



**PROVINCE OF NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR
HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY**

First Session
Forty-Ninth General Assembly

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

June 12, 2019 - Issue 1

Department of Transportation and Works

Published under the authority of the Speaker of the House of Assembly
Honourable Perry Trimper, MHA

GOVERNMENT SERVICES COMMITTEE

Department of Transportation and Works

Chair: Pam Parsons, MHA

Members: Derek Bennett, MHA
Derrick Bragg, MHA
Alison Coffin, MHA
Elvis Loveless, MHA
Loyola O'Driscoll, MHA
Barry Petten, MHA
Sarah Stoodley, MHA

Clerk of the Committee: Sandra Barnes

Appearing:

Department of Transportation and Works

Hon. Steve Crocker, MHA for the District of Carbonear-Trinity-Bay de Verde, Minister

Eilanda Anderson, Executive Assistant

John Baker, Assistant Deputy Minister, Air and Marine Services

Greg Butler, Budget Manager

Joe Dunford, Assistant Deputy Minister, Operations

Tracy English, Assistant Deputy Minister, Strategic and Corporate Services

Cory Grandy, Assistant Deputy Minister, Infrastructure

Tracy King, Deputy Minister

Patrick Morrissey, Controller

Brian Scott, Director of Communications

Also Present

Paul Lane, MHA for the District of Mount Pearl-Southlands

Andrew Parsons, MHA

Ivan Morgan, Researcher, Third Party Office

Bradley Russell, Director of Policy and Research, Official Opposition Office

Pursuant to Standing Order 68, Andrew Parsons, MHA for Burgeo - La Poile, substitutes for Sarah Stoodley, MHA for Mount Scio.

Pursuant to Standing Order 68, Derek Bennett, MHA for Lewisporte - Twillingate, substitutes for Pam Parsons, MHA for Harbour Grace - Port de Grave.

The Committee met at 5:30 p.m. in the Assembly Chamber.

CLERK (Barnes): Good evening, everyone.

I'm the Clerk of the House. Before we get started, since this is the first meeting of the Government Services Committee for this General Assembly, we will need to elect a Chair and a Vice-Chair.

So, with that, I will call for nominations from the floor.

MR. A. PARSONS: I nominate Derek Bennett.

CLERK: He's substituting tonight for, I think, Ms. Parsons (inaudible).

MR. A. PARSONS: Okay. I nominate Pam Parsons then.

CLERK: Okay.

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CLERK: Okay, could I have a nomination for Vice-Chair, please?

MR. A. PARSONS: Elvis Loveless.

CLERK: No, it's usually a Member from the Opposition.

MR. A. PARSONS: Is it? Well, definitely Barry Petten.

CLERK: Mr. Petten?

Okay, so it's the Member for Conception Bay South.

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CLERK: As Mr. Bennett is substituting for Ms. Parsons, could you assume the Chair, please?

CHAIR (Bennett): Okay.

Good evening, everyone. We're here for the Estimates for Transportation and Works. We'll start off by asking the Members of the Committee and staffers to introduce themselves. We will start on the far end of the building.

So, when you're ready, Sir.

MR. MORGAN: Ivan Morgan, Researcher, NDP caucus.

MS. COFFIN: Alison Coffin, MHA, St. John's East - Quidi Vidi.

MR. RUSSELL: Brad Russell, Director of Research and Policy with the Official Opposition.

MR. PETTEN: Barry Petten, MHA for CBS.

MR. O'DRISCOLL: Loyola O'Driscoll, MHA for Ferryland District.

MR. LANE: Paul Lane, MHA for Mount Pearl - Southlands.

MR. LOVELESS: Elvis Loveless, MHA for Fortune Bay - Cape La Hune.

CHAIR: Just wait for your mics to come on.

MR. LANE: Okay, all right. I'll try again.

Paul Lane, MHA, District of Mount Pearl - Southlands.

MR. LOVELESS: Elvis Loveless, MHA for Fortune Bay - Cape La Hune.

MR. BRAGG: Derrick Bragg, MHA, Fogo Island - Cape Freels.

MR. A. PARSONS: Andrew Parsons, MHA, Burgeo - La Poile.

CHAIR: Thank you.

I'll ask the minister to introduce his staffers and then we'll (inaudible).

MR. CROCKER: I'll let the staff introduce themselves.

Steve Crocker, Minister of Transportation and Works.

MS. KING: Tracy King, Deputy Minister.

MR. MORRISSEY: Patrick Morrissey, Departmental Controller.

MS. ENGLISH: Tracy English, Assistant Deputy Minister of Corporate Services.

MS. ANDERSON: Eilanda Anderson, Executive Assistant to Minister Crocker.

MR. BAKER: John Baker, Assistant Deputy Minister of Air and Marine Services.

MR. DUNFORD: Joe Dunford, Assistant Deputy Minister of Operations.

MR. GRANDY: Cory Grandy, Assistant Deputy Minister of Infrastructure.

MR. SCOTT: Brian Scott, Director of Communications.

MR. BUTLER: Greg Butler, Manager of Budgeting.

CHAIR: Thank you.

For Hansard, each time someone goes to speak, we'll ask you to make sure you say who you are and make sure your light is on.

We'll start off with Minister Crocker for opening remarks. We'll give you up to 15 minutes.

CLERK: Will we be proceeding by subhead, so the first subhead would be Executive and Support Services?

CHAIR: If that's okay with the Members of the Committee, we can do 10 minutes. If we're finished the subhead, we can vote or however you guys want to do it.

CLERK: So we'll organize it by subhead? Okay.

Subhead 1.1.01 through 1.2.06 inclusive.

MR. CROCKER: I'm going to dispense of the opening remarks because I'm a big fan of anything that New England can possibly win; primarily Super Bowls, but I'll take a Stanley Cup. So, I'll dispense with opening remarks.

We will do our best to answer whatever questions we have tonight. We'll actually record anything that we can't answer and get you that information. We will provide an electronic copy of our Estimates to the three groups opposite at the end of the meeting.

Let's go.

CHAIR: We'll be starting from the Official Opposition. So, open with questioning and we'll give you 10 minutes.

CLERK: Fifteen to start.

MR. CROCKER: Fifteen minutes, sorry.

MR. PETTEN: Thank you very much.

I'm a New England fan, too. I'm a Boston Bruins fan, actually, and I like the Patriots, too.

I got some questions I'm going to ask first, if you don't mind –

MR. CROCKER: Sure.

MR. PETTEN: –before we get to line by line.

Minister, are you still applying zero-based budgeting? Is that still –

MR. CROCKER: We are.

MR. PETTEN: You are? Okay.

There are no errors in the public's Estimates book? That's just a question just for the record. Not that you know of?

MR. CROCKER: Certainly not that I'm aware of.

MR. PETTEN: No, that's right, okay.

Is the attrition plan still being followed?

MR. CROCKER: We are following our attrition plan.

MR. PETTEN: Are there any savings from this last – 2018-2019? Or any number of positions of savings, do you have an idea of that?

MR. CROCKER: I will be deferring some of these questions –

MR. PETTEN: Yes.

MR. CROCKER: – to staff, obviously.

Yes, \$809,000 would be our attrition target for this year.

MR. PETTEN: So, in savings, like a number of positions for this year past, do you have the positions or ...?

MR. CROCKER: Twenty-four less positions.

MR. PETTEN: Twenty-four less? Okay.

Minister, how many contractual positions do you have in the department?

MR. CROCKER: I can give you the breakdown if you wanted the full department and then you'll have all your employee numbers.

Right now, as of March 31, we had 1,653 employees. Sorry, 1,652; 84 of those would be 13-week assignments; 1,493 are unionized, non-management; 159 would be management.

Did that get your question, Barry?

MR. PETTEN: Yes, I'm good.

MR. CROCKER: Okay.

No, sorry, I didn't – 10, sorry. Contractual was your question.

MR. PETTEN: Right.

MR. CROCKER: There are 10 contractual employees.

MR. PETTEN: Ten?

MR. CROCKER: Yes.

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

MR. CROCKER: Yes; 517 temporary.

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

What did we say on positions going to be reduced through attrition, for this year, what's the plan, for this year coming?

MR. CROCKER: \$809,000 in 24 positions.

MR. PETTEN: Okay. That's the target for this year, right?

MR. CROCKER: Yes.

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

So, Minister, are there any vacancies in the department that are not being filled? Do you have an idea?

MR. CROCKER: No.

MR. PETTEN: No?

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, there maybe vacancies waiting, just your normal vacancy rate –

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

MR. CROCKER: – waiting to go to competition.

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

The Corner Brook hospital, when is the tenders for that going to be let, do you know or do you have an idea?

MR. CROCKER: We're in the RFP stage right now, that's being concluded, and we should have an announcement on the Corner Brook hospital in the coming weeks.

MR. PETTEN: Coming weeks? Okay.

Another thing, too, there's a contractual position within your department that was recently added.

We went through ATIPPA and I know the name of the person but that's irrelevant now, but we were trying to figure out – there was no competition for this position. It was a position of a senior person with a construction company in the city; I think you know who I'm talking about.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MR. PETTEN: There was no position; there was no competition that was noted. Where does that fit into the equation? How was that created? How did that come to be?

MR. CROCKER: That's a contractual position. That's a senior position coming in to fulfill some of the needs in management of highway construction. We're always looking for good talent; somebody who had left the private sector and was willing to come to the public sector.

MR. PETTEN: Right.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MR. PETTEN: There was a need. They had a (inaudible) shortage staff issue?

MR. CROCKER: Absolute need, yeah.

MR. PETTEN: What is the salary for that position?

MR. CROCKER: It's HL-23. We can get you the salary but it's HL-23.

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

One other thing I don't think I got clear on: What was the attrition savings from last year? We got it for this year's target, what was last year?

MR. CROCKER: Approximately \$1.2 million.

MR. PETTEN: \$1.2 million? Okay.

How many positions?

MR. CROCKER: In the department?

MR. PETTEN: No, the last year, the savings. Do you have the number of positions?

MR. CROCKER: Can we get you that number?

MR. PETTEN: Okay, sure.

One other quick question, too: The Shoal Harbour causeway in Clarendville, is there money set aside for engineering work on that? Is that in the Estimates?

MR. CROCKER: That's not a TW project, that's a municipal-owned piece of infrastructure.

MR. PETTEN: TW is attached to it. Is there some kind of –?

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, when the initial closure occurred –

MR. PETTEN: Right.

MR. CROCKER: – we provided some engineering support –

MR. PETTEN: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: – just as a gesture as much as anything. We did work with Clarendville on a few options that were available at the time. We looked at a Bailey bridge for example. It didn't work. We weren't able to get there, but my understanding that's a project that's been applied for under Municipal Capital Works.

MR. PETTEN: But there's no monies being provided by your department to this.

MR. CROCKER: It's not a TW asset.

MR. PETTEN: Okay. I'll get to some of the line-by-line stuff now.

In the 1.1.01, the Minister's Office, why the discrepancy in the Salaries? It's not a big amount but what would be the change in that?

MR. CROCKER: Would that be step for Nancy?

MR. PETTEN: From budgeted to revised (inaudible).

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, that would be step increases.

MR. PETTEN: Pardon me?

MR. CROCKER: Step increases.

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

There are still people getting step increases in the staff there, I'm assuming, obviously.

MR. CROCKER: Yes.

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

MR. CROCKER: I'm not sure exactly where the step is. It could be as simple as a step for the EA or – probably not the admin assistant but –

OFFICIAL: No, it's Eilanda.

MR. CROCKER: It's Eilanda. It's the EA.

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

Minister's Office, Professional Services; it's not that common to have Professional Services in the Minister's Office. Can you explain what that money was spent on? Again, it's not a big amount but it's just –

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, what line are we on?

MR. PETTEN: It was \$2,600 but it was not budgeted any other time.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, that was the minister's blind trust.

MR. PETTEN: What's that?

MR. CROCKER: The minister's blind trust.

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

MR. CROCKER: That was the legal fees for my blind trust.

MR. PETTEN: Gotcha.

Under Transportation and Communications as well, the revised 2018-'19 Estimates saw an increase of \$17,000 spending over what was budgeted. In 2019-'20 Estimates it is \$11,100 less than what was spent. What's the increase

over last year's budget amount? Why the increase, I guess.

MR. CROCKER: In travel?

MR. PETTEN: Yeah, Transportation and Communications. Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, higher-than-anticipated travel requirements. We're working with Infrastructure Canada and Transport Canada on some of the new bilateral agreements. It would have been primarily trips to Ottawa.

MR. PETTEN: Gotcha.

Under 1.2.01, Executive Support, Salaries, why has it increased by \$45,000? Was there a position added or ...?

MR. CROCKER: Step increases.

MR. PETTEN: Step increase for that too?

MR. CROCKER: The media relation's position was vacant for part of the year but it's now filled.

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

MR. CROCKER: So, previously, the position was vacant, now it's filled.

MR. PETTEN: You have a director of communications and a media relations person?

MR. CROCKER: Yes.

MR. PETTEN: Under 1.2.02, Administration and Support Services, under Salaries there was an increase of \$1,008,000 in spending over what was budgeted. This year it's back \$286,000 less than what was spent in 2018. Why the fluctuation?

MR. CROCKER: It's a 28 per cent overage. Overrun mainly due to attrition management target being taken from one activity. Savings had to be achieved in other areas of the department to offset the overrun and there are unfunded severance payments of \$208,000 included in this overrun.

MR. PETTEN: \$208,000 was severance?

MR. CROCKER: Overrun and severance payments of \$208,000.

MR. PETTEN: Right.

MR. CROCKER: This was a part of the overrun.

MR. PETTEN: But the rest that you're saying was through attrition? I'm not sure I follow it.

MR. CROCKER: Do you want to ...?

OFFICIAL: Yeah, sure.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

OFFICIAL: The attrition management target for last year was all booked in one activity and throughout the year it was put around the department as the attrition happened. This year, we were able to budget that amount in the correct places.

MR. CROCKER: Just to add to that, you'll probably recall that when the Estimates book was done last year we had just completed our restructuring. This year, a lot of the changes are realignment and adjusting budgets to reflect the changes that were made.

MR. PETTEN: Okay. I think I'm with you.

Under Transportation and Communications, Estimates saw a decrease of \$89,000 compared to what was budgeted. 2019-'20 Estimates have this line item as \$63,000 more than what was spent. Again, can you explain the discrepancy there?

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, the budget was rightsized during budget '19-'20. There are savings projected for 2018-'19; however, this could vary on demand for such things as inspections of Planning and Accommodations employees and travel for Occupational Health and Safety employees. Postage costs were reallocated in the fiscal year to 1.2.03, Strategic and Support Services.

MR. PETTEN: Professional Services; again, the discrepancy there has gone up. I guess the

increase of \$132,000 was spent and it's gone back to \$5,800. What was the reason? What was that \$132,000 amount?

MR. CROCKER: 132,000? Yeah, overruns are due to the mobility procurement advisory service required in 2018-'19. We actually secured a new mobility contract late last year or early this year?

OFFICIAL: Early this year.

MR. CROCKER: Early this year. Yeah.

OFFICIAL: (Inaudible) soon, but –

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

OFFICIAL: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: Which will achieve substantial savings for the province.

MR. PETTEN: On mobility?

MR. CROCKER: Yeah. We're going back to flip phones.

MR. PETTEN: Yeah, I was wondering what you were going to go back to, a land line.

MR. CROCKER: Just letting you know.

MR. PETTEN: Yeah, that was my next question.

OFFICIAL: It's more reliable.

MR. PETTEN: Under Purchased Services there was a decrease of \$17,000. Now, this year it's \$14,000 more than what was spent. I guess there are discrepancies in the purchased, yeah.

MR. CROCKER: The savings were savings on shredding and advertising costs. The \$14,000 this year is mostly due to advertising and shredding costs that were actually down in 2018-19.

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

And what's the revenue there, Minister? It went from \$2.3 million down to \$600,000. What was that?

MR. CROCKER: Sorry, \$2.3 million?

MR. PETTEN: The revenue line there, it is \$2.3 million revised, and it was at \$600,000 (inaudible) \$1.7 million.

MR. CROCKER: Sorry, I'm on the wrong page.

The revenue line is related to forfeited security bids, late salt delivery penalties, payments from other Crown corporations related to reimbursement of travel and salary costs for infrastructure projects in the prior year. The increase in revenue is mainly due to insurance claims. We had a claim, actually, on the Veteran that we recovered \$1.4 million.

MR. PETTEN: Oh, is that right? Do you get a lot of fees for late delivery of salt, a lot late payment fees?

MR. CROCKER: Well, we have toughened our policies on all contracts, actually, over the last couple of years, whether it's liquidated damages for construction projects or anything we do in order to keep a check on deliveries and make sure things are getting in on time. We have been a little more diligent and a little more forceful to our suppliers.

MR. PETTEN: So this triggers my mind to another thing – and of course, I'll be all over the place here. What was your spend on cold patch last year? What's your budget for cold patch?

MR. CROCKER: It's in the range of \$600,000 to \$700,000.

MR. PETTEN: That's what we spent in a cold patch?

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MR. PETTEN: Has that been reduced now since we've got the asphalt recycler? See where my interest levels go here.

MR. CROCKER: I'm not sure, actually – Joe?

OFFICIAL: We've been fairly consistent.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, that number has been fairly consistent.

MR. PETTEN: It's consistently that price even with the asphalt recycling?

MR. CROCKER: Even with the asphalt recycling. Asphalt recycling is good, but it really works only in the very shoulder season.

MR. PETTEN: Right.

MR. CROCKER: Because if you think about it, at that dead of winter, asphalt recycling is tough and as soon as we can get hot asphalt, as soon as the plants come up in late May, we switch to hot asphalt and we buy from local suppliers because – my opinion, obviously – the worst thing you can put in a pothole is cold patch.

MR. PETTEN: Yes.

MR. CROCKER: Next thing would be recycled asphalt, but the best thing you can do is hot mix. So as soon as we get availability of hot asphalt, we go to hot asphalt.

MR. PETTEN: I would consider cold patch the biggest waste. It lasts for a day. It don't even get a day sometimes.

MR. CROCKER: I totally agree.

MR. PETTEN: My time is up now, so I'll let my colleague go.

Thank you.

MR. CROCKER: Okay, thank you, Sir.

CHAIR: Ms. Coffin, if you're ready?

MS. COFFIN: Yes, please. Thank you.

I think most of my questions – the first part seems to have been answered, so I'll move on to 1.2.04, Air Subsidies. Why the move? This was in 4.1.01, how come it got moved over to Executive and Support Services?

MR. CROCKER: That was the different areas of the department and it got moved over to Corporate Services; it was more in line with the activity.

MS. COFFIN: Okay.

Why are there an extra \$200,000 in Grants and Subsidies? What's that for?

MR. CROCKER: Approximately \$200,000 is required for Normans Bay. We've removed the ferry service to Normans Bay and replaced it with helicopter service, and there's also some funding in there as well with the changes that we made to the Black Tickle ferry service.

MS. COFFIN: How do you get cars on a helicopter?

MR. CROCKER: There are no cars in Normans Bay.

MS. COFFIN: I know, just kidding. I've been at Fogo Island an awful lot.

What we're seeing now, Admin Support, we had an addition of almost \$150,000 in Property, Furnishings and Equipment. And then it went back to \$100. What did you buy? What was the tangible asset?

MR. CROCKER: I'm sorry –

MS. COFFIN: 1.2.05, Admin Support, Property, Furnishings and Equipment.

MR. CROCKER: You got it? Go right ahead, Tracy King.

MS. KING: Through the year, we purchased more highway cameras for Lumsden and Rocky Harbour, Cold Brook and St. George's. So we accumulated some savings in other areas of the department, and this is the account that we paid for the capital assets from.

MS. COFFIN: Okay. All right, what's the funniest thing you've seen on the highway cameras?

MS. KING: I don't know.

MR. CROCKER: Can I go on a tangent for a second?

MS. COFFIN: Of course.

MR. CROCKER: During the campaign I was actually going to stand out in front of the new

highway camera in my district like this, just because they freeze frame them for a few hours.

MS. COFFIN: They do, right?

MR. CROCKER: I didn't do it, but ...

MS. COFFIN: You didn't? Okay.

MR. CROCKER: No.

MS. COFFIN: Well, we're going to be watching for that during the next campaign.

MR. CROCKER: Next election.

MS. COFFIN: Land Acquisition got an extra \$250,000. What are we going to buy? Are we gonna buy a bridge?

MR. CROCKER: So, as you can see, we budgeted \$2 million in –

MS. COFFIN: Yeah, and did you spend –?

MR. CROCKER: What it was, there was less than anticipated purchases in '18-'19. We didn't expend our entire \$2 million; we only spent \$1.75 million.

MS. COFFIN: Was there anything in particular you were planning to spend?

MR. CROCKER: No, we buy land obviously, and we still have a lot of land settlements that are out there from many, many years ago. One of the biggest contributors to that, every year, has been Team Gushue. We're paying for land that was expropriated for Outer Ring Road back 30 years ago.

