

**Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Wednesday, May 15, 2013 — 1:00 p.m.**

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

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

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

Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In recognition of First Nation anniversaries

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: It is my pleasure to rise today in recognition of a number of significant First Nation anniversaries throughout this year. As many of you know, February 14 marked the 40th anniversary of the presentation of *Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow*. It was on that day, in 1973, when a delegation of Yukon First Nation chiefs, led by Elijah Smith, presented this historic document to the Prime Minister. In his speech to the Prime Minister, Elijah Smith affirmed it was the first time that leaders of the Yukon Indian people had come to the capital and he declared, “We’re here to talk about the future. We are not here looking for a handout.” That presentation marked the beginning of the negotiation process for modern-day treaties in Yukon and the first self-government agreements in Canada. This group of First Nation leaders blazed a trail and put Yukon on the map by travelling to Ottawa to express their aspirations and present their plan for moving forward. Forty years later, there is much to celebrate.

Today, 11 of Yukon’s 14 First Nations have final and self-government agreements. Yukon accounts for almost half of all self-governing First Nations in this country. Yukon land claim settlements create opportunities. They help to preserve First Nation culture and strengthen the social, political and economic fabric of this territory. It is a great source of pride for Yukon to be seen as a leader in land claim implementation and self-government, both in Canada and internationally.

I also pay tribute to the 20th anniversary of the signing of the *Umbrella Final Agreement* and the first four First Nation final and self-government agreements, as well as the 25th anniversary of the Yukon *Languages Act*, which recognizes the significance of aboriginal languages in Yukon.

On May 29, 1993, the *Umbrella Final Agreement* was signed by the Council for Yukon Indians, now Council of Yukon First Nations, the Government of Canada and the Government of Yukon. Judy Gingell signed as Chair of the Council for Yukon Indians, Tom Siddon signed as the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, and John Ostashek signed as the Yukon Government Leader.

The *Umbrella Final Agreement*, commonly referred to as the UFA, provided a common template for Yukon First Nations in the negotiation of their own final agreements. On the same day the UFA was signed, four Yukon First Nations also signed

final and self-government agreements with the Government of Canada and Yukon, namely Champagne and Aishihik First Nations by Chief Paul Birckel, Teslin Tlingit Council by Chief Dave Keenan; First Nation of Na Cho Nyäk Dun by Chief Robert Hager; and Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation by Chief Robert Bruce, Jr.

The road to Yukon’s land claim agreements was long and, at times, challenging, but today, all Yukoners benefit from these agreements and the foundation laid by past visionaries. Mr. Speaker, given our rich history, it is important that we work together to share our story with others.

As these anniversaries approached, officials from all three parties began working together on a number of public awareness projects to help inform Yukoners about our unique agreements. I’m referring to the “Mapping the Way” campaign, which has the goal of improving the knowledge about and enhancing pride in Yukon First Nation final and self-government agreements.

On May 29, the “Mapping the Way” campaign will be launching a short video recognizing historical milestones and current successes. These remarkable anniversaries could not have been reached without the dedication of many remarkable leaders.

Judy Gingell, a Kwanlin Dun First Nation elder and Yukon’s first aboriginal Commissioner, was presented the Order of Canada medal at a ceremony just two weeks ago in Rideau Hall.

Ms. Gingell promoted aboriginal culture and the need for rural Yukon to have a voice on economic decisions in the territory, particularly when she was head of CYFN. Today I would also like to acknowledge the Council of Yukon First Nations’ first ever Wall of Honour recipients. Earlier this year, six individuals were inducted into the Council of Yukon First Nations Wall of Honour, and they include Dave Joe and Mike Smith, and four past leaders who were inducted posthumously: Johnny Johns, Elijah Smith, Harry Allen and Joe Jacquot. Another one of these great leaders was Roddy Blackjack. Sadly, Yukon recently lost this well-respected elder. To Roddy’s family and community, I wish to convey our deepest sympathy on his passing.

I believe it is important to honour the past and to recognize the people who worked on these significant agreements, as well as those who are contributing to the work now and in the future. As such, it is my honour to introduce both past and current leaders who were instrumental in making this Yukon history.

I ask fellow members and the public who are here today in the Yukon Legislative Assembly to join me in welcoming Paul Birckel; Dave and Marianne Keenan; Robert Hager and Christine Hager; Robert Bruce Jr.; Steve Smith and his wife, Kayla; Judy Gingell; Chief Fairclough, representing Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation and the Council of Yukon First Nations; Denise Beattie; Khà Shâde Héni Cresswell; Chief Eddie Taylor; Chief Carl Sidney; elder Sam Johnston; Deputy Chief Michelle Telep; Acting Chief Jessie Dawson and Regional Chief of AFN, Mike Smith.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: My apologies if I've missed anybody. Once again, thank you for joining us today to celebrate land claims history and the leaders who have made and continue to make Yukon unique.

In closing, I congratulate Yukon First Nations on these important anniversaries that will be celebrated throughout this year. I encourage citizens to learn more about how these agreements make Yukon a better place to live. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Applause

Ms. Hanson: Before I begin my tribute, I'd also like to recognize Chief James Allen from the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations.

Applause

Ms. Hanson: It's a huge honour for me to rise today on behalf of the Yukon New Democratic Party Official Opposition to pay tribute to the 20th anniversary of the signing of the UFA and the first four final and self-government agreements.

Twenty years ago, I would never have anticipated that I'd have the honour to be able to stand here, as an elected member of the Legislature, to reflect upon the achievements of Yukon — Yukon First Nations, the Yukon government and the federal government — in actually finalizing these agreements.

May 29 was a brisk, sunny day filled with expectation. With the big tent erected on the CYI grounds, dignitaries included, as the Premier said, the minister of the day Tom Siddon; Judy Gingell, chair of the Council of Yukon Indians; Yukon Government Leader John Ostashek; Chief Robert Bruce Jr. from Vuntut Gwitchin; Chief Robert Hager, representing the First Nation of Na Cho Nyäk Dun; Dave Keenan, Chief of the Teslin Tlingit Council; and Paul Birckel, Chief of the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations, along with members of the original group of First Nation leaders who had accompanied Elijah Smith to Ottawa in February 1973 for their historic meeting with then Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau. Elders, members of Yukon First Nations, communities from across the Yukon and a large number of people from the general public were piped to the grounds, accompanied by members of the RCMP in full ceremonial dress. The sense of excitement, of anticipation, was palpable, 20 years after the initial tabling of the historic *Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow*.

After numerous setbacks in negotiations, the failed ratification of the 1984 agreement, and after subsequent changes to federal policy that included recognition and negotiations for the first time in Canada of self-government as an integral part of a land claim agreement, Yukon's First Nations' patience was being rewarded. Mr. Speaker, it is important to recognize how deeply rooted First Nations' patience is.

The Klondike Gold Rush brought thousands of gold seekers to Yukon. There were no socio-economic benefits or impact assessments in those days. History tells a grim tale of how Yukon Indian people were treated and ignored. As the words of Chief Jim Boss from the Lake Laberge area so poignantly put it in 1902, "Tell the King very hard we want something for our Indians, because they take our land and our game."

Mr. Speaker, that message went ignored at the time and then was outlawed for many years when Canada's First Nations were forbidden by law to raise issues related to treaty or land claims. The success of the Nisga'a Supreme Court of Canada challenge coincided with a growing momentum in the Yukon among Yukon First Nations that the socio-economic and cultural circumstances of their citizens were such that their very existence was threatened.

Looking back at what was actually said in *Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow* gives a sense of how Yukon First Nations influenced their desire to engage in negotiations. They said, "The land has always been home to us and this is where we intend to stay. The Whiteman has always come to the Yukon for money and left without really ever having experienced her quiet brown people or the majestic reaches of her land. But the Indian people have always been there through all the major invasions caused by the fur trade, gold rush, highway construction and now, the people who want to build pipelines across our land."

"Many Indians look at what the Whiteman has done to destroy and pollute lakes and rivers and wonder what will happen to the birds, fish and game. We wonder how anyone will be able to know what effect ... industrial projects will have on the birds, fish and game before they are built."

"We wonder how the Whiteman can be so concerned about the future by putting money in the bank, and still he pays no attention to the future of the land if he can make a quick dollar from selling it to foreigners." "With a just Settlement of our claims we feel we can participate as equals, and then we will be able to live together as neighbours."

First Nations were clear in *Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow* that, as they said, "We want to take part in the development of Yukon and Canada, not stop it, but we can only participate as Indians. We will not sell our heritage for a quick buck or a temporary job."

Sam Johnston was one of the original 18 delegates with Elijah Smith, who was also, as we heard today, former Chief of the Teslin Tlingit Council and, I would note, he was the first aboriginal Speaker of a Legislative Assembly in Canada. He is accompanied here today by another aboriginal Speaker of this Legislative Assembly, Robert Bruce Jr. Sam Johnston said, "We want the rest of Yukon to know that we didn't trigger land claims so that we could take over. The real thing was that we wanted to become involved so that our young people, both native and non-native, can all work together and try to keep our Yukon the way it is."

Dave Joe, a member of the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations and one of the Yukon First Nation legal architects and negotiators, describes the result of the *Umbrella Final Agreement* as a "partnership". It is an attempt to rationalize how we share law-making in Yukon. He went on to say that we can celebrate these agreements that were premised upon partnerships and our common understanding to do good for all people.

Tim Koepke, whom we recognized in the Legislative Assembly this week as an outgoing Ombudsman and Information and Privacy Commissioner, also served for many years as chief federal negotiator. He reminded me that the *Umbrella Final*

Agreement should not be viewed as a template land-and-cash real estate deal. He said the *Umbrella Final Agreement* reads from the first whereas clause in the preamble and through to the end about shedding the past relationship with governments and focusing on building enduring relationships for future success and shared prosperity.

All parties to these agreements must not lose sight of these objectives. He suggests we should all focus on the rather remarkable achievement and concede that, while not everything is perfect, the foundation for progress is solid as a result of the UFA and the final and self-government agreements in effect.

It's important to remember that although the UFA is 292 pages of legalese, the reality is that the *Umbrella Final Agreement* sets the stage for success to break out all over for years and decades to come.

After almost 20 years of immersion in the Yukon negotiations process, my perspective is coloured by the people — the citizens of Canada and Yukon and First Nations — we charged with the responsibility of negotiating the *Umbrella Final Agreement* and the final and self-government agreements, and we must focus on what they intended. These negotiations were no cakewalk. The issues were complex and occasionally profound.

As another negotiator put it, the signed agreements crystallized a moment in Yukon's history when Yukon First Nations and non-First Nation citizens joined in a shared vision of a future of Yukon where the institutions of public government would be open and inclusive and would incorporate Yukon First Nation interests and participation directly in governing the territory.

It comes as no surprise that many Yukoners think we have fallen short in realizing the great opportunity presented to Yukon by the *Umbrella Final Agreement*, the final agreements, and self-government agreements, but you know, as Charlie Brown put it: "There is no heavier burden than a great potential." Indeed the potential in Yukon is immense, realizing that potential requires us all to breathe life into the agreements that we have entered into. It means the bodies created by the final agreements, such as the Fish and Wildlife Management Board and the renewable resource councils, are not marginalized when key decisions are made, but the obligation to complete land use planning is honoured as a priority by actually dedicating the time and resources to their completion and that the recommendations made by the board, created by the parties to provide a unified assessment process for development in the Yukon — the YESAB recommendations — are not routinely varied or set aside. Fulfilling these commitments is part of the bargain. To do otherwise is to contort the vision reached at the negotiating table.

It is time to reinvigorate and empower public involvement in government decision-making, using the framework established by the *Umbrella Final Agreement* and the Yukon First Nation final and self-government agreements.

I noted earlier that Yukon First Nation people are patient. They worked hard to establish new governments and to live up to the terms of a new relationship that is signified by the *Umbrella Final Agreement* and, through it, the First Nation final

and self-government agreements. These agreements are not just First Nation agreements. Canada and Yukon signed on too. Now we collectively must honour and implement this new relationship.

In closing, I'd like to paraphrase the CEO of the Carcross-Tagish First Nation Development Corporation, who said the time of the handout or the hand up has passed. The respectful relationship that can and should flow from the signing of the UFA is now realized through a handshake between equals.

Applause

Mr. Silver: Today I rise on behalf of the Liberal caucus to pay tribute to the 40th anniversary of *Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow* and the 20th anniversary of the signing of the *Umbrella Final Agreement*.

In 1973, the Council for Yukon Indians was formed to negotiate a land claims settlement with the federal government based on aboriginal rights. The council was formed to ensure that all Indian people, regardless of status under the *Indian Act*, could participate in the claims.

For the basis of their negotiations, Council for Yukon Indians chose the now historic document *Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow* as their statement of grievance and principles for negotiation and negotiating land claims. Elijah Smith and delegates from the Yukon, including Percy Henry of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, went to Ottawa to meet with the Prime Minister of Canada armed with their determination, courage and their document *Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow*. This was the first time a group of Canadian people of native ancestry had prepared and presented such a document. The presentation of this document marked the beginning of a long and arduous struggle for a land claims settlement for the Yukon First Nation people.

I'd like to quote from Elijah Smith in the speech to Prime Minister Trudeau, January 1973: "This is the first time the leaders of the Yukon Indian people have come to the capital of Canada. We are here to talk about the future. The only way we feel we can have a future, is to settle our land claim. This be a future, that will return to us, our lost pride, self-respect, and economic independence. We are not here for a handout. We are here with a plan." The Yukon had previously been left out of the treaty process and the Crown still had an obligation to fulfill with Yukon First Nations based on the Royal Proclamation of 1763 and of 1870 Order in Council.

They were able to convince the federal government to begin a negotiation process for a modern-day treaty, the first in Canada. When Percy Henry, Elijah Smith and the rest of the delegates returned from Ottawa, they were ready to begin negotiations to gain their interdependence and to regain their rights and dignity.

Early in the land claim process, elders and leaders recognized that the separation between status and non-status was affecting the way land claim negotiations were unfolding. It seemed to be that only status people would benefit from the settlement. That simply was not right. With much determination and perseverance, it was decided that all Yukon First Na-

tion people would be recognized under the Yukon land claims regardless of their status.

After many years of aggressive and difficult negotiations under federal, territorial and aboriginal leaders, an *Umbrella Final Agreement* was concluded. On May 29, 1993, the Yukon First Nation people signed an *Umbrella Final Agreement* at a public ceremony in Whitehorse and, with that signing, the implementation process began.

The *Umbrella Final Agreement* formed the basis for determining final and self-governing agreements. These agreements would include land, money, self-government and hunting and fishing rights with aboriginal rights retained on settlement lands.

The *Umbrella Final Agreement* acts as a framework agreement, for which all Yukon First Nation final agreements would follow within their own specific provisions.

In 1995, on February 14, the first four Yukon First Nation settlements came into effect and became part of the Constitution of Canada and, to date, seven more Yukon First Nations have ratified agreements and become self-governing nations. Now we have lost many of the respected leaders and elders who began this journey so many years ago. Their foresight and determination established the foundations for land claims in the Yukon. As trailblazers in the realm of land claim negotiations and self-government, Yukon set out a framework, or blueprint, for other provinces and territories to follow.

The Yukon First Nations can now look to a future while honouring their past. We congratulate and acknowledge these elders and First Nation leaders for taking the significant steps in negotiating land claim and self-government agreements that guarantee Yukon First Nation people rights and responsibility for their lands. First Nation people have always had a profound connection to the land and by the settlement of the land claims, future generations will benefit, and the history, culture and languages of Yukon First Nations will be preserved.

Yukon land claim and self-government agreements are challenging the face of governance in the Yukon and altering the relationship between self-governing Yukon First Nations, the Government of Yukon and the Government of Canada. Through the complete implementation of self-government, it will take time. Many positive changes have been achieved. We offer our sincere congratulations for the 11 Yukon First Nations with land claims settlements and wish you every success in your ongoing collaborative work in the implementation of your self-governing agreements.

I had the honour of attending an event a couple of weeks ago at Robert Service School, hosted by the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in. It was entitled, "Acknowledging the Past. Celebrating the Present. Moving Forward in Unity". As are most events hosted by the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in people, this event was open to everyone, and so was the feast at the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in hall afterward.

Percy Henry was there. This was a good year for Mr. Henry. He received an honorary degree at Yukon College. They call him "Doctor" now. Percy Henry is a working grad. He is an instrumental part of the heritage department of

Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in. There is a great story of former Prime Minister Chrétien. He understands the power of Percy.

He was Prime Minister Trudeau's Department of Indian and Northern Affairs minister when Percy and the chiefs went to Ottawa 40 years ago. Years later, for the opening of the Commissioner's Residence, then Prime Minister Chrétien was on the road and on the streets looking for Percy. This speaks to the honest and lasting impression that a larger-than-life character like Percy Henry has on people.

