



Yukon Legislative Assembly

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HANSARD

Thursday, April 3, 2014 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable David Laxton

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

SPEAKER — Hon. David Laxton, MLA, Porter Creek Centre

DEPUTY SPEAKER — Patti McLeod, MLA, Watson Lake

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Hon. Elaine Taylor	Whitehorse West	Deputy Premier Minister responsible for Education; Women's Directorate; French Language Services Directorate
Hon. Brad Cathers	Lake Laberge	Minister responsible for Community Services; Yukon Housing Corporation; Yukon Liquor Corporation; Yukon Lottery Commission Government House Leader
Hon. Doug Graham	Porter Creek North	Minister responsible for Health and Social Services; Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board
Hon. Scott Kent	Riverdale North	Minister responsible for Energy, Mines and Resources; Yukon Energy Corporation; Yukon Development Corporation
Hon. Currie Dixon	Copperbelt North	Minister responsible for Economic Development; Environment; Public Service Commission
Hon. Wade Istchenko	Kluane	Minister responsible for Highways and Public Works
Hon. Mike Nixon	Porter Creek South	Minister responsible for Justice; Tourism and Culture

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Stacey Hassard	Pelly-Nisutlin
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Jan Stick	Official Opposition House Leader Riverdale South
Kevin Barr	Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes
Lois Moorcroft	Copperbelt South
Jim Tredger	Mayo-Tatchun
Kate White	Takhini-Kopper King

Liberal Party

Sandy Silver	Leader of the Third Party Klondike
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Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
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Speaker: I will now call the House to order. We will proceed at this time with prayers.

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

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

TRIBUTES

In recognition of Biodiversity Awareness Month

Ms. White: I rise today on behalf of the NDP Official Opposition and the Third Party to celebrate April as Biodiversity Awareness Month in the Yukon.

Biodiversity encompasses the variety of life on the planet at all levels, from the genetic diversity within a species to the diversity within regions and ecosystems. It is everything from the microorganisms in the soil to the giant blue whale in the ocean. Biodiversity is critical to human life. We cannot separate us from them. Without these, there is no pollination and without pollination, there are no plants. The cycle is continuous.

The diversity of life on our planet is critical for maintaining the basic planetary life support systems we rely on every day. These support systems provide us with things like drinking water, crop pollination, nutrient cycling and climate regulation. These systems all rely on biodiversity. Many species are more threatened than ever by urbanization, global deforestation, climate change, over-exploitation of the world's fisheries and marine ecosystems, industrial agriculture expansion and other human activities.

The link between climate change and biodiversity has long been established. Throughout earth's history, the climate has always changed and with those changes, ecosystems and species have adapted. However, the rapid climate change we are now seeing is affecting the ability of ecosystems and species to adapt and is increasing biodiversity loss. The links between biodiversity and climate change run both ways. Biodiversity is threatened by climate change, but proper management of biodiversity can reduce the impacts of climate change.

Mr. Speaker, it's easy to get lost in the vast idea of biodiversity — the idea that every living organism affects another. But we can concentrate on one piece of this normal puzzle: the bee. Without bees and the pollination that they do, one-third of our world's food supply would be lost. Imagine the effects that would have on the plant, animal and human life.

We know that biodiversity is critical to human life. We know that actions we take or do not take threaten the biodiversity of our immediate and of our global environment. We have it within our means as legislators to agree that toxins that threaten basic elements of our biodiversity are no longer

available to use. Biodiversity requires each of us to move beyond words. It's a call to action.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: In my tribute to biodiversity yesterday — celebrating April as Biodiversity Awareness Month — I neglected to mention a few important things that I would like to now raise.

As part of our tribute to April as Biodiversity Awareness Month, the Department of Environment ensures that we have an adequate amount of information with regard to the wildlife populations and distributions throughout our territory. This year, we'll be conducting a number of surveys and models to understand those populations. We conduct inventory surveys for moose, fish, grizzly bears and fish and wildlife habitats, which all comprise a central part of the Department of Environment's role.

Information about animal movement, distribution, population trends and habitat use help us develop informed contributions to not only our knowledge about wildlife populations and biodiversity in the territory, but also environmental assessment processes, as well as ensuring sound management decisions. The Department of Environment is conducting approximately 42 inventory projects this year as a part of our ongoing population monitoring, harvest management and habitat programs.

I would like to take a moment to also acknowledge the role of the Yukon Fish and Game Association in promoting biodiversity in the territory. I think no one appreciates the populations we have here in the territory more than those who get out on the land and see them themselves. I would like to thank the Yukon Fish and Game Association for the work that they've done and their work in celebrating biodiversity in the territory this April.

Speaker: Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: It is with great pleasure that I rise in the House today to introduce a few students from the grade 4/5 class in St. Elias Community School.

In the House today we have Tanner Germain, Annika Eckervogt-Brewster, Callum Weir, Dalton Moore, Ecko Kirk, and her brother Austin Kirk, Jonas Hume, Curdin Allenspach, Marius Allenspach, Jason Symanski, Alea Griffith, Ethan Smith, Willow Oakley, Lauren McKinnon, Freya-Rae Rowe, Ethan Thompson, William Hume and Brody Hume — I challenge anyone to tell the difference between them — Jennika Jones, Brendan Mackinnon, Quinnton Beaulieu, Jackson Sheardown and their teacher and EA today, Cyndi Cowie and Dianna Symanski. I would like to thank John Jones, the parent chaperone today. Please help me in welcoming them to the Legislature.

Applause

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: They are going to be in the members' lounge, so after we break for Committee of the

Whole, any MLAs who would like to go and chat with the youth of St. Elias, please do. Thank you.

Speaker: Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Ms. White: I have for tabling the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change summary for policy makers titled, *Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability*.

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

Reports of committees.

Are there any petitions to be presented?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motions?

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Canada to:

(1) abandon its proposed changes to the *Federal Elections Act* that would disenfranchise many Canadians, particularly first-time voters like youth and new Canadians, aboriginal Canadians, seniors living in residence and people living with disabilities by prohibiting vouching, voter education programming by Elections Canada and the use of voter cards as identification;

(2) hold cross-Canada consultations to seek input from Canadians on electoral reform before undertaking any changes to federal election laws.

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Canada to support Bill C-583, *An Act to Amend the Criminal Code*, to improve access to justice for individuals with fetal alcohol spectrum disorder (FASD) by requiring the courts to consider, as a mitigating factor in sentencing, a determination that the offender suffers from FASD if the condition was relevant or contributed to the commission of the offence.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to amend the territorial *Corrections Act* to better meet the needs of individuals with FASD and accommodate FASD as a disability in the Yukon correctional system.

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

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to work with the Government of Canada to determine an equitable funding formula to ensure that the Yukon Avalanche Association stays open for the 2014-15 year and beyond.

Speaker: Is there a statement by a minister?

This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Whistle-blower legislation

Ms. Hanson: Last week, we asked the minister about a key point of the Yukon government's proposed whistle-blower act. The minister was asked to clarify whether whistle-blowers who reveal gross mismanagement of public funds will be protected under the government's proposed law. It's a very important question that he refused to answer. So the minister has had a week to think about it.

Will the minister assure Yukoners that whistle-blowers who disclosure the gross mismanagement of public funds will be protected under the government's proposed legislation?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. On one hand, the NDP would like us to consult Yukoners and listen to what they say and then on the other hand they rise today and ask for us to take a firm position before we've heard from the public in our public consultation process about what the public, what the unions and what other public bodies think about what we've proposed. So what we intend to do is continue consulting Yukoners and hear what they have to say about the proposals we put forward.

Another point where they've shown some dissonance among their party is of course the fact that they want us to move expeditiously but, on the other hand, last week the Member for Copperbelt South asked us to extend the consultation period, putting our timelines back even further.

The NDP needs to figure out what their position is on this particular issue and clarify for not only the House but for all Yukoners.

Ms. Hanson: Yes, we will clarify. We have clarified. We do believe that we should not be reshaping the discussion paper to ignore the recommendations of the select committee.

So, Mr. Speaker, another question about the proposed whistle-blower law that the minister chose not to answer concerns how reprisals against whistle-blowers will be remedied. It is important that whistle-blower laws have a strong process to protect employees who blow the whistle on wrongdoing.

The Select Committee on Whistle-blower Protection recommended that the Office of the Ombudsman be given the authority to decide, not just recommend, how to remedy any reprisals suffered by a whistle-blower. So why is the government again ignoring another key recommendation of the Select Committee on Whistle-blower Protection?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: One of the key recommendations put forward by the select committee was that a potential whistle-blower exhaust all departmental or existing processes before entering the whistle-blower process. That's a position the select committee put forward in their recommendations and that the Member for Riverdale South signed off on.

Then two weeks ago, the Leader of the Official Opposition took a contrary position in the newspaper, criticizing that position. So it's very difficult for us to ascertain exactly where the NDP are on this issue. What we know is that we want to hear from Yukoners and we want to

continue to consult Yukoners about what they think about this particular proposal. We haven't made a decision ultimately as to what the bill will look like because we want to hear from Yukoners, we want to hear from interested groups, we want to hear from unions and we want to hear from the Ombudsman herself about her thoughts on this particular issue.

We haven't drafted a bill; we haven't presented it yet; so no decision has ultimately been made. We want to hear from Yukoners before we reach that decision. It's clear the NDP has their position already and don't care what Yukoners think.

Ms. Hanson: It's too bad the minister prefers attacking the Opposition instead of answering questions.

What he has done is shape the discussion on this legislation by ignoring the recommendations of the select committee. The Yukon NDP firmly believes that whistle-blowers who reveal gross mismanagement of public funds should be protected under the law. The committee recommended it, it's common practice across Canada, and it makes sense.

Protecting whistle-blowers who witness the gross mismanagement of public funds is about accountability. So why is this government proposing a whistle-blower law that ignores a core function of whistle-blower laws currently in place across Canada?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Mr. Speaker, we believe it's in the public interest to establish a process for disclosing serious wrongdoing within the public service and to legally protect those who make such disclosures. Following consideration of the committee's recommendations, we are now proceeding with the work to develop practical, efficient and effective legislation for Yukon and we will be considering the views and suggestions of all interested parties in the process. Unlike the NDP, which has carved out its position already, we want to hear what Yukoners think, we want to hear the input that they provide us, and ultimately we'll make a decision about how to proceed based on that input that we receive from the public.

As I said before, it becomes challenging for us to ascertain the NDP's position on this particular issue because we've heard three different positions from them now — one from the Member for Riverdale South, one from the Member for Copperbelt South, and now the Leader of the Official Opposition is weighing in as well. So, once they solidify their position and articulate it in this House, I'm unable to really understand where the NDP is coming from on this issue. They really ought to, I think, review the recommendations made by the select committee that their own members signed off on, decide whether or not they really support those or not, and then come to this House and make representations on behalf of their party.

Question re: Teachers, government relations with

Mr. Tredger: Mr. Speaker, I'm sure Yukoners would appreciate it if the ministers would tone down the rhetoric and answer some questions.

One year ago, I brought up concerns about a government policy that sought to silence teachers and prevent them from

speaking out on important public matters. I would have hoped that this so-called "draft policy" would have been discarded and this government's attempt to stifle the voices of teachers would have been abandoned. However, the culture of intimidation that this government created through their making-public-statements policy persists.

What is the status of the policy that sought to restrict the freedom of speech of the Yukon teachers, and if it is not currently in force, can the minister confirm that teachers have been clearly informed?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm not entirely sure what the member opposite is referring to. When it comes to teaching professionals and when it comes to Yukon Department of Education employees, yes, there has been a lot of work that has been underway — consultations undertaken with the Yukon Teachers Association and others — about supplementary instructions when it comes to supporting the right of public servants to speak as private citizens and also providing clarity when it comes to speaking in support of government-related policies and programs.

Again, this has undergone extensive consultations and discussions with the Yukon Teachers Association, and certainly we are very pleased to be able to make a substantive number of changes since the draft first came out about a year ago, and that has been taken into consideration. Many changes have been made since the member first raised these questions, and we are very appreciative of those comments.

Mr. Tredger: It would be imperative to inform the teachers of these changes.

Yukon teachers are a valuable resource, yet they feel that they are being muzzled by this government. In this month's newsletter, the president of the Yukon Teachers Association said — and I quote: "...this expertise is squandered when fear of retaliation prohibits open and honest dialogue needed to bring about authentic change in a culture of intimidation, hidden agendas, and top-down management."

The treatment that Yukon teachers are facing is discouraging, but not surprising, from this government that operates on a "my way or the highway" approach. What will this government do to put an end to a culture of intimidation, hidden agendas and top-down management?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: To the contrary, in fact, if the member opposite wants to talk about toning down the rhetoric, I would also ask the member opposite to do just what he has asked us to do.

When it comes to supporting our employees in the Department of Education, the government is doing just that. I refer to a number of very unique, innovative and creative initiatives, which are all in support of increasing educational outcomes of our student population. That's why we are supporting the leadership of the Watson Lake Secondary School in the new blended-learning approach — a new approach that is seeing some very positive results in terms of empowering and engaging students in that particular community and holding the line when it comes to student attendance. It's a huge achievement for that community and a huge achievement for the Department of Education.

Likewise, we are supporting the communities of Old Crow and Teslin in coming up with an alternative high school. That was born as a result of the leadership of those particular school communities.

We are supporting those school communities. We will continue to support teaching professionals and continue to find creative ways to engage our student population to increase the educational outcomes of our students.

Mr. Tredger: Those were the words coming directly from the Yukon Teachers Association.

Yukon teachers are involved, knowledgeable, innovative and dedicated to creating a good learning environment for our children. I'm pleased that the government is working in many areas with them. Unfortunately, teachers are not being given the recognition and the respect that they deserve. This government has attempted to silence the opinions of Yukon teachers on issues in which their voice would add to the discussion.

This government's approach to dealing with teachers needs to be open, transparent and engaging. What is this government doing to increase transparency and reduce political interference in the work that teachers do?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Again, the Government of Yukon, under the Department of Education, is very much supporting the work of our teaching professionals — with a renewed three-year collective agreement to begin with, which is in support of their ongoing work in terms of their work with students and our community stakeholders and in support of delivering educational outcomes for all students.

We are very appreciative of the work of our teaching professionals. We support their work and, as I just mentioned, we are very supportive of the leadership being taken by teachers and by administrations around the territory, from Old Crow to Watson Lake to Teslin.

The rural experiential model is yet another example of another initiative that we are supporting in collaboration with rural Yukon communities. It is an initiative that was first launched in the community of Dawson last fall, which engaged over 80 students from seven different communities in a week of alternative learning in support of their learning outcomes.

It is working. In fact, it has worked so well that we are repeating that exercise and actually lowering the grade levels to take part in another rural experiential model to occur in Carmacks later on in May. Everything that we do in the Department of Education is in the name of delivering educational outcomes and improving those educational outcomes, and we will continue to engage with teachers and all other stakeholders.

Question re: Continuing care facilities

Mr. Silver: All this week, I've been asking questions of this government's poor planning on capital projects. Continuing with that theme, I have question for the Minister of Highways and Public Works about an RFP issued by his department earlier this year for a business case analysis and pre-concept planning for a new continuing care facility.

The consultant who won the bid is still compiling this report, so the government has yet to receive it. However, in the Premier's budget speech, funding of \$6.9 million was announced for a phase 1 design of this facility with an initial 150 beds.

So I have a very simple question, Mr. Speaker. If an RFP for a business case analysis was to support decision-making and planning for a 300-bed facility with an immediate construction of up to 150 beds, then why has the government already announced that the facility will be 150 beds when it hasn't even seen the consultant's report yet?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Again, we hear the inaccurate rhetoric coming from the Leader of the Liberal Party. Earlier this week he admitted that he doesn't write the words he speaks and apparently takes no responsibility for them. But in fact we are following appropriate procurement processes. In terms of planning, the information that we've received to date is that a phased approach is the most cost-effective and that a 150-bed facility with a second phase that would add additional 150 beds has some efficiencies of scale and looks at this point to be the most appropriate, cost-effective and effective program delivery option for the Yukon government.