MS. COFFIN: Okay, it is expropriated land.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MS. COFFIN: Yeah, it's not we're gonna buy, I don't know, a wetland and put a hospital on it.

MR. CROCKER: No. We didn't have to buy that.

MS. COFFIN: Okay.

Let see, what else do I have here? I notice that you did a slightly different accounting of attrition than they had in Justice. In particular, in Justice I think what they did was they took their savings and just took a portion off all of their salaries.

You're saying you had a slightly different approach to that, where you actually had identified the positions and pulled the salaries out of each respectively – is that correct?

MS. KING: We took the target at budget time out of one account and then, through this budget, as attrition came through the year – so this year we budgeted in the places where we found the attrition savings last year. We took them from a central location and then as we realized the savings –

MS. COFFIN: As the positions were finished.

MS. KING: That's right, yeah.

MS. COFFIN: Can you give me an overview of the types of positions that – I'm trying to do a past tense of attrition now.

MR. CROCKER: 'Attritted.'

MS. COFFIN: There we go, we'll go with 'attritted.'

MS. KING: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: You've been 'attritted.'

MS. COFFIN: The new Webster's, okay.

So were they part-time positions or were they mostly Executive Support positions? Were they internal positions? Were they Road Maintenance?

MS. KING: They generally weren't Road Maintenance. We've really tried to keep our staffing levels consistent in Road Maintenance, so there are some in Administrative Support, I think there's some Building Maintenance and there are some in Information Management. So we've tried to spread it out across the department while keeping the front-line service as full as possible.

MS. COFFIN: This is what I was concerned about, the front-line service.

MS. KING: We've also tried to look at it through some of the reduction in overtime and call-back services to find some of the funding that way.

MS. COFFIN: Okay. All right, excellent.

I think that may be all of my questions in this section, and I think we're going to finish up a section at a time. So that was my questions in this section. I don't know if the other ...

CHAIR: With the Committee's approval, I'll give Mr. Lane an opportunity to ask some questions.

All in favour?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: Go ahead, Paul.

MR. LANE: Thank you for that. And thank you, Minister, for the opportunity.

I don't have a lot of questions. I'm not going to be asking line-by-line questions –

MR. CROCKER: Okay.

MR. LANE: – because my colleagues can do that. I have more general questions in a couple of areas.

The first thing I do want to say though, Minister, before I start, is I don't have the opportunity to have a lot of dealings with your department because of the nature of my district, it's location and so on and primarily being the urban area, other than from time to time Pitts Memorial Drive, the ramps coming on and off Pitts Memorial Drive going into Southlands and going into Mount Pearl and so on, and we have, from time to time, issues with potholes and now there's an issue with line painting and all that stuff.

I just want to say for the record, I don't want his head to swell too much, but Mr. Dunford there has been my contact for the last three years. He's been very, very co-operative and

responsive and, in my opinion, he's the top of my book. So, I do say that. He's doing a good job.

MR. CROCKER: Now Salaries is gone up.

MR. LANE: That's not to take away from anybody else, but that's the man I deal with when I deal with Transportation and Works, and I do appreciate –

MR. CROCKER: Just while you're looking, just to add to that, before I went in the House today, he updated me on line painting for Costco.

MR. LANE: Exactly.

MR. CROCKER: It'll be done before Costco opens.

MR. LANE: Exactly. (Inaudible) about that, exactly. I hope that gets done before Costco opens because I suspect there are going to be a lot of traffic snarls, for sure.

Anyway, Minister, I don't have a lot of questions on this section. I do want to ask, though, and I think it's the appropriate place because we're talking here about – somewhere in here it talks about realty and so on, under this section.

MR. CROCKER: (Inaudible.)

MR. LANE: So, in terms of realty, I guess it sort of triggers a question in my mind: What do we have outstanding? How have we done in terms of selling off unused government assets? I'm not sure if this is exactly where it would fall but it's close enough.

MR. CROCKER: I can answer –

MR. LANE: I'm just wondering where we are with that.

MR. CROCKER: I guess we've done well. If you take the light vehicle fleet, as an example.

MR. LANE: Yes.

MR. CROCKER: We've reduced the light vehicle fleet by – I think last year this time we

were around 1,100 vehicles in the light vehicle fleet. We're now down to –

OFFICIAL: Under 1,000.

MR. CROCKER: Yes, so now we've come under 1,000.

The reality is there's not a lot of cash in that because, obviously, you can only imagine what we're –

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: – for 100 light vehicles we took out of aren't really worth a lot, but, obviously, they're worth a lot for the department because, obviously, we're taking old stuff out that hasn't got to be – it's practically, I guess, disposable. So, there's been savings there.

MR. LANE: I'm thinking more about schools and –

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MR. LANE: – office buildings and all that kind of stuff, more so than vehicles.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah. Okay.

So, last year, we were able to get revenue of \$555,000. For example, we sold the CNA campus in Springdale for \$336,000; Come By Chance mill building, \$81,000; Fogo Island public building \$10,000.

I'll give you an example, just in, I guess, this fiscal year we unloaded, I'll say, or the Harbour Grace courthouse, we actually sold the land for about \$56,000; sold the building for a dollar, but, obviously, when you think about that, what we're doing is getting rid of, in a lot of cases –

MR. LANE: Expenses.

MR. CROCKER: Well, expenses, and not only that, the liabilities on those properties.

MR. LANE: Yes.

MR. CROCKER: And the fact of us even keeping the lights on, in a lot of cases. I think the estimate on the Harbour Grace courthouse

was probably in the \$4- to \$5-million range for us to –

OFFICIAL: To do – yeah.

MR. CROCKER: Yes, for us to do something with the Harbour Grace courthouse, it was \$4 to \$5 million –

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: – just to get it back. So, we're able to actually take that business and actually sell it to a company –

MR. LANE: Yes.

MR. CROCKER: – that now is going to use it, hopefully, for some economic benefit to that region.

MR. LANE: Yeah. So it's not just the revenue generated, but it's the money that's –

MR. CROCKER: Right.

MR. LANE: – saved on, whether it be power bills or whether it be security or whether it be –

MR. CROCKER: Insurance.

MR. LANE: – insurance and all those things, right?

MR. CROCKER: Absolutely.

MR. LANE: So, I imagine there are still quite a few facilities out there on the list that could and probably should go. Am I right?

MR. CROCKER: Right. One of the things we did – and I think Harbour Grace courthouse was the first example of this –

MR. LANE: Yes.

MR. CROCKER: – was we actually went out with an expression of interest, because what we heard is that lots of times these old buildings were being sold to the lowest bidder; public tender, lowest bidder wins it and they remain monuments to decrepitude in a lot of cases.

So what we've done now is we go out – and we're about to do the same thing in Carbonear now with a couple of former long-term care homes. We're going to go out and ask for an expression of interest and actually evaluate what can happen there. The same as Harbour Grace. We had a company that came in and said this is what we want to do with the property. We looked at economic benefit and employment opportunities of growth.

So that's the way we're looking at it more now. Instead of just going out to a disposal tender and the lowest bidder getting it; it's how these buildings can be actually reused.

Another one we were able to remove last year from our inventory was Lab West hospital and we're looking at a similar process right now for the Grace property, is go out, have an expression of interest to see what somebody would – or the other option, too.

What government hasn't done in the past is involve a broker, a real estate agent to go out and actually try and broker a deal to sell these properties. So that's something we're looking at.

MR. LANE: Yeah.

I guess that kind of leads to me to another question about the disposal properties and the method that you're taking.

I think it's good, particularly in some of the rural areas, to look at what can be done with that property that makes good economic sense. Not just for the government, in terms of the sale and off-loading some of the costs, but what makes sense for the community and opportunities for economic development. I think that's right on the money, as far as I'm concerned.

Certainly, in the urban area, the St. John's area, I'll say, one of the concerns I've heard – and perhaps it's people speculating and not knowing all the information, of course, but it's this whole idea of – I know, for example, I thought I heard on the news last week or the week before that the Hoyles Escasoni property is now up for sale for something like \$3 million or \$3-point-something million.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MR. LANE: And of course the first thing you're saying is: That was a sweet deal. Someone picked that up for a dime and is flipping it for three. I know the same thing with the school on Bennett Avenue, it had asbestos in it and there are cost. It's not as simple as just a flip. I understand that, but people do sort of wonder sometimes about that –

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MR. LANE: – is there a process in place to make sure that we're not just off-loading the property, but we're getting reasonable value for the property in terms of what it's actually worth and that someone is not making a fortune off of it.

MR. CROCKER: You make a good point because that's the normal reaction on the street is –

MR. LANE: Yes.

MR. CROCKER: – you got – I think we got \$600,000 from those buildings?

MR. LANE: Yes.

MS. KING: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: But we're talking – and we looked at repurposing those buildings but the cost was astronomical, and these buildings are for sale now but they'd been fully remediated.

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: For example, those buildings, when somebody actually purchased those buildings, they're purchasing the liability as well.

MR. LANE: Yes.

MR. CROCKER: So you don't know what you're getting into. If you crack the ground and there are hydrocarbons –

MR. LANE: You're stuck with it.

MR. CROCKER: – you're stuck with it.

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MR. LANE: Yeah, and I guess the point being, again, is that I would think that if you're going to put out an expression of interest or whatever it might be and somebody comes in with a real low-ball number, you're saying: B'ys, even with the problems, we're giving this away.

I would hope that there will be some evaluation to say: Do you know what? We'd rather hang on to it – and we're not going to settle for any price, it has to be a fair price. Albeit, it would be nice to offload it, but we're not going to just give it away and let somebody make a huge profit when –

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MR. LANE: – the taxpayer should have gotten a better return on it, if you know what I'm saying.

MR. CROCKER: Right. I think that's why we've started to do two things; number one was the EOI.

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: So you see what the building can become and what it has the possibility of producing.

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: And the other one is where we want to go now with using a broker where we actually go and hire a real estate company or a real estate agent to actually take, for example, the Grace property –

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: – and put it on the market.

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: And we're just trying to find a mechanism to actually do that as a way of –

MR. LANE: With a fair appraisal process obviously.

MR. CROCKER: Right, absolutely, and then if you hire a broker –

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: – the broker’s desire is get every single cent out of it because the broker is on commission.

MR. LANE: Yes.

MR. CROCKER: Right? So you’ve got somebody who wants to get the most value.

MR. LANE: Sure. Thank you for answering that.

With that said, that’s the only question that I have in this sections. So, we’ll move on with the vote, I guess, or you can vote.

CHAIR: Any further questions to section 1.1.01 to 1.2.06?

MR. PETTEN: Yeah, I do. Yeah.

CHAIR: Mr. Petten.

MR. PETTEN: Minister, 1.2.04, under Air Subsidies.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MR. PETTEN: What were the emergency situations? Under that heading it’s for emergency situations. What would you consider? What would be emergency situations in this one?

MR. CROCKER: Do you want to speak to that, John? That would be any time a ferry is down.

OFFICIAL: It’s always mechanical breakdowns.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, if we have – is that where the Strait of Belle Isle would be now?

OFFICIAL: Yes.

MR. CROCKER: If you think about the ice conditions in the Strait of Belle Isle this winter, when we used to have to put on air service, that’s where that would be.

MR. PETTEN: It’s just like with the *Qajaq* this past winter.

MR. CROCKER: Right, or Mud Lake –

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

MR. CROCKER: – or even Fogo. There are times throughout year we got a fierce –

MR. PETTEN: Or when the flooding happened down in Fortune Bay - Cape La Hune those ferries that get isolated or bridges wiped out.

MR. CROCKER: Exactly. There are times we had to put air support on to Fogo. I think last year we had to put air support on to Fogo at one or two points.

MR. PETTEN: Right on, emergency situation, too, (inaudible).

MR. CROCKER: Exactly, yeah.

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

Okay, I’m good. That’s it for this section for us.

CHAIR: Any further questions?

CLERK: 1.1.01 through 1.2.06.

CHAIR: Shall 1.1.01 to 1.2.06 inclusive carry?

All those in favour, ‘aye.’

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: Opposed?

Carried.

On motion, subheads 1.1.01 through 1.2.06 carried.

CLERK: 2.1.01 through 2.4.03.

CHAIR: Shall 2.1.01 to 2.4.03 carry?

Ms. Coffin, we’ll let you lead off the questioning.

MS. COFFIN: Thank you.

Starting with 01, Salaries, what we noticed is that there was an increase in Salaries from '18 to '19 from budget to revised. That looks like it's a little over \$1.1 million. Then, the comparison between 2019 and 2018 budgets, there was an increase of \$370,000. That does not seem to reflect attrition particularly well.

MR. CROCKER: So the \$1.1 million, the first –

MS. COFFIN: 2.1.01.01.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, the \$1.1 million –

MS. COFFIN: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: – increase is due to payment of – there was \$265,000 for reclassification of our maintenance and project supervisors. They applied for reclassification. Their jobs were reclassified.

MS. COFFIN: Did they get retro?

MR. CROCKER: Yes.

MS. COFFIN: Yeah, okay, so that's what captured some of that?

MR. CROCKER: Obviously, that's a process that every public employee can go through.

MS. COFFIN: Absolutely.

MR. CROCKER: The deficit also can be attributed to unfunded severance payments of approximately \$154,000. \$347,000 was due to winter maintenance overtime and the other \$338,000 relates to various positions funded from other areas of the department.

MS. COFFIN: Did you say there was an unfunded severance?

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, all severance is unfunded, right?

OFFICIAL: Yeah.

MS. COFFIN: Didn't we see other severances in Employee Benefits? Have I seen them elsewhere in other departments? Did I see that in Justice?

MR. CROCKER: In other departments, but all –

OFFICIAL: Severance is budgeted within the department.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, all severance is budgeted in the department –

OFFICIAL: Not budgeted, is charged.

MR. CROCKER: – and it's all unfunded, I think, is it?

OFFICIAL: Right, you have to (inaudible) that.

MS. COFFIN: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, no matter what –

MS. COFFIN: No, I know it's unfunded; I'm sitting on Public Accounts.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, true. Good point.

MS. COFFIN: That's why they were getting rid of it. But, no, I thought that the severance came under Employee Benefits and not in Salaries.

MR. CROCKER: Tracy?

OFFICIAL: Sorry.

MR. CROCKER: I'm sorry, Alison asked a question – severance came under Salaries not –

MS. COFFIN: Yeah, under Benefits and not Salaries.

MR. CROCKER: Under Benefits, not Salaries.

OFFICIAL: No, severance is budgeted under Salaries –

MS. COFFIN: Oh, okay. I thought –

OFFICIAL: – throughout the department.

MS. COFFIN: – last night it was under Benefits.

OFFICIAL: No.

MS. COFFIN: Okay. All right, that's reasonable.

Transportation and Communications, a big jump there: \$127,000. Justice had an issue with postage stamp increases. What's going on with you guys?

MR. CROCKER: It's primarily attributed to increased communication costs for internet services in the depots. There are additional charges for the radios for remote locations and satellite phones in Labrador. On the Trans-Labrador Highway we use satellite phones; we actually lend satellite phones to the travelling public.

MS. COFFIN: You bought extra or they were extra expensive?

MR. CROCKER: It's an increased cost in usage.

MS. COFFIN: Oh, people are using them more.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah and it would continue as the Trans-Labrador Highway becomes more –

MS. COFFIN: Because it's becoming more travelled.

MR. CROCKER: Right.

MS. COFFIN: Okay, very good.

Did we lose a position in Summer Maintenance and Repairs or more than one position in Summer Maintenance and Repairs, Salaries?

MR. CROCKER: 2.1.02?

OFFICIAL: 2.1.02.

MS. COFFIN: Is that another attrition because I notice again it spiked a bit by – what is that ballpark, \$400,000?

OFFICIAL: So that's the (inaudible).

MR. CROCKER: Right here? Yeah, projection includes, again, unfunded severance payout of \$179,000 and overrun mainly attributed to increase in summer maintenance requirements.

MS. COFFIN: From '18-'19 for budget to revised, yeah, and then you had the drop.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MS. COFFIN: It doesn't seem like they did all right in severance or they didn't do very well in severance, if your overall salary budget is \$9 million and the payout is – did you have a lot of new employees who got their severance?

MR. CROCKER: That could be summer maintenance.

MS. COFFIN: It's just summer maintenance, right?

OFFICIAL: Right, it's just summer maintenance.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, these are just summer maintenance.

MS. COFFIN: Yeah, they would be less eligible, hey?

MR. CROCKER: Right. A lot of these summer maintenance employees would be, actually, employees that are employed during the winter as well, but they actually take a step back in the summer seasons. For example, if you're an operator typically in the winter season, in the summer season not everybody, but a lot of those operators, actually –

OFFICIAL: Are labourers.

MR. CROCKER: – fall back to labour. They're given an option to stay on in summer maintenance as labourer positions.

MS. COFFIN: Okay. All right, so they would get year-round employment, but not in the same –

MR. CROCKER: Classification.

MS. COFFIN: Okay.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MS. COFFIN: What kind of Professional Services do you get for \$13,600? I noticed it's

obviously not something that you use regularly because it wasn't even budgeted.

OFFICIAL: Railways, do you see it?

MR. CROCKER: Railways.

OFFICIAL: Railways, because railways in Labrador.

MR. CROCKER: Oh, okay, yeah. I just had to do a double take because the word "railway" was there.

MS. COFFIN: There was what?

OFFICIAL: Railways.

MS. COFFIN: Oh.

MR. CROCKER: It's engineering consultant services, including inspection services for railways and legal and engineering services through the summer season. I had to take –

MS. COFFIN: Why would we inspect railways?

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, we would.

MS. COFFIN: Oh they still have them?

OFFICIAL: Lab West.

MS. COFFIN: Oh right.

You guys still have a railway? Way to go. Okay, no, I'll take that, no problem. Yeah, I am good; I'm totally good.

MR. CROCKER: So it's a railway system.

MS. COFFIN: Are they solid good?

MR. CROCKER: Yes.

MS. COFFIN: Okay, all right. That's good. Okay.

MR. CROCKER: They're used by the mining industry.

MS. COFFIN: All right, no problem. Sorry everybody.

You were expecting almost \$50,000 in revenue. What do you make from revenue in summer maintenance programs? How do you get \$200,000 in the summer maintenance? Are you selling the wood chips on the side of the highway to the pellet plants?

OFFICIAL: (Inaudible) guardrails.

MR. CROCKER: Oh okay, gotcha.

MS. COFFIN: What's going on? There's an idea, right?

OFFICIAL: Some work for municipalities.

MR. CROCKER: Right, so we do some small work for municipalities if we're in an area.

MS. COFFIN: Okay.

MR. CROCKER: Also, in the summertime, if you have an accident in the winter on the Outer Ring Road and you damage our guardrail, we actually go after your insurance company for repairs to our guardrail –

MS. COFFIN: All right.

OFFICIAL: And highway access fees which is the biggest part.

MR. CROCKER: – and highway access fees. If you're building – primarily, I guess that will be in rural Newfoundland.

OFFICIAL: Well, Route 60.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MS. COFFIN: What's that?

MR. CROCKER: Just leave Barry out of this conversation.

MS. COFFIN: Totally. Cover your ears.

MR. CROCKER: So if you want access to a highway, we actually charge for that service.

MR. PETTEN: Yeah.

OFFICIAL: Yeah, the highway access fees.

MR. CROCKER: The highway access fees.

MR. PETTEN: (Inaudible) cordoned off.

MS. COFFIN: Oh yeah, tell me more.

MR. PETTEN: I could tell you, I could write books on that.

MR. CROCKER: It was the only thing –

MR. PETTEN: (Inaudible.)

MS. COFFIN: Oh.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, and he wrote it, and now he don't like it. He couldn't even get Brazil to change it.

MR. PETTEN: I got lots of plans for that.

MS. COFFIN: Once upon a time, 2.1.02 was called the Sign Shop.

MR. CROCKER: 2.1.02?

MS. COFFIN: No, you won't find it there because it was once upon a time.

MR. CROCKER: Okay.

MS. COFFIN: It is no longer it seems.

MR. CROCKER: The Sign Shop?

MS. COFFIN: Where did the Sign Shop go?

MR. CROCKER: Joe, can you –?

MS. COFFIN: Are there no more signs –

MS. KING: Oh no, I got it.

MS. COFFIN: – which would explain why I am so ticked off with some of the stuff going out to Holyrood.

MS. KING: It's just realigned in the department under Equipment Maintenance to fit the structure of the department, that's all.

MS. COFFIN: Right, okay, just curious about that.

MR. CROCKER: Alison, when you ticked off where a road sign that you see you don't like, or that needs to be repaired, pull over, take a picture and send it to Joe. I do it all the time.

MS. COFFIN: Okay.

As an example, my favourite sign so far is the sign for The Shoppes at Galway, and the two agents that you can contact are Jim Pushie and Verna Bulley. Just so you know, in case you want to get a shop there.

Here we go, how about this? We're moving on to Snow and Ice Control now. It looks like we're getting some extra money from revenues there?

