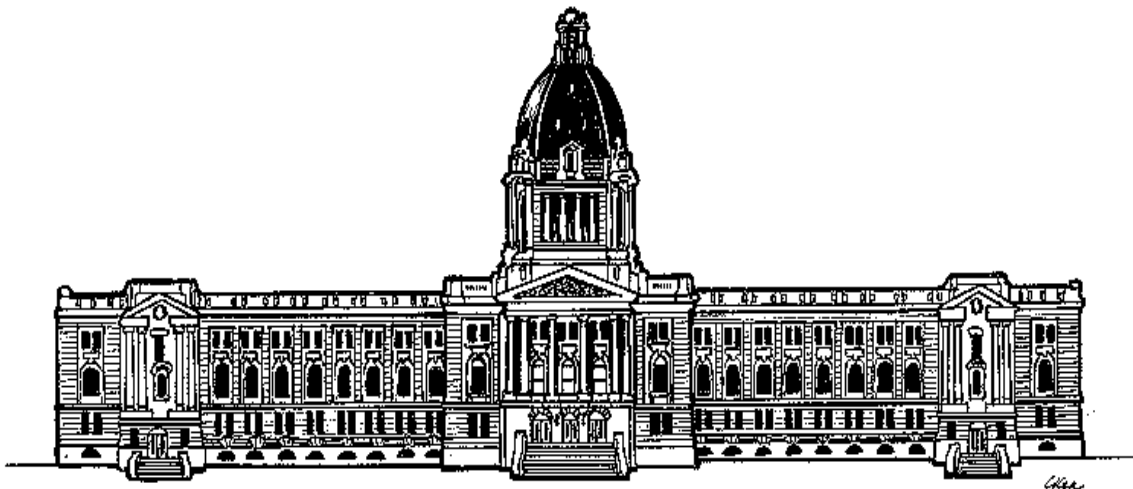




# **STANDING COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES**

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**STANDING COMMITTEE ON HUMAN SERVICES  
2007**

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Saskatoon Eastview

Mr. Wayne Elhard, Deputy Chair  
Cypress Hills

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Saskatchewan Rivers

Ms. Joanne Crofford  
Regina Rosemont

Mr. Peter Prebble  
Saskatoon Greystone

Mr. Don Toth  
Moosomin

Mr. Milton Wakefield  
Lloydminster

[The committee met at 11:05.]

**General Revenue Fund  
Community Resources  
Vote 36**

**Subvote (CR01)**

**The Chair:** — Good morning everyone. Welcome to the Standing Committee on Human Services. This morning on the agenda first up is consideration of estimates for the Department of Community Resources. Welcome to the minister and his officials. If you have any introductions to do or any opening remarks, you can begin.

**Hon. Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you, Madam Chair. We don't have very many opening comments, but I'll introduce my officials once again.

And to my immediate left is Duncan Fisher who is the deputy minister. Directly behind me, not necessarily in order, is Bob Wihlidal, the assistant deputy minister for client surfaces; Don Allen, the executive director of finance and property management division; Andrea Brittin, executive director for child and family services; Natalie Huber, assistant director for child and family services; Janice Krumenacker, the director of post-care services, child and family services; Cathy Bulych, director for the program support services; Larry Chaykowski, executive director for the housing program operations; Lynn Tulloch, the executive director for the income assistance division; Gord Tweed, associate executive director for income assistance division; and finally but not least, Wayne Phaneuf, the associate executive director for the community living division. Thank you, Madam Chair.

**The Chair:** — So questions. Mr. D'Autremont.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you. I'd like to welcome the minister and his officials here this morning. I'd like to ask some questions about the seniors' housing program and the supported housing that takes place. I'm wondering what are the qualifications today for someone, either a senior or someone needing supportive housing to be in those units that are in most towns and cities across the province.

**Hon. Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much for that question. I'm just going to go directly to the gentleman that'll give you the very direct information, Mr. Chaykowski. So Larry, please.

**Mr. Chaykowski:** — Thank you very much. Larry Chaykowski, housing program operations. There are a number of seniors' subsidized housing units throughout the province in very many communities. And there's a consistent point rating system that is used when seniors apply.

And it would consider factors. The most heavily weighted one would be on income, what the seniors' income would be. It would also consider other factors such as the current living conditions that the seniors are in, whether it's suitable for them or not, particularly if they have health considerations or are finding it more of a struggle to live independently in their own home. And there's a point rating system that is used.

And the housing authorities, there's 270 housing authorities that administer seniors' housing throughout the province. Locally we'll do the point rating and allocate units as they become available.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — There's also a program though — is there not? — in place for those who need support because of financial reasons, that they can access these housing units as well?

**Mr. Chaykowski:** — The support comes in the form of a subsidized rent subsidy. So when seniors that are low-income seniors, their rent will be pegged to what their income level is. And there's what's commonly referred to as a graduated rent scale, so the higher your income, the higher your rent; the lower income, the lower it is.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Thank you. Is there also, though, opportunities for someone who is not a senior to access these units?

**Mr. Chaykowski:** — In terms of seniors' housing there are . . . On occasion there will be either near-seniors or people that may have some physical characteristics that make them frail and senior-like that may be close to, you know, if you like, the mobility things. But by and large it's seniors. There are other subsidized housing units that are more for families. But the bulk of it is seniors. But it is, you know, it is possible that there are senior-like people that have maybe a particular type of disability living in some of these suites.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — For the supported housing, though, for the families or other individuals that are low-income, are those completely separate and apart from the seniors' housing, or are they interchangeable?

**Mr. Chaykowski:** — It would depend on the community and the type of housing. So in the larger centres the seniors' housing tends to be more — say, in the Reginas, Saskatoons, and Moose Jaw — more like high-rise apartment buildings. And if there are non-seniors or near-seniors, they would be, you know, housed within those units. And some of the smaller communities, we have what's commonly referred to as a semi-detached unit which is kind of like two small units — you know, side by side. And there may be several of those pairings on a particular tract of land. So that's more of an almost independent type living situation in those cases.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — But the ability to access those housing units, does it matter for those whether or not it's a senior or somebody who needs support?

**Mr. Chaykowski:** — Well for the most part it's seniors. We do have, if it's other young, if you like non-seniors or younger, particularly in the larger centres, there will be a portion of the housing stock that the housing authorities have that have disability characteristics that will have either, you know, wider doorways and grab bars and that sort of thing in some of our, if you like, the regular apartment-type rentals. So there's an ability to access those as well. But they're in heavy demand; there's no doubt about that.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — In some of the rural communities especially, there is a demand for housing for people on income support programs, and I do know that some of them have accessed what would normally be considered seniors' housing, low-cost housing. Do they have to meet the same requirements other than being a senior to access that? Or do the housing authorities have the ability to change the requirements?

**Mr. Chaykowski:** — There is still a consistent point rating system, and as I said there's many, there are a number of pieces to that, so they would have to qualify on, if you like, on being relatively low income. Other factors that came into play, when I mentioned part of the point rating system, looks at a person's ability to live independently. So they would, a non-senior that may have, say, moderate income but has some mobility challenges would rate higher in those categories.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — How about a young mother — single, with one, two, or more children; not employed so living on assistance? Do they qualify?

**Mr. Chaykowski:** — Typically that individual we would be looking at more of our family portfolio that would be available. So in each community there may be a mix of what normally you would consider seniors' housing and family portfolio. So if it was a single-parent mom, typically we would look at, you know, our family portfolio which may either be a detached dwelling like a single-family dwelling or an apartment, a one- or two-bedroom apartment situation, depending on the community.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — So in a lot of the smaller, rural communities, what is normally considered to be seniors' housing is actually interchangeable. It could be family supported housing even though it's the exact same unit.

**Mr. Chaykowski:** — It's possible. In the smaller communities, those semi-detached units that I was describing are typically one bedroom, so they may not be conducive to a family, you know. If there's a number of children, you would want a different type of accommodation for those individuals.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — But that doesn't exclude them, if they have one child, from having access to those units.

**Mr. Chaykowski:** — We would look to our family portfolio first. And there are other means. We have what we call a rent supplement. So if there was some . . . If all of our family units were full, we have the ability to look to the private market and provide a rent supplement for that family to be able to house them.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Well I know in my area that's very difficult to find. Virtually every piece of accommodation is rented. And so in a number of communities the seniors' housing is not full. And there, there are people on support who want access to those types of facilities. And so do they have access to that even though under the numbering system they may not necessarily qualify, or they may have more than one child but no other place to live?

**Mr. Chaykowski:** — Typically we would not put a young, single . . . or a single parent with children in the same facility as

with seniors. That would be very difficult, you know, for reasons such as the seniors . . . I don't know, noise and things like that. But we typically wouldn't intermix that type of population. What I was describing before is senior-like characteristics. Those would be single individuals that might not be a senior that we would consider in a seniors' project. But we typically would not put a single parent with a family in a seniors' project.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — So even if that seniors' project or semi-detached or, even in some cases, individual units not attached to anything else, they would not then qualify because it's within a seniors . . . on the same tract of land as the other senior housing is.

**Mr. Chaykowski:** — That's possible, yes.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — It sounds unreasonable to me but . . . Is there some discussion taking place that you're looking at changing the seniors' qualification to a more general qualification for utilizing these units?

**Mr. Chaykowski:** — I'm not sure if I quite . . . Could you . . .

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Well right now a number of these units, particularly in rural Saskatchewan, the seniors are moving out of the communities that no longer have health care facilities. The seniors' housing is still there. Not all of them are full. People such as people . . . families on support, single parents are looking for accommodations. Under what you've described, they're not eligible for that if it's a seniors' tract. Are you looking at making any changes to this?

**Mr. Chaykowski:** — We are looking. We do have . . . You're quite correct that in a number of our communities we do have a number of vacant units, and we're looking at how we can better use those in the community. So we're looking at a number of different options. Some of those are to make them available for home ownership locally. So that family may be interested in an ownership situation because the units can be made very . . . may be made available at a pretty reasonable cost. We're looking at different ways of . . . For a long time we've had what we called social housing units and affordable housing units, and looking at ways to better blend the mixes of those types of units together.

So these are all things that we're looking at to address, you know, needs where there are needs in the communities. And also address some of the issues around some the vacancies that we're experiencing in some of the smaller communities.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Those units that are empty, are you saying then that you're looking to sell those units that are empty in any of the communities?

**Mr. Chaykowski:** — Over the past year we've made a number of those available in the communities and we've had some very good success in terms of there being local interest, in terms of it might create affordable home ownership opportunities that didn't exist in some of those communities.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — What do the local housing authorities, what kind of input do they have and what's their impressions of

that happening when those units are being privatized?

**Mr. Chaykowski:** — We go through, before we do anything with the vacant units, we engage the community in a bit of a planning process around that. That includes both the housing authority and the municipal council. We schedule a visit with them. We review what the nature of the portfolio is; what it's costing in terms of public monies to support vacancies. We work out a plan that indicates, you know, this part of the portfolio looks like it could be made better use of, and then we proceed on that basis.