Mr. Silver: I didn't want to hear from the minister who is responsible for the poor planning for the hospitals. I wanted to hear from the minister responsible for this particular RFP.

Mr. Speaker, the government currently has a consultant work on the project to make a business case for a new 150-bed continuing care facility, yet they've already announced a project to go ahead with those 150 beds. Now isn't that a little bit premature? What's the point of having a study if the decisions have already been made?

The Yukon Party's approach on this issue has raised a number of questions, and here's one: Has the government learned anything from the Auditor General's report on the Watson Lake and Dawson City hospitals? It doesn't seem so. We are getting the same scattered approach to planning that results in major cost overruns and poorly planned facilities.

The Minister of Health and Social Services has described this as one of the biggest construction projects in the Yukon Territory's history. If a new continuing care facility is such a priority, then why didn't we see it in their election platform and why wasn't it in the minister's mandate letters?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: That's quite interesting rhetoric coming from the Leader of the Liberal Party. In fact, we are continuing with moving forward with the planning for the next continuing care facility. Based on the information we have to date, it appears the most effective model of doing that is a phased approach, beginning with 150 beds, followed by a second 150 beds. I would encourage the member to actually read what it says in the budget instead of just reading what the backroom boys write for him.

Mr. Silver: By the way, I also have backroom girls in my caucus talks, for the record. It's interesting that such a priority item is only now finding its way through the budget process. If this was such a priority to this government, then why has it taken it so long to bring it to the table? The lion's

share of the \$126-million price tag will have to be paid by the next government.

The RFP is also supposed to consider the future of both Macaulay Lodge and the Thomson Centre. The report hasn't even been received yet and the minister has already said publicly that these facilities will be closed.

If the study is supposed to look at the future of both Macaulay Lodge and the Thomson Centre, then why is this minister already saying that the new facilities will replace these beds, when the consultant has yet to put in his report?

Hon. Mr. Istchenko: I thank the member opposite for the question. I don't know if the member opposite understands, but we are currently in the planning stages. A project of this magnitude — it is important that we have detailed evaluation and the analyst's report. When it comes to RFPs, Mr. Speaker — it was in the media this morning, talking about procurement within the government.

We are leaps and bounds ahead when it comes to procurement with our new procurement support centre. We heard that from the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce this morning. They are happy to see that is moving forward. We're happy to see that this Whitehorse continuing care is moving forward. We are also happy to see that the St. Elias group home is moving forward; that we're working and moving forward on Sarah Steele; McDonald Lodge, in the member opposite's riding; the Beaver Creek fire hall; and our Alexander Street seniors complex — stuff we've committed to Yukoners that the member opposite is definitely going to be voting against, unless he changes his mind.

Question re: Automatic external defibrillator availability

Ms. Stick: Automatic external defibrillators, or AEDs, are small portable defibrillators that identify the cardiac rhythm of someone in cardiac arrest and apply shock to correct any inconsistencies. They are designed and meant to be used by trained and untrained citizens in the event of a cardiac arrest.

AEDs are proven to substantially increase the success rate of people who have gone into cardiac arrest. They are relatively cheap and easy to use. There are roughly 40,000 cardiac arrest events in Canada a year, many of these occurring in public space. The odds of surviving these events are better when there is an AED available.

Can the minister tell us how many automatic external defibrillators are installed in public building throughout the Yukon?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: As Acting Minister of Health and Social Services, I don't have all of that information at my fingertips. I do know that in recent years it has become more common in southern areas to put automatic defibrillators — AED devices — in shopping malls and other facilities. I also recall during my time a number of years ago as Minister of Health and Social Services — at that point we had assessed the cost — the risks — associated with putting those devices in facilities and, at that point in time, determined that it was not the right step then. I'm not certain of the most recent

information and what work the department has done to evaluate this possibility, but I'm sure there is some information related to that and we'll certainly undertake to look into what work has been done to consider the possibility of expanding the availability of AED devices.

Ms. Stick: I believe this would be an area that the Department of Community Services would be looking at. The Heart and Stroke Foundation of Canada recommends that all major public spaces have access to AEDs. They have found that there is a 75-percent increase in survival rates when an AED is used in conjunction with CPR. They also make numerous recommendations to governments. This one in particular interested me and it was, "Ensure AED programs are incorporated into comprehensive emergency response plans of government buildings...".

Mr. Speaker, the City of Whitehorse has eight AEDs in city buildings, including City Hall. Does this government have a plan to install or would they consider looking at automatic external defibrillators in public government buildings throughout the Yukon?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Again, I understand the member's confusion in thinking this would be a Community Services area because it is a matter that technically could be addressed by either department.

I know that this has been looked at from a health perspective in the past, and I would assume that the Department of Health and Social Services has more recent data on this than we have. I have undertaken to look into this for the member — what work has been done recently to analyze it. As I mentioned during my first response, I am aware that it has been looked at in the past and the most recent assessment of this that I personally saw determined, at that point in time, it was a very expensive option, and in the health care field, there are a great many areas of cost pressure.

At that point in time, the advice of officials is that there were more urgent health care needs we should be seeking budgetary approval for, but we'll find out what the current status is of assessing the potential benefit AEDs and determine what work officials have done.

Question re: Keno City mine development

Mr. Tredger: Last year, the Yukon government authorized Alexco's plans to reopen the historic Onek and Lucky Queen mines, adding to production at the Bellekeno mine, which began in 2010. In its application to reopen the two historic mines, the company promised to build and operate a new water treatment facility at the Onek mine after an environmental study revealed contaminated effluent from that mine was leaking into the Crystal Creek watershed.

What is the status of the water treatment facility, and what is the government doing to assure the residents of Keno that contaminants are no longer being released into local groundwater?

Hon. Mr. Kent: With respect to the operations at Keno, obviously the Lucky Queen and the Onek are the projects the member opposite referenced with respect to getting the permits. I know that the proponent right now is actually

seeking permits to also look into developing the Flame & Moth project. The project itself isn't operational right now, but the proponents hope to get it going soon. I'm sure that any commitment or licence or permit responsibilities that they have with respect to mine operations will be followed through on. That's something that, through our Compliance Monitoring and Inspections branch of EMR, we will monitor once the projects are up and going.

Mr. Tredger: Meanwhile, the Onek adit continues to leak toxic effluent into the water system. Last May, Alexco's environmental subsidiary, Elsa Reclamation and Development Company Ltd., received an amended water use licence from the Yukon Water Board allowing Alexco to process materials mined from its Onek and Lucky Queen mines at Keno Hill. However, metals-contaminated effluent is continuing to be released into the Crystal Creek watershed from the Onek mine, despite the fact that Alexco's water licence requires that it build and operate a water treatment facility to deal with the problem.

Will the government enforce the terms of the water licence and ensure that the water treatment facility is fully operational?

Hon. Mr. Kent: With respect to the property at United Keno Hill and the work that Alexco does, I mentioned the properties that they're looking to continue to develop. I know they're very proud of the silver that they mine and the silver potential in that area. The other aspect of that project is, of course, to clean up after historic mine damage.

This is a great success story that we have in the Yukon, where we are able to provide new and exciting opportunities from a modern mine but also have that same proponent do the cleanup of an existing mine.

With respect to the question that the member opposite asked, I will consult with officials and get back to him with a written response as to what the terms and conditions of the water licence are and what the company itself has been doing to undertake those terms and conditions.

Mr. Tredger: Meanwhile, the Onek adit continues to leak toxic effluent into the water system.

Placer miners are closely regulated in the Yukon. As small operators in the industry, they know they have to follow the rules. I have heard from several miners who have told me that they must follow stringent requirements or be shut down. However, it appears that large mining companies and the government itself are not subject to the same scrutiny.

The continuing problem of contaminated water flowing from Alexco's Onek mine into local groundwater is a prime example of this double standard. When will the government enforce the Water Board licence requirement to properly treat the metals- contaminated effluent leaking from Onek mine into local groundwater?

Hon. Mr. Kent: Members of the House will, I'm sure, grant me the opportunity to consult with officials and consult with the proponent to determine if what the member opposite is saying is actually correct.

With respect to the United Keno Hill property, it has a long history here in the Yukon Territory — historic workings

that were permitted at the time, when there weren't such rigorous environmental controls, and we are proud of the work that Alexco has done there and the work that they continue to do. They provide jobs and opportunities for Yukoners in a new and modern mining climate that is subject to the environmental standards and regulations of the day, and they are also cleaning up the historic standards at the same time, reducing the liability for Canadians and Canadian taxpayers.

So, with respect to this specific question that the member opposite asked, I will contact my officials and the proponent to determine what exactly has been done and if there is indeed a problem. I know the member opposite has brought incorrect information to the floor before, so I'd like to take the opportunity to determine whether, in fact, this information that he's bringing is correct.

Question re: Whitehorse Correctional Centre, female inmates

Ms. Moorcroft: I'm sure the Whitehorse Correctional Centre and the Department of Justice keep records relating to the number of inmates and other key statistics and that the Department of Justice compiles these records in order to inform government decision-making.

Can the minister inform this house how many women are in the correctional system? What are the recidivism rates for women in Yukon's correctional system?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I thank the member opposite for the question. As we know, over the last couple of years through the correctional redevelopment strategy amending the *Corrections Act* and the work that was done on *Sharing Common Ground*, there has been lot of attention paid to the Whitehorse Correctional Centre over the last couple of years. During this sitting the member opposite has asked most of her questions to me pertaining to the Whitehorse Correctional Centre.

I just took the member opposite for a tour of the Correctional Centre about a week ago, and I believe that at that time there were six female inmates within the Correctional Centre. There's a vast array of programming that is available to those offenders, including college courses and different crafts if there is interest in cultural or heritage work that they wish to do.

I could go on. I have gone on and on about the programming at WCC on the floor of this Legislative.

I do know that there are approximately six female inmates at the correctional centre now and, as I've said, there is programming available for those inmates.

Ms. Moorcroft: My question for the minister was: What are the recidivism rates for women? I would like him to come back with an answer on that.

To stay out of jail — to avoid recidivism — women need safe housing and other supports. Many women who are in the correctional system are themselves victims of violence. If returning to a violent man is their only housing option, they are at risk of further violence. Safe housing improves a woman's chances for successful reintegration into society after leaving corrections.

Will the minister support the development of a community residential facility for Yukon women?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: As of April 1 at the Whitehorse Correctional Centre, the inmate population statistics breakdown is as follows: 26 sentenced males, one sentenced female, one federal sentenced female awaiting transfer, 42 remand male inmates, and four remand female inmates. As of April 1, the total numbers were 68 males and six female inmates, as I had indicated.

The member opposite again referred to programming and ensuring that when people leave the Correctional Centre, whether they're male or female, they have opportunities for that reintegration. I spoke to a number of the different opportunities for programming at the correctional facility: changing the offender behaviour program; respectful relationships; the relationship violence program; violence prevention program; emotions management for women; relationship skills for women; and substance abuse management and so on — including sex offender treatment and sex offender maintenance.

Ms. Moorcroft: Mr. Speaker, the minister has still not answered any of the questions that I have just asked him.

Recidivism or re-offending and then possibly returning to jail is something that we would like to prevent. Having safe housing options is one way of preventing recidivism.

Can the minister make a commitment, since he doesn't have the numbers in front of him today, to come back with a legislative return as to what the recidivism rate is for women in the Yukon correctional system?

Hon. Mr. Cathers: I appreciate the member's question. What I would like to remind the member is that significant investments have been made by government in improving the availability of housing options. These include the significant investment in making additional lots available through the land availability portion of our approach, as well as the significant investments that have been made in our social housing stock, including building new units and investing in existing units, which include investments in this current budget of roughly \$1.6 million in repairs and upgrades to existing housing stock.

As well, through a partnership approach in the housing action plan, we've engaged multiple stakeholders in helping us take the next steps to build on the significant investments that have been made to date and to come up with collaborative approaches to address all areas of the housing spectrum. That includes emergency shelters, transitional housing, supportive housing, social housing, private market rental and home ownership. Together we are working with partners to come up with strategies for government and for identifying opportunities for the private sector, First Nations and municipalities to play a role in further increasing the availability of housing options for all Yukon citizens, including those who are fleeing abusive situations.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

Some Hon. Member: (inaudible)

Question of privilege

Ms. Stick: I rise on a question of privilege.

Speaker's statement

Speaker: Prior to receiving the question of privilege from the Official Opposition House Leader, the Chair would like to make a statement regarding the rules and procedures surrounding questions of privilege.

This is the first question of privilege that has been raised during the 33rd Legislative Assembly. The Chair believes it would be beneficial for all members to understand these rules and procedures.

Once the Official Opposition House Leader has concluded her statement, the Chair will ask for statements from other members, if other members wish to speak to the question of privilege. The House will then proceed with other business.

Standing Order 7(3) says that, in dealing with a question of privilege, "the Speaker may allow such debate as is necessary to assist in the determination of whether there appears to be a prima facie case of breach of privilege and whether the matter is being raised at the earliest opportunity."

I would therefore ask all members who speak to the question of privilege to keep their statements brief and concise. It is important to keep in mind that the Chair does not decide whether a breach of privilege has or has not occurred — that is a matter for the House to decide. The question for the Chair is whether there appears on the face of it to be a breach of privilege.

If the Chair determines that there appears to have been a breach of the House's privileges, Standing Order 7(4) says that "any member may either immediately propose a motion or, not later than at the conclusion of the next sitting day, give notice of a motion calling upon the Assembly to take action thereon or referring the same to a Committee of the Assembly".

Members must realize that a debate on a question of privilege is a serious matter. If the Chair rules that a prima facie breach of privilege has taken place and if the motion designed to deal with the alleged breach calls upon the Assembly to take action, the debate on that motion would take precedence over all other matters under Orders of the Day until the question of privilege has been resolved.

The Chair will now receive the question of privilege from the Official Opposition House Leader.

Ms. Stick: Mr. Speaker, yesterday during Question Period, the Member for Lake Laberge compared a member of the NDP Official Opposition to a "snake" by saying — and I quote: "I'm not sure if it's snakes or the Leader of the NDP."

Mr. Speaker, this is disrespectful and inappropriate for this House. I believe this would fall under Standing Order 19(i), where it refers to "insulting language" and I would ask the Member for Lake Laberge to apologize in this House.

Hon. Mr. Cathers: This matter was not raised earlier or identified at House Leaders. This would appear to be something raised appropriately through a point of order —

and the specific reference was made to “hissing” coming from the Opposition benches.

Ms. Stick: It is only in reviewing the Blues this morning that I saw this reference, and would insist it is still insulting language, whether referring to the “hissing” — but I go back to the quote where it says, “I’m not sure if it’s snakes or the Leader of the Opposition.”

Speaker’s statement

Speaker: The Chair thanks all members for their contribution to the question of privilege. The Chair will return with a ruling at a later date.

Before we proceed with Orders of the Day, I believe Government House Leader, you have the floor.

Government House Leader’s report on length of sitting

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Mr. Speaker, I rise pursuant to the provisions of Standing Order 75(4) to inform the House that the House Leaders have met for the purpose of achieving agreement on the maximum number of sitting days of the current sitting. The House Leaders have agreed that the current sitting should be a maximum of 30 sitting days, with the 30th sitting day being Thursday, May 15, 2014.

Speaker: Accordingly, I declare that the current sitting shall be a maximum 30 sitting days with the 30th sitting day being Thursday, May 15, 2014.

We will now proceed to Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

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

Motion agreed to

Speaker leaves the Chair

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Chair (Ms. McLeod): Order. Committee of the Whole will now come to order. The matter before the Committee is Vote 54, Department of Tourism and Culture, in Bill No. 14, *First Appropriation Act, 2014-15*.

