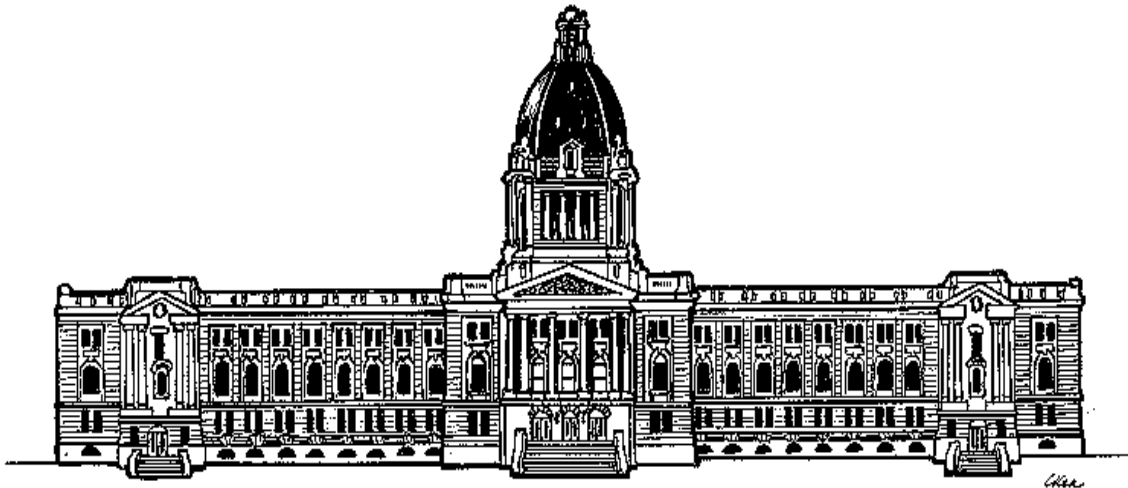




STANDING COMMITTEE ON INTERGOVERNMENTAL AFFAIRS AND JUSTICE

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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON INTERGOVERNMENTAL
AFFAIRS AND JUSTICE**

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Regina Coronation Park

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Mr. Wayne Elhard
Cypress Hills

Ms. Deb Higgins
Moose Jaw Wakamow

Mr. Delbert Kirsch
Batoche

[The committee met at 19:00.]

The Chair: — Well good evening, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to the Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice committee. My name is Warren Michelson. I am the Chair of the committee. Also on the committee tonight is Mr. Wayne Elhard, Mr. Delbert Kirsch, Mr. Greg Brkich, Mr. Michael Chisholm, Ms. Deb Higgins, and sitting in for Mr. Kim Trew is Mr. Warren McCall. Also with us tonight is Buckley Belanger and Tim McMillan.

Welcome back, Mr. Minister, Minister Hutchinson. We're here for the consideration of main and supplementary estimates for the Ministry of First Nations and Métis Relations. Mr. Minister, if you'd like to reintroduce your guests and have any remarks, you can certainly proceed at this time.

**General Revenue Fund
First Nations and Métis Relations
Vote 25**

Subvote (FN01)

Hon. Mr. Hutchinson: — Thank you, Mr. Chair, and good evening members of the committee and others in attendance this evening. In attendance from the ministry we have Mr. Ron Crowe, deputy minister; Mr. James Froh, assistant deputy minister, and that's on the First Nations and Métis affairs division side; Mr. Toby Greschner who is the assistant deputy minister of northern affairs; Mr. Kerry Gray, director of finance; also Mr. Richard Turkheim, executive director of industry and resource development; Mr. Mark LaRocque, executive director, social development; Mr. Doug Howorko, executive director of economic programs and policy; Ms. Seonaid MacPherson, executive director of strategic initiatives; Ms. Trisha Delormier-Hill, executive director, lands and resources; and Ms. Giselle Marcotte, executive director, Aboriginal policy and operations; and also Ms. Bonny Braden, director of communications.

There are a couple of things that we would like to say in the way of introductory comments, specifically to follow up on some of the statements that were made and the questions that were asked in our last adventure yesterday. With respect to legal challenges pertaining to the duty to consult— that was a question that was raised — what sort of court cases have been actually brought against the province? We do have a recent history. There are four of which we are aware.

The first one is Buffalo River Dene versus Canada and Saskatchewan. A statement of claim was initiated some number of years ago, October 17th, 2006, to be exact. And in brief this is claiming an unextinguished Aboriginal title over a traditional territory in northwest Saskatchewan, etc., etc.

Number two is Waterhen Lake Cree Nation versus Canada and Saskatchewan. A statement of claim was initiated February 8th, 2007. So these are both long-standing cases. This particular case, the details are as follows: claiming unextinguished Aboriginal title over traditional territory in northwest Saskatchewan, and on from there. In other words, they're both similar.

Two relatively recent ones as well also exist. And these are in the judicial review stage, so they haven't actually proceeded past that to other parts of the process. White Bear First Nations versus Saskatchewan. February 2009, was when this one was initiated. The First Nation has initiated a judicial review of the Minister of Environment's decision to issue two permits in connection with oil exploration in their area.

And the last one is Kane et al. versus Saskatchewan. A judicial review was initiated in September 2008 on the decision of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs, arguing that consultation with the Métis people in the area of a proposed cottage subdivision was not adequate.

So we have four cases at various stages in the proceedings, Mr. Chair. Two of them recent under the tenure and the office of the current government and two under the office of the previous government. So hopefully that provides the level of detail that members were asking about yesterday.

One other thing that we wanted to say — you know, we didn't have a lot of time in our initial comments; we wanted to get right to questions — but we wanted to concentrate just for a moment or two if we could on the importance of the Year of the Métis. I was asked by an individual recently, how important is this? And I said, to be perfectly honest, I would look at it this way: to those of us who are not Métis, we will never fully appreciate the enormous impact that this has on the Métis population of Saskatchewan. They're absolutely delighted with the recognition, the credibility that the Year of the Métis declaration by the province of Saskatchewan gives to the Métis community in our province today.

Just wanted to make mention of that, and if we have time and interest, we can certainly outline some of the interesting projects that we're becoming involved with in conjunction with the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan. There's in-kind and financial support that's being offered in a large number of ways, and that might form the basis of an interesting question or two if asked. Thank you so much, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. And I just ask the officials again, when you answer a question for the ministry, could you please just identify yourself for Hansard. With that, Mr. Belanger, you've got some questions?

Mr. Belanger: — Yes. Thank you very much. I just want to open my comment that I'm pleased to see the celebration of the Year of the Métis being undertaken. I think it's certainly recognizing the contribution Métis people have made to our province.

But let's get right to the heart of the matter, Mr. Minister. Why didn't your government core fund the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan? I think they were requesting \$1.8 million which is, I think, may represent out of a \$10 billion budget — and I could be corrected on this — point zero one eight of a per cent.

And I mean needless to say, the Métis Nation area directors were left out of the process. They were very upset. And I think the executive themselves basically had their salaries covered and some of their participation as an executive by the federal

government. And the Métis Nation asked for one thing from your government — \$1.8 million to help strengthen the provincial Métis council and start properly funding the area directors.

It's a great celebration. Why didn't your government and you as a minister fight to put that money into the core funding of the Métis Nation?

Mr. Crowe: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Ron Crowe, deputy minister of First Nations and Métis Relations. Just to begin with, as I understand the history, and I believe the province has not provided the kind of core capacity or core funding to the Métis Nation since I think the mid-'80s.

We have of course had some struggles and some challenges over the years. I think what we're proud of and pleased to be part of is the funding that we do provide to the Métis Nation, a total of \$385,000 — 285 which is matched by the Office of the Federal Interlocuter. And that goes to support a couple of relationships that we have, both the bilateral and tripartite relationship that we have, and also with the tripartite including the federal government.

We recognize that there are some capacity issues with the MNS [Métis Nation of Saskatchewan], and certainly we know that there's some issues. I think one of the things that we hope to strengthen in our relationship is the ability to engage on a regular basis and have a better understanding of some of their issues and needs. Certainly one of the first things that we attempted to resolve is the issue around the support for the Métis development institution, and we're really pleased to have been able to provide that type of support. I'll leave it at that for now.

Mr. Belanger: — Thanks. And to the minister, quite frankly, 285,000 is a crying shame for recognizing the Métis and allowing them to participate. The Provincial Métis Council, namely the area directors, are severely neutered. They can't travel. They can't do anything as a Provincial Métis Council. They've been asking your government and being very co-operative and fair to your government, Mr. Minister, and indicating saying, look, we'll work with you. There's so much work to be done on local capacity building, the duty to consult. The stats speak for themselves all through some of our Métis community.

And it's a crying shame, quite frankly, that you get \$280,000 to a group of — what is it? — 13 area directors, Mr. Minister, 13 area directors to travel to do their job. And I said at the outset, I am not impressed not one little bit with the effort of trying to recognize the Métis and the duty to consult, not one little bit.

And I think it's a slap in the face to the Métis people in general when you allow the Métis Nation executive to function as they should, and then you severely neuter and hamper the rest of the Provincial Métis Council, namely the area directors, in doing their job. And then your Premier and you as a minister go out to all this functions and say, look, the duty to consult's something that we're serious about. You are not serious about that because if you were serious about that, Mr. Minister, you would make sure they had the proper resources. You would make sure that they had local capacity building. You would make sure that

they had technical and legal support. You would make sure you had all the above and much more to make sure that they're positioned well, they're positioned well to do their job. And we don't see any evidence whatsoever of that effort.

And I think that this whole notion of going through the motions of duty to consult between your Minister of Agriculture and your Premier and your Minister of the Environment and your Minister of Energy and Mines and your Minister of First Nations and Métis Relations, there's no coordination whatsoever. And I think you guys got the wrong language. It wasn't duty to insult; it was duty to consult. And if your government was deadly serious about some of these things, then you'd really make sure that they had the adequate resources.

First Nations are not happy with this duty to consult. They're not happy in the least bit. And as you're issuing permit after permit either to Agriculture or to SERM [Saskatchewan Environment and Resource Management] or through Energy and Mines, where's the First Nations? And more particular, where are the Métis Nation executive that could sit down and be a true part of this process? Well I hope that they're not hitchhiking to meetings based on the amount of commitment that you've given them to operate their nation.

Now we look at the whole notion of talking about commitment. And that's the problem with your government, Mr. Minister, is that you talk the talk, but you don't walk the walk when it comes to properly financing the Métis people. We don't see any, and I don't see any evidence of your commitment. And next time you take a jig at some Métis event, to me I think it goes a long way to show people that he's prepared to go and jig, but man oh man when it's time to issue a paycheque, guess what? No-show Jones.

So, Mr. Speaker, Mr. Chair, I think what's important, what's important is that these folks have simply asked for point zero one eight per cent. That's less than . . . Point zero one eight, that's not even half a per cent of commitment to get their core funding in place. They ran the elections fairly, but you guys simply turned your back on them, Mr. Minister. You turned your back on them and said no. And were these guys being impossible? I don't think they were being impossible. They were being co-operative. They were being patient. They're waiting.