For the vast majority this has been a very positive experience and we've had support locally. The housing authorities are very cognizant and are, if you like, they are socially conscious people but they are also practical people in terms of, it's not doing anybody any good to have a unit that's sitting vacant and having to pay expenses when there may be another need in the community that can surface for that particular unit.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — Well I know the housing authorities in my area don't like having empty units, but they also understand they need to cover the costs of operating those units. In a number of these communities they have opportunities to rent out these units to other individuals who wouldn't necessarily meet the qualifications but yet they would certainly help to cover the costs. So if a housing authority has the opportunity to rent out a unit that would help cover the costs for all of the units, is that acceptable to do that? If it is, how is that unit then counted as far as the department's concern about it being empty? Is that unit then classified as being empty because it's not a senior in there or is it classified as being utilized, therefore not available for sale?

**Mr. Chaykowski:** — Local communities have been, a number of them have been very creative in this regard and we've provided them the flexibility that if there isn't sufficient population in that community to fill the units based on the, you know, on what they were created for, that they have some flexibility in terms of renting them out. So for example if there may be some economic activity that's going on in the area where they need some temporary housing for, you know, a construction crew or something like that, we welcome them to do that and we've provided that flexibility. When it's filled, it's not considered a vacant unit.

When we talk about vacancies and making plans, what we look at is not, you know, a particular point in time, but we're looking at a three-, four-, five-year history of the portfolio in general and looking at the trends as opposed to whether one specific unit is, you know, as soon as it becomes available it doesn't mean it's going to be vacant forever. But we're looking at the long-term trends as we're using these better-use plans.

**Mr. D'Autremont:** — So if the local housing authority does not want to have its units sold they will not be sold, is that the case? And if you look at the long-term trend, maybe three years ago they were empty but today they're all full, but they've only been full for the last six months. So your long-term trend is, over the five-year average, empty.

Does that mean that that unit now becomes available for sale even though for the last six months of the year it may have been

occupied?

**Mr. Chaykowski:** — No, that's what I was trying to communicate is that we will look at the long-term trends. So if there's a history, if for example in a particular town there are 12 seniors housing units and we look at the occupation rate — or the flip side, the vacancy rate — and we see that half of them have been vacant over the past, you know, two, three, four years, and that that is declining, those are the basis that we make our plans on.

**The Chair:** — Mr. Merriman.

**Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you very much. I have an opportunity that I want to go through a few cases with you today that have come to my office. And for the sake of this first case we will just give it a name of Lisa, which is not the actual name for confidentiality issues. Lisa is an adult who has mental issues and acts out in defiance at times, and the family has been working with various agencies to try to resolve a long-term solution for Lisa.

And one of the questions is that this young woman has been forced to reside in a hospital for the last five months. CLD [community living division] has made no attempts to find her a permanent home that can support her individual needs. My question is, why would we put an individual in a hospital for five months?

**Hon. Mr. Belanger:** — Yes. Thanks so much for the question. And I would point out that I certainly appreciate, as you do, the importance of confidentiality. And the department staff, as always, answer in a very broad, general response as we have to be very, very careful. There's some huge legal ramifications if we compromise on the confidentiality.

But in theory I guess your hypothetical person here . . . I'll ask the associate director of CLD to give the response.

**Mr. Phaneuf:** — Thank you for your question, Mr. Merriman. There are a number of individuals . . . And I do believe I know which individual of which you speak. There are a number of individuals who have very complex needs that it is difficult to engage the community in finding solutions. While we would not have anyone reside in a hospital for any length of time if that wasn't required, we do need to make sure that we do have the most appropriate supports in place to prevent readmission as well.

In these kinds of situations we make sure . . . And certainly the hospital has been involved with the planning, are aware that we're looking for an appropriate resource. The planning continues. The individuals, families, and other interested agencies are involved in the planning process. And we are moving forward. I don't have a timeline on some of these situations when we have complex needs involved, but we certainly make this a planning priority.

**Mr. Merriman:** — I understand from the family — and I have a file about an inch thick on this — that CLD informed the family that it wasn't their job to find a facility. They were there strictly as an adviser. Could you comment on that?

**Mr. Phaneuf:** — I can't comment on that specific, but I will look into that. Certainly community living division plays a lead role in mobilizing community forces to provide services to people with intellectual disabilities who require those kinds of services. And our role is to do that. We don't necessarily control all of those services, but we certainly do play a role as a catalyst and to lead the development of those services.

**Mr. Merriman:** — I understand this individual's at Saskatoon City Hospital. And I had my staff call there. An acute care bed, which is what this individual is taking up, is \$1,113 a day. And which I would just like to inform you that at the first of next week that's \$200,000 that would have been spent on this individual for an acute care bed, which I think is atrocious. And that we need to find somewhere in the community that these individuals that have these special needs or special requirements — which is usually an acting out in a violent manner, which sometimes is a change of medications or in the case of autistic a change in environment — and we don't seem to have that facility available to move them. And to have spent \$200,000 on hospital care to me is unexplainable.

**Mr. Phaneuf:** — I understand your concern, Mr. Merriman, on that. We share that concern. We are looking at developing a generic solution. Not only are we looking at being involved — and we are involved with individuals who are currently in those kinds of situations — we are looking at developing a more detailed and quicker response to do that with a crisis response capacity and looking at new models of support for individuals. However those are not in place yet. I understand your concern. We share your concern about the use of acute care beds, and we are looking to resolve this as soon as possible.

**Mr. Merriman:** — In meeting with the family and talking to them, there doesn't seem to be a mechanism for them to get their concerns above. In the last five months they've had three conversations with their worker although they've left a repeated message, done repeated calls. It would seem to me that, meeting with the family, that they are left with the onerous task of trying to work themselves through the maze to find a solution for the child. And this isn't the only case that I have on this.

We seem to bounce them from department to department rather than having a meeting of all departments within the caregiver section, finding a solution, but more importantly, implementing this solution. This has been going on for a long time in the case of this individual. Could you explain to me how the family is supposed to work their way through this maze when in five months they only have three conversations with the worker?

**Mr. Phaneuf:** — No, I can't explain that to you at this point in time. I will certainly raise it with the region in question and certainly can look as to why we, what our involvement has been to date and ensure that we have an appropriate involvement with the family.

**Mr. Fisher:** — If I could just add, Mr. Merriman, if the family is feeling that the issues are not being heard adequately or at all, I would just suggest that they bring those concerns directly to the attention of Wayne or myself. And we'll ensure that we work with the health region in trying to find an appropriate placement for this young person.

**Mr. Merriman:** — Okay. Can I have a commitment from you today that I will have the family call your office and you will sit down with your senior officials and try and find a long-term solution for the young lady I'm calling Lisa?

**Mr. Fisher:** — Well as Wayne has said, we will be involved. We are involved in the planning and if the family were to give either myself or Wayne a call, we will commit to sitting down with them and reviewing the case and, as Wayne has already mentioned, trying to put a placement option in place just as soon as we can. I mean I can't today make a commitment in terms of a date, but I can commit to sitting down with the family and taking a look at this case.

**Mr. Merriman:** — I appreciate the complexity. I don't think I'm asking for the solution today. What I'm asking for, and I believe I got, was a commitment that my office will contact you next week and you will sit down with this family and we will try to mutually come up with a solution, long term, for this individual.

There is one small immediate need which falls through the bureaucracy. That because this — and I'm going to call her a child — is in the hospital, the basic needs of necessity that she needs such as hygiene products, hair, bathe, all of these types of things, are not being met because, if you can believe this, she has no fixed address.

**Mr. Phaneuf:** — Thank you, Mr. Merriman. That to my knowledge has been resolved. Income assistance division has become involved and we have put a plan in place to have those kinds of supplies addressed.

**Mr. Merriman:** — I fully appreciate that it is done but when you read through these files, the length of time it took to get that minor decision done of basic hygiene products for this young lady, to be delivered, should not have to be . . . You know, the family shouldn't have to have to write me three letters to get this resolved.

We have a failure to communicate somewhere within the department. And I hope when the family expresses their concerns to you that we can look into why this happened so — not to blame somebody but to fix the system — so they don't have to go to an MLA [Member of the Legislative Assembly] three times to have basic life necessities looked after. Agreed?

**Mr. Phaneuf:** — Thank you.

**Mr. Merriman:** — I have another case on a similar note and this case was highlighted on *The National* last week. A young lady, and I'll call her Marie for the sake again, but it was on TV so I don't really have an issue of . . . This is again almost a very similar case where we have a mentally challenged person who acts out either in a violent manner, whether it be change to her prescriptions or their change of facility. And this happens a lot especially with autistic children or people with mental illnesses that change is not easily accepted and they lash out.

What happened to this young lady was, because she lashed out, she ended up spending Christmas in jail because we had no facility to put her in. This needs to be brought to your attention. I mean this is just unacceptable. When CBC [Canadian

Broadcasting Corporation] broke the story last year and we got involved, the solution was found and this young lady was placed in North Battleford. Everybody was happy. The father was happy. The young lady was happy. I was happy and we could move on.

We then got a letter from the minister and the Minister of Healthy Living saying that this was only temporary. After all the work and effort put in by the father, by the family, and by my office, when everybody believes it was resolved, we get a letter — after the news media has quieted down — saying this is only temporary and that the father needs to start looking for a facility.

I would ask you to comment on why this letter was sent indicating what had been done was not done, and that we will also look into this case.

**Mr. Fisher:** — If we're talking about regarding the same case, the temporary issue I believe was the individual's in Saskatchewan Hospital, North Battleford, and the care plan that's in place will have that individual reside there until the redevelopment of the North View Home in P.A. [Prince Albert] is complete. And I believe we're scheduled to do that in August of this year. And then the plan would have that individual transfer to North View.

I should also add that if we can develop a resource that would be appropriate for that individual prior to the opening of North View, we would certainly consider that as an option. But it's my understanding that there are no plans to discharge her from SHNB [Saskatchewan Hospital, North Battleford] until such time as an option is developed, and the current one on the plan would be to wait for North View to open in August.

**Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you for that answer. You know, the letter that was sent to the father didn't convey that. I spoke to the . . . Or I should rephrase that. My staff spoke to the father last night and he was not aware of that as of last night. And I would appreciate, because you and I know who we're talking about, if somebody from your office or yourself would undertake to call this gentleman and put him at ease.

I mean this man is not well unto himself physically and has championed the case on behalf of his daughter. And I'm sure he'll sleep better tonight knowing that you have made a commitment long term, even though we may be switching facilities again, but that the solution is resolved once and for all.