Do members wish to take 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. 14: *First Appropriation Act, 2014-15* — continued

Chair: The matter before the Committee is Vote 54, Department of Tourism and Culture in Bill No. 14, *First Appropriation Act, 2014-15*.

Department of Tourism and Culture

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Madam Chair, it’s my pleasure to introduce the Department of Tourism and Culture’s main estimates for the 2014-15 fiscal year.

Before I get into the department, it’s a real pleasure and an honour to have two exceptional people here joining me today: Jonathan Parker, who is the director of policy and communications from the Department of Tourism and Culture and Jeff O’Farrell, my Deputy Minister for the Department of Tourism and Culture.

The Department of Tourism and Culture plays a key role in advancing the commitments made to Yukoners by this government through the Four Pillars program: better quality of life; the environment; the economy; and good governance.

The department facilitates long-term and sustainable economic growth for the tourism industry through developing and marketing Yukon as a year-round travel destination. It also enhances our quality of life by preserving and interpreting our heritage and supporting and promoting the arts.

Through 2013 and the early days of 2014, the department celebrated many successes, while achieving these goals. I would like to share a few of these with you today. Last month, the local organizing committee for the Canadian Museums Association annual conference held in Whitehorse last summer received a Bravo Award from the Yukon Convention Bureau.

Thanks to the creativity and enthusiasm of Yukon’s museum community, approximately 250 delegates enjoyed an exceptional conference program. Many of the delegates travelled to museums, art galleries and cultural and interpretive centres throughout our territory. They explored the territory’s cultural wonders and its incredible natural beauty at the same time. In other words, they experienced both an exceptional conference and an ultimate Yukon adventure.

Another cultural event the department supported was Northern Scene, which is now in the running for Ottawa’s top event of 2013 award. Northern Scene was a 10-day festival held in Ottawa last April and May that featured 80 talented northern artists, including 40 or so Yukon dancers, filmmakers, musicians and visual and culinary artists.

While these artists were in Ottawa, they enjoyed increased exposure to industry representatives, and several artists have been booked for tours as a result of their participation in Northern Scene.

We are proud that whether Yukoners are hosting events, ourselves, or participating in festivals outside, they are making notable contributions to the Canadian culture scene. The department and its partners are also making notable and significant progress in raising global awareness of Yukon as a year-round tourism destination.

To kick off 2014, I had the opportunity to experience first-hand how hard the department works with industry to strengthen this important tourism market. The Premier and I joined the department officials and a number of Yukon tour businesses at the first ever Yukon-Japan tourism marketplace in Vancouver in January.

The marketplace was an opportunity for Yukon businesses to meet with Japanese tour operators to promote Yukon products, services and travel experiences. Aurora viewing is becoming a big attraction to visitors from Japan each winter, for example.

Through initiatives such as the marketplace, the department is engaging with our partners in the tourism industry, the Canadian Tourism Commission and the Japanese travel trade to grow our fastest growing overseas market even more.

I am pleased to announce that as a result of this marketplace, the Japanese Tour Operators Association informed us on March 12 that they are making Yukon a priority destination for the future in recognition of the commitment and investments made by the Yukon government in attracting Japanese visitors.

This commitment to Yukon tourism by the highest profile Japanese trade organization in Canada is extraordinary. It speaks to the effectiveness of our government's investment and priority placed on tourism in our territory.

Two weeks after the Yukon-Japan marketplace, I travelled to Australia with department officials to attend Canada Corroborree, Canada's premier travel trade event held in Australia. While I was there, I signed several cooperative marketing agreements with Holland America and four other leading tour operators to promote Yukon travel experiences and products in the Australian market. Australia is Yukon's second-largest overseas market with approximately 6,996 visitors to the territory in 2013, representing 19.5 percent of overseas visitors.

Once again, it was Yukon's partnership with industry, businesses and the Canadian Tourism Commission that made these events so successful. In fact, our joint efforts to promote Yukon as a tourism destination are so successful that we are seeing more travellers to the territory and breaking records in the process.

According to border-crossing statistics, 345,510 visitors in private vehicles and motorcoaches crossed the border into Yukon in 2013. This is an eight-percent increase over 2012.

Another sign of tourism growth came just recently with the Yukon Bureau of Statistics 2013 Yukon business survey. The report showed that private sector revenue attributable to tourism was \$249 million in 2012. This is up from the \$197 million reported in 2009.

Similarly, tourism's contribution to the GDP was \$113.8 million in 2002. Again, this is up from \$92.5 million in 2009. The statistics represent a strong upward trend in visitors and tourism-generated revenue for Yukon businesses. This is excellent news for the tourism industry, the economy and all Yukoners.

After such a great year in both culture and tourism, we are looking ahead to build on the momentum for an even stronger 2014. With that in mind, I would like to now present a few of the highlights for the 2014-15 budget for Tourism and Culture.

In operation and maintenance, the Cultural Services branch has \$10.7 million identified in O&M for several programs areas including arts, archives, museums, historic sites and heritage resources which includes palaeontology and archaeology.

The arts section is receiving \$3.9 million to enable continued support of Yukon's dynamic cultural communities. The department provides \$80,000 annually for professional artists through the Advanced Artist Award to further their careers. In October 1, 2013 intake, 11 artists received awards for projects ranging from Brian Fidler attending a public theatre workshop in Banff to Kirsten Madsen preparing a final draft of her first novel.

The budget also includes \$100,000 for the touring artist fund to support professional artists who are presenting their work to new audiences outside of Yukon.

In 2013, there were 19 recipients of the fund who toured 15 countries, including Australia, China, Norway, Iceland and the Netherlands, just to name a few. The \$500,000 arts fund provides organizations throughout the territory with support for community-based art development projects. One great project supported by arts fund is a community mural being created by Kluane First Nation members. The project will include a series of workshops by artists and elders to provide instruction, inspiration and guidance to participating community members. Through projects like the Kluane First Nation mural, the arts fund helps foster creativity in Yukon communities, whether it's through participation as artists or appreciation as audience members.

The Northern Cultural Expressions Society is receiving \$345,000 to support its carving programs and the professional development of emerging artists. Yukoners had an opportunity to see many final works by beginner and advanced carvers at an exhibition in Arts Underground in March. The department also supports the operations of many arts organizations and is renewing a three-year agreement with the Yukon Arts Centre to continue its exceptional performing and visual arts programming. The Arts Centre, through the Old Fire Hall, will also coordinate the art programming on the Whitehorse waterfront to create a vibrant waterfront experience for residents and for visitors this summer. The Old Fire Hall will receive \$150,000 for arts programs and the Yukon Art Society is provided \$100,000 to run the artists in the school program.

Also \$400,000 is allocated to the Dawson City Arts Society for annual and ongoing programs run through the Klondike Institute of Art and Culture. There are also many organizations such as Adäka Cultural Festival and the Guild Society, supported with \$668,000 in operational funding allocated for year-round arts programming.

In 2014, this section will be responsible for a new fund that expands on the branch's existing suite of arts-related programs to include events that focus on multicultural

traditions, holidays and celebrations. The \$50,000 new Canadians event fund will support events and festivals hosted by organizations with a cultural or multicultural mandate. These events increase understanding and appreciation of Yukon's multicultural communities and help new Canadians transition into life in our territory.

Another new arts initiative is an on-line version of the *Arts Adventure on Yukon Time* guide. The dynamic new website will complement the hard copy guide by providing interactive features and enhanced search capabilities.

The Cultural Services branch, (Yukon) Heritage Resources unit receives a budget of \$1.1 million for all aspects of land-based heritage resources, including archaeology, palaeontology, place names and scientist and explorer licencing. The department has identified and recorded over 4,000 archaeological sites and maintains a collection of over 5,000 artifacts.

The archaeology unit's publication called *The Frozen Past: The Yukon Ice Patches* was recognized in 2012 by the Canadian Archaeology Association for its outstanding efforts to increase archaeological knowledge and public interest in archaeology. Yukon's fossil heritage captures the interest of residents and visitors as well as local, national and international media, who often cover the latest palaeontological research in our territory.

The Yukon Beringia Interpretive Centre is where our palaeontological story comes to life and the budget supports its ongoing operations with \$442,000 through O&M.

In the fall of 2014, the Beringia Centre and the Yukon Arts Centre are collaborating to bring an enormously popular exhibit called "Ice Age Mammals" to Yukon. The exhibit has been travelling since 2005 and has been viewed by over one million museum visitors. It features many fossils that were found in Yukon as well as life-sized replicas of the many huge mammals that roamed the Beringia landscape.

The budget provides over \$1.1 million in operating funding to support the long-term sustainability of museums and their work to preserve and interpret Yukon's heritage, including \$514,000 to First Nation cultural centres. These dynamic facilities are vibrant places that not only celebrate our history, but provide unique settings for festivals and other community events.

Another \$370,000 is provided for assisting museums to undertake special projects, such as exhibition development, artifact inventories and conservator projects.

Historic sites are another component of Yukon's fascinating past and the historic sites unit is allocated just over \$1.2 million in O&M to preserve and interpret the territories significant built heritage.

A great example is the Watson Lake Sign Post Forest, an iconic reminder of the Alaska Highway construction, which was designated as the 8th Yukon historic site last October. I look forward to joining the Watson Lake Historical Society, which nominated the signpost forest as a Yukon historic site in a community event celebrating the designation this coming June.

The historic sites unit is also responsible for the many interpretive signs and panels that Yukoners and visitors read as they travel along rivers, heritage trails and other historic sites in the territory.

\$160,000 is dedicated to agreements that provide support for the preservation and interpretation of historic places with First Nations, property owners, municipalities and other stakeholders. The department co-manages many historic sites, such as Fort Selkirk, Forty Mile, Rampart House and Lapierre House with local First Nations governments. Yukon's approach to co-management is recognized as a model for other Canadian jurisdictions. The Yukon Archives has allocated \$1.5 million in O&M to fulfill its mandate to acquire, preserve and make available documentary sources related to Yukon.

The Tourism branch has \$9.9 million identified for O&M. The branch works closely with the tourism industry to identify priorities for its programs. The Industry Services unit has been allocated almost \$1.9 million to provide industry and entrepreneurs with the education and training they need to make good business decisions and to meet today's visitor needs and expectations. The experiences and services being offered by tourism businesses and organizations continue to be second to none and position the territory as a premier travel destination.

Tourism businesses are assisted by the \$700,000 tourism cooperative marketing fund to attract visitation, gain international exposure and strengthen the Larger than Life brand. The marketing unit is receiving \$5.8 million to manage Yukon's consumer travel trade and media strategies to position the territory as a travel destination and grow tourism revenues. The \$1.4 million that is allocated to overseas marketing has contributed to a 33-percent increase in overseas tourism visitation over the last four years. That is why, Madam Chair, \$590,000 was added to the overseas marketing budget — to continue to help realize Yukon's potential as a tourism destination in markets such as Germany, the United Kingdom, Australia and Japan. Part of this success stems from a strategic approach that targets key markets with significant potential for growth.

Madam Chair, I see that my time is just about up. There is more good news that I have to report on. Perhaps when I have another chance on my feet I can delve into that information.

Mr. Barr: I am honoured to rise today to debate the Tourism and Culture budget for the 2014-15 fiscal year. I would just like to take a moment to thank all the public servants who are working hard at the Department of Tourism and Culture and, to those officials who are joining us today, thank you for your hard work. Welcome to this House.

I would also like to acknowledge the Yukon's fantastic private sector groups that contribute to tourism and culture in the Yukon. The Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon has done fantastic work advocating for the tourism sector and bringing some much-needed leadership to the tourism sector — the Yukon's outfitters, sightseeing, canoeing, cycling and skiing guides, and everyone else who deserves a mention for

taking visitors to the Yukon, all across our territory, to visit our fantastic sites. That was just to mention a few.

I want to first speak more broadly about the tourism industry in the Yukon, followed by speaking a little more personally about the cultural side of things in the Yukon. The Yukon's tourism industry is full of dedicated, hard-working individuals who are doing their best to improve tourism and culture in this territory. Unfortunately, the Yukon government is not providing enough leadership on tourism and culture. This government seems to have no vision for the Yukon's tourism industry, which is an absolute shame because tourism and culture are industries that have been steadily providing employment for Yukoners.

This lack of vision, Madam Chair, is par for the course, as this government has not made any concerted effort to diversify Yukon's economy and invest in industries other than the resource-extraction sector. This government is really missing a great opportunity with the tourism and culture sector. The tourism and culture sector has proven that it can perform steadily and solidly year after year in the Yukon. "Consistent" is the word I would use to refer to the tourism industry, and consistency is really what you want in major industries. This is an industry that is stable and has grown steadily over the last several years at a rate of three to four percent a year, and that kind of consistency is what investors are looking for.

The tourism industry also does not experience the same year-to-year volatility that the resource-extraction sector is currently experiencing, so it is a great place to invest money, both for the private sector and for government. We are limiting ourselves by the way we are treating the tourism and culture industry. It has shown to be steady and resilient and it has shown that it has the potential to grow and expand. This government has stood idly by.

I remember under a previous government, from all parties, when tourism was seen as a primary industry and governments would invest in it and give it the attention of a primary industry. This government no longer treats tourism as a primary industry. It is not a priority for this government. This government has sat on their hands when it comes to funding in dealing with the tourism and culture sector.

Funding for tourism has not changed in a meaningful way since this government has been in power. They simply have no plan. What this government needs to do is take tourism seriously as an industry, because they are missing an opportunity to invest in an industry that is renewable and will provide prosperity for Yukoners for years to come.

Part of the reason the tourism and culture sector is so fantastic is the positive impact it has on the Yukon. Money spent in the tourism and cultural sector sees a 28-to-one return on the dollar in terms of investment. Furthermore, this money goes to Yukoners who own small businesses and work in the private sector or are employed in tourism and culture positions.

The money from this industry largely stays in the territory. Not many of the tourism and culture businesses are headquartered somewhere else. Tourism dollars are also great

for the communities. Rural communities will often have a significant portion of their economy based around local small businesses that provide experiences, services and products to tourists. Many of the Yukon's rural communities and smaller towns rely on the tourism dollars to meet their bottom line, year after year.

Tourism and culture is also an amazing industry because it is largely renewable. There are very limited negative impacts on the land and the environment from tourism. In fact, in a lot of cases, we see improvements made to our territory as a result of investments in the tourism and culture industry. Individuals working in these industries are often at the forefront of our environmental stewardship. Outfitters, wildlife viewing guides and nature adventure tour guides all have a vested interest in keeping our land pristine and beautiful.

Madam Chair, this year, the federal money that has been used to promote the Yukon as an international destination through the CanNor fund is being cut and this government is not doing enough just to cover the shortfall. YTG is not stepping up to the plate and they aren't standing up to their federal counterparts and telling them that this is an important industry to us and that we would like to see a continuation of this funding. This is why I put forward a motion in the House the other day to ask this government to provide the \$2.5 million requested for domestic advertising that would help the Yukon attract tourists from all over Canada.

When I hear this government state that they're increasing the budget by \$590,000 or so, and CanNor is losing — this is not new. This is just maintaining the status quo. We believe that investing in tourism and culture and having this \$2.5 million is just a start in taking tourism and culture seriously.

One thing that I think is really hampering the tourism and culture industry is a lack of well-defined and clear measurement tools for the industry. Border crossings are a useful statistic to measure how many visitors we have.

One thing that I think is really hampering the tourism and culture industry is a lack of well-defined and measurement tools for the industry. Border crossings are a useful statistic to measure how many visitors we have, but they are not adequate enough to tell us what sectors could use more funding or what we could do to improve the experience of visiting in the Yukon. This government ought to have made these investments years ago. It's a bad business practice to be investing money without a clear picture of the results that those investments are having.

