that we can ensure that this funding continues on and that we remain a priority in Canada, being that we were the first group to access this funding and the first announced in Canada for access to this new funding initiative.

Ms. White: I guess the concern I am trying to raise is that elections happen, including the one this fall. If it proves to be beneficial, based on the criteria that we hope we are going to have access to — just to make sure that there is the ability to take the justification forward that it should be funded by Yukon government if, for example, the fund is cancelled by the federal government of the day. Elections happen — it is a truth — every four to five years, in our case. I am just looking to see that it will be evaluated and that criteria will be established that will hopefully be shared with the opposition — so we can see that there will be the justification for future

governments that if the federal government fund is no longer there, it will be funded by the Yukon government.

Hon. Ms. Dendys: Again, I will work with our partners and through the indigenous women's groups to ensure that all of the proper reporting is done and that it is evaluated well. We will certainly share that criteria with the members opposite.

I cannot commit to that increase — that the Government of Yukon would be able to fund that increased amount being provided by the federal government. What we have committed to is that other new fund — the indigenous women's equality fund. That is a new fund that we have established, and that is what we are committed to right now. Those are the funds that we used to leverage additional dollars through the federal government, but we will make absolutely every effort, whether it is with the current government or a future government, to ensure that our needs are met in the Yukon and that we remain a high priority for Canada.

Deputy Chair: Is there any more general debate?

We will now move to line-by-line debate.

Ms. White: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, I request the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 11, Women's Directorate, cleared or carried, as required.

Unanimous consent re deeming all lines in Vote 11, Women's Directorate, cleared or carried

Deputy Chair: Ms. White has, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, requested the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 11, Women's Directorate, cleared or carried, as required.

Is there unanimous consent?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Deputy Chair: Unanimous consent has been granted.

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

Total Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$174,000 agreed to

On Capital Expenditures

Total Capital Expenditures in the amount of nil agreed to

Total Expenditures in the amount of \$174,000

Women's Directorate agreed to

Deputy Chair: We will proceed to Vote 2, Executive Council Office.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Deputy Chair: Committee of the Whole will recess for 10 minutes.

Recess

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

The matter before the Committee is general debate on Vote 2, Executive Council Office, in Bill No. 208, entitled *Third Appropriation Act 2018-19*.

Executive Council Office

Hon. Mr. Silver: I'm very pleased to introduce the supplementary budget for the Executive Council Office for 2018-19. I would like to thank the officials here from ECO for joining me: Exilda Driscoll is the director of finance, administration and systems — welcome to the Legislative Assembly — and no stranger to the Legislative Assembly, Mr. Stephen Mills, deputy minister of all things ECO.

The budget request for the Executive Council Office relates to our government's efforts toward reconciliation with First Nations, primarily. We see the path to reconciliation as a journey, and we know that the actions we are taking now will continue to have benefits for years to come.

Our government has worked very hard to rebuild relationships with Yukon First Nations on the basis of respect and cooperation. Of course, Mr. Deputy Chair, this work involves acting respectfully on our obligations to consult when treaty or asserted aboriginal rights may be affected by Yukon government actions and decisions. It also ensures that Yukon First Nations without final and self-governing agreements have the capacity to engage with our government on matters of mutual interest.

This is the purpose of the budget request for the Executive Council Office for 2018-19. This government is working with the Ross River Dena Council on several issues, including mineral exploration and development, infrastructure, hunting and economic opportunities. We have concluded a government-to-government accord with the Liard First Nation. This accord outlines our shared priorities, which include roads, infrastructure, the mineral sector, housing and economic development.

Our government is working with the White River First Nation and other affected First Nations to find solutions that are respectful of all involved related to areas of asserted aboriginal rights. As well, we are engaged in discussions with the Taku River Tlingit First Nation on several matters related to consultation on their land interests in Yukon.

We have funding agreements with each of these First Nations to advance this work — in other words, to support the fulfillment of our consultation obligations and to provide First Nations with capacity for collaborative discussions.

Mr. Deputy Chair, I do want to address some information provided during the briefings for the opposition caucuses on the supplementary estimates. At that briefing, officials with my department spoke about funding being provided to the Kaska Dena Council as part of this supplementary budget. I just want to clarify that no funding is being provided to the Kaska Dena Council in the current budget year. With these introductory comments, I will close, and I look forward to questions from the opposition.

Ms. Hanson: I thank the minister responsible for the Executive Council Office for his comments and to the officials for being here as well as for the information that was provided to us at the briefing.

I just have a few questions with respect to the specific items in the supplementary budget, and I have one other question about the past year on the Executive Council Office.

I just want to clarify that when the minister says there are no dollars for the current budget year, he's referring to 2019-20, and then in fact there was money provided to KDC — Kaska Dena Council — in the year in which we're speaking about, which is the supplementary year for 2018-19.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Yes, for 2018-19, there was no money for the KDC. As we move forward, we are remaining open to engaging with the Kaska Dena Council with respect to addressing our consultation obligations regarding mineral declarations as instructed by the courts.

Ms. Hanson: The reason I asked that question is because the legal status of the Kaska Dena Council is not as a First Nation. They are not an aboriginal entity; they are like a society. The question was to do with the Taku River Tlingit, who are recognized as a First Nation. The Kaska First Nations in northern British Columbia is not the KDC. I want to clarify who in fact, in terms of transboundary rights, are we dealing with — not a society but the aboriginal entities?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, we have proven in the last two years that government-to-government relationships are extremely important to this government. The Supreme Court decision released on March 5 helps the Government of Yukon to better understand our consultation obligations with the Kaska First Nations. We are currently reviewing the court's decisions in there. Our preference as always is to resolve matters between our governments outside of court. We have established government-to-government relationships with First Nations under all Kaska. We would prefer to meet chief and council to ministers, and we remain open to engaging with all Kaska regarding their concerns with hunting, with wildlife management and conservation as well.

Ms. Hanson: I don't want to belabour the point, but it will become critical at some point because it has been in the past as well within the Kaska First Nation leadership and with the people that we deal with in the First Nation leadership as governments and First Nations and not entities that are created for various purposes for running initiatives, just like any other society.

It has been a significant bone of contention. That is what I thought the court had provided clarity about: that the KDC — Kaska Dene Council — is a council. It is not an aboriginal entity; it's not a First Nation government. Perhaps I'm wrong. Perhaps the minister can expound on that and clarify exactly what his understanding is.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, as a government, we've been engaging in consultation and negotiation in the past with the Kaska Dena Council regarding mineral declarations. We remain open to continuing to engage with the Kaska Dena Council with respect to addressing our consultative obligations regarding mineral declarations as instructed by the courts. We committed to working with all Kaska to address implications of that court declaration regarding mineral staking and exploration in Kaska-asserted traditional territory.

Judge Veale rendered his decision on March 5, 2019, and made a number of determinations, including that there are four rights-bearing First Nations that comprise the Kaska Nation: Liard First Nation, the Ross River Dena Council, Kwadacha First Nation and Dease River First Nation. So Daylu Dena Council as well is a subcouncil of the Liard First Nation, not an independent Kaska First Nation or also is not an *Indian Act* band.

So in this case, the KDC is not an aboriginal rights-bearing group, Mr. Deputy Chair.

Ms. Hanson: Good, thank you. And that is my understanding, so I just wanted to confirm that we are on the same page, Mr. Deputy Chair. That is good to know.

With respect to the transboundary groups — recognizing the other communities that he mentioned with respect to what comprise the Kaska Nation, which is really what we are talking about here when we're talking about this transboundary entity — there are other transboundary agreements that Yukon is obliged to engage with. So I am wondering if you can update us, because I don't see any listing here — I mean the activity with the Northwest Territories transboundary interests in Yukon.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Chair. I appreciate the question from the member opposite.

So we can talk specifically about Taku River Tlingit First Nation and the issues they're in. We are engaging with very productive discussions with the Taku River Tlingit First Nation on a number of matters, including consultation on their land interests in the Yukon. This includes exploratory discussions with the Taku River Tlingit Nation and also the Government of Canada on the Taku River Tlingit Nation's transboundary claims in the Yukon. So we are — as a government, and the Taku River Tlingit, as a nation — we're agreeing to suspend the application of the first mineral declaration from the Taku River Tlingit First Nation versus the Yukon until March 31 of 2019. We are seeking solutions to address these obligations set out in that declaration.

We recognize the obligation to consult with other First Nations and stakeholders on matters that may affect them related to any measures to protect Taku River Tlingit First Nation land interests in the Yukon.

Another transboundary First Nation, Gwich'in Tribal Council — we have a good relationship there as well, and we are discussing a range of matters related to their interests in the Yukon. We are working with the Gwich'in Tribal Council and Canada to implement the *Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement* as it applies to the Yukon. That work includes jointly completing revisions to the implementation plan for the *Gwich'in Comprehensive Land Claim Agreement*. We are also developing a renewed communication protocol with the Gwich'in Tribal Council, which will help strengthen our government-to-government relations therein — some preliminary discussions also with the Gwich'in Tribal Council to better understand their interests in the Yukon.

The Acho Dene Koe First Nation is another transboundary First Nation, and we are continuing to engage in conversation with them. We are continuing with some

communication protocols right now to guide our engagement with each other. That is where we are now.