MR. CROCKER: Yes.

MS. COFFIN: The \$4 million goes up to \$4,040,000, although we didn't –

MR. CROCKER: So revenue on snow clearing is primarily revenue from municipalities. We receive about \$1 million from municipalities for snow clearing. We receive about \$2.2 million from sales of salt and sand to municipalities, and we also receive \$840,000 for snow clearing and ice control in the national parks.

MS. COFFIN: You get that from the feds for the national parks?

MR. CROCKER: We do.

MS. COFFIN: They have much better highways than us.

Okay, let's go to Snow and Ice Control. As it's written, our impression is this was an easier year than most for snow clearing, and it certainly seemed to be. Traditionally, this line item is a big number. Interesting to see that it's \$4.6 million more spent than anticipated. Last year you were over budget by \$4.3 million.

How does the department make your projections – Farmers' Almanac?

MR. CROCKER: We do it based on an average because obviously, as you can appreciate, that's one thing we can't predict. We got hammered this past winter on the West Coast and the Northern Peninsula – absolutely hammered. So

we make an estimate, based on previous years, but you never know.

MS. COFFIN: Yeah, I had assumed that.

Does the department have any way of counting how many times the Plow Tracker has been accessed? And, if so, can we get a breakdown of those numbers?

MR. CROCKER: We can get you the Plow Tracker number; it's not as impressive as the highway camera –

MS. COFFIN: Yeah, I totally look at the highway cameras –

MR. CROCKER: Eight hundred and eleven thousand views on the highway cameras this past year.

MS. COFFIN: Yeah, that makes sense. I check them three times before I head out over the highway.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MS. COFFIN: Plow Tracker not so much?

MR. CROCKER: Plow Tracker's numbers aren't there, but we're trying to build awareness of Plow Tracker. And early Plow Tracker, we ironed out some bugs, we're getting there. But it is a service that we want people to –

CHAIR: Your time is expired, Ms. Coffin. I'm going to ask Mr. Petten and Mr. O'Driscoll.

MR. PETTEN: Thank you.

Under 2.1.01, Grants and Subsidies, there's an increase of \$100,000 in spending over what was budgeted. Could you provide what was or an itemized list of those (inaudible)?

MR. CROCKER: That was a one-time grant to the Grand River Snowmobile Club for enhanced snowmobile safety in Northern Labrador, construction of safety shelters, because, obviously when you get onto the north coast trail markings, there's a lot of activity in the winter months. That's their roadway is snowmobile trails. So it was safety enhancements. It's a budget 2018 commitment.

MR. PETTEN: But is that a normal thing that's included in budgets – is that a normal thing we provide monies for, snowmobile trails?

MR. CROCKER: It was a one-time – but remember, this is not –

OFFICIAL: (Inaudible.)

MR. CROCKER: Right, it's typically done through Labrador Affairs, but it's not really recreational snowmobile trails we're talking about here. We're talking about people commuting from Makkovik to Nain or from Nain to Natuashish, so it's really about personal safety.

MR. O'DRISCOLL: I am just wondering, the Team Gushue Highway, is that set to be finished this year?

MR. CROCKER: It's not set to be finished this year. We're committed to working the next phase, the subgrade work this year. The challenge we have right now is we're looking at the final reconfiguration of it and the engineers are going back. Because if you look Team Gushue Highway, I think it dates back three or four decades, the original scoping of the plans.

It was only today I had a conversation with the MHA for Mount Pearl North about how we concluded there. So we're actually revisiting the plans that would've been made decades ago to see what can be done. And we've actually gone back to the federal government asking, even though this project is funded and was funded many years ago for completion, if there are opportunities to actually tie it more directly into the Harbour Arterial, Route 2.

MR. O'DRISCOLL: Okay.

MR. CROCKER: Because there is some structural work that's going to have to happen on Route 2 in coming years and this may be an opportunity to bring it all together.

MR. O'DRISCOLL: I guess the other one I would ask: The Witless Bay Line, is there anything in the future that you have planned for Witless Bay Line?

MR. CROCKER: Yeah. So we actually forwarded the Witless Bay Line to Ottawa under the trade and transportation fund. They came back and told us that it's not something that they wanted to put forward for funding. But we haven't given up on trying to fund it through that.

We're going to change our business case a bit because the trade and transportation fund that's available through the federal government is based on international trade, exports. And we're making the argument that Bay Bulls has become an industrial hub when it comes to the oil industry.

MR. O'DRISCOLL: Yes.

MR. CROCKER: So we're looking at this as an opportunity not only to upgrade the Witless Bay Line to a better highway – not only resurface it but a better highway because of the activity that's likely to be seen there in the future.

MR. O'DRISCOLL: The problem with that is sometimes I hear that it's considered a secondary road rather than a primary road. How did that change, I wonder?

MR. CROCKER: I think that's why we're trying to actually elevate it into the trade and transportation to actually be able to do not only resurfacing, but if you look at the road it's actually a secondary road.

MR. O'DRISCOLL: Yes.

MR. CROCKER: It has become, I think, a trade link.

MR. O'DRISCOLL: It was, yeah.

MR. CROCKER: But it's becoming a trade link. If there is anything heavy coming out of Bay Bulls right now, industrially, it's coming up through there. We've seen that with Bull Arm –

MR. O'DRISCOLL: Bull Arm, Pennecon.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MR. O'DRISCOLL: And the same issue with the crab trucks and stuff like that, this is the main highway that cuts off –

MR. CROCKER: Right, absolutely. It is certainly a road that your predecessor kept it on the agenda and I'm sure you will too.

MR. O'DRISCOLL: Yeah, thank you.

MR. PETTEN: Under 2.2.01, Salaries, there is an increase of \$671,000.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

That was a part of Budget 2018, when we took all of government's fleet into the department. Every department in government would've had somebody managing their portion of the fleet. When we took the entire government fleet into TW, this was for a light vehicle coordinator, a maintenance coordinator and a clerk III.

OFFICIAL: Three positions, yeah.

MR. PETTEN: Three positions.

OFFICIAL: (Inaudible) say that last part because (inaudible).

MR. CROCKER: Tracy just tells me I need to say the last part.

OFFICIAL: Because they weren't (inaudible).

MR. CROCKER: Also, there was an error made as some positions were funded under this activity instead of snow and ice control. This does not represent an increase in positions.

MR. PETTEN: So those three positions, they weren't new positions? The three positions the minister just referred to?

OFFICIAL: Yeah, we used other vacancies.

MR. CROCKER: We use other departmental vacancies. This activity will be realigned now once we get the fleet totally integrated into the department.

MR. PETTEN: How many vehicles are in that fleet now?

MR. CROCKER: Slightly under a thousand.

MR. PETTEN: Right and TW are administering all the vehicles for all departments now.

OFFICIAL: Except the RNC.

MR. CROCKER: Except the RNC.

MR. PETTEN: Except the RNC.

MR. CROCKER: It's getting to a point we're trying to get to almost a rental car-type operation. What we found when we reviewed the fleet, we had some government departments with vehicles with 10,000, 11,000 and 12,000 kilometres on them and then we had some other departments, like FLR and TW, with 300,000 on them; bringing the fleet in and having somebody coordinate and coordinate maintenance.

The Auditor General questioned the fact that government wasn't even taking advantage because of coordination of warranties on vehicles. We weren't getting our vehicles back to dealers for warranty. By bringing it in, we're trying to operate it more like you would see at a car rental.

MR. PETTEN: 2.2.01, I guess I'm going to answer my own question maybe, but in Transportation and Communications there's an increase of \$477,000. Is that all to do with vehicle fleet?

MR. CROCKER: No, that's additional communications costs associated with RWIS and the AVL units in the department's fleet.

MR. PETTEN: Under Purchased Services, 2018-'19 Estimates saw an increase of \$864,000 in spending over what was budgeted. In 2019-'20 the Estimate was at \$1.934 million less than what was spent 2018-'19. There's a discrepancy there.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, so the \$884,000 represents overruns due to additional costs required for repairs on light vehicles and heavy equipment. Costs can vary based on availability of house staff and the complexity, obviously, of the work, labour, materials. We actually had an early start to winter this past year, resulting in

additional repairs to the heavy equipment fleet on the West Coast.

Your \$1.9 million represents a variance due to the department's reallocation of funds to its equipment fleet. As a result, we'll be adding heavy –

OFFICIAL: Right, so we're taking funding out of this account to buy more (inaudible).

MR. CROCKER: Right, okay.

What's happening down here in the \$1.9 million is we're taking funding from this line to actually – we're moving to a capital lease program on some of our heavy equipment. That's going to enable us, actually, to renew the fleet quicker than we would have had traditionally.

MR. PETTEN: Are you buying any new tow plows this year?

MR. CROCKER: I don't think we are. Are we, Joe?

It's not in that particular (inaudible). Yeah, we haven't had any. No, I don't think so.

MR. PETTEN: Don't think? How many do we have now, two?

MR. CROCKER: Two, yeah.

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

Under 2.2.02 in Equipment Acquisitions, there's an increase of \$632,000 over what was budgeted.

MR. CROCKER: This relates back to what we just talked about. This relates back to –

OFFICIAL: This is the reallocation.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, it's a reallocation of funds from the equipment maintenance budget to enter into capital leases to increase our heavy equipment fleet. We also added \$632,000, this allocation, again, for the entering into capital leasing.

MR. PETTEN: Okay. A quick one now before my time is up for this round.

Revenue; there's a large increase in the revenue from what was in the budget. It went up by 320,000.

MR. CROCKER: Right. We actually consolidated a lot of our old equipment that was around in yards and actually had an auction this year where we got \$320,000.

MR. PETTEN: That's the sale of old equipment.

MR. CROCKER: Sale of – and I mean old – equipment.

MR. PETTEN: How do you do that, through tender?

OFFICIAL: We did an auction.

MR. CROCKER: No, we did an auction.

MR. PETTEN: Auction (inaudible).

MR. CROCKER: Well, actually, I think we used Roche, was it?

OFFICIAL: I don't remember.

OFFICIAL: Oh yeah, Roches, yeah.

OFFICIAL: We did have an (inaudible).

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, I think we used –

OFFICIAL: Roche's actually.

MR. CROCKER: I know we did one in Clarenville; we did it on the West Coast and –

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

OFFICIAL: PPA managed them for us.

MR. CROCKER: Okay, Public Procurement Agency actually managed the auction for us.

MR. PETTEN: Proof you can sell anything.

MR. CROCKER: What?

MR. PETTEN: It is proof you can sell anything.

MR. CROCKER: Well, I can tell you, you need to look back through Roche's auctions and see what it was they had there. There's proof that you can sell anything.

CHAIR: Your time has expired.

Ms. Coffin, do you have any further questions?

MS. COFFIN: Oh, I'm sorry –

CHAIR: 1.101 to 2.4.03?

MS. COFFIN: Yes, I do. I am very sorry; I didn't quite hear you say my name. I thought you said someone named Scott or something – very confused.

Go back to Snow and Ice Control here. Has the review for the tow plow pilot project – this is hard to say – been completed? If so, what are the results? Or if not done, when will it be done? Can we see the report, please?

MR. CROCKER: I don't think there was a report completed. We purchased our first tow plow and it went into service the winter of '17.

MS. COFFIN: I spent several hours behind it.

MR. CROCKER: Yes. Unfortunately, most people do when you get caught behind it, but that is the reality of safe roads.

MS. COFFIN: Yeah, totally.

MR. CROCKER: It was successful and we actually, in this year, brought the second one into service. We now have two tow plows in the province.

MS. COFFIN: Okay, so there has been a review?

MR. CROCKER: Well, yeah, obviously we reviewed it. It was successful. We purchased the second one.

MS. COFFIN: Okay, no report. Okay, very good.

Where am I now? Snow and Ice Control is done. Let us go back to Equipment Acquisitions, 2.2.02, Property, Furnishings and Equipment.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MS. COFFIN: What do we get for \$632,000? That's the extra.

MR. CROCKER: That's capital leases, right?

OFFICIAL: That's been (inaudible).

MS. COFFIN: Is that the extra tow plow? Are we getting a new one next year?

MR. CROCKER: No, that's the allocation for our new capital leasing program. I think that primarily, at this point, reflects – what is it – 16 loaders?

OFFICIAL: Twenty.

MR. CROCKER: That reflects our going in the capital leasing program. So far we've acquired or procured 20 new loaders for next season.

MS. COFFIN: Okay.

Let's go back to the capital leasing program. If it is being leased, then the person from whom you lease this piece of equipment does the maintenance on it?

MR. CROCKER: I am going to defer to Joe. I don't think so.

MR. DUNFORD: I'd have to check the terms and conditions for our lease, but my understanding is it's for those first four years, yes.

MR. CROCKER: Okay, so we can confirm that for you, but Joe's understanding or his recollection on this is it does for the first four years. We can confirm that.

MS. COFFIN: Okay, so will that affect our staffing levels in the maintenance?

MR. CROCKER: Absolutely not.

One of the challenges we always have – you can look at the job board any time at all – we are always advertising for heavy equipment technicians constantly. We cannot –

MS. COFFIN: Are they underpaid?

MR. CROCKER: Do you know a journey person heavy mechanic?

MS. COFFIN: I do.

MR. CROCKER: Send him our way.

MS. COFFIN: She's awesome and she has an apprentice now and she is also a really good hockey goalie.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MS. COFFIN: I'll send any more that I know along the way. Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, we're always hiring heavy equipment technicians.

MS. COFFIN: Awesome. Okay, that's good to know.

Let's go 2.3.01, Salaries. Did we lose positions there that was also attrition?

MR. CROCKER: Yes, that's the attrition management plan.

MS. COFFIN: Okay.

Leased Accommodations, Purchased Services, we saw an addition from '18-'19 from budget to revised of an extra \$440,000, that was a surprise. What did they surprise you with?

MR. CROCKER: Well, in 2018, we were given the financial responsibility for all the government leases, as of April 1. During this process, the lease funding from core government departments was transferred to TW, and due to an oversight during the process, the department did not receive the entire expenditure funding for some of the leases. As a result, the funding was provided to the department to right size the budget.

MS. COFFIN: Okay.

Alterations and Improvement to Existing Facilities, we see Grants and Subsidies, someone got \$140,000. Who was subsidized for that? I also see, I don't know if this is related at all, the revenue there, as well. You have a chunk of revenue come in?

MR. CROCKER: There was an old fish plant on the Northern Peninsula in Sandy Cove that, for whatever reason, government owned, and we were able to reach a cost-shared agreement with the feds for the demolition.

MS. COFFIN: They paid you? The Grants and Subsidies or the revenue?

MR. CROCKER: The demolition was around \$300,000, and we gave the feds \$140,000 towards that.

MS. COFFIN: We gave the feds \$140,000 and then – okay, the revenue is then what? Those are unrelated things, are they?

OFFICIAL: Yeah.

MS. COFFIN: Okay, excellent, so the revenue came from ...?

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, the revenue came from the properties that I mentioned earlier, I think, to Mr. Lane's questions around Springdale CNA, Come By Chance mill building, Fogo Island building and other –

MS. COFFIN: This is where everything falls in here?

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MS. COFFIN: Okay, so when we are divesting ourselves of things, it falls under Alterations and Improvements or divesting?

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MS. COFFIN: Okay, interesting.

2.3, do I have anything here? Low Carbon Economy all of a sudden disappeared. Perhaps high-helium economy?

MR. CROCKER: Okay, yeah, so we're going to get into a lot of this as we go through.

MS. COFFIN: Yeah, look at that, because the Low Carbon Economy continues into 2.3.06.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, so this is the current account, and what you're going to find is when you go forward to the capital accounts, our

expenditures now are gone, primarily, into the capital account versus the current account.

MS. COFFIN: So, we're buying capital? What's – hang on now.

MR. CROCKER: So the –

MS. COFFIN: Cost shared –

OFFICIAL: (Inaudible.)

MR. CROCKER: So, obviously, the current account is primarily maintenance.

MS. COFFIN: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: But the money is gone into capital because, obviously, the improvements to the buildings are more capital improvements rather than current improvements. They're substantial improvements to buildings. That put –

MS. COFFIN: Okay.

MR. CROCKER: – them back as an asset.

MS. COFFIN: Yeah, okay. Because sweeping the floors and patching a roof or mowing the grass is current, but if you are –

MR. CROCKER: We're putting back some book value.

MS. COFFIN: Okay. All right. So, that's why it's got moved.

Are you using green technology here?

MR. CROCKER: We would have to, actually, because this is a federal-provincial agreement, again.

MS. COFFIN: This is under the federal-provincial, okay.

MR. CROCKER: So, we would have to make sure that we're meeting the requirements of the bilateral agreement.

MS. COFFIN: Right. So, one would hope that there's not going to be as much mould in these or asbestos.

MR. CROCKER: Right.

Primarily, a lot of this fund from Transportation and Works' perspective, we're going to use it to electrify some of our public buildings, getting them off fossil fuels. CNA campuses, I think, are one example.

OFFICIAL: On of the biggest.

MR. CROCKER: One of the biggest examples that we're taking is the CNA campuses off oil and putting them onto electricity.

MS. COFFIN: Okay. Is that going to be part of rate mitigation?

MR. CROCKER: I think it's considered in rate – yeah, it is. It's a very small factor in rate mitigations, but it is about electrification and using green energy.

MS. COFFIN: Here's a question that's going to transcend a couple of departments then.

So, would the College of the North Atlantic – do you know if they're going to get a greater subsidy or are they just going to get electrification and a rate shock and less funding?

MR. CROCKER: We already paid our utility bills.

MS. COFFIN: Okay, for college. All right. Okay. MUN complained about that type of thing, right?

MR. CROCKER: We don't handle MUN (inaudible).

OFFICIAL: No.

MS. COFFIN: Okay.

MR. CROCKER: But just to your point, Alison. We don't pay MUN's utility bill. We pay CNA's utility bill.

MS. COFFIN: I know.

MR. CROCKER: Okay.

MS. COFFIN: I looked at MUN's books and they go: We have utilities and they're going up.

I've had that conversation a number of times as well.

Airstrip Operations, perhaps far more concerning than the Professional Services that have gone up. Were those Professional Services used to study the Nain airstrip?

MR. CROCKER: Professional Services – is that the \$151,000? Yeah.

MS. COFFIN: I've got \$250,000 under 2.4.01.01, Professional Services.

MR. CROCKER: That's increased consultant costs?

OFFICIAL: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: That's increased funding for consultant cost for '19-'20 to comply with Transport Canada regulations.

MS. COFFIN: Okay. So, has there been a study of the Nain airstrip or the potential for that or the –?

MR. CROCKER: So, there was an update to – Ottawa and the Nunatsiavut Government, last year, updated an older study, and right now it's my understanding that Nunatsiavut Government has again applied to ACOA, or to the federal government for, I guess, the next phase of that study, which would lead to further studies. Well, a more, I guess, on-the-ground-type study, but –

MS. COFFIN: Okay. So the first study was about feasibility and –

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, the first –

MS. COFFIN: – the second study will be about location and timing, perhaps?

MR. CROCKER: Yeah. So the first study was an update to a study that was done –

OFFICIAL: More than five years ago.

MR. CROCKER: – more than five years ago.

MS. COFFIN: Right.

MR. CROCKER: So that study got dusted off. That study now leads to – exactly what you said – a more detailed study. I think it’s valued somewhere around the \$250 million mark and –

MS. COFFIN: So is that what is budgeted for? No, it’s not.

MR. CROCKER: Absolutely not.

MS. COFFIN: When is that budgeted?

MR. CROCKER: The Nain airport –

MS. COFFIN: Okay.

MR. CROCKER: We can be clear that the Nain airport is the responsibility of the federal government.

MS. COFFIN: Okay. So that’s why they’re going through –

CHAIR: Ms. Coffin, your time has expired again.

MS. COFFIN: All right.

CHAIR: We’re having fun; time flies.

MS. COFFIN: It does.

MR. PETTEN: Thank you.

2.3.02 under the Leased Accommodations.

MR. CROCKER: 2.3.02, yeah, sorry, go ahead there.

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

How many leases does the provincial government currently have?

MR. CROCKER: Tracy –?

OFFICIAL: Tracy will get it shortly.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MS. ENGLISH: Two hundred and forty-eight (inaudible).

MR. CROCKER: Two hundred and forty-eight.

MR. PETTEN: Six –?

MR. CROCKER: Two hundred and forty-eight.

MR. PETTEN: Two hundred and forty-eight.

What is the normal lease term when the department goes to tender?

MR. CROCKER: Typically, it’s a five and five.

MR. PETTEN: Five year with a five-year renewal option.

MR. CROCKER: Five year with a five-year option, yeah.

MR. PETTEN: That’s okay.

The extension option is five years always, isn’t it?

OFFICIAL: Generally.

MR. CROCKER: Generally, yes.

MR. PETTEN: But they always have an extension option, don’t they?

MR. CROCKER: Yes, we always ask for an extension option.

MR. PETTEN: It’s an option, right?

