



Yukon Legislative Assembly

Number 270

1st Session

33rd Legislature

HANSARD

Thursday, May 12, 2016 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Patti McLeod

YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

SPEAKER — Hon. Patti McLeod, MLA, Watson Lake
DEPUTY SPEAKER — Darius Elias, MLA, Vuntut Gwitchin

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

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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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David Laxton	Porter Creek Centre
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**Yukon Legislative Assembly
Whitehorse, Yukon
Thursday, May 12, 2016 — 1:00 p.m.**

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

Prayers

DAILY ROUTINE

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

Tributes.

TRIBUTES

In recognition of Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Month

Hon. Mr. Nixon: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am very pleased to rise today on behalf of all members in honour of Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Month. Cystic fibrosis is the most common fatal genetic disease affecting Canadian children and young adults. The disease affects mainly the lungs and the digestive system. Therapies have helped to address the malnutrition issues, but the main cause of death in CF patients is lung failure.

Still, today, there is no cure, but with volunteers working hard to raise funds for drugs and medical interventions, the outlook is brighter. A child diagnosed with cystic fibrosis in the 1960s was not expected to live long enough to reach kindergarten.

Today, the median age of survival of Canadians with cystic fibrosis is among the highest in the world — around 49 years of age. This is due in large part to the outstanding number of volunteers, parents, family and friends who are tirelessly raising funds for this debilitating illness. Almost 4,000 Canadians are battling this fatal genetic disease, and they are counting on research advancement, care and advocacy to improve their lives. The Government of Yukon is doing just that by advocating on behalf of Yukon families. Last year, with Alberta, we led discussions with the drug company, Vertex Pharmaceuticals, to find affordable pricing for families needing the drug Kalydeco. The negotiations took more than a year, but last June, we reached an agreement on the cost of covering the drug. Also, I am pleased to say that since 2014, Government of Yukon has been covering the cost of this drug for a resident, one of about 100 Canadians with a particular mutation of the disease that can be treated with this drug.

Cystic Fibrosis Canada has a Yukon chapter that works hard to raise funds for cystic fibrosis research, care and promotion. To date, our local CF chapter has raised over \$100,000 with all funds going to provide people with cystic fibrosis medical and clinical care, medication, therapies and equipment. It also serves as a local resource and a support for people with cystic fibrosis and their families.

Madam Speaker, the walk for cystic fibrosis in Whitehorse will be held in a few short weeks on Sunday, May 29. Registration starts at noon and the walk starts at 1:00

p.m., and there will be food and refreshments. I know how hard our local chapter and its volunteers have worked organizing this fundraiser and awareness campaign. I urge Yukoners to come out and support this very worthy cause and I would ask all members of the Legislative Assembly to join me in recognizing Cystic Fibrosis Awareness Month. Together we can make a difference and help breathe life into the future of Canadians with cystic fibrosis.

Although he couldn't be here today, Madam Speaker, I would like to just ask all members to join me in giving a shout-out to Famous Seamus, who is a young Yukoner battling cystic fibrosis.

Applause

In recognition of Yukon First Nation languages

Mr. Elias: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise today to pay tribute to Yukon First Nation languages and the work that is being done in the Yukon to promote and foster them.

Chan sreendit neegwidadhat aii geenjit gwiit'oh shòh ihlih. Madam Speaker, that means: "Springtime is here and, for that, I am happy."

The House was not in session on National Aboriginal Languages Day this year, but celebrations and activities took place in a number of Yukon schools and communities on March 31, involving school children, educators, elders and others. Thank you; shòh nithan to everyone involved.

Madam Speaker, eight languages have traditionally been spoken among Yukon's 14 First Nations. Madam Speaker, Shoozri' Divii Ddhàa Chii Nàdhat vaazhii. Old Crow gwats'at ihlih. Shitsuu Mary Kasi Vaazhi. Viti' chan Elias Gwahtl'ah Ti' vaazhii.

In English, that means my name is Darius Elias. My Gwich'in name means "on a high rock mountain looking down on the valley". I am from Old Crow. My grandma is Mary Kasi and her father is Elias.

In the residential school system, the use of these languages was discouraged and even punished, which almost resulted in their loss. It speaks to the remarkable resiliency of our Yukon First Nation people that so many traditional languages have survived. Indeed, more than just surviving, they're undergoing a renewed resurgence.

The Yukon government has long championed the teaching of First Nation languages in Yukon schools. For example, for many years we have provided funding for six First Nation language teacher trainees annually, an initiative arising from a partnership involving the Yukon Native Language Centre, the Council of Yukon First Nations and the Department of Education First Nation Programs and Partnerships unit.

Over the past 30 years, more than 150 speakers of Yukon First Nation languages have completed training through the Yukon Native Language Centre to enable them to provide instruction in Yukon classrooms. I am pleased to note that in the coming school year, 31 trained educators will be involved in teaching seven of the Yukon First Nation languages to students in grades K to 12 in 20 schools.

Learning one's traditional language is much more than a linguistic exercise, Madam Speaker. We know that learning our First Nation languages is helping our youth move beyond the intergenerational effects of residential schools. Learning a traditional language builds bridges between the generations; connecting them culturally and contributing to a strong sense of identity and feeling of pride and self-empowerment. In Gwich'in, we say "nichih gwanaf'in", which means "we strive to succeed or to move forward."

As I noted earlier, Yukon First Nation languages are in the midst of revitalization, not only by our older citizens who wish to pass their languages on to young people, but among young people themselves, who have come to understand the vital connection between language and culture — and we are actively reclaiming both.

Some of these young people are finding ways to enhance their traditional language learning through modern technology. Not only are they using the Internet and social media — something I rarely use — as language learning tools, but they are sharing their digital knowledge and skills with their language instructors to help bring this technology into their teaching practices. That bridge between the generations clearly goes in two directions.

I have also learned about groups of young parents who have taken it upon themselves to continue their own language learning and pass their traditional languages on to their children. They are doing so through conversation sessions, establishing First-Nation-language-only zones and other innovative methods, such as playing language games and placing vocabulary labels in their homes.

Grassroots community-based initiatives such as these augment the formal language instruction that is taking place in Yukon schools and bode well for the future of Yukon First Nation languages in our territory.

I would ask the House to join me in acknowledging Janet McDonald, director of the First Nations Programs and Partnerships unit of the Department of Education — one person who is deeply involved in helping to ensure that future exists, Madam Speaker.

Applause

Mr. Elias: Günilshish; thank you; [*Member spoke in First Nation language. Text unavailable*]; merci beaucoup; and hai' choo [*Member spoke in First Nation language. Text unavailable*].

In recognition of Yukon Francophonie Day

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Merci, Madam la présidente. À titre de ministre responsable de la Direction des services en français, je prends la parole aujourd'hui pour commémorer la 10e Journée de la francophonie yukonnaise.

Dix ans se sont écoulés depuis que le gouvernement du Yukon a proclamé le 15 mai Journée de la francophonie yukonnaise. Cette journée spéciale est l'occasion de saluer le dynamisme de la communauté francophone et de souligner les contributions majeures qu'elle a apportées au Yukon en matière de développement et de qualité de vie.

La communauté francophone yukonnaise représente un atout pour le territoire et ce n'est un secret pour personne qu'elle est en plein essor. Rappelons que le Yukon occupe le troisième rang au Canada sur le plan du bilinguisme, après le Québec et le Nouveau-Brunswick.

Les festivités entourant la 10^e Journée de la francophonie yukonnaise auront lieu le samedi 14 mai. À cette occasion, le drapeau franco-yukonnais sera hissé devant les hôtels de ville de Whitehorse et de Dawson et diverses activités seront organisées dans ces deux villes.

C'est avec fierté que nous constatons la croissance spectaculaire de la communauté francophone yukonnaise et sa présence se fait de plus en plus sentir dans tous les aspects de la vie au Yukon, que ce soit dans le secteur privé, sur la scène culturelle ou au sein du gouvernement.

L'École Émilie Tremblay vient de fêter son 30^e anniversaire, ce qui marque un autre jalon important dans l'histoire de la communauté francophone. On voit désormais s'y inscrire les enfants de la deuxième génération de Franco-Yukonnais. L'année dernière, la communauté soulignait le 20^e anniversaire de son organisme de promotion des intérêts de la femme, Les EssentiElles.

Le Yukon est un lieu propice au développement de la langue et de la culture françaises. La communauté francophone dispose de nombreuses institutions solides qui participent à son essor : une école, une garderie, un journal et une commission scolaire, pour n'en citer que quelques-unes.

Parallèlement, il convient de noter que les programmes d'immersion française des autres écoles connaissent un vif engouement auprès des enfants et des parents.

Le gouvernement du Yukon affiche sa volonté de travailler avec la communauté francophone pour en renforcer les fondements et améliorer les services que nous offrons afin d'assurer son bien-être.

Cette volonté s'exprime dans divers secteurs comme la santé, l'éducation, les arts et la culture, le développement économique, le tourisme, l'immigration francophone, la formation linguistique et l'offre active de services en français.

La Direction des services en français rencontre régulièrement la direction de l'Association franco-yukonnaise. Et grâce à notre chronique mensuelle dans *L'Aurore boréale*, la communauté est tenue au courant de la mise en place de services et d'initiatives en français par notre gouvernement.

Notre programme d'enseignement du français destiné aux adultes est un autre exemple de collaboration avec l'AFY. Dans le cadre de ce partenariat, nous mobilisons nos ressources et notre expertise pour proposer un programme de formation linguistique complet qui comprend huit niveaux. Les cours peuvent avoir lieu en journée ou en soirée et on offre également des cours intensifs et des ateliers de conversation. Nous étudions actuellement les possibilités de formation linguistique en ligne pour répondre aux besoins des employés ne pouvant pas suivre de cours en classe.

Dans les domaines des arts et de la culture, nous entrons dans la deuxième année de notre entente avec le Canada, grâce à laquelle nous pouvons apporter une aide financière directe à l'AFY au profit d'artistes yukonnais francophones.

Cette nouvelle enveloppe représente au total 268 000\$ pour la communauté sur deux ans.

À titre de ministre responsable de la Direction des services en français, je me réjouis à la perspective de continuer à collaborer avec l'Association franco-yukonnaise et de rencontrer les membres de la communauté francophone à l'occasion des diverses activités communautaires auxquelles j'assiste tout au long de l'année.

Madame la présidente, j'aimerais demander à tous les membres de l'Assemblée législative de se joindre à moi pour féliciter la communauté francophone à l'occasion de cette 10^e Journée de la francophonie yukonnaise et souligner sa contribution à la diversité culturelle de notre territoire.

J'aimerais également en profiter pour inviter tous les Yukonnais à participer aux festivités qui auront lieu le samedi 14 mai.

Madam Speaker, as minister responsible for the French Language Services Directorate, I am very proud to recognize the 10th annual Yukon Francophonie Day on behalf of the Government of Yukon. Some 10 years have passed since the Government of Yukon first declared May 15 as Yukon Francophonie Day as an opportunity to earmark this day to celebrate our francophone community's vitality and to acknowledge its important contributions to the development of our territory and the quality of life as we have come to know it today.

Our Francophonie is an asset to the territory and it's no secret that it is thriving. Key evidence of that is that the Yukon ranks as the third most bilingual jurisdiction in the country, right after Quebec and New Brunswick. The 10th Yukon Francophonie Day celebrations will be taking place this Saturday on May 14. The Yukon Francophonie flag will be flying here in Whitehorse and Dawson City. A number of various activities have been planned throughout the territory on this very day.

We are all really proud to witness a significant growth in the Francophonie over the years and its ever-increasing presence in every single of our life as we know it — be it the private sector, the cultural scene or at the government level.

Just recently, École Émilie Tremblay celebrated its 30th anniversary, a very important milestone in the development of the Francophonie here in the Yukon. Children from the second generation of francophone Yukoners are now enrolled at the French school, which is a testament to the level of education at and the commitment to the school and the heart of the community itself.

Last year, the community celebrated the 20th anniversary of the women's organization Les EssentiElles with which we have had a wonderful working relationship as well.

Yukon is a favourable growing ground, to say the least, for the French language and culture. The community has many strong institutions, one of which is the French first language school itself, École Émilie Tremblay, and also a childcare centre, a newspaper and the school board — to name but a few. In parallel, French immersion programs in our schools are also extremely popular and continue to grow in leaps and bounds as well. We are very proud and are

committed to working with the community to strengthen these foundations and the services we deliver in support of its well-being.

I would certainly like to welcome a number of guests who have joined us here today in the gallery. I would just like to point out a number of them — and there are a lot who have joined us, which also speaks to the vitality and the vibrancy of the community — starting with: Angélique Bernard, president of the Association franco-yukonnaise; Isabelle Salesse, the executive director; Roch Nadon, co-executive director, director of the arts and culture and youth sectors; Nancy Power, director of communications and community relations. Also, representing CSFY we have a number of representatives here: starting with the newest elected member, Édith Bélanger, who is the trustee of the school board and also tourism development manager at AFY; Gilbert Bradet, trustee also for CSFY; Marc Champagne, executive director; Julie Dessureault, secretary-treasurer; and Maud Caron, executive assistant. Also, representing la Garderie du Petit Cheval Blanc are Maryne Dumaine, vice-president, and also Jocelyne Isabelle, director.

Representing our own directorate — the French Language Services Directorate — is Patrice Tremblay, director. We also have joining us: Joe MacGillivray, who is our deputy minister responsible for it; Sylvie Painchaud, who is also actively involved in the active offer program; Emmanuelle Praprotnik, French web coordinator; and Lila Power, a STEP student and intern web assistant; Pascal Virmoux-Jackson, translator; and Emylie Thibault-Mahoney, a translator as well.

Also, we have here from Volunteer Bénévoles Yukon, Bruno Bourdache — no stranger to this House. Also, I want to extend a warm welcome to a number of special guests who have joined us here all the way from Quebec. They are currently doing an internship here in Whitehorse as part of their vocational diploma in office administration. They are acquiring professional experience in various work places in Whitehorse, which gives them a much different perspective when it comes to our labour market, and an opportunity to perform in a different work environment other than in Quebec. While in Whitehorse, students live with English-speaking families to help them improve their English language.