The member opposite did not speak specifically about some of the non-self-governing and final agreement First Nations. We could talk about Ross River Dena Council and the work we are doing there. We are working with Ross River on a number of matters, including mineral exploration and development, capacity development, hunting, infrastructure and some economic opportunities there. The Kaska Dena Council — as I mentioned before, we are remaining open to respect our consultation obligations, but this is based upon instructions from the court. We are working with White River First Nation and other affected First Nations to address that area where the White River First Nation's assertions of aboriginal rights — there are some issues on overlap. We are trying to find solutions that are respectful to all of the First Nations that are involved there as well.

Ms. Hanson: When I look at the website for Executive Council Office — this is one of the very few government websites where the new format has actually translated into providing any information. Most of the other ones go to 404, and I am getting a little tired of that. This one actually has some details with respect to the kinds of agreements and the kinds of process documents that the Government of Yukon has been engaging in with Yukon First Nations, in particular those with self-government and final agreements and their relationship to the Yukon Forum. However, when I look at the big, broad category which the minister has been referring to as “other agreements”, I see nothing that provides the general public with any framework for the nature of the conversations that are going on — whether there is an agreement in principle or whether there are framework agreements. Generally, when you have a framework agreement, you would set up the subject matters to be discussed.

The curiosity that I have is to be able to track the progress over time, so we are seeing the Yukon government expending \$103 million on this area and ongoing. At some point, we want to be able to assess whether the participation and funding of these negotiations or these talks are producing any results.

What I am asking is: When will we see at least the framework set out in a public way?

I'm not asking for the specifics — the who said, what said. I'm asking for the framework agreement that would identify the subject matters and the timelines that the parties have agreed to set for these discussions or negotiations.

Hon. Mr. Silver: The Yukon government is providing the funding and supports to Yukon First Nations without final and self-governing agreements mainly for capacity for consultations and to engage with the Yukon government on matters of mutual interest, as well as supporting their participation in those negotiations. This is on a case-by-case basis — that's the best way to describe it. The Government of Yukon is providing that funding in accordance with GAM and to FAM as well to First Nations so they can meet our consultation obligations. That funding is provided on an as-needed basis — I guess that is the best way to say that — and could not be forecasted necessarily as part of the 2018-19

main estimates — if you take a look at where the funding is flowing now.

The member opposite did mention that there is confidentiality in negotiations — when we're talking about this — so we are unable to provide a breakdown of funding provided to those First Nations. Suffice it to say that we are working with these governments to make sure that the agendas are focused on areas that they bring to the table and that we are going with their lead on a lot of this consultation and negotiation.

When it comes to negotiating with other First Nations without final and self-government agreements, we're very committed to advancing reconciliation with these First Nations as well. As part of that objective, we engage in discussions all the time with these First Nations that are not signed on to self-government agreements — whether in regard to consultation itself, economic development, areas of mutual interest and also priorities from those First Nations.

The goal of these negotiations is to find solutions that respect to the First Nation rights and interests, providing benefits to their communities, increasing the certainty for industry and clarifying relationships between our governments. One mechanism to accomplish this is bilateral agreements — government-to-government accords. We will continue with the government-to-government accords. Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, for example, and YG have current engagements and discussions on accords. The Yukon government has reviewed a list of priorities provided by the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council and plans to advance substantive discussions in the near term. That model works for the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, so we will utilize the accord as a tool in this case on issues about TKC's Riverdale parcel, for example.

When it comes to White River First Nation, they have provided us with a list of their priorities for an accord, and we are currently reviewing those priorities.

Kwanlin Dün First Nation — another example of a draft accord that we are working on right now that is intended to replace the current one. Again, we have been told by different chiefs and different councils that sometimes accords are the way that they want to go, and sometimes they are not. We are following the lead of these First Nations, and of course, the money that you see in the supplementary budget today is based on those needs and those communities.

Ms. Hanson: I can understand that accords with self-governing First Nations are a means of engaging with another level of government that is recognized through federal and territorial legislation.

I guess what I still have questions about is that, variously, we have language around entering into negotiations with the other First Nations that have not finalized land claim or self-government agreements in the Yukon or who have not concluded a transboundary agreement in the Yukon. I guess it is material to know the objectives of those negotiations — or if they are not really negotiations and if they are conversations and discussions, that we just want to maintain good relationships with various entities. That is fine, but we should

be clear about that. If we are entering into negotiations, it is at least a two-part conversation and we mutually agree that we have an end point. We want to reach agreement. I enter into negotiation with you on XYZ — buy my house, sell my car or whatever — but it is a negotiation, and we have mutually agreed-upon terms to enter into those negotiations and to move toward a conclusion point.

I raise this not to be obstreperous, but because of the fact that we have seen in the past where governments have been challenged because of the concept of basically frustrated negotiations. You could keep people at the table for a very long time, but at some point you will be challenged if you haven't got an end point in mind and you are not mutually working toward it. Are we doing it to keep people happy because we are talking to each other? Somebody might find that to be disingenuous, to say the least. There are other legal terms for it.

I raise this because I am trying to get a sense of what the end point is here.

Hon. Mr. Silver: It is a good question from the member opposite. I listed government-to-government accords for self-governing First Nations. We are using — if the member opposite would listen to the answer — government-to-government accords for non-self-governing First Nations as well. We are very pleased to have signed a government-to-government accord with Liard First Nation.

I agree that if it is just a matter of having conversations, that may not be where we want to go as a government, but these accords absolutely enhance our government-to-government collaboration and build capacity. One of the biggest things is that they are capacity building.

Also, lots of conversations about where we are on mutual interests for the mining sector, consultation and engagement on traditional use and knowledge of lands, infrastructure, roads, housing and economic development — all topics of conversation in a government-to-government accord being used by a First Nation that is not self-governing.

Ms. Hanson: Are all of these accords with Yukon non-self-governing First Nations bilateral? Are there any tripartite components to this with respect to — surely the federal government has a role and responsibility vis-à-vis those First Nations that are not outside the purview of the *Indian Act*.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, a good question — we are filling a gap that does exist without Canada in there. Canada has no new mandate in that.

Going back to the Taku River Tlingit — I'm not sure if I mentioned it before, but when we're engaging in the discussions that we're having with the Taku River Tlingit First Nation on a number of matters, including consultation and their land interest in Yukon, this includes exploratory discussions with the Taku River Tlingit and the Canadian government on the Taku River Tlingit First Nation's transboundary claims in the Yukon.

Again, it's specific to each First Nation. In some areas, we are filling a gap that does exist and is there without Canada, and in other areas we are trying to include those conversations and involve the Government of Canada as well.

Ms. Hanson: Yes, I understand that Canada is probably a very long way from reconsidering a mandate vis-à-vis a negotiation of what we would refer to as a final or self-government agreement under the mandate that they had with respect to the *Umbrella Final Agreement*. However, that doesn't take away from the federal government's responsibility with respect to those First Nations that are not self-governing.

What I'm trying to get at is: What coordination does Aboriginal Relations have with the federal government — its federal counterparts — with respect to, exactly, capacity development? Those are things one would expect federal departments and agencies to have been traditionally engaged in — and should be engaged in — and so how are we working with those three First Nations to ensure that we can take maximum benefit — that it's not just Yukon that has this responsibility and role vis-à-vis capacity development, but also our federal counterparts?

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, it is an interesting topic as far as engaging on a trilateral level. We have had, in the past, intergovernmental forums with federal ministers and First Nation chiefs and councils. I want to give a shout-out to Grand Chief Peter Johnston, whose approach has always been to have more inclusive conversations through the Yukon Forum and offering seats at that table for transboundary First Nations. I've seen Jordan Peterson from the Gwich'in Tribal Council show up and participate in conversations, and Bobbie Jo Greenland Morgan as well has been there many times.

We've seen White River First Nation and other First Nations — Liard — show up at the forum. So a lot of times, some of these conversations on a trilateral basis are based upon results of court cases where we are mandated to be in a room and other times we are following the lead of First Nations as well.

Any of these conversations — again, we are very respectful of following the lead of the individual First Nation and the chiefs and the councils for direction, but we have increased those tables and those opportunities for those First Nations. We have had successes in working together as governments here in the Yukon to go to Ottawa, hand in hand, to talk about things like housing in First Nation areas that are still under the *Indian Act*, but also being able to share our knowledge of the situations in certain communities, whether it be Ross River Dena Council and the work in Ross River or working with Liard First Nation talking to them about issues of social importance — education, housing — and being able to share information as much as we possibly can. Of course, all of this is based on reconciliation, which is a priority of our government.

We're going to continue to provide feedback and advocate that our federal colleagues need to engage more with First Nations, Yukon First Nations, to ensure that federal efforts reflect Yukon content. It takes a while sometimes to describe the unique circumstances in the north of self-governing — let alone our relationships with transboundary First Nations or First Nations that are not in the *Umbrella Final Agreement*.

A number of key areas in which the Yukon government is providing support to carry out those activities of reconciliation, whether it's working collaboratively with Yukon First Nations and the Government of Canada to implement those final and self-governing agreements or moving forward on the chapters. Revitalizing the forum, again — Yukon First Nations said this is a very big important step for them and a priority for them. The joint priority action plan is an example of those conversations — advancing reconciliation and advancing these chapters.