MR. CROCKER: I think the majority of the time we exercise our option.

MR. PETTEN: Right.

What sort of circumstances do you normally use an extension option? Like, what’s –?

MR. CROCKER: A quick-market sounding.

OFFICIAL: Quick market, like, if you think the market price is good.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, right. So, obviously, it’s not really difficult when you’re in a market.

For example, if you take St. John's, you know what your market is. If it's \$27 today and you have a \$25 option, you take your option. If the market were –

MR. PETTEN: Based on the market.

MR. CROCKER: Based on the market at the given time.

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

So do we have any leases right now outside the normal lease terms?

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, we do.

OFFICIAL: Definitely.

MR. CROCKER: Definitely.

MR. PETTEN: Is that right?

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

Again, we evaluate those on a case-by-case basis too, because if we have a landlord that's willing to continue on in a month-to-month and it's favourable to us, obviously – if you're in a month-to-month, most of the time that's favourable to the tenant.

MR. PETTEN: Could we get an itemized list of those leases and terms?

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, it's all available on the website, but if you want us to –

OFFICIAL: We'll send that along.

MR. PETTEN: It's available on the website?

OFFICIAL: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MR. PETTEN: Do you have any leases at 20 years or more? Are they available on the website, too?

MR. CROCKER: They would be. I'm not aware of any –

MR. PETTEN: Twenty?

OFFICIAL: The only (inaudible) new FLR.

MR. CROCKER: Right, the new FLR building would be in that. I think you would find, too, there were some long-term leases entered. Eastern Health went into some long ...

OFFICIAL: Yes.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

OFFICIAL: We have a smattering of them.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

There is a smattering of them around. There were some long-term leases entered into. When Justice took enforcement from FLR, they went into some big leases.

MR. PETTEN: It's not the norm, though. Twenty years is not the norm for your leases.

MR. CROCKER: Not unless if you look at when Justice took the enforcement from FLR, it makes sense if you're looking at getting a new build over a long period of time. If you know you're going to be there in that place for a long period of time, it makes sense to get new builds.

Eastern Health does it. If you think about the building that was repurposed in Holyrood – it's Eastern Health there now – that's obviously a long-term lease.

MR. PETTEN: Right, based on the investment that's required.

MR. CROCKER: Right, yeah.

MR. PETTEN: Fair enough.

The acronyms, right? Welcome to government – 2.3.04 – it takes a while to get used to it.

MR. CROCKER: 2.3.04?

MR. PETTEN: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: How come I don't have that?

OFFICIAL: 2.3.04?

MR. CROCKER: I'm already there. No, I'm not.

MR. PETTEN: Purchased Services.

OFFICIAL: (Inaudible.)

MR. CROCKER: The tab is wrong.

MR. PETTEN: Under Purchased Services, what's the discrepancy? You go from \$11 million, almost \$12 million, down to \$8 million, back up to \$12 million.

MR. CROCKER: I'm sorry, Barry, bear with me for a second, 2.3.04?

OFFICIAL: 2.3.04.

OFFICIAL: 2.3.04.

MR. PETTEN: We'll be here until 9:30.

OFFICIAL: Oh, it's there; it's a just numbered wrong, I think.

MR. CROCKER: Oh, it's numbered wrong.

OFFICIAL: Sorry.

MR. PETTEN: Oh.

OFFICIAL: That's my bad.

MR. PETTEN: Very good.

OFFICIAL: Here we go.

MR. CROCKER: Go ahead.

MR. PETTEN: Under Purchased Services you have that it went from \$12 million, basically, down to \$8.8 million, back up to \$11.6 million. What's the fluctuation there?

MR. CROCKER: Purchased Services; that's schools A and I, basically, due to project delays. One of the challenges that we have year after year in schools A and I is actually getting the projects complete. If you think about it, doing repairs to a school, especially if it's a structural repair, you have a small window. Really, you have summer, so schools A and I is a challenge.

OFFICIAL: We had a project planned in Exploits Valley that we didn't get done last year.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah. Last year, for example, we had a big project at Exploits Valley that we weren't able to get done. Obviously, in this case, primarily, we're working with the Newfoundland and Labrador English School District. They submit their priorities and we work with their priorities.

MR. PETTEN: So somewhat of a carry-over.

MR. CROCKER: Yes and the budget stays the same.

MR. PETTEN: 2.4.02 now.

MR. CROCKER: 2.4.02, Airstrips?

MR. PETTEN: I thought I was waiting for you.

MR. CROCKER: No, Airstrips?

MR. PETTEN: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: Oh you thought you were waiting for me?

MR. PETTEN: I was waiting for you. It's a long day.

MR. CROCKER: I can't read your mind yet, Barry.

MR. PETTEN: Getting close.

How many airstrips does the provincial government operate or are responsible for?

MR. CROCKER: Joe, 13?

MR. DUNFORD: (Inaudible.)

OFFICIAL: Twenty.

MR. CROCKER: We're responsible for 20, 12 of which are in Labrador. The 12 in Labrador would be sked, right, they're certified. Yeah.

OFFICIAL: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, the 12 in Labrador would be certified strips because they're scheduled flights.

MR. PETTEN: Okay. Could we get a list of them or are they online?

MR. CROCKER: Yes, we can.

MR. PETTEN: What changed for Airstrips in 2019-'20 there?

MR. CROCKER: On what line?

MR. PETTEN: We're down here in 2.4.03.

There's no –

OFFICIAL: That's just capital split in the projects.

MR. PETTEN: Under capital, I guess.

MR. CROCKER: That's the current capital split in the projects.

MR. PETTEN: Yeah. The current –

MR. CROCKER: And the capital split.

MR. PETTEN: Right.

MR. CROCKER: Most of the work that we would do on airstrips would be current, right?

OFFICIAL: Next year would be capital.

MR. CROCKER: Okay, so the change would be the work we did this previous year would've been current and the work that we're planning for this year would be capital.

MR. PETTEN: Okay (inaudible) section now.

For that section that's all I got left, yeah.

CHAIR: Any other questions on 2.1.01 to 2.4.03?

Ms. Coffin.

MS. COFFIN: Airstrips: "Appropriations provide for the purchase of tangible capital" There's \$999,900 for –

MR. CROCKER: That's the LCARP agreement, right?

OFFICIAL: That's right (inaudible) like snow blowers or it might be a new septic system.

MR. CROCKER: Right, because you see that in, I guess, revenue as well. That could be snow blowers, septic fuel upgrades ...

MS. COFFIN: I'm sorry.

MR. CROCKER: Oh, yeah, no problem. That could be equipment; for example, snow blowers. Last year we did – I think it was in Makkovik – a substantial upgrade to the septic system and –

MS. COFFIN: Okay.

MR. CROCKER: – that type of work.

MS. COFFIN: All right then.

And that's fully recoverable? Yeah, it comes out to a net zero, right?

OFFICIAL: Yeah (inaudible).

MR. CROCKER: Right.

MS. COFFIN: Okay, do you want me to do highways or wait until the next one?

Okay, let's have a chat about highways, Trans-Labrador Highway in particular. A timeline to completion?

MR. CROCKER: Do we need a vote first?

CHAIR: Yeah we'll just stick with these item numbers first.

MR. CROCKER: Does Paul want to –?

MR. LANE: Okay.

MS. COFFIN: Okay. All right, good enough. I got excited.

CHAIR: Yeah.

MS. COFFIN: That happens.

CHAIR: Right, do you guys have any other questions?

MR. PETTEN: Not in that section.

CHAIR: With the grace of the committee, I'll offer Mr. Lane some time to speak, if you guys are all good with it.

Mr. Lane.

MR. LANE: Yeah, thank you.

Just wondering, my colleague for the District of Ferryland asked a question about Team Gushue Highway –

MR. CROCKER: He's qualified for that (inaudible), yeah.

MR. LANE: – which I was going to ask.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MR. LANE: He asked would it be finished this year and you said, no, it won't be finished this year.

MR. CROCKER: No.

MR. LANE: You didn't say when it would be finished, so I'm kind of expanding on it. If not this year, when can people expect to have that full connection in place? A guesstimate, I understand it can vary.

MR. CROCKER: Personally, the comments that I've made on it have been aiming at next year.

MR. LANE: Okay.

MR. CROCKER: Obviously, there's a lot of work to do and there's a lot of work to do around the engineering. You're more than welcome – actually, I invited the member for Mount Pearl North today to come over and just look at what it is we ended up having to look at from the design that was there.

Yeah, you're more than welcome to come over, actually, when we do that with the Member for Mount Pearl North, to have a look at different

reasons why we may want to reconfigure what's there.

MR. LANE: Okay.

AN HON. MEMBER: Can I get in on this?

MR. CROCKER: Yes, no problem,

MR. LANE: There you go, b'y.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, no problem. And you, too, Barry or Alison, anybody who wants to look at what we're looking at there. We're trying to see if there's other options to be ...

MR. LANE: Okay, fair enough.

Next question has to do with roads. This is kind of a difficult one, I suppose, but I'll ask it, and I know it can be somewhat controversial, but we continue to see, I guess, people – particularly on social media, you see it – but pictures of roads throughout the province that are, like, riddled with pot holes. Markland is one that comes to mind that really got a lot of attention in social media, for sure. Maybe even –

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MR. LANE: – the mainstream media, and, I got to say, it looked like a minefield. You got to agree, when you're looking at it, it's like, oh my God, I can't believe it's that bad.

What is the plan? I mean, I know you have a Roads Plan, I understand that, but I think we also have a reality in this province that, generally, politicians, of all sides, don't necessarily want to talk about it or address because it can be a challenge.

The reality of it is that we have so many roads, and it's fine to say we'll prioritize, put it on the list, but you know and I know that there are probably roads that will never be paved, right? Nobody might want to say it or admit it but it will never happen – just not going to happen because of the reality of where it is and that there's nobody living there and it's such a cost and so on.

So is there any thought gone into alternatives from the perspective of saying, do you know

what? Let's be honest with people and say, you're never going to get asphalt, but, let's put in a decent gravel road and grade it or something so that you can manage for now, but be honest with people because it's got to happen.

MR. CROCKER: I'm honest with people. There's a community –

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: – in my district that there's a 3½ kilometre road, it was paved in the '70s. It leads to three households and what we've offered that community is to pulverize what's left of the pavement and offer a gravel road that will be graded twice year.

You're absolutely right. There's no way on this creation that we are going to be able to maintain 10,000 kilometres of paved roads in this province. If you think about it, don't blame it on any political government.

MR. LANE: No, no.

MR. CROCKER: The reality is these roads were paved when public service pensions were going into general revenue –

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: – and that is a fact of life in this province. So we're not going to be able to maintain 10,000 kilometres of paved road.

MR. LANE: Yeah, okay.

Well, I'm glad to know that you're talking about that and thinking about that because it's reality. Right?

MR. CROCKER: We're looking for alternatives. Through engineering, we're looking for alternatives.

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: Different products. There are products – we were going to do a pilot last year, but we couldn't find a suitable (inaudible). It's called grave lock, different –

MR. LANE: Yeah. Okay.

All right. Thank you for that. I'm glad you're at least thinking about those things.

I'm wondering about the pilot project on the asphalt mix. What's the status on that or an update on that?

MR. CROCKER: So, we're about 18 months in. We've seen some variations. Certainly, not enough to bring any conclusions. I guess one of the engineers behind me could speak probably better to it than I could but if I miss something they can, certainly, chime in.

To see a real difference here you're going to be into a number of years, whether it's four or five or six, because the reality is something may wear out, may lose quickly in the first 24 months –

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: – but by year five, it actually holds up something that wears more in year three.

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: So, it's really a long-term view. I don't think – Cory, I'm not sure if we've seen anything yet that would make us change anything at the moment.

MR. GRANDY: That's correct. It's still (inaudible) time.

MR. LANE: So, a couple of more years?

MR. GRANDY: But I'm looking forward, actually, our equipment is out now getting some test results after the winter season. We measure it twice a year. Once after the winter season; once after the summer season.

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. GRANDY: One thing that we do see – and, Minister, maybe you want to speak to it. I'll leave it to you.

MR. CROCKER: (Inaudible.)

MR. GRANDY: No, I was going to speak to winter versus summer.

MR. CROCKER: Right. We're seeing the wear is actually happening over the winter months.

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: Two factors.

MR. LANE: Studs?

MR. CROCKER: Studs and, obviously, plowing it.

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: We're seeing the wear.

One of the things we are seeing, though, is back in 2013 – when did the department add polymer '13 or '14?

MR. GRANDY: '14, at least; maybe even '15.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, back in 2014 – you can probably remember it because we were sitting over there.

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: The department –

MR. LANE: Still sitting over there.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

The department added polymer.

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: We first started using polymer that construction season.

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: We are seeing – so, that's five or six years now.

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: We're seeing success with polymer.

MR. LANE: Okay. All right. Well, thanks for that.

MR. CROCKER: You can thank Brazil for that.

MR. LANE: I guess we'll see how it all sort of rolls out.

MR. CROCKER: Petten never heard that.

MR. LANE: But I think it's a good idea to do that because –

MR. CROCKER: Absolutely.

MR. LANE: – obviously, what we're doing now is really not getting us where we need to be.

On the Leased Accommodations –

MR. CROCKER: Yes.

MR. LANE: – the question I have there relates to accessibility for person with disabilities. I know that – well, we're challenged even in our own government-owned facilities, in a lot of them.

In schools – although I know there was a pilot project that happened about a year or two ago and a lot of schools on the Avalon are now fully accessible with blue zones and everything, I guess, the way it should be, but I know there are a lot of leased facilities around and they are not accessible, they don't have proper signage, blue zones, proper entrances, curb cut-downs, whatever.

Is there now at least something in place that would say any new leases must be accessible for people with disabilities?

MR. CROCKER: Absolutely. Not only for leases, if you look at, for example, the new Corner Brook hospital, it's going to be built to the highest standards of accessibility.

If you look at the new visitors' centre actually as an example of job that government recently completed here at Confederation Building, I think that's – I don't know if cutting edge is the right word, but that really incorporates accessibility.

MR. LANE: Okay. Perfect. Thank you.

In terms of the Low Carbon Economy and stuff like that, and it kind of ties into new builds as well, I suppose, I don't know if this word is old now, but back in my day on city council the buzz was lead facilities. I know that the Summit Centre is a, or at least is a partial lead facility capturing rain water to actually use in the toilets and in the urinals and different things like that.

Is that being incorporated into government builds now, that idea?

MR. CROCKER: We always look to achieve lead silver.

MR. LANE: Yeah. Okay.

MR. CROCKER: Don't ask me what that means.

MR. LANE: Okay, that's good.

MR. CROCKER: We look to achieve it.

MR. LANE: On the issue of snow clearing, of course there was an issue – well, actually, my first quick question is, you said we're not getting another tow plow, we have two.

MR. CROCKER: Yes.

MR. LANE: Is the reason why we're not getting another one because the tow plows are not working or not doing what you thought it would do? Why are we not getting more?

MR. CROCKER: It's just something we didn't budget for, and some of it comes back to a consideration to Alison's comment earlier.

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: We can't fill the highways – obviously, tow plows can primarily only be used on a divided highway.

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: Effectively.

MR. LANE: Yes.

MR. CROCKER: If we fill the highways up with tow plows, we're going to cause traffic challenges.

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: So there's a balance on what we can do with a tow plows.

MR. LANE: It makes sense. I understand. Okay.

MR. CROCKER: It's not that we wouldn't get any in the future –

MR. LANE: Yes.

MR. CROCKER: – but we don't want to –

MR. LANE: I know.

MR. CROCKER: – clog up the highway system with tow plows.

MR. LANE: I can see that.

I guess the – because I'm running out of time here, so another quick one is snow clearing for ambulances.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MR. LANE: We had an issue last year, of course, with ambulances getting stuck between here and Whitbourne and so on. I know that the response – I believe the response – I'm not going to put words in your mouth, but it was something to the effect of: They shouldn't be on the highway. They should check and so on, particularly, if they don't have an emergency, but the issue, of course, is that if you already had an emergency in Whitbourne and you brought someone to St. John's, even though you don't have an emergency now that ambulance needs to get back to Whitbourne in case you have another emergency.

I'm just wondering: Has your department worked out any kind of communication beyond what was in place prior to that to ensure that when we're talking emergency services, ambulances, fire departments and so on, that there is a system to make sure that they can get through the highway in the case of emergencies?

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, I won't take full credit to what you attribute my comments because I don't think it was that cut and dry.

MR. LANE: No, I'm just trying to –

MR. CROCKER: Yes, absolutely –

MR. LANE: From memory, right?

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, 100 per cent. What we've done, if you reflect on that night as an example, Eastern Health actually –

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: – well, there's a dispatch centre at the Health Sciences Centre that shows dispatch down there for where every single ambulance is in the province at any given time. We have our Plow Tracker so we know where every single one of our plows are at any given time. There was a communications breakdown that day, I think, would be clearly what happened, or the fact that we were operating in silos.

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: Right now, if you were to go into our provincial dispatch for TW which is in Deer Lake, if you were to go into our dispatch centre right now, since that incident we have a monitor that consistently shows us Plow Tracker and we have a monitor that consistently shows where every single ambulance is in the province.

If we're going to close a highway now, before the decision to put out an advisory that Route 460 is closing, our dispatcher looks up to make sure that there's been no ambulance activity on 460.

MR. LANE: Okay.

MR. CROCKER: And we've really just broken down the silo with Eastern Health and with the ambulance operators because ambulance operators themselves all have AVLs, so in –

MR. LANE: Yeah.

No, I'm glad to hear that. I mean that could be life and death, right?

MR. CROCKER: No, no, absolutely.

MR. LANE: You don't actually know. I know that.

MR. CROCKER: There was a communications challenge to say the least, but I think we've overcome a lot of that. We'll never be perfect but it's a lot better than it was.

MR. LANE: Perfect. Thank you.

CHAIR: Okay your time has expired.

Any further questions?

MR. CROCKER: Mr. Chair –

CHAIR: Everything done?

CLERK: 2.1.01 through 2.4.03 inclusive.

CHAIR: Shall 2.1.01 to 2.4.03 inclusive carry?

All those in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: Opposed?

Carried.

On motion, subheads 2.1.01 through 2.4.03 carried.

CHAIR: We're going to take a five-minute break now before we move into the next section.

Get out and stretch your legs or your bladder.

MR. LANE: It's already stretched.

Recess

CHAIR: Okay, we're going to ask everybody to take their seats, please.

CLERK: 3.1.01 through 3.5.02.

CHAIR: Okay, Mr. Petten or Mr. O'Driscoll, would you like to start off?

MR. PETTEN: Thank you very much.

Minister, I just asked you a question, I got to go back, even though we voted on it, but I wanted to know if you'd give me a list of – in 2.3.02, I'm just looking for a list, it's not a question. I missed it actually.

MR. CROCKER: (Inaudible.)

MR. PETTEN: I figured that.

CHAIR: Order, please!

Thank you.

MR. PETTEN: So there are a couple lists I wanted: 2.3.01.

AN HON. MEMBER: (Inaudible.)

MR. PETTEN: Yeah.

I want you to provide us an itemized list of each government-owned building with the following information: the square footage, appropriations for utility, appropriations for maintenance, appropriation for operating costs and the total number of employees that operate out of each building.

MR. CROCKER: (Inaudible.)

MR. PETTEN: Can you provide an itemized list of each government-owned building with the following information: square footage, the appropriation for utilities. So, basically the costs, right, of appropriations, utilities, maintenance, operating costs of each building and the number of staff that operate out of each building.

MR. CROCKER: Right. So, can we – we'll give you the best of the information we have towards that. Joe is saying maintenance, for example, there are buildings that don't have dedicated maintenance.

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

MR. CROCKER: Right?

MR. PETTEN: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: We can get you the buildings, square footage, utility costs, but the maintenance is regional.

MR. PETTEN: Yeah, I know what you mean, I understand.

MR. CROCKER: Right? It's not like Confederation Building where we have 10 people that work maintenance.

MR. PETTEN: Yeah, I hear you.

MR. CROCKER: But we'll get you the best attempt at –

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

I need the same thing for leased space, basically.

MR. CROCKER: Well, obviously, we wouldn't have maintenance on leased, right?

OFFICIAL: (Inaudible.)

MR. PETTEN: We already asked for a copy of the list of leased spaces.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

OFFICIAL: The list?

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

OFFICIAL: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: Most of those leases would be all inclusive, right?

MR. PETTEN: How many employees, that's the only question, how many employees operate out of your leased space?

OFFICIAL: How many employees are in each – work from each building, is that what you're asking?

MR. PETTEN: You lease space for office space, would you know or departments or any approximation?

OFFICIAL: We have some but not all; we would do tally –

MR. CROCKER: So we're the landlord, I guess in that –

OFFICIAL: Yeah

MR. PETTEN: Yeah, I know what you mean.

MR. CROCKER: So, AES, we wouldn't know how many –

CHAIR: Excuse me. Your mic is there.