As I mentioned — and the reason for this anecdote is — Percy was part of the working group of delegates that went with Elijah Smith to present the grievances and, more importantly, the solutions to the federal government. I truly believe that we have Percy to thank for the way we work in the educational community in Dawson.

We don't even see it. It's just the way that things are done — acknowledging the past, celebrating the present and moving forward in unity.

Mahsi' cho to Percy and to all the trailblazers.

Mr. Elias: [*Member spoke in Gwich'in. Text unavailable.*]

I did have the opportunity to do a tribute last fall and I hope that each and every one of us here and Yukoners get to read that tribute.

I would be remiss if I didn't say a few words today and I thank you for the opportunity.

It's a pleasure to stand in tribute to the 40th anniversary of *Together Today for Our Children Tomorrow* and also the 20th anniversary of the signing of the *Umbrella Final Agreement*. As many of the members of this House are quite used to, I'm going to begin by telling a story.

On May 29, 1993, after our chief, the honourable Robert Bruce Jr., signed that document, he was provided with a million-dollar cheque. The negotiating staff and all the people from Old Crow watched as he brilliantly folded that cheque up and stuck it in his back pocket. He walked around with that million-dollar cheque in his back pocket for some hours until we could finally get it deposited into the CIBC bank. That was the beginning of our compensation fund that began in the back pocket of our honourable chief at that time.

Mr. Speaker, that was the message from our chief. This was not about money. Our land claim was not about gaining power. It was about self-determination; it was about self-determination; it was about securing a vibrant future through hard work for those yet unborn; it was about manifesting our own destiny; it was about the protection of our land and our water and our wildlife; it was about securing the ability to tell our historical stories about our living languages and our living culture; it was about ensuring a long-term partnership and relationship with the federal Crown and the territorial government in all facets of life.

When I travel around our territory and I watch our children play in each and every one of our communities, I see nothing but hope — in our language [*Member spoke in Gwich'in. Text unavailable*] — they look forward to the future. I see that in our youth and it fills my heart. I know those elders who have

long passed since then and the leaders who are here today, and I've learned something from each and every one of you, and I thank you: [*Member spoke Gwich'in. Text unavailable*] I know that those elders are looking down saying that a vision has been accomplished here, but the work is unfinished.

Our work is always going to continue. Mahsi' cho to our elders who had that vision and to those leaders, many of whom are in the gallery today. Thank you for helping us to carry this through and teaching the young generation and those yet unborn that we will be successful here in the territory. When we work together, there is nothing we cannot accomplish and we can be a powerhouse in our federation of Canada and set an example for the world.

[*Member spoke Gwich'in. Text unavailable.*] Mahsi' cho, Mr. Speaker.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Merci. [*Member spoke in French. Text unavailable.*]

Mr. Speaker, if you will, just in summary, I rise to recognize and to offer congratulations to Yukon's francophone community on the seventh annual Yukon Francophonie Day and to acknowledge also the 25th anniversary of the *Languages Act*, which was adopted in May of 1988.

Today is an opportunity to celebrate the French culture and language and to pay tribute to francophones in the Yukon for their many contributions to the social and economic well-being of Yukon.

The French-speaking community has been one of the most dynamic populations in the country, and the number of French speakers in the Yukon continues to grow. The continued vitality of the French community and the enhancement of French language services in Yukon are important to the Yukon government and certainly those we serve.

Yukon government is very pleased to work with the francophone community on developing a more strategic approach to the delivery of French language services within the Yukon government in the years to come. By working collaboratively, we are very much determined to better respond to the priorities of the francophone community through the delivery of improved levels of frontline French language services.

Today's Yukon is a place where French speakers can contribute to their society by sharing their language and culture and certainly a place where people can live their life in French. I urge all Members of the Legislative Assembly to join us in acknowledging the seventh Yukon Francophonie Day and the 25th anniversary of the *Yukon Languages Act*.

Applause

Ms. White: Merci, Monsieur le Président.

C'est un honneur pour moi de rendre hommage aujourd'hui à la Journée de la Francophonie Yukonnaise. Cette journée célébrée depuis 2007 est une occasion unique pour tous les Yukonnais et Yukonaises de découvrir et célébrer la langue française et la culture Francophone.

Les francophones ont eu une grande importance au Yukon depuis les années 1800. Joseph Juneau, Émilie Tremblay et

Jean Ladue ne sont que quelques exemples de pionniers francophones qui ont marqué l'histoire du Yukon.

La communauté francophone du Yukon est aujourd'hui en pleine croissance et elle dispose d'institutions reconnues. L'Association franco-yukonnaise, l'AFY, est très active et contribue à améliorer la qualité de vie des francophones au Yukon. Augmenter la disponibilité des services en français, stimuler la programmation culturelle francophone, et représenter les francophones du Yukon à différents niveaux ne sont que quelques exemples des champs d'action de l'AFY.

L'Aurore Boréale quant à elle offre une tribune de choix aux francophones et francophiles par sa publication bimensuelle. De son côté, la commission scolaire Émilie Tremblay veille à ce que les francophones aient accès à une éducation de qualité en français. Ces institutions importantes ne sont que quelques exemples du dynamisme de la communauté francophone que nous célébrons aujourd'hui.

J'ai eu le plaisir d'assister il y a à peine une heure à la levée du Drapeau Franco-yukonnais et je salue tous ceux et celles qui ont participé à l'organisation de cet événement.

Je veux aussi féliciter M. Yann Herry qui reçoit aujourd'hui la médaille du Jubilé pour son implication à défendre la langue française au Yukon.

En conclusion, je termine sur une note poétique: le vers final de l'hymne franco-yukonnais:

"Y'a des trésors cachés dans le Nord,

"Plus précieux que l'or,

"On les cherche encore,

"Le Yukon m'appelle,

"Et il m'ensorcelle,

"Le Yukon m'appelle,

"Et il m'ensorcelle."

Merci.

In recognition of excellence in education

Hon. Mr. Kent: I rise today in the House to pay tribute to three outstanding examples of excellence in education in Yukon. Today I would like to acknowledge the F.H. Collins Gay-Straight Alliance, l'Académie Parhélie at École Émilie Tremblay, as well as teacher Michel Emery from École Whitehorse Elementary School.

The first person I would like to recognize today is Monsieur Michel Emery, a grade 2 French immersion teacher at École Whitehorse Elementary School. Michel has been selected as an Apple Distinguished Educator, making him the first teacher in northern Canada to receive this distinction. The Apple Distinguished Educator program began in 1994, when Apple recognized K to 12 education pioneers who are using a variety of Apple products to transform teaching and learning in powerful ways. Today it has grown into a worldwide community of over 2,000 visionary educators and innovative leaders who are doing amazing things with technology, both in and out of the classroom.

Michel was recognized for the innovative ways he incorporates technology to empower and engage the students in his classroom. This summer he will travel to Austin, Texas, to join other educators at this year's Apple Distinguished Educator

Institute. Michel is providing his students with opportunities to communicate, problem-solve, think critically and be creative using technology to make learning more accessible and dynamic.

I had the privilege of meeting Michel at last week's Yukon Chamber of Mines Mining Week camp at Shipyards Park, where more than 200 Yukon students were treated to lessons in such things as plate tectonics, gold panning and environmental remediation by Yukon government officials, as well as industry reps. I know the Minister of Community Services' son was among the group, as well as the niece of the Member for Pelly-Nisutlin, so it was great to see the excitement that they had.

I would like to take the time to thank Michel for his excellent work and ask members to join me in recognizing Michel, and his family, I believe, who have joined us here in the gallery today.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Kent: Mr. Speaker, the second group I would like to recognize today is l'Académie Parhélie. Not being as good in French as my colleague across the way, the Member for Takhini-Kopper King, as well as the Minister of Community Services, I am going to first read this in French and then go into English so as not to offend anyone with some misplaced pronunciation.

Le programme secondaire de l'école Émilie-Tremblay, l'Académie Parhélie, a été sélectionné comme lauréat avec mention honorable pour le Prix Ken Spencer.

The academic program for high school students at EET's l'Académie Parhélie has received an honourable mention for the Ken Spencer Award.

Le prix Ken Spencer récompense l'innovation en enseignement et en apprentissage.

The award recognizes innovation in teaching and learning.

C'est un honneur que l'Académie Parhélie soit reconnue au niveau national pour son aspect innovateur.

L'Académie Parhélie is honoured to have its innovation recognized at the national level.

L'Académie Parhélie a aussi été honorée par la Fédération nationale des conseils scolaires francophones qui lui a remis le certificat de reconnaissance à titre d'école communautaire citoyenne.

Académie Parhélie also received recognition for the Fédération National des Conseils Scolaires Francophones — the Association of Francophone School Boards — as a civic community school. En recevant cette prix, l'Académie Parhélie a été reconnue pour l'établissement d'un partenariat solide avec le communauté. It has received a certificate which highlights the strong partnership the school was able to establish with the community. Ce certificate est décerné à une école Department of Education langue française en contexte minoritaire don't le projet régionale a permit Department of Education dynamiser Legislative Assembly communauté. This certificate is awarded to a Francophone school in a minority setting whose regional project has contributed to the vibrancy of the community.

I'm not sure if there are any representatives of École Émilie Tremblay here today, but again, perhaps we can all take time to congratulate them on this prestigious honour as well.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Kent: Last, but certainly not least, I would like to recognize the École F.H. Collins Secondary School Gay Straight Alliance and congratulate them on winning the 2013 Canadian Safe School Network/TD award for Excellence Against LGBTQ Youth Bullying.

The group was nominated for the award based on their efforts on various projects throughout the year, most notably for the Ally Day event that they hosted this past Valentine's Day.

Students were encouraged to take the ally pledge, promising to interrupt all homophobic language and actions. They in turn received an ally bracelet to identify them as a safe person. I know that all members of the House today are wearing their ally bracelets. They will receive the award while in Toronto attending the Gay-Straight Alliance Summit later this month.

Students from Porter Creek Secondary School and Vanier Catholic Secondary School are also here today to support their peers from F.H. Collins. All of these students are standing up against bullying and working to make their schools a safe place for all students.

The work these students do to educate their school community about sexual orientation issues and to fight discrimination is crucial to keeping the environment in Yukon schools healthy and welcoming for all.

As many of us in this House are former students of F.H. Collins, I know that I speak for all of us in mentioning how proud we are of the evolution of this school since I attended in the 1980s and the Minister of Health and Social Services attended a couple of years earlier. I think all the members of this House can agree that we should be proud of what has been accomplished by the individuals and groups I've recognized here today. The vibrant education stakeholders in our territory are key to moving Yukon forward through their work in innovation, social equality and community engagement.

Again, in conclusion, I ask all members of the House to join me in congratulating Michel Emery, L'Académie Parhélie, the F.H. Collins Gay-Straight Alliance, as well as their allies from Porter Creek Senior Secondary and Vanier for their achievements.

I will introduce a few of the individuals who are here with us in the gallery today. Christine Klassen-St.Pierre, the vice-principal at F.H. Collins and a true driving force behind this initiative and a number of the initiatives that take place over at F.H. and throughout our education community; Jerome Stueart has joined us; Brooklyn Pollard, Liam Finnegan, Julia Hall, Christy Sibbeston, and I know the vice-principal of Porter Creek Secondary School Hilary Skilnyk is here as well with some of her students, so please join me in welcoming everyone and congratulating everyone for their excellence.

Applause

Ms. White: It is with great pleasure that I rise on behalf of the Official Opposition to pay tribute to the F.H. Collins Gay-Straight Alliance, which has been awarded the Canadian

Safe School Network award for excellence against lesbian, gay, transgender, two-spirited, bisexual, queer and questioning youth bullying.

Each year the Canadian Safe School Network recognizes one school in Canada that works tirelessly to create an inclusive and accepting environment for all students. The alliance was selected from a great number of groups from across the country. Four students will travel to Toronto on Friday to participate in a national conference on bullying and receive the award. The award will be presented on May 17, the International Day Against Homophobia and Transphobia.

Homophobia can unfortunately run rampant in a school, and it often goes hand-in-hand with bullying. It takes a dedicated staff and an aware student body to work together to fight this phenomenon. We recognize the extraordinary commitment of the staff of F.H. Collins for their efforts, particularly vice-principal Christine Klassen-St. Pierre for being the leading force behind these initiatives.

It is important to note that the GSA at F.H. Collins only really started in earnest in April of last year. It was the first GSA to establish itself north of the 60th parallel. They extended the services and support of their GSA to those at other schools who have not yet been permitted to form such an alliance.

You can trace the GSA's beginnings to Challenge Day. Queer youth felt empowered to use their personal power in positive ways and create their own group. These youth also attended the three-day Be the Change workshop, which gave them the tools to better communicate and understand those around them.

The Gay-Straight Alliance is open to all people, regardless of their sexual orientation. They believe that everybody has a right to a safe learning and working environment, regardless of their sexual orientation, and work to educate, inform and accept all of those around them. The GSA holds weekly meetings on Mondays and organizes other activities to support their members — rainbow bake sales and groceries have been bagged to fund raise. On Valentine's of this year, they organized an ally day. Supportive members of the school body and the community pledged to be allies to support the end of gay-bashing, discrimination and exclusion based on sex and gender differences. I was happy and proud to sign up as an ally and to accept my bracelet.

I asked the group about big moments, and there have been many. What sticks for me is the idea of safety and acceptance. My friend Olivia said the GSA lets people feel like they can be themselves — be who we are in an environment where we feel like we won't be judged. Imagine every day seeing the bright yellow bracelets on the wrists of teachers, parents, students and community members — the symbol of a safe space.

To the students, teachers, friends and families, we are so proud of your accomplishments. Thank you for creating a more inclusive society where the dignity, worth and integrity of all are recognized, respected and honoured.

Applause

Mr. Silver: I also rise today on behalf of the Liberal caucus to recognize and congratulate the Gay Straight Alliance

at F.H. Collins Secondary School upon receiving the Canadian Safe School Network award for Excellence Against LGBTQ Youth Bullying. Now I imagine that most of the stuff I am going to say has already been said by other members in this House, but I just feel very much obligated to get on the record because I do support so much the work of this very, very brave group of Yukoners.

The Canadian Safe School Network award of excellence is presented each year to a publicly funded school, elementary or secondary, that has demonstrated excellence in the development, creation or promotion of an in-school initiative to counter LGBTQ bullying. Bullying and youth violence in our schools and communities is a growing concern across Canada. We all recognize how important it is for our children and our youth to have a safe, secure, caring and tolerant school environment in order to learn and to grow.

The GSA at F.H. Collins is there to support everyone who is LGBTQ by creating a safe space where they can represent themselves, express themselves and be themselves and know that they have the support of the community.

Not only does the GSA work through their school, but they have also extended their services and support to those in other schools and in the community at large. They campaign by selling t-shirts and encouraging people to take the pledge and to stand up against homophobic bullying. When a person takes the pledge, they are given a yellow bracelet that identifies that person as being a safe person.

I'd like to thank the Minister of Education for giving me my bracelet today, and I would also love to take the pledge if you're ever hanging around the Liberal caucus.

It took a lot of courage for these youth to step forward and to face the challenges of coming out in the first place and, in turn, to form the GSA at F.H. Collins school. They offer their help and their support to others by working together positively to create change for all students. You must feel very proud of establishing the first GSA north of 60 and receiving recognition for your hard work not only for your school, but for your community. We would like to congratulate all the members of F.H. Collins' GSA for your hard work and dedication in the promotion of inclusion, safety and acceptance for LGBTQ students.

In recognition of Alice and Arthur John

Mr. Hassard: It gives me great pleasure to rise today on behalf of all members of the Assembly to pay tribute to Alice and Arthur John of Ross River who, to my knowledge, are the longest married couple in Canada. Just how long is that? Well, 81 years.

Alice and Arthur are a wonderful couple with a long and exciting history together. That history includes three wedding ceremonies. Mr. and Mrs. John were married first in an arranged marriage according to Dena tradition in 1932. They were again married on October 6, 1935 in the Anglican church in Fort Selkirk, where they were joined by some family and friends. Again, later that year, while working on their trapline, a Roman Catholic priest blessed their union.

Alice and Arthur lived in Ross River most of their lives. However, in 1956, they moved to Watson Lake to be near their children, when their children were taken away to attend resi-

dential school in northern British Columbia. However, in 1967, they returned to Ross River.

Arthur was a renowned trapper and prospector for many years and has always been known as an excellent provider for his family, while Alice helped supplement Arthur's salary with her sewing, which she sold. Of course, that which she didn't sell was used to clothe her own children.