Again, that's happening government to government. It's nice to have those intergovernmental forums. We've had them in the past, and there is one being scheduled very soon in the spring, where the federal government also comes into help with the negotiation and the implementation of bilateral and trilateral agreements through these accords.

Mr. Deputy Chair, the consulting process is robust, whether it be Yukon First Nations or transboundary aboriginal groups — again, making sure that our actions and our decisions are guided by the asserted aboriginal rights and treaties, but also by the agenda items that are being put forth by those individual governments as we move forward to improve reconciliation.

Ms. Hanson: I thank the minister for his response. We'll certainly have more conversations as we get into the mains for this year on this area and others.

One last area in Executive Council Office — there are lots of subcomponents. First of all, I would just like to say that one part of the website that is not real good is finding the Youth Directorate on your website. Try to find it.

Secondly, but more pertinent to the question I want to ask — I have asked this question previously, and I will continue to ask it with respect to audit plans for the Government Internal Audit Services. The website indicates that the last audit that was done was in June 2017. I would expect that there would be at least an annual audit, and I am wondering if there is a delay in posting it and if the minister could tell us what is the most recent internal audit.

I view these internal audits as significant and important. As it says, they are to provide independent and objective internal audit and advisory services that add value and help strengthen government performance and accountability. I think the minister and I share a desire to do just that — to strengthen government performance and accountability — and part of that is to make sure that we have a current audit plan, that we are publishing the audits and that we are doing follow-up on any of the audits that have been completed. So far, we see that there are reports, and they go back on this website to 2002. There is nothing that indicates, as far as I can tell — and perhaps the minister can clarify this for me — where there has been any follow-up on any of the audits done as internal audits. To me, that is fairly important.

The Minister responsible for the Public Service Commission will be aware that I have raised this question many, many times with respect to some of the findings in the internal audit on the Public Service Commission a number of years ago, which, in many ways, tracked themselves into the

Yukon Financial Advisory Panel's recommendations and report to the government and to this Legislative Assembly. Those are my questions with respect to the Government Internal Audit Services.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Thank you to the member opposite for her questions. We have certain reports that were produced in the Government Internal Audit Services — GIAS, just to save time — in 2018-19. An audit, for example, of the management control framework of Tourism and Culture is completed and was approved by the Audit Committee in July 2018. Of course, that report will be posted on the government website, if it is not already.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Hon. Mr. Silver: It is not? The audit approves Tourism and Culture funding management and provides evidence-based information to support the changes.

There is also the performance audit of talent acquisition and retention. That is completed and was approved by the Audit Committee at their September 2018 meeting. The audit provides assurance that the talent acquisition and retention process within the government is open, transparent and inclusive to ensure a professional merit-based public service with the capacity to deliver on government priorities and commitments. We will follow up to make sure that this is on there.

There was also a follow-up report of the audit recommendations not completed and closed as of the end of September 2018. That will be reviewed by the Audit Committee. I believe that review actually already happened. It was scheduled for the end of February or the 1st of March.

Audit work in progress — GAM 1.13 is being revised, and a multi-year risk-based audit plan approach has been developed and is being tested.

There is also an ongoing review right now — I guess it's a horizontal review of governance. That is completed and was approved by the Audit Committee in September of 2018. That audit provides assurances that the government has an effective governing framework and processes in place that guide activities toward the achievements of department and organizational governmental objectives.

What I'm hearing from the member opposite is that we need to get some more information posted on our website, so we will definitely look into that as soon as possible.

Ms. Hanson: I thank the minister for that. I mean, I do really think it is important that this kind of information is posted on here. Yesterday we indicated that, as members of this Legislative Assembly, we all have a responsibility in terms of accountability and performance. We have decreasing information provided to us by government with respect to the tabled budgets — no data, no performance indicators, nada. We have rollup numbers. We have a summary statement of what the branch's sort of lofty mission statement is and we're supposed to guess. So these kinds of audits and periodic assessments — internal reviews that are really looking at how well we're doing against what we thought — are the only way of finding out what performance measures government might have.

I would challenge the minister responsible for the Executive Council Office to show me where I can find a strategic plan or a performance plan for any department or agency on the websites of this government. It tells me that these are the general things we're involved in or specifically here's how you can apply for this program or that program. You will find other governments across this country that set out this is what we say we're going to do and this is how we're assessing it, and it's not just infographics.

Therefore, Mr. Deputy Chair, I'll leave it at that and whatever the motion is to move it on.

Hon. Mr. Silver: I appreciate the member opposite's questions, and we will look into making sure that things are accessible. Again, the old website — the new website — you can still access the old website as we put pages in toward the new website; so it's more information, not less. We will look to make sure those audit pages are up and running and make sure the member opposite can see where that is, if they're not already up — which I'm hearing they're not.

I do want to talk a bit about planning our priorities and the performance plan itself as an update. This is as great an opportunity as any to give that update. In December, we issued a fall update of the Government of Yukon's performance plans. That detailed our commitments to Yukoners to lay out a pathway forward to deliver on our priorities. With the December report, we have taken steps toward producing a more robust profile of our territory's socio-economic and environmental well-being. This report includes an update on work being done across government, measures our performance on key priorities and outcomes and some new evidence-based indicators of Yukon's long-term well-being. These indicators are important for understanding how the Yukon is doing right now, but also where we can go as a government and as businesses and communities as we try to make lives better for everyone in the Yukon.

It is important to us that we are involving all Yukoners in those discussions as we are moving forward on a Yukon index of well-being.

I want to talk a bit about the Index of Wellbeing. In the fall of 2018, performance plans were organized into five priorities with eight subcategories, whether it be health, education, safety, housing, jobs and the economy, the environment, government-to-government relationships and responsible government. In the fall of 2018, near-term performance measures were identified — primarily through departmental activity updates, databases and those types of things — but the long-term indicators were identified as well with the assistance of the University of Waterloo — it is an affiliated Canadian Index of Wellbeing — and are primarily drawn from publicly available Statistics Canada resources.

To me, this Canadian Index of Wellbeing is not just a checkbox of how well we are doing; it actually takes a look at where we need to be better. I think that is the reason why we wanted to get more toward a moment-in-time snapshot of where we are and where we can go — not just in the context of Yukon, but in the context related to other communities in

Canada. I think this Index of Wellbeing is exciting work. I think it is a better way of taking a look at where we are today.

This has been used by a number of Canadian municipalities. It has been used by sub-provincial agencies and lots of non-profits as well. The good news about these measures of well-being and progress is that they are not only going to be developed for us, but they are also developed for anybody else in the Yukon to use. To me, these are indicators that are much more robust than just GDP. We believe that sometimes the GDP is an insignificant amount of information to reflect actual societal well-being.

These measures of well-being and progress were developed in recognition of the fact that the economic indicators are just one piece. The performance plan provides information to all orders of government in the Yukon as well as community groups. It provides information to the public, and it is regularly updated with information on various dimensions of social well-being.

It is a change. This is not something that this government has done before, but we believe it is a better snapshot.

Ms. Hanson: At the risk of prolonging this a bit more, I agree with the minister. The GDP is a limited instrument. I do agree with the concept of developing an index or indices of well-being, but ultimately there have to be accountability measures built into that, and there has to be accountability as to where the buck stops. How will you assess and how will we assess the achievement of the objective that is being set out in establishing these various frameworks — these various indices? We are saying that these indices will give us a picture, but I want more than a picture. It is not just the nice language about people being happy and healthy. How do we know — compared to what? What kind of factors are we comparing them to? For example, have we changed the morbidity rates around diabetes? If you look at the factors that are associated — using that one example — it could go into so many different aspects of the indices of well-being that the minister is talking about. It involves a number of active players. It should always identify actions that they will have to take in order to reduce that morbidity rate with respect to diabetes in our territory.

I will leave it there. This is an area where we can have a lot of conversation.

I will look to see where these various documents are. So far, I don't see them on the website, but I'm looking to get them. Once we have had a chance to review them, I'm sure we will have more active and, with the information, more informed discussion. It's one thing to say that this is what we're doing; I would like to be able to see — that's what you're saying that you're doing, so how does that translate into measurable performance indicators so we can then say, as MLAs charged with the responsibility of holding government to account, that it has been achieved or not?

Mr. Hassard: I would like to thank the officials for being here today. I have just a couple of things for the minister.

I believe he said he couldn't give us a breakdown on the \$1.25 million because of First Nation confidentiality. Is that correct?

Hon. Mr. Silver: I would say there are a variety of reasons, including what the member opposite is speaking of.

Mr. Hassard: Would the minister be able to provide us with what those other reasons are?

Hon. Mr. Silver: When we go into negotiations with other governments, it's not just us at the table. There's a respect there. There are negotiations that have to happen, and we respect those individual First Nations. We want to make sure that consultation is done right. We want to make sure that we can work together at a table as opposed to in a courtroom, and we will respect the individual First Nations with that.

I don't believe the Yukon Party, in government, gave these details out either. I think they know what the reasons are, as far as negotiations and how sensitive these conversations are.

