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

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Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation

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Honourable Ross Wiseman, MHA

## **SOCIAL SERVICES COMMITTEE**

Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation

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Chair: Glenn Littlejohn, MHA

Vice-Chair: Eddie Joyce, MHA

Members:

Tony Cornect, MHA  
Dan Crummell, MHA  
Glen Little, MHA  
Andrew Parsons, MHA  
Gerry Rogers, MHA

Clerk of the Committee: Lorna Proudfoot

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Appearing:

**Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation**

Hon. Paul Davis, MHA, Minister  
Veronica Hayden, Executive Assistant  
Dennis Kendell, Executive Director, Regional Operations  
Tom Lawrence, Chief Financial Officer  
Ed Moriarity, Director of Communications  
Len Simms, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer

**Also Present**

Kevin Pollard, MHA

The Committee met at 9:00 a.m. in the Assembly Chamber.

**CHAIR (Littlejohn):** Good morning, everyone.

Welcome to the Estimates of the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation. Just a few quick notes; as always, when you are speaking for Hansard, please state your name prior to speaking and wait for the red light to come on in front of your mike. That will assist us in recording all the words that are said here this morning.

Minister, I would like to welcome you and the people from Newfoundland and Labrador Housing. As is tradition, first I am going to ask the Committee members and their staff people to introduce themselves.

If I could start with you, Eddie, please.

**MR. JOYCE:** Eddie Joyce, MHA, Bay of Islands.

**MR. LETTO:** Graham Letto, Researcher.

**MS ROGERS:** Gerry Rogers, MHA, St. John's Centre.

**MS WILLIAMS:** Susan Williams, Researcher.

**MR. POLLARD:** Kevin Pollard, MHA, Baie Verte – Springdale.

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

**MR. LITTLE:** Glen Little, MHA, Bonavista South.

**MR. CRUMMELL:** Dan Crummell, MHA, St. John's West.

**CHAIR:** Minister, if you would like to introduce yourself and your representatives.

**MR. DAVIS:** I would, thank you.

Paul Davis, Minister Responsible for Newfoundland and Labrador Housing. What

might be best, to make sure their microphones are properly working, I will allow Mr. Simms to begin, and each of them to introduce themselves.

**CHAIR:** Thank you.

**MR. SIMMS:** Len Simms, CEO of the Housing Corporation.

**MR. KENDELL:** Dennis Kendell, Executive Director of Regional Operations, Housing Corporation.

**MR. LAWRENCE:** Tom Lawrence, Chief Financial Officer, Housing Corporation.

**MS HAYDEN:** Veronica Hayden, Executive Assistant.

**MR. MORIARITY:** Ed Moriarity, Communications.

**CHAIR:** I am Glenn Littlejohn. I am the Chair and the MHA for the Port de Grave District.

Good morning, everyone.

As is the custom, Minister, you have fifteen minutes for opening remarks, followed by fifteen minutes for the Opposition. Then we go ten and ten, if that is okay with everybody.

Minister.

**MR. DAVIS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you colleagues and staff who have joined us here this morning.

My introduction, I will not need fifteen minutes but I will just run through a brief introduction on Newfoundland and Labrador Housing and more specifically, to some of the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing programs.

I would like to start with advising that the investment in the Affordable Housing Initiative program again this year is \$5.4 million. Probably one of the longest standing programs that Newfoundland and Labrador Housing has – I think it dates back about thirty-five years – is the Provincial Home Repair Program. Mr.

Chair, I am pleased to point out the wait-list has declined significantly since 2006. In 2006, the wait-list was 4,376 and as of March of this year, the wait-list is now at 992.

The Supportive Living Program is a program funded at \$4.8 million. It is the same amount of funding as in last year. The Provincial Homelessness Fund is funded at \$1 million, which is the same level of funding as in last year. The Home Modification Program is a program for persons with disabilities to assist them in modifying their own homes to better accommodate their needs. That funding again this year remains the same as last year at \$3 million.

Mr. Chair, up until 2007, 30 per cent of the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation portfolio had been considered to have been recently modified or in good condition. During the past six years, with a significant increase on modernization and improvement program, over 75 per cent of the units have now been upgraded, are considered to be in good condition and have been recently modernized.

The improvement in those units has also created or caused a significant reduction in the maintenance calls that are received. Obviously, when you have newer, upgraded, modernized homes then there is a reduced need for ongoing maintenance.

