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**Proceedings of the Standing Committee on
Resources**

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Department of Environment and Climate Change

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Honourable Derek Bennett, MHA

RESOURCE COMMITTEE

Department of Environment and Climate Change

Chair: Brian Warr, MHA

Vice-Chair: Jordan Brown, MHA

Members: Pleaman Forsey, MHA
Sherry Gambin-Walsh, MHA
Craig Pardy, MHA
Paul Pike, MHA
Lucy Stoyles, MHA

Clerk of the Committee: Mark Jerrett

Appearing:

Department of Environment and Climate Change

Hon. Bernard Davis, MHA, Minister

Sean Dutton, Deputy Minister (A)

Dan Michielsen, Assistant Deputy Minister, Environment

Susan Squires, Assistant Deputy Minister, Climate Change

Bonnie Steele, Departmental Controller

Jacquelyn Howard, Director of Communications, Environment and Climate Change

Also Present

Hon. John Hogan, MHA, Minister of Justice and Public Safety

Hon. Krista Lynn Howell, MHA, Minister of Municipal and Provincial Affairs

Hon. Tom Osborne, MHA, Minister of Education

Lela Evans, MHA

Chris Tibbs, MHA

Perry Trimper, MHA

Bradley Russell, Director of Digital Strategy, Official Opposition Office

Scott Fleming, Researcher, Third Party Caucus

Pursuant to Standing Order 68, Chris Tibbs, MHA for Grand Falls-Windsor - Buchans, substitutes for Pleaman Forsey, MHA for Exploits for a portion of the meeting.

Pursuant to Standing Order 68, Krista Lynn Howell, MHA for St. Barbe - L'Anse aux Meadows, substitutes for Lucy Stoyles, MHA for Mount Pearl North.

Pursuant to Standing Order 68, Lela Evans, MHA for Torngat Mountains, substitutes for Craig Pardy, MHA for Bonavista.

Pursuant to Standing Order 68, Tom Osborne, MHA for Waterford Valley, substitutes for Paul Pike, MHA for Burin - Grand Bank.

Pursuant to Standing Order 68, John Hogan, MHA for Windsor Lake, substitutes for Sherry Gambin-Walsh, MHA for Placentia - St. Mary's.

The Committee met at 5:31 p.m. in the Assembly Chamber.

CHAIR (Warr): Order, please!

Good evening and welcome to the Estimates of Environment and Climate Change. My name is Brian Warr and it's my pleasure to be your Chair for this evening.

Before we get into calling the subheads, just a little bit of administrative business. With regard to our substitutions tonight: the MHA for Placentia - St. Mary's is being substituted by the Member for Windsor Lake; the Committee Member for Mount Pearl North is being substituted by the MHA for St. Barbe - L'Anse aux Meadows; the Committee Member for Burin - Grand Bank is being substituted by the Member for Waterford Valley; the Committee Member for Bonavista is being substituted by the Member for Torngat Mountains; and the Committee Member for Exploits is being substituted by the Member for Grand Falls-Windsor - Buchans, but that Member will be back to look at some subheads a little later in the evening.

Again, we're welcoming our independent Member, the Member for Happy Valley-Goose Bay – or, actually, I shouldn't say Happy Valley-Goose Bay.

P. TRIMPER: Lake Melville.

CHAIR: Lake Melville, and as we've done in the past, we'll offer our independent Member some time as well to a total of –

P. TRIMPER: Twenty minutes.

CHAIR: Twenty minutes, yeah, thank you.

I'm looking for a mover to adopt the minutes of Thursday, June 8, for the Department of Immigration, Population Growth and Skills.

So moved by MHA Dinn.

Seconder?

MHA Howell.

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, minutes adopted as circulated.

CHAIR: Tonight, we're considering the Estimates of the Department of Environment and Climate Change.

Before we get into calling the subheads, I'd certainly like to do some introductions. I'll start with the gentleman to my right. Just wait for your tally light to pop up and introduce yourself, please.

B. RUSSELL: Bradley Russell, Director of Digital Strategy with the Office of the Official Opposition.

C. TIBBS: Chris Tibbs, MHA for Grand Falls-Windsor - Buchans.

J. DINN: Jim Dinn, MHA for St. John's Centre.

S. FLEMING: Scott Fleming, Researcher, Third Party caucus.

P. TRIMPER: Perry Trimper, MHA for Lake Melville.

J. HOGAN: John Hogan, MHA for Windsor Lake.

K. HOWELL: Krista Howell, MHA for St. Barbe - L'Anse aux Meadows.

L. EVANS: Lela Evans, Torngat Mountains MHA.

CHAIR: Thank you.

We'll turn to Mr. Dutton and have him do the same.

J. DUTTON: John Dutton, Deputy Minister of Environment and Climate Change.

B. DAVIS: Bernard Davis, Minister of Environment and Climate Change and MHA for the beautiful District of Virginia Waters - Pleasantville.

B. STEELE: Bonnie Steele, Departmental Controller.

J. HOWARD: Jacquelyn Howard, Director of Communications, Environment and Climate Change.

D. MICHELSEN: Dan Michielsen, Assistant Deputy Minister of Environment and Labour.

S. SQUIRES: Hi, I'm Susan Squires, Assistant Deputy Minister of the Climate Change Branch.

CHAIR: Thank you.

Just feel free, if you're called upon, if the minister is calling one of his staff to take a question, feel free to drop your mask, if you feel comfortable in doing that, drop your mask and have your remarks.

Can I have the Clerk call the first set of subheads, please?

B. DAVIS: Opening statements first?

CHAIR: I'm sorry?

B. DAVIS: Opening statements first?

CHAIR: Yes, he's going to call the first set of subheads first and then I'll give you the opportunity.

CLERK (Jerrett): Labour, 4.1.01 to 4.1.03 inclusive.

CHAIR: Shall 4.1.01 to 4.1.03 carry?

Minister, opening remarks, please.

Thank you.

B. DAVIS: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Speaker. It's our pleasure to have you in the Chair tonight. You said that about us, so I'm happy to have you here.

Good evening everyone and thank you for being here to participate in the Estimates for the Department of Environment and Climate Change.

On April 8, the department was restructured with the new Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs created and the Labour Relations and Labour Standards Divisions being added to the Department of Environment and Climate Change.

As the Minister Responsible for Labour, I'm also responsible for the Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Review Division and the Labour Relations Board, both of which are subject to the Estimates for this department and we'll discuss them tonight I'm sure.

Other entities of which I'm responsible are WorkplaceNL, the Multi-Materials Stewardship Board and the Wilderness and Ecological Reserves Advisory Council.

I'll begin by highlighting some of the exciting activities in the Environment and Climate Change divisions.

As a department, we focus on supporting environmental protection and enhancement through implementing water resource and pollution prevention regulations and policies and coordination of environmental impact assessments.

Our Climate Change Branch is focused on developing strategies, policy, research, analysis and initiatives related to climate change adaptation and mitigation as well as energy efficiency. So far, it's been a wonderful learning opportunity with this great staff that we have, not just here behind me but all around us in the department. We've had great engagement with stakeholder organizations that support environmental protection. Their work is resulting in better outcomes for environmental protection in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Since I've been minister, I've already seen first hand how knowledgeable and dedicated our staff are in the department and how good they are at advancing environmental and climate change actions for the province.

Protecting the environment for future generations is a priority for our government. During COVID-19, work has continued towards the goals outlined in our five-year Climate Change Action Plan. The Action Plan will reduce greenhouse gas emissions, stimulate clean innovation and growth and build resiliency to climate change impacts.

We have committed to net-zero emissions by 2050. We share the Government of Canada's goal for environmental protection and reducing carbon emissions including those in the oil and gas sector. We are dedicated to collaborating on all aspects of energy supply in Canada.

We are supporting development of the clean economy and climate resilient infrastructure. We are working on initiatives to support environmentally and economically sustainable future for our province for generations to come. These initiatives include transition to electricity from oil. One of the new programs announced in *Budget 2021* is the Electric Vehicle Adaptation Accelerator Program – that's a mouthful but it's very important – which will encourage the purchase of electric vehicles through a \$2,500 rebate to consumers. This \$500,000 program will be administered on a first-come, first-serve basis.

We also announced \$1 million to help transition homes whose sole source of heat is oil to electricity. This program will be administered on a first-come, first-serve basis like the previous

one and will provide a rebate of up to \$2,500 as well.

Budget 2021 includes some \$21.3 million to advance programs under the federal-provincial cost-shared Low Carbon Economy Leadership Fund, such as the Climate Change Challenge Fund and residential energy efficiency programs as well as industry-focused climate change adaptation initiatives.

Another \$17.8 million is allocated under the cost-shared Leadership Fund to convert public buildings to electricity, including education and health care facilities. Our government has six programs for energy efficiency and fuel switching and, by 2030, these programs are anticipated to deliver 830,000 tons of cumulative greenhouse gas reductions and 650 direct person-years of employment. We support continued improvement and access to drinking water and waste water systems in the province and have regulatory programs dedicated to ensure we continue to have some of the cleanest air in this country.

The Labour Relations Division and the Labour Standards Division provides conciliation services and assist employees and employers to promote a stable and constructive labour relations climate and foster productive workplace relationships. In the coming months, a new committee to review the minimum wage will be appointed. Just this past April, the minimum wage was increased by 35 cents, the next increase is on October 1, which will bring the minimum wage to \$12.75. I look forward to the establishment of the committee and supporting their review.

The Review Division reviews final decisions for WorkplaceNL for errors in the application process and legislation under the authority of the *Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Act*. The Labour Relations Board is an independent quasi-judicial body which contributes to and promotes harmonious labour relations in the province by adjudicating and mediating a variety of employment and labour relations matters under a number of statutes.

These are just a few of the many initiatives that I'm proud to highlight from the Department of Environment and Climate Change. As a

government, we remain committed to working closely with our partners so that we can continue to deliver better outcomes for Newfoundlanders and Labradorians.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to stand on that soapbox for a little bit, but we're pretty proud of what we do with the great staff we have in this department. Thank you very much and I look forward to having questions from my hon. colleagues across the way.

CHAIR: Thank you, Minister.

4.1.01 to 4.1.03 inclusive.

MHA Tibbs.

C. TIBBS: Thank you very much, and I thank the minister and his team for putting all this together and answering our questions tonight.

It's definitely very important, and my other portfolio of course is Population Growth, and in order to keep population growth going we need the young people and in order to have the young people stay here we need climate change and our environment needs to be taken care of, so I applaud you for all that you do.

We'll start off with 4.1.01, Labour Relations, and I have a couple of general questions, if that's okay, Minister.

B. DAVIS: That's perfect.

C. TIBBS: Could you provide us with the amount of conciliation, preventative mediation and arbitration processes that were undertaken and the results of these processes for this past year?

B. DAVIS: I will have to turn to Dan to get the specifics of it, but there have been a number of conciliations. We have conciliation officers that work with a variety of different businesses, employers and employees to ensure that we can get deals. We hope that it never gets to that point, but we know with labour relations, in any case, that that sometimes tends to happen. A negotiated deal is the best deal for sure. If we have some stats on that – if we don't have it here with us, we can get it for you for sure. Dan –

D. MICHELSEN: Yes, we can get it some other time.

Last year, there were approximately 45 conciliations. That doesn't include about 19 fish panel hearings which are quasi conciliations on their own. That's down a little bit due to COVID from what we normally process.

C. TIBBS: Perfect. Thank you very much, Mr. Michielsen.

How many employees are in this division?

B. DAVIS: Good question.

I have this sheet for you. We can give this to you as well.

C. TIBBS: Sure.

B. DAVIS: In Labour Standards, we have nine positions; one of which is vacant as we speak. In Labour Relations Board – I know we'll get to that after, but you're probably going to ask me that question so I'll give you that as well – seven, with six being filled and one vacant as of now.

C. TIBBS: Excellent. Thank you, Minister.

How many times have conciliation services been directed by a minister in the last five years, similar to the recent private ambulance service dispute?

B. DAVIS: How many times have we directed a conciliation board?

C. TIBBS: Yes, the services.

B. DAVIS: I think there have been three. We have every option in our tool belt that we're trying to utilize to make sure there's a negotiated deal there. That's one aspect: conciliation board being called. We're in that process right now. I wish them the greatest success in getting that deal.

C. TIBBS: Excellent. Thank you, Minister.

When are the next appointments for the Fish Price Setting Panel going to be made and what is

being done to ensure we attract necessary skill sets?

B. DAVIS: I don't know when the next ones are. I may have to ask Dan on that one again to see when the next ones have to be done. I know that it goes through the Independent Appointments Commission. We encourage people to apply. We want particular expertise there in that area, experience in there. Dan, did you have –?

D. MICHELSEN: Most of the terms of the board members are getting close or are up. We're actually working with the Independent Appointments Commission now to repost. Like the minister said, we strongly encourage both employee and employer representatives to join and put their name forward.

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Mr. Michielsen.

B. DAVIS: (Inaudible) if they have people that they want to encourage to utilize the Independent Appointments Commission, not just for the fish pricing boards but also all of the boards, agencies and commissions that we have. We want to make sure we get great people and all over the province. I encourage every MHA and every person who is listening to us here tonight – whether it be yourself or somebody else – to encourage them to do that.

C. TIBBS: Excellent. Thank you, Minister.

We'll move to Salaries, same subheading there. There's \$14,200 more budgeted this year compared to last year. Can this be explained, please?

B. DAVIS: Yeah. That is the budget reflects salary increases, partially offset by the removal of the 27th pay period. I'm sure you've heard that a dozen times here already.

C. TIBBS: Yes.

B. DAVIS: But that's the difference there in Salaries in 2021-2022.

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Minister.

Transportation and Communications: There was \$29,500 less spent compared to what was budgeted. Can this be explained, please?

B. DAVIS: That would be a direct reflection of COVID and just because we couldn't utilize the services that way. So, obviously, that would be COVID related.

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Minister.

We'll move on to 4.1.02, Standing Fish Price Setting Panel, Professional Services.

B. DAVIS: Just one second, let me get there. Professional Services?

C. TIBBS: Yes, Sir.

B. DAVIS: Okay. Why it was more?

C. TIBBS: Yeah, there was \$13,500 more spent last year compared to what was budgeted.

B. DAVIS: That had to do directly with two new species that were added to the list of species. That being sea cucumber and turbot. So that equated to the fact that we needed more costs associated with that.

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Minister.

We'll move on to Labour Standards, 4.1.03.

B. DAVIS: Yeah.

C. TIBBS: I just have one general question before I move into the headings there. Are there any reviews planned for the *Labour Standards Act*? If so, when will this be completed and will there be any new legislation?

B. DAVIS: There's no plan on the labour standards. We're always looking at the labour standards, of course.

C. TIBBS: Of course.

B. DAVIS: But there's nothing in, as they say, the hopper to move on that right now. Obviously, if anyone brings concerns forward, we always look at those and see if either they are possible and what could make it better.

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Minister.

We'll move on to Salaries. There is \$68,100 more budgeted this year compared to what was spent last year. Can this be explained, please?

B. DAVIS: That was the same thing as before; partially due to step increases as well as that is somewhat offset by the fact of only 26 pay periods versus 27 last year.

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Minister.

Transportation and Communications: There was \$17,500 less spent compared to what was budgeted. Can this be explained, please?

B. DAVIS: The decrease of \$17,500 reflects the lower travel cost due to COVID-19.

C. TIBBS: Travel, got you.

B. DAVIS: You'll see that throughout the entire Estimates in every department. I have no problem answering it, but that's what it is. Generally, if there's an off there in Transportation and Communications, that would be it.