Mr. Hassard: I guess I won't get into a debate about who did what and when, but I'm just curious if the minister would be able to provide us the reasons why he couldn't provide us with a breakdown on the numbers.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Again, according to the GAM and also to the FAM — and we can provide those particular pieces as well — it is on a case-by-case basis. We provide funding in accordance with these policies. We haven't changed any of the policies since we took over office — compared to how the Yukon Party worked through GAM and through FAM — as far as providing that funding to meet our consultation obligations.

This funding is provided on a needed basis and could not necessarily be forecasted. That's why we have this supplementary here. Again, because of the confidentiality of these negotiations, we are unable to break down the funding. We are happy to be at those tables and be able to have positive conversations. We have outlined, through conversations with the Leader of the Third Party, some of the broader topics and are happy to go over those broad topics again.

Mr. Hassard: I know that, in the past, the previous government did in fact provide numbers. I know for sure that they provided numbers for negotiations that were done with the Ross River Dena Council. I guess the question would be: How can the Government of Yukon be accountable if we don't know where the money is going?

Hon. Mr. Silver: We are talking about the numbers that are specific to the supplementary. Those numbers are here. We're debating those numbers. We're explaining why we could not forecast these in 2018-19. We have provided those numbers — and that's what we'll talk about here. Specific numbers are being presented.

If there has been a change particular to a number that the member opposite is talking about, I'll take a look at that and report back to him, but we are bound by these particular policies, and we are here to meet our consultation obligations.

Mr. Hassard: I certainly couldn't ask if there has been any change in any specific numbers because I only have one number because the minister isn't providing us with any

breakdown as to how that number changes. I don't see how he figures that's possible.

Moving on — the minister talked about going hand in hand to Ottawa regarding things like housing, and then he mentioned the Ross River Dena Council. I'm curious — can the minister let us know if in fact the government has gone hand in hand to Ottawa regarding the Ross River Dena Council?

Hon. Mr. Silver: We talk about a whole bunch of different considerations as per First Nations. We've had lots of conversations with Ottawa — big announcements this week on housing — and nothing per se in the supplementary budget for ECO on that particular file.

Mr. Hassard: I would just like to remind the minister that the great announcement today was regarding Whitehorse. I was talking about Ross River.

I guess the final question probably would be — if the minister can update us about where the government is at in regards to an agreement with the Teslin Tlingit Council about contracts in the Teslin Tlingit traditional territory.

Hon. Mr. Silver: Can the member opposite be more specific about which contracts he's talking about?

Mr. Hassard: I know that the First Nation has been in negotiations with the government regarding contracts in their traditional territories, so I'm just curious if there have been any agreements or if there are any agreements forthcoming.

Hon. Mr. Silver: The member opposite was at the signing of a government-to-government agreement with the Teslin Tlingit Council. I want to thank him for being there at that celebration.

Unless he can elaborate on what specific contracts he's talking about — maybe it's something that we want to talk with the department of — I'm not sure. I don't know how to answer this question because I'm not really sure which particular contracts he's talking about.

We do have an agreement with the Teslin Tlingit Council, and we are working with a multitude of First Nations and their economic development corporations on a multitude of files.

It is hard to answer this specific question without maybe a title or a name or some particular concern.

Deputy Chair: Is there any further general debate on Vote 2, Executive Council Office?

We will proceed to line-by-line debate.

Mr. Kent: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, I request unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 2, Executive Council Office, cleared or carried, as required.

Unanimous consent re deeming all lines in Vote 2, Executive Council Office, cleared or carried

Deputy Chair: Mr. Kent has, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, requested the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 2, Executive Council Office, cleared or carried, as required.

Are you agreed?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Deputy Chair: Unanimous consent has been granted.

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures
Total Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$1,259,000 agreed to

On Capital Expenditures
Total Capital Expenditures in the amount of nil agreed to

Total Expenditures in the amount of \$1,259,000 agreed to

Executive Council Office agreed to

Deputy Chair: We will now proceed to Vote 52, Department of Environment.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Deputy Chair: Committee of the Whole will recess for 10 minutes.

Recess

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

The matter before the Committee is Vote 52, Department of Environment.

Department of Environment

Hon. Ms. Frost: I would like to welcome John Bailey, Deputy Minister of Environment, to the Legislative Assembly. The supplementary budget I am presenting today is an increase of \$428,000 for the Department of Environment. This increase is less than one percent of the department's total budget for 2018-19 and falls under the department's operation and maintenance budget.

This money supports our efforts in environmental stewardship and effective management of Yukon's natural resources through four main initiatives: implementing the control order to protect Yukon wild sheep and goats from potential disease transmission from domestic animals; supporting changes to class 1 notifications; scientific research into the potential impacts of industrial development of the Porcupine caribou herd; and funding for five *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act* projects.

I would like to take some time now to provide an overview of these initiatives. The implementation of the control order under the *Animal Health Act* is the largest amount that is being allocated within the Department of Environment at \$226,000. This control order will mitigate the risks of disease transmission from domestic sheep and goats to wild populations. It is common for domestic sheep and goats to be carriers of pneumonia-carrying bacteria without showing symptoms. However, if contracted by wild sheep and goats through direct contact, this disease can have devastating impacts on wild populations.

This control order strikes a balance between supporting our growing local agricultural industry while ensuring protection for wild sheep and goat populations, especially our vulnerable and iconic thinhorn sheep species. The money allocated in the supplementary budget will be used to support

Yukon sheep and goat owners to meet requirements of the control order before it comes into effect on January 1, 2020.

As a government, we are committed to implementing class 1 notifications territory-wide in a manner that balances the interest of Yukon First Nations and the mineral industry. There is \$100,000 allocated for additional staff to support assessment and consultation efforts to establish class 1 notifications.

The \$60,000 allocated for scientific research on the Porcupine caribou herd is 100-percent recoverable from the governments of Canada and the Northwest Territories. This research is focused on the potential impacts to the Porcupine caribou herd from oil and gas leasing and development in the 1002 lands of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, the calving and post-calving grounds of the Porcupine caribou.

For more than 40 years, we have been working with the governments of Canada and Northwest Territories, Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation, the First Nation of the Na Cho Nyäk Dun, Inuvialuit Game Council and the Gwich'in Tribal Council through the *Porcupine Caribou Management Agreement* to successfully manage this herd.

We want to ensure that decisions being made for development in this area are informed and guided by scientific, traditional and local knowledge. The scientific analysis helps to inform our comments on the American Bureau of Land Management's draft environmental statement on oil and gas leasing development on these lands, which we submitted yesterday.

It is our hope that our Alaskan partners will make sure that the science informs their decisions for this important area. The 1002 lands in the Arctic wildlife preserve are unique and crucial areas for the Porcupine caribou. They provide the best vegetation, pest and predator protection possible for vulnerable calves and cows at the most vital time in the cycle of their lives. As it is the last thriving, large migratory caribou herd in the world, it is essential that we protect this culturally and ecologically important herd.

Lastly, we have \$42,000 to support five projects with *Yukon Environmental and Socio-economic Assessment Act* funding. These projects will provide important insight and guidance for development in Yukon. They include: using GPS and telemetry data to investigate Fortymile caribou habitat and range; a review of the impacts of mining activity on thorn sheep populations and assess the effectiveness of mitigation efforts; the development of an ecosystem field guide to adjusted boreal low area of the Klondike Plateau; an assessment of the significance and severity of human-wildlife conflict related to mining and exploration; and an invasive species toolkit project that will provide guidance on how industrial activities can prevent the spread and introduction of invasive species.

Mr. Deputy Chair, thank you for the time to provide more information on the important initiatives that the small increase in the Department of Environment's budget will support. I look forward to answering questions from the member opposite to the supplementary budget submissions.

Mr. Istchenko: I do want to welcome the official who is in the House here today. This is a department that I'm very passionate about — and I know many Yukoners are — and there are many frustrations in the Yukon right now. I'll get into that when we get into general debate on the budget later during the session, so I'll just stick with the monies that we're talking about today.

I am aware that there was \$226,000 allocated to the wild and domestic sheep conflict, and it was broken down a little in the briefing to show that \$125,000 goes to veterinarian costs and \$131,000 is for program costs. But I'm hoping that the minister will be able to break down the allocations a little further.

Can the minister please confirm whether the veterinary costs are related to specific actions, such as vaccinations, or whether it covers wages or contracts?

Hon. Ms. Frost: The Animal Health Unit — the \$226,000 for a control order under the *Animal Health Act* to mitigate the risk of disease transmission from domestic to wild sheep and goats. The funding, as approved, will fund \$95,000 for one full-time person required for this program. That is for the control order veterinarian.

Questions about the amounts and program expenses — we have animal testing and truck rental. I believe there is a bit of compensation in there. I am not clear on what that is, but I can provide a little more clarity once I converse with my deputy.

Mr. Istchenko: With respect to the \$131,000 in program costs, can I get a bit more detail around the program itself and how the costs break out in that program?

Hon. Ms. Frost: The majority of the budget goes into the animal testing, and there is a bit of O&M associated with the fieldwork that is required for the veterinarian to go out into the field. There are contributions to compensation with the agricultural industry and the partners there with the Agriculture branch. When I left last time, I didn't quite respond to — so the compensation really is for the partnership there.

Mr. Istchenko: The minister spoke a little bit of the \$60,000 increase to the two research projects, and I believe she stated they were both for the Porcupine caribou herd, so is none of this money going to research for any other caribou herds within the Yukon?