But I think First Nations and Métis Relations failed miserably on the Métis front and on the First Nations front under duty to consult. They failed miserably on the position that Aboriginal people, in particular the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan, to properly function. That's my critique.

And the other thing that I also am hearing quite a bit about is, what's your plans for the future in terms of funding? Are you going to fund them? Yes or no? That's the question I have for the minister, Mr. Chair.

Hon. Mr. Hutchinson: — Well thank you, Mr. Chair. I knew if we waited long enough, there would be a question at the end of the rather long preamble. You know, if lack of core funding was considered a slap in the face today, it was considered a slap in the face three years ago under the tenure of former government — no different really. If it's considered an insult today,

obviously it was considered an insult three years ago under the tenure of the former government. No change there either.

[19:15]

Former government, of course as we all know, had 16 years to address this issue and others but clearly failed to do so. My guess is that in 16 years we'll accomplish a whole lot more as the government than the previous government either did or even imagined possible. But I think what we need to do is just to wait around another 14 years and see how it all plays out. I'm game for that, and I'm supposing that the members of the opposition are too.

With respect to dollars, in addition to the dollars that have been provided . . . You know we want to make it very clear to everybody that the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan, just like FSIN [Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations] and individual First Nations, in fact any First Nation or Métis organization has the right to ask for support from the \$3 million consultation fund.

Here are a couple of facts. Out of the dollars that were expended from this fund in the last fiscal year, \$170,750 went to First Nations initiatives; 156,600 went for Métis consultations. So not only are we talking the talk, Mr. Speaker; we are walking the walk. Those dollars are available. Anybody in the First Nations and Métis communities of Saskatchewan has the right — and we would hope feels welcome — to submit requests. They will be adjudicated according to the pre-acknowledged criteria and adjudicated accordingly.

Something else that the member raised was the issue of travel. We do of course recognize that folks within the MNS organization, especially those in the North, have long distances to travel to get to their meetings. And so for the first time ever, I believe, we have said, why don't you send us a proposal? This is an interesting issue, and we are very interested in talking about it. Let us know what your thoughts are. Now that invitation was given very recently. I suspect that the MNS hasn't yet had a chance to officially respond, but I'm sure that they will in due course. When they do, we'll be happy to review the proposal and then discuss it with them personally, face to face, as we do with so many of the important issues of the day.

The last thing that I would like to mention in response to the member's comments, we enjoy a particularly robust, healthy, and positive relationship with MNS. The fact that the member doesn't seem to acknowledge this suggests to me, leads me to the clear conclusion that he hasn't actually been talking with them; otherwise he would know differently. I suggest that the member take the time to do his homework, do the job that he is being paid for in order to represent the folks in the North that he is elected to represent, and talk with the MNS leadership and come away with a better informed, more accurate, and more balanced opinion. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Belanger: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. I just want to point out that there was elections that were fraught with a lot of problems in the early years as the MNS were developing politically. I think that was probably about maybe 2004 — if I'm mistaken, I might be wrong on the year — and they've made a lot of changes to how the Métis Nation elections were

run, a lot of improvements.

And prior to that, there was a decision not to core fund the Métis Nation because of its electoral problems. It was not meant to diminish the Métis Nation. There was some election problems that absolutely everybody . . . And you as a current member of the Sask Party, when you were in opposition or when your party was in opposition, they made no bones about complaining about the election problem, and almost every day they get up and complain that the Métis people were doing something wrong.

So we made them do the election properly, which they did. And the plan was to restore their funding to the full amount, to the full amount of what they requested. And in the process of developing that process of the electoral improvements, then all of a sudden the Sask Party became government, which is a pretty dark day, I might add. But nonetheless the Métis Nation made all their current adjustments. They changed all what they were doing. And today now they're duly elected. They are duly elected. And the election process runs, runs straight.

Now in saying that, Mr. Minister, the most important thing that in Saskatchewan — the Aboriginal people and absolutely everybody knows this; absolutely everybody knows this — the Métis people and the First Nations people need to be positioned to achieve strength. They need that. And they're hoping that this duty to consult would be the tool that they could use with governments.

And I look at northern Saskatchewan, and I look at the suicide rates, the conditions of the road. I look at the unemployment rate. I look at all these factors, and nothing is happening to change all that. And you and your Premier could spin, spin, spin and put on a good story, but unless we start changing those stats around, unless we start changing those stats around where we see northern Saskatchewan people being decimated by all these problems, then I'm not convinced in the least bit that things are going to change. Not in the least bit.

And you can give me your history lesson of 16 years and 16 years from now, and the most amazing thing about you guys is every time you're in trouble, you are so bloody used to being in opposition that you don't know how to act as a government. So you go back and blame the NDP [New Democratic Party] for all the problems. So my point is, why don't you stand on your own two feet and start fighting for the people that you as a minister were appointed in Executive Council to make a difference in their lives.

The people of Pelican Narrows, the people of La Loche, the people of Wollaston Lake, the people of Muskeg Lake, the people all throughout the lands of Saskatchewan — they are having some severe, difficult problems, and yet the duty to consult is something you just throw out in front of people in a nice speech as you're jiggling away. And guess what? Point zero one eight per cent of your total provincial budget, you can't give them that to operate the Métis Nation with.

The most important question that I want to know tonight as a result of this, have you or any members of your government offered any position to the current executive of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan?

Hon. Mr. Hutchinson: — Mr. Chair, our officials are asking for the member to repeat his question so that we may fully understand it.

Mr. Belanger: — The question I asked is that, have you or any members of your government offered any positions to the current executive of the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan?

Hon. Mr. Hutchinson: — Thank you, Mr. Chair, for the question I think the member will have to be a little bit more specific so that our officials can understand where he's going with the question. I don't think they fully understand what he's intending in the way of an answer.

Mr. Belanger: — Okay, Mr. Chairman, I'm going to shift gears here because obviously I'm not going to get an answer from that minister. I want to shift gears a bit here in the sense of turning to the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation. The big thing that I think is important here is that this is another strong Métis issue. The fish marketing corporation, your government has said, we're going to wind it down next year, 2011. And you announced at one of their conventions that a lot of Métis people involved in that one as well and First Nations and you announced that yes, we're getting rid of Freshwater. But guess what, you guys wanted the free market. There's the door. Go and enjoy your free market experience.

As First Nations and Métis Relations minister, would it not have been proper to consult with you before the Minister of the Environment made the decision to withdraw FFMC [Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation] from Saskatchewan and all of a sudden next year they're gone? And guess what, not one red penny from your government to help with the transition from FFMC to the commercial fishers' own processing and marketing plan or working with any potential new investors. Your government has done nothing to help the commercial fishing file.

So even on the traditional industry that Métis people are involved with, I see zeros. I see zeros. I see zeros and all over the place. And if I had to grade your ministry and yourself particular as a minister, I'd give you a big fat F on your commitment to First Nations people and on your commitment to the Métis people. Everything from core funding for the Métis nation, provincial Métis council, to duty to consult, to the whole notion on commercial fishing to trapping, I give you a big fat F. And that I think is a telling tale of your commitment, your government's commitment to properly funding the challenges that many First Nations and Métis communities face throughout our province. I give you a big fat F.

Now again my question in relation to FFMC, are you going to allow and assist the commercial fishers and even a large loan guarantee?

Let's use a loan guarantee as an example. If they decide to go on their own, can you position them so that they're able to go with a loan guarantee from your government, that in the event that they're going to look at their own processing or their own marketing, that you'd help them out, like say a \$5 million loan guarantee? Are you in a position to offer them that opportunity and offer them that support to strengthen their industry, Mr. Minister?

Hon. Mr. Hutchinson: — Well, Mr. Chair, once again a long and rambling preamble which mysteriously — inexplicably, I would say — seems to have forgotten to wait for the answers to some of the initial questions that came out of the last long and undisciplined ramble.

So I'll turn back the clock if I can. And you know, in the spirit of co-operation and wanting to make sure that the member's time is wisely spent and that answers are offered to each and every one of the questions to the fullest of our ability, I will go back and address one of the statements that he made which I believe was coming to a question in one fashion or another, and that was the issue of core support for Métis Nation of Saskatchewan.

I believe what the member was inferring was that we ought not to blame the previous government, the NDP government, for failing to provide core funding because, as we all know, there were in fact election irregularities to deal with. Now, Mr. Speaker, I am aware that for a year or two leading up to the last provincial election, there were some election irregularities within the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan structure, and they would be the first to acknowledge that too. And by the way, they've striven mightily and successfully, I would say, to overcome the past and to turn a corner and to improve things in a way that I would say is remarkable.

But I think that the only way that the member's premise would be acceptable is for us all to agree here tonight that there were election regularities within the Métis Nation of Saskatchewan in 1991; again in 1992; of course, 1993. Let's not forget 1994. Then there would be 1995, 1996, 1997, and on and on and on, up to and including, of course, the year of the last provincial election, 2007. That would be the only way that that would be a supportable premise.

Now I am aware of election irregularities within MNS for one or two of those years, but — you know what? — for the life of me I can't remember each and every one of the 16 years that the NDP was in government being problematic for the MNS. In fact I would say that's absolutely not the case. It stretches us past the point of credulity. So we wanted to get that on the table.

The next issue that I think was neglected and passed over unfairly, I would say, is the issue of the northern action plan. We do have very significant, very challenging social issues in northern communities. And I would ask Mr. Greschner to come back to the table if I could because he has an excellent story to tell about our analysis and our plans for today and tomorrow in that regard.

Mr. Greschner: — Thank you. My name is Toby Greschner. I'm the assistant deputy minister. We're pleased to say that there is the creation of a social policy unit within the Northern Affairs division designed specifically to work with or in and around the area of social development, the basic premise being that as we try to move the North forward around economic development that we need to also deal and address social issues as well.

What we're looking at is a plan that'll engage northerners, that will be driven primarily by northerners around four common areas or common pillars that we're looking at. And those are

things such as, the four pillars are healthy people, educated citizens, safe communities, and a strong economy. And we feel that around those four areas, we can gain consensus in the North to work together to achieve long-term benefits for the people of northern Saskatchewan.

The idea is we will begin, we are starting discussions with the leadership in the North. That is under way, and we are working on establishing benchmarks so that we get a good, solid understanding of where we're at with regards to data in the North.

[19:30]

We've brought on a consultant in Doug Elliott to help us establish those benchmarks because what we want to do is ensure that we're not putting in place just a lot of expectations for people up north, but we're actually going to be doing and trying to deliver measureable outcomes, things that are doable. That's the premise that's behind the northern action plan, and hence the term action plan. It really is not only a northern action plan, but more of a call to action.

Hon. Mr. Hutchinson: — Now, Mr. Chair, as with so many other important issues, this particular one has a context; a bit of a history. Members may recall that in the previous budget year, my predecessor, Ms. June Draude, the member from Kelvington-Wadena, said, you know what? We've got a social issue up north and we've got to address this. And while it may take some time to come up with a disciplined, cohesive, comprehensive sort of an effort, we simply cannot move too quickly in order to make some move towards challenging this particular issue.