This government could look at what other jurisdictions in Canada have done to measure not only the amount of visitors the Yukon receives, but where they go, what they do and what could be done to improve their experiences. If the government were to work on this with tourism associations and partnerships with the communities, it would greatly help both the private and public sector to properly invest their dollars in the tourism industry to maximize the financial impact of tourism on our economy.

The government also needs to seriously look at investing in certain sectors of the tourism industry that could help round

it out. The summertime is great — always room for improvement — and we do have tourists that come up and spend money in the Yukon. But often businesses will find themselves struggling to pay the bills in October, November and February to April months. Tourism in the shoulder season needs to improve to help out these businesses.

What we see after the summer comes around is the boards go up. I see it in my community in the Southern Lakes; I see it in various places throughout the territory and in the communities like Dawson City — our rural communities that depend on having more attention paid to these shoulder times. There are smart people in the Yukon who would do well with the support of dollars to assist them to be creative and to attract those who would come here during those shoulder times.

Government could allocate more resources to attract conventions and host sporting events and arts festivals in the current downtime to help out the tourism and culture sector in the quieter months. Government leadership is particularly important on this because the government has an opportunity to help sustain businesses that have a lull during this time by providing other opportunities for them.

We would also like to see a consistent, long-term plan for tourism funding from year to year. This government's current plan, where they have funding for an advertising campaign for the last two or three years, is not enough. For the tourism industry to really be promoted and grow there needs to be a long-term plan that is comprehensive and will see consistent and persistent advertising in strategic areas. We need to see commitment for long-term funding for tourism advertising and promotional campaigns where we really start seeing results in our investments.

Jurisdictions like Newfoundland, Northwest Territories and New Zealand are great examples of the way we can grow the tourism industry over the long term through strong government leadership and consistent long-term funding. I believe that this government could coordinate better with other departments to encourage and develop tourism in the Yukon.

Yukon's Department of Tourism and Culture has run an annual Yukon gold explorer's passport program where tourists can enter into a contest if they visit enough locations on the passport. For many years, the passport was encouraging visitors to go to see the Ross River bridge. The fact that the Department of Tourism is encouraging people to visit a tourist attraction that another department and that government is trying to tear down says a lot about the government's leadership when it comes to tourism. I'll ask a question on that later.

It is important that this government not forget the little guy. In the Yukon's tourism industry, it is the role of small businesses that give the authentic Yukon experience to the tourists who are travelling through the Yukon. For example, my riding in Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes is full of these businesses and their positive impact on the local economy and culture is incredible.

I think I'm having a bit of déjà vu to last session where the — and it goes back to what I just previously spoke to — Minister of Tourism and Culture hadn't even been approached by local businesses in the Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes region. Their situation is that tourists happen in on their businesses — their new businesses, some established — and it's "Oh, we didn't even know you were here; is this ever a beautiful place. We really would have loved to have been able to plan." They just happened to come down the road and found these businesses.

The signs are still not there and so what I'm speaking to is the ability for the ministers to minister and be proactive in accomplishing goals among themselves that they can do and take it upon themselves to do that will support local tourism. In this case, these private business owners seem to call one number and — "Oh that's not our responsibility." Call another number — "Oh, that's not my responsibility." They keep going in a circle and here we have another season coming up and there are still no signs, and still they are getting ready to open the place — this one particular place. We need to support the little guy.

During the cultural part, it was my pleasure in early February to immerse myself into the excellent film screenings in this year's Available Light Film Festival program. The screenings at the Yukon Arts Centre were appreciated by several packed houses. The choice of films for Yukoners to enjoy was excellent. The experience was made all the richer for having so many directors in attendance. On several occasions, very moving conversations took place among the Yukon Arts Centre audience and the directors of films that had screened.

I can see by the limited time I have left I won't get a chance to finish this, but I will go as long as I can at this point and come back. I thank Madam Chair for keeping me abreast of my time limits here.

Of special note was *Hi Ho Mistahey*, the 2013 National Film Board of Canada feature documentary film about "Shannen's Dream", an activist campaign first launched by Shannen Koostachin, a Cree teenager from Attawapiskat, to improve educational opportunities for First Nation youth.

I also want to make a special point in congratulating local producer Dennis Allen for the film *Crazywater*. It was the winner of this year's Available Light Film Festival's Audience Choice Award for the Best Canadian Documentary.

This film tells of substance abuse exactly as it is lived. It allows the viewer to see past the label of addiction, to what is in the north a very normal human experience that includes humour, suffering, as well as beautiful cultural values and dignity.

Thank you to Dennis Allen for the story of your film, *Crazywater*, and what it tells.

I would also like to send out congratulations to the Yukon Film Society for excellent programming for Yukon's film-loving audiences as well as for Yukon's hard-working and dedicated filmmakers.

Not only did I see a lot of great films in the first week of February, I also learned a lot about the film industry by

attending several sessions of the media industry forum that happened in conjunction with the Available Light Film Festival.

I might add that these are the types of things that, with further support, can only grow. I remember listening to one of the directors stating that — he's very well-known in the industry — when he got the call from Andrew Connors that he would like to have him come here and discuss his film — he was actually in the high Arctic, and I forget the name of it — his response was "Come to the Yukon? I'm dropping everything. I'll see you there." That's a testament to the work that can only be increased by those creative people.

I'll take a moment here. Thank you, Madam Chair.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Unlike the members opposite, I do believe very strongly that the department has a great vision, and I commend the marketing division for the very strategic approach that they take with both the domestic markets, the North American markets and the markets around the globe. I'd like to just take this opportunity to thank them for their good work and for their vision.

I might encourage the member opposite to — or the members opposite, for that matter — go on-line and look at the Department of Tourism and Culture's strategic plan from 2013 to 2018. I believe that this supports the department's and this government's, great vision for tourism in our territory.

As I was saying the last time I was on my feet, that is why this government added the \$590,000 to the overseas marketing budget to continue to help realize Yukon's potential as a tourism destination in markets such as Germany, the United Kingdom, Australia and Japan. Part of the success stems from a strategic approach that targets key markets with significant potential for growth.

In our North American markets, \$586,000 is spent on marketing U.S. travellers, while \$1.56 million is allocated to marketing activities targeting Canadian travellers.

Once again, we are seeing an excellent return on the investment. Seventeen percent more Canadian visitors and seven percent more U.S. citizens crossed the border into Yukon in 2013, over 2012.

With the new direct service to Ottawa by Air North, Yukon's airline, we can expect even more visitors travelling from the nation's capital than ever before. In February, the department was in Ottawa for the week of Air North's inaugural visit and flight to Yellowknife and Ottawa. We joined several partners in the capital to promote Air North's new service and Yukon as a visitor destination.

The new service to Yellowknife and Ottawa significantly improves air access and affordability from eastern Canada to Yukon and the north, and the department was in Ottawa with Air North to celebrate the first flight.

The Yukon Convention Bureau was also in Ottawa that week to host, or participate, in a number of events, including a luncheon, a trade show and a gala fundraiser. The bureau is an important tourism partner that receives \$200,000 annually to market Yukon as a meeting, incentive, convention and event destination.

The week in Ottawa also provided an opportunity for Sport Yukon to promote sport tourism in the nation's capital, including key events such as the Klondike Road Relay and the Kluane Chilkat International Bike Relay.

Madam Chair, \$43,000 has been identified to promote Yukon as a sport tourism destination. Other important Yukon tourism partners supported through the budget include the Tourism Industry Association, which receives \$244,000 to support and develop Yukon's vibrant and growing tourism sector. \$264,000 supports the Wilderness Tourism Association of Yukon to deliver the yukonWILD marketing program, which promotes adventure travel in Yukon.

The travelyukon.com website is one of the branch's key digital initiatives, supported with \$190,000 in O&M funding. The site, travelyukon.com, facilitates direct interaction with prospective visitors, providing them with planning information and a direct connection to Yukon tourism operators. It also provides a platform to engage in social media conversations and sharing on Twitter, Instagram, Facebook and YouTube.

Once visitors are in the territory, they receive excellent advice and exceptional service from the staff at six Yukon visitor information centres. This summer, the Yukon visitor information centre in Whitehorse will welcome visitors with a fresh new look, including new paint to match Yukon Tourism brand colours, improved flow, tablets for visitors to use, more seating, and an upgraded audio-visual system in the theatre. A total of \$1.87 million in operational funding is allocated to the visitor services.

On to capital, where a total of \$1.25 million in capital funds are allocated to the Cultural Services branch — the Yukon Archives is receiving \$879,000 for design work for additional storage space for paper records, as well as cold-storage environment for photographs and a vault for digital records. The archives acquire and preserve unique papers, photographs, sound recordings and films created by people whose words, images and voices tell the history of Yukon's social, economic and community development.

As Yukon continues to grow and change, it is important that the records that document the territory's development are well-cared for and made available for future generations.

I mentioned earlier that the Beringia Interpretive Centre is a facility that tells the fascinating story of Yukon's ice age past. The centre is receiving \$200,000 for the design and planning of renewed exhibits that will enhance the centre's ability to educate Yukoners and visitors about Beringia. The budget provides \$627,000 in capital to the historic sites unit for a variety of projects, including historic site maintenance as well as site management of Fort Selkirk, Forty Mile, Rampart House and Lapierre House. The Yukon permanent art collection now contains over 350 artworks, eight of which are new acquisitions featured in the new works exhibition in the main administration building foyer. This collection is supported with \$25,000 for new acquisitions as well as \$13,000 to maintain the invaluable artworks, some of which are over 40 years old.

Madam Chair, the Tourism branch will receive \$425,000 in capital funding. \$130,000 is allocated to upgrades and maintenance to the Dawson City and Watson Lake visitor information centres. Capital funding is also being allocated to new banners to replace and refresh existing banners distributed throughout the territory.

Whether it's promoting Yukon as a destination or being stewards of the Yukon arts and heritage resources, the Department of Tourism and Culture employees approach their work with enthusiasm, dedication and commitment.

By building relationships with its community partners in tourism, arts and heritage, the department continues to deliver excellent programming and provide exceptional service. It also encourages its employees to be innovative and creative, which leads to exciting new projects and programs. I look forward to working with the exceptional people in the department for another year of excellence in tourism and culture in our territory.

The Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon, otherwise known as TIAY, has asked the government to make an investment in the territory's tourism industry by committing \$2.5 million per year to a domestic television campaign. TIAY also stated that the federal government has indicated an interest in providing financial assistance. The federal CanNor funding program was set to terminate at the end of March 2014, but was recently extended when \$40 million over two years was included in the federal government's 2014-15 budget.

TIAY also committed to providing the government with a comprehensive business case in support of their request. We look forward to receiving a comprehensive business case and will continue to explore opportunities to strategically and effectively market Yukon as a travel destination. The department will continue to explore all opportunities to strategically and effectively market Yukon as a travel destination, including the potential use of CanNor and their renewed SINED fund.

Canada's decision to extend the CanNor program was made late in the fiscal year and there is time-limited information at this time about types of projects that will be eligible for CanNor funding.

As with all marketing methods, the Yukon government approaches television advertising strategically and within the context of all the marketing options available.

Integrated marketing is truly key to gaining awareness within a global market looking for travel options, whether for leisure or for business travel. Integrated marketing means using many marketing tools, such as the department's use of digital assets like on-line and social media, mixed with more traditional methods such as print and fam tours to market our territory.

Television is showing increasing effectiveness as a vehicle to develop destination awareness and is continually being assessed as an option in Yukon's tourism marketing strategy campaigns.

The department utilizes two key tools to help assess tourism visitation. They include tourism indicators and major

tourism studies. The tourism indicators are used monthly and annually to track visitation over time. The benefit of tourism indicators is that they are collected consistently year after year after year, which makes them very reliable, and they are relatively inexpensive to collect.

In Yukon, the department uses two key indicators to assess tourism visitation. Border crossing statistics are provided by the Canada Border Services Agency — or CBSA — and have been collected in the same manner since land borders with Alaska were first established. As the name suggests, this tool counts the number of people who cross the Yukon-Alaska border, including where they are from, their country of origin and the type of vehicle they are travelling in.

Border crossings are also an indicator of tourism visitation and not a measurement of total tourism visitation. Border crossing numbers include all entrants, whether they are travelling as a visitor, a Yukon resident returning from Alaska or those on commercial business, like transport trucks. Border crossings reported by the department in their monthly tourism indicators report do not include those individuals crossing the border for commercial purposes or visitors travelling to Fraser, B.C. by train and back to Skagway or those arriving by air at the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport. As good an indicator as they are, caution should be exercised when using border crossing stats as a measurement for total visitation, because they do not include counts at two of our largest entry points — the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport and Watson Lake.

Also, as Yukon becomes more of a stand-alone destination, it is reasonable to expect that a larger number of visitors will travel to Yukon without taking a trip to Alaska. In that case, border crossing stats would not capture those visitors. However, because of the reliability and the consistency with which border crossing stats have been captured over the past 30 years, combined with the knowledge gained through research that Alaska and Yukon share a lot of our visitors, border crossing statistics remain Yukon's most accurate indicator of visitation.

In 2013, border crossings to Yukon were up eight percent compared to 2012. This represents an increase of 22,037 more non-resident travellers entering Yukon through Yukon's four border crossings. Private vehicle traffic was up seven percent, and motorcoach traffic was up by eight percent. Within these numbers, we had a seven-percent increase from U.S. citizens, a 17-percent increase from Canadians, excluding Yukon residents, and an eight-percent increase from foreign visitors. In total, 299,889 non-residents and an additional 45,621 Yukon residents crossed borders into Yukon in 2013. The number of non-residents entering Yukon in 2013 set an all-time record.

Along with border crossing statistics, passenger counts at the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport are also a reliable indicator for visitation. Statistics are collected by the airport and include the number of passengers planing — leaving Whitehorse — and deplaning — arriving in Whitehorse. However, only total counts are provided, with no breakdown by country or origin.

Passenger counts show 292,598 passengers got on and off planes in 2013. This figure is approximately one-percent lower than in 2012 and includes Yukon residents. Both border crossings and airport passenger counts are collected on a monthly basis and are posted on the Tourism and Culture website in the monthly tourism indicator reports.

The second key tool that the department uses to help assess tourism visitation is major visitor studies. Major visitor studies typically occur every five to eight years and provide an in-depth analysis of visitors to Yukon over a defined period of time. The benefit of major visitation studies is that they capture very detailed information about visitors and provide the most accurate estimate of total visitation.

Their weakness is that they are very expensive and only provide a snapshot of visitors at the time that the survey is conducted. However, if conducted over a long period of time, they are excellent tools to show shifts in visitors and trends in visitation. Yukon has conducted five major studies over a 25-year period. They include visitor exit surveys in 1987, 1994, 1999, 2004 and the Yukon visitor tracking program in 2007.

The current visitor tracking program is different from past visitor exit surveys in that it is the first study to include surveys of both summer and winter visitors. It has resulted in the development of a new model that allows the department to estimate the total number of visitors to Yukon on a monthly basis. Results from the 2012 visitor tracking program indicate that since 2004, visitation to Yukon has increased by 26 percent and visitor expenditures have increased by 30 percent. This equates to an average annualized growth rate of three percent per year.

The Yukon visitor tracking program indicates that the growth and visitation was fuelled primarily by other Canadian jurisdictions and our overseas markets. Other notable findings compared to 2004 were increases in visitors arriving by air and in length of stay. Yukon also received strong satisfaction ratings from visitors, and visitors indicated a strong interest in visiting again and referring the destination to others. Tourism visitation is growing, which leads to growing businesses, revenues and a stronger economy.

We are proud that Yukon is outperforming the Canadian average for growth in tourism visitation, which is the result of a strategic and effective approach that the department, our tourism industry operators and NGOs have taken with regard to marketing and investment decisions. The resulting reports and the new model will be valuable resources for Yukon's tourism sector. All the reports from the Yukon visitor tracking program can be found on the department's website.