Hon. Ms. Frost: As the member opposite would know, the Porcupine caribou process right now through potential development on the Arctic refuge — there was a requirement for Canada, Yukon and the Northwest Territories as our partners to put together the scientific analysis in our submission. The \$60,000 was really to address the collaboration of the science knowledge base for the submission. The \$60,000 was very specific for that project, and that has now concluded, given that the submission went in yesterday. It was a partnership with the Northwest Territories and the Government of Canada. It is cost-recoverable from those partners, and we each agreed to a contribution to that project. All participated in the design and development of that, and I think that work was significant in the submissions. It

provided a great basis for our partners to craft their submissions to the EIS process.

Mr. Istchenko: I thank the minister for that answer. My last question is — I think it is going to be my last question. The \$142,000 that was allocated to environment programs — the minister did break these programs down a little bit. She did speak to the caribou and the location, but could she tell me where the other programs and studies — the thinhorn sheep herd — are going to be done to look at this — which parts of the Yukon?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I am trying to get clarification on the specific projects. The YESAA implementation funding to support the review of project impacts and mitigation for thinhorn sheep — the assessments of the significance and severity of human-wildlife conflicts in mining and exploration activities. I am trying to get the specifics on what specific projects those were. I will be happy to respond once I get the details.

Mr. Istchenko: That is what I am looking for. I am looking for the actual areas that these projects are going to be done in. That ends my questioning for the day. I thank the minister and the staff for coming today, and I will turn it over to the Third Party.

Ms. White: I sent a letter to both the Minister of Environment and the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources, dated March 5. I am asking about the sheep control order. It says: “What stakeholders were involved in developing the specific fencing standards for the Sheep Control Order?”

“Was there ever discussion about exclusion zones for areas with a very low probability of wild/domestic animal interaction?”

“There are provisions in the sheep control order to compensate farmers for the destruction and testing of sheep. Will there be compensation to farmers for fencing costs? Will there be support for farmers who are required to expand their pens on to crown land?” That is to give the minister an idea. This was sent on March 5.

The first question I have is: What stakeholders were involved in developing the specific fencing standards for the sheep control order?

Hon. Ms. Frost: The steps are taken under the control order for wild/domestic sheep and goats — the steps that were taken to mitigate the risks of respiratory diseases in sheep and goat populations — the control order under the *Animal Health Act* — will come into effect. In the consultation process that led up to that, various Yukon First Nations and stakeholder groups had significant input into this. We have worked with the Agriculture branch, the farmers and, of course, the Agricultural Association. My understanding is that also included some of the RRCs and the Fish and Wildlife Management Board through that process.

Ms. White: My questions were very specific. So in the sheep control order that was released when this announcement was made last fall, it says in one section — and I quote: “Specific standards will be developed over the winter in discussion with stakeholders.”

The reason why I’m asking for the specific stakeholders is that I have been approached by people who attended the sheep control order meeting, and they were surprised by the fencing requirements, that the announcement was made and they were told what it was going to be. They had questions as to which stakeholders were involved in developing those fencing regulations.

Hon. Ms. Frost: It’s a great question. The control order and the release of that document last fall, leading up to the specifics on who participated — we have worked in partnership with the Agriculture branch as well. In terms of the design and consultation and the specific stakeholders, I will converse with — I don’t have that specific information in front of me, given that we have other partners. I will endeavour to get that back and consult with my colleagues.

Ms. White: I guess I could say I could expect the answer in response to my March 5 letter, so when that comes, it can include who was involved in the discussions around the specific fencing standard.

The other thing that was brought up to me was that, for example, if you were a person who had three domestic goats and you lived in a cul-de-sac in Marsh Lake, your likelihood of having an interaction with wild sheep was quite a bit less than if you had a piece of property that was in a less inhabited area than on a cul-de-sac in Marsh Lake. I wanted to know if there was ever any discussion about exclusion zones for areas with a very low probability of wild and domestic animal interaction.

Hon. Ms. Frost: Appreciating that there are some unique circumstances and some things that we have heard and seen with respect to the location of wild sheep, the control order stipulates domestic sheep must — and then it gives a list of criteria as to where the wild sheep can be, which is: not to be kept above 1,000 metres in elevation; be kept in approved enclosures to prevent nose-to-nose contact with wild sheep; be reported immediately if they escape their enclosure; be individually identified by approved methods supported by farm records; be tested for disease-causing pathogens — and it goes on.

I think that what we know in this process and through the record is that we don’t know where all the domestic sheep are located. We know that there are some sheep in the Yukon that have not been recorded. We have sheep in Dawson City. We have sheep throughout the Yukon. So the objective here is really to ensure that we are protecting the wild sheep and the sensitivities around the interaction of both.

Without knowing that, of course, we are clearly working with our partners and working with the Agriculture branch to ensure that for any new sheep coming into the Yukon in years to come, we have a structure in place and some rules around managing that.

Ms. White: I think my question got lost a little bit in translation because if it wasn’t for knowing where exactly all the sheep and goats are — which I totally appreciate that it is hard when people have brought them into the territory. We have been doing research into wild sheep and goat populations for a really long time in the territory. For example, we know

their habitat areas and we know typically where they are found.

The question is: Was there ever the consideration or discussion around having exclusion zones? For example, it is my understanding that the fence heights have to be a certain height. I believe it was six feet between one fence and the second fence because there were double fences, which I don't disagree with — I am not a sheep biologist. The question I have is: Was there the discussion of exclusion zones, or is there the ability of an owner to approach the Animal Health Unit and have that conversation?

Hon. Ms. Frost: Thanks for the question. There were and there are no exclusion zones.

Ms. White: It has been highlighted by some that if your animal pen is at the edge of your property and — like I said, I think it is six feet, but I stand to be corrected, to have the second fence line — there were questions as to whether or not there would be exceptions made or the allowance of the second fence to go onto Crown land. Has that been discussed by the minister and her department?

Hon. Ms. Frost: I am not specifically sure what the interaction was on the many engagement sessions, but I will endeavour to get that response back. Perhaps that has been the discussion, but certainly is not something that found its way into this process. If, in the future, there is a need for some adjustments, I would suggest that there is always room for improvement and something that we support in terms of working with our animal owners to improve the enclosures. The resources are there, so we have worked with the Agriculture branch to look for compensation in making that readily available to something, I guess, that would result in compliance to this order.

Ms. White: Mr. Deputy Chair, that will end my questions today. I look forward to getting a response to my March 5 letter in which those questions are asked. I realize it falls under two departments, so it was directed to two ministers. I look forward to that and of course look forward to the future budget discussion.

Deputy Chair: Is there any further general debate on Vote 52, Department of Environment?

Seeing none, should we go to line-by-line debate?

Ms. White: Mr. Deputy Chair, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, I request the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 52, Department of Environment, cleared or carried, as required.

Unanimous consent re deeming all lines in Vote 52, Department of Environment, cleared or carried

Deputy Chair: Ms. White has, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, requested the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 52, Department of Environment, cleared or carried, as required.

Is there unanimous consent?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Deputy Chair: Unanimous consent has been granted.
On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

Total Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$428,000 agreed to

On Capital Expenditures

Total Capital Expenditures in the amount of nil agreed to

Total Expenditures in the amount of \$428,000 agreed to Department of Environment agreed to

Deputy Chair: We will now proceed to Vote 51, Department of Community Services.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Deputy Chair: Committee of the Whole will recess for 10 minutes.

Recess

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

The matter before the Committee is resuming general debate on Vote 51, Department of Community Services, in Bill 208, entitled *Third Appropriation Act 2018-19*.

Department of Community Services — continued

Deputy Chair: Ms. White has the floor for 19 minutes and 53 seconds.

Ms. White: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair. This is going to be really brief. It's not going to take 19 minutes or anywhere close to that.

There was the press release that came out on February 13 that talked about the special warrant issued for infrastructure and land development spending. After I listened to the Minister of Community Services talk about the great success of having so many projects and just not having the envelope for it, I thought what a missed opportunity it was in the press release to really celebrate the achievements of the department to get to that point and to highlight that it has never been done before and it's pretty exciting that we got here.

So it strikes me that there's a quote that sometimes is attributed to Lincoln. It talks about seizing defeat from the jaws of victory. I can say for myself, had the press release talked about what the minister said about the great successes and the achievements of how exciting this time is, my response would have been different. It would have been different because all these projects that were listed in the special warrant — we knew they existed, but what wasn't talked about was how things were proceeding quicker and more fluidly than they ever had before and that the Department of Community Services was trying something new and it was really working.

So I would like to say to the department: Congratulations on the unexpected success. I think it's really exciting and I appreciate what the minister said and I appreciated it in my briefing today and I think there are some really exciting things. The one question I have is: What lessons have we learned for this next budgeting process?

We have just gone through this process where we used a special warrant to cover next things, and we have talked about how we're going to change and it's now going to be an envelope process that will be more fluid and being able to respond to the needs. What I really want to know is: What lessons has the Department of Community Services learned for upcoming budgets?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: What I will say is that there was some debate across all departments. Whenever you bring in anything, say from one department — whether it's Community Services or Highways and Public Works — and we're all working to get these infrastructure projects moving, there are questions about capacity — I don't mean within the departments, I mean just broadly across the community.

