



# Yukon Legislative Assembly

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## HANSARD

Tuesday, November 13, 2018 — 1:00 p.m.

Speaker: The Honourable Nils Clarke

# YUKON LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

## 2018 Fall Sitting

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

### CABINET MINISTERS

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

### GOVERNMENT PRIVATE MEMBERS

#### Yukon Liberal Party

<b>Ted Adel</b>	Copperbelt North
<b>Paolo Gallina</b>	Porter Creek Centre
<b>Don Hutton</b>	Mayo-Tatchun

### OFFICIAL OPPOSITION

#### Yukon Party

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

### THIRD PARTY

#### New Democratic Party

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

### LEGISLATIVE STAFF

Clerk of the Assembly	Floyd McCormick
Deputy Clerk	Linda Kolody
Clerk of Committees	Allison Lloyd
Sergeant-at-Arms	Karina Watson
Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms	Harris Cox
Hansard Administrator	Deana Lemke

**Yukon Legislative Assembly  
Whitehorse, Yukon  
Tuesday, November 13, 2018 — 1:00 p.m.**

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

*Prayers*

*Dakhká Khwáan Dancers enter the Chamber*

**In remembrance of Doris McLean, former Sergeant-at-Arms**

**Speaker:** Members and others are aware that Doris McLean passed away in January of this year. Ms. McLean served the Yukon Legislative Assembly as Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms from November 3, 2003, until the end of July 2016 and as Sergeant-at-Arms from July 2016 until her resignation on September 30, 2017.

Ms. McLean, a former chief of the Carcross/Tagish First Nation, was of Tlingit and Tagish ancestry, belonged to the Daklaweidi Killer Whale clan and was the first indigenous person to serve the Yukon Legislative Assembly as Sergeant-at-Arms.

Ms. McLean conducted her official duties with dignity and efficiency and was well liked and highly respected by all those who came in contact with her. Doris McLean was a trail-blazing indigenous woman who led the way of cultural revitalization for family and community.

I would like to take a few moments to provide you with the explanation that was provided to me regarding the purpose of the ceremony today and the songs that the Dakhká Khwáan Dancers will share with you today. They will be singing what are referred to as “cry songs”. Cry songs are sung after a person has died by their respective clan members and also by the opposite clans. Celebratory songs in honour of a deceased person are not sung until after their potlatch happens.

Doris McLean is Daklaweidi clan, Killer Whale, under the wolf/eagle side. I spoke to Marilyn Jensen and she told me that one of the dancers has Ms. McLean’s drum here today. The Daklaweidi clan will sing an ancient clan song called “Eshaan du keet”. Their opposite, the Deisheetaan and the Gaanaxtedi, will then sing a Gaanaxtedi clan song back to the Daklaweidi clan to hold them up in their sorrow and also to maintain the balance of the two sides.

Out of the respect for the solemnity of this occasion, I would ask that those in the public gallery not video-record the ceremony. I invite you to enjoy the cry song.

Thank you.

*Dakhká Khwáan Dancers perform ceremony in honour of Doris McLean, former Sergeant-at-Arms*

*Dakhká Khwáan Dancers leave the Chamber*

**DAILY ROUTINE**

**Speaker:** We’ll now proceed at this time with the Order Paper.

Introduction of visitors.

**INTRODUCTION OF VISITORS**

**Hon. Ms. Dendys:** I have many to welcome here today — such a special day for all of us who have gathered — very fitting for such a respected elder. I have a very beautiful tribute to give to our beloved elder, but I would like to introduce our visitors here today, and I apologize if I miss anyone. That’s not my intent at all.

The dancers and singers today are Marilyn Jensen, Gary Johnson, Frances Neumann, Darla Lindstrom, Calvin Lindstrom, Patrick Voyageur, Annie Auston, David Jensen, Victoria Fred, Jared Lutchman, Phil McLean, Cheryl McLean, Pearl Callaghan, Lorraine Netro, Seth Netro, Mark Rutledge, Jody Overduin, Lou Drapeau, Tricia Johnson-Drapeau, Jessie Stephen, Felisha Johnson, Heather Neumann, Tracy Camilleri, Shelby Blackjack, Jodi-Lyn Newnham, our MP Larry Bagnell, Carol Duquette, Dawn Duquette, Justin Ferbey, Katie Johnson, Karen Vallevand, Karee Vallevand, Ruth Carroll, Sandy Neumann, Flory Enzenauer, Avery Enzenauer, Noushin Naziripour, Taravat Ostovar and Delsa Mostmand.

Again, I am sorry if I have missed anyone. It certainly isn’t my intent. Thank you so very, very much for coming here today. It is an honourable occasion and very historic — very, very historic. Thank you all for being here.

*Applause*

**Mr. Gallina:** We have some additional special guests joining us today. In the gallery we have four guests who are here participating in the Pacific Northwest Economic Region, or PNWER, winter forum, which Yukon is proud to be hosting this year: from the Saskatchewan Legislature, and PNWER president Larry Doke; Oregon senator and past president of PNWER Arnie Roblan; past president of PNWER and former MLA of this Assembly Jim Kenyon; and executive director Matt Morrison. Welcome.

I would also like to recognize Steve Rose, former ADM of Economic Development, who was instrumental in bringing PNWER to the territory.

I would also like to recognize Porter Creek Centre constituent Susan Simpson and her lovely parents, Betty and Gino Guatto, who are visiting the territory today. Welcome.

*Applause*

**Mr. Hassard:** I ask all members of the Legislature to help me in joining a couple of fellows here today: Mr. Dave Laxton, who, of course, most of us know, and Joe Iles. Thank you very much for being here.

*Applause*

**Hon. Ms. Frost:** I would like to take this moment to recognize former Vuntut Gwitchin MLA Lorraine Netro and her grandson Seth. Lorraine is a constituent of mine. I just

wanted to acknowledge you and also thank you for your many years of great service to Vuntut Gwitchin. To my dear auntie Ruth Carroll, it's really great to see you here. Thank you also.

Mahsi' cho.

*Applause*

**Speaker:** Are there any further introductions of visitors?

Tributes.

## TRIBUTES

### In remembrance of Doris McLean

**Hon. Ms. Dendys:** It is truly my honour to rise today on behalf of all Members of this Yukon Legislative Assembly to pay tribute to the late Caroline Doris Angela Johns McLean.

Doris was born in Carcross, Yukon on December 17, 1940 — the seventh of 12 children born to Peter and Agnes Johns. On the day she was born, she was given the name “Guna” which means “fresh springtime water”. Being born into the Daklaweidi clan under the Killer whale house, Doris spent her life in honour of her matrilineal responsibilities.

She was known to many as a beloved elder, advocate, storyteller, former Chief of Carcross/Tagish First Nation and a true friend to all who knew her. Her family lovingly referred to her — and I heard this many times — as their regal matriarch.

In her childhood, she was always a feisty and adventuresome girl with an active curiosity about the world. The numerous stories of her childhood included running through the fields, riding horses in Tagish and spending time with all of her cousins and the rest of the children of Carcross. Adventure after adventure, they partook in rafting their grandmother Mary Johns across Bennett Lake in choppy waters to selling rocks to tourists. Doris loved to be out in the wild with her dad and brothers. They enjoyed almost all of their weekends fishing and hunting out on the territories of their ancestral lands — always returning to Carcross to distribute the meat and fish among the elders and families.

Doris's childhood was abruptly interrupted when she fell ill with tuberculosis and was sent to the Charles Camsell Hospital, where she spent two years of her short life. According to Doris, she decided that she wasn't going to die there, so she lay in that bed for a year forcing herself to get better. She overcame her illness and returned home. This resilience and determination are characteristics that she carried with her throughout her life. Through challenging times at residential schools, societal discrimination and government mandates to assimilate, she fought through all of it with a strong and clear vision to create a better future for her community and for her people.

Doris and her husband Philip celebrated their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in July 2017. Throughout their life together, they brought two beautiful and accomplished daughters, Marilyn and Shirley, into this world, and their daughters brought to this world Doris's and Phil's greatest

treasures: wonderful granddaughter Megan and precious grandson Patrick.

Phil supported Doris through all of her adventures and pursuits. He was her rock at home and helped her to share her many gifts and interests with our territory. She served as Chief of the Carcross/Tagish First Nation from 1988 to 1992, working as she always did for the betterment of her people. She spent years working toward the creation of the Yukon First Nation land claims and self-government agreements. She was involved in the reclamation of her people's culture, rights and dignity from the grassroots to the steps of Parliament Hill. One of Doris's greatest legacies was her dedication in working toward the revitalization of her First Nation culture. Doris's daughters remember their mother teaching them to dance and sing when they were very little, and these were the days when not many people were dancing or singing traditional songs.

In the 1970s, Doris started the Skookum Jim/Keish Tlingit dance group. This group has evolved over the years into the award-winning and world-renowned group that we all know as the Dakhká Khwáan Dancers. Doris loved people, laughter, dancing and fun. She claimed a front-row seat at the Adäka Cultural Festival every summer, in which she attended every show and event, showing her love for her culture and for her people. During Adäka this past summer, the Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association kept a seat reserved for Doris throughout the entire seven-day festival. I will never forget that. In my mind, that will always be her seat.

Doris was an avid berry picker with a specific quest for the perfect soapberry. She and her sister Frances Neumann were always the duo to beat at every soapberry ice-cream-making competition. It was sweet victory when she was recrowned the world soapberry ice-cream-maker champion in 2017 at the Haa Kusteeyi celebration in Teslin, Yukon, and I was privileged to receive a very small taste of that winning batch of soapberry ice cream. I cherish that memory.

Doris was well known for her many volunteer activities with the RCMP Citizens on Patrol, the Arctic Winter Games, the Yukon International Storytelling Festival and the Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association. She was a recipient of the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal.

The time that I was able to spend with Doris was always full due to her extensive knowledge of her land, her people's history and her commitment to seeing that her knowledge remains in the world through sharing it with others. Doris McLean was the Yukon Legislative Assembly's Deputy Sergeant-at-Arms from November 2003 to July 2016. She then served as Sergeant-at-Arms until September 30, 2017, making her the first indigenous person to hold this position in Canada. She served as Sergeant-at-Arms on the day that we were all sworn in on December 3, 2016 — again, a cherished memory for all of us.

I will always remember Doris as a fierce leader who provided strength and encouragement to all indigenous women and girls in Yukon and beyond.

I will never forget a day at the Vancouver airport when I ran into Doris on her way back from a period of medical treatment. She was clearly weakened but still took the time to talk to me and to encourage me in my new position in the Legislative Assembly. During that conversation, she said — and I quote: “I wish I could be there to support you girls” — referring to the Member for Vuntut Gwitchin and me. She was so proud to see First Nation women taking these seats in the Yukon Legislative Assembly. She spoke to me about how difficult it can be in the Legislative Assembly and shared that it can be at times a very hard environment. She gave me advice about how to protect my spirit and reminded me that we are all from spirit.

Doris McLean’s dedication to community, culture and history has left a profound impact on all who came into contact with her. Her absence is profoundly felt, and her legacy and influence in Yukon will continue for generations to come.

On behalf of all Members of the Yukon Legislative Assembly both present and past, we offer our sincere condolences to Doris’s family. It was such a pleasure to work with her.

Thank you all so very, very much for coming and being part of this honouring ceremony for such a beloved elder. Thank you. Günilschish.

*Applause*

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

### TABLING RETURNS AND DOCUMENTS

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** Mr. Speaker, I have for tabling a legislative return responding to questions about the aerodrome in Old Crow, asked by the Official Opposition during general debate on October 25.

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

Are there any reports of committees?

Are there any petitions?

### PETITIONS

#### Petition No. 4 — received

**Clerk:** Mr. Speaker and honourable members of the Assembly, I have had the honour to review a petition, being Petition No. 4 of the Second Session of the 34<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly, as presented by the Leader of the Third Party on November 8, 2018.

The petition presented by the Leader of the Third Party meets the requirements as to form of the Standing Orders of the Yukon Legislative Assembly.

**Speaker:** Accordingly, I declare Petition No. 4 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 deemed read and received within eight sitting days of its presentation. Therefore, the Executive Council response to Petition No. 4 shall be provided on or

before the first sitting day of the 2019 Spring Sitting of the Legislative Assembly.

Are there any petitions to be presented?

Are there any bills to be introduced?

Are there any notices of motions?

### NOTICES OF MOTIONS

**Hon. Ms. McPhee:** I rise to give notice of the following motion:

THAT the membership of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts, as established by Motion No. 6 of the First Session of the 34<sup>th</sup> Legislative Assembly, be amended by:

(1) rescinding the appointment of Don Hutton; and

(2) appointing the Hon. Richard Mostyn to the committee.

I also give notice of the following motion:

THAT the membership of the Standing Committee on Appointments to Major Government Boards and Committees, as established by Motion No. 9 of the First Session of the 34<sup>th</sup> Yukon Legislative Assembly, be amended by:

(1) rescinding the appointment of Don Hutton; and

(2) appointing the Hon. John Streicker to the committee.

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

THAT this House urges the Yukon government to take immediate action to develop a plan to address radon issues in government buildings that have unacceptably high levels of this gas in a timely manner.

**Ms. Hanson:** I rise to give notice of the following motion for the production of papers:

THAT this House urges the Government of Yukon to inform the Legislature and table documents showing which departments have produced information for their employees on how to make a disclosure as directed under the *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act*.

**Speaker:** Are there any further notices of motions?

Is there a statement by a minister?

This then brings us to Question Period.