The Johns lived and taught their children the Dene tradition. Their house was always full, Mr. Speaker, with their own children and with children they took in and many friends. Alice and Arthur had 11 children, four of whom are still with us today, and 38 grandchildren. John and Irene Morin of Ross River nominated the Johns for recognition by Worldwide Marriage Encounter mission, based on the wedding date of October 6, 1935. Worldwide Marriage Encounter representatives will travel to Ross River to join the community to celebrate and honour Mr. and Mrs. John as the longest married couple in Canada, and that celebration will be this weekend on May 19. The whole community of Ross River, as well as many other Yukoners, are looking forward to celebrating this special honour with them. Alice and Arthur John are a source of pride and inspiration to all Yukoners. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Applause

Speaker: Introduction of visitors.
Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Hon. Mr. Graham: In response to a question asked yesterday regarding a subcontractor's allegation that they were owed over \$1 million in April 2012, I would like to table a letter in which the record clearly shows that the Yukon Hospital Corporation paid into the court in excess of \$1 million in July 2012, as permitted under the *Builders Lien Act*. This action clearly indicates that the action begun by Nelson Drywall had absolutely nothing to do and was totally unrelated to Dowland

Speaker's statement

Speaker: Order please.

I remind members that they are to state the name of the document and not to go on about it. Thank you.

Are there any other returns or documents for tabling?

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Speaker: Member for Takhini-Kopper King, on a point of order.

Ms. White: I apologize. I just got this after we flew through introductions. I'd like to introduce Yolande Vachon, who is here representing l'École Émilie Tremblay — if the members could join me in welcoming her.

Applause

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

NOTICES OF MOTION

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to:

(1) work cooperatively with the Village of Mayo, Na Cho Nyäk Dun First Nation, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans and the Yukon Energy Corporation to investigate and remedy the water table issues around the Mayo generating facilities;

(2) ensure that relevant hydrological studies and data are available to the public; and

(3) engage Mayo-area citizens in the process and ensure results are shared with all stakeholders.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to sign-off on *An Agreement Respecting Section 17.7 Education Provisions as Set Out in the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Self-Government Agreement*.

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

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to support the federal Minister of Health and Social Services, Leona Aglukkaq, in her role as chair of the Arctic Council.

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

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: First Nations-government relations

Ms. Hanson: "Partnership" is a fine word, just like "consultation". What makes both of these real is the degree of mutuality. The 20th anniversary of the signing of the *Umbrella Final Agreement* shines a light on how governments in Yukon build enduring relationships. So let's look at a few "partnerships" to see how the walk matches the talk.

Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation opened a new administration building last spring. It was designed and built with a tenant in mind: the Department of Health and Social Services. A year later the First Nation is carrying the cost for empty space and Health and Social Services has not indicated if or when it might move in.

Can the government tell the House when it will honour its commitment and make this opportunity to partner with the Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation a reality?

Hon. Mr. Graham: I'm not aware under what circumstances the First Nation in question constructed their building. I am aware that there was some expectation that Health and Social Services would occupy that space. However under the government's own procurement procedures, we first of all must put a tender out, or at least a request for interest, in order to take a look to see if anyone else is interested in renting space to the government. I believe that is what has been done, and we are in the process of selecting a contractor into whose space we will place the department's personnel.

Ms. Hanson: My colleague, the Member for Mayo-Tatchun, recently asked the Premier about an issue of great importance to the Selkirk First Nation. The First Nation confirmed with us that they spoke in July of 2011 to the then Premier elect about the need for a protective buffer zone free from industrial activity around historic Fort Selkirk.

As a matter of protocol, having raised this with the Premier, Selkirk First Nation is waiting for the Premier's response. As of April 26, the Premier has not responded to Selkirk First Nation regarding protection of this important heritage resource.

Respect is mutually built. Respect includes honouring protocols and responding to issues once they are raised. Will the Premier respect the government-to-government relationship between Yukon and Selkirk First Nation, and will this government protect Fort Selkirk, an historic site that is of great importance to all Yukoners?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Certainly, Fort Selkirk is protected. This is done in collaboration between the Yukon government and Selkirk First Nation. We did have a discussion of many informal topics, upon my first meeting in Pelly Crossing with the Selkirk First Nation.

Now they have actually come forward with requests, we look forward to having officials do the due diligence that is required. We will look at the requests they have now put forward and begin to work together to see how, in fact, we will deal with the situation that has been requested.

I will be going back to Pelly Crossing with the Minister of Education very shortly. I look forward to my meeting with them.

Ms. Hanson: Let's try a third one then — the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation's Dänojà Zho Cultural Centre is open year-round on the waterfront in Dawson City. This beautiful face of tourism in Dawson City has been successfully operating for over 10 years and is active in various aspects of community life.

Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in developed a proposal to the Yukon and federal governments to propose an expansion to its cultural centre to provide a shared space for Yukon Tourism. The initiative only needed a partnership — an opportunity the First Nation offered to the Government of Yukon. The Government of Yukon decided not to partner with the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation, a decision which signifies the end of a project to enhance a vibrant community attraction.

There are many examples of this kind of not partnering — of not really walking the talk. Can the government explain why it does not want to partner with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in on its offer to provide Yukon Tourism a presence in the centre and what alternatives it is looking at and with whom?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: In fact, the cultural centre that the Leader of the Official Opposition is mentioning was built and funded through contributions from the Yukon government. We continue to provide significant funding for operation and maintenance of the cultural centre every year since its inception. We recognize the importance of tourism to the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in people and, in fact, the entire community of Dawson City and the Klondike. We continue to work. I know that they have applied for different streams of funding from the federal government and also from the Yukon

ment and also from the Yukon government. As we continue to do on many different fronts, we will continue to work with our First Nation partners to build an economy that is of benefit to all Yukoners.

Question re: Firing range cleanup

Mr. Barr: It is important on this day when we are talking about living up to our agreements and working respectfully with First Nation governments that I ask about the long-standing, unauthorized firing range located on Kwanlin Dun land at kilometre 1449 off the Alaska Highway.

Firing ranges close to the highway pose a clear risk to public safety. The amount of ammunition, including from restricted firearms that have been discharged at this site, is astonishing. Everything dumped there is riddled with bullet holes.

Years of accumulation of lead from bullets and hazardous fluids from appliances have made this a toxic site. Back in November of 2012, the minister said, and I quote: "Several Yukon government departments are working with the landowner, Kwanlin Dun First Nation, to clean up and secure the site from unauthorized access."

Can the minister provide a progress report on the work to clean up and secure the site?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: We're aware of the site the member is referencing. We understand that it is used informally as a firing range by a number of people in the territory, which, of course, is unfortunate because of the accumulation of potentially hazardous waste in the area.

At one point, the Department of Environment considered using our Y2C2 program to begin some cleanup on the site, but when the level of waste was determined, we were unable to move forward with that. So the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources and the Department of Environment are working together to determine how best to move forward.

Of course, one of the challenges or complicating factors is that it is owned by Kwanlin Dun First Nation, so we need to work with them as well. Ensuring that all parties are at the table for those discussions is a priority for us.

Of course we are committed to taking action to ensure that site and a number of other sites throughout the Yukon are cleaned up, and we'll continue to work with the First Nations and other departments of government to determine how best to do that.

Mr. Barr: Out of frustration, Kwanlin Dun blockaded the bush road to stop this but was ordered by the Yukon government to reopen the road back in the fall of 2011. Not only the First Nation is frustrated by the situation; the Ibex hamlet council has raised concerns about the ugly mess and unsafe site. The Fish and Game Association has cleaned the site only to see it used in a manner that gives all shooters and hunters a bad name. I recognize that the land in question is Kwanlin Dun's and it is not solely a question of the Yukon government directing what is to be done on this land. I'm looking for a commitment that, with Kwanlin Dun's consent, cleanup work will be completed by the end of summer and permanent solutions will be in place to close down this ugly, unsafe mess forever. Will the minister make this commitment?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: What I can commit to doing is continuing to work with the Kwanlin Dun First Nation, continuing to work with other branches of government and other departments in the Yukon government, including the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources lands branch, to determine how best to move forward with that site. I haven't spoken to the Kwanlin Dun First Nation about this myself but I believe I provided a written update to the Opposition on this issue a short number of months ago.

They have the information that is up to date. As I said before, we will continue to work with our First Nation partners to determine how best to move forward and undertake actions that are mutually beneficial and mutually understood to be in the best interest of Yukoners and Kwanlin Dun citizens.

Question re: Robert Service School educational outreach program

Mr. Silver: I have a question for the Minister of Education. The minister received a letter from the Chief of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation regarding the educational outreach program that is in place at Robert Service School in Dawson. The program addresses concern for youth who are struggling with regular attendance. It is clear that the dedicated teacher and associated programming have engaged our youth in a supportive learning environment. This school year, the program was made possible through the initiative of the principal and special circumstances within the school. Next academic year, the program will only be possible with a special commitment from the Government of Yukon. Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in is looking forward to the continuation of the educational outreach program and is encouraging the government to commit the teaching staff resources necessary for further development and success. Will the minister make this commitment?

Hon. Mr. Kent: I thank the member opposite for the question. I did have the opportunity to follow up at this morning's reception with First Nation leaders with Chief Taylor on this initiative and I can confirm for the members opposite in an e-mail sent from a senior official at Education to a senior official in the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation that the Yukon Education Staffing Allocation Committee has already met to discuss alternate programming full-time equivalents at Robert Service School in Dawson City and recommended that the resource be included as part of our rural action plan.

So I can make that commitment today on the floor of the House and we're looking forward to moving in that direction as well as a number of other initiatives under the rural action plan that we're very excited about, and I'm also very excited about sharing those initiatives with MLAs from rural Yukon on both sides of the floor.

Mr. Silver: I appreciate the answer from the minister. The education outreach program is part of a larger educational discussion that has been ongoing between the Government of Yukon and the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in. Last July, officials from both governments concluded substantial negotiations on an agreement respecting section 17.7 education provisions as set out in the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in self-governing agreement.

This agreement is a significant step forward. It confirms the partnership between government and will strengthen the

work undertaken by Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and Education officials in the future. On October 25, 2012, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Council formally endorsed this July 20 draft agreement. Last fall the Chief of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in wrote the minister to encourage him to also formally endorse this agreement. Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in wants to sign off on this agreement as soon as possible to proceed on agreed priorities.

Why has the Government of Yukon not signed off on this agreement to date?

Hon. Mr. Kent: As with many issues that the government is confronted with, there are processes that need to be adhered to and this is no exception. This issue came up during debate in the Department of Education earlier this sitting and at that time I indicated that this is something that has to be considered by not only the Department of Education, but also the Executive Council Office, with the responsibility for that obviously being with the Premier.

Work is continuing on this initiative. I know it's important to the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation. It was also referenced in the letter that I just recently received from Chief Taylor. I can assure members of the House that we continue to work on this and we hope to reach a resolution through the process as quickly as possible.

Mr. Silver: I'd just like to remind the minister that time is of the essence. We are preparing for the next school year.

The schedule attached to section 17.7 outlines a number of initiatives. One of the items of discussion in 17.7 between the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and the government is the establishment of the Individual Learning Centre.

There has been one in place for a number of years here in Whitehorse and it is a fantastic educational academy. The Individual Learning Centre offers a multitude of choices for students through self-paced continuous learning in a safe and respectful environment with opportunities for graduation and lifelong learning. The schedule that I mentioned earlier also includes educational outreach programs, camp accreditation and residential school curriculum development.

The Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in has staff already identified and working to fulfill their side of the deal. We need the government to sign off; it's the only missing element here.

When does the minister see some of these items being signed off?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Indeed, a lot of great work has been done. We have to recognize the officials for the work that has been done, not only between the officials of Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in and Yukon government, but also the work that was done in terms of formalizing these unique additions to Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in's agreement, because none of the other self-governing First Nations had these agreements. So work has been done, not only by officials to move forward with what has been identified within Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in's agreement, but also to look at moving this forward with other interested self-governing First Nations. Canada has also been involved.

We're looking at the possibility of ensuring that those First Nations interested in those similar provisions will be provided the opportunity to do so. Once that work is done, we're looking

forward as a government to move all of those things forward for not only Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, but for other First Nations who are interested.

Question re: Arctic Council

Mr. Elias: The world's eyes are fixed on the Arctic, and Canada is now at the helm. The federal Minister of Health, Leona Aglukkaq, has just taken over the chair of the Arctic Council just hours ago. The Arctic Council is a powerful, high-level intergovernmental forum of Arctic nations and Arctic indigenous communities. It provides a means of promoting cooperation, coordination and interaction with a particular focus on sustainable development and environmental protection in the Arctic.

This represents a tremendous opportunity for Yukon, and it's important that our government supports the chair of the Arctic Council in her new role. How is this government going to support our chair of the Arctic Council, Leona Aglukkaq, so as to maximize the benefits to our territory and to our Arctic neighbours?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Certainly, the Yukon government has been involved with the Arctic Council since its inception in 1996. We are very excited to see Canada again assume the chairmanship today, as the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin has articulated.

All three territories in the north are excited about this. The theme for Canada's chairmanship is, "Development for the people of the north". Under that theme, there are three sub-themes: responsible Arctic resource development, safe Arctic shipping and sustainable circumpolar communities. I just recently met with the other two premiers at the Northern Premiers Forum, and during those meetings we also had an opportunity to meet with two of the six permanent participants of the Arctic Council, with representation from the Arctic Athabaskan Council and the Gwich'in Council International, where we had some good, strong discussions about how we can in fact continue to work together.

So there are many things that are going on. We are looking forward to the opportunity. Canada will host its first set of senior officials meetings right here in Whitehorse in October, which will not only be good for moving Canada's agenda forward, but will also be a great opportunity to showcase Whitehorse and Yukon to the rest of the circumpolar north.

Mr. Elias: It's good to hear that those meetings are ongoing. As chair of the Arctic Council, Minister Aglukkaq is promoting a business-friendly agenda. Some estimates see the Arctic containing as much as one-third of the world's oil and gas supply. As a result, British Petroleum, CNOOC, Nexen, Shell and Imperial Oil already hold exploration leases for large tracts of the Beaufort Sea, the Mackenzie Delta and in north Yukon.

Climate change is opening the Arctic passage, making it a viable shipping route for transnational companies, and opportunities for Arctic tourism are expanding as northern coastlines become more accessible. All of this presents both tremendous opportunities and risks to our territory. Yukoners want assurances that our territory will be ready socially, environmentally, and economically for this new world economic order that will

happen very soon. What is this government's plan, so Yukoners are in charge of the result rather than reacting to the intent of others?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Certainly, there are a number of nations that have observer status at the Arctic Council, and I think that what that does is to help broaden perspectives, allows for more information-gathering with some of the working groups that are a result of the Arctic Council, and will make us better prepared. I know that moving forward with devolution in the Northwest Territories will allow us to now begin some constructive dialogue on the Beaufort, in terms of regulatory processes and ensuring that, working with Canada and the three northern territories, we have in place all the necessary regulations to not only ensure the protection of the north, but ensure that when we do have development it is done in a responsible manner.

Mr. Elias: China, India, Italy, Japan, Singapore and South Korea have just been granted observer status to the Arctic Council. These countries are eyeing the economic opportunities in the Arctic region; they view participation in the Arctic Council as a means of influencing its decisions. This could directly impact the interests of the Yukon. This government should start drafting joint policy recommendations for Arctic biodiversity conservation, infrastructure, healthy communities, sustainable development and marine-oil pollution preparedness and response to oil spills in the Arctic. We have much to offer and the best way to be influential is to be involved from the get-go because, make no mistake, every one of our Yukon communities will be affected should the Arctic open up for development and for international shipping routes.

How will this Yukon Party government maximize the opportunities of Canada chairing the Arctic Council?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Certainly it is very important to ensure that there is a strong working relationship between Canada and the three territories because we want to make sure that what happens at the Arctic Council doesn't result in driving national policy and territorial policies. We are working earnestly; we've had our officials engaged with Arctic Council since its inception in 1996.

We have a number of senior officials who have many years of experience working together, so I'm very confident that with the maturity that the Yukon government has displayed through the years of assuming responsibility for management of the land, water and resources — with that experience and the officials we have. Then, working at the political level with the minister responsible, the Hon. Leona Aglukkaq, and through the three northern premiers, we're confident that we can ensure that Canada's chairmanship and its theme of ensuring that the development is for the people of the north will be achieved.

Question re: Hospital Corporation contracts

Ms. Stick: Mr. Speaker, the public is asking a lot of questions about management, contracting and accountability for millions of dollars in spending by the Yukon Hospital Corporation. We're talking about projects that are overbudget by millions and well past any timelines established. The Auditor General produced a scathing report on the mismanagement of the construction of these hospitals. We heard yesterday that yet

another local subcontractor is owed over \$2 million on work completed on these two hospitals, and they are taking their claims to the courts.

Will the minister tell this House how many outstanding subcontracts have not been paid and for what amount?

Will the money in trust — we were told it was more than \$1 million — be enough or are we looking at additional costs to these hospitals?