**Mr. Fisher:** — We can certainly contact the family and ensure that we all have a common understanding.

**Mr. Merriman:** — I appreciate that. In future is there a mechanism that we can use through our office to get these cases brought to attention and dealt with more rapidly than, you know, some of these cases we've been dealing in my office for like eight, nine months? We keep sending letters off and letters come back and letters go and letters come. But we don't get to the point where we get it resolved till we all sit down here together.

I'm asking, is there a mechanism that you can have in place that in the special cases we can make one phone call and have these

issues resolved?

**Mr. Fisher:** — I would just say, if a case comes to your attention that you can bring it to the attention of the department. Obviously the first question that we're going to ask: are the, you know, consents for sharing information available? But subsequent to that, bring them to the attention of the department and we'll try to deal with them as quickly as we can.

**Mr. Merriman:** — I guess my question is the department is a big word. And when we do send our letters out, you know, we seem to be in a letter writing campaign that takes you or whoever a lot of time within your facility and my office to continually write back and forth, but we don't seem to move forward until we get to the crisis situation.

And in the case of children, which may not be chronologically children but children with the mental issues, you know, time is of the essence. The family is under tremendous strain as they feel that they're on an island. And if we could contact somebody within your office that would at least look at these special cases. You know, we're not going to bring every case to the attention but in these special instances, and deal with one person. It certainly makes the solution quicker and the job a lot easier.

**Hon. Mr. Belanger:** — Just to point out that I think it's obviously we don't want to see any families suffer. We don't want to see any non-permanent planning being done for anybody that may have any cognitive disabilities. It is something that nobody in any part of this world would want to see that occur.

Obviously I think it's important that the officials today offered to have the meeting and offered some resolution to both cases that you brought forward. But for the record I feel as a minister that I ought to share that I believe the number of CLD clients that we have, the community living division clients, is roughly 3,300 people.

And again it's very difficult to explain as it is a complex issue. There are monies being expended through the social assistance plan, there are monies been expended through the community living division, and of course there's many advocacy groups that we also work very closely with. And there's always that continual pressure on some of the CBOs [community-based organization] and on the provincial government and certainly on the families, as I've indicated at the outset.

No question that as a minister we don't want to see these kind of activities occur. But as they come forward and as we work our way through them, it is the intent of this government, and certainly myself, to make sure that we're able to assist as many people as possible with a degree of dignity, and to try and get them resolved as quickly as we can in terms of some of the problems that they may have.

So again I tell the people of Saskatchewan that obviously we don't want to see this kind of activity occur, but on the good news front there's a tremendous amount of resources that are being afforded to this process. There's roughly 3,300 CLD clients that we deal with. There's a variety of costs that we incur and have no problem incurring them through either the

CLD programs or the CBO section or through the social assistance benefits. It's just there's a myriad of stakeholders involved. But obviously, as you mentioned, there are a few that fall through the cracks from time to time. We don't want to see that kind of suffering and we try and respond as quickly as we can.

So I just want to reiterate that it is an incredible responsibility that many people share. We thank the many stakeholders. And we apologize to some of the families that felt that they may have not had a resolution to their problem done as quickly as possible, and to have them contact our office and we will certainly respond as quickly as possible to ensure that any kind of suffering may be diminished quickly. Thanks.

**Mr. Fisher:** — I would just add, Mr. Merriman, that the majority of our services are provided regionally, so we have some people in the regions and in most cases I think the response, the initial contact, should be to the regional representative for the particular service, if it's an income assistance or if it's child welfare or if it's community living. But if there are specific instances or specific cases that you feel it's necessary to draw attention centrally, again the offer that was made earlier, if you want to bring them to the attention of Wayne or myself, that that would be fine.

**Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you. You know, the intent was to find a solution, not make a political issue out of this but, you know, the minister's comments . . . You know, the two cases I brought forward today are here because they are exceptions. We deal with a lot of cases with the local agencies and people and get most of them resolved, and the job gets done quite adequately. But putting a person in jail over Christmas because of mental illnesses, putting a girl in a bed for five months in a hospital, is not acceptable and all I'm asking and I've gotten is the solution to that problem.

I'm not politicizing this. I'm trying to just say with exception cases where we are meeting resistance, roadblocks, or not getting issues resolved on the, I'll call it the local level, and we've, you know, we've done our three letters and we're still at the bottom, somebody higher up just needs to look at it and say yes this . . . No's an acceptable answer if we can't do it. I mean we can then move along and tell the family we can't resolve this.

But to put the pressure on the family to continue to do this . . . And I accept your offer and I will assure you we will not abuse the offer; that we will work through all local facilities when possible but when it gets to the point, you know, when somebody's in a hospital for five months, that's a crisis situation and if we've spent \$200,000, we need to ask these questions and have it resolved. And I appreciate your answers.

I have one more case file that I need to go through and then we can get to some general questions. I have another file that's been going on for years that you have in your area. This gentleman has been trying to get his case resolved. He believes he has a conflict with the minister and my question is: can we have this case also looked at and responded back to with some type of solution in a timely manner?

**Mr. Fisher:** — Again, I'm not quite sure which the case is but

certainly at the conclusion of this meeting if, if you would like to have a discussion certainly we can, we can pursue it with some of the case details.

**Mr. Merriman:** — That would be great. We have letters on file both sent by my colleague, Mr. Morgan, and myself going back I think to 1997. This issue has been ongoing with a family member. I will not get into the specifics of it, again due to confidentiality. You have these files there but I will be delighted to give you a copy of it. And once again if we can just use some resolution mechanism.

There is an issue — whether personality or whatever — with the minister with this individual. Then the easiest way to pursue that is just have somebody else do it. I'm not questioning whether it's a factual issue or . . . Some people don't want to deal with me either and that's fine. Sometimes it's better to move them off to a colleague. That's all I'm asking. So I will endeavour to give you a copy of this before we leave, if that's acceptable.

**Hon. Mr. Belanger:** — Yes. Just let me clarify as well that what's important for people to know out there, this is a very traumatic experience that many families go through and we have a separation or there's divorce or there's problems in the family. That what people ought to know is that the minister is not the individual that decides who retains the home or who retains the children or how the assets are divvied up. There's a variety of processes in place through the courts and through lawyers and so on and so forth.

And one of the things people ought to know when it comes to situations that involve family, the minister does not politically interfere or personally offer his or her opinion. It is quite clear that as a minister that's not my role. That is not my place. We have professional people within the department that make these decisions on behalf of the minister, totally independent of the minister's office, and that's how it ought to be.

So I would point out to Mr. Merriman that it's important for folks to know out there that in a situation such as that may occur, where people think the minister has a right to decide who gets which child and who doesn't, and assets being divvied up in a relation or marital breakdown, the minister doesn't have those decisions personally. They are done by staff, professional people that know each file well and independent of the minister, but on behalf of the minister.

**Mr. Merriman:** — Well thank you, Mr. Minister. I was just trying to be very generic on this one without getting into it, but you know there is a thing with the Conflict of Interest Commissioner on this case. And I had just asked that this case be moved off to an individual, which was acceptable to me, and I think we could have left it at that. But if you wish to pursue it, we can certainly pursue it.

I'd like to turn now to another issue of women in violence. Is the department providing any funding for programs to address violence against women? And how much funding is allocated to transition houses and sexual assault centres?

**Hon. Mr. Belanger:** — Thank you very much for your question. I'm going to ask Andrea Brittin to join us in the front



here. And Andrea is the executive director of child and family services. And Andrea will give you a breakdown as to what we expend when it comes to some of the services that you inquired about so Andrea . . .

**Mr. Fisher:** — We're just looking for the dollar amount. But I can say that we do fund several transition houses in the province — we'll get confirmation of the actual dollar amount — but we do provide annual operating grants to I think it's 13 transition houses across the province.

**Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you for the answer. If you could undertake to forward to me that number at your earliest convenience or give me a date. I guess I'd better ask for a date. Your earliest convenience may not tie into a time frame. If you undertake to have that to me by the end of the session next week . . .

**A Member:** — I think we've got it.

**Mr. Merriman:** — Oh, we have it. Thank you.

**Hon. Mr. Belanger:** — Just for the record, Ted, if you don't mind I'm going to ask just to answer just very briefly the background of what we spend and we'll forward you more detailed information as quick as possible.

**Ms. Brittin:** — I can tell you that the department provides in excess of \$1 million to fund CBOs to provide counselling and outreach and crisis residential services to victims of family violence. And this includes 10 transition houses in Saskatchewan as well as sexual assault centres in six CBOs.

**Mr. Merriman:** — That's 16 in total or 10 transition houses and six . . .

**Ms. Brittin:** — There's also sexual assault centres, that's right, that provide counselling, 24-hour crisis services.

**Mr. Merriman:** — Okay. So 16 in total then for \$1 million, is that correct?

**Ms. Brittin:** — There's 10 staffed transition houses in Saskatchewan and there's also the sexual assault centres that are not necessarily transition houses but they provide 24-hour crisis telephone services for victims of sexual assault.

**Mr. Merriman:** — And six of those was the number you used?

**Ms. Brittin:** — Six, that's right.

**Mr. Merriman:** — That's correct. Okay, thank you. That was the number. Does the department have a long-term strategy in place that deals with this; that we're doing some type of promotion or advertising to get this out to reduce incidences of violence and domestic violence against women in the province?

**Ms. Brittin:** — Thank you for the question. Government has initiated an action plan related to the strategy for stopping interpersonal violence and abuse. Part of that is public releases of policy framework including profiling some of the existing supports and services, as well as new investments in '07-08 to expand programs for children who witness domestic violence

and to enhance the assessing and monitoring capacity for offenders.

There's a number of departments represented on the interdepartmental committee for interpersonal violence and abuse, including Justice and Community Resources.

**Mr. Merriman:** — On the offenders side, do we have programs for offender education or training for the offenders themselves, not the offendees?

**Ms. Brittin:** — I don't have details on that funding. That funding is provided through Justice but . . .

**Mr. Merriman:** — Funding wasn't the question. Do we have the programs?

**Ms. Brittin:** — Again the programs would be provided through Justice so that would not be a question that I would be able to answer.

**Mr. Fisher:** — There are some services provided through the health system for counselling services for sexual offenders as well.

**Mr. Merriman:** — This leads me to a question that is an issue within government, is that we have an issue with violence against women. We have part of in this department, part of it in that department, part of it in another department. Is there some way that you tie all of these together to assure that (a) we don't miss something in the process; and (b) that we're assured that the programs are working together sort of on the same plane as to achieve the objective we're trying to achieve? Or are we in isolation? That's my concern.

**Hon. Mr. Belanger:** — Well I guess I could basically answer that question, Ted. I think one of the things that's really important is people ought to know that in the situations that may occur from time to time, and it could be a variety of issues, there are a variety of departments that are impacted — you know, everything from Justice to housing to DCR and to some of the health departments. There's just a myriad of support services out there that are housed in many departments.

