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**Proceedings of the Standing Committee on
Government Services**

April 15, 2014 - Issue 2

Department of Service NL
Government Purchasing Agency
Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Review Division
Office of the Chief Information Officer, Executive Council

GOVERNMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE

Department of Service NL

Chair: Clayton Forsey, MHA

Vice-Chair: Paul Lane, MHA

Members:

John Dinn, MHA
Calvin Peach, MHA
Kevin Parsons, MHA
George Murphy, MHA
Tom Osborne, MHA

Clerk of the Committee: Sandra Barnes

Appearing:

Department of Service NL

Hon. Dan Crummell, MHA, Minister

David Norman, Deputy Minister

Kim Dunphy, Assistant Deputy Minister, Occupational Health and Safety

Donna Kelland, Assistant Deputy Minister, Government Services

Julian McCarthy, Assistant Deputy Minister, Consumer and Commercial Affairs

Vanessa Colman-Sadd, Director, Communications

Robyn Hayes, Departmental Controller

Government Purchasing Agency

Leigh Puddester, Deputy Minister

Sonya Payne, Director, Planning and Administration

Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Review Division

Marlene Hickey, Chief Review Commissioner, WHSCRD

Donna Ballard, Chief Executive Officer, Labour Relations Agency

Office of the Chief Information Officer

Ellen MacDonald, Chief Information Officer

Roger Scaplen, Director, Communications

Shelley Smith, Executive Director, Information Management

Wanda Trickett, Departmental Controller

Also Present

Randy Edmunds, MHA

Tony Cornect, MHA

Peter Miles, Researcher, Official Opposition Office

Susan Williams, Researcher, NDP Office

Pursuant to Standing Order 68, Randy Edmunds, MHA for Torngat Mountains, substitutes for Tom Osborne, MHA for St. John's South.

Pursuant to Standing Order 68, Tony Cornect, MHA for Port au Port, substitutes for Calvin Peach, MHA for Bellevue.

The Committee met at approximately 6:06 p.m. in the Assembly Chamber.

CHAIR (Forsey): We are a little bit slow getting off the ground here, gang, so what we will do first, before we get into the Estimates, I have a couple of other things to do here. We will go through some introductions; however, I will say that Randy Edmunds is replacing Tom Osborne and Tony Cornect is replacing Calvin Peach.

Actually, I will ask for the motion to adopt the minutes of the Government Services Committee, April 2, the Department of Finance. If I could have a motion to adopt that from over here.

Moved by Mr. Parsons, Cape St. Francis; seconded by Mr. Dinn, Kilbride.

On motion, minutes adopted and circulated.

CHAIR: That is all we need on that, isn't it?

Okay, so what we will do is we will start on my right over here with Paul. Paul, we will go down and do introductions and then we will come over here and do introductions.

MR. LANE: Paul Lane, MHA, District of Mount Pearl South.

MR. MILES: Peter Miles, Opposition Office.

MR. EDMUNDS: Randy Edmunds, Torngat Mountains.

MR. MURPHY: George Murphy, MHA, St. John's East.

MS WILLIAMS: Susan Williams, Researcher, NDP Office.

MR. DINN: Oh, my turn, is it? John Dinn, MHA for Kilbride. I was just taking a nap that is all.

MR. K. PARSONS: Kevin Parsons, MHA, Cape St. Francis.

MR. CORNECT: Tony Cornect, MHA, Port au Port.

CHAIR: I am Clayton Forsey, the Member for Exploits and the Chair of Government Services.

What we are going to do now is we are going to start with the minister. We will do the section in the middle there. So we will come down and go back and then start with Donna. We will do the middle section first, just for introductions.

MR. CRUMMELL: Dan Crummell, MHA, St. John's West and Minister of Service NL.

MR. NORMAN: David Norman, Deputy Minister of Service NL.

MS HAYES: Robyn Hayes, Departmental Controller, Service NL.

MS MACDONALD: Ellen MacDonald, Chief Information Officer from the Office of the Chief Information Officer.

CHAIR: When the light comes on, Donna I guess.

MS COLMAN-SADD: Vanessa Colman-Sadd, Director of Communications, Service NL.

CHAIR: It is coming up this way, okay.

MR. MCCARTHY: Julian McCarthy, Assistant Deputy Minister, Consumer and Commercial Affairs, Service NL.

MS DUNPHY: Kim Dunphy, Occupational Health and Safety, Service NL.

MS KELLAND: Donna Kelland, Assistant Deputy Minister for the Government Services Branch of Service NL.

CHAIR: Now we are going to start to the right. Okay, your light is on.

MR. PUDESTER: Leigh Puddester, Deputy Minister of Procurement and Acting Chief Operations Officer of the Government Purchasing Agency.

MS PAYNE: Sonya Payne, Government Purchasing Agency.

MS BALLARD: Donna Ballard, CEO of the Labour Relations Agency.

MS HICKEY: Marlene Hickey, Chief Review Commissioner with the Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation.

CHAIR: Now down here there is a light on, yes.

MS SMITH: Shelley Smith, Executive Director, Corporate and Information Management Services in the Office of the Chief Information Officer.

MS TRICKETT: Wanda Trickett, Departmental Controller for Office of the Chief Information Officer.

MR. SCAPLEN: Roger Scaplen, Director of Communications for the Office of the Chief Information Officer.

CHAIR: Okay, thank you, everyone.

We normally have three hours allotted for each Estimates for each department. By the way, George, if we finish before that, that is fine too; I do not argue about finishing up earlier. When you are responding to a question, it is very important that you say your name so that Hansard can pick up the name because there are quite a few of you.

What we are going to do is we are going to do the OCIO first, and then of course they can leave. Then we will do WHSC Review. Then we are going to do Government Purchasing. Then we are going to do Service NL. I will ask for the subhead and when I do, Minister, I will give you a couple of minutes if you want to have a couple of words before we start questions. So I will ask for the subhead.

CLERK (Ms Barnes): Do you want them called inclusively?

CHAIR: All inclusively would be good. Yes, for OCIO.

CLERK: Office of the Chief Information Officer, 4.1.01 through 4.1.06 inclusive.

CHAIR: We are going to do 4.1.01 through 4.1.06 inclusive for Office of the Chief Information Officer.

What we will do also, we will take fifteen minutes for each for questions so if Paul takes fifteen minutes, then we will go to George probably for fifteen minutes. We will sort of work it back and forth like that, if need be, of course.

Minister, if you want to have a couple of words before the questions.

MR. CRUMMELL: Sure. Before we get into the OCIO Estimates, I would just like to have a little preamble here and welcome everybody here. I certainly welcome my staff from all of my divisions, department, and certainly entities as well. A lot of work went into Estimates 2014 for Service NL and certainly with the entities that are represented here tonight. I welcome, certainly, the Opposition members, my colleagues as well on this side of the House and the staff that are here.

Just a couple of little words before we get started; I would just like to get it on record. Service NL was created to consolidate services to business and the general public through a single-window model. The department delivers a wide variety of services including public health and safety, environmental protection, occupational health and safety, protection of consumer and financial interests, and the registration of documentation of vital events.

The department also provides internal printing, micrographic and digital document services for government. Service NL has 413 employees with an operating budget of approximately \$42 million. There are three main branches: Government Services, Consumer and Commercial Affairs, and Occupational Health and Safety.

When we look at the other entities that are around us as well, the staffing and budgets of the Government Purchasing Agency and Workplace, Health and Safety Compensation Review Division are also included in the core departmental Estimates for Service NL. As minister, I am certainly responsible for their amenities as well as others. A few that I am

mostly responsible for is the Office of the Chief Information Officer, which is housed within Executive Council but straight lined to me.

The Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission is another entity that I would like to call out and the Credit Union Deposit Guarantee Corporation.

Mr. Chair, Service NL and the other entities that fall under my responsibility are dedicated to serving and protecting the citizens of Newfoundland and Labrador. I am very confident that we will continue to fill these responsibilities. I continue to be very proud of the work that our staff does day in and day out in providing these services. That concludes my opening remarks, and we will get right into the Estimates for OCIO.

CHAIR: Okay, thank you Minister.

We will begin with Paul Lane.

MR. LANE: Okay, thank you. I am certainly glad to be here this evening to ask a few questions.

I thank everybody for your attendance. We have a number of questions to ask, but we will be gentle for sure.

Subhead 4.1.01, under 01, Salaries, Minister, I see that there was a budget amount last year. You budgeted \$3.4 million and that is approximately what was spent. This year it is only \$2.4 million so that is a \$1 million differential. I am wondering why that differential? Were there a number of people laid off, positions not filled?

MR. CRUMMELL: Basically, it is pretty straightforward. That reflects a decrease of about \$990,000. That is primarily attributed to re-profiling of funding to reflect the branch's revised organizational chart which became effective April 1, 2014. We did a reorganization internally, so then salaries would be captured in other line items further in the budget. There is no loss.

MR. LANE: That is not a loss of positions?

MR. CRUMMELL: No.

MR. LANE: We will pick them up in other areas.

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes.

MR. LANE: Okay. Under Professional Services, I see last year you budgeted for \$520,000. You did not spend any of that money. This year you are budgeting it again. I assume it was something you were going to do that did not happen, and it is going to happen this year?

MR. CRUMMELL: This is revenue that you are looking at here. I am sorry, Professional Services. I am sorry, yes, 05, right? Basically what happens here, this reflects savings due to the lower than anticipated federal project expenses and requirements for contract resources during the fiscal year.

Sometimes we do work for the federal government, we partner on work, and we need to budget that amount of money in case that work goes forward. There is no work that went forward this year, but you will see that we budgeted for this year coming up. There is no work done in 2013-2014 with regard to partnering with the feds.

MR. LANE: No, sorry, Minister, I think you are looking at the federal revenue. I was going to ask about that, but thanks for answering that in advance. I was asking about the Professional Services, which is above that under Salaries.

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes.

MR. LANE: The \$520,000.

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes, exactly. They are both basically offsetting.

MR. LANE: Okay, they offset each other.

MR. CRUMMELL: They offset, that is exactly correct.

MR. LANE: Okay.

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes. That answers that question as well.

MR. LANE: Okay.

MR. CRUMMELL: They offset. One is revenue coming in, one is an expense, neither happened.

MR. LANE: Okay.

MR. CRUMMELL: That is why you get that zero.

MR. LANE: All right, thank you.

MR. CRUMMELL: Okay.

MR. LANE: Line 4.1.02 under Salaries 01, we had budgeted an amount of \$2.1 million. This year we are up to \$3.8 million. Is that where we are picking up some of these salaries that we lost on the other piece, sort of re-profiling?

MR. CRUMMELL: This is a little bit different here. Let me just explain it as we go through that.

This reflects an increase of approximately \$1.7 million. That is attributed to approval received in Budget 2014-2015 for OCIO to complete a trade off from Professional Services funding to create four new permanent positions. We are looking at creating four new positions there actually.

What we were doing with some of that money is we were using outside vendors, professional contractors coming and doing the work. We created four new positions for cost savings as well, as to make sure that we keep people working 365 days a year, seven days a week to do the work that needs to be done. That was part of that.

Approval was also received for temporary positions to support the implementation of Child, Youth and Family Services and government's Financial Management System upgrade projects. Additional increases are a result of the permits that are increasing in accordance with the unionized agreement, as well as a re-profile of funding to reflect the branch's revisited organizational chart. It is a combination of all those things Paul.

MR. LANE: There are four new positions? We are talking \$1.7 million.

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes, so do you want me to break it down for you?

MR. LANE: Four new positions, some temporary, plus the re-profiling that we lost up in Salaries under 4.1.01, part of that comes down here. Is that correct?

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes, we have \$338,000 for project leadership positions. That is the four positions. For the Child, Youth and Family Services temporary positions we have \$339,000. For the FMS R12 upgrade, Financial Management System upgrade, there is \$253,000 there allocated and re-profiling is \$755,000. The permanent salary increases in accordance with the unionized agreement is \$42,000. It works out to \$1.7 million. There are five buckets there basically.

MR. LANE: Okay. All right, we will move on. Under Supplies, still under 4.1.02, you budgeted last year \$281,000 and you spent quite a bit more, \$495,000. Now we are moving up to \$549,000. That is a pretty significant increase. It is almost double this year from what was budgeted last year.

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes.

MR. LANE: I am wondering what that is about.

MR. CRUMMELL: OCIO certainly does not buy a lot of pens and paper. We buy software and hardware. When we buy things they do cost a significant amount of dollars. The revised budget reflects a projected deficit of \$214,000 due to higher than anticipated costs for software for projects such as geoscience, atlas replacement, database support tools, Newfoundland and Labrador statistics, open data, and project portfolio management licensing.

We have seen an increase in some of these costs and that is reflected with that deficit in 2013-2014. With regard to Estimates for 2014-2015, that reflects an increase of \$267,800 attributed to reallocation of IT funding to support the planned project portfolio for fiscal 2014-2015, and also due to the accrued (inaudible) for the OCIO Financial Management System R12 upgrade, and authorizing a temporary increase in supplies budget to support the project implementation.

There is \$109,000 there for the reallocation of funding to support the planned project portfolio. For the FMS R12 upgrade, a temporary increase to support project implementation is \$158,000. It works out to be close to \$270,000.

MR. LANE: Okay. This is mostly all software and stuff like that.

MR. CRUMMELL: That is correct. Ellen, is that correct?

MS MACDONALD: Yes.

MR. LANE: Yes, okay. Professional Services, the next one; \$4.3 million budgeted, \$3.9 million actual and now we are going to \$4.9 million. That is about a \$1 million increase over what was actually spent last year.

MR. CRUMMELL: A \$541,000 increase.

MR. LANE: It went from \$3.9 million actually spent. You are actually budgeting this year what you budgeted last year. You spent \$1 million less last year.

MR. CRUMMELL: It looks like \$400,000 to me. We budgeted \$4.3 million, we spent \$3.9 million. It is \$470,000.

MR. LANE: Yes. You spent \$400,000 less and now you are budgeting \$600,000 more. There is \$1 million differential between what was budgeted last year.

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes.

MR. LANE: No, there is a \$600,000 differential between what you budgeted last year and what you are budgeting this year.

MR. CRUMMELL: It is \$541,000 actually.

Basically, when you are doing these projects and you are getting professional services, it takes two and three years to implement some of these projects. Timing can dictate how much money is spent in one year versus the next year so it sort of fluctuates. That is why you see a wide fluctuation of some of these dollars in one year versus to the next. Over a three-year span, or four-year span, you will see that it evens out based on the anticipated project cost.

The revised number there for 2013-2014 reflects projected savings of \$470,000 due to a ruling actually from the Office of the Comptroller General regarding the capitalization of project management costs.

It was a decision made there by the OCG about moving money to – project costs into capitalization, current money into capitalization. Traditionally, these were considered current costs, but are now reflected as an ineligible capital cost. Actuals and encumbrances have been corrected to reflect their direction provided by the OCG.

Also, when we talk about the Estimates, again it reflects an increase of \$541,000 attributed to reallocation of IT funding to support the planned project portfolio for fiscal 2014 and 2015. That explains the extra money that ebbs and flows from year to year.

MR. LANE: What kind of projects are we talking about that we would be spending \$4.9 million? What kind of projects?

MR. CRUMMELL: There are three main projects – one second now. The three main projects we are doing this year, and two in particular that are the bigger numbers, is the Child, Youth and Family Services integrated system management system. The contract for this year alone is a total of \$5.9 million awarded to Bell Canada. That is a significant expense this year. The FMS, Financial Management System, is an R12 upgrade. Approximately \$7.7 million or \$7.8 million is the cost there. Then the reporting system for the FMS is – how much would that be, Ellen?