Mr. Barr: I'll just start with reiterating that, contrary to what the minister seems to have heard on this side of the House, we do applaud the department's hard work — all the staff — and we can only imagine the work and the leaps and bounds that the Tourism and Culture department would see with a government that supports them with real, fresh dollars to expand their work

When we see the consistency of this department in its ability to remain stable and to have increased improvements, we can only say — I would really like to see what, with the

extra dollars, they could really do. Turn them loose. What I have been seeing and what I have stated is that this Yukon Party government, since being in power for the last 12 years — verbal accolades without the money. It's nice to get pats on the back and it's nice to be told you're doing a great job. Let's really reward — that is what I'm saying. We as the Yukon New Democratic Party would encourage this government to do so with real dollars and we would see ourselves as a government putting our money where our mouth is.

I would like to continue — just getting back to my final notes before I enter into some questions.

Not only did I see a lot of great films in the first week of February, I also learned a lot about the film industry by attending several sessions of the media industry forum that happened in conjunction with the Available Light Film Festival. There were excellent panelists who were brought together from across the country, and they provided very timely insight into the state of the industry. It is an industry facing great changes at multiple levels.

The ways that audiences get to view film content are changing very rapidly. They are also evolving in the ways that directors can make films and what platforms distributors need. All of these changes affect both the technologies used in film production and screening as well as the traditional funding mechanisms in the industry.

I would like to acknowledge the importance of the support of the Department of Economic Development and the Film and Sound Commission in partnering with the Yukon Film Society to host this important forum.

I was also very fortunate to be part of the inaugural flight that Air North had earlier this spring in its direct flight to Ottawa. I was playing tunes — up early in the morning. It was a great opportunity to be asked, as someone who might add to the event that day — along with Boyd Benjamin and others who came down. I congratulate this Yukon company on this expansion of its service and its market.

I'd also like to commend the government's \$50,000 a year for celebrating multicultural events. I was glad to see its inclusion in the budget, and I look forward to the government expanding the funding in the future. We are a diverse society of cultures in the Yukon.

In conclusion, I would just like to reiterate the importance of tourism and culture in the Yukon's economy and, obviously, its culture. Thank you for the opportunity to speak on this matter.

I would just like to start with one question in particular, seeing that the bridge in Ross River has been a topic for this side of the House — more so recently this spring, but also bringing it forward last year by myself in this House, during the last session, within Tourism and Culture and having it be part of the passport stamp of visitors coming to the territory.

Could the minister verify if this has come off the website — this bridge — and the ability to be stamped as a passport attraction? If so, when did this happen? I'll just start with that.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I have just a couple of things before I get into some of the great things the department is doing. As I said in my last statement, unlike the members

opposite, I do believe the department has a great vision and I commend the marketing division for the very strategic approach they take to the markets, both domestically in North America and globally.

I would also strongly recommend that the members opposite read the budget before we get to debate. That might make the debate a little bit more helpful.

In 2013, it was a record-breaking year for border crossing statistics, with an eight-percent increase overall. Each year we know that tourism now generates upward of \$250 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 attributed to tourism.

We know that our Japanese visitors are increasing in the winter months to see our northern lights. That was an increase of 800 percent. If that's not vision, I don't know what it is. Germany continues to be Yukon's largest overseas market, representing approximately 26 percent of overseas visitors. Whitehorse is the smallest city in North America with direct flights to Germany. In fact, Condor brought over more than 4,000 visitors to Yukon in 2013, contributing an estimated \$8 million to \$10 million to Yukon's economy.

The Cultural Services branch has a budget of \$10.7 million for operation and maintenance and an additional \$2.3 million for capital projects. The Cultural Services branch is responsible for historic sites, museums, arts, archives and heritage resources, which includes palaeontology and archaeology. Heritage Resources has a budget of \$1.1 million for all aspects of land-based heritage resources, including archaeology and palaeontology, place names and scientific and explorer licensing.

The historic sites unit has been allocated \$1.9 million in O&M and in capital for the research, preservation, management, development and interpretation of Yukon's historic sites and routes.

The department's museums unit has a total budget of \$2.3 million to enable continued partnerships in support of Yukon's vibrant museums and cultural centres, not including Beringia. The department provides over half a million dollars to directly support operation and programming at the seven First Nation centres.

The arts section is receiving \$4.1 million this year to enable continued support of Yukon's dynamic arts and community. The department is supporting the Old Fire Hall, as I mentioned earlier, with over \$150,000 to enable artists and community groups to showcase and market performing arts, literature, visual arts and crafts.

Yukon Archives has a budget of \$1.5 million to continue its operations. The department is adding new works to the Yukon permanent art collection, as I mentioned earlier, with \$25,000.

Madam Chair, \$157,000 has been allocated to support the work of Culture Quest in their mission to increase capacity in the cultural sector and to provide lasting legacies to artists and cultural organization.

An increase to \$125,000 was made to support the Yukon Sourdough Rendezvous Society celebration of their 50th anniversary in 2014.

As I mentioned earlier, the department provided \$345,000 to the Northern Cultural Expressions Society in funding to support its carving programs, which truly helps emerging artists develop the artistic, social and business skills required for personal success.

An exciting new initiative that I touched on earlier is the \$50,000 that has been allocated to establish a program to provide funding for festivals and events that celebrate the multi-cultural diversity of Yukon communities of new Canadians.

There is \$1.56 million spent on marketing activities targeting Canadian travellers, specifically; \$586,000 is spent on marketing activities targeting U.S. travellers; \$1.41 million is spent on marketing activities targeting overseas travellers; \$1.185 million is spent in support of all marketing activities, including the development of our website, our brand, publications and for filming.

The Tourism branch has \$9.9 million identified for operation and maintenance and an additional \$425,000 for capital projects. The industry services unit has been allocated \$1.9 million to provide industry and entrepreneurs with the education and training they need to make better business decisions and to support industry development in consultation with non-governmental organizations and industry stakeholders.

Also, \$700,000 has been budgeted for the tourism cooperative marketing fund. This fund helps tourism businesses market Yukon tourism products to prospective visitors around the globe. As well, \$2 million has been budgeted to support the visitor services unit, which operates the information centers that provide vital traveller and visitor information in communities all across our territory.

As I indicated earlier, \$43,000 has been budgeted to market Yukon's tremendous opportunities for sport tourism, and \$244,000 is budgeted to support the work of the Tourism Industry Association and to promote and develop tourism in our territory.

I want to talk a little bit more about the new Canadians event fund. Yukon's multicultural communities have certainly grown and become more active in our territory. Events and festivals celebrating multicultural traditions and holidays are becoming more and more common. The Department of Tourism and Culture has a robust suite of funds that provide support to individuals and organizations for arts-related projects and events. However, multicultural events, unless they have a strong arts component, were not eligible to apply for arts funding, for example.

The new Canadians event fund addresses this gap by expanding on the department's existing program. The department is still preparing the application forms and will have them available soon. In the meantime, the program is up and running as of April 1. Organizations are encouraged to contact the arts section if they have an upcoming multicultural event. Also, there is information about fund eligibility on the

arts section website, so people are invited to visit there as well. The arts section will be holding an information session about the fund on Tuesday, April 15, from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the Yukon Visitor Information Centre.

Multicultural diversity has been a part of Yukon's cultural fabric for many, many years. In recent decades, we have seen the development of multicultural associations, including the Japanese Canadian Association of Yukon, the Chinese Canadian Association of Yukon, the Yukon African Caribbean Association, the Hispanic Association of Yukon, the Canadian Filipino Association of the Yukon. Part of what these associations do is help new Canadians transition into life in our territory. Festivals and events that celebrate and share cultural traditions help newcomers feel more at home. The new fund is aimed at events celebrating cultures originating from outside of Canada. To date, there has been a gap in Yukon government funding programs as these types of events have been ineligible for Yukon government support. This fund — as I've mentioned — is meant to fill this gap.

Moving on to some of the important capital projects — \$245,000 for the tourism business centre HVAC upgrades; \$31,000 for computer workstations; \$52,000 for network infrastructure projects \$30,000 for office equipment and furniture, \$879,000 for detailed design of the Yukon Archives vault expansion, \$185,000 for archives capital maintenance projects, \$627,000 for the maintenance and interpretation of historic sites, including Fort Selkirk with \$166,000, Rampart House with \$60,000, Forty Mile with \$91,000, and Yukon Sawmill for \$30,000.

As I mentioned, the department is adding new works to the Yukon permanent art collection, with \$25,000 budgeted for the visual arts acquisition program, while investing a further \$13,000 to maintain the integrity of government-owned art assets. There's \$151,000 for capital maintenance projects at the Yukon Arts Centre, which include \$120,000 for the fire alarm and \$31,000 for a theatre curtain.

There's \$50,000 for continued conservation assessment and treatment of military and industrial artifacts. There's \$200,000 for planning and design to renew Yukon Beringia Interpretive Centre exhibits. There's \$25,000 for preservation projects at the Yukon Archives, including conservation assessment of moving images.

There is \$130,000 for capital maintenance projects at the Dawson and Watson Lake visitor information centres; \$200,000 for ongoing development of the travelyukon.com website, including development of U.K. and Australia microsites; \$75,000 for the design and purchase of banners to support the Tourism Yukon brand strategy; and \$20,000 for the ongoing maintenance of displays to ensure content is up-to-date.

The member opposite asked about the Ross River suspension bridge. As we know, that bridge was constructed in 1944 as part of the Canol pipeline project. The bridge carried the pipeline across the Pelly River for the brief period when oil was being pumped from Norman Wells to Whitehorse during World War II. The pipeline was removed in 1949, after abandonment by the U.S. army. The bridge has

been used since then by local pedestrians and by local ATVs and snowmobiles.

A request was received, seeking designation of the bridge as a historical site, under the *Historic Resources Act*. Under section 15(3) of the act, the Minister of Tourism and Culture has the discretion to determine whether historic site designation received from the public will proceed. In this case, due to the state of the bridge, designating it as a historic site was simply not practical. This may change, depending on what is learned from the RFP and the subsequent assessment of whether the bridge can be safely stabilized.

The proposed RFP looking at stabilizing the Ross River bridge will be very valuable in helping us to assess options for the future of that bridge. If stabilization of the bridge is possible — and safety, again, is of utmost importance — the nomination to designate the bridge as a Yukon historic site could potentially be referred to the Yukon Heritage Resources Board to begin the review process.

YHRB reviews nominations for historic site designation following the process set out in the *Historic Resources Act*. As for the Ross River suspension bridge and having a place in the passport program for the 2014 year, I can assure the members opposite that it is indeed in that passport program and look forward to people visiting the site this year.

Mr. Barr: When I was up in Ross River a couple of weeks ago, visiting with the folks and the elders in the tent and sharing tea, they were wondering where the Minister of Tourism and Culture was on this suspension bridge. Why hadn't they heard from him? Why hadn't he been vocal in supporting such a historic bridge? Where was his voice in working with his colleague, the Minister of Community Services, in restoring this bridge? Why is it taking so long?

Just so on and so forth — they just wondered where the Minister of Tourism and Culture's voice was. Worse comes to worse — and I am glad that the government has begun to work with the community, and the Ross River Dena Council also, to stabilize this bridge. As I understand it, the wish of the community is to fully restore this bridge. That's where their minds and hearts are. I would ask the Minister of Tourism and Culture to join in and echo those wishes of the community. I would ask him now if he will do this. If he's not though — if there's no will on his part of join in and do the work necessary — make stable, make safe, restore — what's his vision of having something for Ross River to be maintained in the passport stamping itinerary of those visiting the Yukon?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: It is clear, and it has been evident to me over the last number of weeks that the members opposite clearly don't understand, or don't appear to understand what the meaning of safety is when it comes to items such as the Ross River bridge. I can hear the Leader of the Official Opposition heckling already, and that just clearly supports my belief that they just don't appear to understand what safety means.

The Minister of Community Services has very eloquently described the situation in Ross River, and this government has made decisions based on discussions with the community and

the First Nations of the area, yet the members opposite don't appear to understand what safety means.

The proposed RFP looking at stabilizing the Ross River bridge will be extremely valuable in helping us to assess options for the future of that bridge. If stabilization of the bridge is possible, then we can all move forward, we can look at things like a nomination to designate the bridge as a historic site. At that time we can take a look at it, but the Department of Community Services has work to do ahead of them. I look forward to working with the department and the Minister of Community Services, but safety is of the utmost importance.

Mr. Barr: I was hoping that the Minister of Tourism and Culture would weigh in from his perspective, not reiterate the Minister of Community Services' comments about safety. We on this side of the House firmly believe that safety and culture can move forward together, and that the track record of this government of doing the work on the bridge — years of neglect by this government leading us to this place where the community has to set up a blockade to even get the attention of the government to start to work and listen to them, to resolve this long-standing issue.

I am sure that the community members in the Ross River Dena Council will definitely be interested in the remarks of the Minister of Tourism and Culture.

Seeing as we will not get a position on that, I will ask another question.

I guess it goes back to a question that I brought forward last year — for the minister to work with his colleagues in the area of Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes for signage that has been requested. Signs have been put up by business owners, once you are off the Alaska Highway and on the road to Carcross and Skagway. The effort has been made by the local businesses on that highway to advertise their businesses.

What they asked — and I know they have asked the Minister of Tourism personally for his assistance with the work and bringing it to fruition — last year, which is now when we are here this year, is still not done — signage from the approaches to the Tagish Road from the Alaska Highway from both sides to let people know that businesses exist.

Can the minister assure us at this time that he will, within his powers, expedite the work necessary with his colleagues and assure us that this matter will be completed this year?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The Department of Tourism and Culture has met with the Department of Highways and Public Works officials to discuss opportunities, I suppose, for increased signage for the community of Tagish. The department will be reaching out to the Tagish Community Association and the Tagish Advisory Council to identify options and look at next steps. I do thank the Minister of Highways and Public Works for his assistance on that program.

Through the 2013-16 product development strategy, the Tourism and Culture department continues to provide tourism industry and entrepreneurs with quality education and training programs. This strategy supports the industry development in consultation with non-governmental organizations and

industry stakeholders, and it truly ensures that tourism interests are represented and that they are communicated.

During the 2013-14 fiscal year, the industry services unit hosted six workshops and presentations for tourism businesses and stakeholders. There were a total of 117 participants who attended those workshops.

This industry services unit provides tourism industry entrepreneurs with education and training. They support industry development and ensure that the tourism interests are represented. They continue to engage organizations, such as non-governmental organizations and tourism industry associations, on opportunities and issues that come up.

In addition to that, industry services continues to participate in a variety of interdepartmental committees and working groups and other initiatives, including the labour market strategy, land use planning and environmental and socio-economic assessments.

In 2013-14, initiatives to date include six workshops, a culinary tourism forum, one-on-one business counselling for a number of Yukon tourism businesses, continued representation at multiple land use planning and environmental assessment tables, as well as processing five applications to the product development partnership program, totalling approximately \$50,000, which was 100-percent subscribed.

Mr. Barr: I would like to thank the minister for his commitment to getting the signage in the area and working with his counterparts. I would just like to add to that, in expediting this — that I have spoken with the local advisory council on this and, just to restate our conversation, the instruction they had received is that they can put forward the money and they proofed the sign that would be required and so on and so forth, and that it would be up to them to do that. However, the local advisory council did not have budgets to do that, so I hope that this is part of the conversation and that we can have this be a reality this tourism season.