And so what she decided to do was to pull together all of the, shall we say, the human resource related ministries including FNMR [First Nations and Métis Relations], Justice was there, and I believe Health was there, and K to 12 [kindergarten to grade 12] education and Social Services, just to name a few. Some dollars were pooled and a program was put together. The idea would be that the three communities in the North that had been identified by statistics at that point in time as having the most urgent challenges would receive money for funding of a coordinator, one for each particular community.

So this wouldn't be an adventure where somebody would simply say, look I know better than the people up north. I have a template. I have a solution. We'll simply import it, plop it down in a northern community and expect of course that it's going to work.

In fact it was exactly the opposite. There was a tremendous amount of freedom and flexibility that was provided to each and every one of those coordinators. The idea was that they would go to each particular community and immerse themselves in the local culture — talk to First Nations leaders, talk to Métis leaders, talk to community leaders on the municipal side, school officials, certainly the youngsters themselves and their elders in the First Nations and Métis communities — in order to make sure that they were as fully aware of the facts and the challenges as possible. And then their goal was to work with all of the folks in their respective communities to come up with a unique, a special program or programs that would address the

challenges.

You know, I don't think that we've got time tonight to talk about everything in detail, but a couple of examples about just one community might be illustrative. The solutions, as I've mentioned, were custom-tailored to the unique needs of each northern community. And we'll use La Loche as one example. La Loche partnered with a large number of community-based organizations to provide a leadership camp, a youth healing camp, and a suicide intervention forum which was actually attended by 600 people. Now that's an enormous turnout in a small northern community. On the recreation side, there were sports skill development camps, soccer and coaching clinics, and a summer fun run that attracted 400 people — another amazing turnout.

And at the end of the year, the programs and the results from each of these three communities were compared and coordinated, and a final report was given so that everybody could understand what worked about this ad hoc, fast-acting sort of a solution here, and what could be done better on another occasion.

Now that information formed the basis of the context of the discussion that we're just having now through Mr. Greschner here. So, Mr. Chair, I just thought I would add that because it adds a little bit of useful historical perspective which in so many cases is helpful.

There's one other issue that was part of the member's comments which I believe he was intending to ask a question about, and we'll provide the following detail. With respect to the funding that's being provided to MNS and its affiliates, we offer the following. We'd like this read into the record: for the budget year of 2009-2010, \$385,000 as was mentioned before, that's in support of the bilateral process agreement and tri-part activities; \$156,600, consultation related activities as we mentioned before. There were \$20,000 for Batoche celebrations; \$5,000 for the Métis veterans' meeting; \$109,350 for the Métis Family and Community Justice Services, that's through Social Services; \$106,500 through Justice; \$3 million for the Métis Addictions Council of Saskatchewan, that's from Health; \$8,000,500 for the Gabriel Dumont Institute, that's through Advanced Education, Employment and Labour; and finally \$2 million for Clarence Campeau Development Fund. That's a total of \$14,282,450.

Now while I can't speak to the specifics of all of those, I can certainly say that the Clarence Campeau Fund has been increased by a full \$1.4 million, as we discussed yesterday. And there are other dollars that are coming in support of the Batoche celebrations that will exceed \$20,000 by a long way, Mr. Chair. I just thought that we would like to read that into the record.

And now with respect to the member's question about the fish industry which I think we are now able to turn our attention to.

Ms. Higgins: — Mr. Chair, this is the members' time to ask questions and to have some accountability with the government department and specifics within his jurisdiction or his responsibilities. If the minister would like to give a speech, I would ask that he do it on his own time, or if he will extend the time allowed for the opposition to ask questions, we'd gladly sit

and listen to him give a speech if he wishes to extend the time. Otherwise we would request that he get to the point please.

The Chair: — Thank you, Ms. Higgins. I think the member had quite a preamble, and I think this was part of the information that the former member's question was asking. I will encourage the minister to shorten up his answers and also with the preamble in the questions if you would. Thank you.

Hon. Mr. Hutchinson: — Well thank you very much, Mr. Chair, for that explanation. We'll certainly be guided by your wise advice. With respect to support of SCFL, the Saskatchewan Co-operative Fisheries Ltd., we offer the following facts. Since April 1, 2008, the three ministries of First Nations and Métis Relations, Environment, and Enterprise Saskatchewan have provided \$245,000 in grants. And we have a couple of facts in the way of a breakdown.

Environment has provided \$150,000 to SCFL for general operating support since April 1, 2008. Enterprise Saskatchewan has provided a further \$45,000 in the form of a grant to SCFL to assist in getting the business plan updated. FNMR — our ministry here represented tonight — northern affairs division has provided \$50,000 in support to SCFL since that time period, and that includes \$25,000 in general operating support and also \$25,000 to pay legal fees related to the revision of its offering memorandum, and that relates to its seeking of investment funds from the community.

In addition to these funds, FNMR northern affairs division has also committed, subject to the approval of the budget that we will be entertaining in the coming days I'm sure, \$150,000 in additional support for SCFL's operations and the advancement of its business plan.

Mr. Chair, I think it's fair to say that what we're doing is simply responding to the urgent situation that northern commercial fishermen find themselves in today. And I must say, that as with so many other important issues, this particular one didn't happen yesterday or the day before, and it certainly didn't arrive the day after the election in 2007. In fact this has been going on for years and years and years. Sadly but inescapably, Mr. Chair, this is another one of those issues which the former government had years and years and years to entertain and to debate and to come to a solution on. Sadly that they didn't do that. They didn't do that. They ignored the issue as the industry went into further and further decline as the years rolled by.

What we decided to do is take a fresh look at it, Mr. Chair. We've come up with a good solution. What we want them to do is to be able to attract investment so that they can, when they're ready . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm simply trying to provide the facts that will answer the member's question. He wants to know what level of support we're providing to the fishing industry. I've simply done that. A little bit of history about the . . . This thing isn't a brand new problem and we need to explain that to the folks in the . . .

The Chair: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. We will continue on with further questions. The Chair recognizes Mr. McCall.

Mr. McCall: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, sincerely. To the minister: yesterday there was information

tabled with the committee concerning the reallocation of the urban management agreement monies. There's a list provided, a number of pages in length of '09-10 First Nations and Métis community initiatives. Could the minister table for the committee the criteria by which those funds were allocated? Or make that undertaking?

Mr. Crowe: — We would be able to table the criteria. We also will undertake to do that. But it is also available on our website, the First Nations and Métis Relations website.

Mr. McCall: — Well I thank the deputy minister. It's just that the list came out as a bit of a surprise yesterday in terms of the answers that were made around the urban management agreement. So I'm glad to have that clarified for the committee.

Picking up where we left off yesterday in terms of the duty to consult and as it related to the issue of taxation of tobacco on reserve, I'd like to highlight for the committee two articles that appeared, one in the *Leader-Post*, another in *The StarPhoenix*. The first is dated Thursday, March 18, page A2 of the *Leader-Post*. It concerns, the title of the article is "Wall to seek dialogue on tobacco taxes." Quoting from the article:

In his "state of the province" address to the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce at TCU Place, Wall said the province needs to take some steps to reduce tobacco use and cited a report saying one of the biggest obstacles to that has been the lack of taxation on tobacco products sold on First Nations.

Moving down in the article:

Talking with reporters following his speech, Wall hinted that personal tax-free exemption on- reserve, which is currently three cartons of cigarettes per week, may decrease. He said the government will also be talking with the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) about collecting taxes on First Nations' behalf.

He acknowledged there are treaty rights in regard to the personal use of tobacco, so FSIN involvement would be critical.

And this is the great quote here, if I might add parenthetically, Mr. Chairman, to the minister:

"Together in partnership with First Nations, maybe the objective should be, we don't have tax-free tobacco," he said. "That would have to be a decision First Nations are a part of, because it's a treaty right."

The next article is an editorial that was written in *The StarPhoenix*. It's dated May 10th . . . Or pardon me, it's dated April 10th, page A14, *StarPhoenix*. The title of the article is "National strategy on tobacco useful." And might I add, that's something that we agree with in the opposition. What we find interesting is where it quotes later on down in the article stating:

The first order of business should have been negotiating a strategy with First Nation's people. Last month, First Nations and Métis Relations Minister Bill Hutchinson told *The StarPhoenix*, apparently aside from Mr. Wall's

talk to the Chamber, that the government didn't feel it should discuss a strategy because there are strict limitations on pre-budget consultations.

It is no wonder Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations vice-chair Morley Watson reacted angrily to the budget measure.

[To quote from Mr. Watson] "This is nothing more than the Indian agent mentality. The old Indian agent would tell us how much grain, how much wood, how (many) fenceposts and other goods we could produce to properly provide for our families," he said.

It would be unfortunate, however, if the Wall government's ham-handed handling of this issue derailed the intent.

And I guess we couldn't agree with those statements — to close the quotations — we couldn't agree with that more, in the opposition.

[19:45]

Mr. Chairman, to the minister: when the Premier made similar remarks to the media concerning another vital partner in this province, the municipalities, the Premier went to their association AGM [annual general meeting] and apologized. Now the bilateral meeting which takes place on a yearly basis between the FSIN and the Premier and the cabinet took place this morning. The Premier did not communicate this directly with the FSIN, the issue of tobacco taxation. He announced it at the Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce.

Now in terms of the kind of disrespect involved in that and the kind of bad faith in terms of a meaningful, communicative relationship, I'd say that's at least on par with what happened with SUMA [Saskatchewan Urban Municipalities Association]. Now SUMA got an apology. Did your Premier apologize to the FSIN this morning?

Hon. Mr. Hutchinson: — Well we thank the member through you, Mr. Chair, for the question. We certainly look at the proceedings of this morning's bilateral meeting between FSIN leadership and the Premier and cabinet of the province as being confidential discussions, and we are not able to talk in specifics about the details of what was said, but we certainly can convey a general impression of the tone and the scope and the nature of the discussions that we had there.

While the Premier acknowledged that we may agree to disagree on certain issues — and certainly the taxation of tobacco may in fact be one of those issues — we certainly hope to find common ground, he mentioned. And in fact we found common ground on a large number of issues: K to 12 education, post-secondary education, further engagement of First Nations people in the workforce, our hope, our shared hope for better health outcomes for First Nations citizens of the province. There are a large number of policy areas, very significant policy areas where we found that we were in complete agreement about our goals and the sense of urgency about reaching them as soon as possible.

Mr. McCall: — Well if it's going to be on par with what

happened with SUMA, the FSIN has an assembly coming up in June here in the city of Regina. Will the Premier or the minister perhaps be coming to the assembly to apologize to the assembled for this brutal lack of fundamental respect in communication with an order of government in this province of Saskatchewan?

Hon. Mr. Hutchinson: — A couple of comments in answer to the member's question through you, Mr. Chair. First of all, I believe that we do have a strong working relationship. I think the results of today's bilateral discussions actually prove that. A lot of good work has been done together on a large number of these important policy issues, and there is a firm resolve, a firm commitment by all of the members in attendance at today's meeting to continue doing that level of intensity with respect to these issues and in terms of the work that's moving forward.