We have those questions. We have questions about what it does to prices overall — right? So there are a lot of issues at work. I think we're always watching the debt limit. There are a whole bunch of factors that go into it. We believe the project has overall been successful with this notion of envelopes.

One of the things that I noticed right away and one of the typical ways that any government gets criticized is, "Oh, you didn't spend what you said you were going to spend." Because realistically what happens is you say, "Okay, here are the projects that we think we should do in order to achieve that spend-out." Then inevitably one or two out of 30 projects will fall by the wayside. Something will happen, like YESAB or something — you cannot anticipate all outcomes.

As a result, we were looking for a way to allow us to put in place all of the appropriate tests and rules. Here are the projects. We are sharing what those projects are. We are working with municipalities, in our case, or the territorial government as a whole, in the case of Highways and Public Works. If we all agree that these projects are good, let's do this thing where we create the envelope. I did speak about it here in the Legislature maybe even a little more than a year ago. It was new, and we had not seen how this would play out. We think this is a good technique. In fact, we were more successful than we anticipated.

What we said this time to the department was shoot high, but not as high as you can. That is my answer on the infrastructure. It was to temper the success so that we could hit a specific target of projects, but still allow the flexibility for multi-year projects with our partners.

Unfortunately, the press release for a special warrant typically comes from Finance; it doesn't come from CS. We might have said something slightly different. I hope the Premier is not listening at this very moment. It is totally fine. He also believes this is a good news story. No one wanted a special warrant; let's make that clear.

With respect to land, it is a slightly different story. With land, we believed that we needed to put more energy into land development right now because we felt there had been a lull. I will say that some of that lull can happen whenever you have a transitioning government. Some of it can happen just because there were earlier moves several years ago to change how land development was happening. The department, or the branch, was split a bit. Now through no one's fault, we

thought that's not working so let's get it back together. So we got it back together.

We thought we needed to come in strong on land development to catch up. There is this notion that we want to have a two-year supply of lots across all communities. This is not just Whitehorse; it's across the Yukon. That is what we have been working to do. It is to get back on track, so we have been investing heavily.

As I said during the ministerial statement a couple of days ago, it is not just about the government as the land developers. We are exploring other things as well. So it's government as land developers and exploring with the private sector. We said we were starting with some lots here in Whitehorse. I heard from the Official Opposition that they would like to see that expanded out to communities. I agree with them, but we need to work with the private sector and make sure that it's working well for them too. We want them to succeed. We're happy, but we weren't going to risk this effort to get the two-year supply back on track.

The other one, of course — and I think the Member for Takhini-Kopper King even mentioned this in the last day or two — about the great news that there was a title registered under Kwanlin Dün First Nation. That was a game changer and we all saw it. Now, if that can be replicated by other First Nations — and I think they're all looking to see how this is going to work from their perspective — it may change the landscape, literally and figuratively.

So those are the things that we have on our minds. They're not all about the budget. From a budget perspective, we feel pretty confident. I always want to sort of knock on wood because not every project — you do as much work as you can to make sure the contracts are put in place in a sound way and that the RFP system is let in a positive way, but I don't think you can plan for every eventuality. I'm sure there will be some day when I have to stand up in the House and say yes, there is a project that is overbudget or yes, there is a project that is delayed. Right now, that's not the case. We're pretty happy about that. So from a budgeting perspective, we believe that — and we have used it again in this budget, by the way. That envelope is in there.

The last one I'll say is that we keep talking to municipalities and we say, okay, tell us your priorities. We get their first priorities in and then we say to them, if your next priority is a year or two out, you can change it, but try to change the further out ones. That's what we keep talking about in the flexibility in that five-year capital plan.

For the first few years, until it really fleshes out more, I think we'll still see some movement in it. I anticipate some criticism about that, but that's the growing pains of getting this thing really fleshed out.

I just heard another resolution from municipalities where they want to see that long-term planning, so we really do want to work with them around that.

Ms. White: Just to paraphrase: Aim high but not quite as high and envelopes work?

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Ms. White: All right. I thank the department officials, and I look forward to the budget debate later on.

Mr. Cathers: I'm pleased to rise here this afternoon as one of the two critics of the Community Services area. My area of responsibility as critic is in the Protective Services division of Community Services. I would like to begin by thanking the officials here today, as well as for the briefing earlier today on Community Services.

I'm not going to ask too many Community Services questions here this afternoon — I will save most of that for the budget itself — but I do have a list of several questions about this area of the budget that I will ask this afternoon. The first relates to the issue of communications when something goes wrong. The minister will recall just a few short nights ago that both he and I were at an Ibex Valley Local Advisory Council meeting. We had a good and constructive discussion about the issue.

I doubt that the minister has had much time to look into it since we spoke, so I'm not trying to put the minister in the hot seat here this afternoon. I just want to raise it and put it on the record here in the Assembly because of the importance of the issue so that the minister and officials, as well as those from other departments, can get back to us at a later date.

The issue primarily is that I've had constituents with concerns — including the Ibex Valley Local Advisory Council — and I know my colleague the Member for Kluane has had concern for constituents and also wrote to the minister responsible for Yukon Energy Corporation and the Minister of Community Services this winter related to power outages in January.

The issue relates to better information flowing to the public when there is a problem, and that includes an area of the power outage that Yukon Energy Corporation and ATCO — I do want to thank the crews; I know they were dealing with getting the power back on in extremely cold conditions — no criticism to them for the work that they do. While it was a long power outage, I'm sure that the reason it took so long was because they simply were not able to get the power back on sooner.

What occurred regarding the outage, particularly in the Whitehorse area and affecting a number of my constituents, was a long power outage at a very cold time. I heard from constituents in Ibex Valley — which seems to have been the slowest area to get back on — and some of my constituents reported being 10.5 hours without electricity, which is a big problem for anyone who either is dependent on electric heat or whose oil or other heat system is dependent on power to operate.

The Yukon Energy Corporation had posted on social media early in the day about the power being out and when they expected it to be on. There were also statements made on the radio regarding when they expected it to be on. The issue and the concern that I've heard from constituents was that, after that point, there weren't really updates flowing out, or at least not on social media, and people were in a state of wondering when the power was coming back on. In some cases, it had a significant effect on people of wondering

whether they should leave home to go into work, whether they should leave work to go back home, and it also had some effect on people with regard to wondering when and if and how they should go to check and see if senior citizens and other vulnerable people were okay in that situation.

What I just want to suggest here today and put on record is that when you add this situation, as well as the issue that my constituents have had and which both I and the minister discussed with the Ibex Valley Local Advisory Council, within my riding — we've had a number of incidents within the past year and a bit where the highway has been shut down and the information flow about when it's expected to be open, or how much longer it's going to be out, has often been very sparse, if there have been updates at all, and it has left people largely relying on informing each other via social media.

There have also been both good reports and rumours that occur in that environment, and the rumours, of course, are not always accurate. There have been good eyewitness reports at the time as well. What I am speaking to particularly is that the government information sharing, both on social media and through other means, such as radio, for those who don't have social media, could improve and I believe should improve.

Part of the current situation is that it isn't really necessarily always clear whose job it is to send out updates or when they are supposed to. What I am suggesting is that government — and this affects multiple departments; it affects the Yukon Energy Corporation in the case of those instances where there is a power outage; it probably involves both Yukon Energy and ATCO, which of course is a privately-owned, publicly regulated utility — and so it will involve conversations with them. Within government, the primary areas of responsibility, I would think, would be the Department of Community Services through Protective Services and their Emergency Measures branch, the Department of Highways and Public Works with regard to when a highway is shut down, and there might be other departments involved, such as the Department of Justice, in certain circumstances.

In instances like the problem in my riding when there was a fuel truck that overturned at the corner of the Mayo Road and the Alaska Highway, which had the road shut down for roughly eight hours — it was in the neighbourhood of that — it did have a big impact on people getting to work or getting into town to do shopping, errands and so on. In a situation like that, I think it would be good to see government and partners get to the stage where — whichever department is responsible — and there may be, in a case inside city limits, interaction with the City of Whitehorse — but for the public purpose, regardless of who has to talk to who to get what authorization to do what, it would be nice to see it moved to the stage where, in the future, if one of our primary highways is shut down because of its location — in that particular instance that I am using as an example, both our Highway No. 1 and Highway No. 2 were shut down — to have regular updates coming out via social media for those who follow social media, updates on a government webpage that hopefully steps would be taken to make sure that people knew they could look

there, and thirdly, but also importantly, to have that information coming out through other means, such as on the radio station for people who don't have social media and may not use electronics, would all be valuable.

Of course, as ministers will know, local radio stations have been very cooperative in the past about getting out information of that type to Yukon citizens, both as a matter of convenience and a matter of safety.

If we could get to the stage in those situations — whether we're dealing with a power outage or the road being shut down for situations such as that — again, also a few years back, there was an incident where there was an accident on the Takhini River bridge on the Mayo Road, and that also had the highway shut down at great inconvenience to a number of people and probably at a not-insignificant economic cost to the territory through people who were forced to miss work or were unable to conduct their private business activities — getting to that stage where there's just better and more regular information updates would be a good step for the territory.