MS MACDONALD: Those are the large projects the minister is speaking about. We currently are running I think fifty-six different projects and they are for all the various departments.

We are running something right now to update for the courts. Part of their system we are running. We are doing something for the RNC. We are doing projects for Advanced Education and Skills. We have a lot of different projects.

The Professional Services dollars are the funds – we do not have enough staff to do all these

projects so we pay some vendors of record to get that work done. We saw a saving this past year because we were able to capitalize. The money moved from Professional Services current to Professional Services capital and you will see that later on. As well, we have a heavier load of projects in these phases this coming year. That is why the costs have gone up.

MR. LANE: Okay.

The next one is the next one down of course, Purchased Services, \$271,000 was budgeted and only \$76,000 was spent. This year we are only budgeting \$45,000. There must have been something big that you had planned last year that did not happen obviously.

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes, you are exactly right. That reflects savings of \$194,000. It is due to lower than anticipated costs for IT hardware maintenance as a result of deferred hardware purchase and for training. So you are right, it is a timing thing again. It is a project that was deferred, and the money at some point in time will come back. We will need the money at some point in time.

MR. LANE: Can you tell me what that project was?

MR. CRUMMELL: Ellen might be able to answer that.

MS MACDONALD: Projects typical that did not start when we thought they would were the Case Management System for CYFS, and the financial management upgrade. There are other projects in our portfolio that sometimes do not start up because the department is not ready, because they changed the software and we cannot get the licensing anymore. There are a whole lot of reasons why, but those are the big ones that you are going to see big changes in all of our numbers because of them.

MR. LANE: Okay, that is fine. Thank you.

All right, moving on down to the next line then. That is the Property, Furnishings and Equipment, budgeted \$156,000, spent \$254,000, and now \$395,000.

MR. CRUMMELL: The revised reflects a projected deficit of about \$100,000, and that is due to higher than anticipated hardware costs for projects such as the RNC digital mug shot, and the VIQ court audio system upgrades. They basically cost more money than we anticipated.

For next year coming up in Estimates, that reflects an increase of \$239,000 attributed again to a reallocation of IT funding to support the planned project portfolio for fiscal 2014-2015, and also due to the approval of receipt for the CYFS family services upgrade, the systems, the FMS, which we will refer to again on a regular basis, and the FMS reporting system. That is basically what it is. That is our three big projects, basically, we have there.

MR. LANE: Again, that sounds like software related stuff?

MS MACDONALD: It is a hardware line item.

MR. CRUMMELL: That is right.

MR. LANE: Yes, because it says Property, Furnishings, that is why I am a little confused when you are talking about IT.

MS MACDONALD: I know. The supplies for us mean software licenses, property and furnishings means hardware. I know that is the categories they are just captured under.

MR. LANE: Okay, so actual computers, cameras, whatever.

MS MACDONALD: Yes.

MR. LANE: Okay.

That is all I have under that section. Will I continue, Mr. Chair?

CHAIR: Well, if you want you can pass it on to George, and when we come back you and Randy can probably share if you need, but we will go to George now. We will give George fifteen minutes, if that is okay. We can start him because you – or ten minutes, I am sorry.

MR. LANE: (Inaudible).

CHAIR: Yes, because you were almost down.

MR. LANE: I will start on 4.1.03 when we –

CHAIR: Yes, that is fine.

MR. LANE: Yes.

MR. CRUMMELL: Okay.

CHAIR: George.

MR. MURPHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Good evening to all the staff that has come in here this evening, I know that it is nice outside. Like I said, I think a lot of us would rather be outside by a barbecue tonight with fourteen degrees; but anyway, I guess we all have a job to do.

I will start off with just a couple of questions first off just to get kind of a continuation as regards to where we were last year in asking about some of the projects. Last year we were asking about the information management capacity assessments I think that OCIO was doing last year. Can you give us an update as regards to those projects? What was the final result of those projects? Are those projects completed?

MS MACDONALD: We have completed the Information Management Capacity Assessment Tool. It is a process we went through with every department. OCIO was the last one that we did last year. That has been done for every department. Essentially, it is a review and a classification of how records are being managed and stored, retention cycles, and all those kinds of things.

MR. MURPHY: What was the final assessment?

MS MACDONALD: Departments are at various levels of readiness. Essentially, we left each department with a recommended way forward to improve their practices. Actually this year, part of one of our plans is to go out with an assessment to see how departments are doing.

MR. MURPHY: Okay. So you are going to be auditing again, obviously, this year and it will be an ongoing thing anyway.

MS MACDONALD: Well, we are going to be – yes.

MR. MURPHY: Great. Okay, perfect.

There was something else I was going to ask here, too. You mentioned about the licensing of software programming, and that sort of thing. I am just wondering, is there a capacity here from government – besides falling back on the traditional manufacturers of programming that is out there, is there capacity, for example, that government would be able to do it within OCIO and develop its own software for its own applications?

MR. CRUMMELL: George, if I can interrupt here.

MR. MURPHY: Sure.

MR. CRUMMELL: If there is a line item here in Estimates that is particular around that, we would certainly be willing to offer that answer.

MR. MURPHY: Well, yes, there would be.

MR. CRUMMELL: We could be going around into many different areas here if we do not stick to the Estimates. I think that is what we are talking about here.

MR. MURPHY: It would be for background, Mr. Minister. What I am asking about is when you are talking about Property, Furnishings and Equipment, Professional Services, or Purchased Services, we were talking about lots of money that was being spent on programs and that sort of thing, and software licensing and everything. That is where I was coming from as regards to that. It is an awful expenditure when it comes outside licensing.

MR. CRUMMELL: It is going up every year.

MR. MURPHY: For some companies, it is a licence to print money and it would probably go on every year. What I was wondering about was the capacity of the department to develop potentially, question mark on that. I do not know maybe it will be a policy that you can undertake, Minister, to see if we can get something done as regards to cost savings.

MR. CRUMMELL: That would be a question for the House of Assembly I think, George.

MR. MURPHY: Okay.

MR. CRUMMELL: This probably would not be relevant to Estimates right now.

MR. MURPHY: All right.

MR. CRUMMELL: If you could be more specific and get a line item and ask that question, we would be happy to provide the answer.

MR. MURPHY: We can ask you about plenty of numbers and everything like that, but I thought we were going to be able to ask about some government policy too or something.

MR. CRUMMELL: Okay, all right.

MR. MURPHY: All right.

Subhead 4.1.03, Application Services, line 01, Salaries, \$8,254,600 was spent last year. You are budgeting an extra \$264,800 for this year in Salaries. I wonder if you can explain that.

MR. CRUMMELL: Can you repeat the line item again there, George, please?

MR. MURPHY: Subhead 4.1.03, line 01, Salaries.

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes, got it. The number you are looking at is, sorry?

MR. MURPHY: All of the above.

MR. CRUMMELL: All of the above. That is the \$8.2 million for 2013-2014. Is that what you are looking at?

MR. MURPHY: Yes, you are looking at an increase here too this year, budgeted \$8.519 million.

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes, there you go. Okay, we are good.

The Salaries in that line item; actually it is a salary cost of 105 permanent positions and temporary assistants. The Estimates reflect an

increase of \$264,800, which is primarily attributed to permanent salary increases related to the unionized agreement as well as re-profiling of funding to support the branch's revised organizational chart. It is a combination again of the increases and the re-profiling combining actually two departments into one.

MR. MURPHY: Okay. The next couple of lines down, Professional Services, an extra \$50,000; it was \$901,400 for the year against \$851,000 budgeted last year.

MR. CRUMMELL: Okay. You are looking at the difference between last year and the Estimates?

MR. MURPHY: Yes.

MR. CRUMMELL: There is a \$50,000 increase there if I am not mistaken, I believe, yes. That is attributed to the reallocation of IT funding to support Application Services.

MR. MURPHY: To support again, what?

MR. CRUMMELL: Application Services.

MR. MURPHY: Could you explain what Application Services would be?

MR. CRUMMELL: Ellen could you...?

MS MACDONALD: Application Services is a branch from OCIO that supports 550 different applications for all of government. We sometimes, depending on what is going on, have to call in some Professional Services just for some extra help. That is what that line item is for.

MR. MURPHY: Okay. In Transportation and Communications too, a \$10,800 difference in that line. I wonder if you can you explain that one, Minister. It looks like you had \$23,000 budgeted and you only spent \$2,000.

MR. CRUMMELL: Actually, that was related to the Strategic Procurement Project that was completed this past year. There is a \$10,000 decrease because that project ended.

MR. MURPHY: We are going see a new procurement act as a result of that I would presume?

MR. CRUMMELL: You can pretty well mark that down. We said it in our Blue Book and that will happen.

MR. MURPHY: All right, so we will see that this session of the House?

MR. CRUMMELL: I cannot tell you exactly when you are going to see it, but I can tell you that you will see that.

MR. MURPHY: All right, we are ready.

Subhead 4.1.04, Information Technology Operations, a \$307,000 increase against last year's budget. Do we have new positions here?

MR. CRUMMELL: You are into the Salaries piece there?

MR. MURPHY: Line 01, yes.

MR. CRUMMELL: Line 01 it is, yes. Basically George what we see here is that you will see a reflection of about \$300,000. That is primarily attributed to the re-profiling of funding within the department. We had two departments, we made it into one. That revised organizational chart is the rationale behind that.

Salary increases with the unionized agreement. There was a permanent reduction related to one computer support specialist that was being charged directly actually to the House of Assembly to support a reduction in interdepartmental billing for this resource.

The re-profiling, we had about \$204,000 that was attributed there. The permanent salary increase cost about \$153,000 for the unionized agreement. The permanent salary reduction was a little over \$50,000. It works out to be a little over \$300,000.

MR. MURPHY: All right. Further down in Transportation and Communications, \$2.249 million was budgeted last year; the actual was \$2.066 million. You had budgeted \$2.07 million.

MR. CRUMMELL: That reflects a decrease of about \$180,000. That is primarily attributed to a budget decision to temporarily reduce OCIO's budget to account for Wide Area Network contract savings.

We actually went out and secured an extension for our Wide Area Network contract. We have seen some savings there. Additional reductions of reallocations were made to support increases in postage fees, increases in meal allowances in accordance with the unionized agreement to ensure the alignment of funding and operational support requirements for fiscal 2014-2015.

We have about \$90,000 in savings for the Wide Area Network contract savings, re-profiling to support ongoing operations with another \$83,000 of that in the cost savings area, and permanent reductions of the transfer of funds in financial administration of \$7,000. The net decrease was about \$180,000.

MR. MURPHY: The next line down in Supplies, \$777,500 more than what was the actual spent last year. That number in turn – I am sorry, over the budgeted for last year. I am wondering if you can give me an explanation on that line for Supplies.

MR. CRUMMELL: Sure. That reflects an increase of \$777,000. It is primarily due to approval received in Budget 2014-2015 for software-hardware maintenance support. There have been some additional reductions and reallocations were made to support core mandate savings for the Queen's Printer, and to ensure the alignment of funding with operational supports for fiscal 2014-2015. The permanent increase for the software-hardware maintenance support was \$800,000, so it is a big piece.

MR. MURPHY: What was I going to say here? I lost my train of thought. I will come back to it.

Professional Services, \$20,000 is considerably less than what you spent last year. You had budgeted \$161,200, and this year you budgeted \$141,200, but you only spent \$70,000. What was it that you did not buy?

MR. CRUMMELL: That was a project where we realized savings of approximately \$91,000. That is related to a general reduction in

operational requirements for external contract resources. That was a result of work being done actually by internal staff. We found a way internally to save the taxpayers' money. That is a good news story.

MR. MURPHY: Purchased Services, an added \$233,300 from last year's budget of \$4.9 million. I wonder if you can explain Purchased Services, please.

MR. CRUMMELL: There is a decrease there, I think, from \$5.217 million to \$5.134 million. Is that correct? Yes.

MR. MURPHY: Actually, you went over from last year's budgeted \$4.9 million.

MR. CRUMMELL: The overage you are looking at – I am sorry.

MR. MURPHY: Yes.

MR. CRUMMELL: That reflects a project deficit of \$316,000 as the cost associated with hardware maintenance was much higher than the original budget allocation. We do run into that on occasion. Like we mentioned earlier, it is hard to predict exactly what certain things are going to cost when you get into it. It is like a lot of things.

CHAIR: I am like the referee now, I will call for time.

MR. LANE: George can finish 4.1.04.

CHAIR: I was waiting for him to respond. Finish - what did you say?

MR. LANE: Subhead 4.1.04.

CHAIR: Okay, that section.

MR. LANE: He can finish that section if you like. I have no objection.

CHAIR: Okay. Do you have another question on that George, 4.1.04?

MR. MURPHY: I am just wondering, it seems like an awful lot of money for Purchased Services. I wanted to ask you a question directly around that. I wonder if you can explain it

again. I kind of lost my train of thought here again.

MR. CRUMMELL: Okay, no problem. Maybe we will let Ellen get in on this one.

MS MACDONALD: This is really hardware maintenance and processing costs for our mainframe. We have a lot of big contracts over there; we run a big mainframe, and so there is a regular bill we have to pay essentially. This is all around hardware costs.

Our costs increased this year because of projects, and because of other requirements from government. We expect our number will be at \$5.1 million this year.

MR. MURPHY: Okay, thank you very much for that. I was probably going to ask you a secondary question to that if it is okay with the minister, when it comes to OCIO.

I do not know if it is just me but I sense out there that we seem to be under attack a little bit more when it comes to computers and safety and programming and everything like that. Is any of this money geared towards that?

MS MACDONALD: Yes, I do not know if it would be in this line item. Yes, some of it would.

We have firewalls that sit out there because we are under attack. So we refresh that software and the hardware regularly to keep up with it because it is constant.

MR. MURPHY: How many times has our mainframe, in essence, been attacked in the run of a day? Can you give us a sense of how urgent this is?

MS MACDONALD: It is very urgent. We actually get about 20,000 attacks a month on our firewalls.

MR. MURPHY: Really. So it is there, but the staff are there to handle it.

MS MACDONALD: Yes.

MR. MURPHY: Okay, that is a good thing. Thank you very much for that.

Property, Furnishings and Equipment, there were obviously major purchases happening here, it is \$29,500 less. I guess that is probably self-explanatory when it comes to equipment and everything, Minister, I guess.

MR. CRUMMELL: (Inaudible).

MR. MURPHY: Okay, so that is good.

The revenue provincial side, if you can just explain that line to us, what is happening there, and we will be finished off with that section.

MR. CRUMMELL: Most of the outside sources – again, Ellen, can confirm this. With the federal government we do participate in projects, but there are other sources as well that we receive revenue from: the House of Assembly, actually we do work for them; Legal Aid; The Rooms, these types of things; Newfoundland and Labrador Centre for Health Information; Research and Development Corporation; Municipal Assessment Agency; various insurance companies. They use us and we charge them fees to recover costs.

MR. MURPHY: Okay, perfect.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you, George.

Paul, back to you I guess.

MR. LANE: Under 4.1.05, Transportation and Communications; you budgeted \$1.6 million, only spent \$444,000, we are back up to \$1.6 million. That is \$1.2 million that was not spent. I am just wondering why it was not spent. What happened?

MR. CRUMMELL: That is a pretty obvious one. It goes back to what I talked about earlier, timing of some of these projects. In particular the Child, Youth and Family Services case management system, it just showed the timing of when we are going to implement and do the work. It was pushed forward. We did not spend the money last year. Actually, that money was reallocated for this year. It was money that was approved but we pushed it into 2014-2015, and it is reflected in the budget this year.