Who's going to be attending the FSIN assembly that's coming up, the legislative assembly? Well I expect as minister, I will be there. I'm not aware of the Premier's plans at this particular moment.

Mr. McCall: — So I guess we can we go hold our breath in terms of the apology. That's about par for this course. The next question I'd have is with regards to consultation with the ministry itself before this decision was taken. Did the ministry provide any written opinions to cabinet or to the Treasury Board in terms of the implications of this decision around tobacco taxation? Were there any written opinions provided by the ministry on this issue?

Hon. Mr. Hutchinson: — We thank the member for the question through you, Mr. Chair. We regard the details of discussions that happened between ministries on specific budget items leading up to the tabling of the document, as confidential. We don't believe that we are able to share that level of detail in this particular committee meeting.

Mr. McCall: — Well then let me make it easy for the minister. Was there a written opinion provided, yes or no, concerning this decision by the ministry?

Hon. Mr. Hutchinson: — Mr. Chair, with respect, I believe we just answered that question.

Mr. McCall: — With respect, Mr. Chair, to the minister, the minister steps sideways on the question in terms of detail. I've asked him whether or not there was a written opinion provided on this decision, yes or no.

Hon. Mr. Hutchinson: — Mr. Speaker, I'll stick with my first answer to the question. I believe that we are not able to share those particulars with this particular committee meeting.

Mr. McCall: — Mr. Chair, the minister's not able to answer a question on a simple, a simple request as to whether or not there was written advice provided — not what that advice was, not what the detail was, but whether or not there was an opinion provided on the part of the ministry regarding this decision. That's not prying into the fundamental details of the advice provided, but it goes to demonstrating what kind of process is at work in this government.

You get the impression that in terms of the way that this ministry gets treated by the rest of the government is . . . I don't know if they pick up the phone and tell them about the decisions after the fact or how it works. But I've asked the minister if he can confirm or deny for the committee whether or not there was a written opinion provided on this decision. Broad question, doesn't go to the detail of the budget decision — it goes to the process, and the minister can't answer that. Will the Chair make the minister answer that question?

The Chair: — Mr. McCall, I'm not understanding, fully understanding where you think this advice would be coming from.

Mr. McCall: — The Ministry of First Nations and Métis Relations, as we've established off the top of the hearings, provides advice on First Nations and Métis issues for the rest of the government. They're the lead agency.

This minister can't tell the committee whether or not there was even a written opinion provided on what is one of the most contentious decisions taken by a provincial government in some time as relates to treaty rights, which I can't help but think is going to wind up into some kind of legal proceedings, Mr. Chair. And the minister can neither confirm nor deny for the committee whether or not a written opinion was even provided out of that ministry to the rest of the government in terms of them discharging their duties, that minister discharging his duty, as the lead on First Nations and Métis issues. Does that make my question clearer, Mr. Chair?

The Chair: — Well thank you, Mr. McCall. I think this committee has to respect the ministry, and that we'll proceed if you've got any other questions.

Mr. McCall: — Duly noted, Mr. Chair. And we do have other questions. The next question I'd have for . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . Perhaps the member would like to get it on the record. The member opposite from Cut Knife-Turtleford has a record of saying some pretty interesting things in committee. So if he's going to say something, perhaps he could get it on the record.

But I've got a question, Mr. Chair. The decision to kill the Aboriginal employment development program I understand was some time in the making. Aside from a lot of photo ops that the minister was quite happy to take part in with, you know, as recently as this past summer with organizations like IBM [International Business Machines] and Areva, alongside that time, Mr. Speaker, there was a decision taken to put the brakes on the program and to ultimately kill it in the year to come.

And they traded off a program that, if they had some problems with it, could have been improved upon. But they killed it for a program that has yet to see the light of day although, you know, promises, promises from this government. So the minister said that it was killed because it was old and tired, but at the same time as they were putting the brakes on that program, Mr. Chair, to the minister, Aboriginal unemployment rose by 5 per cent in the province of Saskatchewan last year to this month. Does that not give the . . . If the minister thinks that the Aboriginal employment development program was so old and tired, could he table today for the committee the new plan, the

new program, that's taking its place?

Mr. Froh: — It's James Froh, assistant deputy minister. I understand there was an article in Missinipi Broadcasting Corporation that stated the Aboriginal unemployment had gone up 5 per cent in the past year. It is true that Aboriginal unemployment rate is up slightly from 13.6 per cent in April 2009 to 14 per cent in April 2010. That's an increase of only zero point four per cent, not the 5 per cent claimed in the article.

Mr. McCall: — If I could, it's from table 7 in the recent labour force statistics provided by Stats Canada. That was the basis on which the information was further commented upon in Missinipi Broadcasting, but February, April 2010, the unemployment rate for . . . And in fact this makes it even worse, Mr. Speaker, but the unemployment rate for North American Indians, which is how the Statistics Canada relates to First Nations and Innu, the number was 20.5 per cent. The change from last year was an increase of 4.8 per cent. Now of course the members will confer at the desk and then they'll call the clock and on we go, Mr. Chair, but I'd welcome any comments Mr. Froh has on this.

Hon. Mr. Hutchinson: — Well in the interest of saving some time while Mr. Froh is checking the facts and figures, I can offer the following general overview of what's been happening. I've looked at some of the figures, Mr. Chair. What I saw was that in 2008 with the strong economy certainly unemployment decreased for all of our population in Saskatchewan rather dramatically. There was a tremendous number of new jobs created, and some of the beneficiaries were in fact our First Nations and Métis citizens. No question about that.

Last year I also found that in the midst of the worst recession in almost a century, which has hit every province and every country worldwide, yes, there was some slippage of those numbers. That's to be expected. How could it be anything other than that, we would argue.

What we've also seen is some new figures which support our anecdotal evidence that in fact Saskatchewan's economy is rebounding faster and more strongly than other economies in the province and in fact other economies around the world so that we expect that when we look at the next yearly summary, we will find that those numbers for all of our population, including First Nations and Métis citizens, have increased once again, reflecting the rebound of our provincial economy. Now at this point Mr. Froh may be able to help us with some further details.

Mr. Froh: — I'm going to have to go back to Stats Canada table 7 that you were referring to. The information I have about recent labour force data does show that if you compare from January 2009 to April 2010, you do arrive at a 4.9 per cent increase in unemployment. And it's this unadjusted data that's compared over a 14-month period.

[20:00]

Also I want to just say that recent labour force data does show that the First Nations and Métis people living off-reserve, the labour force has remained unchanged at 39,900. And the employment has decreased by 200, by zero point six per cent, or

34,300 compared to April 2009.

Coming back to the question about the program, about what the plans are, there are no new programs planned by the Ministry of First Nations and Métis Relations. The decision to end the AED [Aboriginal employment development] program was part of a larger realignment within government, and again, we know that this is critical work around employment and Aboriginal employment and labour force development.

And in order to increase the expertise and where that's best handled, the decision was where the experts were, which is in AEE and L [Advanced Education, Employment and Labour]. And AEE and L still does work and continues to work with First Nations and Métis people, but they're using a different model, demand-driven model. And it's one that they've committed dollars to, and there's a 5.1 per cent increase in their budget this year to 38.8 million. Money going for training and education and jobs is directed towards First Nations and Métis institutions. And AEE and L has those direct relationships with those First Nation and Métis institutions in higher learning, and they also have the expertise. So in order to increase those efficiencies, to decrease duplication, and to increase accountability, decisions were made.

Hon. Mr. Hutchinson: — One last comment if I may, Mr. Chair, about the numbers. I noted that the member suggested that all we're offering is promises. If I can be so bold, I would suggest that the budget document itself is a collection of the government of the day's promises to the people of Saskatchewan. One of those promises is \$1.4 million extra funding for Clarence Campeau Development Fund. Another one is over \$1 million to create the northern enterprise regions. Another one is \$3 million in brand new funding to support the brand new First Nations Economic Development Fund. And I certainly invite all the members of the opposition to vote with members of the government to help turn these promises into realities.

But you know, experience shows me, Mr. Speaker, that that's often not the case. It's usually the case that opposition members don't support the government on the budget, sadly. So I gather that they may in fact be considering voting against all these fine initiatives that we're discussing. I wish it were otherwise, Mr. Speaker, and I look for the day when it might in fact be.

Mr. McCall: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I hope the minister doesn't get dizzied by his own pompom waving in terms of how he approaches his job as First Nations minister, First Nations Métis Relations minister.

One of the marquee promises of this government was to strengthen relations, strengthen the partnership with First Nations. It's one of the marquee promises of this government and is proof positive of that decision being kept. And there's offered up information that on December 18th, 2007, there was a feast held at the legislature. Now a feast is a good thing and a holy thing. And for those that want to undertake the responsibilities that accompany that kind of activity, we say good for you. But in terms of the actions of this government, we think that they've made a mockery of that ritual. And we wonder when they're going to take that promise down. Or you know, or is the minister going to have another feast this year?

Because these things are held in four. So, Minister, you know, what are the plans for the feast?

But in terms of the round and round table that's gone for duty to consult, in terms of the elimination of programs and the shuffling of dollars, wow, First Nations and Métis people want to be engaged in the social and economic life of this province. It's hard to listen to the minister with a straight face sometimes, and it's hard to listen to him with some belief.

So I guess the last question is: when is that government going to take that promise down off their so-called promises-kept list?

Hon. Mr. Hutchinson: — Well I doubt if that's actually a question that the member expects a response to, Mr. Chair. But I'll simply offer this as a reply, and I hope it's accepted in the spirit that it's offered in.

I think that we have a strong and growing relationship with our First Nations and Métis communities. Will there be challenges, Mr. Chair? No doubt there will be. Will there be issues on which we will agree to disagree? Without any question. It is not any different now than it was during the 16 years when we had an NDP government who was working in its own fashion to try to adjust these very challenging and complex issues.

But we'll certainly give it our very best effort, and I think that we'll see in due course that we will have fewer and fewer First Nations and Métis youngsters not completing grade 12, fewer and fewer of them not deciding to go on to post-secondary education, whether it's a technical certificate or a university degree, and fewer and fewer of them not productively engaged in the economy of our growing province.

The Chair: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. McCall, is there any further questions?

Mr. McCall: — Thank you again, Mr. Chair, for inviting me to say a few things. I'd like to say thank you to the officials for the work that they do under what must be, I'm sure, pretty interesting circumstances.

As to the minister's closing comments, you know, he cites the number of grade 12 completions for Aboriginal youngsters, to use his expression. It's interesting that it had been a measure of accountability for the government in years past in their annual plan, and it's been removed from this year's annual plan. So again in terms of the yawning chasm between the rhetoric of that minister and that government and what they actually do, it's hard to watch it go down, Mr. Chair.

But I thank the Chair and the committee members for helping us through these estimates this evening.

The Chair: — Thank you. Is it the committee's agreement to call a vote on vote 25, First Nations and Métis Relations?

Some Hon. Members: — Yes.