It is the second year of this internship in Whitehorse, and Christian Tessier is the accompanying teacher and has joined us here today. He teaches English to the students in the vocational program they attend. Christian lived in Whitehorse — of course, no stranger to many of us — from 1991 to 1998, and I know he was a very popular teacher at Golden Horn Elementary School at that time and I'm sure you are still as popular today.

Joining Christian are a number of the individuals who I spoke of: Christian, as I just mentioned; Chantal Cossette from Shawnigan, intern at Whitehorse Elementary School; Kim Richard, Shawnigan, intern at la Garderie du Petit Cheval Blanc; Lina Trudel, Shawnigan, intern at École Émilie Tremblay; Stéphanie Normandin, La Tuque, intern at Association franco-yukonnaise, Stéphanie Boisvert, Shawnigan, intern at Commission scolaire francophone du

Yukon; and Joanne Méthot, Trois Rivières, also an intern here at FLSD at our own shop.

I would like to thank you all for joining us here today. Welcome.

Applause

Ms. White: Madame la présidente, je suis fière de prendre la parole au nom du NPD et du troisième parti pour célébrer la Journée de la francophonie yukonnaise. C'est toujours un honneur pour moi de rendre hommage à cette journée. Il y a 10 ans déjà, la commissaire du Yukon à l'époque, Geraldine Van Bibber, a proclamé pour la première fois le 15 mai Journée de la francophonie yukonnaise. Cette une occasion unique pour tous les Yukonnais et Yukonaises de découvrir et célébrer la langue française, la culture francophone et de souligner l'histoire et la vitalité de la Franco-Yukonnie.

Madame la présidente, quand j'étais petite, mon événement préféré de Rendezvous était la cabane à sucre. Maintenant comme adulte, depuis quelque années, j'ai eu la chance d'être bénévole à cet événement et de réaliser un rêve d'enfance.

For those of you who might not have fully understood that, when I was a child, my favourite thing about Rendezvous was the cabane à sucre and now, as an adult, I get to volunteer. I blow the horn, I roll the tire — it is the greatest — so when you're old, you can do that.

C'est toujours une expérience plein de bonne humeur et de camaraderie. Pour bien des gens, c'est un événement incontournable. Et cette tranche de vie n'est qu'un exemple parmi tant d'autres qui démontre à quel point la culture francophone fait partie de la vie au Yukon.

Depuis les années 1800, les francophones ont contribué à façonner le Yukon. Et votre contribution continue aujourd'hui à faire du Yukon un endroit meilleur et plus inclusif.

La communauté francophone vibre. Elle continue à croître. Je remercie tous ceux et celles qui continuent à jouer un rôle important au sein de la communauté.

C'est grâce à mes professeurs que je peux m'adresser à vous dans la langue de Molière et je veux les remercier, particulièrement pour leur patience et leur dévouement à partager leur langue et leur culture. Même si parfois, les résultats se font attendre, vous avez devant vous une preuve que vos efforts ne sont pas vains.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank all my teachers because — although it was hard when I was a child, I'm sure, because I was energetic — their patience paid off because now, as an adult, I'm able to still speak French.

So although it might be a long time in coming, there is a payoff. So I thank all the teachers — especially those who may have a bit more work with anglophone students because we want to speak English.

Merci et bonne Journée de la francophonie yukonnaise à tous et à toutes.

Thank you so much for everything you contribute to the community, because without you, we just wouldn't be very much fun.

Applause

Speaker: Introduction of visitors.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I would like to ask all members to join me in welcoming to the gallery here today Al Stannard. Until yesterday, when he did not put his name forward to continue to be president of the Yukon Agricultural Association, he served as the president of the YAA.

I would also like to welcome Jennifer Hall, who is the executive director, here to the gallery. They are here for the tabling of the local food strategy for Yukon. Of course, they and the Yukon Agricultural Association played a major role in its development.

I would also like to thank the many people who contributed their ideas and knowledge to develop the local food strategy and note that this delivers on the final remaining agriculture commitment from our 2011 election platform that hadn't been completed already.

Applause

Mr. Tredger: Thank you, Madam Speaker. It is my pleasure to ask all members of the Legislature to join me in welcoming to the legislative gallery the grade 4/5 students and their teachers from Tantalus School in Carmacks.

Madam Speaker, as part of their studies, they have been studying governance. They have attended a Village of Carmacks council meeting, Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation council meeting and, earlier today, visited the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre. I will be asking a number of questions on their behalf today. I would invite all members to join us in the members' lounge during our break after the Commissioner's assent to bills.

I would also like to commend them for their patience and good behaviour today. Students attending are Lucas Bellmore-Mayer, Justine Bellimore-Smarch, Steven Domingo, Alexis Fields-Birckel, Jamie Gage-Skookum, Edcyl Garcia, Joshua Roberts, Luke Roberts, Jessica Staples, Autumn Tricker, Winter Tricker, Layla Wheeler and Paul Wrixson. They are accompanied by their teachers and supervisors: Amelia Andrews, Brian Stevens, Aine Larkin and Alma Wrixson. Welcome to the gallery.

Applause

Ms. White: Merci, la Madame la présidente. Je demande aux élus de m'aider à inviter Éline Michaud, qui vient de faire le Yukon sa maison. Elle vient du Québec. Quelqu'un qui n'est pas nommé — Jeanne Beaudoin, qui m'aide des fois quand j'ai des questions. Avec elle, je peux pratiquer toujours. Merci beaucoup pour la patience.

If the gallery — I guess “the elected” is what I said — would like to help me welcome Éline Michaud, who has just

made her home here from Quebec, and Jeanne Beaudoin, who always has a patient ear and helps me when I'm trying to find words. Thank you so much for coming.

Applause

Speaker: Are there any returns or documents for tabling?

TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

Hon. Mr. Cathers: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am pleased to table here in the House today the *Local Food Strategy for Yukon — Encouraging the Production and Consumption of Yukon-Grown Food 2016 to 2021*.

Speaker: Are there any reports of committees? Petitions.

PETITIONS

Petition No. 29 — received

Clerk: Madam Speaker and honourable members of the Assembly: I have had the honour to review a petition, being Petition No. 29 of the First Session of the 33rd Legislative Assembly, as presented by the Member for Copperbelt South on May 11, 2016. Petition No. 29 meets the requirements as to form of the Standing Orders of the Yukon Legislative Assembly.

Speaker: Accordingly, I declare Petition No. 29 is deemed to be read and received. Pursuant to Standing Order 67, the Executive Council shall provide a response to a petition which has been read and received within eight sitting days of its presentation. Therefore, the Executive Council response to Petition No. 29 shall be provided on or before Thursday, May 26, 2016.

Are there any petitions to be presented?
Are there any bills to be introduced?
Are there any notices of motions?

NOTICES OF MOTIONS

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

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to use the 2016-17 budget to invest \$120,000 for speech and language services within the family supports for children with disabilities program.

Mr. Tredger: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to ratify the Ddhaw Ghro habitat protection plan recommended by the Selkirk First Nation, the Na Cho Nyäk Dun First Nation, and the Northern Tutchone elders.

Ms. White: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to support the Casa Loma mobile home park residents facing

eviction by ensuring that lending streams are available to help those residents pay for required home upgrades and the cost of moving their homes.

Mr. Silver: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise to give notice of the following motion for the production of papers:

THAT this House do order the return of a copy of the 2015 annual report of the Department of Education.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to recognize the recent acquisition of Kaminak Gold Corp. by Goldcorp Inc. by:

(1) congratulating the Kaminak Gold Corp. board of directors on their successful development of the Coffee Gold property to date;

(2) commending the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation on their involvement and cooperation with the exploration and mining sectors; and

(3) increasing efforts toward developing a clear regulatory process for exploration and mining companies doing business in the Yukon.

Speaker: Is there a statement by a minister?

This then brings us to Question Period.

QUESTION PERIOD

Question re: Emergency preparedness

Ms. Hanson: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Last week was Emergency Preparedness Week across Canada. Unfortunately, last week also saw over 80,000 Fort McMurray residents displaced by a raging boreal wildfire — the same kind of forest that covers most of the Yukon. It is a real testament to Fort McMurray's emergency workers that, to date, there are only two known fatalities. In Yukon, many people were reminded, both by Emergency Preparedness Week promotions and the grim realities of the Fort McMurray evacuation, that it is essential to be prepared with 72-hours of goods to survive while help is on the way — but then what?

Madam Speaker, how can Yukon citizens get information on the government's community evacuation procedures, so that they can know what to do and where to go in the event of an emergency?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Emergency preparedness is the responsibility of everyone. The Yukon government needs to play an important role and I'll outline some of the ways we do that, but it is integral, as I outlined in my tribute last week to Emergency Preparedness Week, that Yukoners have a plan, that they are prepared for their own families and prepared in the event of an unexpected disaster of a nature that we've seen in Alberta.

For the Yukon government's part, the Emergency Measures Organization manages the Yukon government emergency coordination plan, which sets out the coordinated actions and responsibilities of Yukon government departments and agencies in preparing for and responding to disasters or emergency events throughout the territory. This is something

we do in conjunction with Yukon municipalities, First Nations and other groups.

While the Yukon is prepared, Yukoners can help to reduce the danger of wildfires by only burning when and where permitted, properly extinguishing campfires and taking particular care to avoid starting a wildfire. All Yukoners are encouraged to make their property firesmart by removing brush and debris from their yards; ensuring eavestroughs are cleared regularly and not stacking firewood beside their houses.

Yukoners also need to be aware of the situation around them during the fire season and they should, as I noted before, prepare the necessary kits and plans. Now, if members of the public wish to have further information about either the plan or how to prepare themselves, I encourage them to visit the Community Services website, where we provide information about not only the preparation of emergency plans, but of kits for their families as well.

Ms. Hanson: Thank you, Madam Speaker. It's precisely because I did visit that website that I'm raising these questions. Yukoners may know what they need to do as a family to respond to an emergency, but as we saw last week, the question is: What happens when people aren't at home if a disaster strikes? What about Yukoners with mobility issues or people without vehicles? Or in the event the Campbell bridge closes, how do Riverdale residents know where to go? This information should be readily available, not when the disaster strikes, but in advance, to all citizens. Madam Speaker, many Whitehorse residents will remember how 9/11 affected them or their families. When will the government take steps to promote information on community evacuation procedures so that, in a worst-case scenario, Yukoners can reach safety quickly —

Speaker: Order, please. The member's time has elapsed.

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. If the member opposite has visited the website and doesn't find the information sufficient, I would be happy to review the information available on the website and consider making changes, as needed. If she has particular suggestions, I would be happy to hear them.

When it comes to the emergency coordination plan and all the specifics issues the member has noted, folks — whether in the Yukon government or in the City of Whitehorse, fire or other organizations — plans are in place for those types of eventualities.

In the case of the bridge, I would note that there is an alternative option with the dam. Of course, that isn't a perfect option and residents in Riverdale have expressed, through various means, a desire to see a second bridge. I would note that the MLA for that area and the Minister of Highways and Public Works put forward a motion to investigate that possibility last week.

With regard to mobility issues, if individuals are facing mobility issues, they should do their best to ensure that they have a plan for an emergency, should it occur. If they're in the care of the Yukon government, Yukon government officials

will have the knowledge and the plan in place to evacuate individuals from Yukon government facilities. If they're living on their own and facing mobility issues, I would encourage them and their families to develop plans for themselves, if they need them. If they do need help in that respect, I would encourage them to contact the officials in the Emergency Measures Organization for more information.

Ms. Hanson: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Yukoners simply want to know that the government has an evacuation plan — what it is and how to get government updates during an emergency. That was unclear at the outset in Fort McMurray. I know this from personal experience with family. We know that we should have three days' worth of personal supplies on hand at home, but emergencies like fire and earthquakes can happen at any time, including when we are at work, and prevent us from getting to our personal emergency supplies. Where do people go when they can't get home? The plans for dealing with these situations surely exist, but they are only useful if they are widely shared with Yukon citizens.

Will the government take advantage of the public's increased awareness and launch an information campaign to inform Yukoners about the evacuation procedures in each of Yukon's communities?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. We endeavour to provide information to the public on this issue through a range of ways. We typically coordinate closely with municipalities, with First Nations and with communities to ensure that each community has a plan for itself. We support First Nations to access funding for these types of plans through the federal government and through the Yukon government.

Of course, it's difficult for me to speculate on a particular case, but I should note that there are plans in place and there is information available. We have done a number of tabletop exercises that have dealt with just this type of issue. I would ask members to recall just a few years when we hosted Operation Nanook where a wildfire raging through the Whitehorse area was contemplated and acted on. Through that exercise a few years ago, the Canadian military, EMO and other organizations and agencies came together to plan and act out an actual case just like that. There are plans in place. We do practise them. Yukon government officials and other agencies are prepared to the degree that they can be.

As we have seen in Alberta, all the preparation in the world sometimes can still be overwhelmed. The incredible extent of the disaster in Alberta has overwhelmed even Alberta to the extent that it has. Alberta is probably one of the most prepared, most well-resourced provinces in the country for these types of issues, and even they have faced the challenges that they have. Yukon, of course, will do our best —

Speaker: Order, please.

Question re: Student questions re Carmacks recreational infrastructure and recycling

Mr. Tredger: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My questions today come from the grade 4/5 class at Tantalus

School. Carmacks has a swimming pool and a closed outdoor skating rink. It is important that the children in Carmacks have the opportunity to learn to skate and swim. The pool and the skating rink are a great way for kids to exercise and have fun. Last winter, the outdoor skating rink in Carmacks was closed for safety reasons. Carmacks residents have not been able to use the rink for the past two winters. The pool is also closed in the winter. Kids in Carmacks need physical activities to do in winter.

What can be done to build a new and safe Carmacks skating rink and keep the pool open year-round?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker, and thank you to the member for bringing forward these questions — and, more specifically, thank you very much to the students from Tantalus School who have brought these questions forward. They're very important and they're excellent questions.

First of all, on the rink in Carmacks — like many Yukoners, I grew up playing hockey, and playing on the outdoor rink was something that I certainly enjoyed. In Carmacks we have an unfortunate situation where, a little while ago, some engineers came and looked at the rink and determined that it wasn't safe anymore to play or skate on it and that we had to do some work on it.