There are a few other things here as well, besides Child, Youth and Family Services, but I think it is \$1.2 million just related to that RFP award. There is the go live date for the teachers' payroll Human Resource Management System and the timing of the awarding of the contract for the Financial Management System R12 upgrades. Those three big ones are there again, reflected in the money not being spent last year but going to be spent this year as those projects move forward.

MR. LANE: Thank you, Minister.

I understand money did not get spent, but I am just a little confused because it is called – maybe it is the lingo you use in this department – Transportation and Communications, which to me does not sound anything like software and stuff not being used. It sounds like buses and telephones, is what it sounds like.

MR. CRUMMELL: This captures transportation, freight express carriage, travel, communications, and data communication IT. The data communication IT certainly is – communications a big piece of it.

Ellen, would you like to expound on that a little bit?

MS MACDONALD: The big line item in this is actually travel, and it is related to the projects that we have awarded. These big projects are typically – we have to bring in expertise from outside of Newfoundland and we have to track those expenses. That is why the travel is so high.

MR. LANE: Okay.

MR. CRUMMELL: I am corrected on that one.

Thank you.

MR. LANE: Thank you.

I just want to go back up to Salaries. Last year there was a discrepancy. It was \$3.3 million budgeted, \$3.4 million budgeted this year, but last year you only spent \$1.4 million. That is a differential of about \$1.6 million, \$1.8 million.

MR. CRUMMELL: The response I gave you for the Transportation and Communication difference, it is the same response. It is the timing of these projects.

MR. LANE: Okay.

The next one is Supplies, maybe that is related as well. It is the same thing, \$2.8 million, only spent \$733,000, and budgeting again \$2.8 million. I assume that is tied in to the same type of thing, projects.

MR. CRUMMELL: That is correct.

MR. LANE: Professional Services – this is my last question in this whole section under OCIO – \$19.8 million budgeted last year, only spent \$14.1 million, and this year \$22.9 million.

MR. CRUMMELL: It is the same answer.

MR. LANE: It is the same answer?

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes.

MR. LANE: Okay.

Well that concludes the OCIO from my perspective, unless George has any other questions.

CHAIR: You have a couple of minutes left there, Randy. Do you want to pick up anything there or are you good on it?

MR. EDMUNDS: No, we pretty much covered everything.

CHAIR: Okay.

George, do you have a question left?

MR. MURPHY: Just one or two when it comes to the line items. Minister, you can probably explain Purchased Services, and Property, Furnishings and Equipment at the same time. I know it is a considerable expense here too on this particular section. Are you at liberty to say exactly what projects this money is going towards?

MR. CRUMMELL: You are talking Purchased Services at 4.1.06?

MR. MURPHY: No, 4.1.05.

MR. CRUMMELL: Five, okay; Professional Services.

MR. MURPHY: Yes, Professional Services. I am sorry, yes.

MR. CRUMMELL: Okay, yes. You are looking for the revised or the Estimates?

MR. MURPHY: Well, you are talking a \$19 million expenditure here that was budgeted; Professional Services are \$22 million.

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes.

MR. MURPHY: It is a considerable expense, but the money was not spent this year. There was only \$14 million spent.

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes, that money was moved forward into –

MR. MURPHY: Okay, so there was a rollover.

MR. CRUMMELL: Absolutely.

MR. MURPHY: So it is an ongoing project?

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes.

MR. MURPHY: Are you at liberty to say what projects those are?

MR. CRUMMELL: It is the same three projects that we just spoke about.

MR. MURPHY: The CYFS –

MR. CRUMMELL: CFYS, Financial Management System R12, and the Financial Management System R12 Reporting System. So the FMS Reporting System is different than the FMS.

MR. MURPHY: Okay, all right.

Purchased Services, just down below on the next line, is \$358,000 again. It is a rollover from last year, is it?

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes. Again, the Child, Youth and Family Services Case Management

System, there is an HR Management System as well, and the Financial Management System R12 upgrade.

MR. MURPHY: Okay.

The Property, Furnishings and Equipment line is an \$81,500 difference from what is actually budgeted to this year. Obviously, we have come to the end of some project. Are you at liberty to say what that project might be, or what they stopped spending on?

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes. Again, the revised – which we really do not need to go there – reflects a decrease attributed to the reallocation of IT funding to support the planned project portfolio for fiscal 2014-2015.

I would like Ellen maybe to expound on that a little bit, please.

MS MACDONALD: I would say what is going on here is that we spent – the timing of projects changes all our line items, but we would have purchased the hardware that we need for some of these new ones starting up, and so we do not need to buy them this year. That is why it is a decrease.

MR. MURPHY: Okay, that is great.

I have no other questions on that section.

MR. LANE: Mr. Chair, I have a further question.

CHAIR: Yes, okay.

Thank you, George.

Go ahead, Paul.

MR. LANE: Then I am done as well.

CHAIR: Sure.

MR. LANE: I have noticed here under CYFS there is a lot of money here in different categories. I am just wondering, what is this CYFS project? Do have any details on what it is? It seems like there has been a delay. I am wondering, what is involved and why the delay?

When do you anticipate it being rolled out, and the overall budget amount?

MR. CRUMMELL: The overall budget. I think this year – Ellen, correct me if I am wrong. This year the budget is going to be for approximately \$6 million, \$5.9 million for CYFS this year. There was money obviously spent in the previous years to move this project forward. This is the first big bucket of money and the contract was awarded to Bell Canada. That was a big part of that.

Ellen, I do not know how much more we can say about that in terms of the overall cost of the project. There are still contracts out there that we are still negotiating or we are still getting to that good place. Would that be correct?

MS MACDONALD: We are actually negotiating with Bell Canada right now for this system. That is what they bid to do this work. We are now negotiating with them for the size of the project, so it has started essentially. It is going to take us a couple of years to complete it. A case management system for social workers is what it is.

MR. LANE: A case management system.

MS MACDONALD: For social workers.

MR. LANE: Was it delayed? There was a delay obviously.

MS MACDONALD: The process to award something like this took us longer than we anticipated. I think it is fair to say we had RFPs in from multiple vendors; we reviewed them with the department. They all had to go through orals and then go through. The whole cycle took us longer than we thought it would. That is why we are kind of starting it up right now and why we had to push money forward.

MR. LANE: Okay, thank you.

I am now finished, Mr. Chair.

CHAIR: Okay, thank you Paul.

I will call for the subheads of the Office of the Chief Information Officer.

CLERK: Subheads 4.1.01 through 4.1.06 inclusive.

CHAIR: 4.1.01 through 4.1.06 inclusive.

Shall the total carry?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

On motion, Office of the Chief Information Officer, total heads, carried.

CHAIR: Shall I report the Estimates of the Office of the Chief Information Officer carried without amendment?

On motion, Estimates of the Office of the Chief Information Officer carried without amendment.

CHAIR: Thank you.

OFFICIAL: Can I leave?

CHAIR: Yes, you are free to go.

Thank you.

We are going to be doing the WHSC review which is 5.1.01.

CLERK: Yes page 5.14 in your Estimates book.

CHAIR: Okay, if somebody responds again, the same thing Minister. They state their name for Hansard, if somebody responds besides the minister.

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes.

CHAIR: We just called for the subhead 5.1.01. Paul, do you want to start?

MR. LANE: Yes. I have no questions on the line items. I did have a couple of questions.

MR. CRUMMELL: You can try and see where you go with it. There is always tomorrow.

MR. LANE: Yes. I guess I am wondering about the compensation review. What is the status on the workers' compensation review?

MR. CRUMMELL: The statutory review?

MR. LANE: The statutory review, yes.

MR. CRUMMELL: The only thing I can tell you on that – and again, it is not a line item that is here, but I will give you a quick response. I have spoken about it in the House as well.

There are no further updates really other than we went out to the key stakeholders and asked for feedback from the recommendations. We received that feedback, we are assembling that information. Interdepartmentally we are looking at it and putting an action plan in place. There is a process, we are into that process, but that is pretty much where we are there.

MR. LANE: Yes. Is there any money here in the budget for actually rolling this program out?

MR. CRUMMELL: No. What you need to understand here is that the WHS Compensation Review Division is a separate entity from WHSCC. You are aware of that. They come under actually the Labour Relations Agency and they are separate from WHSCC. They do the final appeals, external reviews of cases that have been adjudicated.

MR. LANE: Yes, commissioners.

MR. CRUMMELL: Exactly, right. It is a separate piece from them and we oversee that. Me, as a minister, I oversee that.

MR. LANE: I know there was an issue where there was a shortage of commissioners. As a result, cases were backlogging and so on. Has that issue been resolved?

MR. CRUMMELL: When we have commissioners who are coming and going – and when we look at salaries, that is a line item we can refer to. Salaries are going up and down here and there. Commissioners get paid. We have one full-time review commissioner but all the rest of the commissioners are part-time. They get paid per case. It depends on how many cases they adjudicate how much money is spent in that salary line item.

There are always people coming and going and being appointed. We will be going through

another recruitment process a little later on this year. That does fluctuate a bit, but we budget for what we think is anticipated based on historical facts.

The good news is that there has been a 34 per cent increase in the number of cases finalized this year versus last year. We have a new system in place; we have a full-time review commissioner. She is seeing a tremendous amount of cases and making sure that the workload is getting lessened. We are getting down to a manageable wait time for those cases.

MR. LANE: Minister, in terms of these cases, can you tell us how many are the actual numbers of cases that are outstanding? On average how long are people waiting to get their cases heard?

MR. CRUMMELL: Most cases will be heard within four and six months, but this is not a line item here that is really meant to be discussed here. Certainly on the floor of the House of Assembly you are willing to come at me on that one, I have no problem but I will answer it, that is a fair question. Four to six months is what we are looking at right now. It was much higher than that just a year ago. It was closer to nine months. We are getting to a good place and we are going to continue with that momentum.

MR. LANE: Would there be an opportunity to meet with one of your officials at a later time to understand the numbers of how many people are on the waiting list, and how long they have been waiting?

MR. CRUMMELL: There is an opportunity to do that. I will take that under advisement.

MR. LANE: Okay, thank you. The other question was the review. That is okay. That is all I have on this section then, unless George has something.

CHAIR: George do you have a question?

MR. MURPHY: I sure do. Last year, Minister, there were 278 that were on the waiting list, cases that were waiting to be heard. I am just wondering is that number less or more now?

MR. CRUMMELL: It is not really a line item here George. That is probably a question best

suited for the floor of the House, your number that you are quoting there now.

MR. MURPHY: Last year there were 278 on the waiting list to be heard and the department was trying to get two more commissioners to make up six in total. I was just wondering if you had an update.

MR. CRUMMELL: I do not have exactly the information here in front of me that I would communicate.

MR. MURPHY: You do not have the information as regards to the number of cases that are backlogged?

MR. CRUMMELL: I think there are about 207 that are backlogged right now.

MR. MURPHY: Okay I am just wondering if...?

MR. CRUMMELL: Last year there were 317.

MR. MURPHY: Three hundred and seventeen is the number you have.

MR. CRUMMELL: Okay, I will give you that one here tonight George.

MR. MURPHY: Okay. What was the other number you just said?

MR. CRUMMELL: Three hundred and seventeen and now we are down to 207.

MR. MURPHY: Three hundred and seventeen and now you are down –

MR. CRUMMELL: They are not backlogged; they are just waiting to be heard. There are many reasons why they are waiting to be heard. A lot of these cases come down to people not having their information, having their ducks in a row, and cancelling their times for their hearings, as much as it has to do with the integral process.

MR. MURPHY: I can appreciate that.

MR. CRUMMELL: Okay.

MR. MURPHY: I was just curious as regards to the work that was being progressed.

MR. CRUMMELL: I will give you that one.

MR. MURPHY: I will save you that time in the House now. You see now I can ask you something else about insurance maybe.

MR. CRUMMELL: Fair enough.

MR. MURPHY: How about in the hiring of commissioners? The department was after two more commissioners last year. Are we up to six commissioners now like we were looking for?

MR. CRUMMELL: Right now Marlene probably might be able to chime in on that one at this moment.

MR. MURPHY: Sure.

MS HICKEY: We currently have five Review Commissioners, including myself. Unfortunately, we have had two Review Commissioners who had to take leave; one is on sick leave, and the other is one is on maternity leave. Right now, I am doing the bulk of the cases. We also have two other commissioners who are working very diligently with the caseload that they have been assigned as well.

MR. MURPHY: Perfect. So basically five is what we have.

MS HICKEY: Yes.

MR. MURPHY: Great.

Just another question, I guess, when it comes to the review. Representatives for non-unionized workers – for example, they do not have their own representation. I went in and I saw a case. It was not a very good turnout. It ended up as being delayed again, the person having their case heard.

I am just wondering: Is there a possibility here that government is looking at appointing representatives to work on the behalf of workers who cannot get union representation, that are not unionized, for example?

MR. CRUMMELL: Again, George, that is a policy question. We are into Estimates here tonight. I try to stick to that myself, and that is what I am going to continue to try to do tonight.

MR. MURPHY: Okay. I will leave that one with you.

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes.

MR. MURPHY: Okay.

Just a couple of line items then when it comes to – no, I guess the review.

On the Salaries line item, \$728,500 was budgeted and there was only \$684,200 spent. Your budget this year is looking at an additional \$14,600 over what was budgeted last year.

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes.

Basically, I said earlier that we do have a couple of vacancies right now, so that is reflected in that. Also, we have a full-time Review Commissioner who is actually saving us a considerable amount of dollars, because of the number of cases that she has that ability to adjudicate and do the review; but we anticipate this year to get fully up to speed again with a full complement of commissioners and to clear up that backlog even further to get the wait times down even further.

We want to continue with the momentum, so that budget of \$743,000 for this year reflects our commitment to make sure that we get these cases adjudicated in a timely manner.

MR. MURPHY: Okay.

Transportation and Communications, \$48,000 spent against a budgeted \$30,000 last year, and this year you have only budgeted \$30,200.

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes, we did have some of our commissioners that did extra travel last year, more than anticipated, so that is just exactly what happened there. We had people travelling around the Island going from the East Coast to the West Coast, that type of thing, adjudicating cases.

MR. MURPHY: I believe you.

Just a line down there in Purchased Services shows an extra \$47,000 that was budgeted for this year over last year's –

MR. CRUMMELL: Purchased Services, \$167,000?

MR. MURPHY: Right.

MR. CRUMMELL: We just renegotiated a lease agreement with our offices here in Mount Pearl. So, that is all for that.

MR. MURPHY: That is the lease agreements there?

MR. CRUMMELL: That is the lease, yes.

MR. MURPHY: Okay. So has the price of rent gone up?

MR. CRUMMELL: Rent is going up everywhere, apparently, yes.

MR. MURPHY: Okay.

Is the department looking at – well, it is probably a question for Transportation and Works – when it comes to the acquiring of government buildings with moving this office, for example, into a government building somewhere so that we do not have to pay out on so much rent?

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes, this external Review Division, the actual cases are adjudicated right in that building.

MR. MURPHY: Right.

MR. CRUMMELL: There is some good cause to have that in a building that is on its own. So that is part of the reason. I know I have had that discussion. I asked that question when I was first appointed minister. Marlene, maybe you can come in and provide some backup.

MS HICKEY: The original lease on the space that we currently occupy was negotiated ten years ago. The lease actually had a five-year extension at the same rate, which we availed of. We did consult with Transportation and Works in terms of renewing the lease, and we did look at some space that the department felt might be appropriate.