Hon. Mr. Graham: This reminds me of the question yesterday with respect to the Nelson Drywall claim for a million dollars. The claim for a million dollars or slightly in excess of a million dollars had actually been paid into the court. The member opposite didn't mention that simple fact. All Nelson Drywall has to do is prove their claim to the court and that \$1.016 million could be released to them if they prove their claim to the court.

What the member also didn't say yesterday about the Nelson Drywall fiasco is that Nelson walked away from the job. Several contractors or suppliers and tradespeople in Dawson City and Watson Lake weren't paid for their services. Would the member opposite have us walk away from that as well? No. What the Hospital Corporation did is paid the money into the court and allowed the court to make the decision about whose claims were actually valid and whose claims were not valid. I suspect that the exact same thing has happened in this instance. The contractor, the subcontractor in question, will make a claim to the court and let the court decide.

Dowland's insurance agent has already stated that they are good for the claims if the claims are legitimate.

Ms. Stick: I'm going to go back to the question. I asked this of the witnesses on Monday, and they were unable to answer it.

Will the minister tell this House how many outstanding subcontracts have not been paid and for what amount? We were told there was just over \$1 million in a trust.

Is that going to be enough, or are we looking at more money for these hospitals?

Hon. Mr. Graham: I don't know how many times we have to explain that. Both the chair and the CEO of the Hospital Corporation and I have stated here before: the bonding company is the one taking over the claims from the subcontractors, and it's unfortunate, we all agree with that. Unfortunately we couldn't do anything about Dowland's default. The bonding company will determine which claims are to be paid and they will ensure that anything that is legitimate — that is a claim against the construction of the health facilities in Dawson or in Watson Lake — will be paid in due course.

Ms. Stick: It would seem to me that the minister or the Hospital Corporation would want to know what those outstanding amounts are. It is their project; they are responsible. Yes, there is a bonding company. Yes, there is insurance. How much, Mr. Speaker? How much is owing to subcontractors that have not been paid by Dowland? What is the amount of money? Surely, as a corporation responsible for these projects, they would know that amount.

Hon. Mr. Graham: It is really unfortunate that the member opposite wouldn't have asked this question of the

president and chief executive officer, because they are obviously in a much more qualified position to answer this than I am.

Again, the subcontractors' claims — and this doesn't seem to be getting through to members opposite — will be handled by the bonding agent and the subcontractors. The Hospital Corporation will not be involved in the discussion of who owes what for the actual construction project. They will be peripherally, of course, but for them to establish a list and perhaps expect the Hospital Corporation to pay the subcontractors directly is a ridiculous assumption, and I don't even know why they are even going there.

Question re: Crown corporations, ministerial direction

Mr. Tredger: Mr. Speaker, the minister sends his directions to the Yukon Development Corporation and the Yukon Energy Corporation, chiefly through a protocol agreement required by law and a shareholder letter of expectations, which is an established practice.

Yesterday, the officials from the Yukon Development Corporation and Yukon Energy Corporation appeared as witnesses, and I attempted to gain some understanding of the operational implications of changes in the letter of expectations, but was curtailed by the minister. When I compare the new letter of expectations from the current minister with the letter developed by his predecessor, I am struck by what appears to be a new direction in ministerial control.

Can the minister explain the rationale for increasing his control of the corporations and explain how his new powers will result in a more efficient corporation?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Mr. Speaker, I'm not sure if the member doesn't understand the protocol letter of expectations or whether he is simply trying to create a picture that fits with his narrative.

In fact, the member should read the protocol letter of expectations — in fact, I would encourage any member of the public listening to avail themselves of it. I believe it's all up on the website. It has all been tabled in the House. If it isn't on the website, then it will be shortly. They will see very clearly that, in fact, what government has done through the protocol and the shareholders letter — just as has been done in the case of the Housing Corporation — is update the language and the expectation that government is using in setting clear policy parameters for corporations that report to the Yukon government.

We have emphasized in the shareholder letter of expectations that the key expectation of Yukon Development Corporation is to ensure that Yukon Energy Corporation's subsidiary operates in a manner consistent with government's overall requirement that Yukon Energy Corporation provide Yukoners with safe, reliable and cost-effective electrical power and, in particular, that Yukon Energy minimizes financial risk; assists government, as required, with technical information to help government make good decisions, including policy decisions, about new energy projects; undertakes new energy projects, as directed by government, and performs appropriate maintenance on existing assets.

So the member is, quite simply, wrong in his assertions.

Mr. Tredger: When I compare the new letter of expectations from the current minister with the letter developed by his predecessor, I am struck by what appears as a new direction in ministerial control. There are many clauses requiring the corporations to get the minister's approval before performing new studies. There are many "shall not" clauses without the prior written approval of the minister. Previous letters were jointly developed and understood to reflect a shared understanding of the corporations and the minister. The new letter says nothing about collaboration, but that letter details government's performance expectations.

Can the minister explain the rationale for increasing his control of the corporations and explain how his new powers will result in a more efficient corporation?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: First of all, the exercise of the ministerial responsibility and ministerial authority in this is not new. In fact, we are continuing to act in accordance with the *Yukon Development Corporation Act*. We have, as in the case I noted with other government corporations, updated the language. We have also, in the language of this, reflected what we have heard from the Auditor General, and I'd refer the member to past reports done by the Auditor General on the Energy Solutions Centre and Mayo-Dawson transmission line. We have taken steps.

I will refer members of the public to what the letter actually says. It says that government may provide any financial support it considers appropriate for a significant new generation projects undertaken by development or its subsidiary, but will not do so unless the project has been approved by Yukon Development Corporation's Board of Directors and agreed to by government in advance. There is also a reference that Management Board approval must be received by government prior to any borrowing of money by Yukon Development Corporation or a subsidiary, any increase to a line of credit by Yukon Development Corporation or a subsidiary, and a guarantee by Yukon Development Corporation or its subsidiary of any debt.

The reason for that, of course, is that all of the monies borrowed by Yukon Energy Corporation also fall under the Yukon government's debt cap, so, unlike other private business entities, when they borrow money we are ultimately accountable for that, so it's important that approval from the management board be sought and received prior to the board approving such projects or such increases of debt.

Mr. Tredger: Another new direction that the minister is taking with Yukon Development Corporation and Yukon Energy Corporation surround the vetting of public comments. In the new letter, the minister is to be informed of any public announcements or press releases from the corporation prior to their release. I guess the popular and effective "Ask Janet" will become "Ask Janet to ask the minister who will tell Janet what to say." We see the clear pattern of the Yukon Party government controlling the message now being extended to our corporations. Can the minister explain the rationale for increasing his control over the communications of our corporations?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: First of all, in reference to the narrative from the member opposite, I will reference last Friday's *Yukon News* headline entitled "NDP Opposition's Bad Math"

and the article on page 7, entitled "Opposition Bungles YESAB Stats." The member is quite simply inaccurate in the assertions he's making.

In fact, the very same section that he refers to commits the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources to mutual support and cooperation with the Yukon Development Corporation and its subsidiary and open communications and full and timely information sharing with the development group and senior management, including and not limited to regular meetings between the minister and the chairs, and communication that goes both ways. It is a section that refers to accountability and communication, and the clause the member cited is about the intention that before any major announcements were made, that the minister will be advised of them, but does not have to approve them, contrary to the member's assertions.

We have established a framework within the letter of expectation that again I would encourage any member of the public interested in this to actually look at. We have provided for clear financial accountability when it comes to any matters that must receive support greater than what the Energy Corporation can do itself — that being, if they need to borrow money, Management Board needs to authorize it first, because it's not simply a matter of the corporation money; that borrowing of money also affects the Yukon government's debt cap.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has elapsed. We will now proceed with Orders du jour.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

MOTIONS OTHER THAN GOVERNMENT MOTIONS

Motion No. 466

Clerk: Motion No. 466, standing in the name of Ms. McLeod.

Speaker: It is moved by the Member for Watson Lake THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to develop a tourism, trade and investment mission to Europe and the United Kingdom led by the Premier to profile Yukon's tourism industry and investment opportunities for the purpose of:

- (1) increasing awareness of Yukon as a travel destination within European markets;
- (2) strengthening alliances with key business and government partners;
- (3) facilitating business-to-business partnerships; and
- (4) profiling investment opportunities within Yukon.

Ms. McLeod: Prior to the Yukon Party taking office in late 2002, the Yukon had experienced seven years of economic recession. Our unemployment rate was too high, our population was declining. Almost 3,000 Yukoners — many of whom were our young people, our prime labour force — left the Yukon to find work Outside.

Despite being one of our mainstay industries, mining was nearly defunct, with exploration and development spending in the territory being less than \$10 million.

I don't want my comments today to be misunderstood as calling for an economy based on either mining or tourism. We need both.

This trade mission will be the first ever Premier-led tourism trade and investment mission in Yukon's history. I think it has been proven that when we have our leaders taking charge of this sort of a trade mission that it garners a higher profile and can be much more effective.

Germany continues to be the Yukon's largest overseas market, representing approximately 26 percent of overseas visitors. German-speaking Europe continues to be the focus of Yukon's marketing initiatives. The number of visitors to Yukon in 2012 compared to 2011 saw a two-percent increase in foreign visitors. As we've heard here many times, tourism generates \$200 million in revenue for Yukon businesses and over one quarter of all Yukon businesses generate some of their revenue from tourism, with more than four percent of Yukon's GDP directly attributable to tourism.

In 2012 the Yukon government signed a two-year \$150,000 cooperative marketing agreement with Fulda to promote the event and the Yukon. Each year the Fulda Challenge generates European media coverage valued at over \$5 million. In 2012 the department helped celebrate the Hanover Zoo's Yukon Days event, which included gold panning, music and entertainment, and other activities designed to educate zoo attendees on the Yukon.

Supported by the department's touring artist fund, Yukon artists share their talents with fellow Canadians and audiences abroad in Australia, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States. A mission to German-speaking Europe would build on the work already being done by the tourism market and on the investments made in this market through the touring artist fund.

If we look at the Yukon's trade figures for the last couple of years, I think it's important to recognize what we are doing and to build upon our successes. The value of retail sales in Yukon totals a record \$662 million in 2011, which is up 10.6 percent from \$599 million in 2010. Strong economic activity related to mining development, increased employment, higher population and higher year-over-year fuel prices are all considered contributing factors to retail sales growth in 2011. Mr. Speaker, the numbers show that we need to continue to work on growing our trade markets.

Focusing on German-speaking Europe and the United Kingdom, the trade mission will profile Yukon's tourism industry and investment opportunities. This mission will increase awareness in the European markets of Yukon as a destination while strengthening alliances with our key business and government partners. The mission will include meetings in the centres for Yukon's primary and secondary tourism markets, such as the cities of Frankfurt, Hanover, Berlin and London.

Collectively, Germany and the United Kingdom contribute over \$13 million to Yukon's economy annually with 13,000 visitors travelling to the Yukon each year. This mission will

build on the success of last year's visit to German-speaking Europe by the Tourism and Culture minister. It's a great opportunity to develop new strategic initiatives with our partners in the territory's largest overseas tourism markets.

Potential investors will find significant advantages including a strategic global location, strong economy and healthy business environment. The Government of Yukon provides strong support to its knowledge sectors with continued investment in infrastructure and innovation.

Yukon's positive investment climate includes favourable taxation incentives and royalties, streamlined regulatory processes and supportive legislation. Yukon is home to world-class mineral deposits and an established mining industry with abundant natural assets, tourist experiences that are in demand, and a dramatic landscape widely featured in the film and sound community.

Yukon offers opportunities for companies to engage First Nations as investment partners. Yukon's highly educated and entrepreneurial workforce and well-established traditional knowledge and creative-based industries provide for a stable economic and political environment, and of course Yukon's unmatched lifestyle and quality-of-life factors, which are attractive to families and make Yukon a wide open opportunity for so many people.

The good work of the Yukon's Minister of Tourism and Culture has made a significant impact, I believe, and I know he has made it a priority to go to different events and trade shows to demonstrate his support and commitment to marketing our Yukon.

We would like to continue our relationships with businesses in our German-speaking markets — some of our local companies already have relationships with those German companies — and we'd like to enhance those relationships. This mission will also build on mineral sector efforts to establish new business partnerships within Europe by profiling investment opportunities within Yukon's mining industry to European investors.

To sum up, I am in favour of a trade mission by the Premier and selected guests. I look forward to the support of the House.

Mr. Barr: I'll be the only member of the Official Opposition speaking today to Motion 466:

"THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to develop a tourism, trade and investment mission to Europe and the United Kingdom led by the Premier to profile Yukon's tourism industry and investment opportunities for the purpose of:

- (1) increasing awareness of Yukon as a travel destination within European markets;
- (2) strengthening alliances with key business and government partners;
- (3) facilitating business-to-business partnerships; and
- (4) profiling investment opportunities within Yukon.

The NDP Opposition caucus will be unanimously supporting this motion, which is generally about putting a major tour-

ism thrust to a new Premier-led trade and investment mission to Europe and the United Kingdom.

I know there are many in the tourism industry who will say, "Finally, this government is recognizing the value of tourism as a sustainable economic generator." The numbers are in and show the strength and importance of this industry. The DataPath Systems study has shown that visitation to the Yukon is up and that annual revenue for Yukon's tourism industry is over \$200 million per year. This is a key industry for our economy and creates hundreds of jobs in the territory.

Yukon tourism numbers garner a 29-percent return on the government's marketing investment, and markets are showing the Yukon tourism trends are strong in comparison to other destinations. We hope to hear there is a plan to increase this investment and take more advantage of this sustainable economic producer, particularly in the face of reduced resource extraction investments.

Maybe it has taken the reduction of the resource extraction markets with the usual down-cycle to finally get this government to focus on the viable, stable producer with a proven track record. The internationally recognized *Lonely Planet*, the maker of travel books and TV shows, recently highlighted the Yukon as a must-see destination for its mountains, lakes and wilderness but added, before altered by resource extraction.

We need to consider why visitors want to come to the Yukon and ensure that our economic development choices do not spoil this image. We'll provide our support for the Premier's trip, but we expect him to deliver. We want to hear where he will be going in Europe and the U.K., what events he will be attending and what the marketing strategy is to get the Yukon tourism brand out there in European and U.K. media. How will our wilderness, our wildlife and our fresh waters be showcased? How will our rich First Nation cultures and heritage be showcased?

Will the Premier come back from the trip and report on the outcomes of the trip? Who will accompany the Premier? How will representatives be chosen for this?

These are the things we expect and that taxpayers expect to see accomplished: They don't want to fund a holiday; they don't want to fund a junket without outcomes, without a solid marketing plan. The Premier's mission is also about trade and investment. There have been several trade missions to Asia. Foreign investment is important, so I look forward to more details from the Premier about how he presents trade and investment opportunities in the Yukon and returns with a solid list of accomplishments. Thank you.

Mr. Silver: Mr. Speaker, I will be brief. I will be supporting this motion, although I am not convinced that we needed to debate it today here in the Assembly. I see all of the items listed in this motion to be part and parcel of the numerous responsibilities and privileges of the Office of the Premier.

Also, this is an initiative that has already been announced. Yukon premiers of all political stripes have been to Germany to promote tourism investments, and this is just the latest marketing initiative, and we do wish the Premier well on his endeavours.

There are plenty of other items that we could be discussing today, including the budget. I hope this crew will be successful. I hope the Premier will highlight the Peel watershed to potential German visitors, as we know they visit the Yukon to experience our wide open spaces and wilderness.

I am pleased to see the government is taking me up on my suggestion to broaden its search for capital investment in our mining sector beyond China. Recent announcements here in the Yukon have demonstrated that finding capital is once again becoming a major issue of concern for mining companies and for the Yukoners who rely on these investments.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and we will be in support of this motion today.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I'd like to just take a moment to thank the Member for Watson Lake for bringing this motion forward. As the Minister of Tourism and Culture, this is an important initiative, in my mind.

When we took office in 2002, rebuilding Yukon's private sector economy was priority number one for the previous Yukon Party governments. It was an important pillar in our being re-elected in 2006 and 2011. Our vision for moving forward together continues to build upon those previous four pillars: better quality of life, the environment, the economy and good government. We committed to achieving a better quality of life, managing and protecting Yukon's environment, practising good government and building a prosperous, diverse Yukon economy. Yukoners voted for that commitment and now we deliver. We move forward together.

I would like to spend a few minutes talking about how we will move Yukon forward. Members of this Assembly are aware that last year I went to Germany to meet individuals and organizations that are promoting Yukon — organizations like Flex Travel, TUI, Hanover Zoo, Fulda and Condor, to name a few. I have said on many occasions that the Yukon government is very pleased to continue to partner with the Fulda Challenge. The Government of Yukon, through the Department of Tourism and Culture, contributes \$150,000 annually to Fulda in support of this event. In 2012 this sponsorship provided an estimated \$5 million in equivalent media advertising in Germany, Switzerland and Austria — Yukon's largest overseas tourism market.