Since then, we have reached out to the Village of Carmacks and we're working together to try to find a solution. Last winter, we had the rink set up behind the school; it was an outdoor rink with no boards. I know it's not ideal, but there was an opportunity there for some kids to go skating at least. With the boards that are there now, I understand that the Village of Carmacks has reached out to the Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation and has developed a plan to move the boards to the First Nation's side of the river to the First Nation's land where they can set up the boards, hopefully for this winter, so that the kids will have the opportunity to skate on a rink with boards.

These are still outdoor rinks, and I know that what kids really want is a new rink. The Village of Carmacks has been working closely to develop plans for a new facility at the rec centre there and I look forward working with the village on that.

On the pool, Madam Speaker — sorry, I ran out of time.

Mr. Tredger: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Many villages in Yukon have a skateboard park. Skateboarding is a great way to exercise and have fun outdoors in the summer. Many kids in Carmacks skateboard, but there is no skateboard park for them to use. The children of Tantalus School would love to have a skateboard park in their community where they could learn new tricks and improve their skateboarding skills.

Madam Speaker, when will Carmacks get a skateboard park?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker — and an excellent question. I happen to think that a skateboard park in Carmacks is a great idea and it's something that we should certainly look at, but we need some help from our friends in the community of Carmacks. What I would encourage students to do is to talk to their friends and

neighbours and, first of all, pick out a location in Carmacks that they think would be a good spot for a skateboard park.

Once they have done that, they can work with some adults in the community — whether it's their parents, teachers or the mayor and council of the Village of Carmacks — to put together an application to either the community development fund or other funding opportunities in the Yukon government to begin planning for a skateboard park in Carmacks.

Once they have done that, then we can provide funding through some of the funds that we have available and we can start getting to work on building a skateboard park in Carmacks.

There are some things that the Yukon government can do, but I will look to some of the students to start to talk to some of their friends, neighbours and people in the community to find a location and work with us on finding a way to build a new skateboard park in Carmacks.

I will skip back, Madam Speaker, because I ran out of time — on the pool. Unfortunately, with pools in the north, it's very difficult to operate them year-round and some pools simply aren't built for that. I have been to the pool in Carmacks and it's one of those pools that isn't going to be able to be operated year-round, so I have some unfortunate news there that we won't be able to operate the pool year-round in Carmacks but we can look for other —

Speaker: Order.

Mr. Tredger: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Protecting the environment is very important to the grade 4/5 class at Tantalus School. One way that they help to protect the environment is by recycling. Carmacks has a recycling depot but not everyone recycles. The depot also can't recycle as many products as the students would like.

What are the plans to improve recycling in Carmacks?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker, and thank you to the member for the question. Recycling is very important, and we encourage students and all Yukoners to recycle as much as they can. One of the ways that we encourage and support recycling in the communities is by having the recycling club. That is a club where students can register, and the more they recycle, the more points they get. The more points they get, the more opportunity they have to win some pretty cool prizes that are donated by local businesses.

Last year, I had a chance to give out some of the prizes for the recycling club to students who had recycled the most in their community. We had some prizes that included brand new bikes, brand new tablets and iPads — and those sorts of items — that were donated by local businesses. We try to encourage recycling in that way.

Now, in terms of products, we just announced this morning that we have changed some of the rules around recycling so that new products can receive a refund. One example is milk jugs. Now, when you want to take a milk jug to the recycling depot, you will actually get a refund back for that milk jug. We are adding products that have refunds attached to them. That will encourage, I think, more people to recycle. It will encourage more people to keep those products,

like milk jugs, from entering the landfill and creating environmental challenges. We will continue to do that. There are other ways that we support recycling throughout the territory, but I don't have time to list them all, so I look forward to talking to kids in the gallery afterwards and we can discuss some of those.

Question re: Economic outlook

Mr. Silver: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Earlier today, Statistics Canada confirmed what many Yukoners already know: our economy has stopped growing under this Yukon Party government. Statistics Canada announced that Yukon's economy shrank for the third consecutive year in 2015. Alberta led the way and Yukon was second as the two worst performing economies in Canada. This is the third year in a row for Yukon's economy to shrink. The Department of Economic Development produces its own report on our GDP, and the minister has that data.

Can the minister confirm that Yukon's own GDP estimates for 2015 show our economy shrank for a third year in a row?

Hon. Mr. Hassard: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Of course, as we all know, mining is the cornerstone of Yukon's economy and, as we all know as well, mining throughout the world is in a decline. But we have spoken many times in this Assembly about the importance of diversifying our economy, and we have worked very hard to do just that.

I am happy to announce that many sectors of Yukon's economy have actually increased. In the construction industry, we see an increase of 5.1 percent; retail trade, 1.7 percent; professional, scientific and technical services, 5.1 percent; real estate, two percent; transportation and warehousing, 2.3 percent; health care, 2.3 percent; education, 2.2 percent; finance and insurance, 2.4 percent; utilities, 5.4 percent; and public administration at 0.7 percent. This government continues to do the hard work to help improve Yukon's economy to help make the Yukon a better place for all Yukoners.

Mr. Silver: Madam Speaker, Yukon taxpayers are currently paying for Facebook ads that promote the Premier. These ads make a point of saying the Premier is focused on growing our economy. After three years of focusing on growth of our economy, we see three years of negative economic growth. This is the economic track record of the government, and no amount of Facebook ads saying the opposite can change that.

It's worth noting that the government's own forecast, released in October, said that our economy would shrink by six percent in 2015. I guess the good news is that the economy performed better than the government thought; the bad news is that the government's forecast still missed the mark yet again.

Madam Speaker, what changes, if any, has the government made to improve its own economic forecasts?

Hon. Mr. Hassard: Thank you, Madam Speaker. As I've said many times — and I just said here moments ago — this government understands the importance of diversifying

our economy. We understand that the mining sector is in a decline and that's not just here in the Yukon; that's throughout the world.

Madam Speaker, we have taken the steps to move forward, to try to diversify Yukon's economy. We are working on things such as the diverse fibre project. We have invested many dollars in infrastructure, in training and in education. This government is committed to Yukoners and we are committed to improving the economy of the Yukon.

Mr. Silver: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I appreciate those efforts. The question was about the forecasts. Maybe in the supplementary, the minister can speak to that. But the government's message to Yukon as we approach election is: "We are good financial managers. We're good economic managers."

Yukon taxpayers are even footing the bill to spread this Yukon Party message. The only problem is that the government's own stats don't support this argument. Under this government, our economy shrank in 2013; it shrank in 2014 — and confirmed in 2015. It's worth noting that we are the only place in Canada where that has happened. In each of those years, the government's economic forecasts had been well off as well. Most years, the numbers aren't even close.

Madam Speaker, why does this government keep billing taxpayers for ads that say the economy is growing when in fact the opposite is true?

Hon. Mr. Pasloski: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Certainly, we are proud of the work that we have invested through these years of an economic downturn in the resource industry.

As I have said many times: so goes mining, so goes Yukon. I've also said many times that now more than ever, we need to stand up for our resource sector, so we have been working on that. But as we heard from the Minister of Economic Development, while our growth was contracted last year, primarily in the mining sector, we've had all other major sectors of our economy grow last year — construction, retail trade, professional, scientific and technical services, real estate, transportation, health care, education, finance, insurance and utilities. We are proud of the work that's going on. We have more work to do but Yukoners are comforted knowing that there is a government that is looking after the finances, making strategic investments and ensuring that we're not spending money paying interest loans off for debt like every other jurisdiction in this country.

Madam Speaker, I was fortunate to speak to Eira Thomas, the CEO of Kaminak this morning. We have also spoken to Goldcorp today. We're very excited about the news that a Canadian company — the third-largest gold producer in the world — is coming to Yukon. It really speaks volumes for the project that Kaminak — their Coffee Gold project — but really speaks —

Speaker: Order, please.

Question re: Solid-waste management

Mr. Barr: Madam Speaker, since 2015, when this government failed to meet their 50-percent waste diversion targets, they have failed to implement a new strategy.

A year has come and gone since the final deadline of the projected target. There has been no new action. In a press release this morning, they stated their commitment to diverting waste and increasing recycling efforts, yet these efforts are futile without a solid strategy and measurable targets in place. For these changes to be successful, they need to be implemented under a large waste diversion strategy. This government has had ample opportunities to establish new, measurable targets; yet since their failure in 2015, this government has not acted.

Madam Speaker, why has this government not updated the waste diversion targets over the past year since failing to meet their commitment of 50-percent waste diversion by 2015?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Unlike the NDP, we're focused on action rather than targets. We have taken action on waste diversion and recycling. As recently as today, we announced that there have just been changes made to the beverage container regulation and the designated material regulation, which will significantly improve the recycling system here in Yukon and will see more products diverted from our landfills and more products handled responsibly in this territory.

What the changes we have announced today will mean is that new products like milk jugs will be added to the beverage container regulation, as I indicated earlier. As well, we'll set up an e-waste recycling program where individuals who purchase electronic or electric goods at stores in Yukon will pay an upfront fee. That money will then be used to ensure that those products at the end of their life aren't ending up in our landfill because they are usually the most dangerous and the most harmful to the environment.

Madam Speaker, we are very proud of the announcement we made today with regard to the changes to our beverage container and designated material regulations. They are significant improvements and significant action on the recycling front and they're just the next step in our plan for recycling in the territory and for solid-waste management.

We have done a great job over the years implementing the *Yukon Solid Waste Action Plan*, along with municipalities, First Nations and communities and this is just another step forward for recycling in the territory.

Mr. Barr: Today's announcement is a good, yet long overdue, step in the right direction, but it does not replace an overarching waste diversion target and plan to reach this target. In the absence of government action regarding waste diversion, other organizations have stepped up to lead the way. Without an overarching strategy, organizations like AYC, who see an imminent need for sustainable waste management systems, have been proposing solutions.

This government cannot say it supports waste diversion and recycling while simultaneously failing to implement measurable targets and an achievable plan.

Madam Speaker, when will this government take a leadership role in waste diversion action, rather than taking a back seat, and update their waste diversion targets that they so thoroughly missed last year?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Thank you, Madam Speaker. We are taking action on recycling. That is what I just said.

I know the NDP is focused on targets and goals. We're focused on action. We're focused on making improvements to our recycling system to ensure Yukoners have better access to recycling, to ensure that recycling is easier for Yukoners and they understand the implications of not recycling and the cost that it has on the public for managing those goods. We will continue to do the good work that we have been doing to improve solid-waste management in the territory. We'll continue to do work to encourage recycling and promote it through education, improvements to our facilities and through regulatory measures like the changes to the beverage container regulation and designated material regulation that we announced earlier today.

I should note, Madam Speaker, that those regulatory changes we announced today were encouraged and welcomed by the Association of Yukon Communities and I look forward to hearing from the Yukon municipalities this weekend in Watson Lake at the AYC AGM, where we will discuss what the next steps will be for Yukon's recycling industry.

Mr. Barr: Madam Speaker, since missing the 50-percent waste diversion goal in 2015, it is unclear where we are going from here. To successfully manage sustainability practices in the territory and establish a clear path, we must have a concrete vision in mind. Waste diversion is about respecting Yukon's environment and making Yukon a better place for future generations. A clear plan is needed for Yukon's waste management. A Yukon NDP government would set out clear, measurable and achievable waste diversion targets. Then it would provide the necessary funding and resources to meet those targets.

Madam Speaker, does this government recognize that the ad hoc approach it has taken to waste diversion in Yukon doesn't work and that a new achievable plan is needed?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Madam Speaker, all we hear from the NDP are vague commitments for funding and vague targets. We haven't heard anything concrete from the NDP. What we have seen from this government is concrete action on recycling. We've made improvements to our facilities throughout this territory; we're working closely with municipalities to ensure that their sites improve as well. We have taken action by funding recycling depots throughout this territory; we fund the recycling materials that get taken from communities to the processors here in Whitehorse. Then once they get to Whitehorse, we fund the processors here in Whitehorse. We have now taken regulatory steps, as well as infrastructure and financial investments.

We are taking concrete action when it comes to recycling in this territory. What we hear from the NDP is nothing but vague promises and vague commitments to funding, which, of course, is what they put forward over the last number of years — not a single concrete issue have they raised, Madam

Speaker, that can actually be tangibly achieved. All they have committed to is vague targets and vague funding.

Question re: Mobile-homeowners

Ms. White: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Residents of the Casa Loma mobile home park went public this week about the eviction notices they have been handed by their property managers. It turns out that the park wasn't actually zoned for a mobile home park and many of the 12 mobile-homeowners affected by the eviction notice are having trouble finding new places for their homes.

One of those mobile homes is actually considered a permanent structure by city bylaws, and another can't be moved at all. I warned the Yukon Party government repeatedly about the risks created by a lack of options, should a mobile home park be systematically closed down, which is exactly what's happening at the Casa Loma.

Madam Speaker, why did the Yukon Party government ignore the warning signs about the lack of options for Yukon's mobile-homeowners and what will they now do to address this oversight?

Hon. Mr. Dixon: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. We are aware of the situation at the Casa Loma park. It has been raised to us by the member and by individuals in the public over the last number of months. It's my understanding that notice was given to the residents of that park last summer that the park owner intended to redevelop the land for a different purpose and, pursuant to the *Landlord and Tenant Act* and the current *Residential Landlord and Tenant Act*, made notice of that.

Obviously that's an unfortunate situation, but it is one that is within the law. When the notice was given, it was before the current act came into force, so they are governed by the previous act, since that's when the date of the notice was given. As such, the park owner is required to provide 12 months' notice and it is my understanding that has been granted. Notice has been given in writing by registered mail so it appears to be in order. As such, from our perspective, nothing has been done outside the law and the action taken by the park owner appears to be within his rights as a property owner.

With regard to the individuals who are leaving, there are a number of options that we are looking at for those mobile-homeowners and those are currently being considered.

Ms. White: Thank you, Madam Speaker. These Yukoners have been working hard at finding solutions since last year. We have 12 Yukon households that are being asked to pick up and move to we don't know where. Mobile-homeowners are being forced to leave and they are in an impossible situation — many mobile-homeowners just don't have the financial resources to buy a piece of land for their home, to bring their properties up to code or to pay the hefty moving expenses. This is an opportunity for the Yukon government to help a group of homeowners through a tough situation.