Considering that we are very much mindful of the needs of injured workers and accessibility

and ensuring that there is free access to hearings room and services and so on, as well, in terms of maintaining the independence of the organization, it was deemed that the Dorset Building, where we currently are, would be the most appropriate place for us at this time, so the lease was recommended for renewal.

MR. MURPHY: I have to say, it is a nice facility, though, at the same time, but it is pretty far away. Anyway, it is great. Thanks for that.

Minister, can I have just an explanation when it comes to provincial revenue in line 02 down below.

MR. CRUMMELL: So, this review division is fully funded by WHSCC through employers' rates. So, we manage the budgets, government manages the budget, Marlene and her staff manage the budget, but WHSCC pays for it at the end of the day.

MR. MURPHY: Okay.

That is all the questions I have.

CHAIR: Okay, I will call for the subhead of the Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Review.

CLERK: Subhead 5.1.01.

CHAIR: Subhead 5.1.01.

On motion, subhead 5.1.01 carried.

CHAIR: Shall the total carry?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

On motion, total carried.

CHAIR: Shall I report the Estimates of the Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Review carried without amendment?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: Thank you.

Carried.

On motion, Estimates of the Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Review Division carried without amendment.

CHAIR: Thank you.

We will call for the subhead for Government Purchasing Agency.

CLERK: Subhead 6.1.01.

CHAIR: Subhead 6.1.01, Government Purchasing Agency.

Paul, do you want to start?

MR. LANE: Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair.

Minister, Salaries, 01, \$2.1 million budgeted last year, you spent \$2.8 million, so there is a differential there of a little over \$700,000. This year you are budgeting \$2.2 million. Why the additional salaries last year?

MR. CRUMMELL: The \$714,000 was due to severance and leave payments. The agency had five senior staff that retired. We had one resignation, and there was some severances paid in early retirement.

MR. LANE: Okay.

Minister, I am wondering about Bill 1, the Public Tender Act. Are there any amounts in this budget to implement that this year?

MR. CRUMMELL: Actually there is some extra dollars that have been allocated just to get ready for the implementation. It is not a lot of money, but we have actually reallocated funds internally, more than actually increasing the budget. As you can see, the budget is only up slightly from the previous year, but we are moving forward with anticipation for procurement reform and we are doing it every day. We are making sure that we are doing the right things every day to move us in to a better position when the new procurement act comes out. Certainly there are projects in place, even today, that we are finding ways to save money for the taxpayers.

MR. LANE: So you say there is some money budgeted there and there are some internal measures, so am I to assume from that the Public Tender Act will be passed in the House of Assembly this year and implemented?

MR. CRUMMELL: Well, it is a Blue Book commitment and we are committed to making that happen in our term. I would suggest to you that will happen during our term.

MR. LANE: I am sorry; could you speak up a little bit? I could not hear you.

MR. CRUMMELL: What I am suggesting to you is that it is a Blue Book commitment. We are committed to doing that during our term. I cannot tell you exactly when that is going to happen, but we are obviously getting ready for it.

MR. LANE: Okay.

Minister, there were some issues identified by the Auditor General in the last couple of years as it related to public tendering exemptions. I am wondering is there anything here in this Budget in terms of perhaps training or what have you to address these issues with the various government divisions that are not complying with the Public Tender Act?

MR. CRUMMELL: We have monies allocated for training. It is for training for procurement reform as much as it is for training to make sure everybody is up to speed on all that we do within GPA, but we do not have dollars specifically allocated for exemptions.

I would like Leigh to speak to this. Maybe, Leigh, if you could.

MR. PUDESTER: The first point is the exemptions are actually part of the act. They are an approved part of the Public Tender Act. There are certain situations when exemptions apply that would result in no open call, but it is part of the act.

To the minister's point, we do have money allocated for travel, for auditing and training around the Province that will help people to ensure they understand and comply with the act; they understand when they can use exceptions to

open calls, and how to make sure they are doing those to be compliant with the act.

MR. LANE: Okay. I realize that you can have exemptions. I guess the issue I was pointing to is the fact that the Auditor General identified there were times, in his opinion, when it was being used improperly in a number of government departments. I was just wondering would there be money in the budget to address this improper use of the Public Tender Act, which has been occurring?

MR. CRUMMELL: There are no specific dollars that we have allocated for exactly what you are talking about, but we take the Auditor General's report very seriously. Remedial action, when we see something that was not done right in the entities that come under the Public Tender Act, we make sure we get out there and explain to them what they did wrong.

It is very minimal times that these happen, that we have to go in there and do some remedial training and action to make sure people understand what the act means, the regulations and the legislation means, and what the interpretation is. It is not a big piece of our procurement. It happens on occasion. When it does happen, in terms of the instance you referred to that the Auditor General calls out, way before that time, that is being dealt with well before that comes out.

MR. LANE: This training and so on that you would have money in this budget for, some of this training and communications with the various departments and so on would also cover things that were identified by the Auditor General, such as not having internal controls in place to prevent fraud and all types of issues which the AG also identified in the last report. You would have money in the budget to deal with those types of non-compliances of the Public Tender Act to go around and train people in the various departments to ensure they are in compliance. Is that correct?

MR. CRUMMELL: I will let Leigh speak after I say a couple of words here.

Certainly, the role of GPA is to make sure that entities and government departments are following the act, following the legislation and

the regulations around the act. There are procurement people throughout these entities and departments who are trained to procure and follow the act to the letter of the law, and we have a role to play as well.

Maybe I will let Leigh speak on that.

MR. PUDESTER: That is right. Any time we see exceptions that are filed, we review those. They will often result in discussion with the department or entity to better understand why exceptions are being used. As part of those discussions, very often there are suggestions or conversations about whether there are improvements they could make to ensure they are in compliance with the act.

The training that we would do would cover the act in total, but when we would deal with sections on exceptions specifically we would talk to them, again, to try and ensure they know when to use them, how to use them properly.

MR. LANE: Yes, and I am assuming you would do the same, like I said, for other issues because the improper use of exemptions was one issue but then there was another issue about not having the proper controls, the proper signoffs in place and so on to prevent fraud and issues like that. It was also identified by the AG in his report.

I assume that when you get these reports from the AG, the various issues that you would have money allocated here, I would assume you would go to these entities, talk to the parties involved and ensure they are doing all these things properly. Would that be fair to say?

MR. CRUMMELL: In a lot of instances that work is done before the AG gives out his report. A lot of times this is identified.

Anyway, I want to steer away from this conversation because really this is not about Estimates here now. We are getting into the operational piece. With all due respect, that is a question for the House of Assembly. I know you are not afraid to get on your feet and –

MR. LANE: I certainly am not.

That is it, Minister. Again, I was tying it to the budgeted amount in Salaries for training and so on to deal with these issues where the Public Tender Act is not being followed.

That is it for me.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you, Paul.

George.

MR. MURPHY: Just one question before I go on to the line items here. I want to know the status of the spending analysis being done by Deloitte and Touche. I hear they were doing a spend analysis.

MR. CRUMMELL: Spend analysis; that is certainly an ongoing commitment. We are making sure that we are monitoring the results of that program, project.

MR. MURPHY: Is Deloitte and Touche still getting paid for that? Is that an ongoing thing with Deloitte and Touche?

MR. CRUMMELL: No.

Am I correct on that, Leigh, Deloitte's contract is finished? Would that be correct?

MR. PUDESTER: (Inaudible).

MR. CRUMMELL: The strategic (inaudible) project, that is correct, yes. So now it is internally with interdepartmental entities.

MR. MURPHY: Okay. Were there any recommendations that we should be aware of that Deloitte and Touche came out with?

MR. CRUMMELL: There were learnings through that project, and we have incorporated many of the learnings into our business day to day. We are expanding some of those learnings. Again, it is all about saving the taxpayers' dollars. We think we are moving forward with the right procurement, modernization with the learnings that we found from that project.

MR. MURPHY: All right. If we want to ask you any more on that we will ask in the House.

A couple of line items, 6.1.01 in Government Purchasing that I was wondering about; Transportation and Communications line you have budgeted an extra \$30,900 here. You had \$40,000 budgeted and you spent \$40,000. What are you looking at spending the money on this year?

MR. CRUMMELL: Again, we actually referred to it a little bit here earlier about we are going to focus on delivery of training, audit services, and stakeholder engagements. That is getting our people out there and meeting with the purchasing community within our entities, the purchasing personnel within our entities, and doing the proper training to make sure they fully understand best practices and what they are legally required to do under the act.

MR. MURPHY: Okay.

Further down in Professional Services, an added \$55,000 there against – well, you had budgeted \$25,000, you actually spent \$81,000, and you are budgeting \$80,000 for this year.

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes. That actually is reflected with the strategic source and procurement reform for consulting fees. That is a part of that project, development of templates, procurement policy development. We use that for consulting purposes.

MR. MURPHY: Okay. Who was the consulting firm in this particular case that you touched base with?

MR. CRUMMELL: Maybe Leigh could answer it, maybe expand on that and then you can answer that as well.

MR. PUDESTER: The fees would have been paid to, in part, auctioneering firms as well. When we dispose of government assets, we use an auction firm to do that, so that is part of the amount. We also worked with a procurement law firm that specializes in procurement consulting services to help us review our policies and assess what changes we should be making to those policies and templates.

We also employed the services of somebody to assist us internally in developing those policies, reviewing what changes we would need to make

in anticipation of the new legislation that was coming both in the way that GPA operates and also advice for other entities on how they should operate.

MR. MURPHY: Okay.

The next line, just down below it, Purchased Services. There was \$59,000 budgeted, \$59,000 spent, but \$139,000 budgeted for this year.

MR. CRUMMELL: Again that comes down to increases in development of training material, delivery systems, and e- procurement systems. We are moving into more of the electronic world and that is part of that as well. We are modernizing the procurement, and that is what we need to do.

MR. MURPHY: Okay.

A final question, line 02, provincial revenue: I wonder if you can break down that line for me.

MR. CRUMMELL: Revenue –

MR. MURPHY: Provincial, yes.

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes, that is the value of the auction proceeds, and they fluctuate based on the nature and schedule of end-of-life assets and across departments. So that number goes up and down, but that is what that is.

MR. MURPHY: What sort of assets would you be auctioning off?

MR. CRUMMELL: I am assuming everything pretty much – go ahead, Leigh.

MR. PUDESTER: That would be any surplus assets a department would have that they would not need. It could potentially include furniture, equipment, scrap metal, computer equipment, their electronic equipment, things like that.

MR. MURPHY: Okay.

I was just wondering about the services that you retained: \$80,000 versus the \$258,000 that you have. Either way, it is money in the bank I guess you could say.

Mr. Chair, that is all the items I have on that particular section.

CHAIR: Thank you, George.

I call for the subhead of the Government Purchasing Agency.

CLERK: Subhead 6.1.01.

CHAIR: Subhead 6.1.01.

On motion, subhead 6.1.01 carried.

CHAIR: Shall the total carry?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

On motion, total carried.

CHAIR: Shall I report the Estimates of the Department of Government Purchasing Agency carried without amendment?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

On motion, the Estimates of the Government Purchasing Agency carried without amendment.

CHAIR: Okay, that is it, thank you. We are narrowing it down.

We will call for the subheads of Service NL, inclusive.

CLERK: Subhead 1.1.01 through 4.2.02 inclusive.

CHAIR: We are now calling 1.1.01 through 4.2.02 inclusive for Service NL.

Paul, do you want to start.

MR. LANE: Under Salaries you budgeted 246,000, spent \$314,000 and back down to \$252,000. That is a differential there of \$68,000. That basically looks like one salary, is it?

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes, that is severance for one position that somebody left. It is a severance payout mainly due to that.

MR. LANE: That is severance pay?

MR. CRUMMELL: Pretty much; one staff member retired.

MR. LANE: Okay.

The next one, Purchased Services, budgeted \$18,800 last year and again this year, but last year you only spent \$5,600. That was a difference of about \$13,200, is it?

MR. CRUMMELL: It is just lower than anticipated costs for printing, equipment rentals, meeting costs, entertainment, other general purchased items, and they vary year to year. Last year, this department did very well in tightening its belt in a tough budget year.

MR. LANE: Okay.

Subhead 1.2.01, Salaries has gone up about \$80,000. Is that a new position?

MR. CRUMMELL: No, it is the 2 per cent increase in salaries. There is some realignment of the existing salary envelope within our divisions, so it is the 2 per cent pretty much.

MR. LANE: Okay.

Transportation and Communications, I assume that was a bit of a belt-tightening exercise last year as well.

MR. CRUMMELL: Transportation, again, we were very tight on travel last year. There were some conferences and things that we decided not to send people to attend and could probably take a pass on, so yes, absolutely.

MR. LANE: This year you are planning on loosening up the belt a little bit.

MR. CRUMMELL: No, not necessarily. We run this department pretty tight. I have to say my officials are frugal and they are taking care of the taxpayers' dollars, and you will see that right through.

MR. LANE: There you go.

The next one, Supplies, you used about half what was budgeted, so I am guessing that is the same.

MR. CRUMMELL: Same thing.

MR. LANE: In Professional Services you budgeted \$35,000 last year and this year, and only spent \$6,000 last year.

MR. CRUMMELL: Same thing.

MR. LANE: Again, Purchased Services, the same thing?

MR. CRUMMELL: You got it.

MR. LANE: Okay.

Revenue – Provincial, so revenue is coming from what, the feds?

MR. CRUMMELL: The revenue that would come in here – Dave, I am going to lean on you on that one there because we did have that discussion.

MR. NORMAN: Those revenues are received from the Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission.

MR. CRUMMELL: That would have been my answer as well.

MR. LANE: Okay. Why would the Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission be paying you – for what?

MR. NORMAN: A certain portion of the expenses in the Department of SNL is recoverable from workers' compensation, if it is OHS related, so you have the OHS Branch, but you also have a certain portion of my salary, a certain portion of the ADM's salary that is cost recoverable.

MR. LANE: Okay, so when –

MR. NORMAN: Because it is part of the OHS mandate, which the OHS expenses are recoverable from the commission.

MR. LANE: Okay, so I get it clear. Workers' comp premiums are paid 100 per cent by employers –

MR. NORMAN: Yes.

MR. LANE: – and when they are paying those premiums, a portion of those premiums are going to offset your salary and other salaries because of the work you do related to WHSCC. Is that the gist?

MR. NORMAN: It is essentially covering off the expenses of the OHS division, but there is a certain portion that is also recoverable for the ADM's salary and for my salary – it is a portion.

MR. LANE: Okay, so when you say the OHS, it would be inspectors and so on, part of their salaries, or just –

MR. NORMAN: No.

MR. LANE: – part of the administrators' piece is paid for by workers' comp premiums.

MR. NORMAN: The OHS division, in total, is 100 per cent cost-recoverable from the commission. There is also a portion of the ADM's salary and my salary as deputy minister that is also cost recoverable from the commission.

MR. LANE: Okay, I just want to make it totally clear in my head because I did not know this.

MR. NORMAN: No, go ahead.

MR. LANE: What you are telling me is the OHS Division under the Department of Service Newfoundland and Labrador, the salaries associated to that, all the health and safety inspectors and so on, are paid for through workers' comp premiums? Employers are paying. Part of that is transferred to pay for the OHS inspectors' salaries?

MR. NORMAN: It is not just salaries; it is the full cost.

MR. LANE: Okay, the full division.

MR. NORMAN: The full cost of the division is 100 per cent cost recoverable from the commission.

MR. LANE: Is that right?

MR. NORMAN: Yes.