MR. CROCKER: I'm sorry. We wouldn't know how many employees AES would have in a building that AES –

MR. PETTEN: Okay, yeah.

MR. CROCKER: Right?

MR. PETTEN: No, you're right.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MR. PETTEN: Yeah.

So, we'll just get a copy of the leased space and the departments –

MR. CROCKER: Yes.

MR. PETTEN: – or whatever and we'll figure it out from there.

OFFICIAL: Yes.

MR. PETTEN: Okay, thank you for that.

Under 3.1.01, there's a decrease of Salaries of \$291,000 compared to the revised Estimates. What's the reason for the decrease in Salaries?

MR. CROCKER: That was the variance from severance cost in '18-'19. We had severance costs in '18-'19.

MR. PETTEN: Severance?

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MR. PETTEN: Okay. You had retirees, did you?

MR. CROCKER: Or was that through Flatter, Leaner?

OFFICIAL: It wouldn't have been through Flatter, Leaner.

MR. CROCKER: No, so normal retirements or ...?

OFFICIAL: Normal retirements or people leaving?

MR. CROCKER: Either retirements or people leaving – normal.

MR. PETTEN: Okay. So on that note now, there's no more severance?

MR. CROCKER: Right.

MR. PETTEN: Right, going forward.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MR. PETTEN: So were your budgets adjusted for that? There was nothing in budgets for severance, was there?

MR. CROCKER: Never budgeted, right?

OFFICIAL: It was never budgeted.

MR. PETTEN: It's not a budget line, severance, anyway, was it, ever?

OFFICIAL: No.

MR. PETTEN: So there's no change anyway. You can just do more paving with the extra money now?

MR. CROCKER: That's a good point. No, there's \$25 million a year in savings.

MR. PETTEN: Right.

Yeah, that's what I'm asking. Where do that money go?

MR. CROCKER: I'm sure we already got it absorbed.

MR. PETTEN: Where does that go? Does that go back to general revenues? That's my question: Does it stay in the department? Does that stay in your budget? There's \$25 million less, roughly, you're estimating what you would need now.

MR. CROCKER: Overall in government, yeah.

MR. PETTEN: Right? So where does that money go now? That just went into savings, did it?

MR. CROCKER: Finance budgets for severance. Are you on the Committee that has to take Finance to task? Ask Tom Osborne.

MR. PETTEN: In your department, though, you had – I'm asking it more and zeroing in on your department. Right?

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MR. PETTEN: So you had an approximation every year for severance?

MR. CROCKER: We'd have to find it, right? Obviously, you haven't got to find it anymore.

MR. PETTEN: Yeah, but I remember being there, you always ballparked. You knew that this one or that one was leaving, right?

OFFICIAL: Right.

MR. PETTEN: What budget line would that come of? Just in that division, was it? It was always earmarked at that –

OFFICIAL: (Inaudible) just manage it based on our needs.

MR. CROCKER: The deputy is saying to me, Barry, it was managed through the vacancy rate or whatever means was necessary.

OFFICIAL: There was not cut to our (inaudible).

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, there was no cut to ours.

MR. PETTEN: It shouldn't be a cut; it should be more money.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MR. PETTEN: Yeah.

OFFICIAL: Gives us some flexibility, maybe, but you never know where and when.

MR. CROCKER: Right, you don't know where and when.

MR. PETTEN: Some of that money could be substantial, right, in the department now that severance is not –

OFFICIAL: Some of that would go to Finance for a transfer because we (inaudible).

MR. CROCKER: Right, the nature of our business, too – Tracy just mentioned to me – is lots of times we would have to go to Finance for a transfer, right?

MR. PETTEN: Right, so you wouldn't necessarily have it there, you'd have to get extra money.

MR. CROCKER: No, we have to go to Finance for a transfer.

MR. PETTEN: That's my question.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MR. PETTEN: That's a relevant question because some of the severance is big money. I've been around, I know. We're not talking \$500 or \$1,000; this is like six-figure dollars. Depending on the year of retirement, it's a lot of money, including (inaudible) the department.

MR. CROCKER: I guess it is 10 years, right, or it's a year's salary for anybody who serves 12 years or greater.

MR. PETTEN: Right, exactly.

The number of government employees up for retirement and –

MR. CROCKER: Oh, it stopped at 20 weeks, didn't it?

OFFICIAL: Twenty weeks.

MR. CROCKER: Okay, 20 weeks. Anyway, yeah, it's big money.

MR. PETTEN: It is.

The 3.2.01, Improvements - Provincial Roads, 2018-'19 Estimate saw a decrease of \$897,000

compared to what was budgeted. This year's Estimates have it, this line item, at \$1.12 million less than what was spent in 2018-'19. What's the discrepancy?

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, so your \$897,000, as the individual allocations reach type of expenditure item, i.e. Salaries, travel, Supplies, Professional Services are completed based on the standard percentages of total project cost, so obviously there's variances year over year. Your \$1.1-million variance primarily reflects the reduction in 2019-2020 allocation based on the province's Roads Plan.

OFFICIAL: (Inaudible.)

MR. CROCKER: Right, so as you can see on the top line there, we have \$32.9 million in current and this year we have \$12.6 million in current.

MR. PETTEN: This is where a lot of engineers in the department, their salaries are charged off to different jobs.

MR. CROCKER: Right, so –

MR. PETTEN: If they're assigned to a job, the salary goes into that job.

MR. CROCKER: Right, so in this case, these are current jobs.

MR. PETTEN: Right.

MR. CROCKER: If it was a capital, you'll see over when we get into capital, that's gone up because we have more work in capital this year versus current.

MR. PETTEN: Yeah, so their salaries are never as much a line item, they're always tied to the Provincial Roads program.

MR. CROCKER: They're tied to what we bill back to the project.

MR. PETTEN: Cory is nodding his head. Just remember, Cory, just (inaudible).

Under Transportation and Communications as well – I guess I'm going to answer my own

question – that ties into the roads program as well.

MR. CROCKER: The same thing as well, we're charging off our engineers' time and travel to –

MR. PETTEN: That fluctuates anyway.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

Under Purchased Services, why such a drop of \$21 million if the roads program budget remained the same?

OFFICIAL: It's the same section.

MR. PETTEN: It's the same section.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, the same. It's a decrease in current capital. It's a split again.

OFFICIAL: Sort of standard.

MR. PETTEN: Why would it go from \$30 million to \$9 million? What happened to the \$21 million? It was \$26 million last year. What's involved and what's included in that, I should say. What is that? What does it make up?

MR. CROCKER: That's our contractors. That's paying for roadwork, but it's being billed over the capital now versus current.

MR. PETTEN: That's the money we're paying out to contractors for the roads.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

There's a standard –

MR. PETTEN: Is the \$9 million a carry-over from last year?

MR. CROCKER: I don't think it was \$9 million.

MR. PETTEN: It says \$70 million or \$74 million isn't it?

MR. CROCKER: The Provincial Roads Plan was \$77.2 million.

MR. PETTEN: Seventy-seven million dollars, okay.

MR. CROCKER: If it's any use to you, I can give you the percentages. For example, Salaries are billed at 6.4 per cent; travel and supplies is billed at 1.5 per cent; Professional Services, 7.9 to 12 per cent and Purchased Services, 80.1 to 84.4 per cent.

OFFICIAL: That will be in the (inaudible).

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, that's going to be in your copy of the Estimates book when we give it to you anyway.

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

My time is up now, so I'll pass it over to my colleague.

CHAIR: Okay, Ms. Coffin.

MS. COFFIN: Thank you.

Let's go to cost-shared federal and provincial agreements. Are we getting more position under Salaries, 3.2.03.01? There seems to be increases across the board in all categories there.

CHAIR: What was the line number again, sorry?

MS. COFFIN: 3.2.03.01, Salaries.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah so, again, this is the same thing. It's the percentages that we billed off to our projects. This is the activities for agreements like New Building Canada and rural and northern communities projects.

MS. COFFIN: These are cost-shared, so that's 30-30-40?

MR. CROCKER: When we have a cost-shared, it's 50-50.

MS. COFFIN: There are no municipalities involved in this one (inaudible).

MR. CROCKER: Yes, it's done through that department.

MS. COFFIN: Right.

Okay, the federal revenue variance, I guess that's also related to that, yes?

MR. CROCKER: Yes.

MS. COFFIN: Okay.

Improvement and Construction - Provincial Roads, let's see, more positions lost as well. We're seeing attrition in the Salaries, yes?

MR. CROCKER: No.

MS. COFFIN: Oh no, more extra positions. You have money.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, again, that's the compensation that's tied to what we bill to our projects.

MS. COFFIN: Right. Okay.

There seems to be \$300,000 less in Supplies.

MR. CROCKER: Again, it's the same. It is formula based; it's based on the project. Supplies are billed at 1.5 per cent of project costs.

MS. COFFIN: Okay.

Professional Services and Purchased Services; the Professional Services dropped significantly and Purchased Services went up significantly.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, so Professional Services are billed at 7.9 to 12 per cent.

MS. COFFIN: Right.

MR. CROCKER: Purchased Services are billed at – and this is our contractors, obviously. They make up approximately 80.1 to 84.2 per cent of any given project.

MS. COFFIN: Right. Okay.

Speaking of roads, what's the QA/QC on roads – quality assurance and quality control?

MR. CROCKER: Two years, right?

OFFICIAL: Our warranty for that is two years.

MR. CROCKER: Our warranty?

MS. COFFIN: No, how do you monitor your contractors? Just to couch that in an example for you: I'm coming out over the Brigus highway out over Roaches Line and I was very excited to see that someone went over it with a little bit of asphalt. They mostly just whispered asphalt at it and walked away, but I'm pretty sure they didn't tamp it down, because I'm coming across –

MR. CROCKER: Yes, I know exactly what she's talking about.

MS. COFFIN: I'm not sure how they added asphalt and made it worse.

MR. CROCKER: I know exactly where you're talking about.

MS. COFFIN: You do, don't you, right?

MR. CROCKER: Absolutely.

MS. COFFIN: I'm so glad I have an all-wheel drive. I was going to buy a WRX so I could rally drive it, right?

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MS. COFFIN: I can tell you another story.

MR. CROCKER: Remember the good stuff Paul Lane said about Joe Dunford? I know the exact area, what you're talking about.

MS. COFFIN: Yeah, (inaudible) farms.

MR. CROCKER: I can even tell you how it was laid. It was dumped and spread without (inaudible).

MS. COFFIN: Yeah, like the b'ys walked away. They just kind of flung like they were scattering birdseed and walked away.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, so that was an attempt at summer maintenance.

MS. COFFIN: Nice try – no, not even a nice try.

MR. CROCKER: That wouldn't have been a capital project. That would have been summer maintenance.

MS. COFFIN: Yeah.

Not much on the QA/QC, though, hey?

MR. CROCKER: Obviously, that's done by our internal staff.

MS. COFFIN: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: When you come to capital projects, if you were to look at – for example, if you went down Veterans Memorial instead of using Roaches Line, you would have seen right now there's construction there.

MS. COFFIN: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: That's capital construction. That's a contractor that we're purchasing.

MS. COFFIN: Oh yeah, and that's serious. We're bringing our real equipment in.

MR. CROCKER: Right.

MS. COFFIN: We're actually going to do this with a purpose, yeah.

MR. CROCKER: For quality assurance there, we would – I guess, on a job that size we would have an engineer there full time?

OFFICIAL: (Inaudible.)

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, we would have staff on that site full time –

MS. COFFIN: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: – with an engineer overseeing that project. That engineer may have a number of projects happening in that area –

MS. COFFIN: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: – but that would be overseen by one of our engineers.

MS. COFFIN: Okay.

I say this because when I was coming down over that highway another time – and I take that road because I don't go down over Veterans because I'm not going to Bay Roberts, I'm going off the Roaches Line to Brigus there. I was coming down over the highway one day and there was – I assume it was a family with a Subaru Outback and a pop-up camper, one of those little fold-down ones. They had out-of-province plates on them. They were coming there before they whispered asphalt at the road. The car was slowing. It was stopping. The camper on the back was moving around so much I thought it was going to let go like one of those Jiffy Pop things on the campfire, it looked like that was going to happen.

I thought this is not particularly good for tourism because they are going to go home and go: B'y, I totally ripped off the axle and my camper's no good and it just popped open in the middle of the highway.

So, is there any kind of effort to go: How are we going to target the roads? That's a key highway for tourism; there are a number of other ones like that. Is there accommodation for that type of thing?

MR. CROCKER: Absolutely.

AN HON. MEMBER: Adventure tourism.

MR. CROCKER: It's called adventure tourism. No.

Upon until, I guess, last year, we signed the new bilateral with Ottawa, and northern and rural is a new pot of roads funding that we have. So we have our traditional Roads Plan, our \$77.2 million.

MS. COFFIN: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: But we also have an additional \$104 million over the next nine years; this year being one of those nine. So what we've set out in criteria for that funding, tourism is actually one of the criteria we look at in that funding because one of the things with the Roads Plan, as pleased as we are with the Roads Plan, it wasn't addressing some of these realities because of traffic counts. Traffic counts become a factor in our Roads Plan –

MS. COFFIN: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: – whereas some of these roads, Bonavista is a prime example, and others – so, yeah, one of the things that we're going to try and do with our northern and rural projects is address tourism and economics in one. If you got a road, in some cases, there's not a lot of traffic but it leads to a fish plant –

MS. COFFIN: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: – for example, where there's a lot of heavy traffic – so, yeah, that's one of things that we're trying to focus our limited – because it comes back to Paul's comments earlier about trying to maintain 10,000 kilometres of road.

MS. COFFIN: Yes.

MR. CROCKER: But we are trying to take that new pot of funding, federal-provincial funding, to address some of the tourism issues.

MS. COFFIN: Okay, leads me to another road.

You know the Dominion in Bay Roberts?

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MS. COFFIN: Have you tried turning left off the highway onto that?

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, so you should see where my in-laws live in Bay Roberts and try and back out of their driveway, but –

MS. COFFIN: Yeah, and the reason I bring this up is, one, I like to shop there, but also the other thing is that's a main highway, I understand that it falls under provincial jurisdiction –

MR. CROCKER: It does.

MS. COFFIN: – because it is the old highway.

MR. CROCKER: It is.

MS. COFFIN: That's a serious safety issue.

MR. CROCKER: Highway access – he's not paying attention now, thankfully – highway access is a challenge, all the time. If you look at

a strip there in Bay Roberts, and we just had an issue there where there was another business that wanted to be built, and we actually, pretty much, had to say no, because every time you create an entry point on that road – and Barry would be quite familiar with this, Route 60 – there are so many challenges with access points on roads that are still provincially owned roads but they're in bustling municipalities.

MS. COFFIN: Yes.

MR. CROCKER: And that's a challenge. We would love for the Town of Bay Roberts to take over that road.

MS. COFFIN: I'm sure you would. I doubt very much the Town of Bay Roberts is excited about it, though.

MR. CROCKER: But the challenge, I guess, that we face with that road is the primary route for us in that region would be Veterans.

MS. COFFIN: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: Right? So ...

MS. COFFIN: With that we have a compounded problem, right? So, if we start moving to the highway system, what we're doing is we're not paying attention to Route 60, the maintenance is not going on Route 60.

MR. CROCKER: That's right.

MS. COFFIN: What we are doing then is we're forcing traffic onto the Veterans, which compromises the small businesses in that particular area.

MR. CROCKER: Absolutely.

MS. COFFIN: It compromises the housing in that area and it reduces services to individuals there, as well. So, the residents in the area are suffering.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MS. COFFIN: So there needs to be, perhaps, a more prudent approach to when each of these things are occurring and how we want to direct traffic. Because the other thing that happens is

we can rig our counts a little bit by making Route 60 sketchy and making Veterans –

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, that is –

MS. COFFIN: – a little bit less sketchy but still somewhat dangerous.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MS. COFFIN: What we're doing then is we're forcing more traffic to Veterans, so you are changing your counts, which means that Route 60, which really, really, really needs work, the counts are not there, so it is not being justified.

So, we have this, kind of, competing issue that's happening because we're not doing the maintenance, which drives down the counts, which means that then we also don't do the maintenance on it, so it becomes a self-perpetuating problem.

Is there such a thing as a solution to that?

MR. CROCKER: We're attempting to work closer with municipalities, because I think that's where the solution does lie.

MS. COFFIN: Yes.

MR. CROCKER: It's finding a funding arrangement to actually leverage ...

Obviously, a municipality can apply for 50-50 for roads. I get why municipalities don't really want to take these roads; they're big liabilities.

MS. COFFIN: Yes.

MR. CROCKER: But I think we're trying to forge a better or a new relationship with municipalities to incorporate, for example, ways where they're doing some of the maintenance on our road, shared arrangements with municipalities to do some, for example, whether it be summer maintenance or ways of actually – because in some cases there's a duplication of service. The town plow, as an example, is driving over our road to get to a town street, right?

MS. COFFIN: Are they plowing it?

MR. CROCKER: We're in Bay Roberts now, sorry. We're not even in CBS, Barry.

MS. COFFIN: If they're not plowing it, then (inaudible).

CHAIR: Okay, time requirements – do you want to finish up?

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, but you're dead on the money because that plow is driving over Route 60 in CBS – supposed to be. The plow is driving over that to get to a town road, and then we're coming out and plowing that road. So, I think co-operation with municipalities is something we –

MS. COFFIN: Perhaps. Yes, we can talk about municipalities after.

MR. CROCKER: Yes.

CHAIR: Mr. Parsons, do you have any more questions from 3.1.01 to 3.5.02?

MR. A. PARSONS: No, I'm good.

CHAIR: Sorry, Mr. Petten.

MR. CROCKER: He's going to ask about the Burgeo Highway if he gets a chance.

CHAIR: (Inaudible) paying attention back there.

MR. PETTEN: Andrew and myself, we want a whisper of pavement in CBS and Port aux Basques.

AN HON. MEMBER: And all points in between.

MR. PETTEN: And all points in between, yeah. Yeah, that's a good line. I'll remember that one.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, I can see that coming back in Question Period.

MR. PETTEN: Yeah, that's a good one. When I get in the mood one day, yeah.

3.2.02, under the Canada/Newfoundland and Labrador Infrastructure Framework Agreement.

MR. CROCKER: 3.2.02. Yeah.

MR. PETTEN: So this \$295,000 that was budgeted, where did that disappear or where did that go? Revenue side, where was that?

MR. CROCKER: The department had anticipated to receive this federal revenue in '18-'19; however, we received it before the end of '17-'18 fiscal year.

MR. PETTEN: What was that revenue for?

MR. CROCKER: It was the end of a cost-shared program.

MR. PETTEN: So it's the federal share for –

MR. CROCKER: Okay, yeah, this was a rehabilitation for the Gambo River Bridge and Benton Road intersection project.

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

MR. CROCKER: So it's just a specific project, right?

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

3.2.03, the Federal - Provincial Cost-Shared Agreements. The Salaries there went to \$200,000 to \$150,000 and then back up to \$570,000.

MR. CROCKER: Again, that's the standard percentage being applied to the projects.

MR. PETTEN: That's again tied to the –

MR. CROCKER: Tied to the percentages of the contract.

MR. PETTEN: And what about Purchased Services?

MR. CROCKER: Same thing. Purchased Services is billed at a fixed rate of – sorry, yeah, over 80 per cent, 80.1 to 80.4 – sorry, 80 per cent to 84 per cent is billed as Purchased Services. It's payments –

MR. PETTEN: So what's in the Purchased Services in this area? What would you be –?

MR. CROCKER: Contractors.

MR. PETTEN: Just the contractors.

MR. CROCKER: The tender, the contract.

MR. PETTEN: That's it, is it, just the contractors?

MR. CROCKER: Yeah because we're billing off our supplies in that. Yeah, so it's just the contractors.

MR. PETTEN: Just the contractors.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MR. PETTEN: Okay, 3.2.04, Salaries, under Improvement and Construction - Provincial Roads.

MR. CROCKER: That will be the same.

OFFICIAL: I think that's the same.

MR. CROCKER: That's the building of the formula for Salaries.

MR. PETTEN: It's tied to the jobs as well.

MR. CROCKER: (Inaudible) to the program to the job that's being done, because we're over in capital now, right?

MR. PETTEN: Right.

The first service, that's for the contractor.

MR. CROCKER: The same thing, yeah.

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

3.2.05; there's nothing allocated for Salaries this year?

MR. CROCKER: End of the project, isn't it?

OFFICIAL: (Inaudible.)

MR. PETTEN: Or really any of that.

MR. CROCKER: That's the end of Team Gushue.

OFFICIAL: Oh, this is the end of Team Gushue, yeah.

MR. PETTEN: A full line.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, that's the end of the last Team Gushue project.

MR. PETTEN: That's end of Team Gushue. That \$1.6 million, that's there for this year's work? That's Team Gushue?

MR. CROCKER: No.

MR. PETTEN: That's for other projects?

MR. CROCKER: That's the outstanding cost for the Placentia lift bridge. We're being sued.