Madam Speaker, will the minister responsible for the Yukon Housing Corporation ensure that there are lending

streams available for these mobile-homeowners to both make necessary upgrades and, most importantly, to handle the expenses of moving their homes?

Hon. Mr. Hassard: Thank you, Madam Speaker. Of course, the Yukon Housing Corporation has been in contact with these homeowners. They have had meetings with these individuals and they have worked with them to look at options on places that they could move their mobile homes to. We are able to help those individuals with financing through the investment in affordable housing. We have emergency programming for moving of the mobile homes, as well as a program for doing repairs to those said buildings. As well, Madam Speaker, both of these programs are stackable, so members can actually access both of those programs, which is definitely a benefit.

As I understand it at this time, the homeowners and the city will be having a meeting to look at how things will work with the city as well.

Ms. White: Thank you, Madam Speaker, and I thank the minister for that confirmation. These Yukoners are not feeling reassured at this government's assertions that everything will be okay. They are running out of time.

For a government focused on actions, what action is this Yukon Party government prepared to take to ensure that these homeowners do not lose their homes?

Hon. Mr. Hassard: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I am happy to say that this government is willing to take action on many things in particular here today. As I mentioned earlier, we do have funding available through the investment in affordable housing. It's stackable funding that is available through two separate programs. The first is the emergency program, in which they can be provided with funding to actually move the mobile home; as well, there is funding for a repair program.

Madam Speaker, I'm quite confident that when the homeowners determine where they're going to move their home to, the government will be there to help them with financing for that move.

Speaker: The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

We will now proceed to Orders of the Day.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

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

Commissioner Phillips enters the Chamber, announced by the Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms

ASSENT TO BILLS

Commissioner: Please be seated.

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

Clerk: *Third Appropriation Act, 2015-16; Second Income Tax Amendments Act, 2016; Miscellaneous Statute Law Amendment Act, 2016; Technical Amendments Act, 2016; Act to Amend the Income Tax Act, 2016.*

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

Before I leave today, I want to remind members of an event that is coming up in the next month. I know that in June, many of you will not have very much to do, and will be looking for events to attend. It's the time of year when the Commissioner's Ball and Tea takes place in Dawson City, but this year there isn't going to be a ball. We have made a joint venture between the Commissioner's Office and the Top of the World Highland Games and Celtic Festival. This event is going to be called the Commissioner's Ceilidh BBQ. The event is going to be an under-the-tent event with tickets for about 200 people. It will happen at the Fort Herchmer grounds behind the Commissioner's residence. We are going to have the volunteer fire department cooking steaks, chicken and veggie burgers. We are going to have a band there called Cod Gone Wild, which is a Celtic band from the Okanagan area. We are going to dance the night away with the bagpipes and this band.

I invite all members of the House and all Yukoners to consider coming to Dawson City on Saturday, June 11.

Commissioner leaves the Chamber

Speaker: I will now call the House to order.

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

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

Motion agreed to

Speaker leaves the Chair

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Chair (Mr. Elias): Order, please.

Committee of the Whole will now come to order. The matter before the Committee is general debate on Vote 27, French Language Services Directorate, in Bill No. 23, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2016-17*.

Do members wish a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

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

Bill No. 23: *First Appropriation Act, 2016-17* — continued

Chair: The matter before the Committee is general debate on Vote 27, French Language Services Directorate, in Bill No. 23, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2016-17*.

French Language Services Directorate

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Monsieur le Président, nous venons tout juste d'entrer dans la troisième année du Cadre stratégique sur les services en français et je suis heureuse d'annoncer que, conformément à notre engagement, nous continuons de faire des avancées significatives dans l'amélioration des services en français au public à l'échelle du gouvernement.

À l'automne dernier, lors de l'assemblée générale annuelle de l'Association franco-yukonnaise, j'ai dressé le bilan des réalisations de notre gouvernement concernant l'augmentation des services gouvernementaux en français, et les réactions positives que nous avons reçues de la population nous confirment que nous sommes toujours sur la bonne voie.

Dans le prolongement de l'évaluation, en 2015, de notre projet pilote sur l'offre active, la Direction des services en français a mis au point un modèle axé sur les clients visant à soutenir les ministères dans la mise en œuvre de l'offre active des services en français.

Ce modèle est assorti d'une trousse à outils complète, dont une vidéo de huit minutes qui donne des orientations aux ministères sur le mode de prestation active de services en français, et un site intranet entièrement remanié, principalement axé sur l'offre active, à l'usage de l'ensemble des ministères. En outre, un service d'interprétation par téléphone destiné aux ministères et aux sociétés d'état du gouvernement a été mis en place. Tous les employés du gouvernement peuvent accéder à ces ressources en permanence et s'en servir pour fournir des services en français.

L'agente du programme d'offre active de la DSF continue d'accompagner les ministères et de les aider dans l'élaboration de processus opérationnels qui leur permettront d'adapter leurs pratiques aux exigences de la loi sur les langues du Yukon.

Mr. Chair, I was just saying that we, through the French Languages Services Directorate, have been working diligently to continue to implement the government's strategic framework for French Language Services that we developed in collaboration with Association franco-yukonnaise. We have now just started the third year of that implementation on that particular agreement. I'm pleased to report that we continue to make significant progress on our commitment to improve the delivery of French language services across the board within the Yukon government.

At AFY's annual general meeting last fall, I was able to present a review of significant accomplishments with respect to increasing those services in French. I was also really pleased to be able to speak with the community on how we are doing and where, in fact, we do need to make further improvements, and, very much so, we are on the right track.

In line with the 2015 evaluation of the active offer pilot project that took place, FLSD developed a client-focused model on to support departments in the implementation of the active offer of French Language Services. I have spoken to this model a number of occasions in the Assembly. It's supported by a comprehensive made-in-the-Yukon toolkit, including an eight-minute video that provides guidance on how to actively offer services in French as well as a completely revamped Internet centred on active offer to support each and every department within the Yukon government.

I was really pleased to be able to see that video first-hand. It hasn't been brought live quite yet, but it is making its way through the channels, so to speak. The video is well done. It's very comprehensive and it gives some very real-life experiences and many different challenges that can be approached by Yukon government employees to deliver that active offer when serving the public's needs in French. I think it will be a very useful tool and, of course, it's but one tool within the toolkit itself. I would like to say congratulations to FLSD for coming through in such a dynamic way and in another user-friendly way to be able to access this new tool.

In addition to this, we are also pleased to continue to provide over-the-phone interpretation services, also now available to all departments and corporations. All government employees have access to those resources at all times — again, helping them with the delivery of these services.

The French Language Services Directorate also offers a full-time active offer program that continues to accompany departments and assists them in developing really tailored business processes to align their practices with the requirements of the Yukon *Languages Act*.

We have also just recently approved its revised and improved bilingual staffing guidelines and have been working to roll them out across departments and corporations across the board. The guidelines clarify the process to identify and recruit for positions in the Yukon government to ensure that, when needed, the public can receive government services in English and French. They prescribe an enhanced role for the French Language Services Directorate as well as the Public Service Commission.

A government-wide interdepartmental committee composed of human resources staff has been tasked with developing a corporate Yukon government-wide bilingual staffing plan to designate those positions as bilingual. The plan will be very department-specific and geared toward those key service points within the departments.

We anticipate that the corporate staffing plan will also help maximize our existing capacities as the most recent Yukon government workforce census identified that up to 13 percent of our employees self-identify as bilingual. Having access to such great resources within the Yukon government enables us to provide options and flexibility for staffing bilingual positions.

In parallel, through the directorate, we continue to support employees who wish to improve their own French

language proficiency by offering a wide array of courses through its French language training programs.

The members opposite will recall the move to be able transfer the training capacity from the Public Service Commission over to the French Language Services Directorate in order for us to be more responsive to specific employees' needs and in order to implement the active offer program in the most effective and most integrated manner. I think they're doing a fantastic job in being able to meet this core mandate of our directorate as well.

While testing options for online language training to offer additional opportunities to Yukon government employees, we are also able to introduce new components to its programs to assist employees in the delivery of those services, including training modules for active offer and basic linguistic support that can be specifically tailored to each and every department's needs.

Another important achievement that we were able to recently make in the last few months is a signature of a memorandum of understanding between our directorate and the Yukon Hospital Corporation to improve access to services in French at the Whitehorse General Hospital. The agreement stems from our own strategic framework for French Language Services, which identifies health as a key priority and that was also identified as a key priority among the francophone community itself. It builds on the momentum created by the active offer and the interpretation pilot project that we launched at the hospital back in 2014 and really strengthens the resources that we currently have at the hospital.

We're going to be focusing on the Yukon Hospital Corporation's website, bringing that to become bilingual. Also we are going to be assisting the corporation in conducting an assessment of the current knowledge and resources to better promote French language services, to tap into the existing hospital staff expertise that we have at the hospital, and also to see how we can further access printed materials and offer training again in support to staff who would like to enhance their French language skills as well.

Once this assessment is complete, we will be able to identify that three-year implementation plan, determining specific measures to improve access to those services at the hospital. This will include support from our own directorate in the development and implementation of active offer processes and tools.

Our own strategic framework for French language services also identifies the need to revise internal policies to better support departments in the implementation of active offer and to clarify their responsibilities pursuant to the *Languages Act* as well.

We are currently in the midst of a review of the French language services policy and the guidelines on French language communications and services. We're certainly also looking at a formal process to address complaints related to service delivery that will be included in the policy on French language services — all in response to the francophone community's priorities.

The renewed policy will also, again, bring clarity to the roles and the responsibilities of departments as they relate to the implementation of French language services. As we have said all along, the Association franco-yukonnaise will also be consulted on the proposed changes to any policies and guidelines going forward. Further, we continue to have ongoing discussions with Canadian Heritage — the Government of Canada — as we stress the importance of our agreement on French language services with Canada and the implementation of our strategic framework on French language services.

The Yukon strategic framework for this also commits to increasing communication and collaboration between the Government of Yukon and the francophone community, which we have continued to do; namely, through a number of routine meetings at the management level and ongoing meetings between the members of the board of directors and I on an ongoing basis and, also, participation in key events and communicating through the monthly column of *L'Aurore boréale*.

It has been a great opportunity for *L'Aurore boréale* to showcase the very important work that is going on in each of the respective departments as they relate to French Language Services' initiatives to highlight, promote and better encourage departments to do and to be able to speak about some of their successes. Certainly, I would be very happy to speak to some of those examples later on.

We value our collaboration with AFY, and I think that it has contributed to the success of many initiatives, not just within FLSA, but throughout the government. One of the things that we were able to do just recently was renew our cooperation and exchange agreement with the Government of Quebec to support the development of the francophone community here in the territory and also to strengthen relations between the Government of Quebec and the Government of Yukon.

We were really pleased to be able to host Minister Fournier from Quebec to the Yukon for the first time ever, and I strongly believe it will not be his last visit to the Yukon. What really impressed him most was the amount of collaboration and dialogue that does transpire on a daily basis between the Yukon government — primarily through the French Language Services Directorate — and AFY itself.

We were able to have a meeting with key members of different organizations supported under the umbrella of Association franco-yukonnaise, including members of Les EssentiElles and, of course, AFY itself. We were also able to spend some time at École Émilie Tremblay to speak with them on advances on a new French first language high school as well.

I believe that this renewed agreement marks the mutual commitment of both our governments to work together in a number of key sectors identified to the community in terms of education, early childhood, arts and culture, youth, economy, health and social services as well as tourism and immigration.

I know how important this agreement — this partnership — is to the community, to the Province of Quebec and our

territory, and how that will also help contribute to the further development and vitality of the French language and the francophone culture, as well as the growth of the Yukon French-speaking community.

The initial partnership agreement between Quebec and Yukon was first signed in 2004, so the agreement we were able to sign at the end of March is a third agreement, but it comes with a three-year action plan. We will continue to sit down and work with the community at large to help advance what it is that we wish to identify on a way forward in the years ahead — the three-year agreement.

One of the many events that are taking place in recognition of the Yukon Francophonie Day this weekend is in support of this agreement, and the contributions made by Yukon and Quebec are actually going toward sponsoring this particular event that will be occurring on Saturday.

As I mentioned, while Yukon ranks as the third-most bilingual jurisdiction in the country, we continue to establish good conditions to increase our government's capacity to provide that increased demand for services in French to our population. The change of culture that we have initiated with this new approach to the provision of the French Language Services Directorate does take time. It takes consistent investment and it's something that is very important by our government and by the francophone community we serve. We have made tremendous progress in the last three years and we're committed to keeping the momentum going.

With these comments, Mr. Chair, I look forward to having a good exchange here this afternoon with the members opposite and talking to the mandate of the French Language Services Directorate.

Merci.

Ms. White: I would like to take the opportunity to welcome the official — it's lovely to see you here, of course — and thank the minister for her opening remarks.

I was thinking today about the stark difference that the debate over the French Language Services Directorate is now compared to 2012, the first Spring Sitting after I was elected. The then-Minister of Highways and Public Works was on his feet and the Member for Mount Lorne-Southern Lakes had finished her questions about Highways and Public Works. I stood up to ask questions about the French Language Services Directorate because, in 2012, the French Language Services Directorate was buried deep within the Department of Highways and Public Works. It was interesting because it had two ministers, including the current minister who is responsible, and the then-Minister for Highways and Public Works.

It's interesting because, in 2012, I talked about the critical importance of the French Language Services Directorate and how, with such a large francophone population, it was important that we give this its just due — and being lost within a much bigger department was hardly fair.

So it's so fantastic to know that it's a stand-alone vote. It's so fantastic to know that it's under the auspices of the Executive Council Office, and to know just how far we've

come from 2012. Congratulations to the department and I'm eternally grateful for that reorganization.

There has been so much movement since I was elected in 2011 around the French Language Services Directorate that it's almost hard to imagine that things moved so quickly. We had the examples of the three active offer projects at the hospital and within the Health and Social Services department and how fantastic that was. It's great to know that those are now not just pilot projects any more — the fact that they have been embraced and implemented.