MR. LANE: Okay, I never knew that.

MR. NORMAN: If you look in the Estimates you will see how it is revenue that offsets it.

MR. CRUMMELL: We will see when we get there.

MR. LANE: Yes, okay. That makes sense when you think about it, but I never realized it.

Moving on, 1.2.02, Property, Furnishings and Equipment, we were saving all along but in this case we budgeted \$135,000 and we spent \$563,000. We are budgeting \$300,000, so why the differential there?

MR. CRUMMELL: No, that is a good question. We actually are in the process of replacing thirty vehicles in our fleet for our inspectors and other enforcement people.

We are actually purchasing vehicles. We purchased vehicles last year. We used monies in other budgets to purchase some vehicles for last year. This year we need to purchase more vehicles as well.

We have thirty vehicles basically that we are replacing, that came to their life end. Between 2013-2014 and 2014-2015 it is the purchase of thirty vehicles. That is where that money is.

MR. LANE: I get that but I guess my question is, you budgeted \$135,000, and you spent \$563,000, in terms of planning your budget I would assume these thirty vehicles did not all of a sudden halfway through the budget year all need to be replaced?

I am just wondering why it was budgeted \$135,000 and then all of a sudden someone obviously made a decision that even though we were only going to replace two vehicles or three vehicles, now we are going to replace many more obviously by the number. Why would that have been done to go over budget by that much? What would be the rationale?

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes, there is a simple answer to that and I will let Dave speak.

MR. NORMAN: We have identified a number of positions that require replacement. You are

right, there was \$135,000 allocated so we found other countervailing savings within the department to help cover the costs of replacing some additional vehicles.

We did not replace thirty vehicles; we are still in the process of replacing the balance of them for the next fiscal year. That is essentially our attempt to replace vehicles in the 2013-2014 fiscal year out of countervailing savings.

MR. LANE: Okay, so, perhaps some of the belt tightening that occurred in some areas helped to offset the cost to be able to spend the extra on the vehicles this year, if you will, right?

MR. NORMAN: Every year there are some savings in different areas of a department.

MR. LANE: Yes.

MR. NORMAN: Especially a department of this size. We found some countervailing savings, like I said, to purchase some additional vehicles that fiscal year.

MR. LANE: Okay, so it is like a reallocation of funds, basically.

MR. NORMAN: Essentially.

MR. CRUMMELL: There is some time in here as well. We certainly need to purchase these vehicles and replace them in a timely manner. When they reach that ten-year life, according to our policies, you need to replace vehicles, and sometimes you just have to go out and get them when that happens.

MR. LANE: Just out of curiosity, were any of those hybrid vehicles?

MR. CRUMMELL: Go ahead.

MR. NORMAN: I cannot tell you off the top of my head if any of them were hybrid. We did look at that. There is an additional cost with hybrid which is not insignificant. I cannot tell you that off the top of my head. I know we look at that when we are making the purchase decision, but I cannot tell you if any of them were hybrid or not.

MR. LANE: Okay, sounds like there probably was not, or not too many anyway.

MR. NORMAN: It would not be many.

MR. LANE: No.

CHAIR: Okay, Paul, we will go with the time.

MR. LANE: Yes, okay, well then George can go.

CHAIR: All right, George.

MR. MURPHY: (Inaudible) a fuel efficiency question.

CHAIR: You know, you cannot be up to him sometimes.

MR. MURPHY: I am disgusted. I think Paul pretty much covered it. Just one or two line items over here again, 1.2.01, Executive Support, under Transportation and Communications, I wonder if you can explain that line. I am not sure if you just did that, if I caught a piece of it.

Sixty-five thousand and eight hundred dollars budgeted, and you only spent \$30,000 here. You obviously anticipated spending \$65,000 on something. It did not happen, and it is being topped up in the budget this year to \$66,300.

MR. CRUMMELL: No, again, it is just a decrease in lower than anticipated travel expenditures. It is no other reason other than that. We were trying to keep our costs down throughout the year, and that reflected in that line item as well.

MR. MURPHY: That would not be necessarily for ministerial travel, that would be in the section up above in Transportation and Communications?

MR. CRUMMELL: That would be for the executive group within our department.

MR. MURPHY: Okay, so 1.1.01, under Transportation and Communications, there was belt tightening down there at the executive level, the general administration and executive support level, but in Transportation and

Communications there was more money spent up here in the Minister's Office than what there was there. What happened here for the Minister's Office to spend more in Transportation and Communications than what it had budgeted?

MR. CRUMMELL: I think the minister before me was from Labrador – which he was, right. That certainly was a factor in the increasing cost for him to travel around the Province and getting back and forth from his district to get to events and to different work engagements.

MR. MURPHY: Okay.

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes, then it makes sense.

MR. MURPHY: Kind of. Those are all the questions I believe I have in that particular section. I think my cohort in the Opposition covered that so I guess we can move on to 2.1.01.

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes.

MR. MURPHY: Section 2.1.01, under Salaries, I am guessing again that when it comes to the budgeted figure anyway they added 2 per cent for salary increases in Consumer Affairs.

MR. CRUMMELL: You are looking at the revised number for \$894,000 versus \$762,000?

MR. MURPHY: That was my second question with regard to where did that money come from, the additional money. I guess you will give us a breakdown on the whole line here.

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes, that is certainly for severances as much as anything.

MR. MURPHY: How many people were lost from the Consumer Affairs Division?

MR. CRUMMELL: There were two positions that were eliminated in Consumer Affairs.

MR. MURPHY: What were their jobs? Do we know?

MR. CRUMMELL: There was one clerical position and one management position.

MR. MURPHY: What did that manager do? Do you know that?

MR. CRUMMELL: Consumer Affairs. He was a Consumer Affairs manager.

MR. MURPHY: Okay, I will leave it at that. I will follow it up.

The salary details for this year then, budgeted to \$787,000. I wonder if you can give me an explanation with regard to that.

MR. CRUMMELL: That is the 2 per cent.

MR. MURPHY: That is the 2 per cent, is it?

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes.

MR. MURPHY: Okay, coming further down, \$61,800 in Transportation and Communications, but only spent \$22,000 here.

MR. CRUMMELL: That is reduced travel costs, fewer conferences. It is a similar story as to other line items we spoke about earlier.

MR. MURPHY: The whole section here, it says, "Appropriations provide for the mediation of consumer complaints, the mediation of residential landlord/tenant complaints, the administration of Provincial Lotteries Licensing...". I am just wondering, did consumers suffer because there wasn't money spent? I am asking a general question about outreach here. Because we did not spend \$40,000 in Transportation and Communication, was there outreach that was not done?

MR. CRUMMELL: I mean that is conjecture. I would not be able to say that is a fact.

MR. MURPHY: No, no, I am not saying that it was, I am just asking the general question if anybody suffered as a result.

MR. CRUMMELL: No, no, if it is a hypothetical question, I would suggest that the work was getting done.

MR. MURPHY: Okay. The reason why I ask that is because your budget is back up again to \$62,200. Did we have one year of belt

tightening and now the belt tightening is over?
Is that what I am looking at here?

MR. CRUMMELL: We had an austerity Budget last year, as you are well aware. We did what we could to keep the expenditures down, and it was reflected in many of the line items where we had discretion.

The budget that we feel is needed to do the work certainly is what is reflected for this year. It is not to say the work was not done this year, there are creative ways to do work, and there are efficiencies that can be found. We were successful in maintaining that budget line item to that \$62,000 level. That is what we have budgeted for the year.

MR. MURPHY: Okay, so it is safe to say then lump sum for everything from Transportation and Communications down to Property, Furnishings and Equipment would have been an austerity program savings?

MR. CRUMMELL: I would not necessarily say that, but we were being diligent about what conferences we attended, things that we did in those areas. We were being prudent with the taxpayers' dollars.

MR. MURPHY: Okay, all right.

MR. CRUMMELL: I am not saying we are not being prudent this year, now, that is not the plan.

MR. MURPHY: I am hoping you are going to crack open the piggy bank. We will see.

Line 02, Revenue – Provincial, \$12,000 showing, and \$15,000 actual was last year against the \$12,000 previously budgeted.

MR. CRUMMELL: These are fees that are collected from applicants for various things. It goes up and down. It depends on what is happening out there in the marketplace.

MR. MURPHY: What kind of fees? What would they be paying here in this particular branch?

MR. CRUMMELL: If you need to have a complaint adjudicated, that is one way you

would collect the fee. You would have to pay a fee to get a complaint adjudicated.

MR. MURPHY: Okay.

MR. CRUMMELL: There are a variety of different adjudication responsibilities that we have in Consumer Affairs.

MR. MURPHY: Okay. When will we see the review of the Residential Tenancies Act? When are we going to see that review released?

MR. CRUMMELL: I have stated in the House that we are finalizing a jurisdictional review. I am waiting for a report to be put on my desk in terms of recommendations. We are moving through the process.

As well, you know George it is a very complicated piece of legislation.

MR. MURPHY: Understandably.

MR. CRUMMELL: The legislation we have in place now is robust in many ways. In terms of where we need to go to modernize it, we have to make sure that we take the needs of landlords and tenants into consideration.

As well, you know both landlords and tenants have been lobbying themselves for their own positions on this and we have to find balance. No matter what we do it is not going to make everybody happy, I am sure, but we are looking forward to modernizing that legislation. We are getting there.

MR. MURPHY: Who is doing that work for the department? Is that internal?

MR. CRUMMELL: This is all done internally.

MR. MURPHY: It is all done internal.

MR. CRUMMELL: Correct.

MR. MURPHY: Okay. We already know of course what they are looking at. Are you looking at rent stabilization?

MR. CRUMMELL: Excuse me?

MR. MURPHY: Are you looking at rent stabilization?

MR. CRUMMELL: George, that is a question for the House I think. It is best left there.

MR. MURPHY: Right. The Residential Tenancies Division, did they end up with their computerized database after? That was recommended by the Auditor General.

MR. CRUMMELL: The Residential Tenancies...?

MR. MURPHY: They have a computerized data system now as recommended by the Auditor General? I think it was one of the recommendations he made. What year was that, last year? It was one of the recommendations that the Auditor General made last year.

MR. CRUMMELL: It is not something that I have been briefed on in terms of Estimates. It is a question for another day.

MR. MURPHY: All right. We will move on to 2.1.02 Financial Services Regulation. The Salaries deferential there, it is only about \$3,500 and it is also down about \$6,000 from last year. I am just wondering if I can get a breakdown as regards to what happened there.

MR. CRUMMELL: The decrease?

MR. MURPHY: Yes.

MR. CRUMMELL: Lower than anticipated requirements due to turnovers and vacancies. Obviously you anticipate these things, you build in severances and that type of thing. We did not use all that money in that budget that year. With regards to going forward it is that 2 per cent increase that has bumped that up to over \$1.061 million.

MR. MURPHY: Okay. With regard to Transportation and Communications it was down \$8,000 from last year's number but up again to \$41,400. Are we looking at the savings program, or austerity program last year against what is happening this year? We are back to normal again.

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes. There are a few things. The \$400 difference budgeted in 2013-2014 to \$41,400 is actually an increase in meal allowances according to government policy, believe it or not, \$400 extra. Yes, you are answering your own questions so it is obvious.

MR. MURPHY: Yes, I am just skimming down through the obvious here. The same thing for the line below.

CHAIR: I have to call time, George. We are going to take about a five minute break. We only have one person in Broadcast and I think he deserves a little break. We will take five.

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes.

Recess

CHAIR: Okay, we will get started again.

Thanks, everyone, for your patience. A little break did not hurt us, I guess. We are still doing Service NL.

Paul, back to you.

MR. LANE: Where are we picking up here, Consumer Affairs, I believe.

CHAIR: Yes.

MR. LANE: Under 2.1.01, Salaries – I think George got that one. Okay. I have no line items here per se, but I have a couple of questions related to the line items.

Under 2.1.01, I guess this would fall under revenues. I am wondering what your projected revenues will be for lotteries and how much of that pertains to Atlantic Lotto versus the provincial lottery licensing revenue?

MR. CRUMMELL: We do not have that broken down, Paul.

MR. LANE: You do not have a breakdown, okay.

The lotto machines would fall under this, right? If someone has a lotto machine in a bar or whatever, does that fall under this?

OFFICIAL: That is Finance.

MR. LANE: That goes directly to Finance and not under you guys at all. Okay.

Provincial lottery licensing fees, are they increasing or decreasing?

MR. CRUMMELL: As far as I know, they are staying the same. There is nothing changed to fees with regard to that.

MR. LANE: Okay. The only other question I have here under 2.1.01 is related to the Residential Tenancies Act which is covered, I think, under 2.1.01.

Under the Residential Tenancies Act, one of the types of premises that are exempt is defined under section 4, “living accommodation (i) whose occupant is required to share a bathroom or kitchen facility with the owner who lives in the building in which the living accommodations is located...”.

We are wondering, does that apply to bedsitting rooms, and are bedsitting rooms covered under the act or not?

MR. CRUMMELL: Paul, I will just go back to –this is Estimates, and that is a question more appropriate for another venue or environment.

MR. LANE: Do you know the answer, though?

MR. CRUMMELL: Do I know the answer? I know some answers with regard to – I have read that act backwards and forwards. Trust me on that one, I have, but that one there I do not have at the top of my head.

MR. LANE: You do not know, okay.

Under 2.1.02, prepaid funerals do fall under that, right?

MR. CRUMMELL: Correct.

MR. LANE: Are you able to tell me how many funeral homes are licensed to sell prepaid funerals?

MR. CRUMMELL: I am going to let my deputy –

MR. MCCARTHY: There are approximately fifty-six funeral homes licensed to sell prepaid funerals in the Province.

MR. LANE: Okay. Can you tell me how much licensing revenue is collected? I guess that would fall under the revenues here. Like for last year, can you tell me how much revenue was actually collected and went into the fund?

MR. MCCARTHY: I do not have the exact information. The actual licensing fee would go into Consolidated Revenue, so it is not reflected here.

MR. LANE: Okay. Is there a separate position within the division to administer that prepaid funeral program and do audits and so on, a dedicated position under Salaries?

MR. MCCARTHY: It is not dedicated solely to prepaid funerals, and we have more than one position that is involved in the audits. It is not dedicated solely to prepaid funerals. It carries out a number of functions.

MR. LANE: What else would they be doing besides prepaid funerals?

MR. MCCARTHY: The examinations would include under insurance, mortgage brokers, real estate.

MR. LANE: Okay. Are you able to tell me how much money is in the assurance fund, the compensation fund that is there? Of course, we realize it was put in place a number of years ago as a result of an incident I believe in Port aux Basques.

MR. MCCARTHY: I do not have the exact number but we certainly could get that information for you. I believe it is approximately \$120,000 right now.

MR. LANE: Okay. Are you able to tell me when the assurance fund was last audited?

MR. MCCARTHY: The assurance fund is audited ever year by an accounting firm.

MR. LANE: Okay. So it has been audited every year.

MR. MCCARTHY: Yes.

MR. LANE: Okay.

Under 2.1.03, Salaries was \$185,000, it went to \$205,000 and \$210,000. That is just an increase with the 2 per cent and so on, is it?

MR. CRUMMELL: For the revised for 2013-2014, is anticipated salary expenditures, a little higher than anticipated, and that reorganization which we just did a little while ago has been adjusted for 2014-2015. So the 2014-2015 Estimate is the 2 per cent increase and what we need to do with the reorganization of the Financial Services Regulation Division.

MR. LANE: Okay.