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Minister.

On the revenue side, there was \$22,800 less revenue than was projected last year. Can you explain this, please?

B. DAVIS: Yes, so that was fewer requests for clearance certificates based on the downturn in the real estate market at the time. I can say COVID as well, but it was real estate market as well.

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Minister.

What was the last heading?

CHAIR: 4.1.01 to 4.1.03.

C. TIBBS: Okay, so 5.1 is not going to go yet.

That's it for me for that subheading.

Thank you very much.

CHAIR: Thank you.

Mr. Dinn, 4.1.01 to 4.1.03 inclusive.

J. DINN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Do I have 15 minutes?

CHAIR: Ten.

B. DAVIS: Lots of time. Lots of time.

J. DINN: I want to start off by saying – because before I got a chance to say this last night, the question was called and we were out the door. I'm going to take the opportunity to say thank you very much. It's a long day. Thank you for coming here and answering questions and being patient.

I also think that as far as this department goes, it's probably going to be one of the most significant departments, if not already, as we deal with climate change. It seems to get bounced around and shuttled into the backwaters at times but I do believe it's probably more important than Industry and the other portfolios. I thank you for your work in this.

My colleague asked a question, and I think it was about the number of directed conciliations. That was a similar question we had asked. We also wanted to know how many cases you handled, not only for conciliation, but for arbitration and maybe preventative mediation. Were they included?

B. DAVIS: Thank you for the question.

I'll turn it to Dan because he has the information at hand there, I think.

D. MICHELSEN: I think other than the conciliation, there was one mediation last year, I believe, and that was the Dominion strike.

J. DINN: That was preventive mediation? Why mediation, not conciliation, in that? Or are they about the same?

D. MICHELSEN: The conciliation happens first. It's mandatory for employers and employees in a union-employer relationship to go to conciliation prior to being able to be in a position to strike or lockout. If they can't come up with a collective agreement conciliation, they

request the minister to appoint a conciliator, which are actual employees of the division, and they do the conciliation piece.

If at the end of the conciliation the conciliator writes a report and if they can't come to an agreement at that point in time, then they're in a legal strike position. Then, depending on, I guess, the nature of the dispute and whether or not it's a direct effect to public health or something like that, the minister has other tools in his tool box including the conciliation board, mediation.

J. DINN: I'm asking that certainly in terms now with the ambulance drivers as to where we're going next with it.

Thank you.

B. DAVIS: To fill in what Dan was saying as well, especially when it comes to organizations such as private ambulances where the health and life safety of people, when they dial 911 or dial for an ambulance, we want to make sure they have one. I think it's really important that we use every opportunity to get that negotiated settlement or bargain in great faith with two parties and getting them back to the table.

One option that we had was the – obviously, we went through conciliation. That was well over a year. That broke off. As soon as it broke off, one of the things that we have as an option in the tool box is to form a conciliation board. We're in that process now. We get a representative from both the employer and the employee group or the union and then they get a chair. That gets ratified and then they have a two-week window where they can work through those deals. Then they write a report to me. Then I think it's seven days later or five days later, I have to move it to the next if there's any other opportunity for us there at that point.

In this case, it was very important we moved in that direction.

J. DINN: Okay.

Under 4.1.02, Standing Fish Price Setting Panel: I don't know if it exactly fits here, but I am going to ask it in terms of controlling agreements.

Certainly, to me, it would fit maybe under Labour Relations or maybe this one but here's the thing with controlling agreements: We have federal regulations that prevent controlling agreements, but they target the fishers themselves, the harvesters. Provincial regulations basically have no such mirroring legislation that would target the processors. In these controlling agreements – and I'm sure you already probably know this – it's the fish processors who buy the licences of the fish harvesters. They control the agreement because the prices have gotten so high, but they're the ones that control it.

Federal regulations look at fleet separation – owner, operator – and they also prevent these owner-operator or controlling agreements. If there's any prosecution, it's going to be the fish harvester who gets targeted. The company walks away from it unscathed and finds the next person or the next fish harvester that they can use to be the front person, more or less.

I'm just wondering: With your department, are there any plans to bring in mirroring legislation that would mirror DFO regulations on this so that we have true owner-operator separation and to make sure that we put an end to these controlling agreements? Because in the end it's about making sure that people, harvesters, as many people can get into these agreements or into the fishery and make a living for themselves.

B. DAVIS: Thank you for the question.

I think the Standing Fish Price Setting Panel has done some really good work and I think people would all agree that we've had some pretty good pricing. It's not always perfect, for sure, but it moves in the right direction.

I mean, as I said before in my previous answer, we're always looking at ways we can improve on legislation or if there are other opportunities and we can look at that.

I don't know if Sean wants to add in, or Dan.

S. DUTTON: I just wanted to note that fish processors are, for the most part, regulated by the Department of Fisheries, Forestry and Agriculture under the *Fish Inspection Act*, so our

role is strictly limited to the *Fishing Industry Collective Bargaining Act* and the administration of this panel. I guess it was assigned to this department, rather than to Fisheries, because of the arbitration process that was more familiar to people in the labour relations space.

B. DAVIS: It was crossed over the last time I was minister of Labour as well. It was always that issue between the two departments that way.

J. DINN: Yeah, and you understand where I'm coming from. If fish processors own the licence, they have the bigger source of income. It's basically going to make it prohibitive for people to get into the fishery at a time when we're trying to revitalize our communities. Actually, it's probably one of the reasons why Quin-Sea was bought up by Royal Greenland, because they, as I understand it, had a significant number of controlling agreements.

I'll raise it again with another minister.

B. DAVIS: Perfect, thank you. I'll make sure I tell him.

J. DINN: Please do. It's coming his way.

I have more questions for you, Minister.

B. DAVIS: That's okay.

J. DINN: I won't leave you out.

Has there been any discussion about potential amendments to the *Fishing Industry Collective Bargaining Act*, particularly for a second reconsideration of a pricing decision by the panel?

B. DAVIS: Not at this time, no.

J. DINN: Will you be looking at it, do you think?

B. DAVIS: As I said before, we always look for opportunities to improve the legislation that way. We'll look at anything to see if it makes sense. Feel free to bring that forward to us. I mean, at the end of the day, we want to work with the stakeholders to make sure it's the best system we can have in place.

In the past, it was done and there were multiple reconsiderations and that wasn't working either. We have it done this way now and it seems to be working fairly well. I know that from time to time both sides have looked for different opportunities. We will take that back under advisement for sure.

J. DINN: Perfect.

Spending on Professional Services was over budget last year, why was that?

B. DAVIS: Let me just take a look. That was the same reason I mentioned to MHA Tibbs, it was the two new species that were added to the list for collective bargaining: sea cucumber and turbot.

J. DINN: That's the other one. I had that answer down for somewhere else – sea cucumber and turbot.

B. DAVIS: And turbot, yes.

J. DINN: Thank you.

That's it for that section for me.

CHAIR: Thank you.

Is the Committee ready for the question?

Shall 4.1.01 to 4.1.03 carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, subheads 4.1.01 to 4.1.03 carried.

CHAIR: Can I ask the Clerk to call the next set of subheads, please?

CLERK: Labour Relations Board, 5.1.01.

CHAIR: Shall 5.1.01 carry?

MHA Tibbs.

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

In this subheading, if we can go to Salaries first. I have very little here just to let you know ahead of time.

B. DAVIS: Okay.

C. TIBBS: There was \$147,300 less spent last year compared to what was budgeted. Can this be explained please, Minister?

B. DAVIS: Yes, absolutely.

The decrease of \$147,300 was based on reflected vacant positions and the delays in the recruitment process. That's also partially offset by the 2 per cent salary increase. That will cover off that one there.

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Minister.

There is \$61,400 more budgeted this year compared to what was spent last year. Can this be explained, Minister?

B. DAVIS: You're speaking about the decrease of \$85,900 that reflects the current salary plan for fiscal 2021, positions that were filled and vacant effective – they were filled at an effective lower step. That's the savings that are there. It's partially offset by that as well as we said the repeat of the 27th pay period missing out of this year's budget.

C. TIBBS: Excellent.

B. DAVIS: I'm not excellent. If you wanted that 27th pay period.

C. TIBBS: Well some people can, yeah.

B. DAVIS: If you didn't want the 27th pay period, it's pretty good.

C. TIBBS: Professional Services, there was \$6,400 more spent last year compared to what was budgeted. What's the explanation for this, Minister?

B. DAVIS: The increase of \$6,400 was based on higher costs for counsel, legal counsel, Benson Buffett, to attend court hearings on behalf of the board. There were a total of eight hearings in

2020-2021 compared to three the previous year. It's just an additional cost that way.

C. TIBBS: Excellent. Thank you, Minister.

One last question: Has your snowmobile driving gotten any better since last year, Minister?

B. DAVIS: No, it has not, unfortunately.

C. TIBBS: Thank you.

B. DAVIS: Fortunately, for me I haven't been on one since.

C. TIBBS: Fortunate for all of us.

B. DAVIS: This is true. There's a story there that we're not going to talk about.

C. TIBBS: Thank you very much. That's it for me.

CHAIR: 5.1.01.

Mr. Dinn.

J. DINN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I just want to pick up a question that my colleague asked in relation to Professional Services, legal services. Out of curiosity, do all the departments use the one legal firm? I think you mentioned Benson Buffett, or is it spread – are there several firms depending on the department?

B. DAVIS: I can't speak to what other departments have. I'm assuming that they would be different in many different departments. I know Sean is in response to two different departments. You'll get to see Sean 2.0 tomorrow. I can ask Sean if he wants to –

S. DUTTON: The board does not report to me, but as a board, it secures its own legal support. For the, sort of, core part of the department we'd rely on the Department of Justice and Public Safety and they'd make a determination if outside counsel was required on any particular matter. As a separate board then that's what they do.

It's unique insofar as it's one of the few that's also voted within the Estimates of the department, which allows the employees to participate in the pension plan. It's part of core government and other efficiency benefits.

B. DAVIS: I guess the short answer is we try to use in-house counsel in government departments, but exterior agencies have their own approach on how they do it. This would be one that would have chose Benson Buffett. There may be other agencies, boards and commissions who use other legal counsel.

J. DINN: Okay.

In the end, that would be something to follow up. I know at the NLTA we had legal services on retainer, just an agreed upon amount. So regardless of what legal services were performed, it was a set amount. Sort of like contracting your driveway to be snow cleared, that sort of thing. So if it's a lot of snow, you got a deal; if it's not, you paid out way more than you need.

I won't ask it here, but I'd be certainly interested somewhere looking at the ratio of how much do we use our in-house legal counsel and how much – here is a question: Has the use of outside legal counsel increased – the frequency with which we use it increased – over the years or has it been about the same?

B. DAVIS: It's a very good question and I'd like to be able to give you the answer. I'm not the Minister of Justice and Public Safety, which would probably be a little bit more focused on that than I would be, but you know –

J. DINN: No, I'm talking even in your department as such.

B. DAVIS: Well, our preference, as the minister, would be to seek legal counsel within the Department of Justice and Public Safety. That's our preference, and I know every department would be that preference. So that's where you get your economies of scale. That's your snow clearing you're paying for whether you have snow or not.

So from my standpoint that's where we always want to go, but in some cases you would have to

use outside legal counsel, I would expect. Those should be limited to as little as you possibly can. I think I'm getting a nod over there, which is excellent.

J. DINN: Okay. And I get you're new to this department, but you would have experience in other departments. I'm just wondering from that if you've noticed if there's been an increased reliance on outside legal counsel or are we still heavily relying on the in-house counsel?

B. DAVIS: Still heavily relying on the in-house counsel.

J. DINN: Okay.

B. DAVIS: From the experience I have in the three departments I've worked for.

J. DINN: No, and that's all I'm asking, that's good.

B. DAVIS: Yeah.

J. DINN: Why was spending on Supplies lower than anticipated last year?

B. DAVIS: I'm going to take a stab at it and say that it was based on COVID required less office supplies because we weren't dealing with that with COVID.

J. DINN: Okay. And seeing no one ready to jump in there, you must've been right.

B. DAVIS: Rest assured, if we didn't spend the money it's probably COVID.

J. DINN: That's what I'm figuring, which is the next question on Purchased Services, the same thing?

B. DAVIS: Purchased Services, yes. That would be due to fewer hearings. So there were fewer hearings because of COVID and obviously, that would've reduced the cost to do those hearings.

J. DINN: Thank you very much. That's it for me for that section.

CHAIR: Thank you.

I'm turning to the hon. Member for Lake Melville.

P. TRIMPER: I have no questions at this time, Mr. Chair.

CHAIR: Thank you.

B. DAVIS: He does reserve the right to ask them in the future, though.

CHAIR: So is the Committee ready for the question?

Shall 5.1.01 carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, subhead 5.1.01 carried.

CHAIR: I ask the Clerk to call the next set of subheads, please.

CLERK: Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Review, 6.1.01.

CHAIR: Shall 6.1.01 carry?

MHA Tibbs. Oh, sorry –

L. EVANS: (Inaudible.)

CHAIR: So are you switching out now?

L. EVANS: We're subbing in.

CHAIR: Okay.

C. TIBBS: Give me a couple of minutes, if possible.

L. EVANS: Sure.

C. TIBBS: Okay, thank you.

B. DAVIS: Perfectly fine.

Thank you, the pleasure is all mine.

C. TIBBS: Thank you, Minister, I'll see you again soon.

B. DAVIS: Yes.

L. EVANS: Sorry about that, he's just going to be another moment.

CHAIR: Okay.

So this is MHA Forsey coming in now. Okay, thank you.

B. DAVIS: Welcome.

P. FORSEY: (Inaudible.)

B. DAVIS: We're so happy to have you.

P. FORSEY: (Inaudible) compared to what was budgeted last year.

B. DAVIS: That decrease of \$6,400 reflects lower than expected travel costs due to COVID. (Inaudible) completed by teleconference versus being in person.

P. FORSEY: Professional Services: There was basically \$71,000 less spent compared to what was budgeted last year.

B. DAVIS: That's due to review commissioner vacancies. Lower costs due to review commissioner vacancies.

P. FORSEY: Okay.

Purchased Services: \$34,000 less spent compared to what was budgeted.

B. DAVIS: That would be lower costs due to meeting room rentals and out-of-town, postponed/cancelled hearings due to COVID-19.

P. FORSEY: Okay.

Revenue - Provincial: \$255,600 less revenue last year compared –

B. DAVIS: That reflects the lower cost recovery from the revenues from WorkplaceNL. It works on a 100 per cent cost recovery based on WorkplaceNL. It was just less money requested from the Review Division to WorkplaceNL.

They didn't require the money because they didn't need it.

P. FORSEY: Okay.

Now we have a few questions. How many review commissioners are there at this point?

B. DAVIS: Right now, the review commissioners, I think we have four – Dr. Squires, by the way, sorry.

S. SQUIRES: There is one interim chief review commissioner and there are three full-time review commissioners right now.

P. FORSEY: Thank you.

How many did you say were full-time and how many were part-time?

S. SQUIRES: There are no part-time review commissioners right now. The Review Division has moved away from that model. They just have full-time review commissioners.

B. DAVIS: One of the things that we try to do as a government at the time, over the last number of years, the model of part-time review commissioners that was instituted previously wasn't working. There was much more backlog happening. We decided, based on working with the people at the Compensation Review Division, we moved to a full-time review commissioner and that backlog has been reduced well over half. It was 190 at one point and now it's down to less than 75 right now.