### QUESTION PERIOD

#### Question re: Electoral reform

**Mr. Cathers:** The Liberal government has launched a survey that appears to be about giving themselves political cover to make changes to our electoral system. The entire premise of this process is based on a view that there is something wrong with the current electoral system. The survey implies several times that it needs to be improved. This exercise seems like a solution in search of a problem.

Can the Premier tell us what exactly he believes is broken with our current electoral system that needs to be improved?

**Hon. Mr. Silver:** Mr. Speaker, electoral reform is extremely important to our government, and I think it is

extremely important to every Member of this Legislative Assembly. We want to strengthen the fairness, the integrity and the accessibility of our democracy.

I would say that electoral reform is also about the system that we use to turn our votes into seats in the Legislative Assembly. It is also about the way that Yukon's voices are heard. Again, with this survey, we are taking a look to see those people's voices and make sure that Yukoners are being heard.

**Mr. Cathers:** Mr. Speaker, that wasn't an answer from the Premier.

The survey seems slanted and the way that this entire thing is framed leaves the impression that either the Liberals want to make changes to our electoral system without having any clue about what they want to change or that they have made their mind up already.

The entire survey is framed to imply that there is something wrong with Yukon's electoral system. The survey doesn't even ask the very basic question: Are you happy with the current electoral system?

This seems like an obvious question to include in the survey if the Premier actually cares what Yukoners think. It seems that the Liberals may have already made up their mind that they are going to change the way that Yukoners vote.

Can the Premier tell us why they did not include a question in the survey to ask Yukoners if they are happy with our current electoral system?

**Hon. Mr. Silver:** It is an interesting chart that is being navigated by the member opposite. It would take Magellan awhile to figure that one out.

When we were on the campaign trail we said many times that there is a current system and that current system needs to be considered as well. Again, I am a little bit perplexed as to the question from the members opposite. Do they want more consultation or less consultation? In this case, public engagement was launched on October 4, and the deadline for that public comment was changed from November 30 to December 14, giving more opportunities for Yukoners to make their voices heard.

I am really perplexed by the question from the member opposite. Again, there was a lot of preamble to it. We have reviewed efforts underway in other jurisdictions, and one thing that we have learned is how important it is to make sure that the public is confident about the government and that they are heading the right way. We have said many times that there is a current system and there are other systems, and now we are asking Yukoners what is the most important piece of electoral reform. Is it the age at which we vote? Is it the system that we use? Is it the technology that we use? I believe that this survey is exactly that — allowing Yukoners to voice their opinions, and it is broad for a reason.

**Mr. Cathers:** Well, we heard a lot of words from the Premier but no answer. The survey doesn't give "liking" the current system as an option. The way the Liberals have designed the survey leaves the strong impression that they have made up their minds that they are going to change the way Yukoners vote. The survey says that our electoral system

needs to be improved. It doesn't tell you why it needs to be improved. The survey doesn't even give you the option to say that you are happy with the way we currently vote and prefer the current model. It seems like the Premier and his Liberal government have specifically designed the survey so that it can't allow for the result of Yukoners saying they are happy with the current way that we vote. Yukoners should be given an opportunity to say whether or not they like our current electoral system. They should be allowed to vote on something as major as changes on the way that we elect our government. Will the Premier commit that there will be no changes to the Yukon's electoral system without a referendum?

**Hon. Mr. Silver:** Mr. Speaker, I will address you in your chair, as that is where we are supposed to be addressing you, not looking at a camera. Again, Mr. Speaker, we are engaging with Yukoners to make sure that they know what electoral reform is. It means so many different things to so many different people, whether it is changing the actual system at the ballot or the age of voting or the systems that we use or the way that political parties campaign. There are lots of questions out there. Our survey has a broad approach to it because we want to make sure that we engage every Yukoner on every concern and at every level. Once those results come back in, we will take that data and I will reach out, as I have in the past, to the members opposite. I have reached out to both leaders. The Leader of the Third Party met with me and we had a brief conversation about engagement. We will continue to do that and we will see what the results are.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I am very perplexed about the line of questioning from the member opposite. We believe that we should be engaging with the public when it comes to electoral reform and will be happy if that engagement process bears a lot of fruit, and we will continue the debate here in the Legislative Assembly.

#### **Question re: Contract bid challenge process**

**Mr. Hassard:** Mr. Speaker, a bid challenge process was set up to allow companies an opportunity to voice complaints about the tendering process and to provide specific input on correcting issues. However, it can only do this if the Bid Challenge Committee has people appointed to it. According to the government's website, all of the appointments to the Bid Challenge Committee expired on July 31 of this year.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I know you're probably not too shocked to hear this, as this government's inability to make a decision has become their defining characteristic, but can the minister confirm if the website is accurate? Are there currently no members on the Bid Challenge Committee?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** I thank the member opposite for the question this afternoon on the procurement improvements that we're making to make sure that we buy goods and services for the Yukon government in a much more meaningful and better way.

The member opposite has talked today about bid challenge, and that's an important part of the improvement

process. I can inform the House and the member opposite that we are adding five more members from the private sector to the Bid Challenge Committee, which will deal with dispute resolution. This will help the committee to respond more quickly to challenges.

**Mr. Hassard:** Apparently it's not that important to the minister, because there has been no one on it since the end of July. So Mr. Speaker, can the minister tell us if there are any bid challenges currently open, and if so, how many? Will the minister agree to have this committee appointed by the end of the week so that this process can proceed without any more delays?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** I thank the member opposite for the question. The reason why we are retooling the Bid Challenge Committee is because it didn't work in the past and we wanted to make improvements to make sure that it works better. So that's one of the reasons why we're doing these things.

We have also created a Procurement Business Committee made up of industry representatives who met three times over the summer and again in October. In November, we're going to continue to meet. This is all part of that procurement. We've used the 10 \$1-million exceptions. I've spoken about that many times in the House. We have taken action on all 11 Procurement Advisory Panel recommendations to improve procurement. We are investing in ongoing skill development, with more than 100 employees across government in professional procurement certification programs so that they actually have the training that they need. We have partnered with the Organizational Development branch to create a procurement training framework to ensure that happens. We continue to meet regularly with local businesses and industry associations and host annual events to connect our staff with local vendors and improve the process.

There are many, many things we are doing. The member opposite has asked about whether there are any bid challenges right now. I'm not entirely aware of that. I don't know on the floor of this House, but I will endeavour to get the member opposite the answer to his question.

**Mr. Hassard:** I certainly hope there aren't any out there because, with apparently no one on the committee, it's going to be pretty hard for it to work better as the minister seems to be saying.

One of the priority actions in the Procurement Advisory Panel report was to revise the bid challenge process. At the time, the Government of Yukon committed to do this within one year. Can the minister tell us: What work has been done over the last two years to improve the bid challenge process, and does he believe that allowing all of the appointments on the committee to expire improves the process?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** One of the methods we're trying to employ to improve the procurement is to not have as many bid challenges. I can't attest on the floor of this House that we have reached that Nirvana yet, but we're working toward it.

Transparent and fair government procurement processes generate economic benefits for Yukoners who are trying to keep money in the Yukon for Yukoners. We are working very

hard on that. We have standardized clauses now in our procurement processes to make sure that locals get credit for the knowledge they have about our territory and how to work here. We are working on a First Nation procurement process that will reside within our procurement process so that we can deal with First Nation issues.

There is much work that is being done by the Department of Highways and Public Works and this government, and I am very happy with the work that is being done. I know that we will have a lot more to say about this over the coming weeks and months.

#### **Question re: Geoscience Forum keynote speaker**

**Ms. Hanson:** The Geoscience Forum is getting underway this coming weekend in Whitehorse. Every year, the Yukon government funds the Chamber of Mines to put on this key gathering for the mining industry. Unfortunately, this year's keynote speaker is Rex Murphy. In the past, Mr. Murphy has been under scrutiny for earning generous speaking fees from the oil industry while being a key figure at our national broadcaster. It is Mr. Murphy's recent controversial column defending the infamous Trump Supreme Court appointee Brett Kavanaugh that pushed some concerned citizens to petition the government to dissociate themselves from the invitation to Mr. Murphy.

Does the Minister of Economic Development believe using government money to bring in this kind of divisive speaker is appropriate?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** We truly appreciate the member opposite's question and had a sense that we would be discussing this at some point this week. I am also aware of these concerns from at least one individual who has reached out to me and others in our caucus as well as to the Leader of the Third Party about a week ago which touched on this. I have reached out to the executive director of the Chamber of Mines about the concerns that were brought to our attention and passed that on — the e-mail that was received by me and the Leader of the Third Party. They have informed us that the funding that the Yukon government provides to geoscience — of course, geoscience covers many different activities, from children's days to supporting events for women in mining and others — will not be used to support Rex Murphy as a speaker during this important event that will be happening over the next number of days.

**Ms. Hanson:** I will point out that also #MeToo for women in mining have come out on this issue.

The minister is right, the Chamber of Mines chose the speaker, but this does not change the fact that government money funds this event to a large extent. The minister is accountable for public money. It has been reported that Mr. Murphy's speaking fees run as high as \$30,000. That is quite the price tag and it is doubtful that the Geoscience Forum could foot this kind of bill without government support.

Mr. Speaker, in the #MeToo era, it sends a troubling message for the government to fund a speaker who defends Brett Kavanaugh and thinks women should be charged for

bringing up their experiences of abuse. Does the minister not see a problem with using public funds to fund a speaker whose values are so far removed from most Yukoners?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Mr. Speaker, I want to be extremely respectful as we have this dialogue. I think there are some inaccuracies. I stated already that we would not be funding this speaker. The member opposite has alluded that we are.

I am not aware of the speaking fees associated with the individual. The decision to identify the speakers for this particular event was made by the chamber. If the member opposite wants to have a dialogue concerning those choices, I think that having the dialogue directly with the chamber would be best.

Please — I would ask that the member is respectful — in the sense that we are funding this event. We are not funding the speaker. We think there are a lot of great things that happen. There is a long history of geoscience. I think that having our students there, having an opportunity to see what this industry does for the territory — I think the work that women in mining do is incredible. We've had some people who have been recognized nationally over the last couple of years for their leadership in this sector.

But once again, I hear the concerns of the individual, and we've passed those on to the chamber.

**Ms. Hanson:** I want to be clear that this is not a matter of freedom of speech. No one is saying that Mr. Murphy shouldn't be allowed to spew his misogynistic views. The Yukon does fund the chamber. We just don't think that the government should help Mr. Murphy out by spending tens of thousands of dollars to have him speak here.

This is the second time in less than a month that this government is under the spotlight for publicly funding controversial speakers. A month ago it was a speaker from a firm with a questionable relationship with the Saudi government, and now it's a speaker who delves into victim blaming and whose view of the #MeToo movement aligns with Trump's allies in the extreme right.

How is this a good use of public money, especially at a time when all departments are asked to cut two percent in their budget? Mr. Speaker, how does spending thousands of dollars on these kinds of divisive speakers help Yukoners?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** I would once again just say to the Leader of the Third Party, as stated after questions 1 and 2, that we are not funding — I don't think it does justice to the Legislative Assembly to continue to hear that answer but continue to allude to that inaccuracy.

I appreciate the sensitivity to this on this particular topic. That's why, upon receiving an e-mail about a week and a half or almost a week ago — the same e-mail that was sent to the Leader of the Third Party — we passed it on. I appreciate the fact that the work that is done at this event — there are some great things that do happen, as there are at many of the events that we support. But certainly, once again, we're in a situation where we're not going to be funding this particular speaker, and I'm not going to speak to the other pieces of that question. I think that would be inappropriate at this time.

### Question re: Resource Gateway project

**Mr. Kent:** At one of this government's photo opportunities last year they stood and smiled for pictures announcing quite a lot of money for the Resource Gateway roads project. According to the Government of Canada's website, construction was supposed to start on June 1 of this year. Of course, we know that construction did not start on time and is now 166 days overdue.

Can the minister tell us when major construction for the Resource Gateway roads project will begin?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** First of all, this is an extremely important project for the Yukon government. A little background — as you remember, upon coming into government, there was —

**Some Hon. Member:** (Inaudible)

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** No — I mean, Mr. Speaker, there can be snickers across the way, but let's call this what it was. We came into government, and there was a proposal that was moved in by a lobbying firm and was submitted to the federal government. There was absolutely no written support from any indigenous government at that particular time for the project. Those are the facts; that is the truth.

We had 90 days as a team — the deputy ministers, the other ministers, the Premier — to work to have our First Nation partners provide us some trust that we would work together. That trust is something that we are not going to back away from. We are continuing to have the appropriate conversations. We are working with Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation. Our phase 1 work has — we have an agreement in place. The Minister of Highways and Public Works can add on to what we're doing through the YESAA process. We continue to speak with our nations in the north and in the south. We're going to do this the right way. We're going to ensure that we have agreements in place.

If the opposition doesn't understand that this is not done through respectful dialogue and proper agreements — well, maybe that is why they were in lawsuits, one after another, before.

**Mr. Kent:** I think it's important to remind the minister that we are now entering the third year of their government.

Can the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources or the Minister of Highways and Public Works, as he alluded to, tell us if the Yukon Gateway Resource roads project has been submitted to the environmental assessment process yet, and will it be considered as a designated office evaluation or an executive committee screening?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** I'm more than happy to talk about the Resource Gateway this afternoon on the floor of the Legislature. I want to inform the members opposite that the Department of Highways and Public Works has established a major programs office in the Transportation Engineering branch. The office is responsible for the development and implementation of the Yukon Resource Gateway program, and the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources — my good colleague on the front bench — continues to work together with Highways and Public Works and directly with



affected First Nations to achieve project agreements to proceed with the Yukon Resource Gateway program.