And what we as a government try to do and consistently try to do is to make sure that we have interdepartmental approaches and that they're collaborative and that we're able to communicate with the people that are impacted. But any time that you deal with government there is complex issues that are brought forward, complex needs that people have out there. So obviously it can't be a simplistic approach as saying, go see one department and the solutions are all there.

We understand that some programs, and people understand in general that there are programs housed in a variety of departments. And the province is doing their best and they continually strive to make sure they make improvements to the system overall to make sure that there's coordination and collaboration to provide the best impact and the best benefit of any program that we have, no matter where it's housed.

So in answer to your question, as much as simplistic as it may sound that you have so many different departments involved

and you need to have the coordination happen, well it is; the coordination is happening. Now there are a variety of programs, but obviously as time goes on if there's ways to improve it we certainly will.

**Mr. Merriman:** — That was part of my question. Where I was trying to go with this was to say that, you know, in the case of this violence against women, why could we not have all of these programs centralized under one unit, whatever that unit would be, so again we're not bouncing people from department to department to try and find the services that they need? We always put the onus on the individual to find their way through the maze. My question is, why can't we have a one-stop shop where all the services are met with one department, with one agency?

**Hon. Mr. Belanger:** — Well I guess I go back to my earlier comment is that obviously Justice would be involved in the case that you may bring forward and in the case example you provide today. Housing may be involved. Health may be involved. A CBO may be involved. I said there's a myriad of programs and services and staff out there that are put there to support people going through any kind of crisis.

And again what we encourage and we develop on a continual basis is to make sure people know that the programs and support services are out there, to make sure that we coordinate these services because of the complex issues that maybe might present themselves in certain cases. And it is important for any government, incumbent upon any government, to make sure they coordinate this as best they can and they communicate it effectively.

So I'm not sure if Andrea has anything else to add, but I think the interdepartmental coordination and co-operation of the myriad of programs that are out there is something that is always a work in progress.

**Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister, for the answer. I think I could go on all day on this one but we'll switch subjects. On Project Hope, can the minister indicate how much money, if any, the department is providing to support Project Hope?

**Ms. Brittin:** — Thank you for the question, Mr. Merriman. The department has \$500,000 that is being allocated to assist in the transition of youth that are transitioning from the secure detox to placements within the community or back home.

**Mr. Merriman:** — Five hundred thousand dollars for a transition to the communities or back home. Is this a travel allowance?

**Ms. Brittin:** — It could be. It could be allowances for them to participate in some sorts of community services that they need to participate in in order to transition them back to their communities. As an example, there'll be times when the youth have gone through secure detox but need some community supports to assist them in their addictions issues. And so they may require room and board or supervised room and board for short periods of time. And some of it may be travel. Some of it, mostly travel and short periods of residency in the cities until they transition back to their communities.

**Mr. Merriman:** — It would seem to me that the community services that you're talking about should already be there and be provided by addiction services. I mean that's what their job is, to prove these services in the community. Is this a duplication of the services that were . . . already have?

**Mr. Fisher:** — I think in many cases your comment would be correct. If a child is going back home with the support of family, with the support of the community or the health system, what have you, many of those services are in place. This would be a case where the support services for that child are not there. The money is available to develop a flexible plan to reintegrate the child back into the community. So as Andrea said, it could be used for a number of purposes and it's to be used in those instances where the services, the care plan required for that child, for whatever reason, needs to be supplemented by some sort of living arrangement or transportation arrangement that we can put in place with this money.

**Mr. Merriman:** — I accept that there's a transitional cost of moving the children or getting them back to wherever home would be. I'm not quite on the community services side yet, because to even supplement the services in a community that may not have those services, who would do it? I mean if you don't have the services there, there's not professionals there to provide the services. So I don't understand how we would supplement this in communities where there's not professional help available.

**Ms. Brittin:** — Just to clarify, it's providing the support that the youth would require to attend to existing community supports. And so you know, just to clarify, there isn't a duplication in terms of the funding isn't going to provide those community supports. The funding is going to the youth to support them in attending to existing community supports within the community.

**Mr. Merriman:** — The issue I have with this is that, you know, we're — and I understand what you're doing — but we're shipping a child back to facility A and his home. We're paying for room and board. And then we're shipping him back into town to get the services. Why wouldn't we just pay room and board in the town until he has a facility, the capacity to be solidly on his feet? Why are we transitioning back and forth, back and forth? This can't be helpful to the child. If all the services are available in this community, why not just pay room and board here?

**Mr. Fisher:** — Well again I think, depending on the needs of the individual, if they are going to a community outside of Regina, transportation, living arrangements would be two good examples for the use of this money. It may not be that the individual is moving back and forth. They move back to their community of origin or to the community that the care plan has been centred around, and that would be the last move, hopefully. So it's not a question of bouncing the child back and forth between treatment programs.

I think the intent of the funding is to, as the child is discharged, there is a discharge plan that's in place, and part of that discharge plan is how to get home. And if there is an issue around where that child is or where that individual is going to live once they do get back to the community, then this type of

funding would be available to provide some assistance with housing costs.

**Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you. My time is drawing short so could I ask you to undertake to give me a copy of this discharge plan so I could have a look as to how this program works? And I'll get into it more at a later date.

**Mr. Fisher:** — We can certainly provide you with some information around the program, but the discharge plan would be developed uniquely for each individual. It would be different. There would be a common process, but the plan would be unique.

**Mr. Merriman:** — Sorry, I misunderstood that. I thought you had a strategic plan that you were utilizing across the board. It's an individualized plan? Then I'm satisfied. Okay.

I just have a couple more questions. On the Children's Advocate issue that we've been dealing with, the Children's Advocate has said that there are more facilities under your direction that he is reviewing. Could you tell me how many of those facilities that he has made you aware of?

**Mr. Fisher:** — Well I think it's important to note that when a child is admitted to any of the residential options across the system, one of the things that the child is made aware of upon admission is that there is a thing in Saskatchewan called the Children's Advocate's office. And they are made aware of what the function of the Children's Advocate is, and how to contact the Children's Advocate.

So over time if a child identifies an issue in this residential placement, they have the ability and the right to phone the advocate and bring that issue to their attention. So on any given day there may be calls to the Children's Advocate from kids across the province in a variety of residential resources. Those concerns are generally dealt with between the advocate and our local staff. He would raise it as an issue. We would follow up, and hopefully that it could be either confirmed or resolved.

I think when the advocate has received a number of complaints or a number of issues raised by children from a particular facility, he would raise those issues with . . . He would bring specific focus on those as he did with Oyate, and as he's done with Four Directions. So certainly we have contact with the advocate on a number of facilities over time, based on individual complaints or individual issues that children raise. I do not believe he has formally identified to my attention any additional facilities where he has seen a large number of complaints, focus on a systemic issue within an individual facility, and so he's not notified me that we have similar issues to those that have been identified at Four Directions, but he certainly has raised individual concerns in other areas.

**Hon. Mr. Belanger:** — If I could add to that as well, I think what's important is that as you have done, and many other MLAs, government MLAs, advocacy groups, they've contacted the Department of Social Services or housing on a variety of occasions. And as I've indicated to the media, some of the issues have been resolved. Sometimes they come to the attention of the minister, sometimes they don't. The advocate plays a role, MLAs play roles, the advocacy groups play roles.

So they all do their work and we appreciate that their work is important and the issues are important.

So am I as a minister apprised of every significant problem or every minor problem or any problem at all within the system? Well the answer is no, because sometimes the issues get resolved and sometimes they don't.

When the Children's Advocate gets involved with a systemic problem and a continual problem in some facility, they bring it forward. So some of the issues that the advocate may be involved with, I don't have total awareness all the time. Sometimes the officials within my department have issues in the different regions that they resolve without the minister knowing the problem came up to begin with.

So again I don't micromanage the department, but as these issues come up it is my hope that people that we employ are resolving them as quickly as we can, and taking care of these problems at the regional or at the local level. Does that mean the minister knows everything what happens in his department and every concern? The answer is no. But if it becomes a problem, we'll certainly get engaged.

**Mr. Merriman:** — Well the question was simple; we got a complex answer. So we'll get a little bit more complex on the question then. How many multiple instance of systemic identification of facilities has the Children's Advocate informed somebody in the department about, because it may not have come directly to you, sir?

**Mr. Fisher:** — I think I would answer the question by saying that the advocate has formally advised us of issues that we've been working . . . Well let me go back and say we've been working on issues at the facilities that have been raised publicly over the last little while — Four Directions, Oyate, and the Red Willow Centre in Saskatoon. We've been working on issues there.

The advocate has formally raised issues with us on each of those facilities and to my knowledge he hasn't raised, formally raised, systemic issues with other facilities either operated by the department or services that are funded by the department through community-based residential option.

**Mr. Merriman:** — Thank you for that answer. I am going to wrap-up. I just want to thank the deputy minister for having resolved the case files that I brought forward today and having offered to work together to resolve these cases — which I'll call outside the box — which you and I have done on other occasions. And I just want it to be noted on the record that I want to thank you for your assistance in resolving some of these issues to the satisfaction of the parents and the family, and I appreciate that. Thank you.

**The Chair:** — Thanks to the minister and his officials. We'll now bring in the minister and the officials for the Department of Corrections and Public Safety, our next item up for discussion. Thanks. We'll take a few minutes to switch officials so we can have about a five-minute break here.

[The committee recessed for a period of time.]

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

**Subvote (CP01)**

**The Chair:** — Welcome to the minister and his officials. The item up for discussion before the committee is consideration of estimates for the Department of Corrections and Public Safety which is vote 73 on page 47. If the minister has any new officials or wants to introduce his officials or wants to make a statement, please go ahead.

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — Thank you, Madam Chair. I guess what I'll do right off the top is — mess with the microphone, pardon me — introduce my officials. I'm accompanied by Terry Lang on my left, deputy minister of Corrections and Public Safety; Mae Boa on my right, executive director of management services. I'm also accompanied by Maureen Lloyd, assistant deputy minister, adult corrections; Bob Kary, executive director, young offender programs; Kevin Roche, director, SaskEMO [Saskatchewan Emergency Management Organization]; Duane McKay, director, public safety and Sask911; Brian Krasium, executive director, licensing and inspections; Syd Bolt, team leader, human resources; and Sharon Wall, acting executive assistant to the deputy minister; and my assistant, Darcy Furber.

With that, Madam Chair, I'll gladly entertain any questions from the committee.

**The Chair:** — Thank you. Ms. Harpauer.

**Ms. Harpauer:** — Thank you very much. And welcome to the minister and his officials today. I have two situations that I would like to discuss. And I know we have time restraints, so we'll try to go through this as quickly as possible.