P. FORSEY: Thank you.

Is the current complement of review commissioners adequate to handle the workload in a timely manner?

B. DAVIS: I think we have one on the board to be filled. I'm just looking to Susan just on that. I think we have one that we're waiting to fill. There's an acting chief commissioner and, obviously, there's going to be a competition for that, so when that one is filled that may result in another vacancy potentially. It may not, but it could.

I think that's right, Susan?

S. SQUIRES: Yes, the chief review commissioner appointment from the Independent Appointments Commission has been posted and so that one is currently out to be filled.

P. FORSEY: Okay, so the –

B. DAVIS: If that's filled from within or exterior then that will cause, obviously, a vacancy again, if it's filled within.

P. FORSEY: All right, thank you.

How many applications are currently on file requesting review hearings?

B. DAVIS: Right now I think there's a backlog of 75 that have not been contacted yet to be scheduled, then there's a number of them that are scheduled and I think it's somewhere around 25 or 30 in just this region alone.

I think Susan has the actual numbers. We can get those actual numbers for you if you'd like.

P. FORSEY: Okay, thank you.

S. SQUIRES: Yeah, if this helps you, there were 217 cases closed and reviewed last year. There is a 75 number backlog and there are about 25 outside of the Avalon area in that backlog, most are within town.

P. FORSEY: Okay, thank you.

B. DAVIS: So I think what's happened is we've gotten caught up a lot on the backlog that was there by having the full-time review commissioners. Now, obviously, COVID would have played a little role in getting further ahead and having the chief review commissioner position now being up to be filled that requires – I think the full complement would suffice for what your question was previously.

P. FORSEY: Okay, all right.

How many applications have been withdrawn?

S. SQUIRES: The 217 I referenced for 2020-2021 were all the cases closed, so that included decisions, dismissals and withdraws. I would

have to seek out what portion of those were actually withdraws.

B. DAVIS: We can get that information for you.

P. FORSEY: Okay.

Are you aware of the reasons why, like, representation, delays, et cetera?

B. DAVIS: When we met with the staff over there – it could be a variety of reasons. It could be pulled by the person themselves, new information, for a lot of different reasons. But we can get you the details of how many there are. We can give you the breakdown that Susan just said to you today.

P. FORSEY: Okay.

B. DAVIS: We can give you that breakdown and that will provide much of the information. If there's any other information, just reach out and we'll get it for you.

P. FORSEY: Okay, thanks.

How many hearings are currently scheduled?

B. DAVIS: I think that was in the presentation we had. There were 25 that were backlogged off the Avalon and the remainder of those would have been on the Avalon itself or the Avalon region. I think there are 75 that are backlogged, that are not scheduled yet. Most of them are on the Avalon region. There are only about 25 outside the Avalon.

P. FORSEY: Okay.

How many hearings are being held each month?

B. DAVIS: It ranges each month. We can get that data for you on a month-by-month basis. I don't know off the top of my head on that. We can get that. I wouldn't be able to tell you off the top of my head here on this.

P. FORSEY: Okay.

B. DAVIS: There were 210 or so closed last year. I would assume that would equate that they would be somewhat equally throughout each month.

P. FORSEY: Okay.

B. DAVIS: Some are more complicated than others. When you get to this area here, some of the files could be boxes and boxes of files to go through. It really depends on the complexity of each file.

P. FORSEY: Okay.

Have restrictions from COVID-impacted scheduling resulted in any further backlog?

B. DAVIS: No, we don't think it has resulted in any further backlog. It's been a little bit challenging to get the digital going, and telecommunications side, but they have that going and it's working very well for them. Obviously, COVID has caused some delays that were unforeseen based on COVID, but they've pivoted very well within the Review Division. I think there are some of these opportunities that will continue well past COVID because I think there are some opportunities to find efficiencies there and get good representation so people don't have to travel as far to see the commissioner.

I think there are some good and bad that came with that as well, but there hasn't been any noticeable increase in backlog. I think we probably would have been a little bit further in clearing the backlog had we been able to get all the positions filled. We're in that position now. We're very hopeful where we're going.

P. FORSEY: All right.

With the retirement of the chief review commissioner late last year, has an appointment of a replacement of a review commissioner been completed?

B. DAVIS: As Dr. Squires said, we're in that process, through the Independent Appointments Commission, to find the chief review commissioner. We have an interim one right now. One of the commissioners has stepped in and doing a very good job with respect to that. We anticipate that being filled in short order, but that's sort of a HR matter that's going to come to us. As soon as we get there, we're going to move as fast as we can. We want to get the right person and we don't want to create any more

backlog because of not filling the position as fast as we can.

P. FORSEY: How long for them to be able to conduct hearings?

B. DAVIS: We haven't seen an issue with conducting hearings because of that obviously. When we put the chief review commissioner in place, as soon as that process is completed through the IAC, we're going to be moving at it as quick as we can. There's obviously a little bit of a learning curve if the person comes from outside, but regardless of whether it's an inside or outside competition, you're still going to have potentially a training opportunity there for an additional commissioner. We don't anticipate it taking too much longer, but we're in that process right now. I'll keep in touch with that for you for sure.

P. FORSEY: Okay.

CHAIR: Thank you.

I remind the hon. Member his speaking time has expired.

6.1.01, MHA Dinn.

J. DINN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Are there delays in filling positions? It's not just this department I'm hearing it; some of the vacancies seem to be outstanding for quite a while. Is there a delay? I'm trying to get a sense of even the time it takes to fill these positions.

B. DAVIS: Thank you for the question.

It really depends on the complexity of the positions that we're trying to fill. I know in this case the Independent Appointments Commission is working based on a retirement. We've moved as quickly as we can to go through that process. From the department standpoint, when there are candidates brought forward, we'll be moving on it as quick as we can. It hasn't created a backlog from our standpoint of services to the front-line people that are requiring it. Obviously, we'd be further along in the backlog.

To just go back to your question about what we've been seeing with positions and hiring

positions in the past, in my previous iteration as Labour minister, when we had this area before, we were using part-time review commissioners and that wasn't working for us on a longer time basis. There was a lot of turnover. People were looking at it from a part-time basis. They weren't prepared to put the work in that was required. Some people thought it was a board-type position where it wouldn't require too much time, but it was an opportunity to give back.

Now we've moved and transitioned to a full-time review commissioner process. That seemed to work very, very well for us for continuity's sake: We don't have to be always out recruiting. We've had great success in the last little bit of this – outside of the retirement, and we thank the previous chief review commissioner for her service. As we've heard in this House before, you can't control when people want to retire. They've earned that right, for sure, and we're going to try to move as fast as we can on the replacement for sure.

That's a very long answer to say, yes, we're moving as fast as we can.

J. DINN: In your department, then, and excluding the review commissioners, are there vacancies within your department, and how many?

B. DAVIS: Yes, there are 13 vacancies within our department.

J. DINN: Do all of them require the use of the Independent Appointments Commission to handle?

B. DAVIS: No.

J. DINN: Okay.

In those cases, how would these positions be filled?

B. DAVIS: I can give that to Sean to answer.

S. DUTTON: We had 13 vacancies at April 1 out of 158 positions. They're following a human resources policy. We have to fulfill a request for staffing action. It is completed and advertisements are posted on the government Job Portal. They may be advertised as public or

internal competitions. There's a competitive process. There's a screening carried out by a departmental rep along with a member of Strategic Staffing of the Public Service Commission. They conduct interviews and generate a board report and that's transmitted to the deputy minister, who must choose the most suitable candidate from the list presented.

J. DINN: Here's where I'm going with this – I'll probably come up with another question for QP on this one, for sure. Your department is 13, but in the Estimates Committee meetings that I've attended, in just about every department, there are – I would call 13 a significant number.

B. DAVIS: You'd call it a significant number. Is that what you said?

J. DINN: I would call it a significant number of vacancies when you're looking at what that means, and the work that they are doing is being picked up by someone else, unless, of course, it's not required, and then you don't need the people, I'm assuming. That means the work is being picked up by someone else. Indirectly, I guess, somewhere along the line, that does trickle down to the front line and to the people who depend on the service.

I'm also wondering – here's the other where I'm going with it – if it's actually impeding your ability to hire. And why I ask about the process. It's not a case of here, you, you, you, we need you, come to work tomorrow. There's a process. Again, I'm assuming that with fewer people – and they're taking on additional responsibilities – it also impacts their ability to get the work done as quickly as possible. What is it? More speed and less haste.

I'm just wondering: How long have these vacancies been there? If it's COVID, that's one thing. That I can understand. But it seems to be a chronic problem; a year-in, year-out problem. I'm just wondering how long.

B. DAVIS: Maybe I'll throw it to Sean, as well, in a second. I think the answer, a little bit, some of the vacancies – well, one or two, in particular – are based on the change in departments again. We've had to go out and get additional secretary resources for the minister or deputy minister's offices, so that's a part of it. But some of these

are people either retire or move on to another position in a different department or exterior to government and so you don't know when those are going to come up.

Our goal, and I know Sean's and any deputy minister's role, is to try to fill those – provided they're required; based on what you said before – as quick as we possibly can. There is a process. We want to make sure everyone has an equal opportunity to apply for jobs and better their career as they move forward. So if it's internal or external we want to make sure everyone is given an opportunity to do that. That takes time and, unfortunately, sometimes longer than we all would like.

I don't know if Sean wants to add anything to that.

S. DUTTON: Well, I can just add that for this department, I guess particularly in the Environment and Labour branch, there are a lot of technical positions that require scientific expertise. They're not jobs that anybody can do. It is across government an alternative, depending on the more entry-level-type positions, to hire temporary assistants while you're also pursuing a competitive process. That's a very common thing. It's permitted under the human resource policy of government and the collective agreements that a person may be hired on a short-term basis without a competition, but typically initiates the competition at the same time so that you follow the merit-based process to fill the job on a permanent basis.

J. DINN: Okay.

I guess this goes back to my first introduction to the budget when I was first elected, the whole notion of zero-based budgeting, attrition, rightsizing and now the whole notion of a balanced budget. I'm just wondering if, indeed, what this is doing now is actually slowing down these policies or these concerns are slowing down the hiring process and, thereby, impacting not only the functioning of the department at this level, but the functioning of the services the department supplies.

I know I've received a number of calls from people, for example – not in your department – trying to get through to Motor Registration. If

it's going to be online, it's going to have to be – if online services are meant to be more convenient, it's not turning into that. It's turning into, I would call it, computer rage or digital rage. But that's another thing. So that's my concern and where I was going with that.

S. DUTTON: I'll be happy to answer those questions tomorrow morning at 9 o'clock.

J. DINN: Done. You have a heads-up, so that's good.

Two questions – I should be able to get through these – on 6.1.01: Is it possible to have an update on the ongoing statutory review of Workplace Health and Safety? If we understand it correctly, the consultation phase came to a close last fall.

Secondly, I'll give you the second question: Is it possible to have a breakdown of the number of people receiving workmen's compensation benefits by industry?

B. DAVIS: Okay, so the first question first. The statutory review should be cluing up soon. They had an extension based on COVID because they had the last public consultations and they wanted to make sure they complete it. That's done. I expect the report to be to our office very, very soon. I can't give you the hour or the day, but I'm expecting it soon.

To answer your second question: Yes, we can give you a breakdown of what's there. I don't have it here available now, but we can get that information for you. I'm sure that's not going to be an issue.

J. DINN: Perfect.

The only other thing I'll say on this, if it's possible –

B. DAVIS: You said only two questions, though.

J. DINN: Yeah, I know. This is not a question – well, it is. Whatever information we're requesting I'm assuming that our colleague will get it and –

B. DAVIS: We'll give it to both of you.

J. DINN: Okay, thank you.

B. DAVIS: Sorry, to the three of you.

J. DINN: And the binders as well.

B. DAVIS: Yes.

J. DINN: Thank you.

That's it. I'm done, Mr. Chair.

CHAIR: Mr. Forsey, do you have anything left on 6.1.01?

P. FORSEY: Yes.

CHAIR: Okay.

P. FORSEY: How many doctors are on staff at workers' comp right now?

B. DAVIS: I don't have that in front of me right now. I can get that information for you, though.

P. FORSEY: Okay.

B. DAVIS: It's not in the Estimates book here for workers' compensation, I don't think. It's just the Review Division here. I can get that information for you I think.

S. DUTTON: Sorry, do you mean WorkplaceNL? They're not subject to the Estimates. We can get you the information, but they're at arm's length. They are self-funded through the injury fund. It's not a part of the Estimates.

P. FORSEY: Okay.

B. DAVIS: We can get that information for you, though.

P. FORSEY: Okay, thank you.

Okay, we're done.

CHAIR: Okay, thank you.

Is the Committee ready for the question?

Shall 6.1.01 carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, subhead 6.1.01 carried.

B. DAVIS: Maybe, Mr. Chair, we can take a couple of minutes while they change over again, if that's okay.

CHAIR: Sure.

B. DAVIS: Thank you, MHA Forsey. The pleasure was all mine as well.

CHAIR: We'll take a five-minute break while we change over here. If anybody needs to use the washroom or anything.

Recess

CHAIR: Okay, out of respect for the folks down in the Broadcast Centre, I have to explain that we can't be having two people going back – because one tally light is on. If the minister is going back and forth with Lela, that's fine, the two tally lights. But if someone else comes, the hand has to go up, wait for the tally light, say your name and then you're free to go. Because right now we're losing a lot of the audio because people are talking and Broadcast are not picking it up. Okay?

Thank you.

Can I have the Clerk call the next set of subheads, please?

CLERK: Executive and Support Services, 1.1.01 to 1.2.01 inclusive.

CHAIR: Shall 1.1.01 to 1.2.01 inclusive carry?

I'll turn the floor over to MHA Evans.

L. EVANS: Thank you.

Just some general questions at the beginning. I think Member Dinn asked: Can we have copies of the ministerial bindings?

B. DAVIS: Yes.

L. EVANS: Can we have two for our side?

B. DAVIS: (Inaudible.)

L. EVANS: Thank you.

B. DAVIS: If we don't have two here tonight we'll (inaudible).

L. EVANS: Yeah, perfect.

Just moving on: Are you applying zero-based budgeting?

B. DAVIS: Always.

L. EVANS: Always.

I'm looking at the Estimates now: Are there any errors in the published Estimates book?

B. DAVIS: No, not to my knowledge.

L. EVANS: No, okay.

Is the attrition plan still being followed? If so, are there changes for last year and this year and, if so, how's it being measured?

B. DAVIS: The attrition plan is being followed. We hit our targets when we were ECCM. Now, since it's been separated, obviously, those targets haven't been established yet with respect to the new department. So it was hit with the previous iteration of this department.

L. EVANS: Okay, thanks.

How many people are employed with the department?

B. DAVIS: One hundred and fifty-eight positions and, as I mentioned earlier, there are 13 that are vacant as of right now within the department and some boards that are sitting underneath us.

L. EVANS: How many retirements occurred in the last year?

B. DAVIS: Just give me one second.

There were three retirements this past year.

L. EVANS: Okay.

Out of all those numbers, how many positions have been eliminated and which ones were eliminated?

B. DAVIS: That's a good question. I can ask Sean to step in. I don't think there have been any positions eliminated in this department. I think the previous iteration of the two department, as in ECCM, when it included municipalities, they were hit that way and I think it was one or two that were eliminated there.