Mr. Speaker, we did commit to starting work this year. The members opposite don't think that planning is part of that work, but planning is an integral part of that work. That work has started. The Department of Highways and Public Works has done a lot of work on this project already, and we are going to be continuing right through for the next five years and beyond. That work has begun — the members opposite can rest assured — and I am more than happy to talk about this again on the next supplementary.

**Mr. Kent:** Perhaps when the minister stands he can actually answer the question that I asked in my second question, which is whether this will be done at the DO or the executive committee, as that has timing consequences on the project.

As I mentioned, construction is already 166 days overdue. The government originally stated that construction would be completed by March 31, 2024. Can the minister tell us if this is still the projected end date, or have the delays pushed that date back?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Just for Yukoners who may not be aware, the total value is \$468 million, including \$248 million from the federal government on this particular project, \$112 million from the Yukon government and \$108 million from industry.

Once again, we are excited about this project. I want to commend my colleague, and I want to thank the Yukon Conservation Society as well for this as we start to have conversations now about road ecology and understanding how to make sure that roads, which do have an impact — and that, as we work with our partners, we ensure that we take into consideration the full conversation around roads. I think that the member opposite would understand that.

I don't believe that we are inhibiting any development at this time in Little Salmon Carmacks. We are looking to make that community safer. I think we will see throughout the next couple of weeks that, when we talk about resource development — which this is infrastructure for — we are in a good place right now.

I think that when you talk about the capacity, all the construction companies — and the member, I'm sure, can reach out — I think that everybody is in a position where there is a tremendous amount of work and output. Really, our biggest concern is going to be: Within Yukon, do we have the total portfolio of capacity to ensure that we do all this work as we see Yukon companies win Yukon contracts?

#### **Question re: Mining within municipal boundaries**

**Ms. Van Bibber:** The Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources is quoted in a CBC article from December 16, 2016, as stating that he would meet with the Association of Yukon Communities and First Nations in the new year to develop an action plan with respect to mining within municipal boundaries.

Can the minister provide an update on this action plan?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Most of the work that has been undertaken on this has been quite bilateral. It has really been between the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources and specific municipalities.

At that time, in 2016, I believe we were still waiting for the final decision on a very significant case that was playing out within the City of Whitehorse. Further — and I apologize to the Assembly if I am wrong — I think it was then appealed and then a final decision was made. That certainly gave the industry and the department — and I believe even the municipalities — an understanding from that case law about what the parameters were.

We continue within our department to work through this. Of course, we had a decision that was just played out last week, and it continues to be something that we are focused on.

I would say that the work in our work plan is continuing. It has just been done directly with the municipalities versus the Association of Yukon Communities which, of course, has representatives of chief, mayor and council from each municipality.

I will just wait for questions 2 and 3.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** It is interesting that he said he would meet with the Association of Yukon Communities and First Nations. This was one of the first items that the minister said he would take action on.

Can he update us on changes that have occurred since December 2016 when he told us that he would develop this action plan to address mining within municipal boundaries?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** What has changed? The answer to the question — first and foremost, Mr. Speaker, in 2017 we watched the legal proceedings concerning the case here. That was in 2016. So — quickly — at that particular time, if it was 2016 — I think within 30 days of that we signed a memorandum of understanding with all of our self-governing First Nations in the territory, which has then led to work plans in our groups that have worked together on the First Nation side of things. In some municipalities — primarily Dawson City has been where we have had the most activity when it comes to mining within a municipality. Our teams have worked diligently with both First Nation governments as well as with the community. In past situations we have definitely had dialogue because, of course, municipalities have a piece.

I think that the work has been done. I wouldn't want the member opposite to sort of mislead the public. We have worked on these issues, and we have consistently worked on them.

Whether they are focused into a work plan — the work plan that the department has certainly identified these conversations. There has been a tremendous amount of work and, of course, we will be getting together with First Nations and industry leaders later on this weekend around our Geoscience conference. We will continue to look for clarity when it comes to mining inside of municipalities — a long issue in the Yukon.

**Ms. Van Bibber:** I wasn't intending to mislead the public. I had asked a question about an action plan and did not get an answer.

Is the minister contemplating compensation for any claimholders who are affected by government decisions around claims within municipal boundaries?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Mr. Speaker, looking at mining in municipalities, especially as it looks to planning and zoning — just a bit of background. In May 2017, we responded to concerns from the Mount Lorne Local Advisory Council and the Ibex Valley Local Advisory Council by committing the Yukon government to developing our policies and guidelines — that would have been May of last year — in conjunction with those groups.

Also, in May at the annual general meeting of Yukon communities, we had also indicated support for additional prohibition orders on quartz mineral staking. On May 23, the Whitehorse City Council passed a resolution requesting the five-year extension to an existing prohibition order to restrict quartz mineral staking within most of their — thank you to my colleague who works most directly with the municipalities for just highlighting some of that.

The industry is still looking for some clarity within this. I apologize — I didn't mean to be sticky on that. I just meant that there is ongoing work. It is part our team's work plans — that is a fact. There are work plans at Energy, Mines and Resources that identify this as key work. We continue to go through our internal processes on these important topics.

**Speaker:** The time for Question Period has now elapsed.

### Notice of opposition private members' business

**Mr. Kent:** In order that we may expedite debate on government bills that remain on the Order Paper, the Official Opposition will not be calling any private members' business for Wednesday, November 14, 2018.

**Ms. White:** Pursuant to Standing Order 14.2(3), I would like to identify the item standing in the name of the Third Party to be called on Wednesday, November 14, 2018. It is Motion No. 330, standing in the name of the Member for Whitehorse Centre.

**Speaker:** We will now proceed to Orders of the Day.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

**Hon. Ms. McPhee:** 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. Hutton):** I will now call Committee of the Whole to order.

The matter before the Committee is Vote 7, Department of Economic Development, in Bill No. 207, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2018-19*.

Do members wish to take a brief recess?

**All Hon. Members:** Agreed.

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

*Recess*

**Chair (Mr. Hutton):** Committee of the Whole will now come to order.

### Bill No. 207: *Second Appropriation Act, 2018-19* — continued

**Chair:** The matter before the Committee is Vote 7, Department of Economic Development, in Bill No. 207, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2018-19*.

#### Department of Economic Development

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Mr. Chair, I would just like to invite some of our officials from the Department of Economic Development who will be assisting today: deputy minister Justin Ferbey, who is here to support, as well as Catherine Marangu. We want to welcome her to the department. She has come on board over the last year in the role of director of Finance.

I will start with some opening words and then we can get into the questions on the supplementary budget. I do want to, as well, just thank the officials who are at the department and not here with us today — some 50 — who have worked extremely hard on a number of projects, as well as focusing on renewal and things that we are looking at over the next while within the department to ensure that we can best serve Yukoners and Yukon businesses — of course, taking into consideration our focus toward diversification and making sure that we have strong communities, a strong private business sector and great grassroots community organizations that are helped through our community development fund.

The Department of Economic Development has requested a budget increase in our supplementary budget of \$956,000 for the Yukon film location incentive fund. This is a rebate-based fund that encourages production companies to film in Yukon, spend money locally and hire and train Yukoners. Under the fund, media productions can apply for a rebate of up to 25 percent of the money they spend in the territory if they meet the Yukon hire requirement of the program. This funding is consistent with the media funding in all other Canadian jurisdictions. The additional jobs and spending brought by the fund provide a boost to the local economy, with direct benefits such as hiring camera people and background actors.

Then there are the trickle-down effects of media production spending such as accommodation and food services. This incentive to train Yukoners assists in creating a critical mass of skilled media workers and encourages local people to explore their talents and start or grow businesses.

The training also benefits Yukon's media producers who then have access to local skilled labour.

Yukon is a long way from competing with industry standard indoor television and film facilities across the country, but media productions come here for the breathtaking natural landscapes. Rebates, of course, can make a difference between a production choosing Yukon over similar wilderness locations in Alberta or British Columbia.

Setting an accurate budget for the Yukon film location incentive fund is truly a challenge, since projects and expenditures on large productions vary widely from year to year.

The media development unit may work for months and years with a major production company before a final decision is made to include Yukon as a film location. When a production decides to film in Yukon, they can receive a substantial rebate. For example, in the 2015-16 fiscal year, Raw TV received a rebate of approximately \$690,000 based on their Yukon spend of well over \$2.7 million.

The \$956,000 budget increase for this year allows the Government of Yukon to be flexible and responsible to filming decisions and remain competitive with other jurisdictions. This sends a strong message to industry that this government supports and values the media industries in our territory and that we are committed to growing the economy and the workforce and to making Yukoners more competitive in an international market.

To summarize, this fund has concrete benefits for Yukon as it encourages media production companies to hire, train and spend in the territory. Approving the budget increase allows the Government of Yukon to continue to support our growing media industries, remain competitive and reap the spinoff benefits to the broader economy.

With that, I think we will open it up to questions. Really, it is a fairly simple request in our supplementary budget, although it is significant. I look forward to questions about our request to increase our location incentive fund.

**Mr. Istchenko:** I do want to thank the deputy minister and the director for coming in here today to provide support for the minister.

I have a few questions today. I guess the first one I will ask the minister is: Since being elected, has the minister met with each chamber of commerce, including the community chambers? What were their identified priorities?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** I guess this is as it relates to the film location incentive fund or maybe broader, Mr. Chair.

I believe that I have had the opportunity to meet with all chambers of commerce other than the Watson Lake Chamber of Commerce. I have met with representatives at the Yukon chamber, which hosted their AGM in Dawson City. I believe there was representation there from most chambers of commerce. I believe that I have only met with the previous mayor and council for Watson Lake.

There wasn't a great turnout — I am going to walk through the communities. There wasn't a great turnout in Haines Junction. We met with two representatives at that particular time. I believe it was the Minister of Community

Services who had met with the Watson Lake Chamber of Commerce. I must say that all of my colleagues try to ensure that we pass on appropriate asks and requests to each other if it falls within our areas.

It would probably be best to refer back to my notes from the meeting, but I know that in Haines Junction, we did talk a bit about some of the work that actually the member opposite, my critic, is asking about, which is the work within that corridor, talking a bit about tourism and some of the strategies and infrastructure that are needed there.

I did have two local business owners who attended that particular meeting. It was quite casual. We sat at a picnic table outside the convention centre — it was a nice day — and sort of discussed what their priorities were. We talked about making sure that we also understood the work that is happening in these communities and some of the grassroots — which was also a catalyst for the conference that we held in Watson Lake. We thought it was very important to host the conference in Watson Lake. That is really where we brought community members in from across the Yukon and tried to showcase the model that Teslin had used in the Deisleen Development Corporation when it comes to procurement, but that was sort of the discussion that inevitability was happening with them in Haines Junction.

In Dawson, it was really focused, I think, on small business, as I remember, and just making sure that we have the right programs out of our department. That's been something that we've revisited — the way we fund in north Yukon, so that's been key.

I have had meetings, of course, on multiple occasions with the Yukon chamber. We've had a great relationship. We've had a lot of advice, help and support from the Yukon chamber as we've worked through the process — there's an energy committee but also our carbon committee — and then the Whitehorse chamber on a couple of occasions.

To ensure the conversation was focused, a lot of times they would ask us to come in or ask me to report on what we saw as a long-term sort of vision over the next couple years that's playing out within the economy. I think that my officials in support have said that procurement has been a key topic with a lot of these conversations as well as training opportunities and continued partnerships.

Just to add, Mr. Chair, to the regional economic development side — which really takes into consideration the work we do with our chambers outside of Whitehorse, in partnership, of course, with the municipal and First Nation governments, businesses and NGOs — we have been making strategic investments in communities to support the development of regional economic opportunities through the territory by providing advice on project design and assisting organizations to access our regional economic development and community development funds. Our advisors have been doing a fantastic job of getting out into the communities, working with the communities and being very client-centric in how they deliver. We've had a lot of activity right from Watson Lake through to Dawson and some of the other outlying communities.

Also, we are providing funding to White River First Nation in limited partnership in Beaver Creek to turn identified opportunities in the mining and exploration sector into arrangements with private companies that result in revenue for the development corporation and opportunities for community members.

We're also working with municipalities to ensure their communities have sustainable economies. For example, we are providing funding to Dawson City to analyze their development incentive policies, review best practices across Canada and develop renewed incentives and policy for the city.

I am sorry if I missed specifics in each particular meeting. What we try to do in any of those interactions is that the official that is with me and I will take notes and highlight the concerns. We bring that back and download that to our departments. It might be Economic Development or it could be another department such as Highways and Public Works or Community Services. We then request that they follow up and help in those particular cases. Sometimes there are things that are underway, so it is just making sure that communities are aware of some of the programs that are in place. In other cases, there is a gap and we need to pivot to figure out how we can support and help in those cases.

I will leave it at that and the member can carry on with questions.

**Mr. Istchenko:** My next question is: How much funding was dispersed this year through the regional economic development fund and the strategic industries development fund? I can understand if the minister does not have that handy. There is lots of information there, but could he commit to a legislative return so I can review it please?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** I think it would be best if instead of doing a legislative return I could just provide the numbers. This year, we are at \$2,758,843. That is our total for this fiscal. Our BIP fund has provided \$599,609. Our RED funds have provided \$1,050,506, and our CDF projects funds have so far provided \$1,108,728. I can go through every single project if the member opposite would like, or I could just wait and we will go on to the next question.