The Chair: — Vote 25, First Nations and Métis Relations, central management and services, subvote (FN01) in the amount of 3,409,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Policy coordination and support for Aboriginal organizations, subvote (FN02) in the amount of \$5,417,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Gaming agreements, subvote (FN03) in the amount of \$68,128,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Treaty land entitlements, subvote (FN04) in the amount of 4,891,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Northern affairs division, subvote (FN08) in the amount of 3,843,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Amortization of capital assets in the amount of \$7,000. This is for information purposes only. No amount is to be voted. First Nations and Métis Relations, vote 25 in the amount of \$85,688,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — I will now ask a member to move the following resolution:

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31st, 2011, the following sums for First Nations and Métis Relations in the amount of \$85,688,000.

Mr. Elhard: — I so move.

The Chair: — Mr. Elhard. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried

[Vote 25 agreed to.]

**General Revenue Fund
Lending and Investing Activities
First Nations and Métis Relations
Vote 163**

The Chair: — That concludes . . . Oh, I'm sorry. My apologies. Going on to vote no. 163, First Nations and Métis Relations, loans under *The Economic and Co-operative Development Act*, *The Northern Economic Development Regulations*, subvote (FN01) in the amount of \$350,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. First Nations and Métis Relations, vote 163 in the amount of \$350,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — I will now ask a member to move the following resolution:

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31st, 2011, the following sums for First Nations and Métis Relations in the amount of \$350,000.

Mr. Brkich: — I so move.

The Chair: — Mr. Brkich. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried.

[Vote 163 agreed to.]

**General Revenue Fund
Supplementary Estimates — November
First Nations and Métis Relations
Vote 25**

The Chair: — For the November supplementary estimates, First Nations and Métis Relations, vote no. 25, First Nations and Métis Relations gaming agreements (FN03) in the amount of \$1,700,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. I will now ask a member to move the following resolution:

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31st, 2010, the following sums for First Nations and Métis Relations in the amount of \$1,700,000.

Mr. Chisholm. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried.

[Vote 25 agreed to.]

The Chair: — That concludes the considerations of main and supplementary estimates for the Ministry of First Nations and Métis Relations. Mr. Minister, thank you for your co-operation and to all your officials as well.

This committee will adjourn for two minutes as we set up for the consideration of main estimates . . . a recess, I'm sorry. We'll recess for about three minutes for the consideration of the main estimates of the Ministry of Corrections, Public Safety and Policing.

Thank you.

[The committee recessed for a period of time.]

**General Revenue Fund
Corrections, Public Safety and Policing
Vote 73**

Subvote (CP01)

The Chair: — Welcome back to the Committee of Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice. We are sitting with Minister Huyghebaert for the consideration of the main estimates for the Ministry of Corrections, Public Safety and Policing. Before we start, Mr. Minister, I just have a substitution here for Mr. Kim Trew; Kevin Yates will be sitting in for him.

Mr. Minister, welcome and if you would introduce your officials and have a few opening remarks, we'd welcome them now.

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — Thank you, Mr. Chair. And yes, I'm pleased to be here tonight, and I welcome the committee members here. And I'd like to provide highlights of the 2010-2011 financial plan.

First I'd like to introduce the officials. To my immediate right is Deputy Minister Al Hilton. To my extreme right is Heather Sriver, acting executive director of adult corrections. To my left is Mae Boa is assistant deputy minister, corporate services and public safety. Back behind me is Bob Kary, executive director, young offenders program. At the back row is Murray Sawatsky, executive director of policing service; Brian Krasium is executive director of licensing and policing, sitting at the middle at the back. Dr. Brian Rector is director, program development and therapeutic services, and Dr. Brian is back at the back. Caroline Graves is the executive assistant to the deputy minister, and Rob Nicolay is my chief of staff that's sitting right behind me.

I'll be speaking to a number of pieces. I'm going to have some opening remarks to the members that may answer some of your questions actually. I've got a few pages, but I'll just go through my opening remarks, and then it may answer some of your questions even. I'll be speaking to a number of pieces of the CPSP [Corrections, Public Safety and Policing] financial plan and in particular those that have seen funding increases and those that have seen funding reductions.

Overall I would note two things: 12.7 million in additional funding or approximately a 4 per cent increase and no layoffs of CPSP employees related to the '10-11 budget. Also a highlight for us in this budget is the establishment of an arm's-length, delegated administrative organization that will provide services on a cost-recovery basis currently delivered by CPSP's licensing and inspections branch. And I know we've talked to that delegated administrative authority already on the Bill. The objective in establishing this DAO [delegated administrative organization] is to strengthen the operational effectiveness and timeliness of licensing and inspection services in three areas of technology: boilers and pressure vessels, amusement park rides, and elevators. And as I've mentioned we tabled the Bill, and we've had a brief session with the technical safety authority of Saskatchewan Bill already.

Now I'd like to speak for a few minutes on the details of the

funding allocated to CPSP out of the '10-11 provincial budget. I should note that this funding allows us to continue to work toward achieving the mandate set by our government, adding 120 new police officers over a four-year term, initiatives to combat organized crime and gangs in Saskatchewan, toughening security in prisons to crack down on drugs and gangs in jails while making rehabilitation more effective and increasing support for addiction treatment for offenders. In total 18.618 million will go toward program and service funding increases.

And let me just go through where that funding is going. Again this year, significant expenditures will be made on supporting provisions of police services to communities across Saskatchewan. And I'm pleased to advise that, with 1.168 million for the addition of 30 new police officer positions, this government is now three-quarters of the way to funding our mandate commitment of 120 new police officers on the streets in four years. Although the exact location of each of these 30 positions is yet to be determined, I can tell you that 21 will be allocated to the RCMP [Royal Canadian Mounted Police], and the remaining nine will go to municipal police services. As well, another 1.62 million is earmarked for annualizing the costs and providing the 30 new police officer positions approved in the '09-10 budget.

The RCMP will also receive an additional new funding in the amount of 9.598 million to assist them in their role in law enforcement here in Saskatchewan, and that breaks down as follows: 5.8 million for core salary adjustments; 1.84 million for operating cost increases; and point nine million to implement the second year of the national backup policy. And this policy was put in place last year to ensure RCMP members working in remote locations have an accessible member as backup when requested.

Point nine million will fund the provincial public safety telecommunications network which I will go into some detail now. As you know, last fall we announced the development of the provincial public safety telecommunications network — and I will call it PPSTN because it is much easier — that will see public safety telecommunications users move onto the system by the end of this year. The network is geared to provide interoperability between users, making it easier for emergency responders from different organizations or communities to talk to one another. As well, having all users on the same system ensures sustainability for the network over the long term. The project is a multi-year, multi-organizational initiative being led by CPSP to build on the existing SaskPower-RCMP network. Funding of 2.3 million has been allocated this year to see the PPSTN become operational.

Salary increases — CPSP also received an allocation of 1.417 million toward these salary increases: 1.3 million for the collective bargaining agreement; point four million for out-of-scope salary increases; and I guess it says 1,000 for my own statutory salary increase. CBO [community-based organization] increases — I'm pleased to note that the community-based organizations connected to CPSP will be receiving a 1 per cent increase. CBOs play a valuable role in providing CPSP services to their communities, and their continued support ensures strength and ability to meet our objectives.

Young offenders intensive rehabilitation and custody supervision program will see an increase of \$100,000. This program, known as IRCS, [intensive rehabilitative custody and supervision program] provides targeted intervention to youth who present a set of risk factors that make them candidates for re-offending behaviour. High-risk offenders receive high levels of supervision right away while the targeted interventions are introduced.

With reference to third party capital, CPSP received funding totalling 6.135 million. This includes 4.3 million for the second year of a two-year program to provide radios for volunteer fire services and other emergency responders to access the new PPSTN; 1.835 million to fund minor capital equipment radio system upgrades and minor repairs for RCMP detachments.

On the subject of capital projects, I'd like to speak briefly to those that receive funding out of the '10-11 provincial budget. To sustain the momentum that adult corrections has built in making our correctional facilities more secure and safer through actions detailed in the government's *Road Ahead* response, an additional 1 million has been allocated to continue safety, security, and infrastructure upgrades in adult and youth custody facilities. As well, 13.81 million has been earmarked to complete the multi-year PPSTN project to construct a provincial emergency communication system which I've already spoke about; related to the PPSTN, an additional 450,000 for the final year of a two-year replacement program to acquire radios for CPSP corrections and protection and emergency services so that the ministry's own public safety users can participate on the new network.

Three hundred thousand has been allocated for the staff workforce scheduling system for adult and youth custody facilities. This system will provide a more effective tool for scheduling employee shifts in a 24-7 work environment. Three hundred and fifty thousand goes toward the final year of a two-year IT [information technology] project to construct a financial interface for the SYOCAMS [Saskatchewan young offender case administration and management system] youth case-management program. Five hundred thousand is approved for a joint IT project with Justice and the ITO [Information Technology Office] to replace the outdated courts and corrections legacy information system. Finally, 880,000 has been set aside for the annual small capital project base budget for projects like minor repairs to facilities.

As I mentioned earlier, there will be no job losses in CPSP related to the '10-11 budget; however the ministry will see a decrease in its full-time equivalents or FTEs of 63. So from an FTE complement of 2,017.3 in '09-10, FTEs have been reduced to 1,954.3. This is a breakdown of where these reductions came from. Twenty-eight FTEs transferred out for the licensing inspection services, 44 FTEs represent the notional allocation for the smaller footprint of government, with 11 FTEs added for PPSTN to operate the system. All of CPSP's FTE reductions will be achieved through vacancy management and attrition.

Tempering the news about funding increases for CPSP programs and services is the news about where the ministry will see funding reduction. The most prominent of these is the deferral of the four-year, 87 million project to construct a remand centre at the Saskatoon Provincial Correctional Centre.

This is a project that I believe is vital for Corrections to fulfill its actions under *The Road Ahead* response. Government will revisit this project and other capital project priorities when budget discussions come around again for next fiscal year.

Other funding reductions include 1.58 million from the licensing and inspection branch books for establishment of the delegated administrative authority. 1.68 million remains in the '10-11 base budget for three months of operational and transitional costs before the DAO doors open, forecast to be July 1st of this year; \$1 million for attendance management in adult corrections and young offenders custody facilities; 526,000 for reducing vacation liabilities by an additional five days; 2.5 million to advance a smaller government footprint; and finally a net reduction of 149,000 in amortization expenses.

Those are the budget highlights from the '10-11 fiscal plan. And now I'm ready for questions, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. Are there questions from the committee? I recognize Mr. Yates.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I'm going to do my questions systematically so that when I'm done an area, I won't require to go back here if some officials need to go. I'm going to start with policing. You had mentioned the 30 more police officers and 21 of which will go to the RCMP and 9 to municipalities. And you had indicated that on top of that, there was some additional money too for salary increases. Are any of these assigned positions going to specialized programs, like in the past, a northern drug strategy or other particular strategies to deal with focused problems in areas of the province?

[20:30]

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — Are you referring to the 30 new positions or what we've done already?

Mr. Yates: — The 30 new positions.