I think Bonnie can jump in and fix that.

B. STEELE: In the last attrition plan, there was one position to be eliminated and the department, at the time ECCM, submitted their plan for the elimination. So that's been dealt with. It was a two-year plan for '19-'20 and '20-'21. There's no establishment for another position or anything to be done this fiscal.

L. EVANS: Okay, so how many layoffs occurred last year and how many new hires took place?

B. DAVIS: There were no layoffs this past year. The other one was hires you said?

L. EVANS: New hires.

B. DAVIS: There were five new hires.

L. EVANS: Five new hires, okay.

How many contractual and short-term employees are there in the department?

B. DAVIS: I'll do this but I'll have Bonnie on standby just in case I need her to jump in; seven contractual ones and 37 temporary, I think, is your question you asked for the two of those.

L. EVANS: How many employees are working from home versus in the government buildings, offices?

B. DAVIS: I think Bonnie can handle that one. I know that there are a significant number of them that are working from home right now but

there's a plan in place to bring them back over the next little bit. Maybe Sean will jump in on this one a little bit easier.

S. DUTTON: I don't have a firm number but most of the people in the office you see here today, with the exception of executive admin assistants, most of the staff are working remotely. We did a procurement the last year for additional laptops in January and redeployed them. So when we had the shutdown in February we were quickly able to set up most of the staff to work remotely.

L. EVANS: Okay, that goes to my next question: Is the department investigating a permanent work-from-home plan?

B. DAVIS: We're always looking at options. I know that most of the other departments would have a similar answer to that. There are always options we're looking at ways we can change the way we do things and reimagine government. That's always a view to how we can do things.

COVID has provided some opportunities for us to look at things a little differently, whether it be telecommunications or use of those resources. We're going to be looking at all those options.

L. EVANS: Okay.

Did your department receive any funds from the contingency fund and, if so, how many and for what?

B. DAVIS: The COVID contingency fund I'm going to say no, but I think Bonnie can jump in if there's anything she wants to add to that. But I think the answer is no.

B. STEELE: You're correct. We did not.

L. EVANS: Okay, thank you.

Moving on to the general questions now for 1.1.01. Is there a major restatement of the \$19,252,800 for the department? Can we get a breakdown of that?

B. DAVIS: Can you say that once more, sorry.

L. EVANS: There's a major restatement of the \$19,252,800. That's in ...

B. DAVIS: I think I can get Bonnie to jump in, if that's okay.

B. STEELE: With the formation of the ECC and the reorganization, there was actually a total for Environment and Climate Change of \$26 million. That includes the formation of the minister's office and Executive. We moved from ECCM \$23,121,000. We also moved from FFA Natural Areas of \$894,000, and from IPGS was a total of \$1,991,700. That covered all of the labour sections that moved over. That's the total of the reorganization for this fiscal.

B. DAVIS: We can give you that breakdown. That's no problem.

L. EVANS: Yeah.

My next one was on Salaries. Can you provide a breakdown of the Salaries for the department?

B. DAVIS: Yes.

L. EVANS: Okay, thank you.

Looking at Transportation and Communications: Can you provide a breakdown of the Transportation and Communication line item?

B. DAVIS: We can when we get the Estimates next year. We really don't have any in the new formation of the department that exists as it is.

I can get Bonnie to jump in here and just give you some more detail.

L. EVANS: Okay.

B. STEELE: We will be providing copies of the Estimates binder here, and that will have all of the information on the expenditures for Estimates and for Salaries, Transportation and Communications. It will all be in the information you'll receive at the end of the night.

L. EVANS: Okay. That's what we were looking for there.

Moving to General Administration, 1.2.01, Executive Support: The department used to take in revenue from the MMSB to pay out the CEO salary under Executive Support, but I no longer see that here. Can you explain that?

B. DAVIS: I'll let Bonnie take that one.

B. STEELE: MMSB is currently being reported under the Municipal and Provincial Affairs Department. That was something that was not moved over when Budgeting did the adjustment. It has been noted and it is going to be moved when we form the next budget.

L. EVANS: Okay, thank you.

Looking at Salaries, there's \$196,700 more budgeted this year compared to what was spent last year. Could we get an explanation for that?

B. DAVIS: That is based on the two ADMs' secretaries, I think, a contractual environmental monitoring specialist, as well as the deputy minister and the deputy minister's secretary. That's only going to be based on 75 per cent of the year, because by the time we get it recruited and put in place, 25 per cent of the year would already be gone. That's where that number comes from. I think that's the detail you're looking for, for that question.

L. EVANS: Okay.

Transportation and Communications: There's \$11,300 more budgeted this year compared to what was budgeted last year. Can we get an explanation for that?

B. DAVIS: That would be new funding for travel and communication cost with respect to the new deputy minister's position.

L. EVANS: Okay.

I think that takes me to the end of my section.

CHAIR: Okay, thank you.

MHA Dinn.

1.1.01 to 1.2.01 inclusive.

J. DINN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

In answer to my colleague from Torngat Mountains, you said the attrition plan is still being followed and you hit the targets with the previous, so I'm just wondering: How do you determine that? I'm assuming, then, that programs have been cancelled or have reached their end and the work is no longer there. I'm just wondering how attrition works.

B. DAVIS: Well, I guess, every department is given a target for attrition, and I guess it's up to them on how they achieve that based on whether it be programs that have reached their useful end or whether they are slight changes in what's the requirement there, whether it be through technology or whatnot.

I mean, that's my understanding. If Sean wants to add anything to that that would be great.

S. DUTTON: The target is set; the Department of Finance communicates the target to the department; the money comes out of the salary vote and you have to find the means to fill the positions you have and complete the work that's provided. They've been relatively modest targets, I think, the last two years, so it hasn't been a significant area. We just continue to strive to find more efficient ways to deliver the programs that we're mandated to provide.

J. DINN: How is that target set is what I'm going at. Like, you said a number: We have to save \$20,000 this year. I'm just wondering how you set the target.

S. DUTTON: Well, we don't set the target in the department. Again, it's communicated to us by the Department of Finance as a budget decision.

J. DINN: Okay.

So the Department of Finance says: Here is your target you have to reduce your overall budget by?

B. DAVIS: Correct.

J. DINN: So I'll use my example of Holy Heart, where we had three secretaries and we lost one. Work that was done by secretaries, such as copying and photocopying exams, now fell onto the backs of the teachers to do it. The work

hadn't disappeared; it just was reallocated. It's not that it disappeared, but it did increase the workload.

This is where I'm going: It's sort of like you can only have 50 lifeboats on a ship. Not much good if you have – and I'm looking at zero-based budgeting, in other words. Here's the thing: Zero-based budgeting, you're looking at here's what the department needs. It runs up against you have to find targets. To me, zero-based budgeting is about basically having a budget of only what you need. If your zero-based budgeting comes up and the Department of Finance says, I'm sorry, you need to find another \$10,000 – you've already gone through zero-based budgeting – and you said, this is exactly what we need, now I think those two clash with attrition.

This is my issue with it in terms of you can't have both ways. I would assume that zero-based budgeting is about building the budget from the ground up: Here is what we absolutely need; there are no frills. If the Department of Finance says, no, you have to find another \$100,000, now you're cutting into what you've determined. I'm just trying to – how you reconcile this.

I'm going back to, again, Minister, with regard to the services. In that case, what you're telling me is that it will impact the ability of your department to carry out its mandate.

B. DAVIS: So you're assuming that they're done exterior of each other. In some cases, they're done together. Some cases they're not, of course, like you've identified there. Where we have, as every department – and as we utilize more technology. You just used an example with Service NL. I don't want to talk about Service NL, but Motor Vehicle Registration has been a positive move. There may be some negatives that come along with that from some people that have challenges, but overall I've heard more positive from my constituents just on that example alone, which allows you to do more and people to do more themselves, which is a positive.

I know what you're getting at with respect to having to cut the cloth after the fact of knowing the size of the person. From my standpoint, I think it's an important piece that we have to

work to try to do things as efficient as we possibly can at every step of the way.

J. DINN: I'm assuming when you do zero-based budgeting, you are looking at the efficiencies, you factored all that into it and you said: We can do it this way; we can do this through a digital and whatever else. You've gone through that process and I would assume it's a time-consuming process. Any budget is. Then you said: Well, no, this does have to be cut a little bit more. So that's the problem I have with the – and now we're going to have balanced-budget legislation.

Other than moving out of Municipal and Provincial Affairs – and I get the feeling there has been a few – you mentioned, I think, the MMSB. Have there been any additions or subtractions from this department since the last budget? Like I said, other than Municipal and Provincial Affairs.

B. DAVIS: Other than it being a completely new department, yes, there has been – I think Bonnie went through what has been added in. We can get you a copy of that as well. I don't want to rehash what she said unless you want to.

J. DINN: No, no, that's fine. That's good with me.

B. DAVIS: Okay. We can get you the breakdown of where things came from and what's left.

I think Sean has something to add to that as well.

S. DUTTON: In September's budget, there was a restructuring that had been announced earlier that month and, as a result of that, Municipal Infrastructure had been made a part of the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure. Then, at that time as well, the Natural Areas group had moved from what was Fisheries and Land Resources into the department. The budget, because it was in a subhead, took some time to reconcile and so that's now reflected in the budget for this department as of April 1. As well, the Fire and Emergency Services in September became a part of the Department of Justice and Public Safety. Also, the Labour Relations and Labour Standards were both made a part of this department in the most recent

restructuring. I think that's probably the highlights of the changes.

There was another responsibility for Waste Management. We had two staff that were in Municipal Infrastructure. The Department of Environment and Climate Change retained responsibility for Waste Management and so those two filled positions and one vacancy were transferred into the Pollution Prevention Division and that's also reflected in this year's budget.

J. DINN: Thank you.

I think you might have brought up the new hires. There were five new hires and that's as a result of the changeover of the –

B. DAVIS: No, not necessarily the result of the changeover. Those positions were within the department through the normal recruiting process, I would think.

J. DINN: Okay. Would there have been new hires as a result of this, the realignment?

B. DAVIS: Not as of yet, no.

J. DINN: Okay, thank you.

Protected areas, you just mentioned, where did that go? That budget line, the Salaries for protected areas.

S. DUTTON: That's reflected in the Policy, Planning and Natural Areas Division.

B. DAVIS: (Inaudible.)

J. DINN: No problem, perfect.

Where does WERAC currently fall in this budget?

B. DAVIS: I think it's in the exact same spot.

J. DINN: The same spot.

Is it possible to have an update on this file as to how that's proceeding?

B. DAVIS: Yeah, do you want me to do that now or do you want to do it then?

J. DINN: We can do it at that time.

B. DAVIS: Oh, perfect.

J. DINN: That's fine.

B. DAVIS: Absolutely. I'll give you an update.

J. DINN: Perfect.

Under 1.1.01 – I think I have my answer but I'm going to ask it anyway. All these are new figures and you don't have any numbers from the previous years to base it on; we've established that. Apart from zero-based budgeting – actually, I don't even know how you'd be able to do zero-based budgeting, in some ways – and the directive to find savings, what guided your spending estimates in this coming year?

B. DAVIS: I'm going to say historical knowledge and having a fantastic staff on this side. Bonnie can take us through it, but my guess is this is based on historical data for ministerial offices. We will have estimates next time when we come here doing the same thing next year. There will be a baseline for that as well, so we can see how good we did with hitting this budget. My guess is it's going to be pretty spot-on.

J. DINN: Perfect, excellent.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you.

I remind the hon. Member that his speaking time has expired.

MHA Evans, did you have anything further in 1.1.01 to 1.2.01? Or did you say you were finished?

L. EVANS: No, 2.1.01.

CHAIR: Okay, all right.

I'll just turn to MHA Dinn: Did you have anything further in that section?

J. DINN: Yes, I'll just finish off now with these.

What was the source of expenses under Employee Benefits?

L. EVANS: (Inaudible.)

CHAIR: No, I didn't because I thought you said you were finished.

L. EVANS: No, I misunderstood. So I do have information for this section.

CHAIR: For 1.1.01 to 1.2.01?

L. EVANS: Sorry, about that. I'm going to have to put on my glasses. No, I have stuff on 2.1.01 –

CHAIR: Yeah, we're not there yet.

L. EVANS: Yeah, okay.

CHAIR: Yeah. Thank you.

MHA Dinn.

J. DINN: The source of the expenses under Employee Benefits, what was that?

B. DAVIS: That would be conference registration fees for minister and executive assistant. Somewhat standard across most of the departments, I would guess. Not having been to every Estimates, but the few I've been to they were all the same.

J. DINN: Perfect, thank you.

What does the \$16,800 under Grants and Subsidies pay for?

B. DAVIS: In the next section?

J. DINN: No, 1.2.01.

B. DAVIS: Okay.

Do we have details on that, Bonnie, there?

Bonnie Steele, please.

B. STEELE: It provides grant funding for the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment.

J. DINN: I just asked a question, then, with regard to the expenses under Employee Benefits. I'm just making sure you were answering that for Executive Support, 1.2.01, or was that for the \$400 under –

B. DAVIS: No, the \$400 I was answering for, sorry.

J. DINN: Okay.

B. DAVIS: But I can answer for this one, if you like?

J. DINN: Yes, please, that would be good.

B. DAVIS: Excellent. The decrease that happened there is for lower than –

J. DINN: No, what's it used for?

B. DAVIS: Oh.

J. DINN: I'm not going to quibble over \$100.

B. DAVIS: Registration fees of seminars, conferences and training courses related to departmental responsibilities. Also provides workplace workers' compensation costs for all department staff. It's here in this budget line item for the entire department.

J. DINN: Okay, thank you very much.

B. DAVIS: That's why the number is a little higher than \$400.

J. DINN: Yes, that's what I was thinking.

The last question on this section: When the department is setting out its plans to meet greenhouse gas emissions reductions, how are targets currently determined? The Auditor General has stated that the government should ensure that the expected impact of the actions set out is sufficient to achieve the targets. How do you achieve the targets for greenhouse gas emissions reductions?

B. DAVIS: I think we're going to be getting to that in another section, but if you wanted me to try to answer it here, I can.

J. DINN: Why not, I have seven minutes to kill.

B. DAVIS: Excellent.

Well, Susan, would you like to jump in here?

S. SQUIRES: We have targets set out provincially to meet for greenhouse gas reductions. We have a 2020 target, a 2030 target, we have a 2050 target and most recently, the House agreed to a net-zero target. We have a five-year Climate Change Action Plan.

The current plan is for 2019 to 2024 and that lays out 45 actions to address greenhouse gas mitigation, so emissions reductions as well as – the majority of them are that – there's a subset of that 45 for adaptation measures. So each of those mitigation actions would address, to some extent, reductions. We certainly recognize that the targets are ambitious and that one Climate Change Action Plan is not going to reduce, unfortunately, our targets to 2030, for example, in one five-year plan. It's a long scale of work to do.

Coupled with that, I guess, our provincial actions are certainly the actions of the federal government as well through some of the mechanisms they have. Some of their regulations certainly will affect provincial activities and things that can happen there. They modelled out their most recent action plan that was released in December, it gets emissions on, like, a national scope down an additional 36 per cent and their budget also was more ambitious in new mechanisms that would achieve additional target reductions. So, collectively, all these initiatives work on target reductions.

J. DINN: Okay.

There's a criteria, though, as to how to achieve these targets, right, and they're measurable.