The first situation is a letter from the village of Viscount. And I believe the minister should have received this letter. I'm just going to read the opening paragraph to give him a heads-up on the situation that they ran into. And it just says:

Upon inspection of the man holes for the Village of Viscount it was noticed that the levels were becoming higher than normal and we were faced with a potential disaster situation. Our lagoon is situated next to a lake in which we discharge effluent water from the lagoon. Due to extreme high snowfall this winter the lake and lagoon began to fill excessively high, the overflow pipe was covered with water from the lake and due to the back pressure of the lagoon the sewer was starting to come back into the village, causing the levels in the man holes to rise. We immediately took action to prevent a disaster from taking place. We set up a pump to lower the level of the lake; this water was discharged to another location approximately a mile and a half . . . from the lagoon. By lowering the water level of the lake our lagoon could effectively discharge effluent water into the lake. We discharged approximately 18,432,000 gallons of water from this lake. We effectively prevented a major disaster from taking place.

The letter goes on to explain the situation, as well as maps of what had happened. Now obviously the village was very proactive and avoided a potentially very, very costly disaster. And they incurred a cost of approximately \$48,000. They applied for disaster assistance through the program, through your department, and were turned down because the disaster never happened.

And it goes back to something that I've spoken on other fronts, where crisis management's very costly. They avoided a crisis in this situation so the costs are low, and yet they're in essence penalized. Had they allowed or not been proactive or not monitored the situation or foreseen that this could happen, and had they not taken actions to prevent it from happening, the cost for both themselves and for the disaster program would have been a great deal. So I was wondering if the minister could reconsider or give this some consideration and thought of how, yes, there was a disaster about to happen. There was a cost to preventing it from happening. And is there any possible way of them getting some recovery of their costs because of their proactiveness?

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — I guess what I'd say off the top is I would appreciate a copy of the letter from the member. To my knowledge this is the first I've encountered this particular circumstance. I guess I'd commend the village for their quick action and preventing a much larger emergency, a much larger problem. But this is something that we have as a sort of an ongoing concern with the provincial disaster assistance program in that it's an after-the-fact kind of program.

There are other programs with other departments, other levels of government that do go more towards that proactive work, that preventative work, be it with the Sask Watershed Authority or with Government Relations. But in PDAP [provincial disaster assistance program] this is sort of an ongoing conversation that we have with the federal government and the disaster finance arrangements.

Obviously it makes much more sense to do the mitigation work, the prevention work. But again I guess I'll get back to my first point which is I'd like to have a closer look at the case that the member is bringing forward, and see if there isn't something that can be done out of PDAP. But I guess I'd invite a comment from Kevin Roche who's the expert on the public safety side in terms of PDAP.

**Mr. Roche:** — Mr. Minister, thank you for the question. And again I also apologize because I'm personally not aware of this situation so I'm looking forward to learning more about it myself.

As the minister summarized there's a number of issues to investigate before any real decisions could be made. And generally speaking mitigative measures are taken into account depending on the timing and the level of the imminent threat to the community. And under normal circumstances the level of threat or risk to the community is generally described as imminent, and proactive measures are taken at that time. And wherever possible we would have these cursory discussions with our federal counterparts at the same time.

So without knowing the circumstances, the specific water

levels, and the timing, it's difficult to give an answer. But it's something definitely that we'll be taking a serious look at.

**Ms. Harpauer:** — I thank you . . .

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — And if I could add to that. There are some circumstances that, as my deputy reminds me, where there is some opportunity to claim the costs for mitigative work. Red Earth First Nation of course, there's a fair amount of diking that was done in advance of this spring's flooding situation and part of that was certainly eligible under PDAP to be claimed, but anyway I guess . . . Please carry on.

**Ms. Harpauer:** — I thank the minister and the officials, and I will send . . . I will definitely get you copies of this letter. And if there's anything that can be done, it will be greatly appreciated, as well as suggestions, if there's nothing through this program, of suggestions of where else they may apply to see if there's assistance available.

The other series of questions that I have of course is to do with the serious flooding that's happening in the Humboldt constituency. And my colleague from Kelvington-Wadena is here with me, and so to save time and duplication of questions — because a lot of our questions will be the same — she is going to take the lead on asking about the new program that the Premier announced. And we may go back and forth somewhat to cover the issues for the different flooding situations.

**The Chair:** — Ms. Draude.

**Ms. Draude:** — Thank you very much, and thank you to the minister and to the officials. We had the opportunity for a few moments, one of the last times the committee came up, to talk about this, and I was happy to learn that there was a change in policy to ensure that the number of events was changed to make it possible to enable RMs [rural municipality] to claim one event even if it happened over a longer time frame.

I am wondering if you've made any progress in ensuring that the deductibles will not be taken each time, and that also it won't be taken from each individual RM or municipality, resort, or entity, or even individuals.

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — I guess I would like to be able to say that we've got that policy change complete and made. It's still working it's way through the process, but we do recognize that there is an undertaking. We do recognize that there's undue hardship on, be it RMs or a series of RMs that have been confronted with multiple disasters or disasters that are particularly large in scale.

So of course I would rather be able to announce today in committee that that has been completed, but it's still working it's way through the process in terms of Treasury Board and the cabinet process. But that undertaking is outstanding and will be discharged.

**Ms. Draude:** — So from your statements, Mr. Minister, you're saying that this is a provincial decision then to charge a deductible?

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — Yes.

**Ms. Draude:** — I do understand from speaking with officials in Manitoba and Alberta that there isn't a deductible in those two provinces.

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — There are differences from province to province, pros and cons, with each of the programs as they vary from province to province, certainly.

**Ms. Draude:** — Then I guess I misunderstood last time. I thought it was a change and the federal undertaking to ensure that the events numbers would change and that type of thing. So basically you're saying then the provincial government has rethought the situation and has decided to allow a number of what was considered incidents or events before to be considered as one. Is that correct?

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — It's a bit . . . In the approach that we're taking through the process it is to recognize those multiple disasters, that's that cumulative effect that you can have with multiple disasters. But we wanted something that was broad and adaptable and it also spoke to if a given community had something that was quite large in scale. But I guess . . . Kevin have you got anything you'd like to add on that?

**Mr. Roche:** — Thank you, Minister. I think generally speaking what we're looking for is trying to address the entire issue of financial hardship. And, you know multiple deductibles and multiple claims are one piece of that. But the other is for any community that's faced a single, large event as well because we wouldn't want to treat any community differently, you know, if we're looking at the ability to pay and cost-share the impact of a disaster. So our discussion is around that wider envelope of looking at what are the options, what are the issues to address, just generally ability to pay and financial hardship overall.

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — And I guess as well we wanted to make sure that it did meet the broader guideline set out by the disaster financial assistance arrangements and that it worked with those as well.

**Ms. Draude:** — So then just for clarification then, it isn't part of the federal disaster program that makes it mandatory to have a deductible?

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — No.

**Ms. Draude:** — So when we spoke last time then I was under the impression that there'd been an arrangement made with the federal government that had meant that there was a money savings, and that I was waiting to hear back what kind of a difference it would make to the RMs that had . . . actually had paid the deductible last time. And I was waiting to hear how much money they'd actually get back. Has that decision been made?

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — No, that decision has not been made. But what we were referring to last time in committee is, just as say the RM of Bjorkdale or the RM of Arborfield, with a multiple of claims, they have a deductible to deal with in terms of the provincial disaster assistance program, so too as the province makes a claim on the federal government and the DFAA [disaster financial assistance arrangements], so too do we have a deductible so to speak with the feds. What the feds, what had

been negotiated and was allowed was what we're seeking to do with the municipalities.

And I'm sorry this is, this is maybe further complicating things than I should. But in terms of the treatment that we were able to negotiate with the feds in terms of bringing together a number of provincial claims on the DFAA and having a multiple treated as a single event, you know we're looking to make sure that we can extend that kind of treatment to the municipalities, because we accept the argument that say the RM of Arborfield has been through exceptional circumstance and with flooding over a number of years and, you know, doing what we can to not having them paying the deductible over and over again and not having the capacity to do that.

So again in terms of how the province relates to the federal government, we've made some progress there and now what we're trying to complete is a change in policy in terms of how RMs make their claim on the PDAP.

**Ms. Draude:** — Thank you. And don't worry if it's complex; I know that we can figure it out. So what I need is the information that the province is dealing with when it comes to the deductible that the province pays or has to pay to the federal government or . . . before that they're allowed to get a certain percentage of money back. I understand that anything over \$5 million, the federal government pays 90 per cent of that charges.

Can you explain to me if there's . . . the issues in Saskatchewan. If all our disasters in one year add up to a certain amount of money, do they just take 5, take \$5 million off that and give you 90 per cent of the rest? Is that correct?

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — I guess I'll refer that to Kevin. I'm perhaps referring more to myself in terms of getting, you know, complicated and the problems in understanding. But, Kevin.

**Mr. Roche:** — Thank you. Two points to make. One, when we have a disaster in Saskatchewan they're clearly defined with boundaries as far as geographical boundaries and time of events and are literally approved at the cabinet level in Ottawa for designation as a provincial disaster which makes them eligible for DFAA funding. So there are set boundaries defined for each. So in any given year, it is possible that the province will experience two or three separate, distinct DFAA claims.

The second point being that there is an incremental cost-sharing agreement where for the first dollar per capita — so we generalize \$1 million in Saskatchewan — for the first \$1 million the province bears the entire cost, 100 per cent.

A point of clarification which is important to the discussion is that when we talk about the provincial claim to the federal government, we're isolating it to provincial incremental costs. It does not include the municipalities' costs in a disaster or the deductible — just the provincial incremental costs incurred by the provincial government. So if the aggregate total of municipalities is, for example, \$5 million and the provincial costs for the same disaster are 5 million, the claim to DFAA is only the 5 million incurred by the provincial government.

So after the first dollar per capita, 1 million, then for the next \$2

per capita the federal government reimburses 25 per cent. And then the following, from \$3 to \$5 per capita, the federal government reimburses 50 per cent. And then it's only after we've reached the 5 million, any costs over and above the 5 million, that we receive 90 per cent recovery. So for the first \$5 million in provincial costs, we pay approximately half of that without any recovery from the federal government.

**Ms. Draude:** — Are you saying per capita?

**Mr. Roche:** — That's the way it's described under the DFAA arrangements, \$1 per capita. And that's why we use the figure of \$1 million in Saskatchewan because of our population being so close to the million. But more accurately it's \$1 per capita. So the first dollar per capita, and then from 1 to \$3 per capita, 3 to 5, and over 5.

**Ms. Draude:** — Okay. I'm going to ask if we can get a copy of this seemingly very complex formula that you're using with the federal government.

Because of our time constraints, I'm just going to touch on a few more issues that I know the member from Humboldt has the same issues that I do.

Under this program, one of the big issues is the fact that seasonal homes are not covered. And so many of these seasonal homes were built to become permanent homes. People were saying, I'm going to put my life savings, my sweat equity into this place, and move there in a short time because many of us are baby boomers and we're ready to move out there. So now there is no coverage and of course we know, everybody knows you can't get it through insurance.