The operating subsidies for partner-managed housing groups, and there are sixty-one of those throughout the Province, is at \$4.3 million. This helps to support the partner-managed housing and the operations of approximately 1,100 units throughout the Province.

The Residential Energy Efficiency Program, or REEP as we know it, will continue this year. That program we know is a fairly new program in Newfoundland and Labrador Housing. This year we anticipate REEP will assist 500 homeowners in the upgrading of their homes for energy efficiency.

The Rent Supplement Program is a program where we provide supplements to persons who live in privately-owned residences. We serve approximately 1,700 clients at an annual cost of \$8 million. This amount has significantly increased in recent years, but now it does serve 1,700 clients.

The Provincial Home Repair Program, as I mentioned earlier, continues to be funded this year. For many, many years the Provincial Home Repair Program was funded at \$4 million. In 2004, it was tripled to \$12 million, and this year it is funded at \$10 million. Bear in mind my earlier comment on the reduction of the wait-list for the Provincial Home Repair Program. Since the implementation of that new funding level, it has declined to less than 1,000.

Significant upgrades have been made to the Rabbittown and WestRock community centres, as well as the Froude Avenue Community Centre. There are three more affordable housing projects scheduled for official opening in the next few weeks. One of those is the Mokami Status of Women in Goose Bay, which will have eight units. That is a group who is geared towards persons who are subjected to family violence.

There is also a project in Bay Roberts, which will have eight units. I am sure, Mr. Chair, you are familiar with that one. That one is geared towards seniors and persons with disabilities. There is a second project in Goose Bay, Labrador Coatings, with ten units for seniors and persons with disabilities.

There is also another eight affordable housing initiative projects that are underway, that are progressing. Over the next year we believe they will be open and operational. Of those eight affordable housing initiatives throughout the Province, they will contain fifty-seven new units.

As well, Mr. Chair, I would just like to point out for the interest of my colleagues that Newfoundland and Labrador Housing is continuing to conduct research in relation to practices and a program on affordable home

ownership for first-time homeowners. This was a commitment our government has made, and I can tell you that work is ongoing on that, but we are not to the point yet where we are able to provide a framework as we are still considering our options.

Mr. Chair, those are my opening comments.

**CHAIR:** Thank you, Minister.

Just before I go to the Opposition, I will call the first subhead, please.

**CLERK (Ms Proudfoot):** Subhead 1.1.01.

**CHAIR:** Eddie.

**MR. JOYCE:** Thank you, Minister, and staff.

Minister, you mentioned the wait-list went down in 2004 to 982. Was that for people looking for apartments or was that for the RRAP program?

**MR. DAVIS:** That is the Provincial Home Repair Program. It was 4,376 in 2006, and to March of this year it is 992. That is a program that I mentioned had \$4 million funding for many years and was tripled in 2004.

**MR. JOYCE:** What is the wait-list for apartments now, for units?

**MR. DAVIS:** The wait-list for units. The most up-to-date number I can give you now is 890.

**MR. SIMMS:** (Inaudible).

**MR. DAVIS:** So it is below that now? Mr. Simms likes to give me daily numbers.

**MR. SIMMS:** There are thirty-one being prepared, so you have to deduct thirty-one.

**MR. DAVIS:** Yes. Right now there are 890, but there are thirty-one units that are undergoing different levels of maintenance or repair. So that would lower that number.

**MR. JOYCE:** I can see why the numbers are down. Why has the department initiated the

policy that after one year your application is void?

**MR. DAVIS:** Good question, a very good question actually. What was being experienced, Mr. Joyce, was that people were on the waiting list for a period of time; and we are in a place now where, last year, more people were placed than existed on the waiting list. That number has changed where, for many years, it was big waiting lists, while a very small number was being placed.

What staff were finding was when it came to place individuals, their circumstances had changed, they spent time trying to track these people down because they had moved or changed phone numbers and changed contact information, and spent time trying to find those people, only to find that they no longer were eligible or no longer had interest in a housing unit. To keep the wait list up-to-date, we moved a program where your application was valid for a twelve-month period, at which time it is incumbent on the applicant to reapply.

**MR. JOYCE:** Just to let you know, especially for some seniors and people who find it hard getting all the information together for their application, it is very cumbersome on a lot of people.

Do you want to know why your wait-list is down for housing? A lot of people just do not think it is worth the hassle because once they apply then they have to go through it and get all the information again. Some people are without transportation and some people are without the connections that you would have if you were mobile and out in the public; a lot of people just do not apply any more. I can assure you that and I can say that from experience in Corner Brook.