In 2012, when we were having conversations about translation services and there was some debate about whether I was asking for physical bodies in every department, I said, "I'm sure there's a phone system available that can get us everything we need." I was really happy to hear about the contract that was signed with the Outside firm. It's pretty spectacular that now, not only francophones but various other members of our community from different language backgrounds have access to the translation services when they need it the most.

Part of the reason why I started that line of questioning back in the day is because I had gone to an AFY general meeting and the concern was about health. Just to know now that anyone can go to the hospital and get the translation services that they require to understand better what's happening is really incredible. I just wanted to put that out there. I'm grateful that, in 2016, I'm not full of points that I would like to see improved in the department and now it's a lot easier just to talk about all the successes.

I do have some concerns. When I go to the Government of Yukon website — and I appreciate that it takes time. Right now if I go to "Ministères du gouvernement du Yukon", it lists all the different departments. The Public Service Commission is still entirely in English; Energy, Mines and Resources is entirely in English; and the Department of Environment is partially translated. I do appreciate that, since 2012, we went from having the French Language Services Directorate that was in French to having almost every department available.

I know that during the oil and gas disposition process, there were concerns around the Whitehorse Trough. My pitch would be that it would be great to see Energy, Mines and Resources fully translated so that the francophone community can access the same information as the anglophones. I would also put a pitch in for the Public Service Commission, as that has important information for all people.

The only real question I have at this point is: When can we expect to see those government department websites translated? That is the one question — when can we see them translated — and then if the minister has any other remarks.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I want to thank the member opposite for her remarks as well and for sharing some positive accolades for the work of the French Language Services Directorate.

There has been a significant amount of progress made over the years. First off, I attribute it to an ongoing relationship and having the doors open and having an open

exchange with the leadership of Association franco-yukonnaise. That in itself has made a tremendous difference in the work that we do.

It is of tremendous importance for us to be able to work with the community to be responsive and to serve a growing population in our territory — which we continue to see growing — and it will be interesting to see the next census. Even when you look at our own work for a census and that 13 percent — I think it was last year, if not in 2014 — identified voluntarily among employees — the number of individuals who have self-proclaimed themselves as bilingual.

It speaks to the great importance and, when one looks at the different French streams offered in our schools throughout the territory, I think it's around 48 percent of the student population that is subscribed to some level of French language stream. That too is on the move. It has been growing and, of course, that precipitated a recent review in Education to take a look at how we can be better responsive to the growing demand and the importance that Yukoners place on the French language — but not only the language. It is seamlessly supported through the culture as well. It's as a result of many institutions — the school — from École Émilie Tremblay to the francophonie centre to the whole raft of different programs and services offered under that umbrella organization.

It has been fantastic to see the evolution of our own directorate as well, and the prominence it continues to play within the Government of Yukon as a corporate entity in providing that leadership. I think that, by making it easier for departments to be able to grasp active offer and to be able to implement active offer through the bilingual staffing guidelines — that was a huge feat unto itself — and that was endorsed through the advisory committee on French language services, comprising the respective unions, leadership from our departments as well as CSFY and AFY, and a member at large as well.

Between that and supporting the active offer toolkit, by having signage and having the training integrated and delivered through the directorate itself — these are all examples — over-the-phone interpretation services. Then, of course, it also comes down to translation services as well. I was just kindly reminded by our director of how we have been growing the level of service. I have nothing but accolades for our staff at the French Language Services Directorate. We have probably some of the country's best translators. It is quite an exquisite talent and expertise that is offered.

I was just reminded of some interesting examples of how you can take a literal translation and literally massacre that when you translate it to French and how that can be a very great source of embarrassment for many different organizations, the private sector and governments alike. Even if we have a number of pieces of information that can be also translated by service agencies as well on our behalf, in addition to the translation that's provided — it's that quality assurance afterwards by going over every word and phrase.

Since 2012, we actually have doubled the amount of translation through the directorate. In fact, I was just reminded that we translate up to 1.8 million words per year, so that's a

lot of content. It's not just also fully translating websites but, because websites are so active in terms of being able to change and as more content changes — reviews, different services, programs coming online — those websites are always updated as well — so maintaining those websites. It's not only building out websites and translating them; it's also maintaining those websites. It is a work in progress.

We continue to work with all the departments throughout the organization. We review them and move forward with those websites on a priority basis. I referenced before the agreement that we have just concluded with the Yukon Hospital Corporation — and really working to translate that website unto itself, given the very importance of health care to the community.

Likewise, culture and education — those two have been priorities for us as well. There are many different services and many different websites that we know we have more work to do on, and it will constantly be an item for discussion with the federal government as well, I might add. As we continue to speak to the very importance of the work that is going on in the Yukon, it's also important to note that we collaborate with Northwest Territories and Nunavut as well in terms of being able to take a common approach with the Government of Canada — just to point out that there are obligations on both sides — but the more that we can do, we're very grateful.

I would be very remiss if I didn't mention how grateful we are for the collaboration that we have received from Canadian Heritage. I think the work that our officials have done with their officials through the department has been great. They have supported a number of different projects over the years and now we're able to learn from those experiences — those pilot projects — and now build them into our budget and provide that sustainability. They've been very great to work with but, that said, there's more work to be done with the Government of Canada as well.

Chair: Is there any further general debate on Vote 27, French Language Services Directorate?

Seeing none, we will turn to page 12-7 and we will move into line-by-line debate.

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

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

Chair: Ms. White has, pursuant to Standing Order 14.3, requested the unanimous consent of Committee of the Whole to deem all lines in Vote 27, French Language Services Directorate, cleared or carried, as required. Is there unanimous consent?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Chair: Unanimous consent has been granted.

On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures

Total Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$2,918,000 agreed to

On Capital Expenditures

Total Capital Expenditures in the amount of \$4,000 agreed to

Total Expenditures in the amount of \$2,922,000 agreed to

French Language Services Directorate agreed to

Chair: The matter before the Committee now is general debate on Vote 54, Department of Tourism and Culture, in Bill No. 23, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2016-17*.

Do members wish a brief recess?

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

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

Recess

Chair: Order, please.

Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

The matter before the Committee is general debate on Vote 54, Department of Tourism and Culture, in Bill No. 23, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2016-17*.

The Chair recognizes the Hon. Ms. Taylor. You have 20 minutes.

Department of Tourism and Culture

Hon. Ms. Taylor: Mr. Chair, it is my pleasure to introduce the Department of Tourism and Culture main estimates for this fiscal year. Our department works to support, protect, promote and enhance Yukon's tourism, culture, heritage and arts sectors for the benefit of Yukoners and visitors alike.

This budget reflects numerous programs and activities the department undertakes to fulfill this mission and builds upon the significant achievements made in previous years. These accomplishments lead to the continued long-term growth of the industry by developing and marketing Yukon to the world, as well as maximizing the social and cultural benefits to Yukoners and visitors through the support and promotion of the arts and the preservation and interpretation of our heritage.

Perhaps I will begin by pointing out some of the department's key areas. I'm pleased to say that the expansion to the vault at the Yukon Archives is moving along according to schedule. A YACA agreement has been finalized, and over the coming weeks, we'll be looking forward to a signed contract to begin that construction. As we're all aware, records are very important for understanding our past, and this specialized storage will ensure that Yukon's irreplaceable documentary heritage is preserved for future generations to discover.

Mr. Chair, in order to share this heritage, the Yukon Archives recently held an innovative and very successful event earlier this year, called "Archives à la carte". It was a very well-attended evening, as I was able to see first-hand. We were able to see some very notable Yukoners present to be able to showcase first-hand some of their personal donations of their own records to Yukon Archives and to be able to learn

from them. Pearl Keenan, a long-standing member of the Teslin Tlingit Council, was there.

We also had other individuals like Jim Robb and Bob Cameron, and many other individuals. They were there to take part in some discussions, and to be able to showcase some of their own personal donations to Archives. It was, overall, a great evening that was not only well-attended but really highlighted the importance of the Yukon Archives and the importance of partnerships. As we know, over time, that archives has literally become quite full, necessitating the need for an expansion of this very important institution.

For the Yukon Arts Centre, a milestone in arts funding was achieved in December. In fact, the department received its 1,000th application to the Arts fund since its inception. Since it began in 2001, the fund has made over \$7.5 million available in support of 728 community and group art projects, including a wide array of festivals, workshops and performances.

The arts fund, as we're all very familiar in this Legislature, is truly a mainstay in fostering the creative development of the arts right across the territory, from the Há Kus Teyea celebration in Teslin, to Arts in the Park in Whitehorse, to the St.-Jean- Baptiste Day celebrations held right here in our own capital city and in Dawson City.

New last year was the creation of an artist in residence program for Haines Junction, which the arts fund was able to support. Its first resident, Toronto artist Jacquelyn van Kampen, is going to be arriving this summer, so we're excited about that. As well, the arts section awards funding through the touring artist fund — a fund that I was very pleased to be able to introduce a number of years ago, which continues to support touring artists throughout the year. Several artist groups toured across Canada over the past year while others took their works to United States, Germany, Japan, Ireland and England. There is no lack of places to go.

The Advanced Artist Award was also just recently increased. I believe it was doubled by my predecessor, the previous Minister of Tourism and Culture. It too is available to support individual artists. In 2015-16, we were able to provide well over \$140,000 — that is almost double the amount that was provided a year before that time — in support of 24 Yukon artist projects, including visual, dance, theatre and literary arts.

This summer, we are really excited to be able to host for the very first time ever Canada's nationally acclaimed theatre festival, Magnetic North. That is going to be taking place here in Whitehorse next month. It's a fantastic opportunity to create exposure for many of our talented theatre patrons. Of course, for those who work in theatre, it will offer existing and aspiring theatre talent the chance to enhance their skills, to network with the who's who from Canada as well as beyond to the international audience. We are really pleased, through a combination of different funding mechanisms, to provide over \$165,000 in support of this festival coming to the Yukon through a direct contribution from our own department of about \$90,000 and the remainder through the community development fund. I am really excited to be able to take part

in this upcoming festival and the quality acts, including a number of Yukon theatre companies that will be showcasing the finest. I know Gwaandak Theatre is one of them. We are really looking forward to seeing the exposure to indigenous theatre and being able to take that legacy and to be able to, hopefully, continue to see those tour the country even further and beyond that as well.

I would like to thank the Yukon Arts Centre and the organizing steering committee for all their hard work in bringing Magnetic North to the Yukon — the first time ever to be hosted north of 60. It is going to be a great economic boost for the territory, and it's also going to be world-class entertainment for Yukoners here on the ground and, of course, a great experience for the performing arts themselves.

Also, at the national level, the Cultural Human Resources Council, which provides training and career development support to the cultural workforce, did receive \$5,000 the year before to enhance the popular course "The Art of Managing Your Career", specifically for aboriginal Canadians working as artists. We were really proud to be able to fund a couple of Yukon artists to attend the training in Ottawa last fall. One of them was our own Melaina Sheldon. I know that, since her return, she has been able to share her experiences and enhance training opportunities for other aboriginal Canadians here in the territory as well.

We are very pleased to also broaden our support in terms of the arts section. We were really pleased to be able to curate a couple of exhibitions of the work of the beloved Yukon artist Ted Harrison here at the main administration building and in February at the Premier's reception for Ottawa's Winterlude winter festival.

There was also an increase in outreach activities, including 11 community presentations on the arts funding process, as well as the Yukon permanent art collection programs — again to help the public, visitors and school groups learn more about works in the collection.

I also want to just say a great big shout-out to the Artist in the School program, which our department also helps administer. We were pleased a number of years ago to increase that from \$25,000 to \$100,000 a year, which has made a significant difference in really promoting the expertise of Yukon artists throughout the territory to be able to get into schools on a more frequent basis. I continue to hear of great accolades and many examples of the outreach taking place — that, combined with the art adventures promoted through the Department of Education as well.

The Yukon government in cooperation with the friends of the Yukon permanent art collection society are very proud to support the continued acquisition of new artwork through a variety of means, in order to ensure that this significant collection continues to reflect the history, diversity and evolution of Yukon's artistic practice as well.

As Minister of Tourism and Culture, I was extremely proud of the department's collaborative achievements with Yukon First Nations and there are many initiatives underway currently and have been — the development of heritage management plans is a really good example. Working with

Carcross/Tagish First Nation, a steering committee is in place to oversee the development of a heritage management plan for Conrad. The plan is expected next year. Also, a steering committee has been formed with the First Nation of Na Cho Nyäk Dun for a heritage management plan for Lansing Post at the confluence of the Lansing and Stewart rivers.

These heritage plans are part of the Yukon First Nation final agreements and are absolutely essential to the recognition, protection and preservation of heritage sites and their historical and cultural importance as well.

In support of this work, the Historic Sites unit recently launched the Yukon heritage planning website to keep Yukoners informed about the development of the many heritage management plans underway. We, of course, have an important role in education and training — again, to support all of our interpretation and the preservation of our many historic sites in collaboration with First Nations and in partnership with other entities, such as Yukon College, the Rangers, the Department of Environment and so forth.

The Yukon Historic Sites inventory has more than 3,500 records, with monitoring visits to some 118 sites and 25 new sites added from field work this year.

As I've described, in meeting its responsibilities through the preservation and stewardship of Yukon's history and heritage, we have indeed been able to achieve a great deal through the department. This work is carried out with diligence and professionalism and a great deal of passion among units within the department.

Some of the Yukon's most loved exhibits, of course, are located at the Beringia Interpretive Centre. A number of recent improvements have been made at the museum, including the installation of professional lighting in the theatre; as well, new programming is boosting the centre's expanding role as a community centre.

On the Museums front, we were really pleased to be able to also include a second boost — another 10-percent increase to Yukon museums and First Nation cultural centres. Of course, last year, we were able to announce for the first time in many years a 20-percent increase — the first 10 coming last year; and this fiscal year, the remaining 10 percent. Over the years, we've seen a tremendous increase in the number of institutions we continue to support and we are very proud of that support going forward. These additional dollars in support of the operations funding for museums and cultural centres are something that Yukon Historical and Museums Association advocated for and we worked with them to bring to fruition. We were very pleased to be able to work with our museums throughout the territory on capital improvements, new exhibits and expansions as well.