Under 2.1.04, the Salaries budget last year was \$1.1 million, actual was \$1.2 million, and this year almost \$1.4 million. I am assuming it is the 2 per cent and maybe another position or something?

MR. CRUMMELL: When we look at the increase for 2014-2015, is that where you are trying to go?

MR. LANE: Yes, you went over and now you are gone up even more.

MR. CRUMMELL: The revised for 2013-2014 is severances. Okay, that is what is going to happen there.

MR. LANE: Yes, severances. Okay.

MR. CRUMMELL: In terms of 2014-2015, obviously, we had a hiring freeze and there are some positions on hold. We expect to be filling them this year.

MR. LANE: Can you tell me what positions you froze last year that you are now going to unfreeze this year?

MR. CRUMMELL: There are seven positions, actually, that we are looking to fill. The positions, I do not have the exact details to. Part of that as well is the 2 per cent increase for the labour agreement. The seven positions – did you want to go? Go ahead.

MR. LANE: Does anybody have any idea of what the positions might be?

MR. CRUMMELL: Julian could –

MR. LANE: Okay.

MR. MCCARTHY: Yes, we have a five-year project on the go called the verification project to digitize all the records in the Commercial Registrations Division going back from 1982 to, I believe it is 1897. We put that project on hold for one year last year. That project is back on again this year. So we will be hiring the positions in order to continue with that verification project.

MR. LANE: Okay.

Under Transportation and Communications, budgeted \$80,000, you spent \$63,000. That is a bit of belt tightening there is it?

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes, that is just lower than anticipated expenses.

MR. LANE: Supplies is the same thing?

MR. CRUMMELL: Correct.

MR. LANE: Purchased Services, budgeted \$665,000, actual was \$726,000, forecasting \$790,000. Is there something here that I am not seeing?

MR. CRUMMELL: That actually captures the cost for Moneris fees. You know what Moneris is, the Interac fees and Visa fees.

MR. LANE: Okay.

MR. CRUMMELL: There is an increase in cost because of high anticipated usage. We obviously accept credit cards and debit cards in our Government Services offices and elsewhere.

MR. LANE: Okay. As you do more stuff on online and so on I guess there will be a higher usage for that.

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes.

MR. LANE: Yes, that makes sense.

Okay. That is really it for me.

CHAIR: That is it for you, Paul?

MR. LANE: Yes.

CHAIR: Okay.

George.

MR. MURPHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I want to come back to 2.1.02, Financial Services Regulation, and ask an internal policy question. We have not heard anything on payday loans. I am wondering where government stands on that. Are they going to be enacting any legislation to protect people who are subject to what is happening with payday loans these days? We have been hearing some stories again.

MR. CRUMMELL: Again, it is obviously not the place for this, George, but I will give you one quick answer to that.

There are still things that are ongoing. I have actually reached out to the federal government. I wrote them about what their plan is because they mentioned it in their budget last fall. We have not heard back. Unfortunately, the Finance Minister is who I wrote to, the previous Finance Minister. We will be following up now shortly to see what the status of that request is.

We are looking at working with the federal government, as they outlined in their budget last October, to work with them and having a look at what is happening across the country because the feds recognize that is what is happening in other provinces that have tried to regulate this, it is not working. We have to find a solution and we are committed to doing that. That is the only thing I will say on that one.

MR. MURPHY: Okay. So we are working on something, though. There is something going to be happening with payday loans.

MR. CRUMMELL: It is very live and it is top of mind for sure.

MR. MURPHY: Perfect. Okay. We will get back to you on that one again in the future, in the House.

I want to come ahead to 3.1.01. Before I do, I have one more question when it comes to the insurance end of things, the regulation of insurance. Seeing how we are just about to start on Motor Vehicle Registration, I want to connect the two. Of course, we are looking at a situation where facility insurance is going to be going through the roof. One of the causes happens to be uninsured automobiles, one of the reasons why.

I am just wondering why it is not mandatory or why we cannot make it mandatory in this Province to probably have insurance companies report delinquent policyholders to Motor Vehicle Registration, safety code if you will, so that we can get a better handle on uninsured vehicles that are out there.

MR. CRUMMELL: Again, I will answer the question but I just want to stay on the Estimates here to get through tonight.

The insurance companies are not connected up to each other and they are not connected to MRD, or they are not connected to the RNC either. So to connect everybody up, it is not an easy thing to do. Is it possible? In an ideal situation that would make a lot of sense. Who knows where we need to go in the future to deal with these types of issues? That is the short answer, George.

MR. MURPHY: Okay. I was just wondering because it seems so easy to e-mail or telephone.

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes, if it was that easy it would be done, trust me on that one. That is the only –

MR. MURPHY: Okay.

When it comes to Motor Vehicle Registration, and I will start moving through that section, the line items. Subhead 3.1.01 under Administration, line 01 Salaries, \$74,000 less than what was budgeted in 2013-2014 and you are budgeting \$1.17 million for this year. I am presuming, to be presumptuous, we are looking

at severance here are we for the revised number for 2013-2014?

MR. CRUMMELL: Severance is your right answer for the difference in 2013-2014, and then in 2014-2015 it is mainly due to the 2 per cent.

MR. MURPHY: How many people did we lose, severance pay going to?

MR. CRUMMELL: I do not have that.

MR. MURPHY: We do not know how many people we lost there?

Under Transportation and Communications, \$150,000 more was spent than what was budgeted in 2013-2014; \$710,900 was actually spent. This year that number is \$380,700 above budget. Can we get an explainer as to what is happening in this line here for Transportation and Communications?

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes. There is a very simple answer to that. The cost of postage has gone up and it is costing us more money to communicate with people who own motor vehicles and whatnot. Our cost of mail has gone up considerably. I think the cost of postage has gone up from sixty-one cents to sixty-three cents in January, 2013, and it has gone up to seventy-five cents on April 1 of this year. So, yes, you are talking about a considerable amount of extra money.

MR. MURPHY: Okay. That is good there.

Purchased Services, the same section, I am thinking that is building renovations there for the Administration.

MR. CRUMMELL: You are good.

MR. MURPHY: Which building was that?

MR. CRUMMELL: That is the MRD building.

MR. MURPHY: That was the Motor Vehicle Registration out in Mount Pearl?

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes.

MR. MURPHY: What did they actually do out there when it came to the renovations? Can you give us an update on what is happening?

MR. CRUMMELL: There were some upgrades done. We have actually moved our Vital Statistics Division over there, and GSC as well.

MR. MURPHY: Moved them from Mews Place.

MR. CRUMMELL: We had to renovate the building to accommodate the people. We now have one-stop shopping under one roof, which we think is a beautiful thing.

MR. MURPHY: What is happening with the space you used to have on Mews Place? Was that under private rental or...?

MR. CRUMMELL: That goes back to TW.

MR. MURPHY: That has gone back to Transportation and Works. We did own that building up there?

MR. CRUMMELL: We did not own the building but we were leasing it. They will look for a new tenant.

MR. MURPHY: Okay. Thank you very much for that one.

Under 3.1.01, Administration, just a couple of questions; I asked you the one about the renovation act. I will not even ask you about the Move Over act because that is already being enforced out there. I have been hearing that out there in the media, so thank you very much for that.

Under 3.1.02, Driver Examinations and Weigh Scale Operations; I want to ask about school bus inspections, the National Safety Code, if you can give us an update on what has been happening with school bus inspections.

MR. CRUMMELL: We are following the protocols. Buses are inspected three times a year; once by our inspectors, and twice by official inspection stations. That would be captured in these costs for sure.

MR. MURPHY: So three times a year?

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes, and sometimes more times if they run into deficiencies and we have to go back and have a look at. On the average, I think it is four times a year, to be honest with you.

MR. MURPHY: How many National Safety Code officers do we have out there now, highway inspectors?

MR. CRUMMELL: I would not be able to answer that.

MR. MURPHY: You do not have that. It would probably be under Transportation and Works, I think. Okay.

I am just looking at the salary details here, \$2,343,500 was budgeted. The revised number was down \$248,300 from the actual.

MR. CRUMMELL: The revised, that decrease of \$250,000 reflects vacancies and delayed recruitment. This year we are coming into the differentiation, the 2 per cent. It is also a realignment within the salary envelope with our divisions to match the staffing costs expected per division.

Also, shift differentials went up in the collective agreement. People who are working on weekends and after hours, our inspection stations and our weigh scales, are getting on a different pay scale. That cost went up as well because of the collective agreement. For a variety of those reasons we are going to be paying out more next year than we did the previous year.

MR. MURPHY: Okay, but nothing about new hirings or anything.

MR. CRUMMELL: We are going to be back filling, where we need to, the vacancies.

MR. MURPHY: Okay. Coming down then in this section to Transportation and Communications \$94,500 was the actual for the year, \$119,500 was budgeted, and then the number shoots up to \$131,600.

MR. CRUMMELL: The revised just reflects lower than anticipated requirements due to staff vacancies and related travel. That impacted that

number because we did have a few vacancies there. Then, when we looked to 2014-2015, that increase is about \$12,000, I believe. Yes, that is right. That is mainly due to an increased travel expectation from filling the staff vacancies as well as government-wide increases in meal allowances.

MR. MURPHY: I know two years ago I made a visit of some of the weigh stations across the Province getting to know the people there and know what their routines are. Some of them mentioned a very specialized armored vest. Whenever they are crawling in under the vehicle they would love to acquire some safety equipment.

I am just wondering is there any particular consideration here on the part of Service Newfoundland and Labrador to be buying that equipment now since the austerity measures are over and there is a little bit of savings here. Is there a possibility that you could end up buying some of this equipment for some of the officers who are crawling in underneath some of these big rigs?

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes, that is an interesting question. I think I will defer that to my deputy.

MR. MURPHY: Yes.

MR. NORMAN: We look at the requirements for positions and the requirements for personal protective equipment. When there is something we feel that they need we provide that. At this point, we do not feel there is a requirement for Kevlar vests.

MR. MURPHY: That is what I was wondering about. It is not needed right now, but the ask is still in there.

MR. NORMAN: No. The honest answer is it is not on the horizon.

MR. MURPHY: Okay. How much are these Kevlar vests?

MR. NORMAN: I cannot tell you. We identify based on the need. The next step, if we felt it was required, is we would have costed it out.

MR. MURPHY: Okay.

MR. NORMAN: It was not a cost consideration.

MR. MURPHY: Okay. Hopefully, we will keep it in mind anyway for the future. One of these days hopefully they can have that. Under 3.1.03 –

CHAIR: George, sorry I missed it. We will have to call time.

MR. MURPHY: Okay, go ahead. I will relent.

CHAIR: It is a good time to call it when you are finished on a number there. We will go back to Paul.

MR. LANE: Under 3.1.03 I see you budgeted \$2 million, the actual was \$2.1 million and this year it is \$2.1 million. It is about a \$100,000 increase in Salaries.

MR. CRUMMELL: Severance, yes.

MR. LANE: That is severance. I am going to move over to Permitting and Inspection Services, 3.2.01. There are some minor variations but nothing major.

Line 02 Revenue – Provincial, in 2013-2014 there was a budget amount of \$1.3 million, it came in at \$1.1 million, and this year \$1.297 million, so almost \$1.3 million again. It was down a little bit last year to what you anticipated this year, you anticipated to go back up. What is that amount for, that revenue? What is the source?

MR. CRUMMELL: Obviously we provide inspections and services to businesses, organizations, and individuals in many different ways but demand is one of the ways that we do inspections. Demand was down actually in the previous year.

MR. LANE: Does that include fines, Minister?

MR. CRUMMELL: What is that?

MR. LANE: Are fines included under that?

MR. CRUMMELL: My understanding is no, they are not.

MR. LANE: Where would fines be captured?

MR. CRUMMELL: They go into consolidated revenue. There is not much in the way of fines but it would go in to consolidated revenue.

MR. LANE: On that, 3.2.01 does cover inspections and public safety, building inspections and so on. I would assume that blue zone enforcement would fall under that category, the Salaries there. Are they the people who would enforce provincial blue zones?

MR. CRUMMELL: You are right. Yes, that is correct.

MR. LANE: That would be those people?

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes.

MR. LANE: Okay. My understanding is we have one salaried person who enforces blue zones between here and Clarendville, and then there are a bunch of part timers. Is that correct?

MR. CRUMMELL: There is one dedicated person here who works out of the St. John's office. I am correct on that. There is another, I believe, six or seven who have part responsibilities. I stand corrected; let's get the facts here straight. Go ahead, Dave.

MR. NORMAN: I was just waiting for that. Yes, there is one solely dedicated, and then the others across the Province, that is a shared function with other functions they have.

MR. LANE: Like what? What other functions would they have?

MR. NORMAN: I think in building. Donna, I am going to defer to you on that.

MS KELLAND: We have a number of inspection field officers throughout the Province. Part of their responsibility includes flagging issues like blue zone parking regulations and other violations they might see.

A lot of these folks would be technical inspectors. They would do things like buildings accessibility, electrical inspections, and those types of things. In addition to that though, most of our field inspectors will have this under the

other related duties. As an example, if somebody goes into a premise to inspect it and notices a violation of something else, they will report that to the appropriate division, and then they will follow up on the enforcement piece.

MR. LANE: Okay, so the one person who is dedicated to this operates out of St. John's and covers from St. John's all the way to Clarendville. Is that correct?

MS KELLAND: Actually there are other technical inspectors in this region – the Avalon Region and the Clarendville, which is our Eastern Region – who would also have those partial responsibilities.

MR. LANE: In St. John's it would be the one person?

MS KELLAND: St. John's covers, yes, part of –

MR. LANE: Mount Pearl, CBS, the Northeast Avalon would be the one person.

MS KELLAND: That is right. Yes.

MS KELLAND: Sorry, no, just to clarify, we have technical inspectors in this area as well. They would share those responsibilities, but we do have one dedicated officer. I am not sure if that is clear or not.

MR. LANE: Would these other part time people dedicate a day a week, a day a month, whatever, just going around enforcing blue zones? Or is it only if someone happens to make a complaint about a blue zone that they act upon the complaint?

MS KELLAND: There are two ways we do it: one, is we do a fair number of complaint-based things; but also, we can do blitzes, and we have done blitzes in the past. Depending on the direction they are getting at the operational level from the director, they can be assigned specific blitz responsibilities on a periodic basis.

Again, as they are going into a premise to do other inspections, they will note deficiencies in those areas as well. It is kind of a two- or three-pronged approach.

MR. LANE: We rolled out new blue zone regulations almost two years ago now. How many blitzes would the guy in St. John's have done in the last two years?

MS KELLAND: I cannot tell you right off the top of head. I know that we did a fair bit of work last fall and I believe we provided some information to that effect previously.

MR. LANE: Okay.

If they were out doing their blitzes or a complaint-based action, then would it show up here as revenues if they went to a business and because we upped the fines – that would not fall under that if they were not in compliance with regulations? That would not be covered here?

MR. CRUMMELL: Basically what you are talking there – new buildings that are being constructed, buildings that are being renovated, they require inspection services. They would pay for that in terms of fees, obviously. The various inspection services that we provide, that is the demand piece, and that is where that revenue comes from. It does not come from fines.

MR. LANE: Okay. What about if there is a complaint or the inspector drives down, say, Elizabeth Avenue or wherever and there is noncompliance with the new blue zone regulations, they would issue an order – would they issue a fine after a period of time if the business owner does not comply?

MR. CRUMMELL: I will let Donna speak to it, but the process is that there would be a directive issued, then an order, and then possibly you would charge them is what most – Donna, can you back me up on this one?

MS KELLAND: Yes, that is correct. We would lay charges if the directives were not followed.