MR. PETTEN: (Inaudible.)

Okay, good.

MR. CROCKER: Listen –

MR. PETTEN: I'll stop there.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, you should stop there.

MR. PETTEN: I don't need to ask.

MR. CROCKER: Loyola, he wouldn't have asked that question. He knew what it was.

MR. PETTEN: I'll stop.

MR. O'DRISCOLL: He was trying to get me to ask that.

MR. PETTEN: I'll try – do you want to ask about Team Gushue?

MR. O'DRISCOLL: (Inaudible.)

MR. CROCKER: What?

MR. PETTEN: What's he like.

MR. CROCKER: A \$50-million bridge.

CHAIR: The mic for Mr. O'Driscoll? Yeah.

MR. O'DRISCOLL: The Team Gushue is going to be added back in there?

MR. CROCKER: Team Gushue, right now, will be all provincial moving forward.

MR. O'DRISCOLL: Okay.

MR. CROCKER: We've expended the federal contribution to Team Gushue. It dates back well before –

MR. O'DRISCOLL: Well before us.

Okay, all good.

MR. CROCKER: Any of us in – well, yeah.

MR. O'DRISCOLL: Yeah, it's a long project. I know that.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MR. O'DRISCOLL: Okay, all good.

CHAIR: You're good?

MR. PETTEN: Under the revenue there's \$2.3 million. It didn't look like we received any but it's still there in this year. What happened to that federal revenue?

MR. CROCKER: What section are you on, Barry?

MR. PETTEN: Oh, we're back, I'm sorry, 3.2.05. Still in that one I was just into.

MR. CROCKER: Okay, revenue?

MR. PETTEN: Yeah.

It doesn't look like any money come in under that revised.

MR. CROCKER: Okay, that was the final payment, the final federal contribution from Team Gushue. We'll receive it this year.

MR. PETTEN: Okay, so it was expected last year but now you're going to get it this year?

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

Under 3.2.06, I guess we're talking Salaries and Purchased Services. That will go to –

MR. CROCKER: Trans-Labrador.

MR. PETTEN: – to the projects as we already discussed, right?

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, that's right.

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

What about the revenue piece? Is that the cost-shared factor as well? We had \$30 million come in, \$23 million we're expecting this year?

MR. CROCKER: Yes, that's Trans-Labrador. Yeah.

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

3.2.07, Federal - Provincial Cost-Shared projects, on Salaries there, that is a result of the percentage?

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, it's the billing split for the projects.

MR. PETTEN: It's getting easy.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MR. PETTEN: The revenue piece, are we expecting \$31 million this year from the federal government?

MR. CROCKER: Yes.

MR. PETTEN: What agreements are in this? What projects are included in this one?

MR. CROCKER: This is New Building Canada –

OFFICIAL: (Inaudible) rural and northern and Investing in Canada.

MR. CROCKER: Okay, yeah, so this is the New Building Canada, rural and northern communities and Investing in Canada. New Building Canada is concluding, right?

OFFICIAL: No, we still have –

MR. CROCKER: We have a few years left on it, yeah.

OFFICIAL: Yeah, there are a few more years left on that.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, so New Building Canada I think concludes in '22-'23?

OFFICIAL: Yeah, I think so.

MR. CROCKER: Rural and northern is new; we still have 8½ years on rural and northern. Investing in Canada is the same thing; we would have about eight years left on it.

MR. PETTEN: There's still a lot of projects not in for that. There's not been a lot done with that, has it?

MR. CROCKER: The only thing that I think we would pretty much have our project listing done for is New Building Canada, right?

OFFICIAL: New Building Canada and rural and northern –

MR. CROCKER: We're not complete though, no.

OFFICIAL: Oh, no, no.

MR. CROCKER: No, no.

Yeah, so the only one I think that we've done our final submission of projects for is New Building Canada, but we're only in year one of rural and northern. We only actually just got approvals in the last few days for rural and northern.

MR. PETTEN: Has any of that been publicly announced, any of those projects?

MR. CROCKER: Not really. If you go into the tenders you'll see that we've called a tender, for example, in Bonavista –

OFFICIAL: (Inaudible.)

MR. CROCKER: No, that wasn't that.

OFFICIAL: Oh yeah. No.

MR. CROCKER: No, that wasn't that.

OFFICIAL: We'll see an announcement soon.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, you'll see an announcement soon, but in order to get them tendered and get them done, some of the projects have been tendered.

MR. PETTEN: So we discussed about the trades –

MR. CROCKER: Trades and transportation.

MR. PETTEN: Would that fall under this program?

MR. CROCKER: No, that's under Investing in Canada.

MR. PETTEN: That's Investing in Canada fund.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, and disaster mitigation is another program that you'll see us avail of, too, that falls under Investing in Canada. Investing in Canada is the one that Ottawa – the 555 deal. It was announced last –

MR. PETTEN: What do you call it, the five what?

MR. CROCKER: The \$555-million federal contribution.

MR. PETTEN: Oh, yeah.

MR. CROCKER: This is some money that TW will get out of that \$555 million.

MR. PETTEN: What's included in this disaster? You said disaster ...?

MR. CROCKER: Disaster mitigation.

MR. PETTEN: Yeah, what ...?

MR. CROCKER: From our perspective, it's primarily bridges. If a bridge can be classified – if you lost that bridge –

MR. PETTEN: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: – you lose your link. You cut off the – so that’s the type of project that would qualify under disaster mitigation. Also, too, we have some challenges – we’re doing disaster mitigation in Port au Port?

OFFICIAL: No.

MR. CROCKER: No, that’s green.

OFFICIAL: That would be (inaudible).

MR. CROCKER: Okay, yeah. If the situation can be considered a disaster, we can apply under Investing in Canada.

MR. PETTEN: You’re saying mitigations. That’s before the bridge gives out? It’s proactive, right?

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, disaster mitigation.

MR. PETTEN: What about those big culverts? We have a lot of culverts that – we had the Trans-Canada cut off one time. I know when I was over in the department that happened.

OFFICIAL: Those are the types of things.

MR. PETTEN: Would that qualify under that program?

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, I’m not sure. Would culverts qualify for that, Cory?

MR. PETTEN: They’re a million dollars to operate.

OFFICIAL: It depends how big they are.

MR. CROCKER: They’d have to be bundled to get to the –

OFFICIAL: They are looking for projects \$20 million or over.

MR. CROCKER: Right, so the project list; what you submit in a bundle has to be over \$20 million.

MR. PETTEN: Oh, so it has to be bundled in a \$20 million ...?

MR. CROCKER: They want it coming in \$20-million blocks.

MR. PETTEN: Because up in Holyrood, three or four years ago, New Year’s, the culvert –

MR. CROCKER: Right.

MR. PETTEN: – the road collapsed.

MR. CROCKER: Right.

MR. PETTEN: That would have qualified but it was not enough money, obviously, on its own; it would have had to have been part of a bigger –

MR. CROCKER: Bigger –

MR. PETTEN: – piece.

MR. CROCKER: Right, because if you think about – I guess the only one I’ve really been involved in was the West Coast flood a year ago this past January. We have to get to \$4 million before we ...?

OFFICIAL: I can’t remember.

MR. CROCKER: There’s a number that we have to get to before disaster mitigation applies, and then it applies at 25 or 75-25. After you get to around the \$8-million dollar mark, it becomes 75-25, but it pro-rates upward.

OFFICIAL: That’s disaster financial assistance.

MR. CROCKER: That’s disaster financial assistance, that’s not mitigation. Obviously, that’s a disaster that’s happened; this new fund is for mitigation.

MR. PETTEN: We should have no problem getting a \$20-million bundle sent up for that, based on the bridge repairs probably required throughout. I’m just quickly guessing.

MR. CROCKER: No problem.

MR. PETTEN: No problem.

MR. CROCKER: No problem, but you have to remember the other side of it, we have to come up with our \$10 million but, yes.

OFFICIAL: The feds have to approve it –

MR. CROCKER: The feds –

OFFICIAL: – because it’s application-driven.

MR. CROCKER: Right, it’s application-driven. The feds do have to approve it but, yeah, there’s no problem to get it.

MR. PETTEN: Okay. Thanks.

CHAIR: Ms. Coffin, do you have any questions?

MS. COFFIN: Yes, of course I do.

CHAIR: I thought you would.

MS. COFFIN: It’s roads.

CHAIR: Bring them on.

MS. COFFIN: I got right excited last time.

Let’s talk about the Trans-Labrador Highway.

MR. CROCKER: Yes.

MS. COFFIN: What is the timeline to completion?

MR. CROCKER: The timeline to completion, we will call the final tenders for paving of the Trans-Labrador Highway this calendar year.

MS. COFFIN: That’s excellent. Is the cost on track?

MR. CROCKER: Yes. Actually, last year, we were able to realize some real savings and we’ll have a much better picture once the final tenders are called this year on what the final bill is going to be. But, knock on wood, so far, so good.

MS. COFFIN: Excellent. That’s good to hear.

The Trans-Labrador Highway snow clearing is contracted out to a third party.

MR. CROCKER: Yes.

MS. COFFIN: Where do we find that in the budget?

MR. CROCKER: Under Maintenance, Purchased Services. We have to go to Snow and Ice Control.

MS. COFFIN: So it’s not Purchased Services under Trans-Labrador Highway?

MR. CROCKER: No, because this is the capital project. This is actually doing the work.

MS. COFFIN: Right.

MR. CROCKER: Cory bills it and Joe looks after it.

MS. COFFIN: Right.

Let’s talk about the minister’s – your mandate letter suggests that you would consult with the Nunatsiavut and Innu Nation on the feasibility of extending the Trans-Labrador Highway into Nunatsiavut and Natuashish and, where possible, seek opportunities for federal funding. Is there any progress on that?

MR. CROCKER: Well, right now, our focus is getting the completion of the Trans-Labrador Highway. It’s a massive project. I think over the last three years we have invested, along with the federal government, \$171 million.

MS. COFFIN: Yes.

MR. CROCKER: And they’ve been very cooperative on that. Are we waiting on approval for one more business case?

OFFICIAL: (Inaudible.)

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, so we are doing Trans-Labrador and business cases to Ottawa, chunk by chunk. We still have one final business case to get approved for the current Trans-Labrador. So once we get that commitment, we’ll start to work towards the discussion around the road to the north. It’s a discussion that I’ve had with primarily MP Jones, the Nunatsiavut Government and with officials in Ottawa. So it is certainly something that we’re going to look at the feasibility of.

MS. COFFIN: Okay.

Are there any obstacles that you're seeing, other than the fact that you're building a highway in Labrador over permafrost?

MR. CROCKER: Exactly. And that would really have to be bitten off in realistic pieces.

MS. COFFIN: Okay. All right, thank you.

That was just those questions; there are more of course. Subhead 3.2.08, the Strategic Infrastructure Fund, I noticed there's no money associated with. So did that become 3.2.07?

MR. CROCKER: That was project for the replacement of the Sir Robert Bond Bridge, and that project has now –

MS. COFFIN: Okay, so that was a single project?

MR. CROCKER: That was a project, yeah.

MS. COFFIN: Right.

Are you doing anything under the Canada Infrastructure Bank.

MR. CROCKER: We've met with the bank. We actually had the CEO of the bank in to do a presentation a while ago. We've talked about, for example, a fixed link with the bank. Obviously, the bank wants big projects – triple P or a partnership project, but that's really, to date, the only project that we've had discussions with the bank on and –

OFFICIAL: From TW.

MR. CROCKER: Right. Sorry, yes, from the Transportation and Works perspective. It's interesting to me when you talk about the bank. I've been at an FPT table where, Nova Scotia, for example, is trying to build roads with shadow tolls through the bank and it's not being –

MS. COFFIN: Shadow tolls?

MR. CROCKER: Shadow tolls. So you don't toll the customer; you toll the government. They're not looking overly favourable on that type of arrangement.

MS. COFFIN: Okay.

So since we're talking about the fixed link, you're talking that they like to do those as P3 projects. Do they mean design, maintain, finance and build –

MR. CROCKER: Operate.

MS. COFFIN: – and operate? Okay.

All right then, let's keep going. Resource Roads Construction, 3.3.01, we saw a big chunk of Supplies that came in that was unexpected this year. And I notice that the value went back down, so revised over budget was over by a little over \$100,000.

MR. CROCKER: So that's a reallocation of funding from Property, Furnishings and Equipment for supplies purchased during the year. This is, actually, a budget that we manage for FLR, so –

MS. COFFIN: FLR?

MR. CROCKER: Forestry and Land Resources.

MS. COFFIN: Got it. Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: So, this is a budget that is primarily used – not primarily, it is wholly used for forestry roads, typically in Central and on the West Coast.

MS. COFFIN: Okay. All right, so that explains why there's a big gap in Property, Furnishings and Equipment, got it.

Administration and Support Services, 3.4.01, big, big drop in Salaries there. And that's Building Design and Construction. Was that as a result of a P3?

MR. CROCKER: Take that one.

MS. KING: So we've had a look at how the department recharges salaries to projects. And so that's the difference that you see here is ensuring that employee's time is appropriately being charged to the capital projects. So there's no reduction in positions here.

MS. COFFIN: Okay, so this is provincial and this doesn't relate to this federal-provincial agreement?

MS. KING: No.

MS. COFFIN: Okay. All right, so you started out with \$2.3 million –

MS. KING: This is mainly schools.

MS. COFFIN: – and then you said we're going to charge some of this stuff off to the feds, this is what it turns into, still same number of positions.

Let's see, School Facilities - New Construction and Alterations, what schools are on the go – what falls under this one, this is capital construction? I'm assuming Coley's Point (inaudible) and a couple of others?

MR. CROCKER: What falls here is Paradise, Gander Academy, Coley's Point, St. John's francophone, Bay d'Espoir Academy and the Corner Brook bus depot.

MS. COFFIN: Okay.

Development of New Facilities, we have a lot of unspent money under Purchased Services, and a lot of – okay, no Professional Services, lots of unspent money there.

MR. CROCKER: I'm sorry ...

MS. COFFIN: 3.4.03 under the Salaries, 01.

MR. CROCKER: Professional Services?

MS. COFFIN: Yeah. So I noticed that there was big chunk budgeted, only spent a little tiny bit, does that mean that there's no design on the horizon?

MR. CROCKER: No, what we've actually been able to do is better utilize our design engineers that we have in-house.

MS. COFFIN: Okay.

MR. CROCKER: So we're reducing consultant fees and outside engineering.

MS. COFFIN: That's a good cost savings.

Purchased Services has dropped. So what falls under Purchased Services there?

MR. CROCKER: Again, it's contractors.

MS. COFFIN: Okay, so we're using less contractors so that's why that's a little lower.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, that would probably be projects really not getting completed. It just reflects the anticipated contract requirements for '19-'20.

MS. COFFIN: Okay.

Justice Infrastructure, I assume that means infrastructure that falls under the portfolio of Justice?

MR. CROCKER: Yes, so that would reflect allocations for the Labrador Correctional Centre, which is approximately budgeted at \$1 million. And there is \$600,000, which we would've heard last night, for the new prison, the new corrections facility.

MS. COFFIN: Okay. So what's going to be done with the new – what are we getting for \$650,000?

MR. CROCKER: So, right now, we will go out for requests for proposals for fairness –

OFFICIAL: For fairness, legal and procurement.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, so we'll go out and do a request for proposals this fall for fairness, legal and procurement. So we will start the process of the RFP this fall.

I think the question was asked last night, it very much falls in line with the timelines we've seen in our other partnership projects. Typically, you see a timeline between 30 to 36 months before we actually see shovels in the ground and steel coming up.

MS. COFFIN: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: So it follows pretty much the same timelines.

MS. COFFIN: Okay, good to hear.

CHAIR: Your time is up.

MS. COFFIN: Yeah, okay.

CHAIR: Mr. Petten.

MR. PETTEN: I'm almost done this section, actually. I don't think there's anything to – so we get over in 3.5.02.

MR. CROCKER: Ferry Terminals?

MR. PETTEN: Ferry Terminals, yeah.

I guess in all that 01 and 02. So are we in the same principle there with the charging off for all of these Salaries and Professional Services, is that to do with the Bell Island upgrades or ferry –?

MR. CROCKER: It's not charged often the same way, but primarily the activity is centred around Bell Island in this, right?

MR. PETTEN: So the Purchased Services is for the contractors and Salaries is the engineers.

OFFICIAL: Purchased Services.

MR. CROCKER: Yes.

MR. PETTEN: That's what I mean.

MR. CROCKER: Yes. Yeah, sorry, yes.

MR. PETTEN: The same process.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, the same process, we're charging off our engineering. Purchased Services is the new terminal building.

MR. PETTEN: The majority of this is for the Bell Island terminal?

MR. CROCKER: Yes.

MR. PETTEN: Any out in Farewell?

OFFICIAL: Oh, yes.

MR. CROCKER: What?

MR. PETTEN: Any out in Farewell – Fogo?

That's all the questions on that section.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, we can actually provide you with a list of projects that we did last year for ferry –

MR. PETTEN: Yeah, sure.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MR. PETTEN: Yeah, that'll be great.

MR. CROCKER: Brazil will like you.

MR. PETTEN: Brazil, yeah, I know. That's the problem.

That's all I have for this section.

CHAIR: Any other questions for 3.1.01 to 3.5.02?

Ms. Coffin.

MS. COFFIN: I'm good.

CHAIR: You're good?

MR. LANE: (Inaudible.)

CHAIR: Is everybody good with Mr. Lane asking a couple of questions?

MR. LANE: Yeah, thank you for that.

On the road infrastructure and so on and particularly culverting and things like that.

MR. CROCKER: Yes.

MR. LANE: I'm just wondering is anybody accounting for issues surrounding climate change and more capacity in culverts and so on in recognition of the reality of what's happening?

MR. CROCKER: We always are, absolutely. Just recently, I think, in the last 12 to 18 months, the feds now under disaster relief, like when we would have had the rain storm on the on the West Coast.

MR. LANE: Yeah, the mitigation fund there.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah. So, they allow a 25 – because remember a few years ago, I think it was Igor, they made you put the same diameter of culvert back.

MR. LANE: Yes, which was absolutely crazy.

MR. CROCKER: In order to get the funding you had to put the same diameter back.

MR. LANE: It made no sense. I know.

MR. CROCKER: They allow a 25 per cent variance now.

MR. LANE: Excellent.

MR. CROCKER: So we can upsize by 25 per cent.

MR. LANE: Okay. You can and you are?

MR. CROCKER: Yes.

MR. LANE: Yes.

MR. CROCKER: Anywhere at all that we're doing something, if there's a challenge there that needs to be upgraded, absolutely.

MR. LANE: Okay. That's good to hear because that policy was absolutely ludicrous.

MR. CROCKER: Crazy.

MR. LANE: I don't know who came up with it.

It's not really under this section, but I ran out time on the other section, so I have a quick question. I am just wondering about snow plow repairs.

I know there were issues a couple of years back in particular and we recall where out of Donovan's depot and I know the Avalon depots, two or three of them in particular, we had 30 per cent of the equipment on the road and all that stuff. I know information I received from sources were that we were having issues like not enough mechanics and different things like that, that was causing problems.

Is that still a challenge?

MR. CROCKER: Absolutely.

MR. LANE: We never heard a lot about it this year.

MR. CROCKER: No. Here we go again; this is going to cost money.

Joe is doing a good job managing that.

MR. LANE: Yes.

MR. CROCKER: But it is a challenge.

Alison asked a question earlier about vacancies.

MR. LANE: Yes.

MR. CROCKER: We consistently have jobs for heavy duty mechanics or HETs on the board; always advertising.

I think we were in a good position, Joe, this past winter? We were in a good position. Right now, again, our vacancies of HETs are up again.

MR. LANE: Is it an issue that the salaries are not competitive with larger municipalities, as an example, or what's the issue?

MR. CROCKER: It's certainly part of the issue.

MR. LANE: Is it something that you would consider, obviously with the problem?

MR. CROCKER: It's something that we've looked at, obviously. It's tough to find; it's important we do.

MR. LANE: Yes.

MR. CROCKER: But, yeah, that's certainly something we have looked at.

MR. LANE: Yes.

MR. CROCKER: I think there are other factors in retention, too, and we're working with the Office to Advance Women Apprentices –

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: – to try and get more people into that field.

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: It's a tough job.

MR. LANE: You wouldn't think that, would you?

MR. CROCKER: No, it's a tough job. My father was a heavy duty mechanic, and it's tough work.

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: It is not nice work. It's not nice work for – if you think about the type of work it is, you're outside crawling under a snow plow in February.

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: It's tough work.

MR. LANE: No, I get it.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MR. LANE: Okay.