Last but not least on that subject, in the instance of an actual serious emergency such as a wildfire, if people are more familiar with where they can get the information — whether it's on social media, through text updates, through a push system on the website, on the radio, wherever it is — if they're familiar with it, should we have a situation — which, of course, all of us hope will not occur but is a real possibility — of a major wildfire incident affecting the City of Whitehorse and the surrounding area — people in a situation like that can be fearful. They can be unsure what to do. As we saw in the situation of September 11, 2001, the result of that can be a little bit of panic in the streets, so to speak, if people aren't sure how to handle a situation.

My point with this — which I should give credit to the Ibex Valley Local Advisory Council for their thoughts and suggestions on this — would be that if people are familiar with information sharing in what — for lack of a better term — might be called a “sub-emergency incident” or a less-than-emergency situation that is inconvenient and serious but not life-threatening, in a case of a wildfire or other event of that type, that would increase the probability that people know where to get the information and we're able to better guide people in that type of situation.

Also, on the government communication side, it would provide the staff with more opportunity to be testing how they get these messages out, how many people seem to be reached by the notifications, where there are problems with those notifications, and themselves also have more familiarity about how to deal with it should a crisis occur.

With that introduction there, I would just leave that point and provide the minister with an opportunity to respond about that. But as I say, I recognize that the idea was talked about relatively recently and the minister may not have a lot more to share with me here this afternoon.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: I do certainly have something to share. I want to begin by acknowledging that the points raised by the Member for Lake Laberge are critical points.

This notion about how we communicate with the public is so essential and especially in a situation where people are in an emergency — they're under stress and they're worried. It's critical for them that they get information in a timely fashion. We have been changing as a society. I don't know — maybe it used to be fine that there was a sign up on the highway that talked about the fire threat, but nowadays I think people want to know where the fire is and what's going on. Our access to information has educated us to stay engaged generally — when we want, certainly.

What are we doing? I'll give some outlines, but let me just begin with the notion that I think it requires continuous improvement. Whatever it is that we are doing, it will always require us to keep abreast of what's going on and to look for ways in which to seek improvement.

I will leave most of the changes to Highways and Public Works and 511 to general debate when we get to the mains, but you ought to check out the new website. 511 has just changed.

I will also say that, just a couple of nights ago, I happened to be in the Member for Lake Laberge's riding at the Ibex Valley Local Advisory Council meeting. It was great to meet with his constituents and the good folks who are on the council. We did have this very conversation, as he notes.

I said then that I thought our 511 system was working to get more proactive and to push out more information rather than be sort of a passive system where you call up and find out what's going on. Now it has more information; it has more maps; it's mobile-friendly; it has a trip planner; it has weight-restriction information, and I think the notion is that it will be updated more frequently. That is the whole goal here.

I happened to sit in on a meeting with the Minister of Highways and Public Works recently where we were meeting with the Yukon Avalanche Association — talking about three-year funding for that organization, by the way. They were asking us, and we were talking with them about looking into that. But we were also looking for the synergies, because Highways and Public Works cares about road blockages and the Yukon Avalanche Association has good data about the risks associated with that, and we were trying to get these groups working together. I think that's important.

The member opposite talked about the recent LNG tanker. There have been several incidents over the last year or two. Some of them have prompted us to try to dig down to understand, because sometimes it's Highways and Public Works and the road crews that are dealing with things; sometimes it's the RCMP that are dealing with things; sometimes it's Environment, and sometimes it's us with our emergency crews. One of the things we said to ourselves is that the public doesn't really care about which department is involved. What they want to see is a consistent and safe response. That was one of the things we saw.

Let me just talk about our own department — no, for a second, let me just talk about that incident that was being discussed. I happened to talk to one of the emergency volunteer responders to that incident last night. He gave me some pictures of the event and he talked it over. What I want

to say is that there was really good coordination between volunteer fire, volunteer EMS and our own EMO group that worked well. You don't wish for these incidents, but when they happen, you sure hope that you learn from them so that you can improve your systems and how you coordinate across each other.

It is really important that we do that well. With that one, I know we were also coordinating with Highways and Public Works and 511 — again, the importance of making sure that information is getting out there.

What are we doing, then? First of all, with respect to the emergency measures group that we have within my branch — the Emergency Measures Organization — we have done two tests on mobile devices this past year on push notifications. You get a text out of the blue and you are notified if there is an emergency. It was a very successful test. Nowadays, most people have mobile devices — not everyone, of course, but that penetration is very strong. We have been working nationally on that issue, and that's good news. There is always more work to do with it, but we are feeling pretty good about that.

Second of all, with respect to communications in general, we have new, or additional, dedicated resources to critical stress incidents like wildfire. We have allocated more communications to that because we understand how important communication is. Everyone should understand that underneath that, when there is a critical incident, what happens is that the whole of our communications group — and, I think, even across other departments — people are just allocated into the critical incident response, so “You are now handling this piece of the communications.” The team trains up so that when there is a critical incident, people move out of their regular job and move into a system that will allow them to get those communications moving more regularly.

Lastly, around communications, we have a new wildfire map and system. It is an online system. That system was introduced last year, and we have been talking about how to update it regularly. One of the points that the Member for Lake Laberge mentioned in conversations that I've had with him is if you go stagnant for a while and if you don't give a response, the public starts to worry that something is offline and that they are missing out. So even if you don't have new information, you need to be putting something out that says we have no new information or that the situation is the same, but we will update again in four hours — or whatever the time frame is, depending on how fast that incident is evolving.

Every spring, we have a campaign for emergency preparedness. We line it up with the coming wildfire season. This year — I said this in the Legislature even last fall — we have been planning Operation Nanook with the Joint Task Force North — a shout-out to the Canadian military. They rotate through the Yukon every several years. At my first meeting with the team in charge, they asked what we should use as a trial, and I said, “It's wildfire. It is definitely wildfire.” The incident that they have planned out is a wildfire south of town, which will travel toward Whitehorse and become an interface fire and then result in an evacuation.

We were really pleased — and a shout-out to the Armed Forces, because normally, they run these in August, I think, but we urged them to run them in late April and early May. The reason was that we wanted our own wildfire crews to be part of that training. The problem is that in August, the wildfire crews are typically out fighting fires, so we don't get them involved. We really wanted that exchange, and that is coming.

The last one I'll talk about is that we are doing community emergency plans. I saw a list in front of me. We're doing some piloting this spring in several communities — Teslin, with the Carcross/Tagish First Nation to work with the First Nation, and also working in Mount Lorne — and in particular, building around Operation Nanook, which is being established there.

There is a lot going on.

One more thing I'll mention — and then I'll sit down and answer follow-up questions if I've missed anything — is that we have been working more closely with the City of Whitehorse. They've approached us about planning and about the importance of it. I think this was prompted by the power outage in cold weather that happened earlier this spring or late this winter. We've been in pretty close contact with the City of Whitehorse. We recognize that they are important partners. They have the lead for developing the emergency plan for Whitehorse, but we want to be in partnership with them in development of that plan because it's critical for the whole territory as well.

I'll stop there, Mr. Deputy Chair, and I look forward to answering any further questions.

Mr. Cathers: I thank the minister for his response and the information provided there.

As he did correctly note, one of the issues that can happen even in the — for lack of a better term — sub-emergency category of incidents that may block a road or cause a power outage is that there can be jurisdictional issues around who is involved and who is responsible to speak.

Ultimately, I think that if work proceeds — and I'm pleased to hear the minister's generally supportive comments about this — to do this, it's an opportunity to resolve those jurisdictional issues between ATCO Yukon and the Yukon government, the City of Whitehorse and the Yukon government, or the federal government and the territorial government. It's an opportunity to do it before anything is on fire, if I may put it that way. I think that's a great opportunity to test it.

I do welcome the news that Operation Nanook is going to have the cooperation between the Armed Forces and the Yukon government and that it's moved earlier. Congratulations to the minister and officials for convincing the Armed Forces to do that.

I also want to note — and I don't mean to say this in an alarmist manner, but a very factual manner — that if you look at the situations in which a wildfire that, in dry conditions blown by high winds, could cause a real problem that requires evacuation within Whitehorse's surrounding area and requires it quickly — if the wrong combination of factors combine to

make a perfect storm situation, then fire can move so fast that there won't even be time for the Armed Forces to deploy. I would just encourage the minister — I know he is aware of the work being done by the Whitehorse FireSmart group. I may have the term wrong for this group of citizens who have gotten together of their own volition trying to do more — and to get government and citizens to do more — about reducing wildfire risk.

I want to commend those people who have been involved in doing that, several of whom are my constituents. The presentation they made this winter at Mount McIntyre was well-attended by Yukoners. What struck me on this issue is that unfortunate situations to the south of us — including Fort McMurray, Telegraph Creek, Lower Post, as well as fires in California — have really gotten people's attention and caused people to think more about wildfires than they probably did in the past. They recognize the fact that — in part as a result of the fact that the natural beauty of the area we live in is a big part of what draws many Yukoners to live and make their homes here in the territory — there has often been a reluctance to do much cutting of trees near communities. We have had this beautiful boreal forest grow up around and in the midst of a number of residential areas throughout the territory.