The event brings some 65 people, including athletes, support personnel, foreign journalists and international guests from Germany, Austria, Switzerland and France, and I would note that many are famous athletes or television personalities. In 2013 the event marked Fulda's 17th consecutive year in the territory, including a three-year sponsorship of the Yukon Quest and the Fulda Challenge itself, which started in 2000.

The Fulda Challenge spends an estimated \$1 million directly within the Yukon on equipment rentals, accommodation, food and beverages, transportation, staging of events and other services. This year's challenge featured events in Whitehorse, Dawson and the Dempster Highway.

Congratulations to the winners of this year's event, Renate Reingruber and Andreas Leiter from Team Austria. The German and Swiss teams were second and third respectively. I

should note that one media story reported that two Guinness world records were broken during the slalom event on the ice at Schwatka Lake: one for the shortest breaking distance and the other for the quickest speed slalom. I can tell you that we received a benefit far in excess of the \$150,000 that we spend in support of this race, so let's build upon that relationship.

I'd also like to talk about Condor. We will continue to build upon the relationship that we have with that airline. At the same time, we will continue to build upon our marketing initiatives overseas. One goal for the German market is to fill more seats on Condor and hope for additional flights: more flights, more visitors; more visitors, a better economy.

I know that the *Yukon News* reported last week that the NDP doesn't seem to be very good at math, but that's math that I even think the NDP could potentially understand.

Mr. Speaker, this will be the first-ever Premier-led tourism trade and investment mission in Yukon's history. This mission will increase exposure for the Yukon as a year-round travel destination. I thank the Premier for being so bold as to take this very important mission with industry leaders.

Mr. Speaker, I would now like to turn my attention to the clauses in the motion in particular. Let me share with you the impact tourism has on our Yukon economy. In 2012, Yukon hosted over 320,000 visitors from around the world, including nearly 34,000 overseas visitors. So what activities or products do we have that draw visitors to our territory? It's quite a list. Visitors are coming here for our arts and cultural experiences, aurora viewing, canoeing and kayaking. They are seeking day trips, dogsledding, fishing and flightseeing. There truly seems to be no shortage of product. Our visitors are also looking for hiking, mountain biking and cycling, outdoor equipment rentals, rafting, snowmobiles, spas and relaxation, whitewater rafting, wildlife viewing, and summer and winter vacation packages.

I would bet that visitors from the European market also enjoy the *SS Klondike* and Dredge No. 4 as much as the Member for Klondike does. They too may appreciate the work that we have put into mitigating the cuts to Parks Canada here in Yukon.

Here's a statistic that all members of this House may appreciate: Germany continues to be the Yukon's largest overseas market, representing approximately 26 percent of overseas visitors. German-speaking Europe will continue to be a focus of Yukon's marketing initiatives. In fact, the number of visitors to Yukon in 2012, compared to 2011, saw a two-percent increase in foreign visitation. I've mentioned before in this Assembly that each year tourism generates approximately \$200 million in revenue for Yukon businesses. Over one-quarter of all Yukon businesses generate some of their revenue from tourism, with more than four percent of Yukon's GDP directly attributable to tourism.

I personally find it fascinating that Whitehorse is the smallest city in North America with direct flights to Germany. In fact, Condor brought over 4,000 visitors to Yukon last year, contributing an estimated \$8 million to \$10 million to our economy.

As you may know, Yukon was designated by *Lonely Planet* as a top-10 must-see travel destination for 2013. Ensuing global media coverage generated remarkable publicity for Yukon and expanded awareness of Yukon as a premier outdoor travel destination.

Following media familiarization trips led by the department, both *Reader's Digest* and *Outside* magazine have highlighted Yukon as a must-visit Canadian destination, highlighting some of the exciting new visitor experiences that Yukon has to offer. This is news that we all need to share, wherever we may be.

The dedicated and hard-working staff at Tourism and Culture are always looking for new and innovative ways to promote our territory. I feel fortunate that I've had so many opportunities to see their good work in action. As you may recall, the department organized the Canadian Tourism Commission's "Go Media Marketplace" in May of 2012, hosting 125 international and domestic media, as well as 170 tourism industry members. You may also recall that in 2012 the Yukon government signed a two-year, \$150,000 cooperative marketing agreement with Fulda to promote the event and to promote Yukon.

Also in 2012, the department helped celebrate Hanover Zoo's Yukon Day event, which included gold panning, music, entertainment and other activities designed to educate zoo attendees on Yukon. This was quite an event and I feel very fortunate that I was able to attend and wave our Yukon flag loud and proud.

Another initiative that we continue to work on is the touring artist fund. Yukon artists have shared their talents with fellow Canadians and with audiences abroad in Australia, Denmark, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States. I am quickly realizing that there is no shortage of talent here in our territory. Our mission to German-speaking Europe would build on the work already being done in the tourism market and on the investments made in this market through the touring artist fund.

I would now like to turn my attention to the trade portion of the Premier's trip to Europe and the United Kingdom. Focusing on German-speaking Europe and the United Kingdom, the trade mission will profile Yukon's tourism industry and investment opportunities.

This mission will increase awareness of Yukon as a year-round destination in the European markets while strengthening alliances with our key businesses and government partners.

The mission will include meetings in the centres for Yukon's primary and secondary tourism markets, the cities of Frankfurt, Hanover, Berlin and London. Collectively, Germany and the United Kingdom contribute over \$13 million to Yukon's economy annually with 13,000 visitors travelling to Yukon each year.

This government continues to demonstrate bold leadership in our work to grow Yukon's tourism economy and increase tourism revenue. We see the success and opportunity in partnerships with organizations such as the Tourism Industry Association, the Klondike Visitors Association, l'Association franco-yukonnaise, Holland America, Parks Canada, the Cana-

dian Tourism Commission and many others. Working collaboratively, we will continue to boost tourism in Yukon.

Furthermore, rather than simply relying on domestic travel markets, we have reached out across the globe to attract visitors. This Yukon Party government has proven that through vision, hard work, strategic planning and bold leadership, we produce results.

It will be a great opportunity to develop new strategic initiatives with our partners in the territory's largest overseas tourism markets. Having leaders such as the Premier and key tourism business representatives along on this mission will assist us in making an even larger impact on Europe.

Our branding of Yukon, Larger than Life, has been successful. The staff and management of the Department of Tourism and Culture have worked tirelessly to promote our Yukon to key primary and secondary markets, providing results — and results that I'm quite proud of and results that I will continue to share with my colleagues on both sides of this Legislature.

The Yukon Party's goal is to move forward together. We committed to building a better quality of life. We committed to protecting the environment. We committed to good governance. We committed to building a stronger, diversified private sector economy. This trade mission is in support of our platform commitments on building a stronger, diversified sector economy in Yukon.

I wish the Premier and those accompanying him from the tourism sector all of the best and much success on the tourism trade mission to Europe this fall. I look forward to hearing about the impacts of the trip upon their return.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I would first like to thank the members for their comments thus far and I also want to again thank the Member for Watson Lake for bringing forth yet another important motion on this good day. The motion speaks to really enhancing Yukon's ability to promote tourism trade and investment abroad. That is certainly something that the Yukon government has been working on over the past decade.

I find it interesting how there were some comments made earlier this afternoon about how the Yukon government is finally waking up or — I forget what the correct terminology is — perhaps finally recognizing the light of day when it comes to tourism. I'll get into that because I'll spend a little bit of time talking about just what we have been doing over the past decade. I find these comments really intriguing, particularly when one takes a look at all the work that is being undertaken by the tourism industry, by the Department of Tourism and Culture, and by many other governments across the Yukon. The Government of Canada is also doing their part to promote tourism for the country, but in particular, Yukon, which is what we're talking about here today.

Just to back it up a few years ago, one of the ways in which we went to work to strengthen the tourism brand was to do just that — go to work in partnership with the tourism industry. That is when the Yukon government, under the Department of Tourism and Culture, and the Tourism Industry Association of Yukon actually formalized the Yukon marketing

tourism partnership — born from that was the Senior Marketing Committee.

I go back to the role of the senior marketing committee in playing a very strategic role in terms of providing recommendations to the Department of Tourism and Culture and the Yukon government in terms of where to put those dollars in the most strategic way to generate the best return on investment for every single dollar.

I have spoken to this very issue numerous times on the floor of the Assembly, but I'm really pleased to take an opportunity again just to inform members opposite who perhaps don't have a full understanding or an appreciation of the role of the SMC and the good partnership that we have generated between TIA Yukon and the Yukon government.

Again, the Senior Marketing Committee really came together — it is comprised of members of the private sector primarily — to represent tourism interests and how to best market the territory with the best return on investment. In fact, each and every year, there is a report card that is produced thanks to the good work of that good partnership and it talks to every single segment of the tourism market, whether it is in product development, in visitor services, in meetings, in conventions, in incentive travel; whether it is domestic markets or international travel; whether it is media relations, and the list goes on.

It even supports tourism, which is increasingly becoming very, very important to the territory, as we've seen from the significant growth over the last decade.

So the good work of this partnership — actually, that is the strategy. I know the members opposite from the NDP were looking for the strategy. Well, the strategy — they actually just have to go on-line and take a look at it — go on the Tourism and Culture website and take a look at the good hard work of industry working together with government to come up with an annual report, annual implementation plan and a multi-year strategic framework to guide the work of the Department of Tourism and Culture. That wasn't always the case in years past. In fact, we didn't have the benefit of having that strategic partnership in place.

Of course, without having that very important link to industry, it makes it very difficult to carry out the mandate, which is industry-led, research-based and market-driven. Those three mantras really formulate what is so important about the tourism industry.

You know, over the past decade we have seen incredible changes in how the tourism market has evolved, how it has changed up, not just here in the Yukon or in the country of Canada, but across the world. It has become far more competitive. It has had to become a lot more resilient because of the changes — the stark changes — and arising from 9/11 and whether it was flooding or fires or whether it was a SARS outbreak a number of years ago — rest assured there will be more.

What it has really encouraged within industry and government is to become more strategic, more focused and more integrated in its efforts to market the territory. I think it's a great model, it's a great template and I applaud the Minister of Tourism and Culture, I applaud the Department of Tourism and Culture and I applaud industry. TIA Yukon is the umbrella

organization, but the multitude of individuals and organizations and agencies and governments that contribute to this sector is heartening indeed, and it is working.

The Government of Yukon has made significant investments over the past years and unfortunately the NDP continue to vote against it, over and over again. In fact they vote against the tourism cooperative marketing fund that we brought into play a few years back at the request of industry, by the way, which is over \$700,000, and it's in direct support of organizations like Air North, Yukon's airline. It's in support of organizations like the Klondike Visitors Association to promote Yukon but also to participate in travel trade shows that are dedicated and specifically directed by the tourism sector as the ones to be present at.

The NDP also continually vote against all the investments in the various campaigns that have been undertaken by Tourism and Culture. Destination: Yukon, the domestic marketing campaign, promotes our gateway cities of Vancouver, Calgary, Edmonton, Toronto, the greater Ottawa area — and it's truly unfortunate because those are the strategic partnerships with Air North, Yukon's airline, coupled with industry to provide the packaging, provide that needed product that is very important.

It is one thing to market the Yukon as a beautiful, unique place to visit, but it's another thing to keep them here and that's what product development is all about — hence the tourism cooperative marketing fund. We have been able to also partner up with Northwest Territories and Nunavut and Canada on our pan-north campaign. That was born out of the Canada Winter Games and again through the 2010 Winter Olympics. We've been able to carry on that good work and it is making a difference and it's so important to continue on with those strategic investments, those partnerships — partnerships with the State of Alaska.

Again, I make reference to leveraging the marketing reach of other jurisdictions, such as Alberta and British Columbia and Alaska, under the Tourism North banner. That's very important too because, you know, Yukon is a relatively smaller jurisdiction, so it's important to pool our resources and to extend that reach. We have been able to do so. Investments like media relations, when we talk about events — such as the Fulda winter challenge — those are very strategic, interesting and very unique events; likewise the Yukon Quest International Sled Dog Race.

These are some of the premier events that we as a government find very strategic to continue to invest in because of the return on investment and because we are able to partner and leverage so many additional resources as a result of media coming to the Yukon to participate, not only in these specific events, but also to take another week or two weeks and go take a look at the community of Faro and go take a look at the community of Burwash Landing or Watson Lake or Teslin or Old Crow. These are some of the things that, as a result of those stories being written, the tremendous net return for Yukon is fantastic indeed. It is a relatively small cost compared to what it would cost for the government to actually take out a page in the *New York Times* or the *Globe and Mail*, for exam-

ple. These are all things that come out as a result of our investments in media relations.

Investments in visitor services — we take a look at the community of Carcross, and I'll get into that in a little bit here too. Visitor services — I am pleased to see all of our visitor information centres are now open.

I'd like to thank and welcome back all the staff to our visitor centres across the territory. They do a fantastic job, in terms of promoting all the unique experiences available throughout every corner of the territory.

Again, Carcross — I know the new investments in partnership to develop a new visitor centre in the community of Carcross — just like the new visitor centre that was the result of the partnership with Champagne and Aishihik First Nations — the new cultural centre that will be formally open on June 1, as I understand — tremendous, tremendous investments by the Government of Yukon, coupled with the Government of Canada and, of course, Champagne and Aishihik First Nations and many other First Nations, to be sure. These are all strategic investments.

When we talk about investments in support of overseas travel, which the motion speaks to, there is the very fact that we put an almost \$20-million investment into the expansion of the Whitehorse International Airport terminal building and also the parking area and the expansion of the international wing — very significant. It's unfortunate it's not shared by members of the Opposition, but in order to facilitate the continuation of international flights, these investments were required — they needed to be done. I think they have been a significant asset to the Yukon and continue Yukon's very important connections with airlines such as Condor and other airlines that may come to the Yukon. The connections, again, are working with Air North, Yukon's airline, and making those connections through our southern counterparts of Calgary, Vancouver and Edmonton to facilitate international access — all important things indeed.

That's what this motion is all about: to promote the Yukon at every opportunity and having the Premier there with the Minister of Tourism and Culture — coupled with industry and others — to participate in a trade mission over to Europe is a very good investment.

It's not about a holiday; it's not about a junket, as the member opposite referred. In fact it's a very small investment for a very large return.

I can tell you, having had experience on similar trade missions or similar visits overseas with industry, it's busy. Morning, noon and night, there is not a lot of time for sleep, to be sure, because between all the meetings with the travel trade — and those are the people who put the bums in the seats in Condor airline and Air North and others — and meetings with each of the airlines, while we're talking about that, there are all of the events to facilitate — so taking advantage of having Yukon Bay and having the name brand of Yukon at every turn at the Hanover Zoo, is significant. To be able to leverage those opportunities is significant, and they make a huge difference. What better time to go than later this year when, in fact, those travel trade operators, the CANUSAs and the DERTOURs of

the world, will be actually looking to formalize and complete their packages for print, for distribution, in turn, for next year's travel season.

So I strongly recommend this motion going forward. I do applaud the Premier for taking up this great initiative, working in collaboration with industry, and taking every opportunity to leverage every dollar that we have available toward investing in tourism and building on all that we have done, whether it has been the waterfront in Carcross or the Whitehorse waterfront, whether it has been in our parks — Tombstone Territorial Park, whether it has investments in historic sites, interpretive signage throughout the territory or museums or cultural centres — we talked a little bit about that earlier in Question Period.

It was this government that actually came through with a program in support of operations of cultural centres. It was this government that has actually gone to work on developing cultural centres, in collaboration with First Nation governments. Again, it's this government that has gone to work in expanding our air access, where we have seen huge growth — in leaps and bounds.

So I know my time is short. I know my time is up. I want to say thank you again to the Member for Watson Lake for putting this motion forward and to thank members for their support of the motion, and accolades to the Premier and to the minister himself.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: I rise today in support of the motion. I would like to thank the Member for Watson Lake for bringing this motion forward to really address a key priority for this government, and that is tourism.

I would say that the key objective of this trip that we are debating today is primarily about increasing awareness of Yukon as a travel destination within European markets. I want to acknowledge — as was just had articulated by the Minister of Community Services, the former Minister of Tourism and Culture — some of the great work that has been done in the last decade to really get us to where we are today and the fact that we have since seen 10 years of successive growth in the tourism industry here in the Yukon.

We also want to ensure that we're strengthening the alliances with our key business partners that we have developed in Europe over the years. This is also the opportunity to create or foster new business alliances and business partnerships with this trip.

We also had mentioned that this trip would have an investment component to it. So this is also the opportunity to go and meet with leaders in the European investment industry to encourage business partnerships with companies here in the Yukon, profile investment opportunities and really essentially look for direct foreign investment to ensure that many projects that are being considered now have that opportunity to have the capital required to put those projects forward and create well-paying jobs for Yukoners, both directly and indirectly, as a result of investment in one of our primary industries.