In terms of roads, and this was kind of alluded to, I believe, by the leader of the NDP if I'm not mistaken, she kind of touched on it when she was asking questions about the whisper of pavement and so on in certain areas. You kind of alluded to it as well, but it's something that I've thought of also, it's the whole issue around – if there's been any thought given to analysis done in consultation with Municipal Affairs and maybe Municipalities Newfoundland and Labrador in finding efficiencies so that some of these – I understand if you're in small areas where there are very small communities and local service districts, it's not a reality. But maybe in some of the larger centres where we have provincial plows going through the roads. You talked about Bay Roberts and it's the same thing in different areas around the province.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MR. LANE: I understand municipalities are not going to want to take on the liability and the

extra costs and so on. Although, arguably, there are other larger municipalities that have to do it. I would hear from people in my district, as an example: Why is it that I have to pay taxes to get my roads done but then I also have to pay for other areas? You get that, I understand.

Not as a download, but as a way to compare the costs and say, do you know what? If you took this over, because you have your own equipment and staff doing this anyway and to compensate them by way of perhaps a larger grant from Municipal Affairs or something so that one balances off the other. By the same token, it makes sense for your department and the taxpayers, generally, that we're saving a few dollars.

Is that something that's at all being discussed at all or –?

MR. CROCKER: It is. We've been trying to – and primarily, I guess, we sort of picked the urban municipalities group.

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: I know we attend our meetings now on a regular basis. I guess the challenge with that is the reallocation. So in order for us to do that is trying to find a formula because, obviously we'd have to do it within existing budgets.

MR. LANE: Yes.

MR. CROCKER: It is difficult, but, obviously, duplication of service is an issue that we would really like to get to, and it may actually have to become some type of an arrangement between us and Municipal Affairs and municipalities.

MR. LANE: Yes, that's how I would see it.

MR. CROCKER: Speaking from what I've seen, you go out to a municipality, primarily the smaller ones and say listen, can you take on this local service district for us. If not, we got to travel our equipment there; you're next door to it.

They seem to want to make money off it; I'll just put it to you. Do you know what I mean? It

comes back that it don't fit being feasible because the price tag is usually high.

MR. LANE: Yeah.

And perhaps, I just throw it out there, that's where the conversation around regional government comes into play, right, for some of this stuff, potentially.

MR. CROCKER: Right, absolutely.

MR. LANE: I know there are no easy answers to it.

MR. CROCKER: It's not an easy answer because the reallocation is the issue.

MR. LANE: But the reality of it is that we all know where we are from a financial point of view. We know the mess we're in and we know the demographics and we know the geography and whatever. At some point in time, some of these things, we got to try to tackle it in a fair way and find solutions, but we can't be afraid to talk about these issues and trying to find some solutions.

MR. CROCKER: Just to come back to your comments earlier when we talked about the tough conversation around everybody having a paved road. If you look at the level of service provided in Newfoundland and Labrador for roads –

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: – it is – the best in Canada, Joe, our level of service for snow clearing?

MR. DUNFORD: I think it's one of the best in Canada.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, our level of service for snow clearing in Newfoundland and Labrador is one of the best in Canada. Where we use a four-hour turnaround, Nova Scotia uses a 12. So Nova Scotia would commit to a rural road being cleared once every 12 hours. Our standard is four hours.

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: And then Nova Scotia would have a lot less geography to cover.

MR. LANE: No, I do understand and I know it's a very touchy subject and we can all then make it political, which is unfortunately why nothing ever changes because you get into the politics of, oh, you're against rural Newfoundland or whatever, which nothing could be further from the truth –

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MR. LANE: – for any of us, but these are realistic conversations and your department is one of the departments that is really going to be sort of at the forefront of a lot of these discussions about how we try to come with creative ways of maintaining reasonable services and doing it in a way to try to keep costs down because it's just not sustainable forever, not everywhere.

Anyway, that comment will probably come back to bite me at some point in time on the Open Line or something.

MR. CROCKER: I've probably made a few of them here tonight too.

MR. LANE: What's that?

MR. CROCKER: I've made a few here tonight too.

MR. LANE: Yeah. Listen, so be it, we've got to talk about what's right.

I guess my final quick question: I'm just wondering if you could make a comment about the Waterford Hospital, on the flood plain and just explain why you can't put it somewhere else, what is the rationale why it has to go there? There are a lot of people that are not necessarily happy about that decision. I don't know enough about it to make an informed opinion.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, and I can tell you, you're certainly more than welcome and this goes for yourself, Alison, Barry and anybody who wants to, Cory can certainly be available to give you the study that's been done, the information that's been done. But if you think about it, after Igor, it was determined there was a

berm required at the Health Sciences Centre. There's a \$1-billion plus piece of infrastructure at the Health Sciences Centre already.

That berm was going to be placed there. With an extension to that berm, we are able to now place the new mental health facility there. As an even further mitigation, we're going to put a south berm, which protects even more assets. Really, the health community said where they wanted it. They want the emergency room for the new mental health facility to be the same emergency room. You break your arm or if you have mental health issue, you go to the same – it's about breaking down the stigma and we've found a way that we can actually do that.

So we can arrange that. Anybody who would like to come by, Cory can certainly do the technical briefing and show you the mapping.

MR. LANE: I'd love to do that actually.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, so we can certainly arrange that.

MR. LANE: Along with the other briefing we were doing on – what was the other thing?

MS. COFFIN: Team Gushue.

MR. CROCKER: Team Gushue.

MR. LANE: Team Gushue, yeah.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, we can certainly give that briefing.

MR. LANE: Okay.

Thank you. My time is done.

CHAIR: No further questions for 3.1.01 to 3.5.02?

Shall they carry? All in favour?

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: Contra-minded?

Carried.

On motion, subheads 3.1.01 through 3.5.02 carried.

CLERK: 4.1.01 through 4.2.02.

CHAIR: We'll start off with Ms. Coffin.

MS. COFFIN: Thank you.

All right, let's see, there are a couple of fun ones here.

MR. CROCKER: Oh, is there ever.

MS. COFFIN: Ferries – let's have a chat about people leaving their vehicles on the *Legionnaire*. We hear that the department was going to do a risk assessment as well as provide ambulance service for those who requested it. There was a protest as late as April 16 when a double amputee was asked to leave the ferry by the captain when he would not leave his car.

Can you bring us up to speed on what's being done to accommodate disabled individuals travelling on the ferry?

MR. CROCKER: The risk assessment was completed and is completed independently by our regulator, by Lloyd's. They came back and said that the rules are we should be vacating the vehicle. The muster stations – the safest place for somebody to be, disabled or any other person, is actually on deck where the lifeboats are. We haven't dismissed the possibility of making accommodations and changes for people. Yesterday, we actually accommodated a gentleman on the Bell Island run by the use of ambulance, as an example.

We've looked at a number of different options. We're still assessing different options. It's certainly something that, as much as you never want to inconvenience somebody, it really becomes a safety issue, not only for that person but we also have to take the safety of our employees into account. Because if you get into a situation where that vessel were to list, to a certain extent, your elevators don't work anymore. So there's a risk associated and it's balancing that risk for the passenger and also for the safety of our employees.

We're still working on it. It is an issue. That is the policy on all of our provincial ferries. As simple as it is on the 500-metre run to Long Island – so on Long Island, it's a 500-metre ferry crossing and you're required to get out of your car. It is something that we continue to review. We're looking for a solution because we don't want to inconvenience people that are disabled or people, in some cases, that are in very tough life situations, but we're responsible for their safety and other's safety as well.

MS. COFFIN: Thank you.

The *MV Northern Ranger*, what are we doing with that?

MR. CROCKER: Trying to sell it.

MS. COFFIN: Any luck?

MR. CROCKER: We do have an interested buyer and we would really like to sell it. If you know anybody looking for a boat –

MS. COFFIN: Needs to buy a boat, I'll let you know.

MR. CROCKER: Before we actually –

MS. COFFIN: The food fishery is opening soon.

MR. CROCKER: – went down that route, we did have a conversation with the Nunatsiavut Government because there was some interest; they had seen an opportunity. We also had a conversation with the Innu Nation. We sort of offered it to both of those organizations, but they weren't interested in an old boat.

MS. COFFIN: Fair enough.

We have four ferries between 48 and 55 years old and several more – *Earl Winsor* at 44. We have a couple more – *Challenger One* at 42 years old. Any plans to replace these?

MR. CROCKER: *Earl Winsor* is gone.

MS. COFFIN: Okay.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, we got rid of *Earl*.

The *Challenger One* and I think the other ones they're contracted vessels on the South Coast. We went out with an RFP in 2018 I'm going to say it was. We weren't successful. The cost would've been inflated by approximately \$5 million a year, from about what's \$9 million now to about \$14 million a year.

Coming out of that process, we met with the proponents that were interested. These are the vessels that would've been in place previously. We went back out and did a quick tender; it's a two-year tender with one year extensions.

We're now preparing to go back out with the South Coast RFP. In the first RFP that went out, we used timelines of five years and 10 years and what the providers told us is they could not amortize their investment. What they did tell us is you're looking at all new builds. The vessel for the South Coast of the province doesn't exist to go and buy used, so they're going to have to build new vessels.

What you will see in the new RFP is a lengthened contract time for the amortization so that we can make it attractive enough and affordable for the province, but the proponent can actually amortize a vessel over what would be a 20- or a 25-year period.

MS. COFFIN: Right. Okay.

MR. CROCKER: That's what we learned from the attempt at the RFP.

MS. COFFIN: When you send out these RFPs or when you are considering building a ferry – and I hear this around ferry construction more often than I do a lot of other infrastructure development – in particular, do you consult with individuals who will be using the ferry, like residents on either end of the ferry?

I know that I've heard in several different areas – the North Coast, the Northeast Coast and the South Coast as well – a number of times the ferry that they received doesn't necessarily match their needs. One gentleman quite astutely pointed out that we got a Cadillac when we needed a Neon. We thought that was an unnecessary match. Then, in another instance, I think the ferry specifications required a new wharf which was an unnecessary addition.

Have any –

MR. CROCKER: I'm not taking credit for that one.

MS. COFFIN: Is there any consideration for things like that?

MR. CROCKER: Well, in my tenure we haven't built new ferries and we don't have any new ferry construction on the horizon.

MS. COFFIN: Except for the RFPs we're about to put out.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah but they won't be government owned, that will be RFPs for private.

MS. COFFIN: But if they're not done properly they may result in government buying a new wharf to fit the ferry.

MR. CROCKER: No, absolutely.

We were actually consulting with the South Coast communities as recently as last week. Every ferry destination or island or remote community in the province typically has a ferry users committee. It's an established committee that's a line of communication for the department. So, yeah, we do talk to those committees but –

MS. COFFIN: Do you listen to them though?

MR. CROCKER: We do. Fair, but the reality is, too, we base our decisions on numbers and passenger rates. Most ferry communities in the province – and fair enough – would tell you that they need a second ferry, when the reality is we very rarely operate at capacity.

You have to balance the community needs with value for money and responsibility. We have about 11,000 people in the province right now relying on ferry services and it's costing us close to \$100 million a year to operate.

MS. COFFIN: Okay. All right, let's go over and look at money then.

4.1.01, we see a variance in Supplies under Ferry Operations. Supplies go – there was an

unexpected jump from budget to revised of a little less than a million. Then, what we have budgeted for in the current year is down by \$1.5 million. Are they going to have less supplies?

MR. CROCKER: The \$1.4 million was a reallocation of funding from Supplies to Purchased Services to offset the increase of the cost of the new ferry contract in Labrador. The services offered in Labrador are also resolved into fuel savings because of the more fuel-efficient vessels.

The new *Qajaq* started running in the last quarter of the fiscal and, this year, we are anticipating approximately \$345,000 in fuel savings, as opposed to the *Apollo* that was – sorry, cost of fuel, \$345,000 and the *Apollo* was costing us \$614,000 for fuel. We're looking at a million dollars a year in savings from fuel.

Then, your second line ...?

MS. COFFIN: Yeah, the revised budget versus revised, and then Estimates for this year are lower. One was a jump and then the second was a drop.

MR. CROCKER: Right, so that's an offset by the (inaudible)?

OFFICIAL: Sorry. No, no, you were right what you just said, so from revised to budget.

MR. CROCKER: The revised to budget was an offset by a reduction in the budget from '19-'20 for fuel savings with the more efficient vessels.

MS. COFFIN: Okay.

You say you reallocated money from Purchased Services into Supplies. That was between 2018-'19, right?

MR. CROCKER: Right. Yes, that's for the –

MS. COFFIN: That's why the budgeted versus revised has dropped?

MR. CROCKER: Right, that's from Supplies to Purchased Services.

MS. COFFIN: Right, okay. That's where that was allocated.

MR. CROCKER: That's budget to budget. Yeah.

MS. COFFIN: What falls under Purchased Services?

MR. CROCKER: Fuel? That's to contract the fuel.

OFFICIAL: Repairs and maintenance –

MR. CROCKER: Right.

OFFICIAL: – for the island, and then the contract costs in Labrador.

MR. CROCKER: Right, so it's repairs and maintenance for our government-owned vessels and the contracts for the contracted vessels.

MS. COFFIN: Okay so the contracted vessels, do they supply their own staff?

MR. CROCKER: Yes.

MS. COFFIN: Okay, so our salaries are just for provincially owned –?

MR. CROCKER: Provincial-owned ferries.

MS. COFFIN: Okay.

And then we had this extra amount there for Purchased Services.

MR. CROCKER: For Purchased Services for –

MS. COFFIN: Are the salaries of the individuals in the Purchased Services comparable to the provincial government salaries?

MR. CROCKER: I don't know that answer.

Comparable, John?

That's a very competitive industry so we would say, yes. We have a lot of movement in our own because there are lots of opportunities. If you're a mariner, there are lots of opportunities. Companies and government: everyone needs to remain competitive to keep staff.

MS. COFFIN: But there's no certainty that the salaries match, like a captain on the –?

MR. CROCKER: Oh, yeah. No.

MS. COFFIN: Okay.

CHAIR: Ms. Coffin, your time has expired. Unless you only have one quick question, or ...?

MS. COFFIN: No, no.

CHAIR: If not, we will go back.

Mr. Petten.

MR. PETTEN: (Inaudible) just saying.

I have a few questions on the *Kamutik*.

MR. CROCKER: The *Kamutik*, okay.

MR. PETTEN: Do we need any dock upgrades or infrastructure upgrades – will there be any required in any of the communities for the vessel route or into Goose Bay?

MR. CROCKER: No. There is money allocated, though, in the Marine Infrastructure Plan for upgrades – shed upgrades and wharf upgrades in Makkovik, but they would have happened whether it's the new vessel or not.

MR. PETTEN: So there's no interference with (inaudible).

MR. CROCKER: No.

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

Can we have all the notes and feedback collected from the public consultation that happened around Easter in Labrador?

OFFICIAL: Sorry?

MR. PETTEN: Consultations – this wasn't my question, as you can tell.

MR. CROCKER: No, that's right.

MR. PETTEN: Totally honest, if it was my question, you got no problem.

Public consultations happened about the ferry – any of the public consultations or commentary to come back about the ferry. It happened at Easter – April – about the *Kamutik*.

OFFICIAL: (Inaudible) from Labrador Affairs that they had done on the consultation.

MR. CROCKER: I'm being told that Labrador Affairs would have notes from that. We can coordinate getting that for you.

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

Was there an analysis on the difference between the cost of goods sourced from the Island versus Goose Bay and the added cost to truck goods to Goose Bay? And, if so, can we have this analysis?

MR. CROCKER: I'm trying to think of a name now. That's the work that (inaudible) did, right?

OFFICIAL: Oh yes, on the difference on the rates.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, there should be something available that we can get you on that and a new chart of the rating examples. We do the rating on two things. We did it on a snowmobile and we did it on a pallet.

OFFICIAL: We've got a series of them.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, there are a series of comparisons that we've done.

MR. PETTEN: Thank you.

I guess the example that was used yesterday – we heard it on the news, too –

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MR. PETTEN: – and it was used here was the snowmobile incident. You used that example, actually. The snowmobile is actually \$1,500 cheaper to buy on the Island, or thereabouts – well, it could be \$1,000, who knows. But the costs of the actual goods are cheaper on the Island than in Labrador. So doesn't that negate – ?

MR. CROCKER: I think we've really got to call the sellers into question on that because there's no reason why a snowmobile in Labrador should be any different than a snowmobile in Lewisporte because, in actual fact, if you're shipping out of Bombardier in Quebec –

MR. PETTEN: Yes.

MR. CROCKER: – there's no reason – I will lay dollars or bet on the fact that it's cheaper to get a snowmobile into Labrador versus St. John's. It hasn't got to get on a ferry. So I think a lot of the pricing that we see, we need to start challenging some of the –

MR. PETTEN: But it's a valid point and it stuck out to me and I think a lot of people after the news last night.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah. When we made this announcement in Goose Bay last year, I think the chair of the chamber of commerce at that time, John, really challenged the business community to step up and realize the opportunity here.

This process actually started around 2005 with the *Dutch Runner*. It was the beginning of the construction of the Trans-Labrador Highway, and what was decided back in 2005 era was it was too early. The closing of Lewisporte was a decision that was made in the early 2000s, 2005-2006, and it was delayed until the Trans-Labrador Highway got to a point that gave it a link.

One of the things that the province has really never done is run ferries parallel with highways. So you build a road, obviously the challenge is then – for example, if we were to someday have a fixed link, we'd no longer have a ferry. We invest hundreds of millions of dollars into roads – and this, like I said, was a decision that started in 2005-2006, that at some point in time, once the road got to a condition that we had a road, we would not be able to run a ferry parallel with a road.

Change is always challenging, but when you start with roll-on, roll-off, people are now going to get cargo weekly versus biweekly. So a head of lettuce previously would've taken, I don't

know, seven or eight, 10 days to get to Nain – how long is it going to take now, John?

MR. BAKER: A shipment on a Monday morning, they have it on Wednesday.

MR. CROCKER: Right, so a head of lettuce will now leave Goose Bay on Monday and get in Nain on Wednesday.

MR. PETTEN: But, as we know, the cost of a head of lettuce is another challenge, too.

MR. CROCKER: In all fairness it is a challenge, but I think there is a responsibility to challenge because that head of lettuce – we experienced it this winter with the ice conditions in the Strait of Belle Isle that there are about six tractor-trailers a week leaving Bay Roberts and going to Goose Bay. Currently, there are six tractor-trailer loads a week going from Bay Roberts to Goose Bay. So now it's an extension of three or four days to go up the North Coast.

MR. PETTEN: Was there an analysis conducted to see if the cold storage for the freight in Goose Bay is adequate for the people on the North Coast? Is that cold storage adequate?

MR. CROCKER: We have a 17,000-square-foot warehouse currently in Goose Bay. I had a chance to tour it last year just before the first run, and there was ample, ample space in that cold storage.

The requirement for containers on the new vessel is – 20 or 40?

MR. BAKER: We can take 128, plus passenger vehicles.

MR. CROCKER: Right.

The capacities have changed, and we've worked with the fishing company, Torngat fisheries, because there were challenges about getting out frozen fish. We'll work through those challenges. There are going to be challenges. We addressed the fishing challenges. The department met with Nunatsiavut Government yesterday afternoon. We've had those discussions. We'll monitor it, but we're confident that once people get this new service

in and you can actually get in your car in Nain and drive to anywhere you want to drive, roll-on, roll-off, there will be ...

MR. PETTEN: Under your Refits in 4.1.03, what vessels are being refit, right now, as we speak?

MR. CROCKER: What's in dry dock, John?

I'm going to turn this over to John, Barry, if you don't mind.

MR. BAKER: What's your question, again?

MR. PETTEN: What vessels are currently under refit right now?

MR. BAKER: Right now, the *Hazel McIsaac*.

MR. PETTEN: That's the only one?

MR. BAKER: That's the only one down there now.

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

In our Purchased Services line there, it went from \$3.2 million up to \$5.7 million back to \$3 million. Was that to do with –?

MR. CROCKER: That was the *Gallipoli* refit cost.

MR. PETTEN: *Gallipoli*. Yeah, I couldn't remember the name.

That's the one that we had out in Burry's that ended up coming to NEWDOCK?

MR. CROCKER: Right.

MR. PETTEN: So that ended up costing \$5.7 million or \$5 million?

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, the total was approximately \$10 million, and we're going after Burry's insurer for approximately 30 per cent of that cost.

MR. PETTEN: So it's \$10 million in costs?

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

Now, again, we're claiming about approximately 30 per cent of that back from the insurer.

MR. PETTEN: The final section I have questions on is 4.2.01 under the Air Services.

MR. CROCKER: 4.2.01?

MR. PETTEN: Yeah, 4.2.01.

How many times were government planes down for repair? Do you have an idea about it?

OFFICIAL: Don't know.

MR. BAKER: I don't know about the exact number of times right now, but they come down periodically for inspections.

MR. PETTEN: Inspections.

MR. BAKER: They come down quite often.

MR. CROCKER: The challenge with aircraft is aircraft parts are timed, so it's not like you wait for the break.

MR. PETTEN: Right.

MR. BAKER: Correct.

MR. CROCKER: Every part on an airplane has an hour rating and after so many hours, that part has to be replaced.