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — Mr. Yates, we have not put an allocation to the 30 new positions as yet. We rely on the policing services to place the members where they're really required, looking at the crime indexes. And I just wanted to confirm that with officials. So we're not setting a program and telling them that you need to do this with it. We're providing the resources to them and letting them decide where they're most needed, whether it's municipal or the RCMP.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much. My only reason for asking, in some previous years they had them designated to specific specialized program areas in some cases.

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — You're very correct, like the ICE [Internet child exploitation] unit and the anti-gang and drug strategy. That's been kind of talked about with the police units, but then they have been designated to that.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much. Is there any special attention going to deal with northern policing and some of the situations northern communities are facing, especially with distance and circumstances regarding backup?

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — Again the 30 new, we'll let the police services identify where they're needed. But we do know that the North is in need of policing. And I think throughout the province, there's communities that would debate that they need extra policing also. I know one of my comments with a meeting that I had is, would somebody please tell me how many is enough because there's no such answer.

And so by providing the extra 120 over the four years, we're filling some gaps that are there. There's no doubt about that. But when you look at the crime indexes of the North, and when you see the area of northern Saskatchewan on a crime index basis, it's very, very high. And we know there's some very difficult areas in the North and we'll let, again, the police decide on where they should go.

I know our gang and drug special unit is being very, very effective up there. But I've not had any requests for additions to that particular unit as yet.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much. My next question has to do with the SCAN [safer communities and neighbourhoods] program. I'm wondering how many complaints have been received in the last year and the nature of those complaints.

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — I can give you a breakdown, Mr. Chair. I'll just give a whole breakdown since SCAN became operational, so this does have a background to it.

SCAN became operational in January of 2005. It has received 2,393 complaints up to and including December 31st of 2009. And I will give you a breakdown if you'd like on what the calls are. Of the 2,393 complaints, there's 1,797 for drugs, 145 for prostitution, 166 for gang organized crime, grow ops were 89, other specified activities such as alcohol and sniff houses, 209.

If you'd like me to continue, maybe it's your next question, but as of April the 1st, 2010, SCAN had carried out 401 evictions.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much. Just looking from my notes from a year ago, the evictions have gone up considerably, but what is most noticeably increased as well is gang calls. Is there any particular information or data as to the increase in gang calls? Is that primarily Regina, Saskatoon or do you have any of that information available?

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — I'll look up, I'll get some more information for you, Mr. Chair, but I think, as we know, the increase of gang activities in the province has gone up substantially. And as a result of gang activity, you're bound and determined to get more calls on it.

When I say it's gone up, to document that is very difficult because you document it on where you get some calls from also. But we do know that gang activity is very alive in the province, and again so much of that goes into the northern part of the province. Although we see gang activity in the capital city, Saskatoon but when you start moving farther into the North, you see an awful lot more gang activity, and then it migrates down to the larger centres — P.A. [Prince Albert], Saskatoon, and Regina.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. My next

question has to do with the Western Canadian gang database that last time we were talking about was under way or the development was under way. Could you give us an update?

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — Mr. Chair, I can give a little bit of information. As the member's aware, that we met as Western Justice ministers, attorney generals, and solicitor generals and agreed to participate in this database and made it a priority. And what I understand is that rather than develop a new system, we're using the CISS [Criminal Intelligence Service Saskatchewan] system which makes it quicker, quicker to use. And in the '09-10, we provided \$481,000 to the RCMP for the database, and this provided for timely reporting and tracking of gang members, gang activities, and the gathering of criminal intelligence for the strategic and tactical use of police corrections and other law enforcement agencies. And we are using the system now.

As the member would also know, and I've stated this in discussions, the advantage of having a database that's interprovincial is because we know the migration of gangs, and this is very, very effective in the tracking and following gang members as they migrate from province to province.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much. Just one further question on this issue. If an individual's picked up in Saskatchewan and incarcerated, do we notify automatically or put online automatically that that individual is in custody to the other jurisdictions as part of the tracking?

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — Yes, Mr. Chair, if it's a known gang member, a known gang affiliation, they'll be put on the database.

Mr. Yates: — Okay, thank you very much. My last questions have to do with the legislation around the safe communities and neighbourhoods, and it's now been in effect a number of years. I know that we just made an amendment, and at that time I had asked if there were other issues being brought forward by law enforcement to improve. And at the time, I don't think it had been an area of discussion.

I'm just wondering if you have had any further discussions about concerns being raised by law enforcement, new issues to help them, new tools to be brought forward to help them combat the changing environment.

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — First, Mr. Chair, there's no other issues that have come forward that are directly related to SCAN other than the ones that we discussed with the SCAN amendment Bill, with the wearing of gang colours, etc., which the member is very well familiar with.

That being said, we're in constant discussions with the policing services how we can improve and be more effective in dealing with gangs and drug intervention. And so although that's not directly related to SCAN, it's more global.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much. That would then conclude my questions in the policing area.

I next will move to adult corrections. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I'd like to start, if I could, just getting an update on

the statistics of the number of inmates remanded and sentenced in each of the facilities — Regina, Saskatoon, P.A., and Pine Grove — and number remanded and number sentenced and the total by institution.

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — Mr. Chair, to the member, the average daily count in adult correction system as of — and we have to pick a point in time, as the members is well aware of — so as of December 31st, 2009, the 2009-10 average daily custody count in adult corrections was 1,511 with the breakdown as follows: the average daily sentenced, 945; the average daily remand, 566.

As of December 31st, 2009, the '09-10 average daily community count — this is community count — was 6,239 with a breakdown as follows: average daily probation, 3,993; average daily conditional sentence, 1,322; and the average daily bail, 924.

And you wanted the breakdown of each of the facilities?

[20:45]

Mr. Yates: — Yes please.

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — I'll start with Pine Grove. The averaged sentence was 88, and this is for the 2009-2010 average daily sentenced, remand, and the total. So for Pine Grove the averaged sentence was 88; the average remand was 32. Prince Albert, the average sentenced was 168; the average remand was 149. Regina, the average sentenced was 312, the average remand was 192. In Saskatoon the average sentence was 187, and the average remand was 183. I don't know if, Mr. Yates, if you wanted all of the other facilities, the small facilities?

Mr. Yates: — No, that's sufficient. I'm just looking at whether or not the general numbers are going up and where the pressure points are.

Mr. Minister, it'd be fair to say that over a year ago the total count has increased. And obviously that would result in some additional pressures in regards to space. Could you briefly outline how the ministry is dealing with the additional, daily inmate count?

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — Well as the member would know — and not to be sounding facetious or anything along this line — but there is no increase in bed space from the mid-'80s until this last year. We opened a new dormitory facility in Saskatoon with 90 beds. And that's been the first additional bed space that's been added since the mid-'80s. So that's one of the ways that we were dealing with it.

Is there pressures? For sure. There's pressures right now in . . . There's pressures that present some challenges. And as you are well aware that the daily counts will fluctuate substantially, and so what has happened is we've been required to use program space for bed space. I think that's understandable. Where do you put high-risk inmates? And so we're looking . . . We have a five-year capital plan that we've put forward.

And with the pressures of finances this past year which we've definitely talked about in this facility, in this building, we've

deferred the capital plan for the remand centre because of financial pressures and infrastructure deficit that has been huge throughout other ministries such as Highways and Health and Education. And sitting it in debate for funding, it's very challenging to have that amount of money put into a remand facility when hospitals are . . . the roofs are leaking and schools are overcrowded and roofs are leaking. But that's a challenge that I face and deal with when I start competing for dollars.

So it's an issue that we as a ministry have put forward as a five-year capital plan and working toward that although we know the dollars are tight this year, but we still have it on a plan for going ahead with the remand centre in Saskatoon. Next year hopefully we'll get the funding to get that program moving forward.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Mr. Minister, Bill C-25 currently in the federal parliament, deals with some significant changes in sentencing patterns and particularly in the issue of remand. The federal budget officer has indicated this will cost a significant amount of money, upwards of \$2 billion much of which will be passed on to the provinces as expenses.

Do you have any indications of what the likelihood is of increased need and cost to the province of Saskatchewan as a result of Bill C-25?

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — Just for clarification, the numbers of these Bills have changed off and on, so C-25, I'm assuming you're referring to the two-for-one remand?

Mr. Yates: — Yes.

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — I have received inputs from different sources on what the effect of this might have, and there's two camps. One that will indicate that it will increase our daily count, I have other people that would suggest to me that the daily count should not increase and might even go the other way.

So the position that I have right now is let's wait and see what it does. I know there's a camp that says it'll substantially increase, but I'm prepared to just see what it's going to do to ours because we don't have a short-term solution of building a new facility. I mean you don't build one overnight. And so we're going to have to just look and see what the outcome of this will have rather than prepare for something that we don't know what effect it's going to have.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Minister. The documents I'm reading from talk about the federal budget office indicating it will be, you know, significant, over \$2 billion largely in costs to the provinces, but it lacks real detail as to in what way those costs will impact provinces. So has there been any consultations with the province of Saskatchewan about Bill C-25, and has the federal government offered any transitional dollars to help with the transition and changes that will come about as C-25 is implemented?

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — Mr. Chair, there are always discussions with the federal counterparts. And the specifics of this, the effects of this Bill, I know it's been discussed and the merits of it, and we totally agree with the merits of Bill C-25.

To my knowledge, there's been no indications of dollars that are coming for the province from the federal government. But again as I mentioned, we don't know, and I don't think any of us really know the outcome of this.

And if the federal government has earmarked extra dollars, I'm one and I'm sure that Mr. Yates would understand this also, when you look at our remand count, how many of those will be going into federal institutions? And that's the part that I look at from when I say I don't know because if we look at our remand count as a percentage, maybe is 40-some per cent of our institutions are remand. And when we look at the reason why people are in remand is, that could be from a fairly violent activity, and if they are going through the court system and not getting the two for one . . . In fact that's one of the points that I've brought up and discussed, is if they're entering a federal facility sooner, then the federal institutions would have a higher daily count.

Again I would suggest that's very subjective because we don't know that.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much. The reason I ask the question, in previous years in the past when there have been changes to laws, at times there have been federal dollars, and it's suggested in a number of these articles that there may be federal dollars available for provinces during the transition period.

Now this law's taken effect just very, very recently. It's been a little over two months, I guess, since it's been in effect. Have we noticed any change in the last two months? Has it had any noticeable impact in the last two months?

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — No, we've not seen any impact yet. It's too early to tell. And in the legislation — and maybe you can help me out — is that it only applies to people that have been charged since the date of the Bill passing. So you wouldn't really see any difference for awhile yet.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much. My next questions have to do with, in particular, Saskatoon. The catchment area for Saskatoon has always, in the last number of years, been the most problematic where the greatest pressures have been, to say the least. Is that remaining the same today, that the Saskatoon region or central catchment area is where the greatest pressures are?

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — Well we ease some of the pressures, if you're talking about bed space, by opening the 90-bed dormitory in Saskatoon. That eased, if that's what you're questioning about, the pressures in housing. That eased it. Is there still an issue there? Yes. Do you equate it towards the most pressure? I guess it depends on what day of the week and how the court's moving. But we do have pressures, there's no doubt, in Saskatoon. There's pressures in P.A., and there's pressures in Pine Grove.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much. Mr. Minister, I noticed in the estimates for this year, there's a reduction in the adult corrections budget in the adult corrections facilities of about \$2 million or \$1.5 million, pardon me. Could you indicate to me where those savings are going to be found?