Is this on the top of the radar screen for importance when it comes to making changes to this program?

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — Yes.

**Ms. Draude:** — Okay. How quickly will we get an answer on that?

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — I guess there are a number of in terms of the primary versus secondary dwelling component of PDAP and then how that relates to the DFAA, there's the cap of \$100,000 on primary dwellings. There's the question of especially these people that they've built these homes as their retirement nest egg. We received a communication from an individual. The mother in the family was five days away from retirement.

Having been to Fishing Lake, and I know the member's been there, you know, many times over the past season in particular, we recognize the shortcoming of PDAP in terms of how it relates to these people where they don't fit into the program.

There are other things more broadly that we're looking to do for the community and how that works in relation to PDAP. But one of the things we're really wrestling with is, is it best to approach these situations through PDAP or is it best to do it, you know, do everything that we can under PDAP and then do something alongside that to deal with people where this is currently their secondary dwelling?

It's hard in how it relates with the feds and the DFAA. Certainly any sort of secondary dwellings, it's my understanding, that were affected in things like the flooding in Saguenay or the ice storms or other sort of secondary dwellings that were affected by these massive disasters throughout the rest of the country, the feds have been fairly hard and fast about how secondary dwellings are treated under PDAP, and it's that they don't want them under PDAP.

We've also been in contact with the feds sort of on a daily basis, and Kevin can talk more about that. So something that we are wrestling with is, you know, how do we get the . . . for these individuals where this is going to be their primary dwelling and they're transitioning everything towards that, we're looking to see how we can get the resources in the hands of those people to address that situation.

It's not like, you know, it's the cottage that was built in the '50s and people go out, you know, for a couple of weeks in the summer. You know, we've seen the buildings, we've seen the houses, and there're certainly some . . . There's a lot of resources been put into these dwellings that are intended as retirement homes, as you know, their nest egg.

So we are looking very closely as to how to best address them, and if it's not under PDAP, then is it something alongside PDAP?

**Ms. Draude:** — Thank you. I'm really concerned. The seasonal homes versus permanent homes is important. You also mentioned the cap. The \$100,000 cap is just really not, it's not even in the ballpark of what's acceptable because so many of the homes — and I'm not saying cottages now; I'm saying homes — that are built out there, it far exceeds that.

I'm going to just quickly mention some of the other ones because my colleagues have questions. But the other things really at the top of the list is the machinery rates and the fact that RMs aren't able to pay the full amount of the cost of it. I know that I mentioned to you last time that one RM could've contracted another RM and got the full cost. And that seems to me that it's really silly to put the extra burden, the administrative burden on that happening. But in an RM like the RM of Porcupine, it would have meant \$200,000 if they could've done that. And that's the type of thing that, when you're talking about a farming community, that is a pile of tax money. So I think that that has to be looked at.

The cost of covering items such as sandbags. I mean I think it's \$300 or some ridiculous number. We've got people who've spent tens of thousands of dollars, if I add them all up, to make a difference. The labour to do it. The cost of renting a home. If you've lost your permanent home and you have to move out and you rent a place someplace else, that's not covered. The cost of getting the cadets to help them fill sandbags.

And just as a thank you, I have to tell you that the emergency services, the people that came out to help, the volunteers, were absolutely excellent and they were so valuable to the people out there. And I know that they weren't asking for money individually, but I do know that each one of those areas could use help as well when it comes to what is available for them for equipment and being able to provide service. So if there's some

way that they can receive money for helping to improve the situation for next time, is there anything through PDAP that would allow you to add on to their volunteer time so that there could be funding back on the other end?

These are all issues that are so vital to giving people hope, to ensure that we can manage today. I can't state enough that if . . . We have to get this program right. I think from speaking last time the federal government did make some changes, and I'm understanding a bit more of it now. If there has to be some cases brought forward to show the federal government, as well as your cabinet colleagues, that something has to be done, we've got people who will do that.

So I'm going to turn it over to my colleague from Humboldt, with the understanding that I'm there, my constituents are there. We need to make this happen. Politics aside on this, this has got to change because we can't have people's lives endangered again. So thank you for your support and I'll turn it over.

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — If I could just quickly interject. I want to state for the record, something I have appreciated, certainly from yourself in particular, is that you have demonstrated a real concern for the issue and putting politics aside. And I guess, you know, I'd like to compliment you on that. And so, you know, I'll stop getting gooey, but anyway . . . [inaudible interjection] . . . I know. The earth's going to stop spinning or something, but anyway . . . And certainly we've, you know, we've got people here today who've been working on this situation around the clock and working alongside the people that have been engaged in that heroic effort out at places like Fishing Lake. And anyway we are going to be doing everything we can to make sure that PDAP responds to those efforts.

**The Chair:** — Thank you. Ms. Harpauer.

**Ms. Harpauer:** — Thank you very much. And as I said, my colleague covered a lot of the issues that I need to cover. I can express along with her how urgently we need to know exactly what will be covered, what will be available, when it will be available, where they apply.

I want to thank the minister for coming to Waldsea Lake and taking a look at it first-hand. I know the people there appreciate that. I don't believe he had a chance to go to Humboldt Lake, which is my other flooding situation where I have one producer who's an island and another producer who's very threatened.

So since the permanent homeowners and the secondary dwelling topic has been somewhat covered, in my situation with Waldsea Lake there's also park infrastructure. And also I have a situation where I have cattle producers whose pasture land, due to the saline level of the lake that flooded, will be destroyed. The water source for the cattle is destroyed so they're going to have to find alternative pasturing temporarily. A lot of them will have to downsize their herds. Is any of that included in this program?

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — Just to state generally, PDAP is there to be a backstop for uninsurable losses or where losses aren't covered by existing programs, be it crop insurance or CAIS [Canadian agricultural income stabilization] or what have you. So it's sort of, you know, the last call. For those circumstances

in particular I guess I'll ask Kevin to provide some comment.

**Mr. Roche:** — Regarding lost pasture land, we have had experience in the past. For example in 2005 with the Cumberland House disaster as well, we had similar circumstances. And it has been clearly established that there is some recovery mechanism for loss of pasture land. The direct costs associated with relocation of cattle and the provision of temporary feed is recoverable.

**Ms. Harpauer:** — That's very good to hear. I don't have this situation. My colleague just passed me a note about golf courses, if there's any recovery cost for golf courses.

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — I guess again in terms of the work that we're trying to do to figure out, you know, what PDAP responds to, and then what sort of is alongside, that's especially at Fishing Lake, but it obviously has ramifications for the regional park at Waldsea. That's part of the work that we're trying to figure out what the best approach is.

**Ms. Harpauer:** — Thank you to the minister and his officials. Just as I stressed before, everyone's asking the questions of course right now because they want to know what's going to be available. So we'll be looking forward to the details on this announcement to know who's covered, and they can start to basically deal with what they have. So thank you very much.

**The Chair:** — Further questions? Mr. Toth.

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — I guess if I might . . .

**The Chair:** — Oh, sorry.

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — No, pardon me. Again we should have some, there will be some firm detail provided next week. But there will be some other things that need to be worked through the process and, you know, we won't have the whole enchilada for next week. But there should be some things that we can talk about in a definitive way, I guess towards the end of next week.

**The Chair:** — Mr. Toth. Oh, Ms. Draude.

**Ms. Draude:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister. Can you ensure that we'll get the details as quickly as possible so we can get them out to our constituency. Both Ms. Harpauer and myself would like to be able to tell the people how they can even fill out application forms. If there's something different that has to be filled out or figured out, it would definitely be an advantage if we could do that as quickly as possible. And also I'd have to . . . The people out there, not only the EMO people, but the people from the department, were well appreciated.

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — Okay. And certainly we have already had officials out from the provincial disaster assistance program to work with the local officials and local folks to, just to sort of get the groundwork ready for what's to come with that. Anyway, I second that emotion.

**The Chair:** — Mr. Toth.

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Madam Chair. Mr. Minister and to your officials, I'm just going to do a bit more on public safety.

Just before we adjourned the last time, I happened to pick up . . . going through the news clippings and a letter that had arrived from Enbridge Pipelines regarding a spill at Glenavon.

First of all I want to say how much I appreciated the heads-up from Enbridge and the work that they have been doing. And of course landowners along the whole pipeline strip are, some red flags are starting to arise as a number of these lines have been in place for a number of years. And we've seen ongoing upgrades just continually and that's no doubt due to the length of time the lines have been in the ground. And now there's another proposal for an additional line to be put in the ground from Edmonton through to North Dakota, I believe.

The question I have is when an issue of this nature such as the spill just outside of Glenavon, is the department brought up to speed fairly quickly? And if not, what actions does the department take to ensure that proper procedures are followed in regards to a cleanup of a spill of this nature and that the surrounding area has not been impacted by a spill?

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — Well and first of all I did note with certain interest that incident out in Glenavon because of course my father's from near that country and I still have a number of cousins who are constituents of the member in that part of the world. And I guess moreover I have cousins who actually worked on the construction of that pipeline. And so both from a public safety perspective and from a personal perspective I was quite interested to hear about the situation out in Glenavon.

Of course the department is involved. The lead on the cleanup I believe is the Department of the Environment. But I guess I'll refer to Mr. Roche for a more detailed response in terms of our involvement with this particular incident and just some general information in terms of how we respond in this kind of circumstance.

**Mr. Roche:** — As the minister described, Saskatchewan Environment is the lead agency for the provincial government, both on the initial notification and response to a spill within the province. There are established protocols for bringing in either provincial, federal, or other officials to be involved in the response and recovery and cleanup, as well as the mechanisms for bringing in appropriate contractors for containment, response, and cleanup as well.

Where Corrections and Public Safety becomes involved is in the general support for Environment or other agencies as required as they conduct their business — if they require coordination for example with departments such as Highways or Health, Community Resources etc., or any other agencies that they need brought to the incident as well. So we provide the lead as far as overall provincial coordination, but the direct response to the spill is led by Environment.

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister, and to your officials as well. When we talk about public safety and last year we had a major issue come forward in regards to fires in the North, some of the communities that were dramatically affected when originally it was felt fires would burn themselves out before they would even become a danger. And now more recently we've seen just in regards to flooding, we talked about the limited amount of financial resources we've actually had set



aside to deal with emergencies of this nature. And I'm not sure if you caught the news last night but in the, I believe in both in California and Florida, they've been dealing with some very major fire, conditions that have actually created some significant fires.

Now I think at this time in the province, especially in the North, we're probably not too bad but things can change. We've seen that in the past. We've seen where we thought we were in a pretty good condition when it came to dealing with forest fires and emergency situations. What has the department kind of put in place to address situations such as happened last year — and hoping that we will not have a problem with that again? And I guess this again would be working together with the Department of Environment.