I would also like to ask about — we're coming on to another heavy time of the year where many — well, not many — but strategic places where folks would gas up coming up and down the highway, which became an issue to the point where some locals in the communities would be storing cans of gas to help out tourists that came upon places near the communities where they would think they could gas up, but they were closed down. Is there any way for the Department of Tourism and Culture to work again with Highways to know ahead of time this year which of the lodges might be not open, to be able to be proactive for those visiting our territory to have signage, for example, on some of these lodges? Or not some of them, but the lodges that are no longer in operation or for whatever reason, aren't reopening this season in particular — to let them know in advance that they won't be able to get gas and therefore to get gas where they can?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: This gives me a very unique opportunity. I touched on it briefly during my opening remarks, and that is that there are six visitor information centres that are strategically located around the territory. There are very dedicated and knowledgeable staff who work

at each and every one of these visitor information centres, and it is this staff who speak to our visitors coming up the highway who choose to stop and receive those visitor services. Our staff is able to pass on information about road conditions, where fuel is available and where food is available. They can give them information on attractions, accommodations — and the list goes on and on. I would just like to take this opportunity to thank all the visitor information centre staff. I know a number of them are seasonal, but I and the department sincerely appreciate the service they provide to visitors travelling on the highway.

Mr. Barr: I've learned that on the Alaska Highway — because, living up here, you know that you gas up wherever you can because you don't really know what's coming around the corner — and to also carry an extra can of gas to offer to those tourists who are caught off-guard. I would once again encourage the minister to look into this matter and extend our hospitality to the tourists who are coming up the highway, so they can know ahead of time.

But moving on, I would like to now ask — I know that there are monies set aside for museums in the rural communities. I also know that in the briefing we had some discussion around this, and I would like to get more clarity today as to the priority given. As I understand it, communities are able to submit to a fund. Is this on a priority basis — first-come, first-served — or is it on a basis of attention? For example, the Big Jonathan House in Pelly — the roof is in disarray. Other communities have infrastructure needs in their museums. Comments have come my way that they have found it difficult to operate as status quo, given their ability to access funds.

Is the government looking at other opportunities or could that just be explained a little bit more of how the funds are made available? Does the government know which of these museums need what and when ahead of time, or do they count on the community itself to be getting in touch with the government?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The number of Yukon museums and First Nation cultural centres receiving annual funding from the museums unit has increased from eight in 2001 to 19 in 2014. Annual operation and maintenance funding during this time period has increased from \$178,000 to over \$1.17 million.

In April 2007, Tourism and Culture announced \$150,000 in new funding for Yukon museums and the relocation of \$90,000 in funding to assist Yukon museums to offset rising costs. This funding more than doubled the funding level for small museums from \$11,500 to \$30,000, and resulted in a 25-percent increase in annual funding to all other Yukon museums and First Nation cultural centres.

Madam Chair, annual funding now ranges from \$30,000 to \$100,000 per institution. An additional \$370,000 is available for a variety of special projects, making the total amount of funding for Yukon museums and First Nation cultural centres over \$1.5 million annually.

The introduction of three-year funding agreements in 2008-09 assists all museums unit clients in securing one

permanent full-time or permanent part-time employee by increasing job certainty. At the 2013 Yukon museums round table, the museums unit committed to engage an independent contractor to develop an options paper for funding allocations.

The Government of Yukon truly acknowledges the important role of museums and First Nation cultural heritage centres in protecting, preserving and interpreting Yukon's heritage. The Department of Tourism and Culture provides over \$1.17 million annually, as indicated in operation and maintenance funding, to all 19 museums, culture centres and one umbrella organization. Following a request made by the museums community at the Yukon museums round table last fall, the museums unit is currently researching options for improving how existing O&M funding and project and infrastructure funding is allocated among museums.

Since 2004, the Yukon government has supported Yukon First Nations' efforts to preserve, protect and present their culture and heritage through a First Nation culture and heritage centre funding program. The Government of Yukon provides both partial funding and program support services to seven First Nation cultural heritage centres currently operating in our territory.

The Government of Yukon recognizes the social and economic importance of preserving and presenting the First Nation heritage and culture. We also work in partnership with the Yukon First Nations to help turn our shared vision for culture and heritage centres into a reality. This year the department is providing \$500,000 to directly support operations and programs at the seven culture and heritage centres.

We've also worked with the Yukon First Nations Tourism Association in partnership with Adäka Cultural Festival to restructure the organization in support of the development of both the First Nation culture and the tourism sector. This is something that's very interesting and exciting for me.

The First Nations heritage training coordinator continues to work with various First Nations and the Yukon Historical and Museums Association to develop and deliver training opportunities for First Nation culture centres and museums, and that's something that's ongoing with the department, Madam Chair.

We've worked with Yukon First Nations to produce a best management practice booklet dealing with found human remains and burial sites for industry. The booklet is based on *Guidelines Respecting the Discovery of Human Remains and First Nation Burial Sites in the Yukon*, 1999. It was developed and approved with eight Yukon First Nations and the Gwich'in Tribal Council, working with the Yukon Geographical Place Names Board and Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation to process around 500 Vuntut Gwitchin geographical place names so they receive official status. It's a true pleasure working with organizations like that, Madam Chair.

Mr. Barr: Thank you for some clarity on that. I'll come back — I guess I'm glad that there is some discussion as to looking at the funding opportunities for these museums. Maybe I'll just move on, at this point. I have some questions

before others may want to get in — before we get to line-by-line.

Could the minister speak on the Fort Selkirk historic asset? We were there. I was there with some of my colleagues and saw the erosion of the bank to where some of the buildings had to be moved back. What are the measures that are being taken this year to secure the erosion of the banks at Fort Selkirk?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Just to provide the House with a little bit of background, Fort Selkirk is located on the west bank of the Yukon River, across from the mouth of the Pelly River. It has archaeological evidence of late prehistoric use, 37 standing structures, cemeteries and artifacts dating back to 1852. Fort Selkirk is a co-owned, co-managed site of the Selkirk First Nation and Yukon government. The site has been actively preserved since the early 1980s. Yukon government invests \$160,000 annually to preserve and maintain this site.

Fort Selkirk illustrates the unique contribution and combination of different cultures and natural environment that have helped form the social, economic and political fabric of the territory. The spring of 2013 river breakup caused major erosion along the riverbank within Fort Selkirk. An area near the schoolhouse was the most impacted. The building was moved back about 10 metres to protect it temporarily until it is determined if a further move is required due to additional erosion.

The department has hired a local engineering firm to provide options to protect the site and stabilize the bank against future events. There is \$138,541 for consultant assessment and design options, including cost estimates for bank erosion mitigation, potential impact to heritage elements of the site and continued boat access for visitors.

Fort Selkirk is a designated Yukon historic site and one of the most historically significant sites in our territory. The schoolhouse was threatened when the bank eroded — as I mentioned, during spring breakup of last year — and as I had indicated, it has been moved safely back from the riverbank. We will continue to work with the Selkirk First Nation and consultants to investigate and develop options to stabilize the riverbank and preserve that site.

Mr. Barr: I thank the minister for the update on this true gem of historic significance here in the Yukon. If any member here in the House hasn't been there, it's beautiful; it's amazing. Spend the night, especially around when the salmon are running. You might get some fresh salmon.

Can the minister please tell us more about the new vault for Archives and the construction and maybe some timelines around the completion of that?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Just to provide this House with a little bit of background on the Yukon Archives vault, the Archives acquire, preserve and make accessible the valuable and irreplaceable documentary heritage of our territory. The Archives facility, which was built in 1990, is near capacity and an additional storage space will be required in the near future.

Yukon Archives is maintaining available space by strategic processing of archival material and improving the

organization of allocated space. In September of 2012, this government awarded the design contract for expansion of the Archives to ensure the government was pursuing the most cost-effective solution.

The design project was put on hold to explore the potential for efficiencies and cost savings for co-locating archive storage with expanded archaeology, palaeontology and arts collection spaces. This potential was explored through a functional space analysis just last year in 2013. With \$879,000 in funding identified in this budget for capital design, the Archives vault expansion project is proceeding.

Expansion of the Yukon Archives facility will include increased storage space for paper records, as well as separate cold storage environment for photographs and films and a special vault for storage of digital records. As I have indicated, the budget impact to that is \$879,000.

An expansion to Yukon Archives has been under active consideration since 2008. The current facility was purpose-built in 1990 for Yukon Archives and designed with a 20-year growth horizon. Yukon Archives has carefully monitored its growth and needs since 2003 and has taken steps to extend the life of the facility. It is now expected to reach full capacity in the coming years — perhaps several years longer than had originally been planned.

Regardless, Yukon Archives has an ongoing collections mandate and continued demand for storage is truly inevitable. The vault expansion will address Yukon Archives' program needs for the storage of all records media — paper, photographs, film, tape, digital, et cetera — for the next 20 years.

Madam Chair, the Yukon government has remained committed to ensuring that the Yukon Archives is able to continue its very important role in preserving Yukon's documentary heritage. Yukon Archives record storage, as I said, is nearing capacity, and a variety of practical solutions and work processes have been implemented to help address these space challenges.

Tourism and Culture, as I have mentioned, identified \$879,000 in this 2014-15 capital budget, to advance the vault project by completing the detailed design, including preparation of construction documents.

I do need to extend thanks to the department and the Minister of Highways and Public Works for their work on this in assisting us through this process.

It's important to note that Yukon Archives provided service to 1,500 researchers and retrieved over 7,500 archival records just last year. Yukon Archives holds over 6,500 linear metres of archival and library material — so just an interesting fact.

Mr. Silver: I'd like to thank the representatives from the department for their time here today.

I want to start off with the Klondike palaeontology project. Can the minister provide an update on this project? A couple of years ago, there was talk of a new palaeontology centre in Dawson City. Is there money in the current budget for this project?

Chair: Prior to the minister answering, would members like to take a break?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

Chair: Committee of the Whole will come back to order. We are continuing general debate on Vote 54.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Just to provide a little bit of background information on the palaeontology facility in Klondike — because I know potentially a number of visitors who do come into the territory look for attractions such as that, and the Beringia Centre and the services out in Haines Junction.

A 2010 study commissioned by the Klondike Placer Miners' Association recommended that the Yukon government explore the possibility of developing a palaeontology research and display facility in Dawson City. Since 2010, the department has operated an enhanced Dawson management program during the summer months. Over 3,000 fossil specimens from the Klondike were acquired by the Yukon palaeontology program in the summer of 2012. A similar collection was made just last year in 2013.

Positive working relationships with placer miners continue to be maintained by the Department of Tourism and Culture. The potential for a palaeontology facility in Klondike continues to be assessed in the context of the government's capital planning. I might add that in the 2012-13 budget cycle, as well as the 2013-14 budget cycle, there was \$165,000 allocated for one full-time term position and one full-time seasonal position complementing that.

The Government of Yukon is working collaboratively with the placer mining community to ensure continued stewardship of fossils uncovered in the mining process. In addition to supporting active palaeontological fieldwork in the summers, the Department of Tourism and Culture is considering the feasibility of developing a palaeontology facility in Dawson City. That facility would support important scientific research while celebrating and preserving Yukon's rich fossil heritage.

Just to note again, the palaeontology program continues to provide an enhanced presence in the Klondike goldfields. In cooperation with the placer miners, seasonal staff had acquired over 3,000 new fossils during the summer of last year for the Yukon palaeontology collection.

I thank the member opposite for his question.

Mr. Silver: Just for the record, the question was: Is there any money in the budget for this project?

I move on to my question 2 — Millhaven Bay. I have a couple of questions on this project.

Does the minister support this project, and what is the department doing to support this project through the Department of Tourism and Culture?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: As you will be well aware, the expression-of-interest process was selected and modified for

use in Yukon by the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources. The process gives Energy, Mines and Resources and Tourism and Culture a role in assessing key steps, whether the proponent's proposal is adequate and should proceed to the next stage of review.

While I'm talking about Energy, Mines and Resources, I would like to extend my sincere thanks to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources for working with me on this file. It is something that we're both keenly interested in and we continue to work on together.

The government is confident that the process is thorough and will give the public ample opportunity to learn about the proposed development and make commitments at the time. Should this development ultimately proceed, it would be a welcome addition to Yukon's tourism infrastructure. This would be a high-end, friendly tourist lodge that would open up a new tourism market for our territory. As well, the spinoff benefits for Carcross, in terms of business opportunities and providing services to support that lodge, could be substantial.

The proponent's business model relies on the development being supported by the surrounding community. The proponents have held public meetings and must now decide whether they want to move to the next stage of the process and the submission of a detailed report master plan. Energy, Mines and Resources, along with the Department of Tourism and Culture, would then review that plan to determine whether the government feels the proponent is ready to make a submission to the YESAA process.

The proposed lodge at Stoney Mountain for Millhaven Bay near Carcross is, as I indicated, a very exciting new development for the Yukon tourism industry. To determine whether this development should proceed, as I said, the government is following a process based on the process used in British Columbia for making land available for wilderness tourism. This process flows from the MOU the government signed with the Carcross-Tagish First Nation in December 2013.

In February, the proponents held three public meetings about the project, two of which were in Carcross and one was here in Whitehorse. The proponents, as I mentioned, now must decide whether they want to submit a detailed resort master plan and move forward with the YESAA submission.

Mr. Silver: I thank the minister for his answer.

Moving on to the trip to Japan, I do understand from the comments from the minister that there is a tourism marketing trip planned to Japan with him and the Premier, and I was just wondering if a date has been selected for this trip.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: If I can just back up a step, as I understand it, as of this morning they are proceeding to draft the final resort plan with Stantec as their consultant, so that is even more exciting for the territory.

Yukon's visitation from Japan has grown remarkably since 2009 based largely on interest in Yukon's aurora viewing experiences. Japan has been Yukon's fastest growing overseas market for the past three years and now ranks as the Yukon's fourth-largest overseas market behind German speaking Europe, the United Kingdom and Australia. The

growth of the Japanese market is the result of successful partnerships between industry, government and the Canadian Tourism Commission, and the Japanese receptive tourism operators.

Japan provides strong growth opportunities for the future, focusing on fall aurora viewing and summer soft-adventure travel experiences. Yukon hosted the first-ever Japanese marketplace in Vancouver this year, bringing together 15 Yukon tourism suppliers and 13 Vancouver-based receptive tour operators. Since 2009, Yukon has outperformed the national average for visitation from overseas marketing, experiencing a 33-percent increase while Canada experienced only a 10-percent increase. The source of that information is the CBSA border-crossing stats.

Overseas markets are making up a larger percentage of our visitors and our expenditures. The 2012 Yukon visitor tracking program indicates that since 2004 for the period June to September, visitation from overseas markets has grown by 79 percent. Overseas markets account for approximately 12 percent of all visitors to Yukon and 20 percent of total visitor expenditures. Overseas visitors spend more per day than any other market. The \$590,000 for overseas marketing that this government replaced in this budget will enable the department to further maximize opportunities to grow visitation from overseas markets and tourism revenues for Yukon's tourism sector and Yukon's economy. This new money will continue to be invested in our primary, secondary and emerging markets as well as monitor markets such as China and Mexico.

Japan has indeed been Yukon's fastest-growing overseas market for the past three years now and as mentioned, ranks as Yukon's fourth-largest overseas market. The growth of the Japanese market is the result of partnerships, as I mentioned, between industry, government and the Canadian Tourism Commission. Thanks to our Japanese travel trade partners, Japan provides extremely strong growth potential and opportunities for the future, focusing on the fall aurora viewing and on new summer travel experiences. We've seen an eightfold increase in visitors from the Japanese markets since 2011 and this trend is continuing into 2013, driven by the markets that I indicated.

The member opposite had asked if there was any date set for any sort of Premier-led or minister-led tourism mission, and the simple answer to that is we're still looking for options. If it's feasible — there is lots to consider, but the Department of Tourism and Culture is working on that file now.

Mr. Silver: What is the breakdown on market dollars between North America and overseas as a percentage. For example, is it 50:50 or is it 60:40 marketing dollars.