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — Mr. Chair, I gave these numbers in my presentation, but I'll go over them again. Attendance management is a reduction of \$670,000, and attendance management is based on sick leave. Vacation liability reduction and that is 223,000, and 1.307 million is the smaller footprint of government through attrition management.

[21:00]

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much. In the adult correctional facilities, are you saying in the government footprint reduction that we're going to see fewer staff employed in facilities?

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — Mr. Chair, we will not be reducing staff to be non-effective and run the facilities. We will make sure that there's enough staff that are there to manage and run the facilities in a very, very safe manner.

It's difficult maybe to explain when we talk about footprint, but I'm going to give you a couple of examples. It costs about 120 FTEs per year in sick leave, 120 FTEs. So if you reduce that by half, you've saved 60 FTEs and you're not impeding the functioning, the working function of a facility.

The other is overtime reduction. And by reducing overtime it fits into the equation of being able to reduce FTEs. So it's not, it's not that you're reducing people from being able to run a facility. It's managing the facility when you start looking at overtime and sick leave and actually vacation liability reduction also.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Minister. I wish you luck. That has been tried, I think, every year for the last 30. I wish you luck and hopeful success.

Mr. Minister, that will conclude my questions on adult corrections.

The Chair: — Mr. Yates, when you're ready.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much. I'd like to start with just the basic statistical information number — young offenders, closed custody, open custody, remanded, please.

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — It might be easier to give you a copy of this, but I will read it out for you. For 2009-2010, in the Paul Dojack Centre, the average sentence was 26; the average remand was 22. In Kilburn Hall, the average sentence was 7; the average remand was 20. In North Battleford Youth Centre, the average sentence was 22; the average remand was 15. Orcadia, the average sentence was 10; the average remand was 3. Prince Albert Youth Residence, the average sentence was 1, and the average remand was 9.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Minister. The numbers for remand and the numbers of sentence seem to be about equal across the province. Is that unusual for the YO [young offender] branch at this time?

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — I don't know if it's unusual or not, but . . . Yes, Mr. Chair, that is about normal for the secure custody, for sentence and remand. I can give you the numbers. It may put it into a little bit different perspective, but the open

custody which you're very familiar with, how open custody operates and with all of these facilities . . . I'll just give you some numbers. Total custody in community — sentenced is 124 and remand is 68. So it makes the figures look a little different when you look at it in that context.

But for actual secure custody, as the member will know, these will fluctuate. And we've seen over the past while quite a growing number of remand, whether it's in adult facilities as I mentioned earlier, people on remand, and this is kind of, if you wish, a steady state, but it will fluctuate a little bit.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Minister. Are we experiencing any pressures in regards to space in the YO facilities?

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — The answer is no, and some very good news is it's been reduced that we could actually close . . . Bob would you say two? A couple of units, so there's no bed space pressures at Delisle.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much. Where will those units . . . Are we talking the units at Dojack?

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — Did I say two?

Mr. Yates: — Yes.

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — I think it's three. There's one at Dojack — temporarily, all these obviously are temporarily closed — one at Kilburn Hall and one in North Battleford. So it's a unit that's been closed.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much. I have just one further question regarding young offenders. Have there been any changes in program or any new programs initiated in the last year?

Mr. Kary: — Mr. Chair, Bob Kary, executive director of the young offenders programs. We continually update our programs, and they've continued to evolve over the years.

One of the new programs that was demonstrated over the past year was a program, an individual treatment program called Courage to Change, and that was introduced in six units in young offender custody. There was also introduced in some adult custody facilities. That program deals with the root causes of offending assessed for each individual offender involved in the program. It involves direct interventions between youth workers assigned in the facility and the young people. This has been an extremely promising kind of program from the sense that the young people do like it. Many of them ask to see their youth workers and continue the program as well as it is a program that seems to work very well for the youth workers. They too are very encouraged by it.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much. Could you give me a little more detail about the program, what its components are and how it's designed to affect change.

Mr. Kary: — The program involves a number of interactive journals. Interactive journals are textbooks that are used by both the staff person and the young person. They cover a number of

areas in a young person's life that are risk factors, risk factors that are assessed in the individual's case that would be causative to the offending behaviour. The young people with their youth workers work through the booklets and learn about their offending behaviour, but they also learn new skills in which to manage their own behaviour.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Mr. Minister, have we had any expansion in the drug and alcohol treatment programs available to young offenders over the last year?

Mr. Kary: — About two years ago we began by introducing additional drug and alcohol programming inside of custody facilities to young people. We did so by contracting with the health authorities in the areas where the facilities are. Those programs continue. They, at this point, are able to manage capacity within the facilities, and so those programs do continue.

[21:15]

As you know, the regional health authorities have youth addictions programs, some of them that both assess young people and transition them back to the community and put them into programs when they go back to their home communities. Those programs are operated by regional health authorities, and young offenders is very much a part of those. And those programs too were enhanced substantially two to three years ago and are certainly improving the amount of addictions treatment that young people are getting.

During the past year, a programming audit that we looked at showed that there were significant improvements and quite a high level of addictions treatment being provided to young people, both in community settings and custody settings.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much. Mr. Chair, just one final question on this area. The audit that was done, did it take the further step to examine whether or not there was success in the treatment provided?

Mr. Kary: — The audit looked at a number of areas in which treatment and supervision was provided and whether the treatment occurred, but it did not measure outcomes of the treatment.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much. Would it be the intention in the future to, at some point, audit outcomes from former utilizers of the program to look and measure success?

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — I think, Mr. Chair, is there an interest in it? Very much so, very much so. The problem that I think everybody would know that it's a problem in tracking because when somebody has gone through the program, whether it's in one of the facilities or even after they're at a CBO or a CTR [community training residence] and their period is over, their probation period is over. How do you track it?

And I know that's a fair question because I've asked that very question. Do we have a tracking mechanism to see the effect of what some of our programming has done? It's a difficult task to try and track that unless it's done on a volunteer basis by the individual because they're outside of the system once their

probation is finished. And so unless they volunteer to come in . . . and I know I have spoken to some that actually have come in and they're part of some different program. And we know that there's some successes out there. But that does not mean that there's not some that go back to it unless they come back into our system the wrong way again.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Minister. I'm, as you would know, aware of some of the challenges and difficulties in tracking, and you're right. But I would point out it's much easier among youth because they generally go home if . . . than it is among adults. But it's still a very difficult task. But one of the important things to measure success is to know what success we have achieved. And if there is some way, I know it's not easy, but I think we should continue to look for ways to track what success levels we have with the programming.

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — We do look at ways, and that's been an interest of mine, is how can it be done? And that is a big question, is how can it be done? And we're looking at ways.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much. I would like to now spend a few minutes just dealing with some basic questions on PDAP [provincial disaster assistance program].

Mr. Minister, if we could, my colleague has just a couple of questions regarding identification that falls both in the young offenders corrections area. I'm sorry; I wasn't aware that he wanted to ask. But if we could just ask a couple of questions before we move onto the next area.

The Chair: — The Chair recognizes Mr. Forbes.

Mr. Forbes: — Thank you very much. Yes, it's come up over the last year or two. People have raised the whole issue of about identification as a barrier for people, vulnerable people who have problems accessing bank accounts and voting and doing all this type of thing. And it became apparent that — now correct me if I'm wrong — but when people leave the jail system or whatever, that they don't necessarily have ID [identification] when they leave the jails. Is that right?

Ms. Scriver: — Heather Scriver, director of institutional operations, acting executive director of adult corrections. There are situations when offenders are released from the correctional centre without identification. However we do have interactions with the case managers of these folks where they have an opportunity to apply for a social insurance number, to apply for any type of identification through Statistics Canada.

And generally when they come into the correctional centre, if they have their identification with them, it's kept in a safe, secure area so that when they do get released, they get their identification back with them when they go.

Mr. Forbes: — Is there, you know, when I heard this, I just assumed that everybody coming out would have ID, that it would . . . Just one of those things that's in the best interest of everybody because then that's one less problem for people re-entering society to deal with. Is there a particular reason why this system doesn't provide that or make sure people, when they leave, that this would be one less thing that they'd have to worry about? Has it come up in your discussions?

Ms. Scriver: — There's no reason why we cannot facilitate that sort of a process for them. In regards to any monies that they make while they're in the correctional centre, they do get a letterhead, a ministry letterhead letter that they take to their bank so that they can open up a bank account. And it gives them authorization to cash a cheque as well. But in terms of, is there a reason why we don't do that? No, there is no reason why we don't.

Mr. Forbes: — Would it be something that you'd be open to looking at? I know that there's a group in Saskatoon, and I think the food bank's actually quite involved with this, who are looking at ways to deal with ID. And it'd be really helpful.

I know SGI [Saskatchewan Government Insurance] actually just changed their policy recently around picture ID where it's dealing with fines and penalties, that no longer do you have to pay off those before you get your picture ID, have to pay them off before you get your driver's licence. But they treat them as two separate things now which I think is pretty good because ID is so hugely important when you're trying to access services. That if this could be one less thing, this would be a very good thing.

And while I know people are working in jails, this is why I think it's in the best interest of everything. So I don't know if the minister has a comment about this.

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — Mr. Chair, I do. It's something that we will sure look into. It's also, I would suggest, it's one that you can't force onto somebody. But I think if it's made available to somebody that would like to have their ID before leaving one of our institutions, it's probably a good idea if they would like it. So we will definitely look at that. I was not aware that there was an issue with that, to be very honest with you. I never heard it brought up before, so it's something we'll look into.

Mr. Forbes: — I appreciate that. And you're right; you can't force it. It's actually funny when you ask. You assume everybody would want it too. And some people don't want it. But it was brought up to me about the food bank, actually at a church. I couldn't believe it when I heard it the first time. I just assumed that. So thank you very much, I appreciate the answer, and we'll see how it goes over the next while. Thank you.

The Chair: — The Chair recognizes Mr. Yates.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I'd just like to get an update on the PDAP numbers. What would the number of current outstanding claims be?

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — As of February the 28th of this year, there were 160 outstanding claims and partial payment on 115. I guess there's an awful lot. There's a time limit. And I know we've lowered the time limit on payouts at PDAP. For a few years, it was quite extensive, the time to get a payout. And I think we've lowered it to an average of six months. If I'm very far out from that, I'll have it corrected for you, but I think our goal is less than that. But our average time now I think has been down to a six-month payout, but that's the number of outstanding claims.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Minister. How many of those would be over one year?

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — That's one we'll have to find out for you. The numbers that are over a year I don't have. I know there have been some that are longer just the nature, like of the 2007 flood. So there are some, but again the average has come down substantially. I will endeavour to get a figure for you of how many claims are outstanding that are over a year.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Minister. Well the numbers are down significantly from a year ago. Hopefully that is a pattern that we can maintain. I don't recall a large disaster in the last year, a large flood or anything, which is helpful. There may be one, but I don't recall one off hand, and let's touch wood that's right.