In terms of tourism, I wanted to spend a few minutes in terms of highlighting some of our achievements. I don't think I have to say too much other than that there has been an overwhelmingly positive response to our first-ever made-in-Yukon tourism television commercials.

The two winter and the four summer commercials aired across Canada to reach all of our key target audiences for the

past year through the winter and summer marketing campaigns. With the broadcast of those made-in-Yukon commercials, we have seen increases in visits to our tourism website and our social media channels. We have seen tremendous growth through the Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport, and we certainly know that the awareness of Yukon is definitely increasing in light of these commercials going forward.

The creation of those commercials was made possible by the unprecedented investment in tourism marketing made by this government, in partnership with the Government of Canada. Over 165 Yukoners played a very integral role in the production of these particular commercials, and over 50 local businesses as well were involved in contributing to the development of those commercials.

We can all be very proud of those efforts of Yukoners. Not only has it resulted in some beautiful commercials that showcase our six major pillars of the tourism plan and strategy, but it also leaves some lasting legacies in terms of the film industry and the amount of capacity that we have seen grow over the past number of years on that front.

We have heard the Minister of Economic Development speak to the growth in the film industry. In fact, CBC just recently reminded us all of another record year of film activity — just looking at an area like the Dawson area.

We are really pleased with this year's budget to be able to continue the funding for the Yukon Now television marketing campaign, inclusive of the user-content-generated project and the digital storytelling project — but really now taking that opportunity to put those commercials into play and really ensure that they have a lot of play in the Canadian market and looking to other new markets.

We're very pleased to continue to work toward building more partnerships with other levels and orders of government, businesses and other organizations as part of the day-to-day work of the tourism branch. It's absolutely essential that everything that we do is in collaboration with industry — that it remains industry-led, research-based and market-driven in all of our tourism-related programs in the development, the implementation and the evaluation of those particular plans going forward.

I see that my time has pretty much run out here. I have a couple of minutes and I have so much more to say about this department, but I know that for the course of the afternoon we'll have lots of time to speak to some of these other great things going on in the department.

I do want to take the opportunity to thank our Department of Tourism and Culture and the many hard-working officials within our department and to thank them for their work on this budget and for their day-to-day work with industry and all the many different partners that make this department so important and this industry so important.

I also just want to thank the Tourism Industry Association of Yukon and the Yukon Chamber of Commerce, which have been really instrumental in really helping the department raise the bar in terms of expanding our marketing reach to other

areas of the country through the Yukon Now tourism investment and many other initiatives.

Mr. Chair, I'll just sit down for now and I look forward to the debate taking place here this afternoon.

Mr. Barr: I would like to thank the minister for her opening remarks. I would also like to welcome the officials from the department. Thank you for all your hard work. I know that it's endless — what we could be doing in tourism and culture — and it's great to see we have such dedicated staff and people who are out there moving things forward. I do welcome you to the House today.

I'll be fairly brief. I have a couple of questions, and then I'll sit down. I was pleased in this budget to see an extension of the Yukon Now funding and the 2014 funding commitment by this government was for \$1.8 million from YG's coffers over two years for domestic and international marketing. The new commitment is for \$2.7 million over three years. The Tourism Industry Association of Yukon had originally asked for \$5 million over two years for domestic marketing. We're still not meeting that original ask, but we're taking a step in the right direction. Our tourism industry needs to know that funding for tourism marketing will be consistent. Short-term investments of two or three years will have short-term outcomes.

Newfoundland spends \$13 million annually on tourism marketing and, as a result, they have seen their industry expand rapidly. Tourism spending topped \$1 billion in 2011. The province is well on its way to meeting its goal of \$1.6 billion in tourism spending by the year 2020. Newfoundlanders can comfortably invest in expanding their tourism businesses, knowing that market demand will remain consistent because of their government's investment in marketing. They also produce reliable and comprehensive statistics on tourism in Newfoundland. We need to get to that point in Yukon.

I have a few questions, and then I'll sit down. How much of the \$2.7 million is for domestic marketing? How much can we expect to see go to international marketing? Do we have CanNor funding for the three additional years of Yukon Now? When will we know? Will the government be contributing an additional \$900,000 a year if CanNor does not? Has that been budgeted for, or will that come out of the surplus?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: As the member opposite just alluded to, we are very pleased to be able to continue on with the funding for Yukon Now. It originally started off with an initial investment from Canada and Yukon for two years and we were able to have matching dollars through the Government of Canada. That continues to be the case. We have made the case on many occasions between the tourism industry, the Yukon business community as well as ourselves as the Government of Yukon.

I personally have met with the minister responsible for Small Business and Tourism here in the country on a number of occasions. Not only have we had talks on the phone, but we've had person-to-person meetings with the minister. I've also met with the parliamentary secretary to the minister responsible for CanNor. I know that our department officials

— and we certainly have been talking continuously with officials within CanNor — we have had discussions with our Member of Parliament, our senator for the Yukon and, of course, many other discussions by way of written correspondence; again, by way of phone calls and individual meetings. I know that we continue to have that outreach to the federal government and it is very important.

Certainly, all of the signals that are coming forward are very positive. As the Premier has also stated, if Canada doesn't come through with its commitment for whatever reason — and one would hope that the Government of Canada would regard this investment as important as we do here in this Assembly — and certainly, as we do on this side of the Legislative Assembly — we will indeed work with the community. We will work with the tourism industry to ensure that they receive those dollars that are so needed to continue to have this campaign go the way it has been.

We have had tremendous success, not just with the television commercials — although that was the lion's share of that original expenditure over two years — but with the digital storytelling project that earned us a national award for the work that we had done on that front. In fact, we were awarded a national award for having the most innovative PR campaign in the country, and that was awarded by Destination Canada, formerly the Canadian Tourism Commission. We have seen that it has supported a number of webisodes, a number of Yukon films — the paranormal series — and we were able to negotiate a really great arrangement with some of our specialty networks in the country to showcase those particular films on a number of specialty channels as well.

Those two are being very well received so, between the television marketing and our television commercials, the Yukon films are also being shown on the specialty networks as well as the user-content-generated project. That is really important as well because that has generated a lot of individual content from Yukoners and from the visiting population as well — to post their videos, films, B-rolls and photographs. It has also been well-received. It's another opportunity for us to really leverage that marketing reach here in the Yukon — about all that makes us such a unique destination and travel choice for this country. It has been an outstanding campaign.

As the member opposite just alluded to, we did commit to a full \$2.7 million over the next three years. We have officially applied to CanNor, and we look forward to receiving an outcome of the answer to that application. I don't have a time frame here, but we are anticipating something probably by August, if not sooner, to be able to share with us. Again, I would have to check with our officials on that particular time frame as well.

I know the member opposite made reference to Newfoundland and Labrador, and I have to say that they have been in the television commercials business for a number of years. It really has made a difference for them as well. That too is some of the vision that was seen and elaborated by the Tourism Industry Association of Yukon as well as the Yukon Chamber of Commerce in the last couple of years — about

how we can take Yukon to the next level in terms of raising awareness of us as a territory, as a travel destination — how is it that we can best move that dial to motivate people to make that call to the 1-800 centre to ask for a vacation planner, to go on the www.travelyukon.com website, to be able to click on a tourism-based operator and make that connection from interest to sales?

We have been working on a pre-campaign. Just before we launched those commercials in the marketplace, we had hired the agency of record to go out and do a pre-campaign, a survey of Canadians across the country. Just recently, we were able to complete a post-survey of Canadians to see what their thoughts are.

I know that information is just being compiled. I think it's going to be completed here pretty quickly. Some of the initial and preliminary results are very positive, I understand, in terms of people being far more aware of the Yukon than they were before these commercials were launched. People are more interested in coming to the Yukon because of its accessibility factors, and people are more interested in looking at what is being offered here on the ground in terms of product offerings and tourism experiences throughout the territory.

That was one of the primary mandates of this campaign — to heighten awareness of the Yukon. Now with these commercials rolling — and the thought processes is that, the more awareness — the more of the same look and feel on those commercials — but also built into the website, the vacation planner and all the print material that we produce each and every year, and even working with each of our individual tourism operators, you'll see the same look and feel.

We're encouraging industry to use that information we have available, because of the stock footage that we have on films and B-roll — all of that — to be able to incorporate that into their brochures and into their print material and websites — all of that to expand that marketing reach.

We look forward to more results coming forward, and ultimately more bums in seats and bums in beds — and coming over here and spending money, most importantly.

With that said, that's really what this is all about. Going back to Newfoundland and Labrador, I would remind that their population is about 527,000 people; ours is about 38,000-plus people in the Yukon. We have been increasing our expenditure in tourism marketing, but now, to this degree, it's really a significant boost to our tourism marketing budget. We want to be smart about how we allocate those dollars. We want to work hand-in-hand with industry to ensure that the expenditures — those investments — being made actually have a return for those businesses and that we are meeting the mark.

I also just want to say that we're really blessed to be able to entertain well over 300,000 visitors each and every year to the territory. That's a significant cry from the 38,000 people that we entertain. I know Newfoundland and Labrador isn't getting that kind of ratio of visiting population coming there as well. We're very fortunate because of the many entry points into the Yukon. It's about building partnerships with

Air North, for example — Yukon's airline — and building partnerships with all of our local partners — the Klondike Visitors Association, Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association.

One of the things that I didn't actually mention in my opening remarks is the additional funding increase to that organization — of an additional \$100,000 on an ongoing basis of \$160,000 for YFNCTA.

In fact, we were recently pleased to be able to, at the same time as announcing that increase in their core funding — but also working to sign an agreement with them to really build on the momentum that they have been able to generate over the years, but really taking advantage of the significant momentum.

One recent example is Rendez-vous Canada, which is Canada's travel trade marketplace where global partners come from all over the world and that's where we introduce our products and that's where we do our sales pitch. We are a pretty important part of Canada's overall destination pitch — and certainly part of the vision — and we had representatives of YFNCTA accompany our delegation to Montreal, this year's Rendez-vous, and it was the first time ever. It was a great opportunity to see first-hand how those sales and the expectations are made. By all accounts, I understand it was a tremendous success — significant interest in the Yukon. In fact, I just had a meeting with the tourism marketing committee from the Tourism Industry Association of Yukon and again, by all accounts, every single individual — we went around the room just on the last day — had very positive feelings about last year — the best year ever, we heard on a number of occasions in terms of purchases and sales that were made for product offerings last year alone.

This year it looks like the trend continues. Certainly, because of the heightened awareness through expenditures such as Yukon Now and through expenditures in Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association and investments in some of our primary attractions here on the ground as well, coupled with a low dollar and lower fuel prices, it makes for a great climate to be able to seize on those opportunities for Yukon as a travel destination.

We're really thrilled. We look forward to a very successful, positive year going ahead this year. Again, I can't say enough about those people working on the front line — the individuals who run our visitor information centres. They all started on May 1 — again, another record year of starting early and going until the end of September. They are really the face of the Yukon tourism travel industry. They do an amazing job on Yukon's behalf.

Likewise working with our campgrounds — we have an earlier season for many of our primary campgrounds. Shortly we will be opening up yet another campground in the territory — the first time in many, many years. These all help build a robust tourism sector and that, combined with cultural industries, makes the Yukon a very well-sought after place.

Mr. Barr: I thank the minister for her response. During that response, there were some partial answers to some upcoming questions that I had; however, I would still like to

get confirmation on how much of the \$2.7 million is for domestic marketing and how much can we expect to see go to international marketing as we move forward in the next couple of years?

If CanNor does not commit to their share of \$900,000 per year — I do seem to recall the minister stating before that the Yukon government will come up with that funding. I just want to confirm that or seek clarity that if CanNor does not come up with their share, the Yukon government will come up with the other \$900,000 tier to make it the \$2.7 million that Yukon Now will be extended to?

I know that the government has committed this \$2.7 million to tourism and according to the Yukon tourism indicators year-end report for 2015, the numbers of visitors to the Yukon was down from 2014. Does the department have numbers to support continued investment on this project? I know the minister was saying that there was some preliminary campaigning going on to find out some numbers and that she is expecting to hear another post and get results, so maybe that is something that — when the minister receives that information, will she share that with this side of the House?

The other part of the question is: Do we have those stats — and that's what you're gathering right now — to indicate that our investment in the tourism marketing through this campaign has resulted in increased awareness of Yukon as a destination? I'll look forward to seeing those when they are compiled.

I'll just leave it at that for now.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I would have to actually get a breakdown of the individual markets there, but I can say that the lion's share of the markets would be Canada.

In keeping with what occurred in years previous — and the last few years as well — we also were in the United States marketplace. We were also in China and Japan with the tourism missions over to Asia. There was also Europe, but by all means, the significant share has always been targeting Canada because we see that as a significant growth market for us, especially with the added increased air access thanks to partners like Air North, Yukon's airline. Certainly, we will be in keeping with that going forward the next three years, just because we need to keep our hands in many different pockets as well — so to speak — to diversify our marketplace.

We've seen growth over the years with the Chinese market, for example, and through increased air access through China — from China coming over to Vancouver in particular — and in Toronto. We've seen more and more operators coming here to the Yukon as well and so we've been working with industry to come up with a working group to assess even more potential — how we can leverage that potential. We've been working on the terms of reference and actually compiling the group together to take a look at what it is that we currently do, but also moving forward on a go-forward basis.

Likewise, we've seen some significant growth in the Japanese market over the past number of years and we're also seeing that it's not just within the winter tourism season, but

really it's becoming year-round. We're seeing more and more partners coming to Yukon year-round.

In fact, it used to be just the case that we would have hotel accommodation challenges in certain months. We still have those peak-period challenges, but it's becoming year-round. We're building out those shoulder seasons — they're becoming fewer and fewer, especially with more events on the horizon and more festivals being built out. That's where cultural tourism takes place as well. In keeping with demand through air access, with Condor for example — we have just celebrated many years with Condor — it is a significant 17 years with Condor coming to the Yukon. That's a significant improvement or commitment to the territory.

We're seeing more individuals coming here, staying longer and taking part in the fly-drives — so coming here, landing, renting a motorhome or camper and spending some serious time in the territory and going through all our highway networks in the territory. It has been fantastic.