This really will be about promoting Yukon within the tourism industry. It is about building those relationships. I would

like to mention the relationship that this government, over the last decade, has fostered with Condor and also with Fulda.

I think all Yukoners would be aware of those two businesses and the significant impact that they have had in the Yukon tourism industry. We are also, as I mentioned, looking at developing relationships. As a government, we can play a very good role in terms of an introductory role as well to get those relationships started and to facilitate the opportunity by going there with local Yukon tourism businesses to help establish that initial contact between the different parties. We can really play a catalyst role, I believe, by bringing the profile to that market that says that the Premier of the Yukon is there. I think we'll create more interest and opportunity for Yukon businesses to have a greater chance to have more face time with more businesses. As we know, approximately 30 percent of Yukon businesses benefit — get at least some of their revenue from the tourism industry, and that the tourism industry is generating \$200 million annually in the Yukon. That is significant and results in many jobs and career opportunities for local Yukon people.

In 2012, Yukon hosted approximately 34,000 overseas visitors. Of course, that number continues to rise. I believe it was up approximately two percent over the previous year. Germany is, in fact, Yukon's largest overseas market, representing approximately 26 percent of all our overseas visitors.

I mentioned Condor. I really do need to recognize that Whitehorse is the smallest city in North America with direct flights from Germany. Condor brought more than 4,000 visitors to Yukon, contributing \$8 million to \$10 million to Yukon's economy. My understanding is that there is going to be a slight increase in the number of flights next year, as well. I know that when I go to meetings and I meet with my peers — the other premiers in the country — they are certainly impressed when I tell them that we have direct flights from Germany to Yukon — to our small jurisdiction — when most of them don't. So it certainly is a true accomplishment and a testament to the commitment that this government has had to growing and fostering the relationship with industry and building the tourism business.

Trade is certainly an important aspect of this mission as well. Quite simply, there are many parts of the world that are looking for access to goods and some of the mineral potential that we in fact hold today. We do acknowledge that the price of commodities is a function of supply and demand and there is a good opportunity at this time to be able to go out and wave the Yukon flag and talk about the opportunities. We know that on the mining side, the Fraser Institute has raised Yukon's place in terms of mining jurisdictions from 10th last year to eighth in this current year.

What we also see in terms of promotion is the fact that we have some very good selling features to present to the investment community. We have the resources; we have a wide suite of minerals that are available in high concentrations. We have a government that is promoting policy for responsible economic development, and we also have certainty. We have certainty through the assessment process, through the permitting process,

regulatory and inspection processes. There is a high degree of certainty, which you cannot see in many places in the world.

We also have a significant amount of infrastructure, as well, for example, our access to a year-round deepwater ice-free port in Skagway, Alaska or Stewart, British Columbia and a connection of almost 5,000 kilometres of roads that are well-maintained by the Minister of Highways and Public Works.

There is global competition for access to capital and part of that responsibility that I would bring forward — and also through the summer through the work of the Minister of Economic Development — is to unlock that potential and make awareness of the opportunities that do exist in the Yukon for foreign investment. We see this as a benefit of diversifying our portfolio, by working in many areas — certainly, the Minister of Economic Development has been to Japan, Europe, the United States and China. I too have been to China. I am looking forward to this opportunity to continue to promote Yukon as a strong place for long-term investment.

I certainly take into consideration the comment from the Member for Klondike, who was really trying to take credit for the work that we have been doing on this side, in terms of investment creation in the Yukon, but this is certainly something that we have seen this government doing for many, many years now.

I would look to mention the name of Dr. Jim Kenyon, a former Economic Development minister. His hard work has resulted in hundreds of millions of dollars being invested — direct foreign investment into the Yukon — which has resulted in the creation of many Yukon jobs and benefits for many Yukoners.

Why are we doing this? I think one way to generate wealth is to really grow the local market, and it's really an opportunity to increase access to other markets by going on this trip. On this trip, we will focus on German-speaking Europe and also on the U.K., but I believe that, through this work, you sow the seeds of knowledge in the market in terms of tourism opportunities.

Certainly, tourism is a very global industry, and it's a very competitive industry. We need to continue to move forward. If you're not moving forward, Mr. Speaker, you're moving backward and we need to maintain our commitment to continue to attempt to grow our market share. We need to continue to promote our key markets. My dad says you go hunting where the ducks are, so we need to make sure that we go to those areas where we know that we have strong market access. I do believe that the U.K. and Germany are markets that have been proven to be successful for us, but we certainly haven't fully tapped the tourism potential in those markets.

I also mentioned Fulda, which has invested millions of dollars in the Yukon over the last few years. The other component of that is the market exposure that Yukon gets every year back in Germany or German-speaking Europe, which is immeasurable. Millions of people will watch those events that get televised in Europe that occur right here in the Yukon, and you couldn't quantify what that would be worth in terms of exposure for Yukon.

I think it's worthy of mentioning the investment that is being made in the Hanover Zoo in the Yukon Bay and that the Hanover Zoo does see approximately 1.5 million visitors every year. Those are people who go there and get a slice of Yukon. That does nothing but continue to support tourism for Yukon. I do know that our local Yukon Brewing does take the opportunity at least a couple of times per year to stock a supply of locally grown Yukon beer that they have on display and for sale at Hanover Zoo. I think that's also good for business.

The United Kingdom is Canada's largest overseas market. I believe that over 600,000 people come to Canada from the U.K. every year. It's our third-largest overseas market, with over 4,500 visitors annually to Yukon. As I mentioned, I do think that this is a market that will continue to be able to grow with some investment. I think that's one of the primary reasons for this mission to go forward — we have learned, ourselves and other jurisdictions, that when you have your senior political leadership going on such missions — if it's a trade mission of tourism or industry — it enhances the credibility of that trade mission.

So, it really does show that the jurisdiction is committed to what it is promoting by having senior leadership involved in that. It sends that message to our local tourism businesses and to those people within other industries, such as the mining industry, which are looking for promotion of their industry, but it also sends a message to those people in those jurisdictions to have the senior leadership come and really talk about it. It really says to them that it is important. It's important to not just talk the talk but to walk the walk.

Again, I think we really need to recognize the incredible job that has been done by this government in the last decade in both sectors — investment in the mining industry and in the tourism industry. We believe that we can have both, that we can have a strong, growing tourism industry and a responsible mining sector as well. Not everybody in this Legislative Assembly believes that, but we on this side of the House firmly believe that.

We really expect and are encouraged by the initial response and by having a number of industry participants. I anticipate this will go out to all of those people who are interested within the Tourism Industry Association of Yukon. I think that we will together be able to move forward as well. I've heard the question from the Member for Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes, and I expect of course there will be some officials as well. I would expect some Tourism and Culture officials there, perhaps in terms of economic investment opportunities, and some support from Economic Development and also in terms of embassy and Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada — probably have some support, whether it's from here or travelling with us from the Executive Council Office.

We expect this trip to occur later this fall. Again, echoing the comments from the Minister of Community Services, we want to be there when these organizations in Europe are formalizing their packages for the upcoming year. We also want to make sure that we're heading into the shoulder season for our tourism businesses so that they do have a chance to go.

We can't go in the middle of their season because that wouldn't make sense. They wouldn't have the opportunity to go.

We certainly are meeting our goals of moving the Yukon forward together. This builds on those commitments that we have — the pillars of our platform in terms of building a better quality of life; ensuring that we continue whatever we do to protect the environment; that we're applying good governance; and that we're really building a stronger, diversified private sector economy. This trade mission, Mr. Speaker, supports our platform commitments around a stronger diversified private sector economy. It also meets our commitments in terms of marketing Destination: Yukon.

I just want to also acknowledge the work of the Minister of Tourism and Culture and the hard work that he has done. He has been engaged extensively in marketing the Yukon. He was in German-speaking Europe last year. He has been to numerous trade shows, conventions and events in the United States, Ontario and British Columbia. Of course, he was recently at Northern Scene in Ottawa, which was showcasing artistic talent from across the north in our capital and showcasing it, not only nationally, but also internationally as well.

I'd like to thank the Minister of Tourism and Culture and his department. I'd like to thank the Minister of Economic Development and his department as well for the work they are doing on the investment side. I would also like to thank the Member for Watson Lake for bringing this motion forward.

I was disappointed with the comments from the member opposite, in terms of implying that this was a holiday or a junket. I will not go any further than that. I think the Minister of Community Services articulated exactly how intensive these trips are and that they are from when you get up in the morning until you go to bed at night and I think, upon reflection, he'll maybe regret making those comments.

Thank you for the opportunity, and I also want to thank the members opposite for their intended support of this motion.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: It's a pleasure for me to rise today in support of this motion put forward by the Member for Watson Lake. I'd like to thank her for bringing this motion to the floor. I do agree that it's an excellent idea, and it's one to which I look forward to providing support, both for industry and my colleagues will be participating.

Obviously, this will have an important impact on our tourism industry, which is an important component of our private-sector economy here in the territory. The impact that will be felt will certainly be across the entire Yukon, as tourism affects the various parts of the Yukon in different ways.

Typically, when we discuss issues of tourism and the tourism industry, the focus is naturally put on the Department of Tourism and Culture, but I would like to highlight some of the ways I feel that the Department of Economic Development could lend to this mission and a few ways that I feel the Department of Economic Development can provide support for those companies going and those of my colleagues who will be heading over to Europe as well.

One of the key attractants to Yukon is, of course, our natural beauty and some of our very quaint and beautiful communities throughout the Yukon. While they often are used specifically for their beauty, one of the other attractants is that Yukon is a remarkable film location.

Over the years, Yukon has had a number of fairly high-budget film and video projects come to the Yukon. Traditionally we focused on the Hollywood and Canadian film industry for attracting investment and projects to the Yukon, but I think this mission may provide an opportunity for us to expand our vision and broaden our viewscope of the film and sound industry to include the fairly robust film and video scene in Europe.

I would expect that my department, the Department of Economic Development, and the Film and Sound Commission, which falls under the Department of Economic Development, to provide a significant amount of material and support to the Department of Tourism, as well as the Premier, who will be leading the mission to Europe.

Some of the important information and products that we have are developed in collaboration with the Northern Film and Video Industry Association, better known as NFVIA. Those include the documents that can be found on <http://reelyukon.com/>, which includes a number of excellent documents, including some picture compositions — collections is probably the best way to put it: picture collections — that demonstrate the variety of filming opportunities in Yukon. They range from picturesque farms to large mountains and expansive viewscapes, small quaint communities that we have here in the territory as well as some of the more bustling hubs like Whitehorse. The downtown area in Whitehorse is one of those — certainly a bustling metropolis at times. As well there are communities like Keno and Dawson, which have some very unique looks to them, given the fact that they have such a unique history. We've been so successful in preserving many of the heritage buildings in communities like Dawson, for instance.

A lot of opportunities will be available to those looking to film here in the territory. In the case of those in Europe, it's possible they may not have been aware of the opportunities here in Yukon. The significant degree to which we are connected with Europe through things like the Condor flights and a number of other ways really lends itself to further development of this particular relationship. I think that is going to be one that I will certainly encourage the Premier and his staff, as well as the Minister of Tourism and Culture, to consider when discussing matters of tourism and attracting tourism investment to the territory.

This work, in my opinion, really builds on some of the excellent work we have done to date in attracting investment to the territory. I have spoken significantly about my own efforts and the efforts of the Department of Economic Development to attract investment to the territory. Sometimes we focus primarily on our mineral resources and our natural resources industry, but we must be very certain not to forget about the importance of the diversity of our economy here in the Yukon, including not only tourism but a number of other industries in those discussions as well.

The reality of a northern still-somewhat-frontier economy like we have is that investment from outside of our borders is absolutely key to seeing projects go forward. That includes the mining sector but it also includes the tourism sector. In order for significant projects in the tourism industry to go forward, they require investment and they require interest from outside of our borders. So it's my hope that a mission like this one will be successful in generating that interest and attracting that sort of investment.

I did listen with interest to some of the comments from some of our colleagues in this Legislature, particularly the Member for Klondike, who seemed to suggest that we were in some way taking his advice on investment attraction. I had to take exception that because of the number of inaccurate statements he had made about our investment attraction activities over the course of this legislative sitting — of course, not the least of which was the inaccurate assertion that we weren't working with the Yukon Gold Mining Alliance or his assertion that we should provide funding to them or support to them. Of course, we already do that. If the member had done his research, he would have known that we already do that. So when it comes to advice from the Member for Klondike, I think the only thing I would rely on him for advice on is how to misuse first person plural pronouns when referring to his singular self and all the members of his caucus.

I guess I should move on and circle back to the original topic here, which is this trade mission. So, I think one of the things that we need to remember in going on this European trade mission and investment attraction mission is that we have a diversity of industries here in the Yukon that will benefit greatly from attention and investment from Europe.

I've obviously mentioned the film and sound industry as being one that I think the Department of Economic Development can provide some support to this mission and do fully intend to work with both the Minister of Tourism and Culture and the Premier to ensure that they are adequately prepared in that sense. Another one that I think is important for us to remember in this discussion is our relatively small but very important manufacturing sector. One of the typical misconceptions about the north and particularly the Yukon is that being so remote and far away from the southern markets, we must not be able to have a manufacturing sector in the Yukon and that simply isn't true. As we know, there are a number of excellent examples of Yukon-made goods here in the territory that are surprising to some and certainly in need of recognition. I would point to some excellent examples in the product development field, including the RAB Northern Windows which are locally produced here in the Yukon.

They are manufactured at a factory in Whitehorse and have the potential to be sold all around the world. Typically they are only sold in Alaska and northern parts of Canada, but I think that the level of innovation that they have achieved and the significant savings that can be realized by using these types of four-paned windows in other northern jurisdictions, perhaps in northern Europe, may be of interest to some of those in Europe and I think that we shouldn't forget about the possibility of export markets for our Yukon products as well.

In addition to that, as the Premier mentioned, we have excellent examples of locally made beer and alcohol producers in the Yukon. The Yukon Brewing Company is an excellent example of a locally made product that is exported around the country and out-of-country as well. As I think the Premier or the Minister of Tourism and Culture mentioned earlier, it is sometimes sold at the Hanover Zoo in Germany, which I think is an excellent first step and something that we can expand on if there is a market for it in Europe.

I won't go on at too much length. I just wanted to say that there are a few areas where my department can provide support and will certainly be involved. I look forward to sitting down with the Minister of Tourism and Culture and sitting down with the Premier to discuss how best to coordinate this and ensure that the Department of Economic Development is able to provide the necessary support and whatever additional materials or information that they may find useful when undertaking this particular mission.

That covers what I wanted to say, but the one piece that I did want to add is that this is hopefully the first of many of these types of trips. Obviously we can't be doing them once a month or anything like that, but I think it's important to develop these kinds of relationships. I've found that in my travels, that investment attraction and developing relationships in other markets are very important. That's certainly the case in some of the Asian markets where investors want to have a somewhat personal relationship with someone in the area before they make an investment. I think this could be applied to tourism as well.

I would encourage this House to support initiatives like this and encourage my colleagues and government and members of the Legislature to support these types of steps and make sure that they aren't one-offs, that they are part of an overall coordinated strategy that sees us do this a number of times over the next couple of years as we have done successfully in the past.

So with that, Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend this motion to the House and again thank the MLA for Watson Lake for bringing this forward and for providing the spark for this important discussion about investment attraction in the tourism industry here in the territory, which of course plays such an important role in our private sector economy.

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: I'm very pleased to rise today to speak to Motion No. 466 brought forward by the Member for Watson Lake. As most know and have heard in this House, tourism is near and dear to my heart as I did that for many years with my business.

Before I get started in this, I do want to commend the Minister of Tourism and the past Minister of Tourism for the work the Tourism department has done over the years. I've worked with them in my past life and they do a wonderful job at promoting — especially promoting in Europe — and I really believe in this motion.

The Minister of Economic Development — some of the opportunities in that shop and even going as far as education —

some of the things I have seen in education with some of our local history being put into our schools.

It's important that our youth see that at an early age and maybe that gives them the avenue to get into the industry of tourism and start a business.

I just want to speak a little bit as to why we would do this. As a ranger and a guide, I've guided a lot of Europeans. As a ranger, I had a unit from Germany come over and spend a month in the wintertime and some of them came back as civilians. As a guide I've also guided a lot of Europeans who have come to this neck of the woods — and why? It's to discover untouched wilderness — world-class. I'm going to speak to the reasons why you would want to come over here for a trip — maybe world-class fishing and outdoor adventures and, of course, the luxury accommodation that we have to offer. Yukon fishing, hiking, outdoor adventure, ATVs, wildlife watching and canoeing are just a few of the many outdoor packages that are offered in the Klauane area. Bordering our national park, the place you'll be staying at is the perfect base for many outdoor adventures and experiences, fishing in the Yukon at its best and enjoying an adventure that is second to none. We offer you luxury accommodations, gourmet meals and, of course, first-class Yukon service.