Mr. Minister, for a number of years the province has been working with the federal government to try to move the disaster assistance program to cover preventative costs and dealing with issues like temporary dikes put up by communities as being part of an allowable expense, and I'm wondering if any progress has been made on that issue.

[21:30]

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — I am not going to tell you that there's a lot of progress made. It is definitely in some areas been discussed, and I'll give you the example of the Fishing Lake area. And I think, Mr. Chair, the member would fully understand one of the problems when you start dealing with putting in a dike or a trenching system, and that is with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, environmental issues. There's a lot of issues with local residents whether they be landowners or First Nations.

Even in the area of where there's been a disaster such as Fishing Lake, the issues now of dikes are under subject of review because what have the dikes done to the ecology of the bottom of the lake around where the dikes are? So has there been discussions? Yes. Is there any resolution to it? No, because again we're dealing with all of these departments, and getting some answers from some of our federal ministries is not as easy as we would like to think it might be.

I was recently in discussions with a diking project for the northeast area, and we have encountered most of these problems again. And there is a potential for flooding there as we speak. And the solution would be a permanent dike, but again for approval to do a permanent dike in co-operation with DFO [Department of Fisheries and Oceans] and . . . That's probably one of the larger issues with DFO, and to my knowledge right now there's no approval for that.

Now a question also is it's probably more of a question for SaskWater and the Environment than it is for CPSP. What CPSP deals with is after the fact as you know. We deal with the disaster assistance once a disaster has occurred, where building a dike is preventative, and that's with SaskWater, and SaskWater are the ones that are looking at it. I just sat in a meeting with them when they were discussing this.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Minister. I wasn't

thinking of the Fishing Lake situation when I was asking the question. There was a community in the Northeast, and the name escapes me at the moment . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . No, it wasn't . . . [inaudible] . . . And this was from a number of years ago about 2005, maybe 2006, where we had significant flooding. And a small community didn't have the resources to build a dike around the community. If they would've been able to do that, it would have prevented flooding in several homes.

Of course once they're flooded, they're eligible for assistance, but they're not eligible for any dollars to prevent the flooding. And so at that time, it was raised with the federal government, and the federal government said they would examine the issues because of course in the long run the preventative measures may result in significant savings both to the province and the federal government. And I was just wondering on those issues if there's been any progress at the federal level.

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — Again I would say that as far as any money on preventative measures in the federal government, the answer is no to us, to our ministry. But in fact it's in Mr. Kirsch's area. It's . . . [inaudible] . . . is that correct? The one that . . . That's in your constituency, is it not? . . . [inaudible] . . . where the flooding?

Mr. Kirsch: — Waldsea Lake.

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — Or Waldsea, Waldsea — is that the same one?

Mr. Yates: — No, it isn't but I'm familiar with that area and Waldsea Lake.

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — That was a subject of just what you were speaking of, is building a dike, preventative measure and that's really in Department of Environment's domain. We were invited to discussions on this from CPSP because as you correctly pointed out, if they flood then they're eligible for disaster assistance, and that's where we come in as the disaster assistance. We are not there to do the preventative, but SaskWater is and Environment.

But that's the meetings that I have attended that discussed this, and the officials discussed the issues with the DFO and how they set up the whole flood basin that it looks . . . the possibilities of flooding are very apparent there right now. And again it's a cottage issue, and options that are available, but again I would not want to give you any answers to that because it's really SaskWater and Ministry of Environment that are dealing with that subject. We were invited there because we know that we're involved in it if it floods and the cottages are underwater.

Mr. Yates: — All right. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I'd like to move on to just a few questions about central management and services, and that would conclude my questions for this evening. I won't be asking any questions on the regulatory area that's being transferred over because we'll have time to do that during the discussion of the Bill.

So, Mr. Minister, under accommodation services, we see a significant reduction, some \$8 million. I'm wondering if you could indicate where those savings are?

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — Mr. Chair, we have a reduction of \$7 million that was one-time money, and so the one-time money is not in the budget this year. That was one-time money for safety, security, and infrastructure upgrades, and I think the member's familiar with those upgrades with security cameras in the facilities that included the security cameras, etc. And there's a number of enhancements for security and upgrades that we did in the facilities that was one-time dollars.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Minister. It just was an unusually large reduction, and I was wondering what it would be.

If we have just a few minutes left, I'd like to talk for a minute about the new telecommunications system that's going to replace FleetNet. If we could have just a little bit of an update in regards to the funding of radios for communities and what was passed in the legislation last fall and whether or not that funding is rolling out to communities.

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — It's quite a lengthy answer. I'm probably going to give you . . . Here, Mr. Yates. As you know, it's a system that's been ongoing now for a number of years, and we all know the reason for it is to replace FleetNet. If it lasts till the end of this year, it would be decommissioned at the end of this year, so we needed a new system.

34.6 million has been approved for the four years for the purchase of capital and the project management for the PPSTN. Migrating to the system by the end of this year, the majority of the users will hopefully be migrating starting now to November, and it will be scheduled to be fully operational by January 1 of 2011 — fully operational.

The affordability. We have approved \$6.1 million over two years to establish a radio equipment purchase program to offset some of the costs to non-provincial government public safety users for the radios. The cost to operate the PPSTN is \$90 per radio per month, and this is one we debated last fall. The cost to operate the PPSTN raised the issue of smaller municipal and volunteer-based emergency responder groups, and we received calls, and they were very, very concerned about the affordability. So what we have done — and you'll be familiar with — is we've reduced that fee for all public safety response agencies to \$40 a month and to cover the costs of that, which was our Bill last fall when we added 24 cents to the 911 user fee.

And just to revisit that, the acceptance level in the later '90s or mid-to-later '90s for 911 was actually, the acceptance level was \$1 at that time. The 911 fee had actually been up to \$1, and it had been lowered to in the area of 50 cents, and I don't remember the exact level that it was lowered to. And then it went to 59 cents is what the 911 user fee was on the Bill. So we added 24 cents which brought it up to 83 cents which was still, in our view, well below the accepted level of \$1 back *circa* the mid-to-late '90s. So we never anticipated a problem with that at all by increasing the 911 levy to an additional 24 cents.

Now on the radios, the ministry is discussing the detailed operational needs for radios for those participating in the PPSTN. And from the discussions — now we have to be fair but frank on the discussions — there are some that want a radio

in every pot. And the ministry is looking at it on the basis of an operational requirement. From the discussions that the ministry has had, it's estimated that a total of 2,500 radios will need to be purchased — 2,500. The ministry has budgeted 6.1 million to be phased in over two years; 1.8 million was approved in 2009-10 and 4.3 million in the '10-11 budget.

I'm anticipating a question, so I'll give you the answer now. With an established standing offer and bulk purchase program, the costs of the radios were reduced from \$4,900, which was an average price, to \$2,104 for a portable radio and \$2,329 for a mobile radio. During the '09-10 fiscal year, 853 mobile and portable radios were purchased. Total cost for the 853 radios was 1.8 million.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. Is there a priority as to who will get the radios first?

[21:45]

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — Not to sound facetious on this, but with the system to be fully integrated by this fall, everybody's a priority.

Mr. Yates: — That's what I was wondering.

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — So if you ask me to break it down a little bit, those currently on the FleetNet . . . but everybody's got to be up and running by this fall, but the FleetNet users because the ones that are on FleetNet right now, that system is in a state that if it went down now, there's no replacement or no way to fix it. You just can't get parts for it as I understand. So those that are on the FleetNet would be a priority, but everybody's a priority to get it up and running by this fall.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much. My question came about as a result of 1.8 million being available and 4.3 million being available this year. And when is that money going to flow and be in place to help the users based on the fact that we have only about six months left of useful life of FleetNet?

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — Yes, that money is flowing right now. It's not about 4.3 million that I understand. But it's flowing right now to make sure that we have the radios to cover the needs as the priority ones come on board, which is everybody.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much. Is the 6.1 million going to be adequate, or are we, as we're moving forward here, seeing some potential shortcomings or shortfalls in predictions?

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — Based on the estimated total of 2,500 radios, 6.1 is enough.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much. If agencies want to purchase their own, are they able to purchase them as part of a bulk buy at a lower cost?

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — Yes, they can buy. And we've had interest from some users that have expressed a desire to maybe purchase more. I think when they, when they look at the operational requirements, some may change. And it's very interesting. And it's a wish, want, need scenario, as I call it

because if you ask somebody how many they want, you'll get a huge number. But you look at the operational requirements, and that number might be significantly less.

So I've talked to people in municipalities that have actually said they need less radios than what originally that they were going to get. There's some places, a small fire department that only has a requirement for one. They only have one fire truck. So there is, there is some movement with some municipalities that have spoken to me. And there's others that may wish . . . I talked to one the other day that I think their operational requirement was three, but they want five. So yes, they can purchase them at cost.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much. That would conclude my questions.

The Chair: — Thank you, Mr. Yates. If there's no other questions, is the committee in agreement to call the vote on vote 73, Corrections, Public Safety and Policing?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Vote 73, Corrections, Public Safety and Policing, central management and services, subvote (CP01) in the amount of \$23,809,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Adult corrections, subvote (CP04) in the amount of \$98,203,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Young offender programs, subvote (CP07) in the amount of 50,374,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Public safety, subvote (CP06) in the amount of 12,638,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Policing services, subvote (CP10) in the amount of 154,315,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Major capital projects, subvote (CP09) in the amount of 13,810,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. Amortization of capital assets in the amount of \$301,000, this is for information purposes only. No amount is to be voted.

Corrections, Public Safety and Policing, vote 73 in the amount of 353,149,000, is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — I will now ask a member to vote the following resolution:

Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty for the 12 months ending March 31, 2011, the following sum for Corrections, Public Safety and Policing in the amount of \$353,149,000.

Mr. Elhard. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried.

[Vote 73 agreed to.]

The Chair: — Mr. Minister, thank you very much for your endurance and for all your help here. I hope we didn't work them too hard. If you have any comments please.

Hon. Mr. Huyghebaert: — Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. And I would very much like to thank the officials from CPSP that are here this evening for all of their support and help putting together the budget and also with the estimates. I would like to thank Mr. Yates, Mr. Forbes for their questions. It's nice to see estimates done in this manner. It's the way it's conducive to a good discussion on what the estimates are really about. And to committee members, I'd like to thank you all for being here this evening. And thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Yates.

Mr. Yates: — Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. I'd just like to thank the minister and their officials for coming this evening and answering our questions. It is always informative and helpful to get the answers. So thank you very much.

The Chair: — Committee members, you have before you a draft of the eighth report of the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice. We require a member to move the following motion:

That the eighth report of the Standing Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs and Justice be adopted and presented to the Assembly.

Mr. Kirsch: — I so move.

The Chair: — Mr. Kirsch. Is that agreed?

Some Hon. Members: — Agreed.

The Chair: — Carried. This concludes our committee hearings for this evening. Thank you very much to the committee members. And I will ask for an adjournment.

Mr. Brkich: — I so move.

The Chair: — Mr. Brkich. This committee now stands adjourned.

[The committee adjourned at 21:53.]