S. SQUIRES: Yeah, certainly. We annually participate in a national inventory for greenhouse gas emissions, and all are accounted and that's publicly available. We also publicly report on our provincial emissions, separate from the national inventory, and we also report on those industries that are found within the scope of our *Management of Greenhouse Gas Act*. The industries that produce over 25,000 tons per year, they have their own reduction

target as under the *Management of Greenhouse Gas Act*, so they report on what they have.

We have it all broken down and certainly when we're developing actions, for example, the transportation piece of the pie is different than maybe onshore industrial activity and you're looking at actions that can address each piece of the pie that adds to a net-zero balance.

J. DINN: Okay, thank you.

B. DAVIS: (Inaudible) are in those targeted areas, so you can try to get those – changes happen there.

J. DINN: Would that information be in the binder, then, that information you just provided, or not necessarily I would say?

B. DAVIS: Susan can go; she's going to do much better than I am at it because that's what she lives every day.

S. SQUIRES: The information about our actions and the specific targets certainly would not be in your binder because they're not linked to the concrete Estimates piece, but all that information is publicly available on our website, the Action Plan, the national inventory data is publicly available. Our large emitters' data is updated annually and that list is publicly available.

J. DINN: Thank you.

That's it, thank you, Chair.

CHAIR: I'm going to turn to MHA Trimper.

P. TRIMPER: Just to confirm, Mr. Chair, we are only up to 1.2.01?

CHAIR: That's correct.

P. TRIMPER: Okay, I will standby.

CHAIR: Okay, thank you.

Is the Committee ready for the question?

Shall 1.1.01 to 1.2.01 inclusive carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, subheads 1.1.01 through 1.2.01 carried.

CHAIR: I'll ask the Clerk to call the next set of subheads, please.

CLERK: Environment, 2.1.01 to 2.3.01 inclusive.

CHAIR: Shall 2.1.01 to 2.3.01 inclusive carry?

I'll turn it over to MHA Evans.

L. EVANS: Thank you.

I just have to keep all the numbers straight.

Just looking at 2.1.01, Pollution Prevention, some general questions. How much revenue was taken in from the carbon tax?

B. DAVIS: I'm going to say that there was none from the carbon tax at this point. I think that's correct, isn't it, Susan from provincial revenue?

I think there's \$2 million came over from Municipal Affairs from revenue for the US military sites in the Labrador project, from the federal. There was revenue decreased of \$115,700 for lower revenue for approvals, permits, licences, file searches and audit fees. Is that what you were talking about, the lower Revenue - Provincial?

L. EVANS: Yes, basically.

You already answered the question about emission reductions that I was going to ask. I was just wondering: Are we on track? Are there CO2 equivalents tied to each year initiatives that you have for reduction?

B. DAVIS: MHA Evans, I'm just going to let Susan jump in because I think she wanted to jump in on the last one there for a second.

S. SQUIRES: The questions are not about the environmental piece; those Estimates are a little

bit later in the binder for the climate change components, but two things on what your questions were: The *Revenue Administration Act* is where we find the carbon tax. The revenue collected by the carbon tax is actually collected by the Department of Finance and it's under their budget Estimates. You won't see carbon tax revenue reflected anywhere in this department's binder.

L. EVANS: So it's under Finance?

S. SQUIRES: It's under Finance, correct. It goes into general revenue.

Your question on the targets: Certainly, when we're coming up with actions, we do model GHG reduction totals linked to them. That's done in all program areas. The minister mentioned in his opening remarks, for example, the Low Carbon Economy Leadership Fund and the projection that that will reduce emissions by 830,000 tons.

Each of the projects, for example, under that program is modelled out with an estimated GHG reduction. We do that for every new initiative that we are considering.

L. EVANS: Okay.

Is government on track to meet its Paris climate change targets?

B. DAVIS: As Susan had mentioned before, it's a different section than where we are – Pollution Prevention – but we can address it now. If you want to wait until then, we can because it may stimulate some other questions. I will let Susan jump in now if you like to –

L. EVANS: Yeah, I was hesitant on asking it because I don't want to throw you off.

S. SQUIRES: The Paris commitments, we certainly participate in that process every year, an annual report to Canada who then reports further again on our participation in that program or process. You will see likely a dip in our emissions going to 2020 as a result of some of the global changes to transportation and industry as a result of COVID-19. Some of those are yet to be determined, whether they will stay

in place and we'll see continued reduction in emissions.

While we are seeing some reductions compared to our baseline of 2005 and we have decoupled GDP growth from greenhouse gas emission increases, we still have a ways to go to meet our 2030 target. So additional measures will have to be tabled to meet that target.

L. EVANS: Okay.

I prefer to ask the questions here because I have other questions later and I don't want to run out of time in the other sections.

B. DAVIS: No problem.

L. EVANS: The question here – I think you partially answered it – can you provide us with a list of work that has been completed last year and what will be completed this year for contaminated sites?

B. DAVIS: Yes, we can do that, through Dan, for contaminated sites. Some of it would be online, if not all of it would be.

CHAIR: The Chair is recognizing Dan.

D. MICHELSEN: As the minister was saying, we do have a list. We have the Impacted Sites Liability Assessment Program where we inventory all the impacted sites across that government owns or is responsible for. Every year that is reported to the Comptroller General and is reported in the province's balance sheet. We have all those details on the site and what was done, so we can –

L. EVANS: Yeah, what work was done and what was completed.

Another one, and I think I'd rather ask it here than over in 2.2.01, but just regarding Muskrat Falls and the measuring of methylmercury levels. What's the status of the monitoring to date and are levels in range with what was forecasted for this time period?

B. DAVIS: The short answer is, yes, they're in range of that and in some cases lower than what was forecasted by some of the scientists that were out there. We have a start-of-the-art

monitoring system in place for that and we're working towards – I'm trying to get the word here now – the monitoring committee up and running. We have the terms of reference there and we've reached out to our federal counterparts to get some membership for that committee as well. That's in process and should be moving fairly quickly.

L. EVANS: Yes.

Are your results being made available regularly, quarterly?

B. DAVIS: Yes. I don't know the time frame, but I think Dan can jump in and let you know the time frame.

D. MICHELSEN: All the results are online. You can go right back to when we originally started and they're all in graphs so you can see where the levels are in the ups and downs. We've seen some predicted increases at certain times of the year in the summertime, when it's a bit warmer. Overall, they haven't reached anywhere near any concern from a health perspective, nor have they hit the predicted values.

L. EVANS: Okay, yeah, that's fine. Thank you for that answer there.

I just want to add, too, water levels are not a reflection of health. Basically, when methylmercury gets into the food chain, that's an indicator of health issues because people consume the biota, the vegetation and the animal. I'd just like to state that on the record.

Looking at subsection 01, Salaries, there is –

B. DAVIS: Are you still under the Pollution Prevention –?

L. EVANS: Yeah, in Salaries.

B. DAVIS: Okay.

L. EVANS: \$344,800 more budgeted this year than was spent last year. Can you explain that? I should have just rounded it up. There's more money spent.

B. DAVIS: I'm trying to see where you're on this one. I think it's –

L. EVANS: 01, Salaries.

B. DAVIS: Yeah, Salaries, I think there's ...

L. EVANS: There's more budgeted for this year than last year, almost \$350,000 budgeted more this year than was spent last year.

OFFICIAL: (Inaudible.)

B. DAVIS: Oh, okay.

L. EVANS: Yeah, sorry about that, Bernie.

B. DAVIS: Okay. So you're comparing the increase over what was revised, okay.

L. EVANS: Yeah.

B. DAVIS: The decrease of \$399,000, roughly, from budgeted to revised of 2020-2021 was based on vacant positions and recruitment process, offset by the 2 per cent salary increase as well. It doesn't also reflect the salary of \$163,000 for two waste management positions that are expensed to the Department of Transportation and Infrastructure in 2020-2021.

Sorry, I had a bit of a hard time following –

L. EVANS: (Inaudible.)

B. DAVIS: It's a bunch of numbers there.

L. EVANS: It reminds me of when I was getting sworn in. I had to keep pushing the paper further away. I didn't realize –

B. DAVIS: I can hold it over here if you'd like.

L. EVANS: You can hold it over there, yeah.

Sorry, I got a little bit flustered there.

B. DAVIS: Just take your time. It's no problem.

L. EVANS: Under the subheading 01, Professional Services: There is \$1,030,000 more budgeted this year compared to last year. Can you explain it and just give us a breakdown?

B. DAVIS: Yes, absolutely.

That reflects the funding for the former US military sites in Labrador project, which is \$1 million, plus \$30,000 for consultants related to monitoring at the Come By Chance hazardous waste and New Harbour landfills. That's where that \$1,030,000 increase comes from.

L. EVANS: Okay, thank you.

Still in subsection 01, Purchased Services: There is \$3,030,000 more budgeted this year compared to last year. Can you explain this and give us a breakdown?

B. DAVIS: Yes, that's essentially the exact same thing. It's coming in there and I can probably get Bonnie to jump in on it, but essentially the \$3,030,000 reflects the former military sites of \$3 million and the \$30,000 for maintenance and monitoring at Come By Chance and New Harbour landfills.

CHAIR: Thank you.

I remind the hon. Member that her speaking time has expired.

I'll turn it over to you, MHA Dinn.

J. DINN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I just want to make sure I heard it correctly there with regard to an update on site assessments.

No, I didn't write it down.

Is it possible to have an update on site assessments? If it's too long at this point in time, just have a list. What cleanup plans do we have for the upcoming year?

B. DAVIS: I think the answer initially to that first question was that it's available online and we can get that information for you.

Dan, if you wanted to jump in, you can.

D. MICHELSEN: Yes, we do have that information. Recognizing the fact that our department is really the accountant for government's impacted sites. Each individual impacted site is assigned to a department. For

example, the former transportation depots would be the responsibility of the Transportation and Infrastructure Department.

We are responsible for some including these military sites. We can certainly provide our plans for what we intend to do and move forward there, but each individual site within our database, it would be indicative of each department to be able to provide an update on what they intend to do on each site.

J. DINN: So you'd have a list of all the sites whether they're in your department or not? Just one area.

D. MICHELSEN: Yes, we have a full spreadsheet that would identify the department that's responsible for the site and what the current assessed liability or cost of remediation would be and the work that has been done in the past.

J. DINN: That leads me into the next question: How do you estimate the liabilities for contaminated sites currently?

B. DAVIS: I'll let the technical expertise answer this one, because that's not something that I would know.

D. MICHELSEN: Basically, as I said, we maintain this database from departments. Departments would hire consultants to do environmental site assessments to determine the level of impacts on the property. As a part of that process, generally there are developed cost estimates to remediate. That would form what the associated costs of the site were. That's not done every year on every site. There is also a guidance document that's provided to departments where they look at sites and re-evaluate them and add in inflation costs and things like to their estimated liabilities and reduce them by the expenses that they incurred in the previous year towards remediation.

J. DINN: Thank you.

What kinds of policies or procedures need to be added to the current calculation process as per the recommendations in the Auditor General's 2020 report?

B. DAVIS: I think Dan is ready to jump in here.

D. MICHELSEN: Yes, working with the Comptroller General, we've provided a guidance document to all the departments to fulfill that requirement in terms of how the liabilities are estimated. There is a new document that is official from this year that was produced and provided to the departments to do that calculation.

J. DINN: That's available on your website or ...?

D. MICHELSEN: No, it's an internal document, but we can certainly make it available.

J. DINN: Please, that would be great. Thank you.

Have you begun work on drafting these policies – so you already have them already laid out, the policies then?

OFFICIAL: (Inaudible.)

J. DINN: Okay, good.

They've already been implemented then, I take it?

B. DAVIS: I think they're moved out to the departments. I don't know if they're implemented yet, but they're working towards that I'm guessing. I'll ask Dan to jump in.

D. MICHELSEN: Every year, we poll the departments to get the information and, this year, the guidance document was provided to them in advance so that they could provide their information to us on the sites and use it accordingly.

J. DINN: So if you're the accountant for that, you'd have a record of just how they're moving along with the implementation. Is that information available as well?

D. MICHELSEN: That would be all in this spreadsheet that identifies the sites and what's done.

J. DINN: Perfect. Thank you very much.

Are there any plans to start pilot projects for the processing and reuse of tires or for glass, especially to be used in aggregate? I don't know how many years ago it was that they were shipping tires up to Quebec to be used as fuel, but I've seen studies, documentaries and articles on using tires – usually freezing them, then shattering them and using the bits in road aggregate or asphalt. I think there was some talk about a pilot project in this last year. I'm just wondering if we're proceeding a long with that.

B. DAVIS: That would be under the MMSB, which handles the removal of tires and finding a home for those tires. One of the struggles that we have in the province is we don't have a significant enough stockpile of tires for any length of activities to create a business opportunity like when we send it to Lafarge in Quebec, a cement factory; that heats the cement factory for maybe a few days or a week with all of our tires.

From our perspective, we have too many that we can't store adequately, easily, but we don't have enough that we're going to be able create business enterprises. We've already been working with MMSB to try to find alternative uses. I agree with what you're saying. Maybe there's an opportunity we can use some pilot projects to use some of that tire waste as aggregate for underneath roads or trail systems. I mean, it's inert material so it's not harmful to the environment, except for the fact that it could, if it's stockpiled, burn and things like that and cause some issues that way. If there's an opportunity for us to find some use for it that can be done locally, we would love to do that, but we're still looking at those options.

J. DINN: What do other jurisdictions do with the tires they collect? I'm sure a place like Ontario must have a huge stockpile. Do they make use of them?

B. DAVIS: Absolutely. There would be business opportunities that would be available to those individuals that have that critical mass.

A part of our problem is we have 500,000 people and we don't create enough tires that would be able to create that critical mass that you would get in, say, Ontario. Most of the other jurisdictions in Atlantic Canada – I can't speak

for them all; but from conversations with MMSB – send those tires to a similar place like we do.

J. DINN: That's where I'm going with this. If we don't have enough for a critical mass – although, one statistic says there are more cars than people in this province – if there's a pilot project that's working, then why not import the tires and do it. It's still a business. You can sell the aggregate, whether you use it in our roads or somewhere else, but maybe it becomes a marketable commodity as well. So if we don't have the resources here – you look at Japan, a common base in manufacturing but very few of its own resources. I'm just thinking along those lines. If we have a pilot project that works, why not. Then we can send your wretched refuse yearning to be reused, that kind of thing.

D. MICHELSEN: (Inaudible.)

J. DINN: And glass, was there some –?

B. DAVIS: Just one second there, Dan was ...

CHAIR: The Chair recognizes Dan Michielsen.

D. MICHELSEN: Yes, I just wanted to remind you. There was one project awhile back where there was a work stoppage at Lafarge and they couldn't take the tires, so the tires were shipped to Norris Arm and a bunch of them were shredded as tire-derived aggregate. That was actually used in the construction of the new landfill cell in Central, on site, as engineering fill for the landfill to support the liner. There was a significant amount of tires that actually went in that. So instead of having to quarry somewhere and ship in fill, they used this material as lightweight fill in the landfill site on Cell 3.

J. DINN: Yeah. I'm just looking at opportunities, rather than having it go up in flames.

The same thing for glass – right now, you can return wine bottles, but a lot of other glass you end up turfing. I have quite a collection of glass at home that I just haven't had the heart to throw out. I know there have been some projects and I think one over in Corner Brook was using glass in concrete in sidewalks. Again, the same thing,

but are there any projects along those lines using glass in aggregate?