And while you're Public Safety, the Department of Environment has the responsibility of dealing with the fires but part of the . . . if an emergency arises and your department gets involved. So what avenues and actions has the department come up with should an emergency such as last year's arise again?

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — I guess the, you know the first line of defence is always that local emergency plan. And you know, in getting to know a bit more about the public safety side of the portfolio . . . It's been certainly through any number of measures, be it through the provincial disaster assistance program where over the past couple of years we've had more, we've had just about an equal number of dollars involved in claims as over the previous 30 years of the program. That is one sort of barometer in terms of the public safety or the emergency activity in the province of Saskatchewan is fairly remarkable.

But the first line of defence is always that local emergency plan. And this past year at the Saskatchewan Emergency Planners Association, where we work with local officials to share our skills and knowledge and to raise that awareness and to raise that preparedness around emergencies, they had the largest conference in the history of the association.

And I guess the thing that's reassuring about that is that as the incidence of critical emergencies seems to be on the rise, so too is the response from local communities. So I guess we take that work of supporting local officials, local communities as they said about that emergency preparedness work, as they said about constructing emergency plans. And even communities where they don't, you know, if you go through an incident and you don't have an emergency plan in place, we've got the means to make sure that any time you go through an emergency, there's always a debrief. You figure out what went right, what didn't go right, what could be done better next time.

And I think the number of people that have been trained out of public safety through organizations like SEPA [Saskatchewan Emergency Planners Association] doubled this past year. So again it does, it does show an interest on the local level about people getting their skills up to par to make as best possible response to emergency situations, but . . . Kevin, would you have anything to add to that?

**Mr. Roche:** — Yes, I would, Minister. Thank you. I think the minister accurately described the responsibility. It's important to note that disasters do occur at a local level. And regardless of

the level of response, the ownership of the disaster is by the local authorities. So we start at the grassroots level of personal household preparedness up to the local. And beyond that then we look at other innovative ways of sharing limited resources next at a regional level.

And we strongly encourage mutual aid agreements and sharing across municipalities in Saskatchewan where they can share limited resources and limited funding for more of a collective capacity. And then beyond that, at the provincial level, we're taking a number of steps to expand and enhance provincial capacity to provide support, not only across provincial government ability to coordinate, but to support communities.

A number of discussions are also happening at the national and international levels — again at the higher levels — to ensure that protocols, authorities, and mechanisms are in place that, if required, that we can share trained staff and equipment across provinces as required as well.

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — And I guess if I could, just to add one more thing to that. I mean, in the situation in flooding around Red Earth First Nation this year was sort of a great example of a community that had been through a critical incident, started their planning right after that, the immediate threat of that incident had subsided. And this year the level of coordination between Red Earth First Nation, the Prince Albert Grand Council, CPS [Corrections and Public Safety], Indian and Northern Affairs, Community Resources, Health — everybody that had a role to play — this time the evacuation went almost seamlessly.

The communities of P.A. and Saskatoon did a tremendous job in terms of hosting those people that needed to be evacuated. I had opportunity to visit at the reception centre in Saskatoon, and it was like watching the army set up in terms of all the work that had been done to make these people that had been forced to leave their homes as comfortable and as safe and secure as possible.

So again, in the critical incident that occurred in Red Earth around flooding the year before, here's a community that really took a hard look at that and set about very purposefully and thoughtfully in terms of how they would respond and how that worked with all the different partners to make as best possible a response. And I think it was, it was a real success and a real tribute to the people that did that hard work of planning and coordinating and making it all happen.

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Minister, given the time, I'm probably going to jump around from one thing to the other a little more aggressively than I have in the past. Regarding occupational health and safety, how many complaints were brought to the department's attention last year and how were they dealt with?

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — Just one moment. The faster you jump, the slower I'll get, and I apologize for that. But just one moment. I'm informed by my deputy that we don't have those stats with us in terms of OHS [occupational health and safety] complaints overall for the past year, but we can undertake to provide them to the member.

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister, and to your deputy minister. One of the issues that's been an ongoing concern has been the number of grievances that have been filed. And over the past number of years we've continued to have a backlog. Now over the last couple of sessions that I've dealt with the issue, I've been informed that the department's been making significant efforts in trying to address the backlog. I'm wondering how we're coming along in addressing the backlog and how many grievances were filed this year and what have we still got outstanding.

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — I guess, again further to the jumping around, I'm just going to bring Syd Bolt from our HR [human resources] component to join the committee and to provide some information on that score. Welcome, Syd.

**Mr. Bolt:** — Thank you. All right. Based on the year ending March 31 we currently have 301 outstanding grievances in the department. And during that year we actually had received 59 and were successful in closing 25.

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — I guess if I could add to that as well, certainly in the collective agreement that has recently been ratified and in which Corrections and Public Safety employees figured heavily, grievances were singled out as one of the sort of side-table issues to be resolved. There's a process that we're going through on that score. We have hopes that we'll expedite the resolution of a number of grievances and, you know, make some further progress in terms of winnowing down those outstanding grievances.

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister. Mr. Minister, one of the centres where we have had an exceptionally large number of grievances has been the Saskatoon Correctional Centre. And in just following back on the last question in regards to the Saskatoon Correctional Centre itself, how have we been or how has the department been making out in addressing the overall backlog of grievances in that facility specifically?

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — Well just in a general sense there had been some good work done on an expedited grievance process — prior to the collective agreement expiring September 31, 2006 — where certain like grievances could be bundled up, if you would, and then dealt with in a group. That of course was, that progress was halted as we went into job action in the situation there. It has yet to really resume that approach to the grievances given that it is currently under the jurisdiction of the process that was laid out by Ready and is very much the full attention, has the full attention at one of the side tables that arose out of the collective agreement that was signed. But, Syd, anything you'd like to add to that?

**Mr. Bolt:** — Just a couple of points perhaps. During the last year, for Saskatoon Correctional Centre specifically, we had received 21 new grievances and during that same time period 10 were closed. Mr. Minister is correct that we were actually quite successful utilizing an expedited grievance process in Saskatoon in particular. As a result of that process, where we heard probably upwards of 20 grievances, at this point we've closed four of them and we're expecting to close probably another four. We're simply waiting now for the union to go through their internal process to determine whether or not the recommendations made by the adjudicator will be supported by

them.

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister, and to your officials. I'd like to move into a few questions regarding adult corrections. In the estimates we talk about operating commercial industries within the correctional centres to assist in the rehabilitation and training processes in your adult correctional facilities. And I'm wondering what training programs and rehabilitation programs are currently being offered in these centres, and how well we're doing in actually seeing some positive outcomes from the programs.

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — Well I guess there are different things being done throughout the system. But two things in particular I'd like to touch on before I turn it over to the able Maureen Lloyd for further comment would be one of the things that we were, as a department, quite happy about in the decisions that were made coming out of the last budget were the funds and the resources that were put in place for the supported employment program in terms of connecting people coming out of corrections to gainful employment, which of course is critical in terms of cutting into reoffending.

So we were quite happy to get the resources for that. There's a pilot under way in Regina that is going to be used to figure out the best parts of how to do that supportive employment work, and then we'll extrapolate across the other three adult institutions. But there are already some very good things being done on the programming side — not as much as we would like or I would like certainly as the minister — but there are some good things being done.

And the one that sticks out in my mind is in Prince Albert. There's a really robust construction carpentry program that runs there. And of course given the labour force situation . . . And I know the member well understands this opportunity that we have here in the province of Saskatchewan for people coming out of corrections and having opportunities in the workforce that maybe weren't there before.

This program in Prince Albert is a partnership between, I believe, Advanced Education and Employment, Corrections, and the Saskatchewan institute of Indian technology. So the inmates that are working there gain 250 hours which they can apply as apprenticeable hours as they seek to get their carpentry ticket. So it's not just about connecting them to employment but also to those vital credentials that mean you're going to be paid a better scale and have better job opportunities, more security in general.

But there are some good things that are under way and being done, and I guess for a broader discussion on that I'll pass the mike over to Maureen Lloyd.

**Ms. Lloyd:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister. To go back, your initial question in terms of some of the industry work that we're doing out Corrections, I can start there. We do have what we call Prism Industries — that's Prism with a "m." We operate a wood shop in Regina. It has a major contract with IPSCO on building supports for pipes that are being shipped, you know, wherever across North America. We have a huge contract with IPSCO now because of how much work they have, and we're expanding the shop. We're running now some weekends and

evenings as well as during the day to fulfill that contract.

We have a couple of contracts in Saskatoon — there's a metal shop there — contracts with Flexi-Coil and SARCAN in Saskatoon. And it's pretty consistent and working along there.

And in Pine Grove Correctional Centre we have a small shop there, accommodates about six to eight women, and it's merely a sewing shop producing school bags for children, materials for northern firefighting, and so on.

The minister mentioned our joint project construction skills out of the Prince Albert Correctional Centre. We have programs that are involved in short-order cooking and where inmates can actually get a short-order cook certificate. It's in partnership with SIAST [Saskatchewan Institute of Applied Science and Technology]. And we've certainly experienced inmates moving out of correctional centres, and young offender centres as well, and moving into short-order cooking jobs in the community.

We employ full-time kitchen crews in our facilities, and we do look at these crews as . . . These are training crews. They work for us, and they receive a minimal salary for working in the kitchen. But overall it's more of a . . . it's a training about being to work on time, displaying proper work attitudes, and learning good work habits. So it's another . . . It's an important part of both providing the work crews that we need in the correctional centres and doing that kind of training. And they're learning general food service preparation duties at the same time.

We have outdoor maintenance crews. Again it's a skill building and work-prep type of undertaking that we do with our outdoor crews. In our camps in Besnard, Buffalo, Urban Camp in Saskatoon — those are work-related camps and projects. Right. They work in the community. They can be contacted by community groups. Offenders will go and do a number of duties. In fact I believe, Minister, you had mentioned that setting up some of the emergency preparing in Prince Albert, I guess it . . . No. Saskatoon.

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — In Saskatoon. Yes.

**Ms. Lloyd:** — Right. That the inmates from Urban Camp were part of coming out and setting up bunks and doing that kind of work for the community. So they're strongly involved.

Our community-training residences . . . And we can go to that to speak about the link to employment between correctional centres and community. The community-training residence sits in the middle and takes offenders as they're ready to come out of the correctional centre and as they are at a risk level where we feel they can be in the community and be reintegrated. And they are employment centres.

CTRs [community-training residence] are connected to, in some cases, select employers in the community because we need employers that are friendly to our offenders, who can provide some of the kind of workplaces and support that people need but also the requirements of what you have to do if you come to work. And so those bridges are extremely important. We will use them to bridge people from the correctional centres into work in the community, and we'll use them in developing our future, overall, larger employment project.