You probably didn't know that over in Europe, at the end of the last century, the great Klondike Gold Rush made the Yukon famous as a land of adventure. Miles of untouched wilderness, majestic mountains, clear, clean water and a rich variety of animals and plant life wait to be discovered by the visitor from Europe. Anyone who loves the outdoors will experience a sense of awe at the sheer magnitude of the Yukon's landscape. The land invites you to throw on a backpack, go on a guided trip and wander among the mountain meadows of wildflowers and discover and explore this untouched wilderness.

Just so you know, Air North and other airlines have daily flights, non-stop to Vancouver, British Columbia, from anywhere in the world. There are also weekly non-stop flights directly from Frankfurt and Zurich right to Whitehorse. The Minister of Community Services spoke a little bit about that.

First of all, we would really like to thank you for booking your next fishing adventure with us. Your stay will be at the most scenic lodge in the Yukon, with service and meals that are unique and unsurpassed. Although we are in a remote northerly location, we offer a lot of comfort. Your room is equipped with private washrooms, including shower and bath. Given our isolated setting, we produce our own power, 110 volts. Europe, you are on 220, so you are going to need a converter. We have our own satellite phone/fax, as well as high-speed satellite television and, of course, for your enjoyment, a fully licensed bar, a large sundeck, a tennis court and many popular activities in our games room. While you relax, we'll even do your laundry.

Why would you come? Your fishing adventure will take you to more than 20 different bodies of water. We use many modes of transportation — jet boats, boats, four-wheelers, canoes, helicopters — to get you to your fishing spot. We have outpost camps at different lakes and the most experienced guides in the business to assist you — local Yukon guides.

Thanks to our catch-and-release policy — except maybe the fish that the shore lunch might provide for you or some of the smoked salmon you might want to take home — you can expect a sensational fishing experience, but do not be overwhelmed or confused by the many choices you have, as we will ensure that you are informed and orientated each day. If you don't have time for all of them, you can always come back again next year. Every evening, we sit with the guests and help customize their adventure for the following day in order to provide the best opportunity for fun and success.

Just so you know, our time zone is the Pacific Standard time zone, and the only thing that Canadian Customs requires is your valid passport. There is no requirement for any special vaccinations to come to this great place.

Our currency is the national currency, the Canadian dollar, and we do accept VISA, MasterCard or for your convenience, cash.

Medical facilities: At any given time we have roads to a health centre or a helicopter can be dispatched.

The weather conditions: The weather in the Canadian north can be very unpredictable due to our vast mountain ranges. Typically our summer months are dry and warm — up to 90 degrees Fahrenheit — but it is possible that you may experience some cool, rainy or windy days. Therefore, it is important that you have good rain gear, a warm sweater or fleece, warm socks, a parka, a hat or toque — a toque, which is famous in Canada — and some gloves as well as a T-shirt, shorts and sun protection. Always in the Yukon, layering your clothing will prepare you for the possible unpredictable weather changes. In the fall, be prepared for cooler temperatures.

Your fishing licence: You're going to need a fishing licence and this licence costs \$38 a year.

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

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

Ms. White: In reference to Standing Order 19(d), perhaps the member can refer to what document he is reading from so we can follow along.

Speaker: Is the member reading from a document?

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: No, I'm reading my speech that I've prepared.

I probably said this many times to a European in one way or another. I'm just tying it in to what beauty we have in the Yukon. If the member opposite doesn't want — sorry, Mr. Speaker. May I continue?

Speaker's ruling

Speaker: There is no point of order, but the member should try and make a bit of statement ahead of time to ensure that it will be tied together or just give me an idea of how he's going to tie it together, please. Minister of Highways and Public Works.

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: So tying this all together, I guess what I've spoken to in the last few minutes plays into the reason that this motion that has been put forward on the floor — “increasing awareness of Yukon as a travel destination

within European markets” — I just increased the awareness of the Yukon as a travel destination and that’s what we would do for our European markets. With “strengthening alliances with key business and government partners”, I was alluding to that fact, taking into consideration that the government has rules and regulations as does Canada Customs — you need a passport, you need a fishing licence, okay — and to strengthen the alliances that we follow the rules.

“Facilitating business-to-business partnerships” — we all have to get our equipment from somewhere, and that’s businesses promoting other businesses within Yukon. “Profiling investment opportunities within the Yukon” — bring them, they will come. Some may stay. I have many great friends in the riding of Kluane who are from Europe and who came here, bought businesses and provided good economy and a service in our community.

I’m not going to speak much longer on this. Of course, the only thing I wanted to get across is that, just so you know, the stuff I was reading to you can also be provided to you in German or French if you are looking somewhere on the Internet to see what the Yukon has to offer.

In closing, we’ve seen in the past few years that the economy of Europe hasn’t been as strong as it always was. But, you know what, Mr. Speaker? This is why I support this tourism trade and investment mission to Europe. My fellow colleagues have spoken to the Minister of Tourism and Culture and to some of the great things that Tourism is doing. The Premier has spoken. The Minister of Community Services, who used to be our Tourism minister, has spoken about a lot of the great things. I’m a firm believer that we need to promote what we have and we need to be proud of what we have. I think that’s about all I have to say.

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

Ms. McLeod: I want to thank all the members who took the opportunity to commend this motion for consideration by the members of this Legislature. I think this is a really important trip in order for us to broaden our markets and expand our existing ones. I want to thank the Premier for taking this on. Some may think it’s easy to run off to Europe, but it really isn’t.

So thank you and I look forward to support.

Speaker: Are you prepared for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Division.

Division

Speaker: Division has been called.

Bells

Speaker: Mr. Clerk, please poll the House.

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Agree.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Graham: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Kent: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Agree.

Ms. McLeod: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: Agree.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Agree.

Mr. Hassard: Agree.

Ms. Hanson: D’accord.

Ms. Stick: Agree.

Ms. Moorcroft: Agree.

Ms. White: Agree.

Mr. Tredger: Agree.

Mr. Barr: Agree.

Mr. Silver: Agree.

Mr. Elias: Agree.

Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the results are 18 yea, nil nay.

Speaker: The yeas have it. I declare the motion carried.

Motion No. 466 agreed to

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Speaker: Government House Leader, on a point of order.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, as I indicated to House leaders early this afternoon, in the interest of getting into government debate on the budget sooner, the government would be prepared to set aside debate on Motion No. 473.

Unanimous consent re deferring debate on Motion No. 473 and proceeding with government business

Hon. Mr. Cathers: My understanding is that, because the motion was called yesterday under the Standing Orders, that requires me to request unanimous agreement of the House to stand aside debate on Motion No. 473 and proceed to government business, which would be Bill No. 10, *First Appropriation Act, 2013-14*, French Language Services Directorate. So accordingly, I request that consent.

Speaker: The Government House Leader has requested unanimous consent to forego Motion No. 473 and proceed with further reading on Bill No. 10. Is there unanimous consent?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: Unanimous consent has been granted.

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

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

Motion agreed to

Speaker leaves the Chair

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Chair (Ms. McLeod): Order. Committee of the Whole will now come to order. The matter before the Committee is Vote 27, French Language Services Directorate, in Bill No. 10, First Appropriation Act, 2013-14.

Do members wish a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

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

Bill No. 10: First Appropriation Act, 2013-14 — continued

Chair: The matter before Committee of the Whole is Vote 27, French Language Services Directorate, in Bill No. 10, *First Appropriation Act, 2013-14*.

French Language Services Directorate

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I am honoured to introduce for the first time the French Language Services Directorate budget for 2013-14. As you know, the Yukon government has recently established the French Language Services Directorate as a distinct budget vote. Hence, the minister responsible for the directorate now has full responsibility for the budget that we are speaking to this afternoon.

The French Language Services Directorate budget forecasts an operation and maintenance spending of \$2.5 million in support of the directorate's operations and French service delivery in various departments. Capital spending of \$10,000 will provide for computer replacement, translation software and system development.

As in previous years, Canadian Heritage of the Government of Canada will provide funding to Yukon as a recovery, pursuant to the Canada-Yukon Agreement on French Language Services. This amount is forecast to be \$1.75 million for this fiscal year. The proposed budget will enable the French Language Services Directorate to continue to support all government departments and corporations by providing translation, revision and French Web coordination services — also providing policy advice, funding for department services in French and liaison with the francophone community.

The 2013-14 budget represents an overall increase of \$502,000 from last fiscal year's budget. The increase is largely due to four main items including: the development of a corporate, four-year plan on French Language Services; one-time funding for the implementation of three pilot projects to improve the French Language Services delivery; the development of an evaluation framework; and, funding to support an increase in translation services.

For the development of a corporate four-year plan on French Language Services, \$85,000 has been allocated. This planning confirms again our government's commitment to work closely with the francophone community to meet its priorities. The plan will establish principles for service delivery

according to the *Languages Act*. The development of a corporate plan for the delivery of French Language Services will also identify ways to enhance capacity to offer French Language Services at key service points.

The budget also includes \$204,000 to introduce and deliver three pilot projects to strengthen French Language Services in the Health and Social Services sector. This includes a full-time employee to coordinate the projects. The three pilot projects specifically identified as priorities by the French community are: to provide an active offer of French services, implement interpretation services, and development an implementation plan for designated bilingual positions in the health and social services sector to be in place by next fiscal year.

Pilot projects will be tested at key service points within the Yukon government's departments and support improvements to services to the francophone community. A budget allocation of \$33,000 has been identified for the active offer pilot project. The objectives of this program are to foster an organizational culture that supports the delivery of French services, establishes minimum standards for services in order to improve consistency, and to test the various active offer tours for efficacy and efficiency.

For the French interpretation pilot project, the amount of \$49,000 has been included in this budget. Again, we're looking at four types of interpretation, which will be tested under this particular pilot project, inclusive of professional interpretation by phone, on-demand services, video and simultaneous translation services and in-person services by volunteer bilingual interpreters.

There will also be a formal evaluation of all pilot projects as they progress, as well as specific performance measures and indicators, and a budget amount of \$25,000 has been allocated for this work.

The budget for translations services has been increased commencing in this fiscal year. Again, this is to reflect the growing demands on the service. Other ongoing increases reflected in this budget include \$15,000 for long-term disability costs and \$78,000 to cover the lease costs for the directorate space. This allocation now represents the full cost of the office space and includes \$61,000 transferred from Highways and Public Works, supplemented with a new allocation of \$17,000.

These are just simply some brief comments that highlight the key features of the expenditure and the activity plan for 2013-14. The recent changes in governance at the French Language Services Directorate and the program improvements mentioned previously reiterate our commitment to working with French-speaking Yukoners to improve government services.

As I mentioned earlier today in today's tribute, 2013 marks the 25th anniversary of the Yukon *Languages Act* and as such the Yukon government is pleased to have embarked upon a strengthened relationship with the French community. It is fitting that our partnership focuses on developing a more strategic approach to the delivery of French language services within the Yukon government in the years to come.

Madam Chair, this concludes my comments and I certainly look forward to answering all questions any of the members may have on this particular budget.

Ms. White: Merci, Madame la Présidente. J'aimerais prendre cette occasion pour remercier la Ministre, le directeur et le personnel de la Direction des services en français ainsi que le département du Ministère du Conseil exécutif pour le travail de planification pour l'année à venir.

Pour la première fois depuis longtemps, je crois que la Direction des services en français reçoit enfin l'attention méritée.

En déplaçant la Direction des profondeurs de la Voirie et des Travaux publics, le gouvernement démontre enfin une ouverture à travailler avec notre communauté francophone.

La session d'information budgétaire de cette année était intéressante par sa nouveauté. Pour la première fois depuis de nombreuses années, le gouvernement Territorial investit son propre argent dans le développement de programme.

Il est inspirant de savoir que 3 projets-pilotes prendront place à l'hôpital cet automne pour rendre des services plus accessibles à la communauté francophone.

[Member spoke in French. Text unavailable.]

I'd like to take the opportunity to thank the minister, the director and the staff of the French Language Services Directorate as well as the Executive Council Office for the hard work that has been done in planning for this fiscal year. For the first time in many years, I believe that the French Language Services Directorate is getting the attention that it deserves. By removing it from the depths of Highways and Public Works, government is showing leadership and an openness to work with our francophone community.

The budget briefing I received this year was refreshing in its newness. For the first time in many years — and I went as far back as 2005 — the territorial government is investing its own money in program development. To know that we'll have three pilot programs at the hospital this fall, making services more available for the French community, is inspiring. Learning that both a department-wide language plan as well as a corporate plan is being developed to guide the future of language service availability in the territory is fantastic. Knowing that with these developments, the hope is to increase contributions from Canada by 100 percent and means that the Yukon will be able to become a leader in our bilingual country.

So with that, I will leave it to the minister to tell us about anything she may have missed in her opening comments and just thank you so much for the change. This is a big thing for the francophone community. On this day, la Journée de la Francophonie, this is a reason to celebrate. I will leave it to the minister.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: First of all, I want to thank the member opposite for her remarks. I want to thank her for her recognition of the hard work at the directorate. This is indeed a new approach and it is perhaps a step outside the box, but it is one that is well overdue. It just makes sense to work with the francophone community to do what we can do in terms of enhancing the delivery of French language services.

I just want to thank the directorate as well for its leadership. I think that with these changes we will certainly be able to come up with a framework that is responsive, that is usable, that is practical and will in fact make a difference in the lives of many francophone citizens of the territory. It will certainly go a long way in meeting our obligations under the *Languages Act*.

That said, I could go into specific elements of each of the pilot projects there. Of course, when we announced this at the francophone centre not long ago — it was actually the end of March — it was really a large step. Of course, last fall — last November at the annual general meeting of l'AFY, I had the opportunity to talk a bit about where we were heading. I just want to thank the staff, the board and the executive director of l'AFY, as well, for wanting to work with the Yukon government and coming up with some agreed-upon steps that I think are meaningful and will certainly go a long way.

It's going to be a very interesting next few months. We do have a policy person who has just been hired.

Of course, we're still undertaking the process of hiring a contractor who will help lead the discussions in terms of formulating a corporate plan. But I do think it is timely and, with the changes here in the governance structure of the directorate, it is a new day and we certainly look forward to continuing to work with the community from here on out.

Again, I just want to thank the member opposite for her comments and for her praise of the directorate and very much appreciate hearing those words.

Chair: Does any other member wish to be heard?

We're going to proceed then, line by line.

Ms. White: Pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, I request the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 27, French Language Services Directorate, cleared or carried, as required.

Unanimous consent re deeming all lines in Vote 27, French Language Services Directorate, cleared or carried

Chair: Ms. White has requested the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 27, French Language Services Directorate, cleared or carried, as required. Are you agreed?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Unanimous consent has been granted.

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

Total Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$2,516,000 agreed to

On Capital Expenditures

Total Capital Expenditures in the amount of \$10,000 agreed to

Total Expenditures in the amount of \$2,526,000 agreed to

French Language Services Directorate agreed to

Chair: We will move on now to Vote 55, Department of Highways and Public Works.

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: Mat I have 10 minutes to get my officials, please?

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

Recess

Chair: Committee of the Whole will now come to order. We are going to resume debate in Vote 55, Department of Highways and Public Works.

Department of Highways and Public Works — *continued*

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: My officials will be along shortly, but I understand I have a few minutes left from the last response. I do have an update for the Member for Copperbelt South, who asked the question about the safety management system. I'll give her a complete update on that and maybe her motion can then be just pulled off the Order Paper.

In relation to the safety management system at the airport, our focus over the past five years has been getting — I'm going to call it the SMS now — the SMS designed and functional to the standard demanded by Transport Canada. This SMS came into force — the start of it — in 2008-09, and it came into force at all airports in Canada. Let me reassure the members opposite that our airports are completely safe, and we're still following Transport Canada rules. This is just something new that Transport Canada came up with.

The SMS is designed and functional to the standard demanded by Transport Canada. We have been operational since June 2012, when Transport Canada certified our fourth and final phase of implementation. The first phase was completed March 31, 2009; the second phase was completed March 31, 2010; the third phase was completed March 31, 2011, and what will be completed March 31, 2012 will be the fourth phase. It will be approved on June 22, 2012.

I have two core documents that I will be forwarding to the member opposite, which is a complete SMS. It's fairly complex, so there's a bit of reading.

The regulations for airport SMS came into force in 2008-09 and, since that time, airports have been gradually introducing SMS to their operations, as have all other airports and jurisdictions in Canada — building the various elements into the operation's implementation that involves a progressive development and a phased-in approach. Smaller airports like Whitehorse were given an exemption by Transport Canada so they provided them with a little additional time to complete the four phases.

Transport Canada has approved the airport's final fourth phase. During the back-and-forth process with the control document, regular Transport Canada inspections were still being conducted on a regular basis, like every other airport. I'll say that again for the members opposite: during the back-and-forth process of creating the SMS, regular Transport Canada inspections were still being conducted. Scheduled site visits were conducted at the end of each phase so the plan could be validated.