B. DAVIS: I know, in my initial conversations with MMSB over the last couple of months since being in the role, they're looking at other options that we can look at trying to expand how we're going to get more diversion out of our landfills. That's one of the things we're all focused on trying to do.

I like your thinking about trying to find different ways of doing things and trying to utilize all of those products. We're going to try to support industry where we can to try to get them do that, but it's not as simple as just saying we want to – we just don't have that critical mass to do some of those things.

J. DINN: True, Minister, but getting to the moon wasn't simple, but it did start with a simple idea.

B. DAVIS: Absolutely.

CHAIR: Thank you.

B. DAVIS: Couldn't agree with you more.

CHAIR: The Chair is recognizing MHA Trimper.

P. TRIMPER: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and to the Committee for the opportunity and thanks to the Minister and his team for being here and being available to us.

I'm going to try to go in order with some questions here. First of all, under Pollution Prevention, a housekeeping item. Someone in your department recently approached myself, and I suspect my colleague from Torngat Mountains, with some files. They were password encrypted. We went back and forth a couple of times. It was the most cumbersome exercise to try to download the files. I have yet to receive the files and I just wondered if somebody – I don't know, did you receive them? You did and you downloaded. I was not able to, and I think it was because I was working with an iPhone and traveling. Could we try that again?

I saw the deputy minister making a – I'd like to participate –

CHAIR: The Chair is recognizing Dan Michielsen.

D. MICHELSEN: I assume these were the consultation documents that we sent to the Indigenous groups with regard to the military site cleanups.

P. TRIMPER: That's it.

D. MICHELSEN: Okay, so we can certainly help facilitate that.

P. TRIMPER: Thank you. Somebody had indicated they were going to fix it, but it didn't get fixed yet.

D. MICHELSEN: It may be as easy as you coming up to our office and us giving you a little stick or something.

P. TRIMPER: I'd like that. I'm an old-fashioned guy.

Jumping around, did we ever come up with a source for the fuel spill in Postville a few years ago? I think this department would have been at least involved in the investigation of that. Have we ever had a conclusion from a provincial perspective as to what caused that fuel spill?

CHAIR: Dan Michielsen.

D. MICHELSEN: No, I don't think there was. I can check with Service NL, they were involved in that as well. That's where the environmental protection officers lie. But, no, as far as we know there was no source. I think the biggest issue was that for the size of the spill there was no source found. There was some speculation that it was offshore related versus onshore related, but I don't know. I can certainly check to see what the conclusion was.

P. TRIMPER: Okay, I think that would be helpful to know. There was a lot of concern at the time, and not that it has gone quiet in terms of everyone has forgot about it, it's just that they're waiting for a response.

Moving over to the \$1-million study on flood risk and modelling for the Churchill River. Why did we do that study? Why did the provincial government spend a million dollars on a very

impressive set of binders and predictions and calculations for future flooding, the risk associated with same and so on?

B. DAVIS: I think I can let Dan jump in on this a little bit after, but I think to provide information is really important to get the right information out there to make sure we understand what's happening with the river. But I think Dan can give a little bit more insight into that than I could probably do.

D. MICHELSEN: Really, the evidence of flood-risk mapping is really two-fold. It's to provide property owners with information that predicts somewhat potential floods so that they can prepare. They can, if necessary, modify their property or put in flood controls or whatever needs to take place. It's also a planning tool for municipalities and communities so they know areas that they shouldn't permit development and areas where they should focus on development so that we don't end up with significant development in flood plain areas and things of that nature.

P. TRIMPER: I was part of the consultation, at least the rollout when the report was first introduced and then there was a rollout out, I think, in October of last year. Does the department have any more plans to reach out to any of the residents or municipalities as to the conclusions of that document and what they may mean or is it just going to be, there it is and folks can have a read and deal with it as they may?

D. MICHELSEN: The intention was – and we provided the information to the municipality, to the Local River Watch Committee. There's a lot of good information in there. There were some recommendations and we're moving forward to ensure that the best available information is available to the municipality and the residents in the area so that they can prepare for the floods.

But, no, there's no planned action, other than to continue operating the state-of-the-art river monitoring and flood forecasting system on the river, in conjunction with the River Watch Committee to help them address any concerns that may come.

P. TRIMPER: No question the effort and the gear that's in place and so on is start of the art and one that everybody should be very proud of.

I believe I heard you say, you know, in terms of providing an aid for decision-makers, for land-use planners and for the residents themselves, we've got five binders that are probably that big when they're stacked, a lot of complicated technical information in there. I've been a part, I think, of each rollout that I've seen and have been associated with each of the River Watch Committees. I've yet to see government sit down with each of those residents, each of the municipal community leaders and really talk about what the implications are in there.

Is there any intent on doing anything like that at all?

B. DAVIS: (Inaudible.)

CHAIR: Just a second now. There you go.

B. DAVIS: I think similar to what we just did recently, I had the pleasure to tour, with you, some of the affected regions, utilizing that information to provide, as Dan said, that world-class monitoring system.

I mean, we can't stop the water from doing what it's going to do, in some cases, in most cases, but we can provide as much warning as we can and provide at least that planning that Dan has talked about, as well as you have talked about, to ensure that municipalities, when they use flood-risk mapping, have that ability to make the best decisions for their residents when they do developments in those areas so that those developments don't get impacted. That could happen from time to time.

P. TRIMPER: Yeah, I was with you, Minister, until that last part.

I don't think I've missed a meeting, or an interaction or a conversation between government officials, political leadership and each of the municipalities or communities and I've yet to see that sort of rollout, with the exception of myself, I guess, sitting and trying to help people understand what that red dot means. I haven't seen that sort of handholding exercise after spending a million dollars and using, again,

state-of-the-art imagery, modelling and all the amazing data that we've collected. We have this very definitive documents here now and essentially the whole interpretation, what does it mean for you is still out there.

B. DAVIS: Right. I can appreciate that. I mean, it is still – I won't say early days with respect to the report being finalized but I know we can take your concerns that you've raised here back and see what we can do to try to ensure that those individuals that would be most impacted – I was speaking more in general terms about flood-risk mapping, not necessarily your five volumes that are five feet tall. I think it's important that that information that we do have is shared with as many people as we can. I agree with your statement on that.

P. TRIMPER: Listen, I'm not trying to trap anybody. I just feel that step needs to happen. I appreciate your support, co-operation, everybody over there. We all know each other very well, but when it comes down to it there are still people on the ground asking what does this mean for me? What do I need to do? Where do I go for help?

At least those first two points, first two questions, I feel we really need to help them understand what that means.

B. DAVIS: Perfect, thank you.

P. TRIMPER: I think with that, Mr. Chair, I'm going to wait now until the next session.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Okay. Thank you.

2.1.01 to 2.3.01, back to you MHA Evans.

L. EVANS: Just a quick question on this section: Is 2.3.01 included? Is it inclusive or –?

CHAIR: Yes, it is, it's inclusive.

L. EVANS: Inclusive, okay.

Sticking to 2.1.01, the federal revenue, there's \$2 million in revenue budgeted this year but last year there was nothing spent. Can you explain that?

B. DAVIS: The \$2 million is anticipated federal revenue related to the former US military sites in Labrador project. That's coming in as revenue.

L. EVANS: Okay.

B. DAVIS: Anticipated revenue.

L. EVANS: Anticipated revenue.

Okay, moving on to 2.2.01, Water Resources, just some general questions. How many municipal boil advisories are there for the province?

B. DAVIS: I can get that for you, just give me one second. I think it's 178 but I can stand corrected. It's around that number.

L. EVANS: Okay.

B. DAVIS: 189, sorry, boil water advisories in place as of June 7.

L. EVANS: Do you have a provincial record of communities that exceed THMs, the guidelines for THMs?

B. DAVIS: I think we do.

Dan, did you want to ...?

D. MICHIELSEN: Yes, so all that information is actually online. You can see by community any exceedances. We report all the water-quality information on our portal. Any community at any given time can go in and see what the levels were and where there were any exceedances within their community. If there's something specific that you're looking for, if you want it sorted by contaminant or whatnot, our Water Resources folks would be happy to help facilitate that.

L. EVANS: Yes, I was only asking if you actually do a report that puts all the provincial exceedances into one report.

D. MICHIELSEN: Yes, there is an annual drinking water report that's produced as well and published every year on our website.

L. EVANS: Okay.

Moving onto subsection 01, Salaries: There was \$71,700 more spent last year compared to what was budgeted. Can you explain this?

B. DAVIS: You said Salaries here?

L. EVANS: In Salaries, yeah, it's subsection 01.

B. DAVIS: There's an increase of \$71,700 from the revised 2020-21, which includes a 2 per cent salary increase and a reclassification of a number of staff.

L. EVANS: Okay.

Continuing on, still in subsection 01, Transportation and Communications: There is \$50,900 more budgeted this year compared to what was spent last year. Can you explain this?

B. DAVIS: That is an increase of \$11,500, actually, based on what was budgeted last year. Rightsizing the travel budget for an increase of helicopter rates, travel costs for drinking-water sampling, as well as costs to engage presenters at workshops. That's why the increase is there over what was budgeted last year. The reason why it was less when we did the revised was based on COVID and some of the workshops didn't go ahead.

L. EVANS: Okay.

B. DAVIS: That's why there's a bigger jump based on what you said. So you sort of have to answer two of them to get the rights of it.

L. EVANS: All right. Okay, thank you.

Just in the same subsection there for Supplies: There was \$27,300 more spent last year compared to what was budgeted. Was that because of COVID as well?

B. DAVIS: Purchased Services, is that what you're saying?

L. EVANS: Supplies.

B. DAVIS: Oh, Supplies.

The increase of \$27,300 reflects higher field supplies for drinking-water program equipment

and climate program equipment. That's based on COVID-19 protective equipment as well.

L. EVANS: Right, exactly. Okay.

In the same subsection 01 for Professional Services, there is \$129,300 more budgeted this year compared to what was spent last year. Can you explain this?

B. DAVIS: The Professional Services actually is going to decrease based on what was spent in the revised budget. Funding is down to reflect the approval of the amount of year two of the Defence Research and Development Canada as well as community flood risk awareness index model project. That's where one of the Professional Services is. The revised number for the previous year, for last year, was \$150,000 less based on lower consultant costs and lower costs for community flood risk awareness index modelling. That's partially offset by higher costs for hurricane forecasting and weather forecasting.

L. EVANS: Okay.

You kind of lost me there.

B. DAVIS: Is that as clear as mud or what?

L. EVANS: I kind of zoned out at one point, sorry.

That's what *Hansard* is for, right?

B. DAVIS: Exactly, but we'll also give you the book, too.

L. EVANS: Down in the bottom there, the lower part, 01, Revenue - Federal, what was included here and why is expected revenue set to decline?

B. DAVIS: The decrease in revenue of \$26,600 was based on forecast budget reduction from year one of the Defence Research and Development Canada as well as community flood risk awareness model. That's why it's decreased down. We project the revenue to be down.

L. EVANS: To be down, okay.

For revenue under provincial, what is included here and why is the expected revenue set to decline? Is it the same?

B. DAVIS: The revenue for revised 2020-2021 was increased by \$1.135 million. That's based on results of invoices that were previously invoiced that we received. Revenue collected in 2019-20 was \$1.039 million and the revenue collected in 2020-2021 was \$1.4 million. Slightly above budgeted. That's why that number is more than we budgeted for last year.

L. EVANS: Okay.

Moving on to section 2.2.02, Water Quality Agreement. Under subsection 01, Salaries, there is \$69,800 more budgeted this year compared to what was spent last year. Can you explain this one?

B. DAVIS: What we budgeted in 2020-2021, we're down about \$3,000, which reflects the elimination of funding for the 27th pay period and additional funding for the approved wage increase. That's what made it a little less than it was budgeted for, but it's up from what actually was revised last year.

L. EVANS: Okay.

Under subsection 01, continuing on, Transportation and Communications: There is \$48,500 more budgeted this year compared to what was spent last year. Can you explain this as well?

B. DAVIS: The decrease for what was actually revised last year from the budget was \$47,500, lower travel costs due to COVID. What we were estimating this year is based on the fact that we anticipate that it's going to be an increase of about \$1,000 based on future travel costs related to water quality and monitoring fieldwork, because you're going to have to do that now after COVID. We're going to get back to normal is what we're assuming here.

L. EVANS: Subsection 01, continuing on, Purchased Services: There is \$29,400 more spent last year compared to what was budgeted. Can you explain this?

B. DAVIS: The increase of \$29,400 over budgeted was based on higher expenses for ambient water sampling due to Environment and Climate Change Canada's laboratories being closed due to COVID-19. They agreed to pick up the funding on the private lab as well, so you'll see that coming off somewhere else down the road here as revenue coming in.

L. EVANS: Okay. I guess that will change once COVID is over.

B. DAVIS: Correct.

L. EVANS: Yeah, okay.

Continuing on down at the bottom there, 01 revenue for federal: There's \$48,300 less revenue budgeted this year than it was for last year. Can you explain this?

B. DAVIS: So that's an adjustment between federal and provincial revenues. It accurately reflects the revenue received, not what we thought we were going to get.

L. EVANS: Okay.

In the last one, Revenue - Provincial: There's \$481,600 more revenue taken in last year compared to what was budgeted. Can you explain this increase?

B. DAVIS: The increase of \$64,600 reflects an adjustment of \$48,300 between the federal and provincial revenue and also reflects corrected provincial revenue plus an increase of \$16,300 based on the anticipated revenue for this fiscal year.

L. EVANS: Okay.

CHAIR: Thank you.

2.1.01 to 2.3.01, further questions?

MHA Dinn.

J. DINN: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Under Grants and Subsidies in 2.1.01, what was the money paid out for last year?

B. DAVIS: The –

J. DINN: No, I'm sorry, none of the money was paid out last year, why was that?

B. DAVIS: There was no distribution of grants for provincial waste management projects. The unused funding will be transferred to this year, as you see in the Estimates there. That was based on the department's plan to close – for landfill closures but that didn't happen.

J. DINN: Okay.

That's why none of it was spent?

B. DAVIS: Correct.

J. DINN: Because of landfill closures or ...?

B. DAVIS: Yes because there was none that was done last year.

J. DINN: Okay.

Explain that?

B. DAVIS: There were no grants to provincial waste management projects based on – I'm going to say COVID but Dan can jump in here. It's an application-based process.

J. DINN: So no grants were paid out because landfills were closed, there was no need to pay –

D. MICHELSEN: Yeah, we've got two funds really to fund waste management. It's the federal gas tax program and then we have this provincial money. This provincial money covers things that the federal gas tax doesn't. One of the things that the federal gas tax doesn't, it will pay for new infrastructure for new landfills and things like that, but it doesn't pay for the actual closure of the former sites. That's going in and basically compacting, grading, putting up berms, all that kind of stuff. None of that was done last year, but we do have a new plan that we're rolling out this year to spend this year's and last year's money.

J. DINN: Okay, that makes sense. Now I understand.

Then that accounts for the fluctuations – you explained the fluctuations, you're going to be going at that this year, fair enough.

Thank you.

Under 2.2.01, Water Resources Management. Is it possible to have an update on the implementation of the regional water and waste water operations pilot program? What progress has been made on developing a drinking water quality action program?

B. DAVIS: The short answer I guess is it's still in process. The action plan is making its way through the process.

Dan, if you want to provide a little bit of an update on where it's to, but it's still working its way through the system.