**Mr. Istchenko:** I was looking for a specific project, so I could see which projects money was going toward.

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Under the BIP project list: digital assets and guide development, which was with the Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association, really focused on the photography, creative design, publication and distribution of a welcome guide that was in the amount of \$99,590. We also did a business plan for a land development strategy with Chu Níikwán Development Corporation of Kwanlin Dün First Nation for \$73,500. In partnership with Yukon College, we worked on the expansion of the Institute of Indigenous Self-Determination with a support of \$65,000. With Chu Níikwán again, the Kwanlin Dün First Nation development corporation, we did detailed planning for a hotel development and planning for the development of a hotel in downtown Whitehorse. Under the Yukon First Nations Culture and Tourism Association, we provided \$15,440 for

Fashion Forward, which was the promotion of events, industry meetings and workshops to support the growth of the fashion industry in Yukon.

In partnership with Chief Isaac Inc., we did the development of a marketing and branding strategy for a total of \$56,137. For the Mayo Airport and McQuesten Road business plan — and we did this in conjunction and partnership with the Na Cho Nyäk Dun Development Corporation — and it was really about the identification of business opportunities related to the airport road infrastructure in the Mayo area. We provided \$28,035 for that particular project.

Under the low carbon committee, I want to thank the Yukon Chamber of Commerce for their work and guidance in making sure the private sector had an opportunity to help us as we look at carbon pricing models and how we can use funds from the federal government to impact our low-carbon economy. There was \$40,000 to the Yukon Chamber of Commerce for that. The Arctic Indigenous Investment conference — the pan-northern conference — was hosted in the summer. There was a huge contingent of Yukon companies, and I appreciated having an opportunity to share the Yukon story and to meet with our companies as well as to speak with companies from across the north. I urged them to look at investing in Yukon and to set up partnerships or set up a footprint here. Through that, we provided funds of \$50,000.

There was a China trade mission and FPT attendance — Northern Vision Development, Air North and Arctic Colour Tours were supported in attending that important conference. My colleague, the Minister of Highways and Public Works, who was also backup for Tourism and Culture, attended. We provided \$12,864 for that. We also supported the Arctic Indigenous Investment conference attendance by a Yukon delegation. In many of these cases, we provide some support and help to ensure that we have Yukon companies in attendance. We provided that through the Yukon First Nation Chamber of Commerce — that was \$19,788. On the tourism side, the International Indigenous Tourism conference — once again, we provided assistance for those in attendance, and that was \$24,755 for a multitude of individuals. The hotel feasibility study by the Carcross/Tagish Management Corporation was funded in the amount of \$15,000, for a total of \$599,609.

Under the RED fund, we provided a serious of great projects right across the Yukon. The Carcross/Tagish Management Corporation is looking at a prefab for a housing manufacturing business study — something they have really been looking at — for \$34,140. Through the Dawson north Yukon ready community projects, through the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation, there was \$70,000 for a series of opportunities. Community readiness and opportunities planning was \$3,000. The capacity development, through the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in — this is a process where we have worked very closely with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in because of the massive amount of impact and opportunity that is in the Dawson region, and we provided \$300,000.

We also, through the Carcross/Tagish Management Corporation, have supported them with Executive Council Office-tourism planning, and implementation — and that again, to the Management Corporation, \$42,750. Also, to the First Nation Na Cho Nyäk Dun concerning the Stewart-Keno transmission line, supporting them as they look for opportunities to work on that particular project with Yukon Energy Corporation with \$17,318.55. Enhancement of the community development plan for 2015-2025, a 10-year plan in Teslin for Deisleen Development Corporation, was \$36,000. In Kluane, to the Kluane Community Development Limited Partnership for the *Dalan* campground business plan was \$6,375. The Mayo north Yukon READI communities projects to the First Nation of Na Cho Nyäk Dun was \$22,500. Real estate investment feasibility to Da Daghay Development Corporation from the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council was \$13,500. Carcross/Tagish First Nation Community Development Corporation strategy study, as well, in Carcross was \$22,123.90. Champagne and Aishihik economic development strategic assistance was \$25,861 to the First Nation and their community development corporation. White River First Nation — we touched on this project earlier — in Beaver Creek was \$24,425. Na Cho Nyäk Dun planning projects for their development corporation was \$16,275. White River First Nation on their tourism opportunity identification in White River was \$36,630. Improving capacity for fire and land-based opportunities through the support of Charlie Crew, which we have seen over the last two years was \$15,000 for the Da Daghay Development Corporation. Chief Isaac human resources policies, procedures and tools for their development corporation as they expand were for \$24,187.

Also, the Minto Resorts campground revitalization to Selkirk Development Corporation is \$25,000. The establishment of a community economic development corporation for Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in was \$50,000. In Watson Lake, the Liard First Nation capacity development for Liard First Nation was \$27,000. Chu Níkwän commercial development sculpting workshop was \$6,000 — of course, that is the development corporation Kwanlin Dün.

Earlier, we touched on the 10-year plan, but also the long-term sustainability planning for Deisleen Development Corporation in Teslin was \$34,125. Champagne and Aishihik strategic economic initiatives were \$50,000. I think there was an additional — White River First Nation mining sector business development was \$20,175. Teslin tourism risk-management to the Teslin Tlingit Council was \$50,000. Champagne and Aishihik First Nation for the Matatana resort third-party feasibility review was \$40,120.

You can see a multitude of really diverse funding focusing not just on resources, but also on the tourism sector, trying to ensure that the governance models for all of these development corporations and their community corporations are strong, as they tie to the vision of their First Nation, in many of those cases.

Then we have a couple that are just pending approval — and their corporate policies and procedure — and that is Kluane — the member opposite's constituents at Kluane

Community Development Corporation — maybe I will just leave the number out at this particular time, but it is significant funding — and as well to the Burwash Landing Community Trail Planning, which is another that is just pending.

As well, Mr. Chair, on the CDF projects — the multi-recreational project phase 2 to Kluane First Nation, \$200,000; the development of the Little Salmon Carmacks First Nation, \$19,975; and the Klondike UNESCO World Heritage Site nomination — I know our predecessors — I think there was about \$400,000 previously and then, last year, there was another \$116,639 that was provided to Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in on that particular project.

Just to conclude — and I thank the Assembly for their patience. The departments, of course, have done all this work, and it is important to put it into the record versus them preparing legislative returns later on.

As well, I know a project that was concluded — certainly my critic was a huge fan of the Champagne Potlatch House expansion \$75,000, which concluded in 2017.

There was also: the Vuntut Gwitchin navigation systems project phase 2, \$69,920; the horticultural landscaping and greenhouse development in 2017 with White River First Nation, \$50,056; the website redesign for the Kwanlin Dün First Nation, \$14,348; the Fox Point playground dedication sign and ribbon cutting, which was a great event — the member who represents the Teslin area, of course, was in attendance — and that was for \$9,382 — and a great grassroots initiative from a young citizen from Teslin who felt that this was a very important project, and then the community rallied around it; small-scale primary sawmill and biomass heating utility in Teslin, \$150,000, as we move toward continuing to support the move toward more biomass — and that was with Teslin Tlingit Council; the infrastructure — a baseball diamond, soccer field and fencing — in Old Crow — and I think it was also in partnership with Canada 150 — Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation — and that was \$77,400; the Da Kù Cultural Centre expansion and the daycare project — the Member for Kluane and I were in attendance — that was a great initiative there for \$150,000, and is really a revitalization of language as well as having a well-needed daycare in that community; Ross River playground equipment project, \$38,391; as well, the youth hand games and drum-making workshop in Little Salmon Carmacks, \$5,128; youth leadership development day in Little Salmon Carmacks, \$1,840; the skateboard park, which opened with Carcross/Tagish First Nation and is a great addition to the community, \$56,000; the Mayo legion hall structural upgrades, \$35,900, in conjunction with Na Cho Nyäk Dun ; the playground as well in Pelly Crossing, with Selkirk First Nation, \$19,999; and the Kluane First Nation elders memory project with Kluane First Nation, \$18,700. That is \$1,108,000.

I know that the department is busy and that they are working with lots of community members. Now, of course, as we move through this year, there are lots of great projects being funded.

That gives a real detailed account of the spending within our department over the last fiscal year.

**Mr. Istchenko:** What was the total amount of funding given by the Yukon government toward the innovation hub?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** The Government of Yukon's contribution to the project was \$1.9 million in 2018-19.

**Mr. Istchenko:** Has the Government of Yukon provided any further funding to the innovation hub outside of the initial contribution?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Mr. Chair, there was no other money provided to the project, but we do provide funding to YuKonstruct and also the business centre. I believe that, in the last year, the funding was \$150,000 for that.

**Mr. Istchenko:** My next question is: Does the Yukon government provide any in-kind support to the innovation hub? If so, what is the value of it? Maybe that's what the minister was speaking to.

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** No, there would be no in-kind — there would be the funding to the organization and then the initial funding toward the capital expenditure.

**Mr. Istchenko:** I thank the minister for that.

How many government office spaces are located at the innovation hub?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Of course, we have the Yukon Development Corporation, which is a Crown corporation, but I also think it is worth noting that there is space there. I think it takes up space for five individuals in that particular space.

Within the support to YuKonstruct and (co)space, we do receive one space within a collective area of (co)space. We do not consistently have somebody there, but there is a space within that work area that is part of our agreement with (co)space.

**Mr. Istchenko:** What is the total cost to the government to lease those spaces?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** I would be happy to answer this question, but why don't we get into that when we bring forward the supplementary budget for the Yukon Development Corporation, which will be specific to the rental agreement for the Yukon Development Corporation? As I've stated, the Department of Economic Development doesn't have any other office space that is rented in that particular facility.

**Mr. Istchenko:** So was the leasing of office space at the innovation hub part of the government's original plan when they reviewed this project?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Once again, I think that, when speaking with Economic Development — we do not have a lease agreement from the Department of Economic Development, but the Yukon Development Corporation does lease. I think that, through the process of the conversation that had transpired, it looked like that was a good opportunity for the Yukon Development Corporation, especially with the IREI funding.

I can touch on that a bit — and it's not disrespect; it's just trying to — for some reason, we're hearing the Leader of the Third Party jumping in for questions, excited to ask me some questions. But once again, I'm just trying to be respectful of

the process here. I can certainly get into that when we speak to the Yukon Development Corporation supplementary budget.

**Mr. Istchenko:** I thank the minister for the whole-of-government approach to answering that question.

So can the minister provide the House with the status update on the Dempster fibre line? What work has been completed to date, and can the minister provide a timeline for when construction will begin?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Mr. Chair, I'm going to defer to my colleague who will be more than comfortable to touch on this. The way the process has been undertaken is that the Department of Economic Development has negotiated the bilateral agreements with Canada to ensure that we had funding in place. The actual negotiation with our First Nation partners and the buildout of that work are being covered through the Department of Highways and Public Works. So to get a most accurate understanding of that — but to be respectful, my colleague can give a brief update on this particular topic in the spirit of the one-government approach.

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** As the members opposite no doubt know, construction of a backup fibre optic line is vital to establishing consistent and reliable Internet in Yukon. We all know the history of this.

Routinely in the last several years, we have had backhoe operators cutting our line to the south, plunging the territory into digital darkness, so to speak — where cash machines don't work and the whole bit. This really undermines our industry, and it undermines our commerce. The Internet is so vital to our lives every day that we have to prevent this from happening in the future, so we committed to and are executing a backup fibre optic line up the Dempster to provide that redundancy. We're working very closely with our federal partner and with Northwestel and First Nations on this project.

Planning is underway immediately. Work has started on this. My colleague in Economic Development has been working on this — on laying the groundwork for this fibre line, for looking at our options and for making sure that we know in which direction we're going. Now that a route has been chosen, we are executing on that.

So our next steps are to engage with First Nations and the public, create a project and procurement plan and start permitting. We also need to negotiate the required agreements with Northwestel and the Northwest Territories because it will be crossing a border up in the north.

The total cost of the project is estimated to be \$79 million, with a \$5-million contribution from the Government of Yukon, \$59 million from the federal government and \$15 million from Northwestel. At the end of the project, the Yukon government will own the line, and Northwestel will operate it and pay all operating costs for the next 20 years.

This is a particularly complex project, and the schedule is subject to change as the project evolves. Right now, our best estimate is that geotechnical work will start in the fall of 2019. As I have said, planning is underway for this important piece of infrastructure, and the schedule is being developed and a request for proposal is expected shortly in 2019.

**Mr. Istchenko:** So we're looking forward to the fall of 2019.

I want to go back to the innovation hub again. When the Minister of Economic Development reviewed the innovation hub project, was the potential of the government leasing some of that space out part of the analysis that he reviewed?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** I need to get some clarity. I'm not sure exactly what the question is, so I would just ask again for clarity on exactly what the question is.

**Mr. Istchenko:** So when the minister reviewed the innovation hub project, was the potential of the government leasing space part of the analysis when he reviewed it?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** I know that my interaction on it — was that the team at Economic Development worked very closely with the YuKonstruct Society to ensure that we could be supportive of a project that we think is very important.

The conversations concerning who was renting or which organizations were going to be inside that facility were between the lead of the organization. I don't remember an analysis that was there.

I will say that when the opportunity came up for Yukon Development Corporation to be in that particular space — from my perspective, I think that is a great fit. For many, Yukon Development Corporation was previously a space where — maybe if you had direct business with them, you would have an interaction, but now, especially as we look at some of the work there — in the supplementary budget, we will touch on some of their IREI funding where there is a lot more opportunity for organizations to reach out to them and it seemed like an appropriate choice.