We are working in partnership with Advanced Education and Employment, with DCR [Department of Community Resources], ourselves and developing those models where we engage other departments — and we're less isolated in the service we provide — and then we look to what our inmates need for training. Who can provide that training best? What's the role of the work-prep centres in the cities and the role of, you know, and connecting with employers? We have a supported employment project started through young offender program, but the intent of this project is to provide other supports for offenders. So as they graduate from our programs, they still need support.

They are individuals who had significant deficits. They have significant issues around addictions. Many of our offenders needed additional education. There's literacy issues. So we need to be addressing those, those barriers to employment, I guess as it were, as they move along through employment. So sometimes it's not as easy as saying I found you, I found you a job and off you go and you're hired.

But I would highlight one project. We've been taking offenders from the Regina CTR and the correctional centre to the biofuels project at Belle Plaine. I have to look this up and read it accurately. And it is a major \$1.6 billion operation in the construction of the biofuel plant.

We have been picking up six inmates from the Regina Correctional Centre, six from the CTR, taking them out there to work. And as of last week, three of those offenders have been offered full-time work at about 16, 16 or \$18 an hour. Initially our guys are being paid \$9 an hour. But we've got three provided with permanent employment to the completion of the project. But the owner of the . . . and the manager says they will have been trained enough to be able to work wherever, right, so it's a longer term employment opportunity for them. So that's a very positive work that's going on and just touching on a few highlights.

**Mr. Toth:** — I thank you, and I think that's certainly an avenue that we need to pursue. The question I have to you is, do you have, in offering these programs, is there a readily acceptance or a high uptake on the programs, or do individuals have to be coerced into getting involved in these programs?

**Ms. Lloyd:** — In terms of the offenders themselves?

**Mr. Toth:** — That's right.

**Ms. Lloyd:** — There's a good, a strong uptake in the employment opportunities. Some are better able to take advantage of them than others but certainly a recognition from inmates and offenders in the community that they want to work, right. They want to support their families. They have barriers, but certainly at this point we're not having any trouble finding willing candidates.

**Mr. Toth:** — That's good to hear because I think the more a person's willing to want to move forward, the better chance we have of that individual actually moving out, integrating back into and becoming a full-time contributor in society versus becoming just another statistic and reoffender.

You had mentioned one of the major problems we do have for our young . . . or individuals do have is addictions, that in many cases that's probably almost 100 per cent of the times why people reoffend or offend in the first place and then reoffend is because of their inability to deal with addictions.

We have a program in the province called Teen Challenge. And I know when individuals have served their time . . . and while they may not have been able to address their addictions, does the department offer addiction services? And does the department look at suggesting there are community-based services that are available if a person wants to really take seriously addressing their addictions? Because I know at times there really isn't the time period for a person's sentence to really deal totally with the addictions and help overcome those addictions.

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — Perhaps we'll get Maureen to provide some of the detail around the situation in adult corrections and then perhaps invite Bob Kary to join us from the youth corrections side.

But certainly there is a fair amount of work that's done in the institutions themselves on the addictions work side but also in terms of trying to work with things like the chaplains or, in terms of First Nations spirituality, working with different elders to have that component of what work needs to be done around addictions. But I guess I'll state that generally, and then perhaps Maureen could give us some more detail on the adult side. And then we'll invite Bob Kary to join us to talk about some of the work that's done on the youth side.

**Ms. Lloyd:** — Thanks, Minister. As the minister said, in adult corrections we certainly focus on the addictions area from a variety of angles, and we provide programming related to individuals with addictions problems. We don't — and you're right — we don't have our offenders long enough in most cases to actually do a full treatment program. So our intent is to provide the education to get them ready in terms of going out into the community. And we are looking at linking them up and we do link them up with community-based addiction services. And we are looking to strengthen the connections with community-based addiction services in the model we're developing.

We're involved with the Premier's Project Hope, and through that project we have in adult corrections a partnership with the health authorities in the province, so that in each of our major secure custody facilities we will have a senior addictions worker from a health authority working with our staff, coming into our centres, working with our inmates, to enhance what we can do for them in terms of addictions. And that's everything from assessment to counselling to planning individual reintegration activities into the community, and better connect them to appropriate resources. So what one individual might need in terms of a resource could be different for someone else. So the partnership, we view this as a very positive move for us, because that brings someone who is an expert in the field of addictions into the correctional business and will be a big help to the service we can provide.

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, and I see our time is really moving, really moving by here and . . .

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — Bob Kary's pretty fast on his feet. Would you care to hear from Bob on the inside or . . .

**Mr. Toth:** — While he's coming, I'll throw another question.

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — All right.

**Mr. Toth:** — I noticed that under adult corrections there's an expenditure increase for adult corrections facilities of 6 million. Exactly what would that be?

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — Corrections obviously is labour-intensive and capital-intensive in terms of the facilities throughout the province. But you'll be happy to know we've brought some pictures to show which is our largest ongoing capital project — the replacement of the 1913 portion of the Regina Correctional Centre. And I note we're here today with Mr. Prebble, who did a lot of work on getting that project up and running. But I guess I'll table the pictures with the committee here or pass them along, as the case may be. Thank you, Viktor.

In a detailed sense — and perhaps I mistook the member's question — but the overall increase of \$7.357 million in the adult corrections budget, 4.796 million of that is related to the collective bargaining agreements and the family day, leap year in 2008; 1.729 million is related to the adult corrections account management and program support; 60,000 was related to the Saskatoon Women's Community Training Residence for operations; 33,000 was related to the community-based organizations receiving a 3 per cent increase; \$276,000 was related to the supported employment program for offenders.

As we've just been discussing, \$480,000 was related to violence reduction initiatives and focusing but not exclusively limited to the supervision of high-risk offenders in the community; \$458,000 was related to targeted initiatives in therapeutic courts, be it the domestic violence court or the ongoing work with the drug treatment court here in Regina. There were reallocations of \$137,000 for the realignment to central management for human resource services; \$237,000 for centralized systems and hardware costs; and \$101,000 for administrative efficiencies.

And we're now joined by Bob Kary. So any further questions on that? Or we could turn it over to Bob for comment on the youth corrections side and addictions — as you like it, of course.

**Mr. Toth:** — Maybe before Bob addresses some of the issues he might be able to address, there were four questions just handed to me that there was an interest in.

And we were looking at the amount of money that is spent on addictions treatment in correction facilities. How much would have been spent in an ongoing basis for these addiction treatments? How much is spent on employment-based programs, and what would that comparison be to last year? And how much money would be spent on educational life skill programs? You just went through a number. Now whether or not any of that is based on these programs . . . And how much money is spent on youth and adult facilities on an annual basis?

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — The member has asked some fairly

precise questions. And I guess what I'll do off the top is make an undertaking to provide the detailed response to those detailed questions. And we should be able to get those to the member within a reasonable period of time. But perhaps I'll turn it over to Bob for some comment on the youth addictions piece in particular. And if we've got anything that's readily available in terms of detail to respond to your questions, the four questions, we'll see if we can shake that up here. But Bob Kary.

**Mr. Kary:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister. You're right that addictions pose a significant issue with young offenders as well as adults. With respect to young offenders, 78 per cent of young people in custody have significant issues with addiction and about 58 per cent in the community have those also significant issues.

The way we deal with issues of addictions is through partnerships with the health authorities in Saskatchewan and through the Department of Healthy Living. What that means is that we have addictions specialists coming into our facilities and also working with our folks, our young people in the communities. And we and our staff also work alongside of them to co-deliver programs in some instances.

The Project Hope funding last year has allowed us to plan with our health partners significant additional programming for youth, right from assessment to educational programming to treatment programming and relapse prevention programming. So we're currently in a final phase of putting that into effect through the health authorities. But what it will mean is that we will have quite comprehensive programming for young people, both in-custody programs and as they move back into community.

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you. Another question I'd certainly like to get into, and it's regarding the health services in correctional facilities. It's my understanding the federal penitentiary has actual health services right within the penitentiary system to deal with the needs of inmates. Does the provincial correctional system have the same types of services? And if it doesn't, how does it deal with the health needs of inmates and what kind of costs are incurred in providing these services?

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — Well I guess there is a fair amount of work that's done around transportation, but there is a nurse complement and addictions workers attached to each of the major institutions. But I don't know that we'd be as . . . Given the lesser period of time that inmates would be spending in the institutions compared to the feds and perhaps on the question of relative size as well, obviously we don't have an identical complement of medical personnel compared to the feds. But I guess, Maureen, if you'd care to provide . . .

**Ms. Lloyd:** — Thank you, Minister. Yes, we have health care units in the four large adult facilities. And within those units we provide a variety of services from basic health care, examinations, dental care. We contract with individual doctors from the community who come in and provide these services during the week. You know, it could be for a day depending on what the service is, or two days. We work with the health authorities in terms of psychiatric services, individual psychiatrists who are also assigned to come in to the correctional centres to do a certain level of psychiatric

assessment.

Now saying all that, one must keep in mind that offenders come to us with significant health problems. They haven't taken care of themselves. Many of them have been on the street. Many of them come from homes, come from poverty. And when they come to us they are looking to have many health concerns addressed. And one of the major ones is dental care. So we have many offenders who come and, I mean, literally their teeth are rotting out of their mouths. And they're with us, and they're saying, please, you have to do something for my teeth — pretty significant work.

But in this year's budget we will be including what we are referring to right now as a provincial director of health care because of the kinds of issues that our inmates bring with them. And we're talking also communicable diseases. I don't think you can forget about the issues of whether it's TB [tuberculosis] or hep C or HIV [human immunodeficiency virus] positive individuals. So we'll hire a provincial director of health care. That individual will coordinate and work with our health care units to ensure that we are meeting standards as much as we can that would replicate — to the point at least that we can replicate — services that are available in the community.

And we're working with the Department of Health at the same time to talk about how can we work together to ensure that with the help they can give us and their expertise and knowledge, the services we already provide, that we can do, you know, I'd say we could do a better job in what we deliver.

**Mr. Toth:** — Thank you, Mr. Minister, and to your officials. I had a number of questions regarding the Regina Correctional Centre, but I understand as well that there's been an agreement to wrap up around 1:30. And I know by the time I get my question done, the Chair's going to be looking at me because it'll just take you too long to answer it.

So I guess we'll have to say thank you to each one for coming this afternoon and for the responses to the questions we were able to raise. And certainly one of the major issues at this time was the issue around public safety and the flooding and the disaster up in the Northeast. So thank you, Mr. Minister, and to your officials.

**Hon. Mr. McCall:** — Thank you to the member. And I thank you for not putting me in a situation where the Chair wouldn't be looking hard at you, she'd be looking hard at me. Anyway with that I'd thank the member and the committee members, and thank my officials and the folks in CPS for all the good work that they do on a day-to-day basis. Madam Chair.

**The Chair:** — Thank you to the minister and his officials. And also thank you to the committee members for respecting the agreed-upon time. The committee is now adjourned.

[The committee adjourned at 13:30.]