D. MICHELSEN: We've done a lot of work on the plan. We're at the stage now where we're going to go out for public consultations before finalizing and moving it forward. Stay tuned, you should see something through Public Engagement fairly soon on consultations on water quality action.

J. DINN: Okay, thank you.

CHAIR: The Chair recognizes Mr. Dutton.

S. DUTTON: I think at the start of your question you were asking about the regional operators program.

J. DINN: Yes.

S. DUTTON: There was a mandate letter, a commitment to continue that program, that was also in the previous minister's mandate letter and they're funded for this fiscal year; received special assistance grants in what's now the Department of Municipal and Provincial Affairs. Future year funding will be subject to future budget decisions.

J. DINN: Thank you.

We had some discussion on the flood-risk mapping for the Churchill River, I'm just wondering if we could have an update on flood-risk mapping, what actions are being done or planned with the federal government? Which locations other than, I guess, Churchill River are next on the priority list for flood-risk mapping?

B. DAVIS: Thank you for the question.

Obviously, we talked a little bit about how important it is for flood-risk mapping, not just on the Churchill River as my hon. colleague from Lake Melville was talking about, but there are many other rivers and tributaries that are going to be impacted with that. There is some federal funding associated with that. We're working through processes to try to do as much – I've got a focus on trying to spend as much federal money as we possibly can – whatever we can try to do to areas.

I think Dan or Sean can jump in on a couple of the areas, not necessarily the areas but the process from there.

CHAIR: The Chair is recognizing Mr. Dutton.

S. DUTTON: Thank you.

I just wanted to note that the minister's mandate letter also committed to work on flood-risk mapping for the Humber and Exploits Rivers as well and that work on both of those has been completed.

J. DINN: And the results are available or – the results of that?

CHAIR: Dan Michielsen.

D. MICHELSEN: Yes, so we've provided the information to the local affected municipalities and, yes, the information is available. We can certainly point you to that and provide that information for you.

J. DINN: Thank you.

How many inspectors are there for monitoring aquaculture sites? How often are these locations inspected and do they undergo regular checks?

B. DAVIS: (Inaudible.)

D. MICHELSEN: We don't have any specific officers as of yet. One is in the process of being hired now for the Grieg project.

There was a commitment, as you recall, in the release of the environmental impact assessment for Grieg that they would have to fund a monitor

for 10 years. That was tied into the use of the sea cages. We've been informed by Grieg that they expect to move that later this summer – expect to move, I guess, their fish into the sea cages, so hiring is now ongoing for that position.

We do have a number of arrangements with Service NL to use the environmental protection officers for enforcement of the *Environmental Protection Act* and the *Water Resources Act* and the general provisions under such. So they are available for enforcement. We also have pesticides enforcement officers who do the inspections on behalf of Health Canada in terms of the applications of pesticides that are applied at the aquaculture sites.

J. DINN: Are the environmental officers federal or provincial?

D. MICHELSEN: Provincial.

J. DINN: They're not the same now as the enforcement officers, like with Wildlife and so on and so forth, right?

D. MICHELSEN: No, those are the environmental protection officers with Service NL.

We do have a new agreement with the enforcement officers with FFA to enforce provisions under the *Water Resources Act* as well as the *Environmental Protection Act*, but that's more dedicated for remote, illegal dumping on remote roads and things of that nature.

J. DINN: Okay.

How many inspectors are there, again, did you say?

D. MICHELSEN: There are 14 with Service NL. We have two pesticides enforcement officers, then there will be the new position that's dedicated to Grieg, as well FFA has 95, I think, officers around the province that are available to enforce that legislation as needed.

J. DINN: Thank you.

When it comes to the on-site, land-based portion of a project, and I'm thinking here of the

smoltification facility in Marystown recently identified on May 21 that there was water that was released in an embankment behind their plant. There are pictures that appeared of it and, of course, this happened before the 21st. I don't know if there were actually one or two releases of water.

Would the officers, then, be responsible for checking on this as well if there's some effluent that might be going out into the system that might contain ISA or anything else or diseased fish? I'm just wondering how that would be monitored.

B. DAVIS: We've had officers that looked at that particular spill or what you're saying is a potential spill. It was just – I can't say just; it was an old water tank facility. There was no effluent from the site itself. They've done an assessment on that.

I don't know if Dan wants to add anything to that.

CHAIR: Dan Michielsen.

D. MICHELSEN: Yes, so that particular incident, we did receive a complaint, an environmental protection officer from Service NL was dispatched to the site and they did an investigation. Basically, in the commissioning of the holding tanks, they were filled with municipal water to do pressure testing and vessel testing and then the water was subsequently released to, I guess, the parking lot which rolled down over the hill and into the river. We're currently still dealing with the actions on that, but that's basically what the result of that one was.

CHAIR: Thank you.

2.1.01 to 2.3.01 inclusive.

Back to you, MHA Evans.

L. EVANS: (Inaudible.)

CHAIR: You're done with that.

Mr. Dinn, do you still have further questions on that particular section?

J. DINN: Yes, Mr. Chair, I do.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you.

J. DINN: With regard to that, if they're emptying tanks, what are the protocols around that? I'm assuming that if they're cleaning out a tank or the fish died off, whatever, would the water be drained there or are there protocols around the disposal of any waste water, especially if the waste water contains fish remains?

B. DAVIS: There are absolutely protocols about the discharge of effluent. In this case, there was an investigation done and it was municipal water that was released, as Dan had said, that went over the parking lot and down an embankment into the river. They are still continuing to look into that, but I think that was the long and short of what happened in that situation.

Am I correct on that, Dan?

CHAIR: Dan Michielsen.

D. MICHELSEN: Yes, that was the case in this case. We do have the provisions under the Environmental Control Water and Sewage Regulations and the parameters that are attached with that. The proponent would be responsible for treating the effluent to meet those standards before it's discharged into the environment.

J. DINN: So it would be discharged into the river, though, it would be treated and then discharged, or would they be required to take it to a landfill, for example?

D. MICHELSEN: If it meets the water and sewer control regulations and the limits attached to that piece of legislation, then it could be discharged into the environment.

J. DINN: Okay.

Transportation, you mentioned the use of helicopters. What would helicopters be used for under Transportation?

B. DAVIS: For example, on the Churchill River, looking at the monitoring sites that would be there. I think Dan can probably give a little bit

more detail that they would go into, where they would actually be utilized on a more regular basis.

D. MICHELSEN: We maintain, like the minister said, a significant amount of environmental monitoring equipment in remote locations, so it would be used to access that. As well as we use helicopters, when needed, to conduct community water sampling in remote communities. So instead of having to go to communities and spend a day or so to take a quick sample, there would be a drop-in in each community to take the sample. A much more efficient process in these remote communities.

J. DINN: Okay. There's no option or there's no scenario where maybe the use of drones and that could be used instead of that. Really, what you're saying, you need physical boots on the ground to go and do this work.

D. MICHELSEN: Yeah.

J. DINN: Okay.

With regard to – I think you talked about, in the federal revenue – forecast flood risk, has there been any assessment done or analysis done of, let's say, climate change in terms of hurricanes, the intensity, flood risks and so on and so forth, and preparedness for this and mitigation measures? I assume a lot of low-lying communities are going to be significantly impacted.

CHAIR: The Chair is recognizing the minister.

B. DAVIS: Our flood risk mapping does include climate change forecasting in it as well and does reflect that. My understanding is we're one of the few provinces that do that.

Susan, if you'd like to jump in.

CHAIR: Susan Squires.

S. SQUIRES: Thank you.

We have a few avenues to kind of consider that information. We have updated climate change projections that we incorporate in a few places and we provide it to proponents of environmental assessments so they can consider

it in their infrastructure. We also consider it in municipal infrastructure through a climate lens. The minister is correct; we were one of the first jurisdictions to require a climate scenario in a flood-risk map so that they don't just do historic projections, they also include a sensitivity analysis for climate change.

You're correct; our predicted weather patterns are likely to change in the sense of larger hurricanes – we have a hurricane alert system now, a recent addition as well – increased coastal erosion, increased sea level, certainly changes in when we receive our precipitation. We are aware of all that and that is certainly addressed in some of our adaptation initiatives.

J. DINN: Thank you.

Under 2.2.02, Water Quality Agreement, Salaries, were there any vacancies there? I know you talked about it had to do with the elimination of the 27th pay period mitigated by the step increase, but were there any vacancies?

B. DAVIS: No, I don't think there are any vacancies in that shop.

J. DINN: Thank you.

Under 2.3.0.1, Environmental Assessment and Sustainable Development, could the minister provide us with an update on the environmental assessment process review and also the Waste Management Strategy review? You can give a treetop now or in some detail later (inaudible) –

B. DAVIS: For the waste management review, that's been completed. We're going through the recommendations. We're looking at opportunities for us to – for lack of a better term – pick the low-hanging fruit that we can move on quicker rather than trying to wait to get the full recommendations moved forward. That's in process and I would say stay tuned for that.

Your second question was ...?

J. DINN: The environmental assessment process review.

B. DAVIS: We're in the process of doing that review. I don't have an update for you today, but we'll keep you in mind very quickly when we

get to a point where I can let you know how that's progressing.

J. DINN: Thank you.

CHAIR: The Chair is recognizing Mr. Dutton.

S. DUTTON: I just wanted to note that the *What We Heard* document from the EA review is available online.

J. DINN: Thank you very much.

Are there any plans or strategies coming to address illegal dumping, either in clearing up existing dumpsites or in terms of prevention? If I may add, I can tell you I cleaned up a dumpsite out by the North Harbour River. The regional waste area, I think, is over around St. Joseph's, but trying to arrange to drop off the dumped waste material – we gathered three pickup loads – was a difficult process. I understand why people decide to go down to a walk-in point to a river and dump it. I'm just wondering how are we going to address that. It's becoming a problem.

B. DAVIS: Thank you for the question.

It's an issue. Every piece of waste that we find starts in someone's hand for sure. I think FFA has 95 enforcement officers. That's new. That's going to help us try to get rid of some of the illegal dumping or at least mitigate some of that. It's not going to stop unless people want to make that decision themselves.

You're correct; we have to make it easy for people to get rid of that garbage, but in all fairness it become more of a challenge when you're trying to clean up what you did, and thank you for what you've done out there. Three pickup truck loads, volunteers doing garbage that they didn't put into the environment is – glad that you did, but very sad that you had to.

J. DINN: And a salmon river too.

B. DAVIS: Yes.

J. DINN: Maybe it's worthwhile to even have the signs. I know we did it through – I forget which department – not a department, but a

company over on the West Coast. You pack in, pack out your litter – pack it out.

DFO has reported that salmon stocks on the Conne River and Little River were on the verge of extinction. Have any mitigation plans been put in place or are any currently in the works by Indigenous authorities, the province or federal government? Other than that, please don't tell me that you're looking at growing them in sea cages.

B. DAVIS: I think that's FFA.

J. DINN: FFA, thank you. That's an easy one. We sort of talked about that. I wondered if you might be involved, too.

When Grieg or any other open-pen aquaculture companies first set up, are these companies obligated to do baseline assessment of the wild salmon population and the ecosystem? That's the first one.

B. DAVIS: Can you say that again, sorry? I missed the first little bit there.

J. DINN: If you look at any open-pen aquaculture, are they required to do a baseline study of the existing wild Atlantic salmon stocks in the area? We're planning on the West Coast to expand it, on the western part of the South Coast. Before we do it, are we looking at what's already in the rivers and doing an assessment?

B. DAVIS: I think they have to go through an environmental assessment process that's based on the legislation that we have in the House of Assembly.

I don't know if Dan wants to jump in.

D. MICHELSEN: I guess when the sea cages are tied to a hatchery, then they need to go through the EA process. We rely on the government agencies that are responsible for salmon stocks and those to sit on our EA committees and provide the terms of reference for what's required in those EA reviews. While we function as, I guess, the chair of the EA committee, most of the technical information that is required is developed through them. So as we move forward, the intention is to look at those experts to provide that.

J. DINN: Okay.

CHAIR: Mr. Dinn, do you still have further questions?

J. DINN: I just have two questions and I'm done, if I may.

CHAIR: Okay, because I'm just reminding the Committee that we have 24 minutes left to the three-hour allotment for this evening.

J. DINN: These are just two quick ones.

Salaries, slightly under budget. Vacant positions or just to do with the elimination of the 27th pay period?

B. DAVIS: (Inaudible.)

J. DINN: Yeah.

B. DAVIS: Yeah, the elimination of the 27th pay period and the wage increase.

J. DINN: The step increase, is it?

B. DAVIS: Yeah, the step increase.

J. DINN: Thank you.

Why did we only receive a fraction of the provincial revenue we were expecting last year?

B. DAVIS: The decrease of \$177,500 reflects no revenue from Grieg NL with respect to what Dan spoke about earlier, the environmental scientist position, which will be in the budget this year.

J. DINN: Okay.

That's it, Chair.

CHAIR: Thank you.

If the Committee is ready for the question.

Shall 2.1.01 to 2.3.01 inclusive carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, ‘nay.’

Carried.

On motion, subheads 2.1.01 through 2.3.01 carried.

CHAIR: Can I have the Clerk call the last subheads, please?

CLERK: Climate Change, 3.1.01 to 3.2.01 inclusive.

CHAIR: Shall 3.1.01 to 3.2.01 inclusive carry?

MHA Evans.

L. EVANS: Thank you.

Looking at 3.1.01, Climate Change, just some general questions.

Do you have any joint initiatives that are cost shared, say, with the federal government or Indigenous groups that are looking at the reduction of impacts of climate change?

B. DAVIS: The short answer is, yes, we do have co-operative programs with both the federal and Indigenous groups. I think Susan can probably give you a little bit more detail, but we can provide you the programs there. They’re online but, I mean, it’s nice to have them looked at that way.

But it’s best to go to Susan on this one.

S. SQUIRES: Under not this budget but the next one, 3.2.01, is where we get into our Low Carbon Economy Leadership Fund. We have programs under that for mitigation of impacts, such as around energy efficiency, for example, and fuel switching. Those types of things are addressed in that program.

L. EVANS: Okay, thank you.

With initiatives, I know with a lot of initiatives – no, I’ll save it for that section.

Going under subsection 01, Salaries: There was \$36,300 less spent compared to what was budgeted. Can you explain this?

B. DAVIS: Yes, that reflects the vacant policy and program specialist position, partially offset by the 2 per cent salary increase.

L. EVANS: Okay, thank you.

I’m starting to notice I have trouble with numbers. Not with numbers, but with money. I don’t think they should put me in charge of any kind of accounting.

B. DAVIS: You’re doing great. You’re doing great.

L. EVANS: Under subsection 10, Grants and Subsidies: There is \$1,400,000 budgeted this year compared to what was budgeted last year – \$1,400,000 more. Can you explain and give us Grant and Subsidies breakdowns?

B. DAVIS: Yes, so this one is a pretty easy one to breakdown. The increase of \$1.4 million is based on the one-time initiative for transitioning from – announced in the budget – oil heat homes to electric homes. That’s \$1 million. The EV adoption accelerator, which is the electric vehicles, for \$500,000. That’s partially offset by one-time funding of \$100,000 that went towards the Harris Centre before.

L. EVANS: Okay.

Moving on down to 3.1.02, Low Carbon Economy, subsection 10. Grants and Subsidies: Last year there was –

B. DAVIS: Can you say the section again, sorry? You’re too quick.

L. EVANS: 3.1.02.

I have no trouble with the numbers it’s just when it’s money.

3.1.02, Low Carbon Economy.