What is the actual in-market spending in Japan, Australia, Britain and Germany? Also, what is the additional amount spent on departmental staff and support in those jurisdictions?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I thank the member opposite for the question because it truly speaks to the visitors that we see in the territory — the visitors in fact captured by the Yukon visitor tracking program that we did this summer.

It's estimated that 317,200 people visited Yukon during the summer of 2012. That was an increase of 26 percent over the 2004 volume estimates or over 65,500 more visitors since the previous study had been conducted.

Approximately 129,600 visitor parties travelled to Yukon in the summer of 2012, which was an increase of 19 percent, up 20,800 people over 2004. Party size increased marginally from 2.3 people per party to 2.4 people per party between 2004 and 2012.

Over half of Yukon's 2012 summer visitors, or 63 percent, came from the United States, while the bulk of the remainder — which was 25 percent — hailed from Canada. Yukon's overseas markets represent the remaining 12 percent of total visitors. Within that 12 percent, more than three-quarters of visitors were from Europe. British Columbia, Alberta and Ontario continue to be the top three provinces of origin for Yukon visitors, which have remained the same since 2004. Travellers from British Columbia represented almost one-half, or approximately 42 percent, of Yukon's domestic visitors, which rounded out around 33,000 people, while travellers from Alberta generated 19 percent of Canadian visitors — approximately 15,100 people. Approximately 13,500 visitors came from Ontario and 8,700 people came from Quebec, representing 17 percent and 11 percent of Canadian visitors respectively. Notably, the proportion of visitors from Quebec increased from three percent in 2004 to 11 percent in 2012.

Not surprisingly, Alaskans accounted for 12 percent of all American visitors; however, Alaskans represented 29 percent of American visitors in 2004, so this market has decreased significantly over the past eight or nine years. The next top five states of origin were Oregon, California, Florida, Texas and New York. The number of visitors from Oregon and New York increased sixfold and fivefold respectively since 2004. Travellers from Europe accounted for 76 percent of Yukon's overseas market. Asia-Pacific countries accounted for 19 percent of overseas visitor numbers; other overseas visitors make up about 5 percent of overseas visitors.

From 2004 to 2012, the number of visitors from overseas markets increased. European markets have increased by 86 percent and Asia-Pacific markets reported a lift of about 22 percent since 2004. Over half of all Yukon visitors were travelling in parties of two. Other party sizes were fairly evenly distributed; 13 percent for parties of one person, 10 percent for parties of three, 11 percent for parties of four, nine percent for parties of 5 or more, and 22 percent of visitors were travelling with children.

Two-thirds of Yukon visitors, or close to about 67 percent, were on their first Yukon trip, while one-third were repeat visitors. Since 2004, slightly fewer visitors have been repeat visitors, so it was 37 percent versus 33 percent.

The largest summer visitor segment is the authentic explorers followed by cultural explorers; combined, the top two segments account for 48 percent or 152,300 of Yukon summer visitors. Nearly one-half of Yukon visitors stated that the primary purpose of their overall trip was to visit Alaska, while nearly one-quarter took the trip primarily to visit

Yukon. Among those whose main destination was Yukon, seven percent travelled for business and 93 percent came for leisure. These percentages have remained unchanged since 2004.

In 2004, only 10 percent of business travellers attended a conference or a convention. By 2012, the number of conference or convention travellers increased by 4,000 visitors, which was up 222 percent. During the same period, government-related travel dropped from 45 percent to only seven percent. Of people travelling for leisure or personal reasons, the number of people travelling for other leisure/personal increased 15 percent between 2004 and 2012. Wilderness travel doubled from 2004 and visiting friends and relatives increased by 62 percent. People travelling for festivals and events decreased between 2004 and 2012. Over one-half of Yukon visitors drove to the territory. Of those who drove, 50 percent drove a car, truck or van; 40 percent drove a recreational vehicle and four percent drove a motorcoach.

Twelve percent of Yukon visitors flew to the territory, with the majority of people flying through Vancouver, Calgary or Edmonton. Another 24 percent of visitors arrived in a motorcoach, and the remaining 10 percent arrived by train. The most common point of entry to Yukon was via Carcross — the Fraser border crossing — followed by driving the Alaska or Stewart-Cassiar highway and then through Beaver Creek.

There are three routes that people could have chosen to enter Yukon. The majority of people entered through Alaska, which was about 54 percent, followed by entry through British Columbia at 34 percent and finally by air at 12 percent. Thirty-five percent of visitors stated they were just passing through Yukon, while 29 percent indicated that Dawson City was their main Yukon destination, followed by 17 percent for Carcross and 15 percent for Whitehorse.

I might add that Dawson City was also visitors' favourite community, followed by Whitehorse and Carcross. Almost one-third of visitors travelled in a loop that started and ended at Watson Lake. The next most common routes were taken by visitors who travelled from Alaska into a Yukon community close to a border and then left again. Visitors were more likely to fly out of Yukon than to fly in, and that comparison was about 15 percent to 12 percent.

Overall the most common type of accommodation was to camp. Camping of various types was reported by 59 percent of the visitors, which included RV parks, commercial campgrounds, Yukon government campgrounds and pullouts or parking lots.

Among the 59 percent who reported they camped during their visit, 65 percent stayed in an RV park or RV camper trailer, 32 percent used a tent and three percent used both types. Nearly half of Yukon visitors — so about 42 percent — reported staying at a hotel or motel in Yukon; nine percent reported staying in a bed and breakfast, lodge cabin or hostel; and nine percent stayed with a friend or relative. Fourteen percent of visitors came to Yukon on a day trip and did not stay overnight; 30 percent of visitors spent one to three nights; 23 percent spent four to seven nights and 31 percent spent

eight or more nights in the territory. Now, compared to 2004, the proportion of visitors staying one or more nights in Yukon grew from 71 percent to 84 percent in 2012.

I think it's important to point out that satisfaction with Yukon experiences were rated very high for the majority of the travel experiences listed on the survey that had been conducted. The highest satisfaction was with wildlife viewing at 79 percent, closely followed by experiencing Alaska at 77 percent. To learn about the Klondike Gold Rush history, which I know will be important to the Member for Klondike and to experience time in the wilderness — so hiking, camping, fishing and paddling — followed at 76 percent and 75 percent respectively.

It's also important to note that the Tourism branch has \$9.9 million identified for operation and maintenance. It has \$1.65 million spent on marketing activities targeting Canadian travellers; \$546,000 is to be spent on marketing activities targeting U.S. travellers specifically; \$1.34 million is spent on marketing activities targeting overseas travellers; \$1.2 million is spent in support of all marketing activities, including the development of the website, the solid Yukon brand, publications and fulfillment.

The industry services unit has been allocated \$1.9 million to provide industry and entrepreneurs with the education and training that they need to make better business decisions and to support industry development in consultation with non-government organizations and industry stakeholders. Also, \$700,000 has been budgeted for the tourism cooperative marketing fund. This fund helps tourism businesses market Yukon's tourism products to prospective visitors around the world. I know recently a number of people through the Yukon Outfitters Association have grabbed and accessed those funds to help them with their travellers down to Safari Club International and other areas.

Specific dollar amounts to specific markets — German-speaking Europe, there are investments of about \$550,000; the U.K. generally is about \$250,000; Australia, we spend about \$215,000; France, \$65,000; and Japan and Asia, \$255,000, for a total of \$1.335 million.

Mr. Silver: Thank you to the member opposite for all those statistics. That was a lot. The breakdown wasn't given. We did ask for a breakdown — the percentage of North America compared to overseas. Also actual in-market spending in Britain wasn't mentioned — and also what additional amounts spent on departmental staff and support in those particular jurisdictions. But I am going to move on.

With German visitation numbers, earlier this year the minister told CBC Radio that higher tourism numbers are due to marketing that the government is doing with Germany and Japan. We can all agree that the number of visitors from Japan is up and that is a great thing.

Information I've seen from the minister's own department, however, shows that visitors from Germany are actually down from where they were in 2010 and they are down substantially from about 15 years ago. I wrote to the minister to ask him to provide any statistics to back up these

claims that the number of German tourists is on the rise. He did respond to my letter, but he did not answer the question.

I was wondering if the minister can tell us today what proof he has to provide the public that increased marketing to Germany has, in fact, resulted in more German visitors to the Yukon.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The Canada Border Services Agency records the number of people who enter Yukon through Alaska and Canada border stations. Border-crossing stats do not include commercial vehicle traffic, visitors travelling by train to Fraser, B.C., and back to Skagway or those arriving by air at the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport.

The 2013 border crossings indicate a total of 345,510 travellers, an increase of over eight percent over 2012. The total figure includes 299,889 non-residents and 45,621 Yukon residents.

Arrivals by a private vehicle, including RV, increased by seven percent, and arrivals by bus increased by eight percent.

By nationality, border crossings by Americans increased by seven percent, crossings by Canadians from other provinces and territories increased by 17 percent, and international visitors increased by eight percent.

The 2013 passenger counts at the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport show 292,598 passengers. This figure is approximately one-percent lower than 2012 and includes Yukon residents. 2013 saw almost 248,000 people visit our six information centres located throughout Yukon, an increase of two percent over 2012. The Whitehorse visitor information centre increase was up by eight percent.

In 2014, overall visitor numbers are expected to stay strong and are forecasted to grow anywhere from 1.5 to three percent. Statistics by country — the United States in 2012 was 216,008; in 2013, the numbers were 230,625 visitors to the territory, and that was a change of about seven percent; Canadian visitation to the territory in 2012 was 71,291, an increase of up to 78,228, which was a 10-percent increase in 2013; Australia saw an increase of 11 percent, 6,306 to 6,996, which was up 690 people; Germany's increase was only three percent from 5,750 to 5,901; United Kingdom saw a slight decrease of three percent; visitors from Switzerland saw a slight decrease of five percent; China visitation increased approximately 31 percent; visitors from India decreased by approximately nine percent; New Zealand saw an increase of six percent; and France saw an increase of 14 percent, so fairly significant.

Mr. Silver: I do appreciate the answer from the minister. I think in that he did kind of confirm that German tourism would have been up three percent from last year, but I guess we are still not sure if he agrees that it was down from 2010 and down substantially from 15 years ago.

I'm going to move on to KIAC. In light of a recent press release regarding an increase in core funding to the Yukon Arts Centre, we're wondering if there are any other such increases in mind for KIAC. Don't get me wrong — we're very pleased that the Department of Tourism and Culture is increasing the funding to the Yukon Arts Centre. They

provide amazing services, they expand very well in the communities as well, and we wish them all the success possible. But I understand from KIAC's recent AGM that was held on March 27 that they've been operating at a slight deficit for the past four years. They have been asking each year for a modest increase in their core funding to help with ever-increasing operational costs, such as utilities and taxes and insurance, as well as to accommodate a commitment to a five-percent salary increase for staff every two years. It is also worth mentioning at this time that KIAC has taken on additional programming and was funded by CanNor. They did mention at their AGM how ecstatic they were about this funding, but this was only for the year and I believe that they will have to sustain it themselves from here on in.

I guess the question to the minister is — in light of the increases to core funding to certain arts centres, we're wondering if there's a formula or a path or an assessment by which they decide which arts centres get increases and which ones don't.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: The Yukon School of Visual Arts is an accredited arts college where students complete their foundational year toward a bachelor of fine arts degree. The Yukon government provides the Dawson City Arts Society — or DCAS — with an annual operations and programming funding of \$400,000. As the operating arm of DCAS, the Klondike Institute of Art and Culture offers a broad range of community and continuing education and professional development programs.

In 2013, applicant-driven arts funding programs supported 12 community projects that benefited Dawson citizens, enabling a variety of creation and celebration activities and events. In the last year, through the support of the Department of Tourism and Culture, one professional Dawson City artist and one professional arts group toured nationally and internationally, and one received peer recognition through an arts award.

The Government of Yukon is pleased to support the continued growth and development of arts in Dawson City through a variety of funding programs. The Klondike Institute of Art and Culture, the Yukon School of Visual Arts, the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation and the Dawson City Music Festival all receive funding support from the Yukon government. The Department of Tourism and Culture funding programs also support community projects and individual artists for development, presentation and touring, and we look forward to continuing on with the positive relationship we have with those organizations.

Madam Chair, it's important to note that, since April of last year, over \$83,000 has been provided to support 19 artists or ensembles to tour creative works nationally or internationally.

Mr. Silver: So I'm going to assume from that question that there isn't an assessment process for which art centres get increases in funding and which ones remain stagnant.

I'm going to move on to overseas marketing money. The Premier announced that the government will be replacing the \$590,000 from CanNor for overseas marketing funding. There

have been no major increases to the Tourism budget for many years. Can the minister confirm that this money is merely replacing federal money that was not renewed and accounts for no new investment in the tourism marketing?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Madam Chair, the primary target markets for the department's overseas marketing program are indeed Germany and Switzerland. Secondary markets are the U.K., Australia, and Japan, while emerging markets are identified as France, the Netherlands, South Korea and China. Overseas visitors to Yukon generally stay longer and spend more than U.S. visitors, which aligns with our strategy to attract high-yield customers to our territory.

The additional \$2 million from CanNor has enabled Yukon to increase its market share, compared to the rest of Canada, in key European markets. The department is currently working with CanNor to explore opportunities around the two-year renewal of strategic investments in northern economic development, or SINED, as mentioned in Canada's budget speech just a couple of months ago. Yukon has benefited from CanNor funding programs for tourism-related initiatives such as the expansion of our overseas market efforts, as well as upgrades to the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport and the Yukon visitor tracking program, all of which our visitors are able to participate in.

As I mentioned, with the CanNor assistance of that \$2 million over the last four years, the department has been able to pursue an enhanced overseas destination awareness marketing project. This initiative has been a great success, with overseas visitation to Yukon growing by 33 percent over the life of the project. Given this success, the department will maintain the enhanced level of investment in overseas marketing to continue to maximize opportunities to generate new and increased revenues from Yukon's overseas market.

With the recently announced two-year renewal of CanNor, the department is now exploring additional opportunities for CanNor marketing assistance and we look forward to seeing what programs are released through there.

Mr. Silver: I am to assume from the minister's answers that this is a confirmation that no new money is here and this is merely a replacement of federal money, when it comes to investment in tourism marketing.

I am going to move on to a question about the Premier's tourism trade mission. A letter was sent to the minister requesting costs from the Premier's tourism trade mission in the summer of 2013. The cost that was listed was \$85,000. Businesses and NGOs had to pay their own way for the trip; however, money was accessible through the Economic Development ETF fund.

Can the minister confirm that the \$85,000 represents the full cost of the Premier's trade mission and that no other government programs were used to subsidize this trip?

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Madam Chair, as you will remember in early September of 2013, the Premier travelled to Europe on an eight-day European tourism mission. This was the first-ever tourism-focused trade mission to Europe led by a Canadian premier. Sixteen individuals, representing 14 Yukon businesses and tourism NGOs, participated in that mission.

The cooperation accord signed with CanNor, Condor Airlines and Air North, Yukon's airline, was designed to achieve a number of things, such as increase the number of travellers from Europe, maximize the sale of seats on Condor direct flights to Yukon, and increase the awareness and sales of seats on Condor Airline and flights that connect with Air North, Yukon's airline, through our tour operators and other travel trade partners in Europe.

Since 2006, the Fulda Extreme Arctic Challenge has generated over €32 million in equivalent advertising value for Yukon through print, television and on-line media. Based on media research conducted by an independent research group in Germany, the PR advertising value in Germany in 2013, as a result of the Fulda Challenge 2013, was an estimated 6.9 million euros, which is close to \$10 million Canadian. This equates to an ROI of approximately \$64 for every dollar Yukon invests in that market.

The UK is a strong secondary market with approximately 3,300 visitors to the Yukon in the summer of 2013. According to the market program assessment model developed by Tourism and Culture Yukon staff in the spring of 2013, both markets show a high potential for significant growth. Moreover, daily spend figures from the 2012 visitor tracking program confirmed German and UK travellers are the highest daily spending travellers to Yukon, which is to me fairly significant.