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

MR. CROCKER: It's not so much about breakdown; it's about the aging aircraft and the aging part.

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

I have another few questions on this section but my time is up, so ...

CHAIR: Okay.

Ms. Coffin.

MS. COFFIN: Yes, please.

CHAIR: Further questions.

MS. COFFIN: I do.

Will the new Northern ferry be ready by the time the ice breaks up? Given that we don't know when the ice is really going to break up, but we can guess it may be before August.

MR. CROCKER: We've seen the Northern ferry go as early as June 20. We've seen the Northern ferry go as late as mid-July to get all the way north. Right now, it's anticipated that looking at the current ice conditions that it would.

We would have to have very favourable wind conditions over the next 10 days or so to get the ice off the North Coast. We anticipate it is, but the other reality is the company is obligated to us, that once the ports become ice free, to provide a vessel.

MS. COFFIN: Okay, good.

I noticed that under the current, there's Ferry Vessel Refits and under capital there's Ferry Vessel Refits. Now, I noticed that under the current account it says that, "Appropriations ... for the repairs and maintenance of Provincial ferry vessels," and they have, you know, \$10 million down to \$7 million.

I thought you had said that the ferry operations under, at least one of those sections here, there was repairs and maintenance in that. Is there any distinct difference between them?

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, one would be like minor repairs and maintenance.

MS. COFFIN: That would be in Ferry Operations –

MR. CROCKER: Right.

MS. COFFIN: – you'd (inaudible) repairs?

MR. CROCKER: That would be day to day; a busted hose or a broken ramp.

MS. COFFIN: Okay.

Then, under current Ferry Vessel Refits, what would that be?

MR. CROCKER: That would be refits that we can't make capital because, obviously, it's to our

—

OFFICIAL: Like paint jobs.

MR. CROCKER: Right. A good example would be painting, something that really doesn't add to the value of the vessel.

MS. COFFIN: Okay, so then when we go over to capital costs —

MR. CROCKER: That would be something that extends the vessel's life — thrusters are one. One of the silver linings to the challenges that we had with the *Gallipoli* and the \$10 million that we actually ended up spending minus the 30 roughly per cent insurance claim, was we actually extended the life of that vessel considerably.

What was the extension, John, they estimated?

MR. BAKER: About 20 years.

MR. CROCKER: I guess the silver lining of that cloud is we've extended the life of that vessel by approximately 20 years.

MS. COFFIN: Right.

I notice under Ferry Vessels, capital again, 4.1.04, there is no money. The RFPs that have been issued for the new ferries that we mentioned earlier, we're not expecting to purchase them before the end of this fiscal?

MR. CROCKER: We wouldn't purchase them. We already have the money allocated because we pay approximately — is it \$9 million, I think it is currently, with the South Coast contract. Patrick is going to get the number but, currently, \$9.4 million is what we pay for the South Coast ferries.

MS. COFFIN: Right.

MR. CROCKER: We would hope that the new RFP would produce a similar figure, similar cost per year.

MS. COFFIN: Right, because it's not for a new ferry, it's for a new service.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, we wouldn't be owning the asset.

MS. COFFIN: Right.

Let's see now. Government - Operated Aircraft, let's go there. Before we get into the numbers, how about the water bomber in Lab West this year?

MR. CROCKER: Right now, unfortunately, we're down to four water bombers. We had an accident in September. In September of last year we actually had a water bomber strike a rock, so we're down to four bombers for this season.

Right now, what FLR has done is they had put in place a rotating schedule that will work on — a risk-based schedule that will work on conditions because, for example, the early season, like right now the biggest demand is on the Avalon. If you were in Labrador now, or Lab West, we probably still have ice in the lakes. I'm not sure if we do or not, but as an example and the index is not high. They're going to manage the schedule because, really, we provide the aircraft to Fisheries and Land Resources and it's their expertise in firefighting that actually will decide how we're going to position the assets at any given time.

MS. COFFIN: Okay.

I notice under that same section, Professional Services, budgeted was none and we came in at little under \$200,000. What did we buy for that?

MR. CROCKER: That was associated to consultant cost for the fleet.

MS. COFFIN: What did they consult on?

MR. CROCKER: That was for a consultant to come and review the damage to the fifth water bomber.

MS. COFFIN: Wow, that's a pretty good gig. I'm just saying.

MR. CROCKER: I know, just ask how much the (inaudible). There's more into that, but that's primarily — aircrafts are expensive.

MS. COFFIN: I have no doubt.

MR. CROCKER: Yes.

MS. COFFIN: They provide a very valuable service.

MR. CROCKER: Yes.

MS. COFFIN: Government - Operated Aircraft, 4.2.02, Property, Furnishings and Equipment, capital investment; we have \$200,000 this year that was unexpected and \$100 for this year.

MR. CROCKER: That's a new tug and the fall restraint system in the hangar. A tug, the one that tugs the airplane out in position –

MS. COFFIN: Right.

MR. CROCKER: – we had to buy a new tug.

MS. COFFIN: Okay.

I notice there was revenue associated with that as well. They budgeted \$1.7 million; it came in at slightly less than a million and then none?

MR. CROCKER: We had two old 215s that –

MS. COFFIN: I'm not sure how big that is.

MR. CROCKER: That was the previous addition of our water bombers.

MS. COFFIN: Okay.

MR. CROCKER: Anybody who watches – what's it called – Ice Pilots, Buffalo Joe bought those assets from us.

MS. COFFIN: No way.

MR. CROCKER: Yes.

MS. COFFIN: All right, way to go.

MR. CROCKER: And all the parts that were associated.

MS. COFFIN: Did you talk to any of the *Cold Water Cowboys* about buying the ferry system?

Okay, I think that does it for me right now.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Mr. Petten.

MR. PETTEN: Yes, thank you very much.

Under 4.2.01, I still have a few more questions; that's it for me then.

Are there any plans for any aircraft replacement?

MR. CROCKER: Well, it's obviously something that we need to look at. No immediate plans because, obviously, the main, I guess, aircraft in our fleet are the water bombers, and they're new, right? I'm not sure, but we can probably get you some more information on the timelines of the –

OFFICIAL: (Inaudible) end of life on one of our (inaudible).

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, one of the air ambulances is coming to the end of its life.

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

What are the ages of the planes? What ages are we talking? Are there many more nearing their end of life?

OFFICIAL: The two aircraft that we have, the older one now we have it out for painting and inspection. Other than that, the aircraft are kept going through their inspections and the regulatory requirements.

MR. PETTEN: What are the ages of them?

OFFICIAL: One is eight years old and I think the other one is getting close to 10.

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

MR. CROCKER: Age doesn't matter a lot with the airplanes.

MR. PETTEN: It matters with us.

MR. CROCKER: What?

MR. PETTEN: It matters with us.

Age doesn't matter. It matters with us.

MR. CROCKER: Oh, yeah, it matters with us.

Really, aircraft is about the maintenance schedule; they just become very, very much more expensive to maintain as they get older.

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

MR. CROCKER: We can certainly get you the ages, Barry, if you want ...

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

How many charter flights were needed because planes were not available due to maintenance issues? How many charters did you have?

MR. CROCKER: That's a Health and Community Services question.

MR. PETTEN: Even though you administer the – the request would come in through you?

MR. CROCKER: They manage the – no, we don't manage the private contacts.

MR. PETTEN: Just manage the planes?

MR. CROCKER: We manage the government-owned assets. Health and Community Services manages the contract aircraft.

MR. PETTEN: Okay.

Let's see what else; I think I'm pretty well – I have other ones here, but I think they are more tied to Health.

With our air ambulance, we're just maintaining – the service is being provided by Health, but the actual ambulance is being looked after by the department, right?

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, we're the supplier, I guess, really.

MR. PETTEN: It's a shared service is what you're doing basically, two departments ...

MR. CROCKER: So the pilots are ours, the planes are TW, but the medical crew and, really, even positioning decisions are logically made by Health, right?

MR. PETTEN: But the service itself, any decision on the service is made by Health?

MR. CROCKER: It's joint, but obviously it's led by Health because they're – right?

MR. PETTEN: Right.

MR. CROCKER: It's clinical decisions, right, in lots of cases.

MR. PETTEN: Well, ways to improve air ambulance services, so are you making that or is Minister Haggie?

MR. CROCKER: I would think that would be based on Health information. I think, in a lot of ways, we're sort of the service provider, we do what we're told.

MR. PETTEN: Right.

MR. CROCKER: Maybe not as simple as that, but they evaluate the medical needs.

MR. PETTEN: Any plans to privatize, that you're aware of?

MR. CROCKER: It's under review, isn't it?

OFFICIAL: Yeah, we got a market sounding last year.

MR. CROCKER: So there was a market sounding done last year, but I think, in a lot of ways, that wasn't – I'm trying to remember now what the results of it were. It was sort of marginal.

OFFICIAL: Yeah, I don't think it's going to be (inaudible).

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, from the market sounding, it's certainly not something that I would think would be on the agenda.

MR. PETTEN: But it has been considered or looked at or discussed?

MR. CROCKER: Over and over and over –

MR. PETTEN: Right.

MR. CROCKER: – for successive governments. There has always been a conversation of how to get, obviously, the best value and the best service.

MR. PETTEN: Right.

MR. CROCKER: I think when it comes down to it.

MR. PETTEN: So you had recommendations from the Fitch report, would that have been something that your department or Health would've been responsible for? Basically, we're talking about the air ambulance program in relation to the government aircraft. So would that be under Health's responsibility or your (inaudible)?

MR. CROCKER: It really predates me. When was the Fitch report?

MR. PETTEN: 2014; there were recommendations done in 2014.

MR. CROCKER: 2014, yeah.

OFFICIAL: I think Health is (inaudible).

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, that's probably better addressed to Health. I'll give Haggie a heads-up.

MR. PETTEN: What's that?

MR. CROCKER: I'll give Haggie a heads-up.

MR. LANE: Ask Brazil (inaudible).

MR. PETTEN: Ask Brazil, yeah.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MR. PETTEN: That's all the questions I have for tonight.

I want to thank you for giving us the time.

MR. CROCKER: No problem.

MR. PETTEN: I'll just finish up my end, I guess, or do you want to finish?

CHAIR: Before we move forward, any further questions, Ms. Coffin? Any further questions?

MS. COFFIN: All good here.

Thank you.

CHAIR: Paul, do you have any questions?

MR. LANE: I do have a couple of questions.

CHAIR: Everybody good with Mr. Lane having a couple of questions?

All in favour? Good.

MR. LANE: Yeah, I got a couple questions.

I was just wondering, on the ferries, I can recall when they posted the sunshine list, I believe, that came out, and they were talking about a captain or something on Bell Island that made more on overtime than he made on his salary or something. I'm just wondering was that issue addressed, or whatever, and are there any others?

MR. CROCKER: We're addressing it. This year we were able to reduce our overtime spending by a million dollars.

MR. LANE: Okay.

MR. CROCKER: Ferry captains are still going to be on the sunshine list.

MR. LANE: Yeah, and there is no issue with that, but it was the amount of overtime. It was like an insane amount.

MR. CROCKER: This past year, we were able to manage our overtime and reduce, year over year, by a million dollars.

MR. LANE: Yeah. Okay.

Just wondering, again, I think you already answered this in a previous question, but all new builds now will be universal design?

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, the hospitals, yeah.

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: That's the standard that we're applying.

MR. LANE: That'll be a standard now. That's good.

MR. CROCKER: That's fair to say?

OFFICIAL: Yeah.

MR. LANE: I had an email from a gentleman from Bay of Islands, or from the area there, and

–

MR. CROCKER: You sit by him.

MR. LANE: Yeah, I know. No, it wasn't from Eddie.

Anyway, he asked me to ask – there was supposed to be some money, I guess, allocated, he said \$10 million; I don't know what the amount is, for moving people from the Bay of Islands, to relocate or whatever and shut down the ferry and relocate. He just wanted to confirm that that's still budgeted and that's still going to happen this year.

MR. CROCKER: That's a Municipal Affairs question, and it's Little Bay Islands?

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MR. LANE: But where it's a ferry I thought you might know.

MR. CROCKER: I think it is, right?

My understanding is they're proceeding with that buyout, yeah. The offers are out to the – it's a Municipal Affairs question.

MR. LANE: Okay, all right, I'll save it.

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, my understanding is that the offers are out to the residents, yeah.

MR. LANE: Okay.

I just wanted to make a little comment, more than a question, Minister.

I heard you talk about, tonight – and I heard Minister of Justice talk about – the attrition plan has come up. I know that you've done a lot of work with reducing leased spaces; selling off assets, buildings and so on; reducing fleet; managing fleet; and so on. I'll just give you a thumbs up on that because that's the kind of

thing that needs to happen. I just make that as a comment.

Without reliving the whole *Budget 2016* and everything, but people were saying – at least people from my area – if you're going to raise taxes on this end, you got to start cutting revenues before you dip into my pocket anymore. I think these are all good initiatives that have come from your department, a lot of them, and so keep on doing what you're doing, as far as I'm concerned at least.

The water bomber; you say now one of the water bombers is out of service, it hit a rock. I assume that's going to be repaired. Or is it repairable or will you have to buy a new one or you don't know?

MR. CROCKER: I can share what I do know. There is no new one. These are the last that Bombardier made.

MR. LANE: Okay.

MR. CROCKER: Viking bought Bombardier's division. The damage to this water bomber is substantial; it's in the \$7-million to \$8-million range.

MR. LANE: Okay.

MR. CROCKER: We're still evaluating what our options are with that.

MR. LANE: Okay, because –

MR. CROCKER: Just to add to that, the deductible on the insurance is \$10 million because one of the first things that happened when the new water bombers were purchased – I don't know if you recall – is we lost one, so at that time our deductible went through the roof.

MR. LANE: Okay.

I guess the question, then, is more around the fact of you said they were being sort of redeployed, based on strategic risk which, obviously, makes sense if –

MR. CROCKER: Yeah.

MR. LANE: – you have four and, really, you need five or you're used to having five or you work with five.

Given the fact, though, that's what we're doing, I would assume there is some contingency in place that if you had a couple of big fires or whatever, that you have some arrangement made with either private industry or Nova Scotia or somebody to –

MR. CROCKER: We're actually the only province in Atlantic Canada that has water bombers.

MR. LANE: Really? What do we do if there's a fire here or somewhere else then?

MR. CROCKER: New Brunswick has them but they're private. They don't own water bombers.

MR. LANE: Okay.

MR. CROCKER: PEI doesn't need water bombers and Nova Scotia uses helicopters.

MR. LANE: Okay.

MR. CROCKER: We're a member of – and I remember this from my FLR days and I don't know the name of the organization, but there's a reciprocal agreement for all of Canada. We use it all the time.

MR. LANE: Okay.

MR. CROCKER: We're a part of it. If there are fires in Alberta, we'll send firefighters. We've often sent our bombers to other provinces.

MR. LANE: Okay.

MR. CROCKER: So we're a part of that agreement.

MR. LANE: If you ever needed it's there.

MR. CROCKER: Absolutely, and it's a shared-services agreement for every province in the country.

MR. LANE: Okay, excellent. Good to hear that.

MR. CROCKER: We are confident that with the new water bombers that were purchased, they are so much further advanced with speed, size, capacities, that four is – in most cases, God willing – quite adequate for the province.

MR. LANE: Okay, good.

The final question then relates to Burry's Shipyard and going back to what the Member for Conception Bay South had talked about. I'm just trying to get an understanding of when the contract was pulled from Burry's Shipyard and moved to NEWDOCK, did that result in – and I know you said that you're going to get 30 per cent or you're hoping to get 30 per cent back from the insurance at Burry's.

In the final analysis, amount of money paid versus amount of money would've been paid had it stayed at Burry's Shipyard, is it costing us more money or same money or less money or the final analysis, in terms of ...

MR. CROCKER: Some of the cost overruns actually occurred at Burry's because, I think it was a \$1.5 million – I apologize; numbers are starting to elude me. By the time we left Burry's, we were in an extra \$700,000 or \$800,000 –

MR. LANE: More than what you were supposed to be?

MR. CROCKER: – more than the original tender.

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. CROCKER: Any time we put a boat in dry dock, there are typically always cost overruns, I think in the \$10 million. By the time we had done two years of refits on the *Gallipoli*, I think the overall (inaudible) was about a \$1.8-million budget overrun, which wasn't unacceptable.

We had money budgeted in two fiscal years for the *Gallipoli* because she had to come out again, but she was just out so long that we actually did two years of refits while she was out.

MR. LANE: Are we saying then, that if it was \$1.8 million over and there was a \$700,000

overrun that you're attributing to Burry's, does that mean –

MR. CROCKER: Yeah, we're not attributing it to Burry's –

MR. LANE: No.

MR. CROCKER: – we're attributing it to what they found once they started peeling back the –

MR. LANE: Okay.

MR. CROCKER: Any time you take a vessel out of the water –

MR. LANE: All right, so whoever had done it, there was extra –

MR. CROCKER: – you're going to –

MR. LANE: Okay, sure.

There's still a \$1-million differential. Are we saying that it cost us a million dollars more by pulling it from Burry's and –

MR. CROCKER: No.

MR. LANE: – sending it to the St. John's shipyard? Is that what that means?

MR. CROCKER: No, I wouldn't think so.

John?

MR. BAKER: The (inaudible) was that when we were at Burry's and when we moved into – because of the incident that had happened, we had to relocate the ship. Once we were in there, by the time we finished we were in to our second refit in the year, so two refits overlapped.

MR. LANE: You did extra work, so to speak, than you were supposed –

MR. BAKER: It created extra work, which was in our budget as well, for that period of time.

MR. LANE: Was it pretty much a wash then? Is that what we're saying?

MR. BAKER: Pretty much, but where we went into a lot more expenses was what happened

during the time that she was stalled on the slipway.

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. BAKER: It caused so much damage because she was left to the elements and a lot of lines froze up and broke.

MR. LANE: Yeah.

MR. BAKER: Then we had to go in and once we got in there, then one thing created another.

MR. LANE: Okay.

MR. CROCKER: As I said earlier, the silver lining to this unfortunate incident is the fact that Lloyd's has told us that the refit was substantial enough that we've added 20 years to the life of the vessel.

MR. LANE: Okay.

That's it. I thank you very much for answering all my questions. That's all I can ask.

Thank you.

MR. CROCKER: I'll just take 15 or 20 minutes to conclude.

CHAIR: Before we do, shall 4.1.01 to 4.2.02 carry?

All in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: Opposed?

On motion, subheads 4.1.01 through 4.2.02 carried.

CLERK: The total.

CHAIR: Should the total carry?

All in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: Opposed?

Carried.

On motion, Department of Transportation and Works, total heads, carried.

CHAIR: Shall I report the Estimates for the Department of Transportation and Works carried without amendment?

All in favour, 'aye.'

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

CHAIR: Opposed?

Carried.

On motion, Estimates of the Department of Transportation and Works carried without amendment.

CHAIR: Would you like a few words?

MR. CROCKER: Just very quickly, I want to thank the people to my left and behind me because, obviously, anybody who understands budgeting, it's not about the minister. These guys labour at this from November until now, pretty much. We'll probably have a four-week delay but these guys are the ones that labour through budgets and just produce documents that we get the fun of coming and sharing.

Thank you to the staff. Thank you to the Committee. Jordan, you're doing well. Two nights right there in the Gallery.

Again, thank you and anything that we said we would follow up on, we certainly will. If there are any questions I'm not too hard to find.

Go Bruins go.

CHAIR: Mr. Petten.

MR. CROCKER: Sorry, go ahead, Barry.

MS. COFFIN: I just want to say thank you –

CHAIR: Wait now, Mr. Petten first.

MR. PETTEN: I just want to quickly say thank you to the minister for your answers and your staff's and the time; very thorough, a good job

and I appreciate it. I understand because I did have eight years sitting over there in that row watching this so, yeah, I get it.

I appreciate your time and I truly understand it. Thank you very much.

MR. CROCKER: He understands it enough he predicted this afternoon what you guys were having for supper.

MR. PETTEN: I did. That says a lot. I predicted; I knew exactly what you were doing.

Thank you very much.

CHAIR: Ms. Coffin.

MS. COFFIN: Thank you very much.

I just want to say thank you. Congratulations on Public Service Week. You have done us all proud.

Thanks for staying late and disrupting your lives. I hope you have good child care and someone keeping dinner warm for you. I have neither. That's okay.

Jordan is here because I am his ride. He's also very interested in that. Although we haven't been on that side, we look forward to the time when we are.

Thank you.

MR. CROCKER: No problem, as long as it's 10 years from now.

CHAIR: Before I ask for adjournment, I just want to echo the words and thank you, everybody. This is my first time chairing a Committee so I appreciate your co-operation.

9 a.m. tomorrow morning is Children, Seniors and Social Development with the Social Services Committee.

Can I have a motion to adjourn, please?

MR. BRAGG: So moved.

CHAIR: Moved by Mr. Bragg.

Meeting adjourned at 9:01 p.m.

On motion, the Committee adjourned.