From a fire perspective, the boreal forest is a high-risk area. The work that was being done at the presentation by the Whitehorse FireSmart group was really very informative with what they provided, both through the citizens and government staff from the minister's department as well as the City of Whitehorse, who were there to provide information about wildfire risk mitigation, including talking about a report done in the aftermath of Fort McMurray, which had assessed where fires occurred, which homes were left standing and had demonstrated a very clear correlation between areas that had been thoroughly firesmarted or were in the middle of deciduous trees versus those that were right near boreal forest, as well as a correlation between whether people had taken down the vegetation in their yard — I should say, vegetation of primarily the boreal forest or coniferous trees in that situation, which is the highest risk, as well as some brush. When they had removed those higher risk elements within a proper radius of their house, there was again a correlation in the survival of the buildings.

I just want to jump back to the fact that I think we have a window of opportunity here in the Yukon that I don't think has ever really existed before to this extent where more people than ever are thinking about the consequences they have seen affecting friends and family in Telegraph Creek, Lower Post or Fort McMurray and realizing that we're currently in a situation where if the wrong combination of factors come into play, we're simply dealing with trying to evacuate as a fire comes through and burns areas where people's homes are and recognizing as well that there is something we can do about it.

This doesn't have to be a doom-and-gloom situation. It is an opportunity to identify areas that are priorities for cutting down the boreal forest or coniferous trees in that area and potentially replacing them with deciduous trees. So it is not

necessarily a matter of simply deforesting or de-vegetating, but choosing the vegetation in the area to go with trees such as aspen or willow, which have a far lower risk of ever igniting. Doing that in cooperation with the private sector, there is an opportunity to create opportunity for the forestry, logging and woodcutting sector of our economy. It can also be connected to work that can be done by the government within its own buildings, as well as the private sector and citizens, to move away from our dependence on fossil fuel heat and shift toward using renewable resources, whether it be cut wood in the normal blocks that most of us use or through more of the biomass model, such as is used in Teslin, for example, or like we put into Dawson City.

I just want to highlight all those points. I want to thank the people who have taken their personal time to get involved in this issue for doing so. Since it is a cross-departmental thing, I have had a conversation before with the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources about it. I just want to raise that point and to encourage government to use this opportunity to work with the citizens who are involved, to work with all levels of government and to come up with a plan to address this issue in a way that really has multiple benefits. It provides an economic opportunity. It reduces the risk to our homes, and from an environmental perspective, it can reduce our dependence on fossil fuels. As well, it can be a source of long-term jobs that are good jobs and well-paying jobs for Yukon citizens. With that, I will move on from that issue and again just encourage the government to act on it and to strike while the iron is hot.

I want to move on as well to the issue of volunteer firefighters getting to the scene of emergencies when there is an emergency situation. One of the things that I had heard from a volunteer firefighter, who is from one of the fire halls in my riding, is that a couple times when they have incidents when the road has been shut down, volunteer firefighters — a lot of them, especially for the fire halls that are right on the periphery of Whitehorse, including in my riding Hootalinqua and Ibex Valley as well as those on the south side of town — also have jobs, usually in Whitehorse. When they get a call, they are very happy to respond. They are dedicated in responding.

The problem they can end up with is that if the reason they're being called out has anything to do with the road being shut down —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

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

Ms. White: Standing Order 19(b)(i) — so the member is speaking to matters other than the question under discussion.

Right now, we're in the supplementary budget of Community Services. We have a line item for \$15 million under the Clean Water Wastewater Fund and \$5 million under residential land development. I wonder if this is on topic.

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

Mr. Cathers: On the point of order, I thought it was related to the subject matter. I do actually get the member's point, so with the Deputy Chair's indulgence, I will wrap up one remark on this and move more specifically to the items in the budget.

Deputy Chair's ruling

Deputy Chair: It would be appreciated if you could wrap up and move on to a more relevant question.

Mr. Cathers: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair.

In just closing that off, what had reminded me of this was our conversation about communications and events that happened this year. The only issue I just want to mention is that one idea that has been suggested by the volunteer firefighters is that perhaps looking at some sort of strobe options for them would help them get to a situation — some sort of flashing light they could put on the dashboard.

In concluding my comments on that point, I am just going to put that thought out there for the minister and encourage him to consider consulting with volunteer fire departments as well as EMS about whether they would support that here in the territory.

With that, Mr. Deputy Chair, I am going to move to an item that specifically relates to this fiscal year in the funding that relates to the EMS area of the minister's budget. While there's not an increase in that area identified, it certainly falls under the category of expenditures in the 2018-19 fiscal year.

In the Department of Health and Social Services, as the minister knows, the medevac program operated by Health and Social Services works directly with EMS, and they depend on each other to operate effectively.

In the area of the Health and Social Services department, they identified a \$2.6-million increase in medical travel. They haven't provided us with a breakdown — although they committed to one — of how much of this was for medevac costs and how much was for the items related to in-territory travel subsidies — or out of territory. Since the minister's Emergency Medical Services area works directly with Health and Social Services on that, my question is if the minister has the information — or can get back to me later with it. Of that \$2.6-million increase that affected the Government of Yukon for medical travel costs, in the area of medevacs inside the territory, how many of those —

Deputy Chair's statement

Deputy Chair: Order. In my opinion, you are getting very close to straying off of Standing Order 19(b)(i), which Ms. White brought to the floor as a point of order. I would appreciate it if you could direct your questions toward the lines that we're talking about today, which is about community infrastructure, clean water and land development — if you could direct them in that way, please.

Mr. Cathers: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair, I think. In the past, it has always been deemed in order to ask about

program areas of department budgets that were contained within the budgets before the Assembly.

I will wrap up on this point here, but it has been in order in the past to ask the minister: In an area of your budget that's before the Assembly under debate and as it relates to another department, were any of the increases in medevac costs caused by gaps in Emergency Medical Services coverage, and if so, how many, and what was the cost?

Hon. Mr. Streicker: With everybody's indulgence, I will just give a few remarks back.

First of all, the one thing I will say is that if there are any questions that I don't get to here today, I'm happy to get up during the mains and respond to them. I know we'll be answering these same questions at that time, so it's all good. We'll get there.

I do want to talk just briefly, if I may, about some of the synergies. First of all, last year, some of the importance of working across jurisdictions — it's very important. We picked up the phone when Telegraph Creek was on fire, and we had a good conversation with BC. That led to a lot of positive work with our territory supporting British Columbia.

Why is that good? Because they'll support us. I think they would anyway, but it's always good to build those relationships. On this notion of reducing the risk of wildfire, absolutely we need to do that.

Just in talking about synergies again, I thank the member opposite for his suggestions. As it turns out, I have been sitting down with the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources and with the Minister of Highways and Public Works to talk about these very things — about forestry, about the Yukon Wood Products Association, about reducing fuel load and about biomass and generating economic activities.

With respect to the question about medevacs, I will have to get something specific. Certainly nothing in last year's budget was increased that I know of around medevacs, and nothing in this supplementary is about that medevac travel. It's very consistent from last year, and I can check.

Again, we're not talking yet about 2019-20.

We do work with the Department of Health and Social Services regarding medical travel, although my understanding is that most of the increase was for medical travel, not medevacs.

We do have changes in medevacs across the territory. It has to do with, I think, health acuity and responses and the types of calls that we get over time. I can look a little more deeply into that, but I don't think anything in the 2018-19 budget has changed around medevacs, although I will look and make sure that I have that right.

Mr. Cathers: I thank the minister for his answer on that. I would just hope that he could get back to us with more information later. As we get into debate — especially on the next budget — I hope that we have the opportunity to talk about how these two program areas work together and where gaps in one area may cause costs in another budget.

That exhausts most of the main questions that I had to ask the minister here today.

I have a long list of other questions to ask him in the area of the new budget, once that comes up. I would remind the minister that I won't dwell on it at length here today. I do have a letter related to the EMS program area that I had hoped he could follow up on and get back to me with a response shortly. With that, I will conclude and thank the officials for their responses.

Deputy Chair: Is there any further general debate on Vote 51, Department of Community Services?

Seeing none, we will proceed to line-by-line debate.

Ms. White: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, I request the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 51, Department of Community Services, cleared or carried, as required.

Unanimous consent re deeming all lines in Vote 51, Department of Community Services, cleared or carried

Deputy Chair: Ms. White has, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, requested the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 51, Department of Community Services, cleared or carried, as required.

Is there unanimous consent?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Deputy Chair: Unanimous consent has been granted.

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

Total Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of nil agreed to

On Capital Expenditures

Total Capital Expenditures in the amount of \$20,000,000 agreed to

Total Expenditures in the amount of \$20,000,000 agreed to

Department of Community Services agreed to

Deputy Chair: We will now proceed to Vote 10, Public Service Commission.

Hon. Mr. Streicker: Noting the time, I move that the Chair report progress.

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

Motion agreed to

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

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

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

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

Chair's report

Mr. Adel: Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 208, entitled *Third Appropriation Act 2018-19*, and directed me to report progress.

Speaker: You have heard the report from the Deputy Chair of Committee of the Whole.

Are you agreed?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

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

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

Motion agreed to

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

I wish everyone a happy St. Patrick's Day.

The House adjourned at 5:20 p.m.

The following document was filed March 14, 2019:

34-2-63

Policing Priorities, letter re (dated February 4, 2019) from Brad Cathers, Member for Lake Laberge, to Hon. Tracy-Anne McPhee, Minister of Justice (Cathers)