The Premier's European trade mission in August/September 2013 raised awareness of Yukon in our target markets, and it assisted facilitating a number of partnerships with our tour operators, airlines and strategic partnerships. During the mission, Yukon government officials signed several marketing agreements with tourism partners in Germany, as well as in the UK. Under the arrangements, the Yukon government will invest \$209,500 with German and UK tour operators to create cooperative marketing initiatives worth \$592,500. These marketing efforts are expected to reach approximately 3.7 million people.

In addition to the cooperative marketing agreements, the Premier signed a cooperation accord between Yukon government, Condor and Air North, and an extension of the existing memorandum of understanding with Goodyear, Dunlop and Fulda tires. German-speaking Europe is Yukon's largest overseas market, accounting for 13 percent of visitors in the summer of 2012.

Yukon businesses were able to access the economic development enterprise trade fund. Again, I need to extend my appreciation to the Minister of Economic Development for his support on this very important initiative for our territory.

Yukon NGOs were eligible — and these are NGOs — for up to 75 percent of funding. For more information on that trade fund specifically, I'd ask the member opposite to bring those questions forward to the Minister of Economic Development during that budget debate.

Mr. Silver: I have a couple more questions. I know the Ross River bridge was already brought up, but I do have a question here. The application was submitted to the Department of Tourism and Culture for the Ross River

suspension bridge to be designated as a Yukon historic site. In a letter that was dated November 25, the minister did reject that application to have the bridge listed as a territorial historic site, preventing it from being forwarded to the Yukon Heritage Resources Board review and recommendation.

We were told earlier on today in debate that there was an issue of safety, so I'm still not clear. Why did the minister reject the application to begin with? Was that because of a safety issue? He did mention that it could be reapplied, which would be great, but we're just wondering what the original reason was for the rejection to begin with.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: It is important to note that the department did receive a request for designation of the Ross River suspension bridge as an historic site under the *Historic Resources Act*.

Given the state of the bridge, the historic designation at this point in time was not practical. A structure that represents a public safety hazard is clearly not a suitable candidate for historic site designation. The framers of the *Historic Resources Act* gave me, as Minister of Tourism and Culture, the discretion over whether public requests for historic site designation should proceed to review by the Yukon Heritage Resources Board, or YHRB. This discretion anticipated cases like the Ross River bridge where factors over and above historic value must be truly taken into account. However, efforts are now underway to stabilize the bridge to ensure public safety. Should this work prove successful, the request to designate the bridge could potentially be reconsidered. The bridge is an important part of the history and an important part of the identity of the community of Ross River and it would be — at some point in time when it's deemed safe — a pleasure to refer to the YHRB for historic site designation.

Mr. Silver: Thank you to the minister for his answers. It's good to hear that the Yukon Party does hold this bridge in high regard.

Madam Chair, looking at some of the line items in the budget, I have a question about museum funding. It's down almost \$265,000, yet funding at Beringia is up.

I'm wondering if the minister can elaborate a bit about the algorithm for spending on museums and if he can confirm or deny whether or not there is a corresponding increase or decrease for the other museums, and justify, once again, which museums get picked for increased funding and which museums do not.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: As I mentioned earlier when the questions about museums came up, the government acknowledges the important role that museums and First Nation cultural and heritage centres in protecting, preserving and interpreting Yukon's heritage, the Department of Tourism and Culture currently provides over \$1.17 million annually in operation and maintenance funding to the 19 museums, the cultural centres and one umbrella organization. Following a request made by the museums community, as I mentioned at the Yukon museums roundtable last fall, the Museums unit is currently researching options for improving how existing O&M funding and project funding and infrastructure funding, for that matter, is allocated among museums.

So, the member opposite had indicated that there was a decrease of \$95,000 from the 2013-14 estimate to the 2014-15 estimate as a result of a \$22,000 increase for personnel and benefit adjustments coinciding with a \$117,000 decrease in the transfer of payments for the northern strategy project with Yukon College. The final year of that three-year program was 2013-14.

Ms. Hanson: I just have a couple of questions. One is just a general question in terms of tourism and the presence and role of the regional tourism offices and the main tourism centre downtown in Whitehorse. I'll just give the minister a scenario that surprised me, and I wanted to confirm with him whether or not this was in fact the case.

In the late summer of last year, I was putting together a package as a wedding gift for some friends. Part of that was information about the Yukon, because the gift was a gift to come to the Yukon and all the stuff that goes with that. These people are outdoors types and I was looking for information on Southern Lakes and was particularly interested in information about the world-class bike trails that we have in Carcross.

I thought the simple thing to do would be to go down to the tourism information centre here on Second Avenue and, one-stop shopping, I would be able to get this information and put this package together and say, "Here are your tickets and here's where you're staying, and enjoy yourself."

When I get there, I'm told, no, we don't have that. That information is held in the regional tourism centres, so if you want to know about the bike trails in Carcross, you're going to have to talk to the Carcross tourism office. I said, so if I'm coming through Whitehorse and I want to know about Carcross or Beaver Creek, does that mean I have to go to Beaver Creek to find out that tourism information?

I guess my question is: are we really that disconnected or can the minister tell me that in fact there have been some changes and that when someone comes to Whitehorse, they can actually get information about all of the attractions, whether in Keno City, Ross River, Dawson City or Carcross — about what I might see and how I might access, for example, the trails or how I might get copies of the maps of those trails to share with visitors.

Another example was Faro; the townsite tourism information has not been updated for some time. How do we ensure that tourists from outside who show up and want to spend their money here aren't thwarted? Because I can tell you, if you have a choice of having to find your way through it, or drive through, they will drive through. I want them to stay here and spend their money. Can the minister tell me that that was just an anomaly and tell me how that has been changed so we can assure that same couple — who I did find the information for, and who will be coming here in the summer, who will be spending a lot of money — will not have to go to Beaver Creek and every place else to find out how to spend their money in the regions of this territory; that when they come to Whitehorse, they will be able to get that information from the tourism centre here.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: This is another perfect example where my colleagues on this side of the House have full confidence in the staff, yet we see another attack from the Leader of the Official Opposition on the staff of Yukon government.

I have got full confidence and my colleagues on this side of the Legislature have full confidence in the staff at the visitor information centres to provide exceptional services to visitors coming into our territory.

We see it time and time again. In fact, I have talked to the staff. I have talked to visitors that are present there. I have heard nothing but good remarks about providing information on road conditions, gas stations, accommodations, restaurants, lodging and pull-offs.

This is just another attack on Yukon government staff. I have full confidence in the staff at the visitor information centres and they do an exceptional job. I sincerely appreciate them making themselves available, sometimes on a seasonal basis and some, like in Whitehorse's visitor information centre, on an annual basis. In fact, I mentioned earlier that the Whitehorse visitor information centre has just gone through a refresh. The department is proud of the high level of customer service provided to visitors through the Yukon's six visitor information centres.

Over the past year, a number of enhancements have in fact been made at the Whitehorse centre to improve the visitor experience and to ensure the facility matches the quality service visitors receive from our staff. The department will continue to make improvements to the centre to meet the changing needs of our visitors and ensure that they truly enjoy a larger than life experience.

While I'm talking about visitor information centres, it is important to note that the department has entered into a two-year lease agreement with the Carcross-Tagish First Nation Development Corporation for a location in Carcross to provide visitor information services, located in the new Carcross Commons.

The visitor information centre hosted approximately 74,000 visitors in its first season, making it the most visited visitor information centre in Yukon. Last fall, the department made the decision to keep the Carcross VIC open for a few extra days to continue to welcome the visitors on Holland America's last few ships coming from Skagway, who entered into Carcross.

I'm going to wrap up my comments with again thanking the staff for the exceptional service that they offer to Yukoners and to visitors alike.

Ms. Hanson: I do have another question. I do want to comment, though, that one of the things that's really important — and you notice that when you run a business — the attitude comes from the top down. If that's the attitude of the minister when a consumer asks a question about a tourism issue that he's responsible for, it's really unfortunate.

I have no qualms about the people who I visited in visitor centres across this territory. What I was pointing out is that there is a disconnection. I was asking the minister, as the minister accountable and responsible for that department, to

give me assurances for when those tourists come here. I know he doesn't understand ministerial accountability and responsibility; I'm trying to help him with that. So I was asking him for that assurance as minister.

The minister has spoken, primarily reading at length from briefing notes about a variety of matters contrary to actually responding and engaging in debate. I did want to come back to the areas that he had touched on with respect to the strategic plan.

It's an area that I am particularly interested in — the strategic goal, the economic growth aspect of it. The plan has identified these annual and branch plans. I'm particularly interested and would look for the minister to table by legislative return, because I don't think he would have time to read all of his briefing notes on these four subjects.

I'm particularly interested in the details with respect — he has touched on the four percent of territorial GDP that is attributable to tourism and I understand that. I'd like to have a breakdown in terms of how he sourced that.

I'd also be interested in the economic analysis that's being used in terms of the metrics to determine the revenues to Yukon businesses generated by tourism. I know that we've heard the industry sector — and occasionally the minister — use a 28 to 21. I would be interested in that.

Also of interest to me, because I've heard various statistics from the industry sector as well as government — and these are all items that are covered off in the strategic plan that is on the website — with respect to the percentage of Yukon businesses that are generating revenue from tourism. That's a really important aspect of the economic driver that tourism is, and I think that it's really important to put that kind of stuff on the record so that we can continue to see the legitimacy of increasing investment in the tourism sector.

I would be very interested in having the minister be able to share with this Legislative Assembly, either this afternoon or by legislative return, the information that backs up what the department is doing to actually capture and measure those indicators — the key economic indicators — that are set out as part of their strategic plan for this department. I look forward to that because, as I said, this is a very important piece of the puzzle.

Hon. Mr. Nixon: I will not be addressing the personal attacks on the staff of the visitor information centre or on myself from the Leader of the Official Opposition. I think this is a better place than that.

Yukon businesses attributed \$249.5 million of their gross revenue in 2012 to tourism. The industry with the highest reported tourism-related gross revenue was, in fact, retail trade. Of the total gross revenue of \$671.9 million in retail trade, \$77.4 million — or 11.5 percent — was reported to be from tourism.

The industry with the second highest reported tourism-related gross revenue was accommodation and food services, interestingly enough. The total gross revenue of accommodation and food services in 2012 was \$130.8 million, of which \$50.5 million — or 38.6 percent — was attributed to tourism.

Based on the revenues from tourism reported by Yukon businesses, the total GDP attributable to tourism was \$113.8 million in 2012. The industry with the largest contribution to tourism's GDP was accommodation and food services, at \$26 million, followed by transportation and warehousing at \$18.3 million. Tourism GDP accounted for 4.3 percent of Statistics Canada's estimates of Yukon's total GDP in 2012.

Some other really interesting figures that the member opposite may be interested in — of those, retail trade was at \$77.4 million, accommodation and food services at \$50.5 million, transportation and warehousing was at \$35.6 million, wholesale trade at \$17.8 million, arts, entertainment and recreation was at \$12.4 million, construction was at \$11.9 million, finance and insurance was \$10 million, and all other industries were captured under a \$33.9-million component.

Businesses were placed in industry categories according to what the respondents felt was the most important business activity. This may not always correspond to the activity that generated the most revenue for businesses. In fact, the concept of revenue coming from construction or mining is less clear than the concept of revenue coming from tourism, which means that the likelihood of bias or error due to respondent confusion may be a greater concern in the former than in the latter.

There was likely some under-reporting of revenues attributed to construction within the construction industry and revenue attributed to mining within the mining industry. We therefore made the assumption that all revenues reported by businesses, quoted as construction businesses, as per the North American industry classification system, were attributed to construction, and they adjusted our calculations accordingly — “they” being the Yukon Bureau of Statistics.

They also note that these statistics represent perceived Yukon GDP attributed to tourism, mining and construction. These calculations are entirely dependent on the business owner's perception of the percent of their revenue attributed to each of these sectors in the Yukon economy. Although some businesses may be able to calculate this value with precision, many businesses have reported this value as an approximation or based on subjective impression.

The perceived contribution of tourism, mining and construction to the Yukon GDP was calculated by multiplying the total revenues within each industry category with the ratio of Statistics Canada's current dollar GDP for industry category over the gross output for the same industry category in 2010. Note that this is the most recent year for which they have that data.

In the case of retail and wholesale trade, they used Statistics Canada estimates of retail and wholesale trade figures in the place of gross output in our calculations for the real estate and rental and leasing industry.

They excluded Statistics Canada estimates of GDP attributed to owner-occupied housing from their calculations since those values were not reflected in the business survey. Estimates of the proportion of Yukon GDP attributed to mining, tourism and construction does not include the amount of GDP within the public sector that is attributed to mining,

tourism and construction. Non-response adjustments were conducted within each industry and category to account for businesses that did not respond fully to the survey questions regarding their gross revenues or percentage of their revenue attributed to tourism, mining or construction.

It's important to also note Tourism Yukon's marketing framework takes a channel-marketing approach segmented at consumer travel trade, media relations and public relations, and meetings, incentives, conventions and events, otherwise known as MICE. Tourism Yukon develops and delivers a number of strategic media relations and PR initiatives that have a positive impact on the generation of unpaid media coverage from Canada, the U.S. and the international markets.

Yukon's tourism industry continues to enjoy significant unpaid media coverage stimulated through Tourism Yukon's hosting of GoMedia 2012 and an annual investment in the Fulda Yukon Challenge.

This expanded level of coverage has driven notable recognition for Yukon's tourism, including readersdigest.ca, which recognized Yukon as one of 10 Canadian destinations you need to visit.

Also, in *Lonely Planet* in 2012, Yukon was designated by *Lonely Planet* as one of the top-10 regions to visit in 2013, and I know the Member for Klondike was familiar with this one.

Outside magazine was designated Yukon as the top mountain biking destination in the world. Boréale Mountain Biking of Whitehorse has been selected as an honoree in *Outside* magazine's 2013 active travel awards.

Tourism Yukon will continue implementation of its global media relations strategy. Key objectives incorporated into the global strategy include: alignment of the North American media relations activities within consumer and trade platforms; integration of North American and overseas media relations and PR initiatives; activation of appropriate social media initiatives as outlined in both the global media relations strategy and the recently developed digital strategy, which is interesting. The successful implementation of these new initiatives is expected to enhance communication with media contacts, thereby increasing the potential to generate on-line traditional print and electronic unpaid media coverage.

The travel trade channel is critically important to Tourism Yukon, particularly in the overseas markets where direct-to-consumer marketing is not affordable, nor is it effective.

Many international visitors to Yukon choose to book their vacation through a tour operator or travel agency that packages or promotes Yukon tourism products and experiences. Tourism Yukon leverages the relationship that our travel trade partners have with their clients and sales networks in market.

Our investment in the travel trade channel varies depending on market, but generally it includes a number of the following activities such as: attending key travel trade marketplaces to meet with key accounts and identify travel trade partners; providing up-to-date product and planning information and encouraging the travel trade to carry and promote Yukon products and experiences; supporting

familiarization — or fam tours as they are quite often referred to — for product managers and sales agents to increase their awareness in sales of Yukon travel experiences; and creating strategic cooperative marketing partnerships and promotions to enhance the destination awareness and general sales.

I would strongly recommend for the Opposition members to familiarize themselves with the 2013-14 tourism plan. As well, on-line on the Executive Council Office website is the Yukon Bureau of Statistics. There's some riveting information in there that the members might find very interesting.

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

Chair: It has been moved by Mr. Nixon 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. 14, entitled *First Appropriation Act 2014-15*, and directed me to report progress.

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

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

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

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

Motion agreed to

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

The House adjourned at 5:27 p.m.