Of course, on this particular ecosystem, we were working in partnership with the Cold Climate Innovation, TechYukon and the YuKonstruct Makerspace Society to look at delivering programming that supports Yukoners and Yukon businesses working in the technology, innovation and knowledge-economy sectors.

We worked with YuKonstruct Makerspace Society to secure funding and to undertake the renovation of the new Yukon innovation hub. It is a collaborative space for innovation in Yukon's knowledge and tech economy.

Of course, we secured funding and announced the construction of our fibre line. We think that all of this fits together, but it's really our technology team at T2D2 that is handling the work and working with the leadership at YuKonstruct, or the makerspace.

**Mr. Istchenko:** Mr. Chair, Economic Development provided a lot of money to this project. I would hope that the minister would know, when he reviewed the project before money was spent, whether or not there was anything in there for the Yukon government to lease space through a part of the analysis that he did when he looked at the initial project.

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Maybe I am missing it.

Instead, let's get right to the point. If the member opposite has a specific question or if something was done inappropriately, let's just get right down to it. I think we have a great project. There are tenants in the building. We will talk about things during debate on the Yukon Development

Corporation. I think our processes have had integrity and accountability. If there is something that we want to get to, let's get to it, Mr. Chair.

**Mr. Istchenko:** The question I am asking is: When the minister reviewed the innovation hub project, was there potential for the government leasing space as part of his analysis when he looked at the project?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** I want to be respectful to the question.

There is a concept of a project. I think that the Yukon Development Corporation, along with Cold Climate Innovation and others, were all early adopters of the concept to be there. Whether they were there or not — I think it is a good fit, but if the question is: Do they need to be there for the model? Probably not. I think that for all of us who attended the opening, it was very clear that there was a huge interest in being in that space. So when there was an opportunity for them to be there — and it was communicated to me by my deputy minister and president of the Yukon Development Corporation — I thought it was a fantastic concept to have them in that space as we look at innovation.

I was proud of the individuals who worked on this, because the other thing that played out — and we have shared this on a couple of occasions — was that what was being touted in rural America in one particular case was that Google — when you look at a great technology company — was focusing on — the first project was in rural Vermont — was to take communities the size of Whitehorse to look at innovation for a digital economy to make sure that you had connectivity, which goes back to that conversation when we talk about the redundancy in fibre — but also to look at renewable energy and where you could have innovation in renewable energy. They touted that as their new concept. The team of people I get to work with were already months ahead on that concept being done here in the Yukon.

I hope I answered it. There were reports coming forward to me through my bilateral meetings with the deputy minister as they worked through it. The teams that were involved did a lot of work in a short period of time. If there is a question of whether it was needed or not — once I was told that there was an opportunity for them to be there, I think it was a good idea. Of course, there is a board of the Yukon Development Corporation that was making that decision, and Joanne Fairlie, who has moved on — an amazing individual who did a phenomenal job as the chair of the Yukon Development Corporation — handled this in a very eloquent way. It was great work and she reported back to me during our bilateral meetings. I hope that answers the question, Mr. Chair.

**Mr. Istchenko:** Does the Department of Economic Development have any funds allocated to the Yukon Trappers Association or to any trapping initiatives in this fiscal year?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** I was going to try to get the department through a session without having a legislative return, but the member opposite has caught me on that.

I note that we did have a very good meeting with the members of the Yukon Trappers Association, but Fur Real, the group that has been working really to promote the fur

industry, did a presentation to all the renewable resources councils in Pelly this summer. Mr. Van Fleet was there, and it was a great opportunity to speak with him. Of course, the whole House had an opportunity to tribute the work as well that Kelly Proudfoot, Kelly Milner and others took on to promote their work.

I'm not sure if there was any submission. I know that in my discussions with them, they said that they may be looking to continue the partnership with Economic Development. I think it's a great initiative — absolutely amazing initiative. I'll leave that to our advisors on what value they see in the proposals, but I will make sure that I get back to you to tell you what the status is on that particular project.

**Mr. Istchenko:** I thank the minister for that.

It's a pretty big issue with respect to steel and aluminum tariffs from the United States, as well as Canada's tariffs that it launched in response. Local businesses have raised concerns — I know that we've talked about this before — over both sets of tariffs. So can the minister tell us what communications his government has had with Canada regarding the steel and aluminum tariffs, and/or have they expressed any concerns over them?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** I think it is important to look at the conversation as really a two-part conversation. Of course, we had the announcement of the free trade agreement, the USMCA — the renewed agreement — my sense was that, at the federal level — whether it be from updates from Minister Freeland, who had done a great job of reaching out to all ministers in the country through the process, having thoughtful dialogues and updates when appropriate. But at the same time, I think that most people would have heard publicly — for those watching that particular undertaking — that the tariffs were sort of the next part of the conversation.

I know that there continue to be a series of conversations this week. We're figuring out the effects almost in real time. It's timely that the member asks me this question. We actually met this morning with some of our US counterparts who were here today. Of course, the state senator from Oregon, as well as Mr. Larry Doke, the MLA from Saskatchewan, and we had a brief discussion. There is some messaging that you will see probably later today, if not tomorrow, that is coming out from us as we work together to look at how we deal with this very important issue.

Some of our local businesses have — there have been some workarounds and solutions that have helped them get through it — I have just been informed this morning — and that deal with aluminum, but I was explaining to our American counterparts the importance of the great questions that were brought up here — when you think about infrastructure, the cost of new infrastructure and what the potential increase in the cost of steel looks like to these projects.

So those are continuing discussions. We have great officials who continue to be at the table from our policy shop at Economic Development.

I know that there have been concerns voiced over this particular topic. What we're going to be doing — even now in

the short run — is we will be collecting communication from some local organizations. Having that voice added was a bit of the strategy that was discussed today. So I would ask the members opposite, if there is anybody or any company specifically that they are aware of that is feeling the impacts of this — we're going to work together hopefully here in this Assembly to make sure that we have as many of those voices that are being affected put together to be sent to Canada but also, as we start to see the changes post-midterm elections, it's important that our American partners know that.

So we have, of course, provided some relevant consultation information on the issue from Canada to our chambers, as appropriate. Of course, we will remain in contact with Global Affairs Canada. I know that Canada continues to see — the removal of working with — and working to just do that. So, of course, this is something that we are keeping a close eye on. But I think that when we talk about significant action, I am happy.

That is one of the reasons — we touched on it today and I know there is a bit of protocol. Mr. Rose, who is here with us today, was key in going to Victoria and bringing the PNWER event here. This is a perfect example of us having an opportunity to have American policy makers here with us tonight and tomorrow. I know that the members opposite will have an opportunity and invitations have gone out. Please take that opportunity to speak with US policy makers to ensure that you get another voice in at the table speaking about how important it is to ensure that we have this free trade activity. It is not a partisan issue. It's great — Mr. Doke is here as our president, working hand in hand with colleagues from Alberta and British Columbia to ensure that we're all really talking about the northwest, but Canada and US relations.

So just — yes, there has been conversation, as I have been informed, and we will continue to have dialogue and more formal — moving forward, even after this week, in some of our discussion that we will be putting out to both governments.

**Mr. Istchenko:** Just further on that, I was reading through and looked at the agenda for PNWER, and I'm sure glad that it is being held here in the Yukon. I look forward to going to some of the events and talking to some of the people. But previously — and the minister just said again today — you know, to encourage business to get after it. Let us know — let us know. But my question was — and I think we've had this discussion before — but the government — this government — this Liberal government — have they been in communication, have they written letters, have they talked to their federal counterparts in Ottawa and expressed concerns over this? That was kind of my question.

I agree that everybody needs to work on this. We need to work together on it, but I'm just wondering what the government has done. Have they sent a letter right after or what? That is what I was looking for.

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Our officials do a great job of continuing to voice our concerns. There is a briefing table and some of it is done in confidence between officials. We had officials — I believe even in the last couple weeks — who



travelled out to sit at our bilateral tables. Mostly the focus has been, in the short run, on the *Canadian Free Trade Agreement*, but we continue to voice our concerns any opportunity we get. One of the things that even pre-midterms and before the agreement was in place, the commitment that I had made at a personal level was to ensure that we used this platform now to Minister Freeland in conversation about ensuring that we could get as many policymakers in western Canada who are part of the PNWER family here so that we could continue this dialogue.

So two parts to that: to continue to focus on the tariffs — so if the question is if I have specifically spoken to the federal minister about my concerns around key issues, the answer is yes. Do I think there needs to be an ongoing dialogue? Yes, I do. I had that opportunity in calls with Minister Freeland. Of course, we have concluded our free trade agreement since then, but there is still concern about what is going to happen after the mid-term elections.

**Mr. Istchenko:** There has been much expansion of cellular service in the Whitehorse periphery and in the Yukon communities. It would not have happened without the support of the Yukon government over the years. Cellular expansion has been a significant benefit to Yukoners in terms of convenience, economic opportunities and, most importantly, access to emergency services in times of need. The Official Opposition has inquired numerous times about the government's plan to support the next stage of cell service expansion to all communities with a significant population — of course, including Junction 37, Grizzly Valley, Deep Creek, Fox Lake, Ibx Valley, Mendenhall and Champagne — and as we grow.

Are there any new developments and/or dollars for this service expansion?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** I want to thank our officials for concluding the work that the previous government undertook under a program that was in existence. The total expenditure was, I think, on the government's side, about \$400,000. That concluded — I hope, Mr. Chair, when you are driving to your home riding, that the cellular service in Stewart has improved. I think there was some tweaking that had to be done initially. I know that you ensured that I was made aware that things had to be tweaked on that particular piece.

The newest information would be that the CRTC is looking at key priorities. Part of our discussion that took place — the member opposite might have remembered that he had an opportunity to criticize me for not attending a meeting. There were two hours of the meeting that I did not get to go to. At the other part of the meeting that I was in attendance for, this was a topic that came up.

There is a significant expenditure that is being identified. I think it is in the range of \$750 million and really, at this point, CRTC is trying to come up with the mechanism and the criteria and the terms of reference on how to allocate that. The early indication is that it would be providing infrastructure in Canada along infrastructure arteries — highways — so if you go through that list that was just identified by the member opposite, whether it be Junction 37, communities along the

Klondike Highway or the Alaska Highway — I don't know the perspective yet about how broad that is, but I think there is a pathway for it.

I will say, when the Member for Lake Laberge brings forward his concerns — and I should not be remiss; you need to remember that the Member for Kluane has been a great advocate for the communities he represents and has touched on the Champagne piece on a couple of occasions. I have gone and spoken with Northwestel on this topic. There is the potential to upgrade — I apologize for my lack of technical terminology, but essentially to use existing infrastructure but to improve some of the power and strength of that so that certain communities may — I think the member opposite and I probably could tell you which tree between Mendenhall and Otter Falls you can get cell service at or not. There is a little area within there near the Tay Lake turnoff or whatever, and then there's another space, so it's probably just extending there, and then just past what many of us would say is the sod farm toward Grizzly Valley, you would be in a position where you would maybe lose cell service.

How can we extend some of the existing infrastructure? I think it is important, as the member opposite said, to take into consideration the health and safety of community members. As we see different projects in the resource sector and the tourism sector continue to expand, how do we make sure that our corridors also provide safe networks where people can stay in touch in times of need?

**Mr. Istchenko:** Sticking with cell coverage: Can the minister provide a status update on the 4G mobile service expansion in the Yukon?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** As stated, the work that we did — that was the conclusion of that existing program, and now we are looking to see some decisions made by CRTC to move forward. The goal is to ensure that there is connectivity across the country. When you look at particular — our officials are sharing that it is.

So CRTC did announce the funding for the enhanced fibre coverage, including cell coverage on major roads, but we were still waiting for details after our Vancouver session. There is a real inequity across the north when you take into consideration the quality of service, especially in Nunavut.

I will endeavour to make sure that I get back to the House as soon as we are made aware — with public information about what is going to take place. I look at our path forward as focusing on the new program versus the previous — what we would call the 4G program — but looking at what is going to happen over the next number of years through the reallocation of this \$750 million and how that can help our Yukon highways and infrastructure — our arteries.

**Mr. Istchenko:** That concludes my questions for today. I want to thank the staff for providing support to the minister today and the minister for his answers.

I will turn the floor over to the Leader of the Third Party.

**Ms. Hanson:** I just have a few questions for the minister on the supplementary budget and one other area.

In reviewing the information with respect to the film locations incentive fund, I had a couple of questions. When I

look at the website, I see that the most recent annual report was for last year, 2016-17. A question would be: When will their current report be available for 2017-18?

Can the minister confirm the status of the review that I believe was mentioned in the spring budget debate with respect to this overall programming area?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** I am just going to request the patience of the Leader of the Third Party. We were just under the wire. The Yukon Trappers Association, UnFURled and associated projects — just to touch on that last lingering question from the Official Opposition — \$53,479 in the 2017-18 budget, and this 2018-19 budget is supporting it with \$13,370. We are continuing that particular partnership.

As for the report, I will reach out to the department to see when it is going to be posted. I have signed off on it. The report has been completed. It was very well done by the team in the media unit. I have read through it. I know that there were a couple of things I had. They requested my signature. It just probably needs to be uploaded, but it has been completed. It will lay out the funding that has been in place for the last fiscal year.

For the film fund review, which was the second part to the question, the goal is to support a prosperous and diversified Yukon economy. We are reviewing our film and media funding programs. In partnership with the Screen Production Yukon Association, SPYA, we have developed terms of reference and a project charter to guide the review. I am happy to be working with those talented individuals.