MR. LANE: So in terms of ensuring that business are in compliance with the legislation, is there any money in here to proactively – we talked back here somewhere about the cost of mail went up, stamps went up and so on. Just to go back to the topic of stamps and sending stuff out and whatever, we passed new regulations

which put in a new requirement for businesses to have these new permanent signs and so on.

I am wondering: Was there anything sent out to the businesses here in the city and the region or whatever letting them know that these are new regulations that you have to be in compliance with? Was there anything other than to say well, we passed it the House of Assembly or it was on our Web site – which we all know no business owner is going to go searching through government Web sites looking to see what the latest regulation happens to be. So did we actually have anything here to roll this out, to educate businesses that they need to be in compliance?

MR. CRUMMELL: No, absolutely. We did reach out specifically to organizations that were umbrella organizations like the Newfoundland and Labrador Construction Association and other organizations as well that are involved in the renovations and construction industry, building buildings, making them aware of what the new regulations are. We also did a number of media releases, just like we did with communications like the move-over legislation and other legislation similar to that. So there was activity around that.

There are brochures that are available in different locations as well that explains exactly what the new legislation is. Any time that anybody applies for a permit to renovate a building, significantly renovate a building or to construct a new building, they will become aware, before anything is approved, that there are regulations around blue zone parking; and they need to be compliant with that, with their original plan, before they get their permit and they can go off with it. So that is part of the process as well.

There are a number of different ways that we have communicated what these regulations are. We have worked very closely with COD-NL. Any time they have issues, they have direct lines to our people that they can call up and say what is going on. We have been working on a complaint-driven basis with regard to that. Complaint-driven is important as well as anything else. As you well know, Paul, in municipal politics, any by-law that you have in

municipal politics, most of that is complaint-driven when it comes to enforcement.

Now, we are not saying that that is the same with the provincial government, but we are doing our part in terms of being proactive with blitzes and being proactive with audits, with demand inspections. As well, the complaint piece has to be that critical spoke in that wheel.

I hear where you are going with this, but I think we need to get back to Estimates. I hear you. I know (inaudible) –

CHAIR: Time please – shorter answers, more questions.

We will have to go back to George; sorry, Paul.

MR. MURPHY: Sorry, Paul.

I guess I will get four policy questions out of the way, if I can, Minister, just to skip ahead so that I can get to the numbers thing because I can see that it is 8:25 p.m., just about, and I think everybody wants out of here by 9:00 p.m.

Section 4.1.01, Occupational Health and Safety Inspection, I have just a couple of quick questions. Two offshore health and safety positions were created last year. Are those positions filled now?

MR. CRUMMELL: That is correct – this year, yes.

MR. MURPHY: They are filled this year anyway.

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes.

MR. MURPHY: Budget 2014 announced two new Occupational Health and Safety Officer positions to assist with strategic planning regarding inspections. What are they going to be doing? Just basically inspections, that is it?

MR. CRUMMELL: It is my understanding right now that they are going to be based here in St. John's and like any Occupational Health and Safety Officer in the Province, they will be tasked to go to different worksites throughout the Province. Certainly, we do have a frequency of visits to Labrador because, not hiding it, we

have a difficulty filling two positions up there that are vacant at this point in time.

MR. MURPHY: Still fly in, fly out up there?

MR. CRUMMELL: Fly in, fly out is what we are doing. I think last year we had over 100 inspections in Lab West for instance. So you are getting in there on a very regular basis.

Those positions certainly with the expanding economy, with the industries that are growing in our Province, we have recognized that we need more people out there; but saying all that, and I will just say this once, that every single metric around occupational health and safety in terms of incidence rates, in terms of inspections, in terms of directions, in terms of stop-work orders, we are either number one or in the top three in the country.

We have the highest per capita OHS inspector ratio per person in the country, far ahead of anywhere else. We have lots of stats around that. We are doing a very good job with occupational health and safety in this Province and it has been recognized by a reduction in incidence rates. We are moving in the right direction.

MR. MURPHY: Would that include, say, inspections of fishing vessels? I know CBC has been doing some reporting on that recently.

MR. CRUMMELL: There are 35,000 worksites or places that an OHS inspector can go in this Province on land. There are 6,000 at sea. Getting onto a fishing vessel is a very difficult thing, it is a complex issue, and there is a different way you need to attack that sector. We are going about that in the right way by the establishment of the fish harvesting sector association.

The training piece on land is the most important piece there, but let's get back to Estimates, please, if we could, and I will stop my soliloquy.

MR. MURPHY: Actually, that was the last question I had on policy.

MR. CRUMMELL: Okay.

MR. MURPHY: There you go. So I guess we will get back to the numbers.

I wanted to come back to 3.3.01, Vital Statistics Registry.

MR. CRUMMELL: Subhead 3.3.01?

MR. MURPHY: Subhead 3.3.01, I think that is a section of –

MR. CRUMMELL: Got it.

MR. MURPHY: Sorry, the one before that. I will go to 3.3.01 first. The Vital Statistics Registry, salary details upwards of \$14,200 for this year. I am taking it that is the 2 per cent?

MR. CRUMMELL: That is the 2 per cent.

MR. MURPHY: That is the 2 per cent there, okay. The only other question I had in this section was probably an explainer in regard to what the federal revenue is here that we are looking at.

MR. CRUMMELL: The federal revenue here.

MR. MURPHY: Yes.

MR. CRUMMELL: That is a one-time increase. It was paid for development costs for system changes. That \$45,000 was a one-time revenue that the feds paid us.

MR. MURPHY: Okay. I missed one little piece over here, 3.2.01, if I can cover that off, Support Services in line 09, Allowances and Assistance, it is \$83,100. What is this transfer for?

MR. CRUMMELL: Sorry, can you give me that number again? I lost it.

MR. MURPHY: It is 3.2.01 in Support Services, line 09, Allowances and Assistance.

MR. CRUMMELL: Allowances and Assistance.

MR. MURPHY: Yes.

MR. CRUMMELL: What is that for?

MR. MURPHY: Yes.

MR. CRUMMELL: I think what I will do is I will defer that to my deputy minister.

MR. MURPHY: It is \$83,100 right across the board.

MR. NORMAN: That is funding for our Environmental Health Officer bursary program.

MR. MURPHY: Okay. I guess we will come back over to 3.3.02, the Queen's Printer, Revenue - Provincial.

MR. CRUMMELL: That revenue, if I am correct on this one, is basically the elimination of interdepartmental billings. We have gone to a new system where we used to bill interdepartmentally for services. We got clear of that now and we are showing that we are absorbing those costs. Am I correct on that? Yes.

MR. MURPHY: Okay. Purchased Services just above there, \$98,500 budgeted for, but the revised amount is only \$3,500. It is down about \$50,000 compared to what is budgeted for this year, if I can get an explainer on this line.

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes. The decrease of \$95,000 reflects the lower than anticipated requirements as well as a transfer of funds to the Printing and Micrographics division which shares a common area with common assets. We have changed the way we are doing business.

MR. MURPHY: Okay. Moving over to 3.3.03, Printing and Micrographic Services, the salary details I take it is the 2 per cent again.

MR. CRUMMELL: Correct. Yes.

MR. MURPHY: Coming down to Supplies, \$467,400 is budgeted again for this year. It was budgeted for last year, but you did not spend all of that money last year.

MR. CRUMMELL: You are looking at 04, Supplies?

MR. MURPHY: It is 3.3.03, under Supplies, yes.

MR. CRUMMELL: Under Supplies, yes.

MR. MURPHY: This is last year's austerity, I guess.

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes, unfortunately we had a flood last August. We had a pipe burst and we had our equipment that was down, it was ruined. It cost us revenue and the down time.

MR. MURPHY: That was down at the Queen's Printer, was it? Is that same flood we are taking about?

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes, the basement of the East Block.

MR. MURPHY: What did we lose down there?

MR. CRUMMELL: We lost one or two pieces of equipment?

OFFICIAL: We lost a number of pieces.

MR. CRUMMELL: We lost a number of pieces of equipment. I would not be able to give you details off the top of my head here now, but we it cost us a few dollars in the end.

MR. MURPHY: Okay, I take it in Purchased Services that is probably where you reacquired.

MR. CRUMMELL: You got it.

MR. MURPHY: Okay. Accidents happen.

Property, Furnishings and Equipment; that is accoutrements, I guess, for the department.

MR. CRUMMELL: That is it. Between the two of them, it cost approximately \$600,000 to replace that equipment.

MR. MURPHY: All right. Just right here now in this particular section, line 02, Revenue – Provincial from \$1.6 million down to \$90,500. Something is stopping.

MR. CRUMMELL: That is the elimination of interdepartmental billing.

MR. MURPHY: Okay. That is it for this section for me. Let's see. Did we do this one, 4.1.01? I have the questions done. Just on the

line items for 4.1.01, Occupational Health and Safety Inspections, it is down \$801,300 from the budgeted number and the revised, but the number is up again in the 2014-2015 Estimates to \$4.15 million.

MR. CRUMMELL: What is the line item, sorry?

MR. MURPHY: Line 01, Salaries, 4.1.01.

MR. CRUMMELL: For Salaries, I am sorry, there you go. Okay, yes.

Again, that is that 2 per cent increase. You are looking at the reason why it was revised and down.

MR. MURPHY: Yes.

MR. CRUMMELL: That had to do with staff vacancies and just the natural turnover of staff.

MR. MURPHY: Okay, so it went from \$4 million down to \$3.2 million?

MR. CRUMMELL: It did, our actuals ended up to be \$3.2 million.

MR. MURPHY: How many employees is that? That is a lot of money.

MR. CRUMMELL: There are thirty-seven employees in total in the department.

MR. MURPHY: Thirty-seven retired from the department?

MR. CRUMMELL: No, no, no I am sorry, there are thirty-seven in total in the department and there has been some turnover. I will let Kim speak to that.

MS DUNPHY: Those are inspector positions. We have fifty-five permanent positions plus a pilot –

MR. MURPHY: I did not catch that. Sorry Kim, they cut you off.

MS DUNPHY: The number the minister referenced to are just enforcement personnel but we have administrative, management personnel, policy, and programming people.

MR. MURPHY: Right.

MS DUNPHY: We have around fifty-five permanent positions, but there are a number of temporary positions as well. We had six people retire in one go last year. That was a lot of people who left at a higher salary scale. When those positions were left vacant, that left a large void. We are recruiting them now, but they would come in at a lower level.

MR. MURPHY: Okay, so that is why they budgeted for \$4.1 million this year.

MS DUNPHY: Yes, and we will go back to being fully staffed again.

MR. MURPHY: Okay, great. I am just wondering too for the \$4.1 million the next line down, Employee Benefits seems to be awfully small here, \$54,600. As a matter of fact for the \$3.2 million that was the revised number for last year in spite of retirements and everything, the employee benefits seem to be a really small dollar amount here, \$13,000. I know it is not small by some context but in context of the number that you are looking at when you are looking at for Salaries.

Can I get an explainer as regards to that? We have all seen that throughout the Estimates numbers here, sometimes the benefits are a lot smaller than what the salary details are.

MR. CRUMMELL: I know that staff vacancies did play a role in the decline in terms of the employee benefits for revised in 2013-2014. The budgeted for the fifty-odd employees we have there for the benefits is set at \$54,600 for practical reasons.

MS DUNPHY: We actually went to a few conferences and we did a lot, because we are the ones who have the expertise. We actually do a lot of the training for ourselves internally and so there would be less need to go and get external trainers to come in. We have done that, but a lot of it is related to not having to do conferences.

MR. MURPHY: Okay, all right.

CHAIR: That is the time George. I know you are just about finished there, but we will have

time to come back. We will have lots of time to come back.

Paul.

MR. LANE: All the lines items really have been asked in terms of the actual numbers but I have some questions around the line items.

Is there any money in this budget for the fish harvesters association? What is the status of the Fish Harvesting Safety Association, I should say?

There are supposed to be two. There was a fish harvester's safety and there was a fish processing sector safety, both were supposed to be implemented. It was announced.

MR. CRUMMELL: I will be quick on that, Paul, because again, this is probably not the time and place.

It is not captured in this budget. WHSCC funds the \$500,000 that is allocated for the Fish Harvesting Safety Association and put that in place. There is an interim board that has been set up. We are just about to populate the board. There is an executive director and another employee who is running it full time. They have been very, very active this last year.

MR. LANE: Is that harvesters?

MR. CRUMMELL: That is the harvesters.

MR. LANE: Okay.

MR. CRUMMELL: The processors board has not been formed yet. There are a number of issues with the stakeholders that has to be resolved before that board becomes active and they are agreed to. There are some challenges around the formation of that board.

MR. LANE: Okay. That is funded through Workers' Compensation as opposed to –

MR. CRUMMELL: That will be funded through – everything is being funded by WHSCC, not through this department.

MR. LANE: Not through this one, okay. That is fine.

I am just wondering, Minister, is there any money in this budget to roll out bike helmet legislation?

MR. CRUMMELL: This would be in Occupational Health and Safety. Is bike helmet legislation happening? That is still being looked at. We are always looking at new legislation to bring to the floor and to the people of the Province, but right now that is not a discussion we need to have here, I do not think.

MR. LANE: Okay. So there is nothing budgeted to do anything with that.

I am just wondering about, there is money budgeted here for OHS officers. Although that goes through WHSCC but it is captured here, right, the OHS officers?

MR. CRUMMELL: If you look at the total revenue and you see that line item on 02, Revenue.

MR. LANE: Yes.

MR. CRUMMELL: That is the money that will come back from WHSCC to government. Government will pay out that \$5,545,000 where we paid out \$4,483,000 last year. That is recouped from WHSCC.

MR. LANE: Okay.

MR. CRUMMELL: It does not go through Workers' Comp, no.

MR. LANE: Based on the amounts coming in, are the numbers of inspectors up or down compared to last year?

MR. CRUMMELL: Due to vacancies, they are down just slightly. Again, they are all going to be – we are in the process of filling out the full bench. There are two new inspectors who are going to be added this year.

MR. LANE: Okay. You are saying they are down slightly. What were they...?

MR. CRUMMELL: There were seven positions vacant last year.

Am I correct on that, Kim?

MS DUNPHY: Yes, we had six retire and then we have had some transitions. We just actively continue to recruit for those positions.

MR. LANE: Okay. Are those inspectors all general lists or do you have some who are sort of general OHS, then you have some specifics like electrical or dedicated to different sectors and so on?

MS DUNPHY: Yes, we have a pool of general inspectors or Officer IIs, who are capable of doing inspections in all of the different industries in the Province.

MR. LANE: Yes.

MS DUNPHY: We then have sector specific officers, Officer IIIs, which are a higher level position. They are responsible for ensuring and knowing what is going on in their industry from an injury perspective, from a risk perspective, and they develop annual work plans. Then they are part of the rollout of that, as with the Officer IIs in that sector. So, they are not just doing inspections only in that sector, but they are the lead officer in knowing that industry and a resource for the officers within that sector.

MR. LANE: Okay.

MS DUNPHY: We would have industrial hygienists who are specialists as well, who would support the officer role. They are able to issue orders. We have an ergonomist who is also an officer. We have an engineer who is also an officer. Those are all support positions for the Officer II and Officer III positions.

MR. LANE: Yes. Do you have a specific officer or officers dedicated to fishing vessel inspections and safety, or would that be a general officer?

MS DUNPHY: We have an officer dedicated to the fishery but the fishery also includes processing, aquaculture, as well as the vessels. There is activity that occurs in the industry, vessels are one part of it.