With the impetus of dollars going forward for Yukon Now, it is really critical for us that we continue to build on the presence we have in these markets all along — the United States, through the State of Alaska, but also through other consortiums, like the Tourism North program through Alberta, BC, Alaska and Yukon. Those are really critical to help market the Yukon and market all of our jurisdictions that they're going through on the Alaska Highway, and so forth.

With the State of Alaska, and again through the Yukon Now funding, again enhancing the presence with those dollars going forward — very key, especially with the 75th anniversary coming forward of the Alaska Highway. We're working to leverage that through enhanced marketing opportunities with our industry — to leverage that, as well as Canada's 150th birthday anniversary next year, so lots of great opportunities, to say the least.

In terms of whether that's actually — now that we have those commercials, as I said, that was a significant portion of dollars that we spent to make that initial investment over the past two years in developing and producing those commercials. Now that is done, we have six beautiful commercials. We want to get them into place, so that's going toward buying media placement, and that is something that I think we've done very strategically, again building upon the presence alongside other shows that happen to showcase the Yukon, whether that's the — I can't think of their names, but I think the member opposite gets the message — *Gold Rush*, for example, or there's the *Yukon Vet*. I think those are the names of the shows and they are very popular reality shows. Again it's building out those commercial placements and putting an added emphasis on more media play, ensuring that they get out more frequently, earlier in the season as well, and that they stay longer, so that it can become readily apparent that those are Yukon commercials, just like they are in Newfoundland and Labrador as well.

We are looking forward to expanding on the great work that has been done through Tourism and Culture over the years. That is, in fact, our mission — to facilitate that long-term economic growth for the tourism industry through

developing and marketing Yukon as a year-round travel destination.

As I mentioned, it is a really positive time for industry — more so those industries are working together more collaboratively, more strategically, and that hasn't always been the case in years past. That is not to say that we won't be hit by other outside influences. The one thing that I have learned about tourism, though, over the years, is that it is a very resilient industry. It's very flexible, and by working with industry to help lead our efforts to ensure the return on investment — I know the member opposite referred to a tourism plan on a number of occasions. We do have a tourism plan; every year we work together collectively with industry to look at each of the individual markets to see how we are performing. It may be that Australia is the place of prime importance. It may be that, perhaps, New Zealand is not. We need to be very strategic on where we are present on those travel trade shows in terms of media buys and in terms of having familiarization tours of media coming from those different marketplaces. We were able to do that and we have been able to be very strategic with our investments over the years. We are really thrilled about that.

Again, that is what this budget speaks to — whether it's investments in heritage or in tourism or the arts or in culture overall, it's about really building out and working collectively with other departments as well to leverage those resources in support of the tourism industry.

INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS

Chair: Before I turn the floor over to Mr. Barr, I would like to have my indulgence, I guess, and ask all members to join me in welcoming my cousin Victor Kisoun to the Yukon Legislative Assembly today.

Applause

Mr. Barr: Mr. Chair, you took the words right out of my mouth. That is what I was going to do. Welcome, Victor — it's all good.

I thank the minister for her responses. Maybe I wasn't clear. I will try one more time for this answer, and hopefully we will get it. I did hear that the minister spoke earlier about the CanNor funding for the three additional years of Yukon Now. She mentioned that by August we may know if that additional funding will be matched by Ottawa. The question that I had asked was: Will the government be contributing the additional \$900,000 a year if CanNor does not? I didn't hear that commitment. If the minister could comment on that, I would appreciate that.

Now I will move on to Cossette communications. I have a few questions for the minister regarding this recent contract with that company. The \$2.7-million marketing contract over three years was awarded to this Outside company — Cossette communications. It was our understanding that two local companies partnered with larger Canadian marketing companies to submit bids. Does Cossette communications have a local partner and why was Cossette communications

chosen over firms that partnered with Yukon businesses, if that was the case?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: With respect to the agency of record contract, I have already spoken to this on the floor of the Assembly. Again, I believe I have already done this, but I will do that again just by thanking our former agency of record, Outside the Cube. They did an exemplary job with exceptional service and value for all that they brought to the territory — some award-winning campaigns. I spoke of the digital storytelling project that earned us the most innovative PR campaign, and just by having boots on the ground here as well. As I understand it, they are really the one and only successful local agency that the Yukon has had here in the territory since the very early 1990s.

They had indicated their interest in not moving forward with a new contract and provided us notice, so we were informed at the end of the fiscal year, March 31, that they would not be here any longer to service the Yukon — or I should say to service this particular contract. So the use of the agency — I just want to be very clear that this is something that is certainly commonplace in every jurisdiction in the country. It's standard practice. It's a practice, as I have said, that has been in place in the Yukon since the early 1990s and we've had a number of agencies of record over the years that have come and gone. As I said though, Outside the Cube was around for the past number of recent years. When we were alerted to the fact that Outside the Cube would not be retaining its contract, we went out and completed a public request for proposals for a new agency.

In fact, I have already relayed that nine proposals were received. All of them were led by non-Yukon-based agencies, and as I mentioned the other day in Question Period, two of the proposals — to be very clear, though — they did include Yukon-based companies as partners, but they were not the lead of those particular proposals that came forward.

There was an open tender process, as I mentioned. It included the use of an independent fairness monitor and an evaluation committee that did comprise members of the Tourism and Culture department and also a member of the Tourism Industry Association of the Yukon — that name was submitted — and also included the fairness monitor, I understand.

Following that process — which included the independent monitor and then the evaluation committee itself — the contract was awarded to Cossette and, as I alluded to before, there was an open house last night that was held, in which, I understand, there were approximately 60 businesses that came over and had the opportunity to meet with Cossette, as the first of many to come. It was, I understand, relatively positive. I wasn't there, but from what I hear from the department — they met with the Tourism Marketing Committee members, they met with representatives of the Yukon Convention Bureau, the Whitehorse Chamber of Commerce and the Yukon Chamber of Commerce, the Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association, and TIA. They met with the Wilderness Tourism Association of the Yukon and many other individual businesses as well. As I

understand it too, they are also looking to actually have specific meetings in other places in the territory, as well, as they gear up. They will be taking place here in May and June, if I'm not mistaken. They are reaching out to the community and obviously it makes great sense for them to be able to be introduced to the expertise that we have here in the territory and to be able to make best use of that business here on the ground that we've worked really hard to generate, and we have tremendous experience as well.

That is what transpired. I also stated on the floor of the Assembly not long ago that we are able to work outside of that particular SOA, that contract, and so we will continue to engage with local business as much as we can and as we're able to. I know that the *Yukon Vacation Planner*, for example — there has been a three-year contract with one of our local companies here. They've done a great job. In terms of website development or event planning, there are numerous examples of us being able to continue with those local contracts over the years. We'll continue to maximize the use of that local talent as much as possible.

I just refer to the television commercials, the production of those — about 75 percent of the spending was done here in the Yukon, and we want to continue to emphasize that point and really ensure that we are able to help grow tourism in the territory, which ultimately contributes to jobs and revenue for business.

I'm just wondering if there's anything else to add to that, other than the fact that we look forward to working with Cossette, and we look forward to working with our local industry here and working to grow the visitation numbers and, more importantly, revenue for everyone to enjoy.

Mr. Barr: I have some comments about the Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association. I was very happy to see that, after years of excellent work, the Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association received an increase of \$100,000 per year in funding for a total of \$160,000. This is something that the Yukon NDP asked about in this House in May 2015, so it was great to see that this government had come forward and delivered on the funding to this very deserving organization and increased it by \$100,000.

Other government transfers have remained the same over a number of years — for example, the Yukon Sourdough Rendezvous is budgeted for only \$75,000 per year, which is low, I think, considering the organization's contribution to the Yukon tourism industry.

I have some questions around organization and funding criteria. How are the funding levels for tourism and cultural organizations determined? What kind of assessment of need is done? Do we consider increasing costs for organizations — for example, annual wage increases that account for the cost of living?

Hon. Ms. Taylor: We were really pleased to be able to increase the funding for Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association. That dollar figure has remained at \$60,000 for many years. In fact, I remember back, a number of years ago, when YFNCTA was very close to closing its doors, just because of capacity issues and finding the people

to keep it going. People like Judy Gingell, Barb Fred and Geraldine Van Bibber and a lot of other iconic women — I say women, but I'm sure there were some men there too — they really kept the doors open, because they always felt the importance of their organization and the contributions to the growth of tourism in our territory and of culture as well.

They really kept the doors open, because they always felt the importance of their organization and the contributions to the growth of tourism in our territory and of culture as well. I think one of the pivotal points in the history of that organization was back in 2007 when the Canada Winter Games was hosted here. I remember there was this real passion to have this gathering of nations outside of the ATCO tent — the member opposite may recall. It was really the first concerted time, I believe, in many years that all 14 Yukon First Nations came together and not only showcased different First Nation products, but it was really a gathering of music, performances and visual art. It was a combination of First Nation culture coming together and really being able to proudly perform, to share and to show the rest of the country what Yukon is all about.

It was from that time, shortly thereafter, that it evolved to the first-ever Yukon First Nation arts festival that took place on the waterfront at the Old Fire Hall, I think it was. From there, we rolled into 2010 with the Winter Olympics. I know the member opposite is very familiar with that because he also was a very active player in the many activities that took place that coincided with 2010 as well.

That organization played a very big role in that, as a result of just even having a web presence and having information to hand out to individuals who were interested in learning more about the different experiences offered here in the Yukon — more information about Yukon First Nations, the history, and what Canadians and other people can expect to see and find here on the ground when they come here — and through the Northern House as well. It was a tremendous opportunity for us to unite with the other two territories and have the Look Up North campaign that was really shared. That was one of our major forays into television marketing as well.

We've come a long way since then and, as a result of those investments over time, we've seen a real revitalization in First Nation culture in terms of the festivals. The Adäka Cultural Festival just celebrated five years — hard to believe. It is huge and it continues to grow in being able to take the best of the best from the Yukon, but also from other parts of the north and Alaska and other places in the world.

We have seen other cultural festivals, Há Kus Teyea that the Tlingit most recently hosted through Teslin Tlingit Council in Teslin. Again, that's another example of a tremendous festival that has grown — Moosehide Gathering. There was a new drum and dance festival that was born in Haines Junction through the Champagne and Aishihik cultural centre.

With more infrastructure like First Nation cultural centres — I just took part in three days of hand games for the first time ever, and I have to put a plug in for our team because

Walking With Our Sisters came in third place out of 19 teams. I am pretty thrilled about that show, but it wasn't about the competition; it was about taking part, participating and learning. To have 19 teams of six players each and having all the spectators, champions and fans out there, it was a huge gathering that took place in the heart of that cultural centre. There hasn't been one day when I have been in the Kwanlin Dün Cultural Centre where it hasn't been very busy and very active.

With the resurgence of those institutions and the programming that they are building — and the dance groups as well. The Dakhká Khwáan Dancers continue to win national and international recognition and accolades. We have seen many other groups across the territory. It really is an amazing thing to see flourish.

We hosted YFNCTA with support from our government and other partners. They hosted the Sharing Our Stories conference last fall, and it was tremendous. Almost 200 people signed up as participants. Drawing from other experiences from all over the world on indigenous tourism — and we had the benefit of having Keith Henry, who just took over recently, in the last year, and heads the Aboriginal Tourism Association of Canada. He has been a huge proponent of aboriginal tourism and culture and has worked with our territory over the past year. He has been a real champion for these efforts and a champion of the work that YFNCTA has been working toward.

This investment in this organization at this time was made because it was the right time. I wouldn't have said that 10 years ago but, because of all the momentum that has been garnered and the significant interest on the international scale, it is the right time. It's a huge investment; it has more than doubled the previous investment. It will make a huge difference in terms of the outreach that they have with the communities, in terms of working with different operators, working to develop new tourism experiences. I am really excited about the future and about working also with each of the First Nation cultural centres to expand that level of programming and how we can better integrate and connect those cultural centres and the great programming that takes place within those institutions each and every year.

It's a very important time for us to invest in this sector. I know that they are thrilled to be able to work with us, not just from the funding point of view, but really working on other partnerships — the Rendez-vous Canada I just referred to.

They work on many other different planks through the Department of Economic Development. I know they've been working on the renewal of their travel guide. They have had a previous guide in place, but it's dated now, so it needs refreshing. They have been working on that. They have held a number of product development workshops, building export markets for Yukon First Nation art. I have to say that, when I was just recently at an exhibit launch of the exhibit with the Kwanlin Dün First Nation and the Yukon archaeology program through the Department of Tourism and Culture, I ran into Brian Walker — who is a great, esteemed artist here in the territory — and his partner Ann Smith, another

beautiful artist. Brian was just sharing with me a copy of his catalogue. He has been asked to go to Vancouver to a very prominent art gallery, and he had been asked to have a single, solo show. It's huge; it's significant. Those opportunities don't come every day.

I attribute that to the work of organizations like YFNCTA and working as a collective to not only just build up one operator, but to lift the industry as a whole. I just wanted to share that story, because he is very proud. In fact, I think he may even be there for a whole week in Vancouver with Ann. It's huge for the Yukon, because that's going to lift not only him, but all of the Yukon for the benefit of all of us going forward.

In terms of ongoing support for organizations, we recognize the huge value that we do undertake in collaboration with other organizations. We work with those organizations. I meet with them on a regular basis. We'll continue to seize opportunities to leverage their work through other funding mechanisms, whether through the community development fund or whether it's through Economic Development. There are many different funding sources that we continue to work with in support of tourism and culture in any given week in the territory.

For example, I know the member opposite made reference to Yukon Sourdough Rendezvous. The Sourdough Rendezvous — we were very pleased a number of years ago to be able to boost their funding. At one time, their funding was about \$35,000, and then it went up to \$50,000, and then I think it went up even further to where it is today. As an example of seeing a particular area that has grown in leaps and bounds, and the number of partnerships — our financial contribution is relatively small compared to all the other partnerships that they have been able to solidify with the private sector, industry, the Government of Canada and many other partners — First Nation governments, the City of Whitehorse, in-kind services. That's what we like to see — diversification of their buy-in from other partners.