I want to welcome the officials and thank them.

I just wanted to get across something that disappointed me a little bit — we have great employees who work at our airports and they put a lot of time and effort into these safety management systems, as do our highways crews with their regular tailgate meetings, and the safety that we have within the organization at Highways and Public Works — whether it be our Property Management people who are on jobsites fixing a school or something else.

It was a bit disappointing that members opposite were asking about our safety audits, but also questioning the qualifications of our employees. As the Minister of Highways and Public Works, I and my fellow colleagues definitely understand that no political member has business in the personnel issues of our employees. I was a little bit disappointed in that.

I will be forwarding to the member opposite — the Official Opposition — those court documents I spoke to, and they can go through them and, if there is still a lack of understanding — if you would like to know more about it, maybe all the members of the Opposition — we could organize a technical briefing, but I want to get it across plain as day — I'm getting a little long in the tooth here — that we're proud of our employees and how safe that our airports are.

That's one of the things that I had an update on. We're still working on some of the other stuff that I committed to get back to, so I look to more questions and hopefully other members have questions also today.

Ms. Moorcroft: I would like to start out by saying that I have not been critical of the employees of the Department of Highways and Public Works. I have not questioned in this Legislative Assembly the qualifications of the employees of the Department of Highways and Public Works. The minister is misrepresenting what I said if he is making that assertion in this House.

I am disappointed —

Some Hon. Member: (Inaudible)

Point of order

Chair: Mr. Cathers on a point of order.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: The Member for Copperbelt South just stood up and accused the Minister of Highways and Public Works of misrepresentation, which I believe is contrary to Standing Order 19(h).

Chair's ruling

Chair: Thank you. At this time, I will say that there is no point of order, but I'll probably want to review the Blues and have a look at the exact wording. In the meantime, I would ask members to be careful of their language.

Ms. Moorcroft: I would like to encourage the minister to reflect the facts accurately in this Assembly and I would repeat that I have not been critical of employees of the Department of Highways and Public Works. I may be critical of the minister if he fails to have the knowledge that he requires in order to answer the questions that I have for him.

Now, the minister provided some information related to the phasing in of the safety management system between 2009

and 2012 and has indicated he'll be sending some documents over, so I'll look forward to a chance to review those.

I do want to ask the minister if he can assure the House that all airport employees are aware of the safety management system requirements and I would also like to ask him, as I have previously put on the record, to report back with further information on the documents, the manuals and the processes for implementing the safety management system across all areas at the airport.

The minister indicated he didn't have any further information to read into the record. There were a number of questions that I had asked him when we had a few minutes to begin Highways and Public Works debate on May 13 related to the numbers of full-time equivalencies, the communications budget, questions on the YACA agreements with First Nations.

He's indicating he'll have that later and doesn't have it now. I see the minister is nodding his head, so I look forward to getting that information. It would be helpful to have it today. Some of these requests had also been made at the briefing, but I'll look forward to a time when he does have the information.

Related to the airport operations, I would like the minister to indicate whether he is aware and has directed his department to meet the Transport Canada standards and move the glide path indicator. That's something we have discussed in this House. I would like to also ask the minister to provide information on how much equipment the Yukon government has purchased with the airports capital assistance program. I had previously put on record to the minister that I wanted to know what equipment — and the age of the equipment — that they have at the airport for runway maintenance, and if he could bring that information back, that would be good.

I would also like to know whether the minister has directed his officials to apply to the airports capital assistance program to purchase new, modern, Canadian-made and purpose-built snow-clearing equipment. If the minister could come back with that information, that would be helpful.

I've also requested that the minister let us know whether he has directed his department to do upgrades to the secondary runway at Whitehorse airport soon. I understand that the main runway is scheduled for a resurfacing in 2015. I would like to know if the funds for that are identified in the long-term capital plans and I would like to know what direction the minister has given to his department in relation to those questions. I think that before I move on to other subjects, I will give the minister an opportunity to respond to those questions.

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: The question referenced the glide path indicator. If there were a problem with the glide path indicator, we wouldn't have an open runway; there is no problem with the glide path indicator in its present location.

When it comes to our equipment, we apply to the ACAP fund all the time. Actually, we have been applying since the inception of this program, and we received \$250,000 for a sweeper that we got last year. So I think it's a program that a lot of airports apply for, and I know that we put in for it on a regular basis as much as we can.

When it comes to the pavement, we have a pavement management system for the runways. The primary runway meets all

the requirements, so it's not due for repaving until 2015, but it's in the long-term plan. The secondary runway we're looking at doing within the next two years. Those will answer a couple more questions from the member.

Ms. Moorcroft: The department is responsible for information and communications technology. One of the areas that I asked about at the departmental briefing was the cost of 911 services on the cellphone network, as well as the cost of the 911 services on the Northwestel land line.

In the information and communications technology budget, there is a cell subsidy payment of \$144,000, which the officials indicated was for subsidizing the provision of cellphone service in the rural communities. Can the minister answer the question as to what the cost of the 911 services are?

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: When it comes to the 911 service — that is something that has been addressed and has come to our attention. We are looking at that right now. So when we find out what the costs are going to be on that, we'll get back to the member opposite. If the member opposite could ask me the question again on the \$144,000 — I missed that — lots of questions flying here.

Ms. Moorcroft: That's fine. I had an answer to that question at the briefing.

I was just referring to it to give the minister the context of how we came to be discussing costs of 911 services.

Can the minister tell us what the total increase is across the Department of Highways and Public Works for the enhancements to the long-term disability leave benefits? As we were going through the briefing on the budget items, in many of the line items there were indications of certain amounts that were for long-term disability leave, and I'd like to know what that total increase is for the enhancements to the long-term disability leave across the entire department.

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: For the member opposite, that's broken down by each division in each department, so we'll have to get back to her with the total sum amount.

Ms. Moorcroft: There was one other question that I had related to Information and Communications. How much is the phone bill for the Department of Highways and Public Works? Is that captured in the Communications branch, and how much is it? I'm interested in knowing what the total costs of telephone services and payments to Northwestel are for the Yukon government, so if the minister is able to provide that information, if he could just let me know.

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: I will commit to get back to the member opposite on that. That would be something more that would come out when we go through it line by line.

Ms. Moorcroft: I'll turn to Property Management next. The statistics indicate that there are 71 buildings leased. I've had questions for the minister previously related to improvements for accessibility in the buildings that the government leases for workspaces, and officials said at the briefing that Highways and Public Works was putting a requirement in place for accessibility.

I'd like to know how many leases will be renewed this year, and I'd also ask the minister, if he can, to let us know if any leases — and, if so, how many leases — have been re-

newed where there have been improvements made to make a building accessible.

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: The exact numbers — I'll get back to the member opposite. When it does come to our facilities — at Management Board today, I just signed a lease — the question that's always asked and always put in there from us is: Is it wheelchair accessible, and does it meet the requirements and standards that we have? All new leases that we sign meet that.

The one today has an elevator. It has been an upgraded building. I think the industry itself — the people who are in the business of leasing to government, and that's a lot of space — are looking to that direction, because that's the direction that we've given to the department — that the department goes on — when we do put out our leases — that we need to have the accessibility and stuff like that. So as a new lease comes up, those requirements are there. When we get into the lease agreement, then that's something that comes forward and I bring that back to Management Board.

Ms. Moorcroft: The budget includes an expenditure of \$700,000 for the Old Crow winter road, and I see that there is a transfer payment to the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation for \$700,000.

We have seen warmer winters in the Yukon. The last time that a winter road was constructed to Old Crow, the government was paying very close attention to daily temperatures toward the end of March, hoping to get a few more days when the road could be used. I would like to ask the minister how the department has addressed the issue of timing and planning in relation to the winter road, and if he can explain the approach to the construction. I understand that the transfer payment to the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation relates to the fact that the road covers three separate areas of settlement lands. Perhaps the minister can elaborate on plans for the Old Crow winter road.

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: The \$700,000 is a contribution agreement to the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation.

But this is their project; it's not a Highways and Public Works project. It's a contribution. We understand the remoteness of Old Crow and how important a road is for the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin, as does our department. Providing a road to Old Crow works quite well with the fact that we have a lot of infrastructure that we maintain and manage up there — in being able to take new equipment in and new equipment out. Also for private industry — the Energy Corporation; I believe there are some crushing units up there owned by a crushing company — to be able to have access back and forth. We have experts within the department who are always willing and able to help, but when we first discussed this project with them, one of the big things that we worked on was a time frame, like the member opposite asked. They call it "global warming" but I could have shown you "not global warming" this winter when I was on my snowmobile; it's pretty cold. Also, it was pretty "global warming" when we were the hottest place in Canada at the beginning of February when it was plus 11 in Haines Junction.

Back to staying on topic here, working with the Vuntut Gwitchin and the cost of the road and the cost of the mainte-

nance of the road — the longer the road is open, the more it costs to maintain and the more we have to pay. We have a contribution agreement with them that will definitely spell out the roles of government and roles of the Vuntut Gwitchin.

There have been a lot of winter roads built since the state of the Diavik mine and some of the diamond mines in the north. A lot more winter roadwork has been done, and a lot more knowledge has been learned from that. There is a good base to capture knowledge from. We're hoping and praying that we're going to get a regular winter, and I hope, as most others do, that this project goes forward. We'll be there alongside them, but we'll have an agreement in place that spells out the roles. It is their project, but we're there to help if we have to.

Ms. Moorcroft: Another transportation question for the minister — the budget statistics indicate that there are 1,156 snow machine and ATV registrations for the previous fiscal year and anticipated for the 2013-14 budget year.

Does the minister have any idea how many snow machines and ATVs may be sold that are not registered?

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: I know that we do track — for the member opposite's information — stuff that is registered, but I don't know that we track things that are unregistered. That's a little difficult.

Ms. Moorcroft: I'd like to ask the minister some questions related to the off-road vehicles. The Select Committee on the Safe Operation and Use of Off-road Vehicles submitted its report in March of 2011, and we're now in May of 2013. The committee made 14 recommendations, and several of those fall under the purview of the Minister of Highways and Public Works. In particular, there are recommendations that there be a consistency throughout all legislation and regulations governing the use of off-road vehicles in the territory — something the minister would need to take note of. There are recommendations, as well, related to extensive advertising and educational campaigns about the existing restrictions on off-road vehicle use, as well as the penalties and means of enforcement.

There were recommendations relating to amendments to the *Motor Vehicles Act* governing the on-road use of off-road vehicles. So I'd like to ask the minister if he can provide a bit of an update on that. The recommendations specific to the *Motor Vehicles Act* would be the ones that say that, as it pertains to on-road use of off-road vehicles, the provisions and current policy regarding the operation and registration of all-terrain vehicles be given the force of law and enshrined in legislation. There is also a recommendation about off-road vehicles being subject to registration and liability insurance and requirement that operators hold a class 5 driver's licence, that the definition of "highway" in the *Motor Vehicles Act* be clarified and that the terms "on-road" and "off-road" be clearly defined in the act.

The select committee report also addresses a couple of very important concerns that I think many of us share. The issues of age requirements, underage riders, adult supervision and age versus the size of machine, should be addressed in legislation. The government should consider how other jurisdic-

tions have approached those issues in determining the best approach for the Yukon.

There has also been much discussion in this Assembly about whether or not helmet use would be mandatory when operating snow machines or off-road vehicles on the road. I know there was not a consensus for off-road use, but some of these, I believe, have been captured in amendments. If the minister could go through that and indicate what is outstanding and when he plans to address it. Yukon is the last jurisdiction in Canada without legislation specifically governing the operation and use of off-road vehicles. Perhaps if the minister can just check off amendments that have already been made, that would be great. We will all know where we stand — and if he could indicate when he plans to bring forward to this Legislature amendments that have not yet been considered, I would appreciate hearing that.

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: First of all, I just want to get across to members opposite that ATVs do demand respect. There are safety concerns and appropriate supervision and protective equipment and everything else that goes along with it.

Now with the department, what I wanted to get across to the member opposite — we hear a lot from the members opposite about legislation, asking when legislation will be coming forward. There's only so much legislative time or that our staff has. We've been working since the select committee. As soon as the 14 recommendations related to the safety of the environment, protection including helmets, licence, education, restricting access, all the departments — including my Department of Highways and Public Works — have been looking at legislation and seeing what needs to be changed.

One thing to remember regarding the *Motor Vehicles Act* the member opposite spoke to: that is something that we want to bring forward and have those changes made, but with the *Motor Vehicles Act* there is more to the *Motor Vehicles Act* than just ATVs. It's an older act and there are a lot of other outstanding things within that legislation that need to be updated, such as fines for speeding in a construction zone. You know, technology has changed. There are a lot of updates that need to be done on that, so that's something that the department is working on. On a regular basis I get an update on that, as do my fellow colleagues.

It is a work in progress. Legislation is something that does take time, and when we go to look at the legislation, there were recommendations made. I know the Member for Lake Laberge was on that and the decreased member from the NDP was on that too.

We're going to have to look at it. It will have to go back out again for consultation, like everything else that we do on this side of the House. I'm looking forward. I'm a Canada Safety Council-certified ATV instructor, and I've instructed youth in different things over the years. I understand and know all the different jurisdictions and regulations that were part of being an instructor at that course. We need to get up to date like the rest of the jurisdictions so that is something we are working on.

Ms. Moorcroft: The minister indicated that he gets a regular update from his officials regarding work on updating

the *Motor Vehicles Act*. I'd like to ask the minister if he could provide a little more information about what his plan is for updating the *Motor Vehicles Act*. What timeline does the minister have? How many areas are being addressed? Does he have an idea of when he might be able to take forward a Cabinet submission to make some of these changes? We know that the off-road vehicle report has been in the government's hands for a little over two years now. If the department has been monitoring on an ongoing basis where other amendments might be needed, have these changes gone yet to the Department of Justice or is the minister's department still compiling a list? What is his plan on this project?

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: That's a bit of a Cabinet process. But what I will speak to is the fact that we're hoping to get it on the legislative slate for 2014. When the member asked the question, she talked about designation of a highway. Those are all things we need to look at. She started off with that all the way down the line. Our department officials will look at that and, yes, they go back and forth with Justice and with some of the other departments to make sure we're not overlapping existing legislation we have somewhere else. I'll just say it's a work in progress and that we are working on it.

Ms. Moorcroft: All departments must comply with the *Financial Administration Manual* to satisfy the general requirements of the *Financial Administration Act*.

Some of the elements of the financial planning and budgetary control that I would like the minister to address relate to financial reports, performance indicators and comprehensive budget reviews.

In chapter 2 of the *Financial Administration Manual*, which is financial planning and budgetary control, it states that a method of measuring results is to develop performance indicators, which are targets or standards, and compare the actual performance to these targets or standards. I'd like to ask the minister: What performance indicators has the department developed and used to comply with the budgetary control requirements set out in the *Financial Administration Manual* and the *Financial Administration Act*? Measuring performance — the results that are achieved — is a key component of any accountability structure, and the ongoing responsibility of individual departments, and the Department of Finance, for that matter, is to develop performance indicators and use them to measure performance. So what performance indicators has the department developed and used?

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: I thank the member opposite for the question. Performance evaluation and audits — one of the first things I learned with my new job was the Auditor General's report in 2008. What I did learn is about the improvements and great strides that the department has taken. Within each department, we put a budget forward every year. It's debated in the House. We have audits for certain projects. The Auditor General picks different projects. But I'm actually pleased to say that we have done a wonderful job within the department. There are a lot of things. We work hand-in-hand with other jurisdictions.

The last time the Auditor General was up here, he gave us a thumbs-up and he noticed the improvements that the depart-

ment has made on how they budget and how we go forward. The example earlier asked about leases. The Auditor General didn't like our three-year leases so we're signing five- and 10-year leases with accessibility issues addressed and things like that.

Every year we strive to build on a bit of a strong foundation, I guess you could call it, to improve our internal processes. We've got our connections program, which is a great program that allows for new initiatives and ideas from some of our employees — not just management, but any employee can come forward. With this department and all other departments there are ongoing audits. We've heard about audits and the members opposite have criticized things that have come out in audits and we spoke to those before — I can answer it that way.

Seeing the time, I move that the Chair report progress.

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

Motion agreed to

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

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

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

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

Chair's report

Ms. McLeod: Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 10, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2013-14*, and directed me to report progress.

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

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

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

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

Motion agreed to

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

The House adjourned at 5:27 p.m.

The following document was filed May 15, 2013:

33-1-59

Dowland Contracting Ltd. – Nelson's Drywall Interior (Alberta) Inc., letter re (dated May 15, 2013) from Craig Tuton,

Chair, Yukon Hospital Corporation Board of Trustees to Doug Graham, Minister of Health and Social Services (Graham)