B. DAVIS: Yes.

L. EVANS: Under subsection 10. Grants and Subsidies.

B. DAVIS: Yes.

L. EVANS: Last year there was \$10,196,300 less spent compared to what was budgeted. Can you explain this and give us a breakdown of the Grants and Subsidies?

B. DAVIS: The decrease of \$10 million was based on the budget is due to lower grants costs due to delays caused by COVID-19. That affected it there, but obviously, the comparable side to that is that there's an increase of \$6.1 million that also reflects the Low Carbon Economy Leadership Fund, as well there, to equate to the \$20 million that we're budgeting this year.

If you want more details on that, I can get Susan to jump in as well.

L. EVANS: Okay.

Yeah, just going on along those lines. This year there was \$20,168,400 budgeted, right?

B. DAVIS: Correct.

L. EVANS: Yeah. Is there a breakdown of that in the binder?

B. DAVIS: Susan, do you want to (inaudible)?

S. SQUIRES: Sure.

This is the multi-year funding. It was scheduled to end in 2022. Because of COVID and the delays, we worked with the federal government to actually extend it to end in 2024, because there were certainly some proponents who had some delays related to their project. The money is a total envelope of about \$89 million. It's planned to be spent, certainly, over the course of the time frame we have, but it can, as the minister pointed out, move from year to year.

There are six envelopes of money under that fund. Some are related to a specific project like oil-heated home efficiencies; other ones are adaptation initiatives. One of the biggest envelopes in that pot we have is the Climate Change Challenge Fund. That's a broad-based fund where anyone from a municipality, a non-profit right to a corporation or industrial facility, could put in a proposal to spend money.

We have announced some, actually, recently, just a few weeks ago, from expenditures for that. Some of, certainly, that \$3.7 million in grants that we put out last year relate to that, and we're anticipating spending another \$20 million out of that this year.

L. EVANS: Okay.

B. DAVIS: And we can give you a breakdown of (inaudible) just so, MHA Evans, that you can get to see that. We'll have that for you in your binder as well.

L. EVANS: Okay.

For this year, \$11,035,100 in revenue is projected. Can you explain that?

B. DAVIS: Yes. The revenue increased by –

L. EVANS: Projected.

B. DAVIS: Yeah, projected to increase by \$2.7 million. This reflects anticipated revenue from the Low Carbon Economy Leadership Fund. I think that's the question you're asking on that one.

L. EVANS: There's a projection of \$11 million.

B. DAVIS: Yeah, it's just increased from the \$8.36 million that we had budgeted in 2020-2021.

CHAIR: The Chair is recognizing Mr. Dutton.

S. DUTTON: Again, as Susan noted, this is a multi-year program, so funding that's not spent in one year is carried over to the next. Similarly, the projected revenue from the federal government offsetting that is also carried forward. We would expect to allocate the full \$89.4 million over the life of the agreement.

L. EVANS: Okay.

I'll move on to, 3.2.01, Policy, Planning and Natural Areas.

Just a general question: Can you give us an update on the ATV trail that was approved for Main Brook?

B. DAVIS: Yes, I can give you an update on the trail from the perspective of this department. That's a question that's better suited for – because it's going through a provincial park, which lies within TCAR. The minister has the approval or has the – what's the right word – ability to approve trails through provincial parks. In this case, from the 20 or 25 different trails that were going around there, in that case, it was in that case to make a single trail.

L. EVANS: Okay.

Under subsection 01, Salaries, there's \$51,500 more budgeted this year compared to last year. Can you explain this?

B. DAVIS: Yes. That reflects salary and step increases, which are partially offset by the removal of the 27th pay period.

L. EVANS: Okay.

B. DAVIS: It's salary increases, but because we lose that pay period, it's a little less than it would normally have been.

L. EVANS: Okay.

Subsection 01, Purchased Services, \$48,700 spent less last year compared to what was budgeted. Can you explain that?

B. DAVIS: Lower costs for copier, wilderness and remote first aid training at the two ecological reserves, Mistaken Point, and also the reimbursement of Mistaken Point Cape Race Heritage Incorporated.

It would probably be a little bit better to let Susan jump in and explain the details of that because it's a sort of an in and out sort of thing.

L. EVANS: Okay.

S. SQUIRES: The minister is correct. I guess the lion's share of that decline there is the fact that Mistaken Point Cape Race Heritage Incorporated runs the interpretative centre down at Mistaken Point and they were closed for a good portion of the year because of COVID. They collect money and we reimburse them for some of their costs associated with running that building.

L. EVANS: Okay.

Subsection on the bottom there, 02, Revenue - Provincial: There was \$22,000 more collected last year compared to what was budgeted. Can you explain that?

B. DAVIS: That resulted from a receipt of a payment from an invoice related to a previous fiscal year.

L. EVANS: Okay.

That takes me up to the end of my questions.

CHAIR: Okay. No further questions.

MHA Dinn, 3.1.01 to 3.2.01 inclusive.

J. DINN: I'm going to work backwards from 3.2.01.

B. DAVIS: Sorry, what number?

J. DINN: 3.2.01.

B. DAVIS: I was just going forward.

J. DINN: Policy, Planning and Natural Areas. The Member for Torngat Mountains has asked a few questions, so I'm just going to pick up the last few that I had there.

Spending on Supplies was lower than expected last year. Why was this? COVID or other reasons? COVID?

B. DAVIS: Five would be, yeah, COVID.

J. DINN: Okay, thank you.

Under Purchased Services in 3.1.02, the Low Carbon Economy.

B. DAVIS: Okay, so previous. Give me a second to get there. You said Professional Services?

J. DINN: Purchased Services: \$80,000 was spent last year, but nothing is budgeted this year. Why is that?

B. DAVIS: Susan.

CHAIR: Susan Squires.

S. SQUIRES: This was a one-time project that came to its natural end. It's a risk assessment where we used climate change projections to complete risk assessments for various sectors within the provincial economy, so that included fisheries, forestry, agriculture as well as municipal government.

We used the Canadian Council of Ministers of the Environment guidance document on climate risk assessments and we work with them to look at risks to those sectors under the varying IPCC scenarios of climate increases, so increasing of less than two degrees up to potentially a four-degree global change in temperature. They looked at things like infrastructure damage, increased weather, a limited ability to change under those circumstances and sometimes a new species, if you're talking about fisheries, for example, forestry, right down to municipal challenges of less snow clearing and some of the benefits. That is a report. We hired a consultant and that report is available online.

J. DINN: Okay, so we can get that through your department online.

S. SQUIRES: Yeah.

J. DINN: Thank you.

With regard to Grants and Subsidies, you talked about, I think, the money to – I don't know if it was here, but money to convert from oil to electricity. What has the take-up been like on that?

B. DAVIS: The oil to electricity?

J. DINN: Yeah.

B. DAVIS: That's a new program we announced in this budget. As soon as you vote for the budget now, we'll start the process of getting that out there.

J. DINN: Has there been an interest in it?

B. DAVIS: Yes.

J. DINN: Okay. I'm just curious if there's hesitancy in terms of where electricity might go.

I have heard one person who's on oil and not really interested in going to electricity because they're not sure where the prices are going to land, right?

B. DAVIS: Right. No, and I can appreciate people's concern. It's sort of going to dovetail with respect to announcements about rate mitigation as well. Obviously, rate mitigation is an important piece and people are looking at that before they make those decisions for sure.

J. DINN: Perfect.

3.1.01, Climate Change, is the department currently looking at any carbon capture technology projects?

B. DAVIS: Sorry?

J. DINN: Is the department – it's been a long day – currently looking at any carbon capture technology projects?

B. DAVIS: I'd like to go to Susan on that one, but we're always looking for opportunities where we can avail of things like that.

I'll go to Susan on this.

S. SQUIRES: Our current funding portfolio doesn't – it really focuses on mitigation as it relates to energy efficiency, fuel switching. We have done some minor carbon capture through the Climate Change Challenge Fund and that has been really around people wanting to plant trees in carbon storage that way.

We don't have any funding envelopes for larger scale carbon capture, but certainly we're working with our federal colleagues. There were some new initiatives announced in their budget for this year and we've certainly heard from them on some of that. They are working with us on some conversations about where that might go.

J. DINN: I know there's been some discussion or use of carbon capture in manufacturing concrete, for example, as one way. Now, it would require significant amounts but still maybe it's a project worth funding, too.

I want to come back to planting trees in a minute. What specific plans does this department have to meet its own target of reaching net zero? I think you talked a little bit about that earlier. Specifically, are there any new initiatives that are in the works? I know you talked about you had targets for 2030, 2040 and there's a plan in place. Are there any specific – I guess if you had to highlight some of the ones that you're most excited by or figured have the best – what would they be?

B. DAVIS: I guess the easiest answer – and I will throw it back to Susan who is the resident expert on this, but all of the programs that we have with the federal government where we're utilizing, whether it be the Climate Change Challenge Fund or our energy efficiency programs that we have, they're all about trying to reduce the greenhouse gas emissions.

One of the things I'm quite happy about is the transition from oil heat to electric heat as well as trying to get people to – because transportation is a big concern for emissions and reducing that, so if we can get people to consider – and it's happening naturally, but if we can sort of move them a little quicker to look at EVs, electric vehicles as an option, by putting things in place and partnering with the federal government and others to make that more affordable for people to make that, I think that's an important initiative that we can deal with.

I'd like to throw it back to our resident expert on this because I think there's a lot more we can be doing and we're going to continue to do that.

S. SQUIRES: You're correct, there are actions that need to be happening across the board in every piece of the pie that kind of makes up our total GHG emission portfolio.

I would echo the minister, transportation right now makes up 36 per cent of our GHG emissions and on-road transportation, like the vehicles we drive, are a substantial piece of that 36. That's a piece of infrastructure that we're replacing on a shorter time frame than, for example, potentially even a heating system in a building or a large industrial processing facility. We can make a lot more immediate gains when we look at things like electrifying our transportation network and our vehicles. That's

one that's pretty exciting. It's actually pretty low cost because we look at this as well, not just your total GHG reduction but your cost per ton and electric vehicles are typically lower cost per ton in some larger infrastructure projects, so that's an exciting area.

B. DAVIS: (Inaudible) that sounds happy-clappy, but at the end of the day that's what we want to try to encourage people to do.

J. DINN: That's where I'm going. Planting trees is great, no arguing with that, but that by itself is not going to solve the problems we have.

B. DAVIS: No, you're absolutely right.

J. DINN: I know there's been some – you look at the use of cladding on – like, people would put solar panels, and now the technology exists that you can actually – the cladding that you put on, they generate electricity themselves.

I'm also thinking in terms of, you know, we gave away our rail system, that was short sighted; short-term gain, long-term short sightedness. I often think, if you've driven out the highway, as I have, peak hours, the amount of traffic that's coming in, but even having a light rail system, electric, that will bring people into the city, I don't know if that's even possible anymore but that's one option.

I was listening to the CBC *CrossTalk* and they were talking about the salmon angling. I'll leave it at this: One lady was talking about she would travel the upper part – the highlands, I guess, over on the Northern Peninsula where bog holes that had water 10 years ago are no longer, they're dry. One of the facts that by 2050 we'll be dealing with 40 per cent less fresh water in this planet, which is going to create significant problems.

I'm thinking here we're seeing invasive species, such as the deer tick and you look at the lime disease that comes with it and so on and so forth. I think in many ways, and my last word on this would be, we have to get to it. I'm sure there's going to be savings on snow clearing, but I think there's going to be a greater cost to our economy as this planet warms.

That, Chair, is all I have to say.

B. DAVIS: Let's vote for the budget and we can get going at it.

CHAIR: Thank you.

B. DAVIS: Did Perry have anything there?

CHAIR: Pardon?

B. DAVIS: Did Perry have anything?

CHAIR: I'm looking at the time here, so if the hon. Member has a quick question I certainly don't mind.

P. TRIMPER: Let's try two or three quick questions.

An opening statement, just for our colleagues over there who are of like mind to myself. Interesting statement out of the World Science community just a few days ago that the world is now at carbon dioxide levels 50 per cent more than preindustrial levels. We have now hit that threshold. So we have to get real nimble real fast.

Quickly: Was the department able to provide any financial support to the Harris Centre this year under the climate change, economy, society initiative? \$100,000 there last year.

B. DAVIS: We did give \$100,000 last year. I'm not sure if we've given any this year yet.

OFFICIAL: No.

B. DAVIS: No, it hasn't been in the budget this year. That's not to say –

P. TRIMPER: So it's not in it, or you're going to still look at it or ...?

B. DAVIS: I'm not sure if we can look at it at this point. I don't know. We can take that under advisement now. I know we had a conversation yesterday or today.

P. TRIMPER: I just keep pushing them because it's an interesting collection of folks from the green side to the economic side and so on, and I think there could be some really good direction there for us.

I just wanted to add on my colleague's point here. I'm involved in a program in New Brunswick with Community Forests International on carbon sequestration in woodlots. I think it's an interesting opportunity for us, particularly in association with the NASP and other Crown land, if we could structure some of our regulatory situations so that we could actually get carbon credits for just saying: We're going to leave that forest there and we're not going to cut it. You can set it up for 10-year increments, or even longer for the NASP, should they be there forever. Again, it's a carbon-credit opportunity.

Thanks.

CHAIR: Thank you.

Is the Committee ready for the question?

Shall 3.1.01 to 3.2.01 inclusive carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, subheads 3.1.01 through 3.2.01 carried.

CHAIR: Shall the total carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, 'nay.'

Carried.

On motion, Department of Environment and Climate Change, total heads, carried.

CHAIR: Shall I report the Estimates of the Department of Environment and Climate Change carried?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: All those against, ‘nay.’

Carried.

On motion, Estimates of the Department of Environment and Climate Change carried without amendment.

CHAIR: This is the last department with regard to the Resource Committee. I certainly want to thank the Committee for their involvement and participation in the sessions.

I’m just going to give MHA Evans just a minute to pass some closing remarks.

L. EVANS: Yes, just a minute.

I just want to thank everyone for all your time and effort. It’s greatly appreciated.

I just want to note, too, regarding the spill at Postville. I am waiting on a federal government report where they took samples and did an investigation.

Anyway, thank you so much. It’s late at night and all this hard work I know it’s greatly appreciated. Thank you.

CHAIR: Thank you.

MHA Dinn, just a closing remark.

J. DINN: I got my closing remarks in at the beginning, Sir. I was trying to get ahead of it. But thank you for your work. You can count on me; I’ll have a few more questions in Question Period for the minister.

B. DAVIS: Absolutely.

CHAIR: Minister, do you want to say some final ...?

B. DAVIS: Do you, Perry?

P. TRIMPER: The Committee doesn’t allow me –

CHAIR: He’s not a Member of the Committee.

B. DAVIS: Oh, sorry.

I’d just like to say thank you to the Committee Members for coming. Thank you to Perry because he can’t say thank you himself.

More importantly, I just want to say thank you to the fantastic staff. I know how hard they work and it shows on a night like this. The good opportunity for Estimates is that the Opposition and people in the public get to hear how skilled the staff are in each of the departments. We couldn’t do what we do without them. I know you guys couldn’t do what you guys do over there either without them. So I just want to say a big thank you to them.

Thank you, Mr. Chair, for running the Resource Committee so adequately.

CHAIR: Thank you.

I’m looking for someone to move an adjournment.

MHA Hogan, thank you.

The meeting is adjourned.

On motion, Committee adjourned *sine die*.