I referenced the increase in funding for museums and cultural centres — a 20-percent lift and that is significant. In fact, we've seen about a 300-percent increased investment in that area since 2002. We've seen a number of new institutions coming into play as well with the cultural centres coming on board.

Those dollars again are there to help leverage funding made available through First Nation governments, through municipal governments and through the Government of Canada — so having that secure base funding of what is now \$1.8 million for museums clients. That's also inclusive of capital improvements, so under our special projects contribution assistance program for our museums, that has been another great way of having some secure funding there available just solely for enhancing exhibits, developing new exhibits or it could be developing new retail strategies, based on the priorities of those institutions. They do a fantastic job and the degree of programming, of course, has grown in leaps and bounds as well.

There are many other organizations — the Convention Bureau. It was not too long ago that we were able to also come up with a set amount of new dollars for sports tourism that is delivered now through Sport Yukon and it's really in recognition of the growth in sports events.

Through the work of the ministry of Community Services, we've seen funding going up as well for key organizations. I would also be remiss if I didn't mention the investments in arts organizations as well.

Recently, when I was the previous Minister of Tourism and Culture, we were able to introduce a number of new funding sources for artists — the touring artist fund for example, and the Artist in the School fund — but we're also able to really target some organizations like the Klondike Institute of Art and Culture as well and be able to lift their funding for — actually, it was the Dawson City Arts Society — and to be able to build into their core funding an increase that would see them subscribing less to the arts fund for example — so freeing up more dollars there. It's always going to be a work in progress and I think that what we have seen, though, in recent years is increased partnerships between those organizations. They're working more closely than ever before and that's a great thing because the more we can work together the more synergies and less effort it is and less duplication.

Those are just some examples and I have many more to draw from as well.

Mr. Barr: Thank you to the minister for her responses. The minister brought back a lot of “remember whens” and thinking back on the history, where we've been and where we've come, and there have been a lot of people behind the scenes. She mentioned several names of esteemed elders, prior to what we've seen with Adāka here that kept the fires burning, if you will. They say: “Which spoonful moved the mountain?” It's all of them.

I think long before I even came to the Yukon there were elders and people in the community and people throughout communities — who have long since passed over to the other side — who had been working for change and had been working to come to a place where, as the minister said, it seemed like the right time for this \$100,000 for the Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association. That's why I had asked for some specific examples, because in my reflection, it seems as though many of these organizations have developed or are at a place where that funding could have come sooner. So if we did have increasing costs for organizations for annual wage increases that account for the cost of living — or if there are assessments done on a regular basis — then maybe we would be able to keep ahead of it. I'm not saying this is always true, but sometimes the squeaky wheel gets the grease, or whoever fights hardest or longest. It just seems as though maybe we could look at how it doesn't have to be such a struggle sometimes to finally be recognized and receive some of the funding.

When I do think of some of the times that the minister referred to the 2007 Gathering of Nations, which was a pivotal time — although then I think back to my involvement with

CAIRS, in the middle 1990s, where there had to be a lot of healing done — and recognizing that culture was a huge part of that. We did have all of those things that kind of fell into place in 2007, which moved on to 2010 to where we are today. We have the Kaska Dene Drummers; we have the *Dakhká Khwáan* Dancers; we have dance groups throughout the territory. When you think back, they were not here. They are loud and proud and getting stronger every day by the spoonful that continues to move this mountain that we see. It's not only what is good for the Yukon — it's good for people, it's good for community. When we can be proud — all of us working together — and when we think of tourism and culture, it's these authentic experiences that people want to come to see.

Recognizing that we are in a very good place and that, really, the time is now — I do hear that these monies, the \$2.7 million, and I didn't hear the answer yet about if CanNor doesn't come through — to make sure that it does come through and that there is a firm commitment, not only for the 2.7 million. I realize the minister stated that we are a smaller population and all those kinds of things, but the time really is now to capitalize on the shift on the global market, because people out there want to come to what we have to offer here — so it's about getting and continuing the strong message out there that we have it.

I think back to this last TIAY convention, and Olaf from Iceland who made her presentation and talked about the time. It seems like we're in a transition time here in the Yukon, where they recognized that Tourism and Culture need to work very closely with Energy, Mines and Resources, Economic Development and the Environment departments, and so on and so forth, and that they set forth a task force. I would ask the minister if this is something the government would be willing to put forward and work together with other First Nation stakeholders on when we speak of truly diversifying our economy, and that we listen to the big picture and what's going on out there.

In that presentation of Olaf, where it was export of aluminum and something, and the energy sector was a huge part of their economy. It was a paradigm shift, if you will. The powers that had always been really realized that tourism and culture, which is now their largest employer in Iceland, over and above any other industry — that if it was the extraction industry and mining, that you had to have the other ones, like tourism and culture — but the mining and extraction, that came first.

There has been a shift to that, and it's through this task force that people have been able to really complement the tourism industry. When I think of the culture end of Tourism and Culture, one of the things that we've spoken of in the House previously was around wildlife viewing. When we look at the numbers in other jurisdictions, and for example when we think of Alaska — or when I remember about Alaska — the \$3.6 billion in tourism dollars that comes to their coffers from wildlife viewing alone, which includes hunting, which includes land use planning that they've had to do, and so on and so forth — it really results in dollars and cents. When the

minister was speaking earlier, she said that this is really what it does come down to.

If we really look at what some of these other jurisdictions are doing, I'm thinking that, from the perspective of this side of the House, sometimes we could be doing more sooner. Not to say that there's not a lot happening — there is — but I'm always looking at more. Having these constant yearly guidelines to look at, for example, for Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association, which had been really working for 10 years, it's only now that they received this. We may have been able to recognize how much and how good this would be if we could have come up with some dollars sooner.

When I think of culture — wildlife viewing, for example — and I think of the Southern Lakes caribou herd — we have some recent information around a Judas Creek placer mine, and we have Jubilee Mountain, which is a quartz mine that is going up in Tagish. We have a gravel pit in Mount Lorne, and we have the McGowan lands — talks of putting all of these things — we have to do all that stuff and, when we think about the past, almost 30 years, of the recovery of the Southern Lakes caribou herd and how that is related to culture and the effort, no one is hunting — the First Nations are not hunting. Sometimes we don't know what we don't know until we get further down the road.

If I was even able to closely resemble some of the remarks of Elder Patrick James at the last meeting in Tagish around the Southern Lakes caribou herd, when they were talking about the placer mine and the quartz mining and the gravel pits, it's really a miracle that the herd has come back to the state that it has. This is the first time a woodland caribou herd has come back to this extent in Canada.

Yet, we are still always trying to put out these activities that are trying to come forward also at the expense of the loss of culture. This is where I think the task force could come in, and where I would ask the minister to be a strong advocate in other departments, is that, when we think of culture and we think of being out in the Carcross/Tagish area, there is a whole generation who have never gotten to hunt caribou — a whole generation. We are talking about culture that is getting lost. We are talking about elders who, at a potlatch, if their last meal was to be caribou, it's not on the table, because these people, who are willing to forego all of those expenses — the ability for elders to show this generation, which never got to see how to dress a caribou, they never got to hunt a caribou for all of this time, and it really starts to hit home how important this means to all of us, when we talk about culture and when it can be lost and not passed on, and how that does affect us when it's all connected in a big way for tourism, because people are getting tired of plastic and fast food. They really want something authentic with the way things are in the world.

Would the minister entertain setting up a task force, or tasking committees of departments, that would meet on a regular basis to really work together and be able to complement mining — not at the expense of tourism or vice versa or loss of culture — that we actually have meaningful

conversations with the departments on a regular basis. There are timelines to that to tackle some of these issues that we're faced with every day in our community.

In my way of thinking — what I have listened to from people throughout the territory — is that this would help us as we're moving forward and it would also be respectful of our final agreements and working with all the people, as we are to be doing as we go forward. It's a win for everybody and not a loss over, "You don't get it and I do."

I just wanted to throw that out there and kind of try to give a background to that of why we do believe, on this side of the House, that it is so important to have a task force implemented. Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I look forward to a response from the minister.

Hon. Ms. Taylor: I would like to thank the member opposite for his questions. I just want to take it back to when the Premier first tabled the budget and how we are literally the only jurisdiction in the country to actually have net financial resources and money in the bank. We have a modest surplus going forward, and our government has worked hard over the years to be able to ensure that we still have the flexibility to be able to invest in organizations — whether it's YFNCTA or whether it's investment in new tourism marketing initiatives, like Yukon Now, or whether it is investments in museums, cultural centres, or investments in airports, in road infrastructure, our highway networks, infrastructure in our campgrounds, in wildlife viewing sites — all of these areas are very important, as the member opposite just alluded to, to the development of the tourism industry.

The member opposite is absolutely correct. It's not just up to the Department of Tourism and Culture — it's really a collective effort. I think the Minister of Highways and Public Works alluded to this too the other day — that we have discussions every single day. I have discussions with my colleagues at the Cabinet table and in caucus about areas that we can strengthen — whether it is about the wildlife viewing platform, whether it is working to coordinate signage, in terms of support for interpretation in terms of our sites, coordinating pullouts, being able to work closer together on campgrounds — interpretation of them — in terms of maintenance of those sites, in terms of coordinating efforts on border crossings and the openings of those, and coordinating with ferry crossings and so forth. It is a tremendous collective of many individuals housed throughout the organization.

We always recognize that there is always room for improvement. There always will be, but I have made it abundantly clear to my department that we need to keep those channels of communication open and we need to be working collectively among many deputy ministers, ministers and the officials to ensure that our efforts are integrated and working collectively.

I do want to say that there are a number of different efforts going on, in terms of — I know the member opposite referred to wildlife management. There are many different mechanisms that are in play to ensure that caribou herds remain vibrant, that they remain healthy and sustainable. Whether it's working through the renewable resources

councils that we have in place, born out of the UFA and the treaties themselves, or whether it's working through the YESAA permitting processes, there are a number of different parks being planned through habitat protection areas, special management areas and new territorial parks. There are many different processes, of which Tourism and Culture is an active player at all of those tables.

That is really critical and, as a result, we are really blessed to see caribou herds — the Fortymile or the Porcupine caribou herd that we've heard a lot about over the years from members opposite — in support of healthy caribou populations and, as a result, through the Porcupine Caribou Management Board, there are many different mechanisms in place that we have many different stakeholders around those tables to ensure that we have those resources in place — not just today, but for future generations.

It's the primary reason why we've chosen to call Yukon our home. It has been my home all my life, and I certainly want my family to grow up here in this territory and to benefit from what I have been able to benefit from over the years, but it takes a collection of efforts. We are working on many different fronts to coordinate those efforts and to better improve the delivery of services for Yukoners. That's our job and we take that very seriously.

I know that wildlife viewing, campground future developments — the member opposite has spoken to that in months past as well. That's an area that the Minister of Environment and I are working more closely together on with our departments and our officials and have tasked our deputy ministers and their officials within the departments to better coordinate those efforts, in terms of publications and in terms of enhancing those wildlife-viewing sites and to be able to build that into our tourism product offerings. How can we better maximize those opportunities that do lie there?

That work is very much underway. We always recognize that there is going to be more work to be done but, believe me, there isn't a day that doesn't go by that we're not talking to each other, by e-mail or on the phone or many different mechanisms — with all the respective departments on being proactive in identifying those challenges and how we can systematically address those year after year. We know where the issues that may have come up in years' past are and we know that we need to work collectively. That is going on, as we speak.

Again, just going back to working with other departments — Economic Development is another major department that has been working very closely with Tourism and Culture through their funding mechanisms, through their different service providers that they have in place — through the Film and Sound Commission, for example. We know how effective they have been in creating opportunities for Yukoners and to maximize the economic impact of media production in the territory.

We know that there have been significant dollars awarded to many different film- and sound-related projects and initiatives since it first came out back in 2003, when the two were housed together through Economic Development. It's

working with Tourism and Culture to see how we can better integrate those efforts into our programs, how we market and entice people to come to Yukon and how to keep them here longer so that they can spend more dollars, stay longer and really contribute to our economy. Again, it all goes back to having a financially healthy situation in the territory.

I think this budget that we're talking about here speaks to the importance of having dollars in the bank, but also being able to continue to invest in that key infrastructure, whether it's in airport improvements or cultural centres, whether it's in campgrounds, wildlife habitat, surveys, monitoring or whether it is in our ferries, our highway infrastructure — the list goes on. These are all very important — and also supporting businesses to contribute.

One of the initiatives that I was able to introduce a number of years ago was having the tourism cooperative marketing fund. That fund has grown in leaps and bounds, and we've been increasing that fund over the years. It's now \$700,000, and that's a specific investment in support of industry subscribing to and participating in trade shows — but also to be able to help extend that marketing reach in the country and here in the territory and beyond, with the same kind of look and feel of the tourism brand that we adopted years ago. That's just one of many different examples.

Looking over the list of different entities that we have introduced — the touring artist fund and the artist in the school fund — there are many different areas where we have either developed new programs or we've expanded those programs with finances.

Mr. Chair, seeing the time, I move that you report progress.

Chair: It has been moved by the Member for Whitehorse West that the Chair report progress.

Motion agreed to

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

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

Motion agreed to

Speaker resumes the Chair

Speaker: I'll now call the House to order.

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

Chair's report

Mr. Elias: Madam Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 23, entitled *First Appropriation Act, 2016-17*, and directed me to report progress.

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

All Hon. Members: Agreed.

Speaker: I declare the report carried.

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

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

Motion agreed to

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

The House adjourned at 5:21 p.m.

The following document was filed May 12, 2016:

33-1-134

Local Food Strategy for Yukon — Encouraging the Production and Consumption of Yukon-Grown Food 2016-2021 (Cathers)

**Written notice was given of the following motions
May 12, 2016:**

Motion No. 1196

Re: expanding 911 service to all Yukon communities by the end of July 2016 (Elias)

Motion No. 1197

Re: membership of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts (Cathers)

Motion No. 1198

Re: membership of the Standing Committee on Appointments to Major Government Boards and Committees (Cathers)

Motion No. 1199

Re: membership of the Standing Committee on Rules, Elections and Privileges (Cathers)

Motion No. 1200

Re: membership of the Standing Committee on Statutory Instruments (Cathers)