The public consultation was expected to launch in October 2018, but I believe it is underway. I would have to see when the conclusion is, but I know that it has been undertaken. Our goal is to ensure that our funding programs are flexible and compatible with ever-changing technology and that they meet the identified needs of Yukoners making a living in this industry.

Just a bit of background — in supporting media production in Yukon, we are also supporting the growth and diversification of an industry that is sustainable and provides good-paying jobs for Yukoners. I had the opportunity a long time ago to work part-time in that industry. What we are seeing now is something to be really proud of. When you think of the positions on-site, you normally would have grip work, which is technical but labour-oriented, and then you have people working on props or catering in different areas. What we saw on this last film that we had an opportunity to fund — it was the German production — was that we had an assistant director on the site — a Yukoner. It was great to be there on the set and to see Yukoners in key roles now. That is the important thing, because they build their own capacity while they are on-site — to see somebody in an AD role. Over the years, people left to increase their capacity and now they are coming home. We are seeing a large growth.

I think I have a meeting with SPYA as well to talk about the review. I know that the Yukon Film Society has reached out and wants to have a discussion with me. I do want to thank the Yukon Film Society. They did a showing yesterday of three movies. I had an opportunity to take my son to the

2:00 p.m. showing. It is phenomenal and great work that they do. Once again, all of these important organizations — and then partnering with the Arts Centre yesterday. We are underway with the review and look forward to this continued discussion with the industry.

**Ms. Hanson:** Can the minister tell us when the review be completed, and will it be done in time to have an impact, one way or the other, with respect to budget 2019?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** I am just endeavouring to get the concluding date of that.

Will it potentially affect the budget? I think we will have to wait and see the results of this to see if it will affect our budget.

The one piece that I will share is that I think part of the dialogue — I don't want to premeditate the findings, but one thing that I have heard from a number of individuals in the industry is that the industry has changed so much — the medium that is being used, the expectations in the digital content that is being produced, how people can use it, what all of the elements toward the film are and then the digital content that is built as part of that package that kind of gives an overview of the film. It will be completed by the middle of November. That is the date. We are getting to that point now. We are almost in conclusion, and then we will sit down and take a look at the findings.

I will make a commitment to the member. There are lots of different priorities from different members of the community that we are speaking with, but if we feel that we can make some changes in an appropriate manner that can lead to a more client-centred approach and to support the industry and if we can undertake that work, looking to the next fiscal year's budget — I know those are things that we will most definitely take into consideration. But we are really excited to just see the findings and see what the industry is telling us that they need or what we may be missing in supporting them.

**Ms. Hanson:** I thank the minister for his response.

Will the minister table the terms of reference for this review? In particular, I am interested in ensuring that the terms of reference have some reference to the value added of the jobs created in Yukon and what assessment criteria are contained in the terms of reference in terms of the review of this programming area — basically to ascertain whether we are getting value for money and whether or not, as the minister seems to allude to, this is an area that should seek further investment. I probably have no doubt that it is true, but I would like to be able to have some evidence to that effect before we support it or not.

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** I would like to provide a hard yes, but I would like to have a discussion with our partners who have helped us to define the terms of reference. I don't think that there would be any discomfort at all. I think that it is a good question. We will speak to them, and I am sure we will get support and be able to table the terms of reference, which are essentially our questions and our focus on the review — not a problem.

**Ms. Hanson:** I just have some general questions. I would like to ask the minister for an update on the delivery of the immigration programs in the Department of Economic Development since that program area has made its transition from Education to Economic Development under the business industry development program and the business nominee program.

I am asking these questions because I don't see any data or stats on the website. How many business nominees have there been this fiscal year so far?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Concerning the Yukon business nominee program — the entrepreneurs and investors arriving in Yukon through the Yukon business nominee program, of course, inject new talent and innovative ideas to increase job opportunities and enhance economic diversification and growth in the Yukon. The program has successfully attracted businesses and entrepreneurs to the hospitality, service, tourism, arts and agricultural sectors in Dawson, Mayo, Faro, Haines Junction and Whitehorse.

The business nominee program operates under an agreement and annex with the Government of Canada to allow the Government of Yukon to accept prospective immigrants with proven business skills to work, live and settle in Yukon.

Just a bit of background — I know the member opposite is probably very well aware of all the details, but just for those who are not familiar with the program — participants are required to contribute a minimum of \$300,000 to their businesses and have a minimal verifiable net worth of \$500,000. Since 2004, nominees have invested about \$17.86 million into their businesses. From 2015 to August 2018, there have been seven new businesses and eight candidates nominated for permanent residence over the last three years. So that is it — there have been seven.

What I have had the opportunity to see — there are, of course, some businesses locally, great contributors to the local economy here. But what we are starting to see, which is really exciting, are individuals on the agricultural side — some extremely talented people who have done amazing things in the work they have done in the digital economy or construction and who are now moving here to work in agriculture. They have moved to areas like Mayo and Faro, and I'm pretty excited to see that happen.

**Ms. Hanson:** Could the minister clarify: Of the \$300,000 contribution that business nominees are required to make, does Yukon retain any portion of that?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** No, I believe that it is a straight investment into the business opportunity.

**Ms. Hanson:** I'm sure the minister knows why I asked that question just with respect to the debacle in Prince Edward Island where we had 800 business nominees registered at one hotel, and the province was charging \$200,000 and keeping \$50,000, which caused a federal investigation into the situation.

How many workers were admitted under the express entry stream to hire a foreign worker?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** The Yukon express entry — just for a bit of background, in January 2015, the express entry was

introduced by Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada as a new way of managing the entry of skilled workers into Canada. It is intended to create a fast and flexible economic immigration system. In March 2015, the department launched the new stream within the Yukon nominee program called the "Yukon express entry", which mirrors the federal program.

I'm just looking to see if I have the exact number of individuals.

The IRCC — Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada — increased the number of annual nominations for Yukon — just our total amount allowed — by 60 for the Yukon express entry candidates, bringing the annual allocation for all Yukon nominee program streams to 250. To date, we have had 25 individuals who go through the express entry.

Also, maybe just to go a little bit further, the Yukon nominee program, which I just touched on as part of that, administers the critical impact worker, the skilled worker and the express entry streams of the Yukon nominee program, and it helps employers fill positions crucial to the viability of their business with foreign nationals who intend to become permanent residents of Canada. Since 2007, the YNP has assisted 385 employers, addressing labour shortages. There have been about 1,250 nominees to date, and most nominees are in the food service, tourism and hospitality industries and in early childhood education.

I will share with the member opposite and the Assembly that the one area where we have been getting a lot of requests is for that seasonal workforce. In certain communities, it has been really difficult this last year. Mostly in the tourism sector we've seen requests, and they've been coming from some of our larger communities in Yukon and also from organizations in Whitehorse that have had a really difficult time maximizing their potential. Of course, that is so important because of the short season, but is really because of some labour shortages. In many communities, I have spoken with owners of organizations and had a discussion about housing. In some of those communities the owners have said no, it's getting the individuals there. They do have places for people to stay, but they need to find more staff.

In Atlantic Canada, there was a pilot project that was undertaken. It was discussed at immigration ministers' meetings really to support the resource with the seafood industry as well as agriculture. There have been some challenges where certain seasons are two or three months long and, if there is flexibility, that's been one of the conversations — can there be flexibility so that the same individual can then work in another type of sector in your community, but under seasonal? I know our officials continue to have consistent discussions on a plethora of issues with Canada to ensure that we can also support our economy and our local businesses, while always respecting the fact that we want to make sure that Yukoners have the first opportunity to seek those opportunities, yet make sure that we can still run businesses with the appropriate efficiency.

**Ms. Hanson:** I thank the minister for that. The business market and trade-ready training programs for Yukon tourism

businesses — can the minister tell us how many Yukon tourism businesses have accessed this program? Has there been an assessment done of this program in terms of value to participants? I'm curious.

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** Sorry; can I get the member to just ask that question one more time?

**Ms. Hanson:** The business market and trade-ready training program is for Yukon tourism businesses. It's under Economic Development — that's curious to me — so I wanted to know how many Yukon tourism businesses have accessed this training. Has there been an assessment by Economic Development of its value to participants?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** I think we had an opportunity in the earlier questions from the Official Opposition to go through this in its entirety. I'm not going to go through it again — I wouldn't do that to the member opposite. On our specific financial support for the sector as it pertains to a number of different tourism initiatives, I will endeavour to get back to see how many organizations are using this particular program of training. I know that we provide it from time to time, but let me endeavour — it hasn't been a discussion point with the officials and me, so if it's listed and it's not being used, I will endeavour to find that out. If it has been used, I will find out the statistical information for the member opposite on that topic.

**Ms. Hanson:** I raised the question because I have been around for a while. I saw this program listed on the website. It appears to be mostly done through online and — whatever. It is self-directed. I just don't know what kind of assessment it is and how long it has been around. The question I am asking is: Is it value for money?

I want to move on to the business incentive program and the rebates to contractors. As we know, those rebates are for contractors working on eligible Government of Yukon contracts to hire Yukon residents and to use Yukon manufactured goods and services. There is a labour rebate for three broad categories: Yukon apprentices, Yukon labour and Yukon youth labour.

Can the minister tell me: In each of those categories, how many employees and how many are apprentices? How much is Yukon labour in terms of the number and the number of Yukon youth workers who this program has supported in this past year?

**Hon. Mr. Pillai:** I am going to go through the dollar values, and I will go through the organizations. Then I will provide the breakdown concerning the number of apprentices and youth. I know I have gone through some of that data and read through it — probably more is on some of my internal briefing notes — but I can certainly go through the program just to see. Of course, you have to be eligible for these different funds.

First of all, for the major projects in 2017-18, the Yukon government construction contracts — the Salvation Army building was \$482,000 and the general contractor was Narrow Gauge Contracting. The labour rebate is \$161,495.71. I know Klondike Welding received \$3,157, Keith Plumbing and Heating was \$73,101 and Narrow Gauge was \$85,236 — I'm

sorry — the exact numbers for the apprentice rebates were \$103,475. \$33,000 of that went to Keith Plumbing and Heating — and a little bit more, and Narrow Gauge was \$70,000. The youth rebates for that particular project was \$6,529.41, and that was Narrow Gauge.

To conclude, the manufacturing rebates were \$210,000. Kilrich received \$25,879.48, Kareway Homes received \$62,935.72, Keith Plumbing and Heating received \$51,690, and Klondike Welding received \$70,295.40. The goods and services contract was specifically Klondike Welding at \$77,000. We can do the breakdown for you. I think it's probably one youth, based on that number — I will have to check. We can get the number of apprentices who are associated with those rebates.

**Chair:** Is there any further general debate?

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

***On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures***

*On Business and Industry Development*

*Business and Industry Development in the amount of \$956,000 agreed to*

*On Total of Other Operation and Maintenance*

*Total of Other Operation and Maintenance in the amount of nil cleared*

***Total Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$956,000 agreed to***

***On Capital Expenditures***

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

***Total Expenditures in the amount of \$956,000 agreed to Department of Economic Development agreed to***

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

*Recess*

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

The matter before the Committee is Vote 10, Public Service Commission.

Is there any general debate?

**Public Service Commission**

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the deputy minister, Pam Muir, and Kim Brant into the Legislative Assembly to help me this afternoon.

I'm going to take this opportunity this afternoon to speak to the Public Service Commission's supplementary estimates for 2018-19. There were two changes in the Public Service Commission's supplementary amounts. They result in a total increase of \$4,846,000.

The first change is a one-time increase of \$200,000 for expenditures related to negotiating two collective agreements. This fiscal year, the collective agreements with both the Yukon Teachers' Association and Yukon Employees' Union are being renewed. These additional expenses relate to hiring

a chief negotiator and increased branch administrative costs in support of these negotiations.

The second change is an increase of \$4,646,000 for the employee future benefits fund. The employee future benefits fund covers the cost of benefits to be paid to Yukon government employees when they leave the organization or retire. This amount is an estimate based on regular actuarial review and varies each year depending on factors such as accumulated service, wage rates and demographic factors such as rate of retirement. When the employee future benefits amount is calculated for the main estimates, it has to be based on an actuarial review from the previous year. When a more recent actuarial review is received, the expense is then revised based on the latest information.

In this case, the updated figures from the actuarial review resulted in an increase in the employee future benefits fund amount.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chair, for this opportunity to share the details of the supplementary estimates for the Public Service Commission. With that, I will leave it to my esteemed colleagues to ask some questions.

**Mr. Hassard:** I would like to thank the minister for his opening remarks, and I would also like to thank the officials for being here today to help assist the minister with these brutally tough questions that we have for him this afternoon.

The first question is: Would the minister be able to tell us how many employees have utilized the whistle-blower legislation this year?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** I thank the member opposite for the question. The *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act*, as I am certainly sure members are aware, is a mechanism for addressing serious wrongdoings that may be committed within a public entity covered by the act and affords specific reprisal protections to employees of those entities.

The act obligations of each public entity include the obligation to ensure wide communication to their employees about the act, including how to disclose a wrongdoing. The Public Service Commission works closely with the Ombudsman, who is now the Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner, to coordinate act implementation and communicate activities.

So the member opposite is asking how many employees have used the *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act* this year. I think he referred to it as the whistle-blowing legislation. To be honest, we don't know how many individuals in departments have used that piece of legislation this year. It is reported by the Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner in their annual report. So we don't know across the organization or its Crown corporations how many people actually used the act this year, but that information will be revealed in the annual report of the Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner when they file that report sometime at the end of the year.