MR. LANE: Do you anticipate a need to increase the number of officers and increase the budget to accommodate more inspections of vessels given the fact that the number of

accidents on fishing vessels are up, as we have seen in the media, and not a lot of inspections getting done? I think it was thirty-two years or forty.

MR. CRUMMELL: (Inaudible) responsible for the fish harvesting sector, the fish sector, and the processing in aquaculture, but other inspectors do the work as well. We do have a point person who is in a management position that oversees what everybody else does. We have other sector leaders as well within our occupational health division.

We have our full bench that can be activated in the harvesting fish processing sector, aquaculture as well. We have a number of people who do the work, and are trained to do the work.

MR. LANE: Okay. Minister, we have people who are capable of and who can be deployed to do, for example, inspections of fishing vessels but there is really only one person who is solely dedicated to the fishery, which does not include just fishing vessels but processing and the whole works for the entire Province. Would that be correct?

MR. CRUMMELL: Go ahead, Kim, if you want to. I will let Kim answer this one.

MS DUNPHY: We have an Officer III dedicated to the fishery, and part of their work planning on an annual basis is to help to identify inspection protocols, hazards, things that you would need to focus on in the industry. From that we would roll out inspections of, whether it is vessels when they are at the wharf, the processing plants when they are operating, whether it is the individual. They do diving, they do aquaculture as well, but other officers are also part of that work plan roll out. It is not just one officer doing all of those inspections.

We have had industrial hygienists on fishing vessels as well looking at hearing loss issues, those kinds of things. So it is kind of a team approach when we are looking the industry, generally, and vessels.

MR. LANE: Okay. I am just wondering again, because the numbers that were reported of inspections of fishing vessels, given the high

incidents of injury and so on, it seemed rather low. I think it worked out to one per month over a two-year period, which does not seem a whole lot when you consider the number of people who are actually operating fishing vessels in every nook and cranny of the Province. It seems like we are not really doing a whole lot in that area.

Maybe we are doing the best we can with the numbers we have, but I am wondering is it an issue of more resources needed and it is not in this budget?

MR. CRUMMELL: The bottom line here, I would suggest, is we do have protocols in place and inspections in place. The fish harvesting sector in particular, the processing sector and the other sectors, they are very unique. The approach around occupational health and safety and building that culture is different. It is much different than any other sectors, the mining sector, the construction sector, it is very much different. The approach has to be different in how we go about it.

The incident rate in the fish harvesting sector is 2.2 per cent. The provincial average is 1.6 per cent. It was not that long ago when the provincial average for all workplaces was 2.6 per cent; not that long ago at all, ten years ago.

I am suggesting to you that there are a lot of positive things being done around safety, education, training. The Occupational Health and Safety Division plays a critical role there, as does WHSCC, as does all the industry stakeholders. They all have a role to play here. That is where the Fish Harvesting Safety Association comes into play and other vehicles that we can use to continue to grow our safety culture.

We are aware of the risks. It is a high-risk environment. We totally get it. Are we moving in the right direction? We absolutely are. The metrics are proving it. Do we need to do more? Absolutely, we do.

MR. LANE: Yes, I find it curious you say that it is different cultures, different whatever – I understand it might be different in the sense that perhaps traditionally they were not into occupational health and safety programs and so on, as would be common, say, in the

construction sector. There was a time before the NLCSA came on board there was a lot of construction companies that were not up to scratch. So, hopefully this new fish harvesters' safety council, once it gets up and running, will be of benefit.

With that being said, whether the culture is there or not, having inspectors on the ground actually boarding these vessels when they are tied up and doing these inspections, it is an enforcement role. So in that regard – and perhaps Kim can comment – I see it no different an inspector going on board a vessel, as I do seeing an officer go into a manufacturing plant, or go on a construction site, or go wherever – safety is safety, and inspections are inspections.

I am just trying to understand why it would be any different. If anything, I would think that based on the high risk and the number of accidents and injuries that are happening that we would be putting a stronger effort on these areas as opposed to less of an effort.

MR. CRUMMELL: Again, I am just going to say one last comment on this, because we are really off the topic of our Estimates here. This jurisdiction is no different than any other jurisdiction in Canada and our approach to occupational health and safety in the offshore with regard to fish harvesters and around fishing. It is no different; the challenges are the same everywhere else. It is a unique environment and it is a high-risk environment; we recognize that.

The training and education is a key pillar to making sure that these people are safe when they leave dockside, because you cannot get out there on their boats when they are working at sea. It is almost impossible to do. So, you have to work in that other area, and that is where the focus needs to be in that unique nature of their environment.

CHAIR: Okay. Thank you, Minister.

We have about ten minutes each left. I know we are down to the little nitty-gritties there, George, and you had a couple of more questions or something, so we will go back to you.

MR. MURPHY: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Just a couple of more questions on some of the line items in 4.1.01 before I get on with the ask. Under 4.1.01, Transportation and Communications was down \$67,700 from what was budgeted, but at the same time it is also up to \$441,800 this year. That is up, well, basically about \$80,000 from what you actually spent – a breakdown.

MR. CRUMMELL: That is about \$67,000 in the difference, and again, it is reduced travel expenditures because of our staff shortage. We did not have our full bench.

MR. MURPHY: Reduced travel because of...?

MR. CRUMMELL: We did not have as many people out there working. We were getting the inspections done, you can trust me on that one; but there was fewer people out there doing it, so the costs were down.

MR. MURPHY: What is happening right now with Labrador inspections? You mentioned earlier about fly in, fly out.

MR. CRUMMELL: That has been going on for the last three or four years.

MR. MURPHY: Why would that still be happening with inspections? Can we find anybody that wants to work in Labrador?

MR. CRUMMELL: We have tried. We have had several recruitment activities in the last three years. To get the type of individual we need with the proper training, it is not that easy, and the cost of living in Labrador. We are not the only department in government or only business that are trying to recruit people to work in Labrador. There are challenges right across every industry, government sectors, you name it, and we are facing those challenges as well.

MR. MURPHY: Okay. So it is not because of salary or anything?

MR. CRUMMELL: No. Well, I guess it depends, George, what you are talking about. It is a collective agreement, you have a unionized environment, and we can only offer so much money. Is that part of it? Well, there are other things we are looking at, but right now Child

Youth and Family Services are flying in and out people as well to service the communities.

MR. MURPHY: It is expensive, yes.

MR. CRUMMELL: We are not unique in what we are doing and not unique with regard to other employers.

MR. MURPHY: Okay.

My final question when it comes to revenue: 4.1.01, Revenue – Provincial, line 02 on the bottom, if we could just get a breakdown of what is happening here. The revised number is \$972,500 less than what was budgeted for last year.

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes, basically what we spent, and you look at the line items above there, it is Salaries, it is Transportation and Communications, so that all adds up to less money that we had to spend. It is money in and money out because the WHSCC basically transfers dollars to cover off our expenses.

MR. MURPHY: Okay, perfect.

Onwards to 4.2.01, Assistance to St. Lawrence Miners' Dependents, there is a drop of \$4,000 here in Allowances and Assistance. I am just wondering what has happened here.

MR. CRUMMELL: Where are we to; I am sorry?

MR. MURPHY: Subhead 4.2.01, line 09.

MR. CRUMMELL: It is just a lower number of claims than expected.

MR. MURPHY: Okay.

The same thing would be for line 10, Grants and Subsidies; it is down by \$10,000.

MR. CRUMMELL: Yes, exactly, a lower demand on services.

MR. MURPHY: Okay.

Just one more policy question: When it comes to the Labrador dust study, what is happening with that now?

MR. CRUMMELL: It is a two-year study. I think we are one year into the study. I would like maybe Kim to give a definitive answer on that one; she is our (inaudible) expert.

MS DUNPHY: We are in sort of year one. It expands over three budget cycles so the first year we are into sending our enrollment kits, getting the database of all the workers who work there, former workers who work there, getting contact information, and then mailing out those enrollment kits to get their permission to raise the issue so that they can choose to enroll in this program.

We are in the data collection stage at this point. The next year's stage will be more substantive and then the following year stage will be the report.

MR. MURPHY: Okay, that is great.

That is all of the questions I have, I think. Susan, did you have anything? No? We are good. The only other thing that I would ask is if the minister could give us a breakdown on the travel, the \$50,200 and the breakdown on the Executive travel for sections 1.1.01 and 1.2.01 so we can have a look at them. That is all we need.

MR. CRUMMELL: We will look into that.

CHAIR: Thank you, George.

We will come back to the Opposition.

Randy has a question.

MR. EDMUNDS: I just have one question. I think it is an issue that I brought up a few years ago and it is probably already done, and it has to do with online registration. I know the department makes exceptions for rural areas where you can register for six months. The only problem was that you could not do it online because there were some issues with the software problem.

The previous minister did bring it up and say that it was being worked on. I have not followed that closely. I register my vehicles for the full year, but a lot of people do not, so I am just wondering if there has been any update or has it

been finally followed through with so the people in rural areas can go online and register for six months.

MR. CRUMMELL: I would suggest this time next week we will have that announcement made, sometime between now and then, and it is going to be a good announcement. So yes, we are doing that.

CHAIR: Is that it for you, Randy?

MR. EDMUNDS: Yes, that is it.

CHAIR: Paul, are you finished?

MR. LANE: No. I have a couple of quick questions. Minister, I will direct it obviously to you and maybe Kim might be able to give us some more insight perhaps.

I am just wondering is there any plan to put – currently, if somebody puts themselves out to be a safety trainer, safety consultant and so on, for example, you can teach the Occupational Health and Safety committee and representative training, you have to go to a trainer through WHSCC, I believe, and I think maybe the same with power line hazards and there are a couple of others. With that said, there are other training programs and so on that are being put out there that do not require having to go through that process. There are also people who hang out a shingle and call themselves a safety consultant that could be putting together policies, procedures, and so on.

I will phrase it: Is there any plan in this budget, to be relevant here, to put any kind of mechanism in place to sort of – I do not know if I should use the word licence – ensure that individuals who are putting themselves out there as safety consultants and trainers and so on, are actually qualified and have the qualifications to do that type of work?

MR. CRUMMELL: I think I will turn it over to our resident expert, since she is here. I do have an answer for that but I think she would probably be more succinct and direct.

MS DUNPHY: That is really not something that would fall under the enforcement mandate from an enforcement of legislation and regulation.

The training piece is really the mandate of the Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission. They would do certification of training providers for those certifications that are required under the OHS Act, like power line hazards, confined space injury, fall protection, all of those things. Committee training is another one.

Other types of training that are out there; again, First Aid is regulated in a way because it has standards and instructions, but there are other programs out there, as you say, that are not regulated. That is really something the commission would need to respond to, whether they would be in a position to look at that because that is a pretty broad piece.

MR. LANE: What about someone who is calling themselves – the training is one piece – a consultant, I am going to write policies and procedures for your company?

MS DUNPHY: Yes. Again, there is no oversight of that. Essentially, it would be a liability on the individual if they did not perform as was expected, to identify all the hazards or write the programs and policies in accordance. We would go in and do an inspection if we found the program deficient. Then we would note that, but it is really an issue between the client and the service provider.

MR. LANE: Okay. Would that be a Service NL initiative to enact some sort of legislation or something around that? Would that be a Service NL function to deal with regulating that type of activity?

MR. CRUMMELL: It is a policy question, and it is a good question, Paul. I do appreciate your question. It is a good question. It is a policy question and that is one better suited for the House of Assembly. I am sure we might hear that one.

MR. LANE: Okay. I will ask you that, so I will give you time to get a good answer.

The final one, I suppose it is policy but I am going to throw it out there anyway and then I will be done, I promise. We have working alone legislation, yet we continue to hear about, particularly people working in gas bars and stuff

like that, armed robberies and all those issues. I have heard the Third Party talk about the fact that we need specific legislation. I believe working alone legislation could probably cover it but it is a matter of enforcement.

Is there any kind of push by your department to start going to these twenty-four-hour stores, gas bars and so on, to start enforcing working alone legislation to protect people working by themselves in the nighttime in particular?

MR. CRUMMELL: I will defer to Kim.

MS DUNPHY: Thank you.

We are very aggressive in enforcing that working alone legislation. We identify – again, it is strategic – the high-risk places working alone at night handling cash. We have our Officer III for retail, who has done a lot of work with the franchises and those smaller employers and pharmacies, because they are another area, and with the RNC in doing enforcement and making sure they have violence prevention plans and working alone plans in place. We have been very proactive in moving forward on enforcing that legislation when it came out in 2009.

MR. LANE: Okay. That is good to hear.

Thank you.

That finishes it for me, Mr. Chair.

CHAIR: Thank you, Paul.

I will call for the subheads of Service NL.

CLERK: Subhead 1.1.01 through 4.2.02 inclusive.

CHAIR: Subhead 1.1.01 through 4.2.02 inclusive.

On motion, subhead 1.1.01 through 4.2.02 carried.

CHAIR: Shall the total carry?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

On motion, Department of Service NL, total heads, carried.

CHAIR: Shall I report the Estimates of Service NL carried without amendment?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

On motion, Estimates of the Department of Service NL carried without amendment.

CHAIR: Before we call for an adjournment, there are a couple of things we have to do. In the beginning we adopted the minutes of the Government Services Committee on April 2, 2014, Department of Finance. If you look at the new one that was just passed out – if you look at the old one, number 7 was the motion for adjournment.

Actually, number 7 should be the Committee considered and passed the Estimates of the Department of Finance, the Public Service Commission, and the Human Resources Secretariat of the Executive Council without amendment. That should have gone in there, so I will ask for a motion to –

MR. DINN: So moved.

CHAIR: Moved by Mr. Dinn.

We may as well get a seconder. Can I have a seconder?

MR. K. PARSONS: Seconded.

CHAIR: Seconded by Kevin Parsons.

On motion, minutes as amended were adopted as circulated.

CHAIR: Do you have anything to clue up, Minister, before we go?

MR. CRUMMELL: No, I would just like, again, to thank my staff for the work they have done in preparing the budget for Service NL and our other entities, like I said earlier. I certainly thank the staff here in the House of Assembly, and yourself, Mr. Chair. The questions on the other side have been very respectful, and I look

forward to seeing the questions in the House of Assembly that you have gathered from this experience.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister.

Paul, do you have anything, just quickly?

MR. LANE: No. Again, just to clue up. I want to thank the minister and his staff for the opportunity to ask you all these questions. I appreciate your time this evening, and I do intend to take the minister up on that. I will have a few questions in the House of Assembly for sure.

CHAIR: Okay, thank you.

Randy, are you okay?

MR. EDMUNDS: I just want to thank the minister and his staff for coming out. Certainly there is follow up, and it is our duty to follow up.

CHAIR: That is good. Thank you.

George.

MR. MURPHY: Just a thank you to the staff, again, from ourselves. Thanks for the past year of briefings, by the way. Your staff is always good at giving briefings. They have always been readily available when it comes to breaking down a piece of legislation that is coming before the House.

I appreciate the job that you are doing, keep it up. We know you are all dedicated, and you are teaching him lots. So keep it up, and we will see you at the barbecue.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Okay, before we call for adjournment, I would just like to say that the next Committee meeting of Government Services will be on Monday, May 5, at 6 p.m., and that will be Transportation and Works, and Labrador and Aboriginal Affairs. I am sure we will all remember that by the time May 5 rolls around.

So with that, I will ask for a motion for adjournment.

MR. K. PARSONS: So moved.

CHAIR: Moved by Kevin Parsons.

All those in favour, 'aye'.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: Thank you very much.

On motion, the Committee adjourned.