**Mr. Hassard:** Would the minister be able to update the House on what the government has done to strengthen protections for whistle-blowers, Mr. Deputy Chair?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** The member opposite has asked, if I am to understand correctly, what we have done to communicate more clearly to employees how to actually access the act and what their rights are. In addition to briefings offered to public entities and specific communication delivered to all Yukon government employees, the Public Service Commission has also prepared and posted on our internal and external websites extensive material about the act that all public entities could reference and use for their own communication purposes. For the benefit of our public servants, the Public Service Commission is working with departments to enhance our communications and offer greater guidance across the Yukon government, including development of guidelines for supervisors and employees that public entities can use.

Throughout the Yukon government, we have done many things across departments. For example, in Community Services, all employees were e-mailed through the deputy minister's office. Discussions have been held with department managers. Information will be prominently displayed on their corporate Internet, which is now under development.

In Economic Development, all departmental staff were e-mailed with information and links about the *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act*. In Education, *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act* procedures have been shared with departmental human resource unit staff and discussed at team meetings. Information and links have been e-mailed to departmental managers and supervisors.

In Energy, Mines and Resources, the executive committee team e-mailed information and links to all staff. A summary of the *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act* information has been sent in a weekly staff newsletter to all Energy, Mines and Resources employees. A *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act* link was added to the employee information page, and a *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act* link was also added to the Energy, Mines and Resources site for managers.

In Environment, a *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act* snapshot document was shared in August via the departmental intranet. The departmental directive on *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act* was updated and signed by the deputy minister in October. All directives are posted on the Environment intranet and are part of an on-boarding process for all new employees.

In the Executive Council Office, the *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act* employee information page link is now on the Executive Council Office's intranet home page. The deputy minister has shared *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act* information with all staff by e-mail on September 11 and provided links to the Public Service Commission's one-page snapshot, Executive Council Office's *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act* guide for employees and the Yukonconnect page on disclosing a wrongdoing.

In Finance, the *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act* information communication was sent to all staff through a departmental blog. The Finance *Public Interest Disclosure of*

*Wrongdoing Act* activities are accurately recorded and they are planning on resending this information on the staff blog and through a “finance-all” e-mail. They are planning that in early December.

In Health and Social Services, the executive committee team e-mailed information and links to all staff.

In Highways and Public Works, a department-wide e-mail was sent out by the deputy minister to all staff on August 14, 2018. Plans are to send information and links to departmental managers and supervisors to present at staff meetings. We are going to post *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act* snapshot documents in common spaces and on departmental intranet sites and provide information to all new employees as part of an on-boarding process.

In Justice, information was e-mailed to all staff and has been posted to a blog on their internal website.

In the Public Service Commission, a blog post and an e-mail was sent to all departmental staff alerting them to the Public Service Commission’s updated guideline document. A brochure, entitled *Public Interest Disclosure*, was provided to all new employees with on-boarding documents, and there is a link to the brochure also provided on the Public Service Commission’s intranet home page.

In Tourism and Culture, the deputy minister discussed the *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act*, its importance and how to report any incidents to Tourism and Culture staff at the April 27, 2018, all-staff meeting. In June 2018, there was a deputy minister blog post on the Tourism and Culture talk which was e-mailed to all Tourism and Culture employees with information links to additional information. In September, the *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act* guide was posted on the Tourism and Culture intranet site. Also in September, the DM sent an e-mail to all staff directing them to the intranet site.

In the Women’s Directorate, the director sent an e-mail to staff about the *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act* information. The staff meeting scheduled for October 9 that had to be postponed due to absences was scheduled for November 6, so that has probably happened. I will follow up to see if that has actually happened.

At the Workers’ Compensation Health and Safety Board, all staff were advised on the *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act* at tailgate meetings. *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act* information has been posted on workers’ compensation bulletin boards. A link to an employee info *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act* page has been posted on the internal safety net site and plans are to add to the PPP — personal performance plan and professional development plan document review checklist for this year.

At Yukon Housing Corporation, the president included information in the monthly newsletter to all corporation staff. It was brought forward at all tailgate meetings. It is included in the orientation process for new employees and has been placed as a resource on the Yukon Housing Corporation human resource intranet website.

Yukon Liquor Corporation has created its own *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act* guide. It is modelled

on the Public Service Commission’s document. It has posted that guide on an employee SharePoint page, along with a poster and frequently asked questions. It has sent an e-mail to all YLC staff to raise awareness for all Yukon Liquor Corporation employees and supervisors about the *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act* and to raise awareness about the process for disclosing a wrongdoing. Augmented posters are already on display in the Yukon Liquor Corporation head office. Posters will also be sent to all stores and the distribution centre for posting to staff areas and bulletin boards. There will be further awareness of the *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act* at all Yukon Liquor Corporation staff town hall meetings in October. Managers and supervisors are going to be briefed at the upcoming management team meetings. That is what we have done on the *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act* so far.

I am going to put in a plug for the new on-boarding website which has been developed. It is government-wide to provide resources to all employees coming on to Yukon government. It is one of the efficiencies we are trying to do where the Public Service Commission is providing a template — an on-boarding tool — for all departments so that it is more consistent and we don’t have to go through this process in every department and have every department develop their own on-boarding procedures. We are starting to have a central repository of this information for new employees. On that new on-boarding website, it has information and links to the *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act*.

I will leave it there for now, Mr. Deputy Chair.

**Mr. Hassard:** Following reports that a department sent plumbers into some government offices to look through their things, can the minister tell us what his department has done to follow up on these serious allegations, Mr. Deputy Chair?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** Could the Leader of the Official Opposition please repeat his question? I missed the first part of it; I’m sorry.

**Mr. Hassard:** I will speak very clearly and slowly. Following reports that a department sent plumbers into some government offices to look through their things, can the minister tell us what his department has done to follow up on these serious allegations?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** I am sure the member opposite understands that, as a minister responsible for a department and as the Minister responsible for the Public Service Commission, I am not going to weigh in on individual cases or individual incidents within the public service. This isn’t the appropriate forum for such talks.

To get to the member opposite’s question, it speaks to how people conduct themselves in the civil service, and that I can address in very general terms. From the point of view of a civil servant — I expect our civil servants to be professional. You know, Mr. Deputy Chair, I am very lucky to say that we have a very professional, very conscientious and very thoughtful civil service. I am very happy to be working with them and to have the opportunity to represent them. As the Minister responsible for the Public Service Commission, I am always exceedingly pleased and often humbled by their

commitment to public service and to serving the people of the territory in a thoughtful and conscientious way.

They go above and beyond the call of duty in many cases to serve citizens of this territory, be it in Highways and Public Works and working with the roads, in the Public Service Commission dealing with HR issues or in Education with our teachers and administrators. There are just so many examples. You could go on all afternoon. I am sure all of us could do the very same thing. It is just a real pleasure to be able to work with such people.

That said, since my time coming into this role, I have noticed that there are lapses or things we were missing — foundational pieces within the civil service — that will help us conduct ourselves into the future. For one thing, this institution doesn't have a code of conduct. Over the summer and early fall of this year, the Public Service Commission has been developing and consulting on a code of conduct for Yukon government employees. This initiative is part of our government's commitment to promote and support a professional and merit-based civil service. We already have many policies in place to guide the ethical and expected behaviour of our public servants. The code of conduct will draw from, integrate and build upon those existing policies — again, compile them all together so they are not scattered across government. We want to put them in one place to provide a good resource for our civil servants.

Many Canadian provinces, national governments and professional organizations employ conduct codes to set standards for their workforces. The draft code of conduct is currently undergoing an internal review. I look forward to seeing it established in the near future.

There is that underway, and that will certainly help our civil servants and their managers to understand what is expected of them in the future, and that certainty will often, I think, be reassuring to many people.

We also have performance management in government. We want to — we do value — I hope I've been fairly clear in that expression of support for the astounding and exemplary work by so many of our civil servants on a daily basis. We support our employees and the achievement of our public service priorities and objectives.

So the eligibility criteria for performance pay merit increases are set out in the terms and conditions of employment for Yukon government employees, which are posted on the public website. Performance plans are tools the Yukon government, as an employer, uses to set out goals and expectations for employees and for monitoring and reporting on performance generally. Satisfactory performance and conduct is essential to employees' performance pay or merit increment considerations, and deputy heads are responsible for ensuring that the performance pay or merit pay activities are carried out appropriately in all departments.

There are methods we use to manage the civil service effectively, to reward them, to reward our civil servants for the great work they do on a daily basis — and we're providing some guidance now as to what our expectations are so that they're clear for our employees so they know what is expected

of them — and compiling that information in a central location will be helpful for all.

**Mr. Hassard:** Would the minister be able to tell us today how many deputy heads have or are in the process of hiring senior advisor positions?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** I don't have that information at hand, but I will endeavour to get it for the member opposite.

**Mr. Hassard:** When the minister is getting that information, I was hoping that maybe he would be able to get me the following information as well. I'm curious about the number of vacancies in government positions throughout the Yukon and if we can get it broken down by community, as well as by department. I don't expect the minister to have that information here today, but last year he did provide it in the form of a legislative return, so I'm wondering if the minister feels that would be possible again.

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** I will endeavour to get the member opposite an answer to that question.

**Mr. Hassard:** I appreciate that from the minister, if he could do that.

During the group home scandal earlier this year, the government made some pretty bold statements about the quality of media reporting. I believe that the Minister of Justice, in fact, told the House that what's in the media isn't necessarily true.

The Premier did an interview on a CBC afternoon program where he said that the media wasn't dealing in facts. As you know, Mr. Deputy Chair, some of these were very serious allegations coming from some whistle-blowers within the public service. I think it is a very brave thing for a public servant to come forward in that type of situation — yet when those people hear from the Minister of Justice suggesting that the reports coming from the whistle-blowers aren't accurate, I believe that it sends a rather chilling message to public servants.

When a senior member of the government comes out and essentially throws concerned public servants under the bus, it definitely sends the wrong message. I am curious if the minister could tell us, with respect to the group home scandal, what were the lessons learned by the government on how to respond to whistle-blowers? Has Cabinet changed their process to ensure that they don't suggest public servants are not telling the truth in the future?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** I thank the member opposite for the question this afternoon, because this is information that we went over quite a bit last fall in the wake of the public discussion about group homes in the Yukon. At the time, and I will say it again, we encourage employees to bring forward issues or ideas on how we can improve services for Yukoners.

I worked in the media for many years, and I am sure that is no surprise or a statement that is going to shock the member opposite: I fully understand the media's role, respect it and I won't be in any way critical of that institution. I think it is a very important institution for this territory, and I know the work it does in this territory and across the country is essential to our democracy, to our public governance and to society as a whole. It is an incredibly important institution for our society.

That said, it is a blunt instrument. When we hear reports in the community about incidents happening from the point of view of a government, we need information that is much more precise than what we will often receive in the media. The media will flag an issue — and it does so very well — but in terms of dealing with those issues, we need more information than we often receive from the media — dates, times, individuals, places and things that happened — precise details that will allow us to go in and start to investigate properly the matters at hand. I don't think that is a criticism of the media — that is just an acknowledgement of some of its shortcomings of detail that can happen.

As I said, that certainly is not a criticism; that's just a fact of life and one that I know very, very well.

If an employee of a public entity believes that there is a serious wrongdoing and that a serious wrongdoing has been committed or is about to be committed, they can seek advice or make a disclosure of wrongdoing under the *Public Interest Disclosure of Wrongdoing Act* and be reprisal protected for doing so.

At the same time, we need to be clear that coming forward does not excuse any rule-breaking that there may be or may have been on the part of the person making that disclosure. That's an important point to note as well.

We are working — as I have gone through earlier this afternoon — to enhance our communication and guidance to employees and supervisors on the act to bolster the efforts in that regard so that, when people come forward, they know what their rights and responsibilities are under this piece of legislation. Through doing so, I think you will see a changing culture within the Yukon government as they begin to understand how this relatively new piece of legislation works and how it interacts with the workplace.

On the floor of this House right now, I am not going to comment on any related investigations that may have happened or were underway at the Public Service Commission or by the Public Interest Disclosure Commissioner.

We do encourage employees who have concern to come forward. The information on how to do that is now spelled out quite clearly within all departments, as I have noted earlier.

**Mr. Hassard:** I just have one final question. We have heard from a lot of public servants who are concerned with the politicization of the public service under this government. There are individuals who are finding that they are under scrutiny due to their political affiliation or whom they are seen with in public. I believe it has been a bit of a trend, unfortunately.

Last year, we saw the Premier in a media scrum criticize private citizens who are members of industry associations because of their political affiliation or even who their family members were.

Can the minister tell us what this government's policy is with respect to public servants and their political affiliations?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** This territory only works if we have a robust and fear-free political dialogue. I take a very dim view of people being bullied or harassed as a result of their political views. I can assure the member opposite that it is not

something that I abide by in any way, shape or form. We all have political views — or not, I suppose. You are also entitled to not have any. That is perfectly all right.

I have heard of no examples where members have been persecuted. If they have examples, please bring them to my attention and I will do that, but I have no concrete examples. I certainly do not abide by bullying or harassment of civil servants based on their political beliefs. That's not something that is acceptable. It's just not acceptable.

**Mr. Hassard:** I know I said that was my last question, but I don't believe that the minister actually told me what the government's policy is with respect to public servants and their political affiliations.

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** We have a Yukon Human Rights Commission. It is to protect people from harassment, in all its forms, including sexual harassment, which is a societal problem that governments across the country are working to address. As an employer, we do not condone harassment in the workplace. Furthermore, we believe that a respectful workplace is essential for employee morale and well-being and ultimately for the delivery of a quality public service to Yukoners. As legislators — and a proponent of good governance — we are working to provide and improve safeguards to Yukon workers who may be subject to harassment in the workplace.

Our expectation for the respectful and harassment-free conduct of public servants is expressed and enforced by a respectful workplace policy. I hope that clarifies the matter for the member opposite.

**Mr. Hassard:** It certainly doesn't. I'm not talking about harassment in the workplace. The question was, I thought, very specific and very straightforward about the government's policy with respect to public servants and their political affiliations.

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** The member opposite says "persecution"; it is harassment. I've answered that question. There has been no change in policy since we came into office. It is unacceptable. We have a respectful workplace policy. We expect our civil servants to follow it. That is fairly clear.

**Mr. Hassard:** I don't think I'm getting anywhere, but I do want to clear the record. I never at any time said "persecution", so I will leave it at that, Mr. Deputy Chair.

**Ms. Hanson:** I had not intended to go here, but having been a public servant for a very long time, I would be very happy to have the minister put on the record the simple statement of policy with respect to political affiliation and public servants. I'm leading you, Mr. Deputy Chair — I'm leading the minister. Public servants have rights. Could the minister finish that with respect to political affiliation?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** The Yukon *Human Rights Act* — the charter — expressly protects our rights. From the human rights website, it's illegal to discriminate against people on the basis of certain characteristics: ancestry, including colour and race; national origin; ethnic or linguistic background or origin; religion or creed; age; sex, including pregnancy, gender identity or gender expression; sexual orientation; physical or mental disability; criminal charges or criminal record;



political belief, association or activity; marital or family status; source of income; and actual or presumed association with any of the grounds listed above. That's absolutely clear. I don't understand. It's not an issue, Mr. Deputy Chair, and I don't know what else to tell the members opposite.

**Ms. Hanson:** Well, I'll start back where I was going to start. It's unfortunate that the minister can't outline what the Government of Yukon's public policy is with respect to public servants' political affiliation. That is generally standard. There are certain guidelines that are followed with respect to the political activities — or not — that are allowed — or not — for public servants with respect to political parties, and there are those within the large umbrella of the human rights legislation.

I just wanted to go back. I don't think we did welcome Ms. Muir in her first appearance here as the Public Service Commissioner — and other officials.

The minister outlined — and I was pleased to hear him outline — the long list of departments and agencies that have communicated procedures to be followed if public servants believe a wrongdoing has been committed or if they feel they have been unfairly treated as a result of raising concerns about a wrongdoing.

I do not recall him setting out in that long list the Department of Health and Social Services and Yukon Hospital Corporation. Are they covered in that list, and has the PIDWA been communicated? Have the Deputy Minister of Health and Social Services and the CEO of the hospital set out procedures and policies, and what communications were used to convey that in those two entities?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** It was a long list and I can repeat it. I'll repeat the Health and Social Services piece for the member opposite. The Health and Social Services executive committee team emailed information and links to all staff; so Health and Social Services did that globally.

As for the Hospital Corporation, that's outside of the Yukon government's purview. That's managed by the board and its executive. That's for the board of the Hospital Corporation itself as a Crown corporation to e-mail its employees. I don't have information on what the Hospital Corporation has done.

**Ms. Hanson:** I would like to go back — I have asked the minister previously and previous ministers, but I'm hoping that, given that the minister has articulated in a number of statements so far today — improving the performance and the workplace so that public servants can perform to their full potential. I am going to go back and ask the minister for some follow-up with respect to the audit on staffing. I am going to keep asking this until I get an answer from the Minister responsible for the Public Service Commission.

I just want to point out that, as the minister is no doubt aware — and I would assume that by now he has read the government's internal audit of staffing from February 20, 2013. I raise this again because I am hearing echoes of the same concerns, and I do want to know that the minister has plans in place to address these and that he will articulate and set them out for the Legislative Assembly.

The audit at that time, which was an audit that had been underway in terms of identifying the risk to government — and it goes back to 2011. They agreed to do an audit in 2012 and finally published it in February 2013. They found weakness in the human resources regime government-wide to monitor quality in competitive files for staffing, but they found no regime for monitoring quality in non-competitive staffing actions — for example, direct hires, exemptions and temporary and acting assignments. According to the audit, over 60 percent of approximately 1,900 staffing actions could fall into these categories — in other words, 60 percent of the 1,900 staffing actions that were considered to be direct hires, exemptions, temporary and acting assignments. The Public Service Commission at the time argued that many staffing activities carried out under these categories arguably posed limited risk to the organization due to their theoretically limited duration. However, the Audit bureau found concerns: "First, there are indications that these staffing types have been used for periods other than short duration." I am sure that everybody who has been involved in the public service will know that this is a fact. "Second, individuals who obtain employment through exemptions and auxiliaries-on-call can be employed on a permanent or ongoing basis. Given that these types of transactions far outnumber competitive ones, and are subject to significantly fewer rules by their very nature..." — the Audit bureau maintained — "... that the absence of a monitoring regime for non-competitive staffing activities is potentially problematic, and warrants further consideration from the employer."

Is there now a monitoring regime for non-competitive staffing activities across the public service? If so, how is it communicated and how is it being deployed?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** That is a very specific question from the Leader of the Third Party. I appreciate it, and I will endeavour to get an answer to her.

**Ms. Hanson:** I do appreciate the minister's undertaking to get back to me. I will point out that it is not the first time I have asked this question of this minister. I have referenced this particular audit a number of times because I think it is particularly important — and, Mr. Deputy Chair, it is absolutely consistent with this government's own Yukon Financial Advisory Panel's recommendations with respect to the HR function in government. I am not going to go on — I am going to come back to this. The minister is on notice that he will be getting in-depth questions on this whole particular area and how both the findings of this six-year-old audit plus the Financial Advisory Panel with respect to the HR function are addressed.

I would just like to go back to the supplementary estimate. I would just like the minister to explain — we are seeing a 25-percent increase in the employee future benefits. The minister said and I understand that this is due to actuarial assessment calculations. This is a significant increase. How often is a 25-percent increase seen in employee future benefits? Is that an annual increase or is this a catch-up of some sort? Could the minister please provide an explanation?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** The actuarial review is done every year so this isn't catch-up or keep-up. This is based on an actuarial review that is done every year and this is the adjustment that the actuaries have asked us to make for this year. I believe the total number is \$11 million and change — about \$100,000 in non-pension post-retirement benefits. That is an increase of \$4.8 million. This records the future liability of retirees and eligible current employees for extended health and life insurance. Amounts are determined by that yearly actuarial estimate. It reflects the length of service and the age of the public servant — that whole algorithm that the actuaries use.

**Ms. Hanson:** I understand that. That is why I said I understood that it was based on actuarial assessment. It was roughly a 25-percent increase this year, and I asked him how often we see a 25-percent increase. Has that been the pattern each year over the last five years, or are we starting to see a dramatic increase?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** The member opposite has drawn attention to the increase this year. Most of that comes through the extended health care, so those are benefits that flow to people who retire. If we have more retirees, that number is going to go up. Over the last five years, it has varied. In some years, this is a larger increase and probably reflects the larger retirees we have coming out of the civil service.

**Ms. Hanson:** I want to get an update from the minister. When we spoke in the spring, I asked questions with respect to Respectful Workplace office, and the minister indicated there was a steering committee that had been established that was a union government committee. It included the Public Service Commissioner, YEU and YTA. There was an evaluation piece that was being done on the Respectful Workplace office, and they had not developed the evaluation criteria or methodology as of yet — that was in the spring. Could the minister set out for the House what the evaluation criteria are? Have they been established? As he noted at that time, there was going to be some setting out of the objectives, the measurables and the scope of an evaluation for the RWO.

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** The respectful workplace policy came into effect in April 2013. A commitment was made to evaluate the policy and appropriate dispute resolution processes used by the Respectful Workplace office after five years of operation. As the member noted, we are in the process of that. The evaluation has two components: the evaluation itself and a client survey. The evaluation framework was established in 2013 and identified performance indicators based on capturing quantitative data, such as the number and types of complaints received by a department and branch.

The committee overseeing this work is a union management team, so it is collaborative. The evaluation will also be informed by other data, including but not limited to: the results from four employee engagement surveys in 2011, 2013, 2016 and now in 2018; key informant interviews; workshop evaluations; and the client survey. The client survey was developed in close collaboration with the Yukon Bureau of Statistics. It queries clients on the principles of the

appropriate dispute resolution practice, timeliness and feeling heard; the ADR process they were engaged in and their satisfaction with the same and their satisfaction with the outcome of the process. The survey was administered by the Bureau of Statistics, and that institution will tabulate the data to provide the evaluator. That will then provide the data analysis, and recommendations will be made based on that analysis. The Respectful Workplace office will not have access to this data.

I can say that approximately 650 current employees received this survey and there was almost a 50-percent response.

**Ms. Hanson:** We will look forward to the final product.

When we were debating the mains in the spring, I asked questions with respect to the employee assistance program. The minister indicated at the time that an RFP had been put out and there would be an announcement soon.

It is no longer Morneau Shepell. Their contract apparently ended on March 31.

Can the minister tell this House: Who has the employee assistance program? What is the length of the contract? How much is the contract and how is it being delivered?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** To begin, I'm just going to go back to the former question and the assessment of the Respectful Workplace office, and that whole process is expected to be completed by the end of December. Just for the member opposite's information; I wanted to say that earlier and it slipped my mind.

The employee and family assistance program was retendered. We had a few bidders on that contract. The successful company was called Family Services Employee Assistance Program; it goes by an acronym — I'm not going to read it. It began its contract with the Yukon government on April 1. The contract is funded on an annual basis and is renewable for three years. I don't have the cost of that contract handy, Mr. Deputy Chair, but I will endeavour to get it to the member opposite.

**Ms. Hanson:** Can the minister tell this House where the Family Services Employee Assistance Program is based out of?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** The company is based out of Vancouver.

**Ms. Hanson:** Does that company based in Vancouver subcontract to any local agency?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** Yes, I do have some information. It does use the services of Many Rivers and it also has other individual representatives here in the Yukon that it also pulls on — so individuals as well.

**Ms. Hanson:** The Family Services Employee Assistance Program agency out of Vancouver that subcontracts to Many Rivers has an annual contract, renewable for three years. Are there criteria associated with the renewal each year, and will the minister table those criteria when he tables the total amount that the contract is for each year?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Chair. The criteria would have been outlined in the contract,

and I will review the contract and endeavour to get an answer to the member opposite.

**Ms. Hanson:** I think I need to paraphrase that because I wasn't really sure what the minister said. I believe he said that he will endeavour to get back to me after he reviews the contract, but he doesn't want to release the criteria. Is that what he is saying with respect to the renewal provisions?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** I said I would review the contract to see what the criteria was and get back to the member opposite.

**Ms. Hanson:** I do look forward to that. When we were speaking in the spring and I asked questions with respect to the representative workforce, the minister indicated that there was a new, revised plan that was in the process of being updated. It had been worked on for almost a year — since 2017-18 — and it would be completed by the end of this calendar year. Can the minister provide the House with confirmation that this new revised representative workforce plan has been completed or if there is a revised date for when it will be completed? When can we anticipate seeing it tabled in the Legislative Assembly?

**Hon. Mr. Mostyn:** We are collaborating with our Yukon First Nation partners through the Yukon Forum to advance the renewal of the representative public service plan. As the member opposite, I think, has noted, the plan has not been comprehensively reviewed since its establishment in 2011. An intergovernmental committee comprised of Yukon First Nation and Yukon government representatives has been formed to co-design the new plan. The committee anticipates that the draft of the renewed plan will be completed by the end of December, with the approval process to begin thereafter. The plan continues to be a priority for both the Yukon government and self-governing First Nations, as demonstrated by its status as a joint priority of the Yukon Forum.

**Deputy Chair:** Is there any further debate on Vote 10, Public Service Commission?

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

**On Operation and Maintenance Expenditures**

**On Labour Relations**

**Labour Relations in the amount of \$200,000 agreed to**

**On Employee Future Benefits**

**Employee Future Benefits in the amount of \$4,646,000 agreed to**

*On Total of Other Operation and Maintenance*

*Total of Other Operation and Maintenance in the amount of nil cleared*

**Total Operation and Maintenance Expenditures in the amount of \$4,846,000 agreed to**

**On Capital Expenditures**

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

**Total Expenditures in the amount of \$4,846,000 agreed to**

**Public Service Commission agreed to**

**Hon. Ms. McPhee:** Mr. Deputy Chair, I move that you report progress with respect to the matters before the House in Committee of the Whole.

**Deputy Chair:** It has been moved by Ms. McPhee that the Chair report progress.

*Motion agreed to*

**Hon. Ms. McPhee:** I move that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

**Deputy Chair:** It has been moved by Ms. McPhee that the Speaker do now resume the Chair.

*Motion agreed to*

*Speaker resumes the Chair*

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

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

### Chair's report

**Mr. Adel:** Mr. Speaker, Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 207, entitled *Second Appropriation Act, 2018-19*, and directed me to report progress.

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

Are you agreed?

**Some Hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Speaker:** I declare the report carried.

**Hon. Ms. McPhee:** 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. tomorrow.

*The House adjourned at 5:15 p.m.*

**The following legislative return was tabled November 13, 2018:**

34-2-169

Response to matter outstanding from discussion with Mr. Hassard related to general debate on Bill No. 207, *Second Appropriation Act, 2018-19* — Old Crow Airport (Mostyn)