**MR. DAVIS:** What I would like to do, if it is fine with you, Mr. Chair, is allow Mr. Simms to provide some comment on that.

**MR. SIMMS:** I will just make this comment and I do not doubt that you have run into that from occasion. It is not our –

**MR. JOYCE:** More than occasion.

**MR. SIMMS:** It is not our experience; that is all I can tell you. From around the Province, it happens occasionally. The reality is the people can reapply. We do not remove them from the list. They can reapply, so there is some onus on that individual.

What happens with our counterparts across the country, housing agencies, they do their purging of their wait-list manually probably twice a year by sending letters out to everybody on the wait-list and those that do not respond they just automatically drop them. This was several years ago now that we brought in the twelve month one and many of the other jurisdictions are looking at the way we are doing it. It is called a self-purging process.

The City of St. John's sends out letters for their housing units and so on, but considering the fact that it has been pretty stable for the last three or four years it seems to be an efficient process –

**MR. JOYCE:** I can assure you –

**MR. SIMMS:** We only have 10 per cent or 12 per cent seniors on our wait-list, by the way.

**MR. JOYCE:** Seniors is just one group, but there is other low income who finds it very cumbersome to get out and get all the financial information – trust me. I mean, you may use the word occasionally; I can assure you it is a lot more occasional than when you are out dealing with individuals – a lot more.

**MR. SIMMS:** Yes.

**MR. JOYCE:** I do not know if there is a better way, Minister, to do that. What is happening - it is great to say the people applying are down, but the reason is because a lot of them just – trust me on that, and I deal with a lot of them. I do not know if there is a better way.

**MR. SIMMS:** They can certainly call the offices. We have seven offices. Anybody will help them with any of that information. The only information they have to provide, generally

speaking, is an updated national revenue option C, which is done by a phone call. The phone number is on their application form and so on. If anybody has any difficulty and needs help with that we certainly can help, and we have.

**MR. JOYCE:** Is there any way just to have in –

**MR. SIMMS:** Sorry?

**MR. JOYCE:** Is there any way to have it there, for example, if there have been no changes in the last year, just to call in. Once you are accepted, then you can get the information. Once you have to go through all that – for example if I was on the list and I somehow call in and say no, there has been no changes; just keep my file active.

**MR. SIMMS:** They have to fill out a form.

**MR. JOYCE:** If you get accepted, then if there are any changes you are not accepted. I can understand that if your income has increased that much or something.

**MR. SIMMS:** Right.

**MR. JOYCE:** I am just looking for a better way because there are people who are –

**MR. SIMMS:** All I can tell you is the number of complaints that we would get in that kind of a situation are not very many, but that does not mean there are not some who might need some help. We can provide help to anybody who needs help to redo their application. We would be happy to do that. There might be differences in medical situations, a change from their last applications and so on. We can help them with that.

**MR. DAVIS:** Mr. Joyce, just if I may, Mr. Chair, momentarily or just briefly.

**MR. JOYCE:** Yes.

**CHAIR:** Minister.

**MR. DAVIS:** The application and the process for evaluating applications are based on very

broad criteria, and I am sure Mr. Joyce is aware of that. Any one of those criteria could change during a period of a year which could make a difference in a person's application. It could move them much higher depending on the circumstance.

**MR. JOYCE:** I agree with that and that is why they should supply the information. If there is no change then they have to go back – if someone whose medical condition has not changed they have to go back and get another appointment with the doctor to reaffirm that no, my medical condition has not changed. I have to go to Revenue Canada and get that letter. If there is any financial you have to go through the banks and get that.

Trust me, it is – and I am just wondering if there is a better way. If nothing has changed, if a phone call to the office would say nothing has changed and please keep my application active, and then if something did change, when they do get approved, then you can say yes or no. If something did change, it is up to the individual then to notify the office of the change.

If nothing changes, a lot of people have to go – I will just give you an example. I know of one person had to go see a specialist just because of the application. They had to wait four or five months to see a specialist to put the letter back on the application that they are still in need of housing, and that is common. Anyway, let's just look for a better way.

A \$10 million reduction in 2013-2014 budget; can you tell me what the \$10 million is for?

**MR. DAVIS:** I can, yes.

**MR. JOYCE:** Please.

**MR. DAVIS:** I can give you that.

I will start with the Provincial Home Repair Program. It is reduced by \$2 million. So it was, as I mentioned earlier, \$4 million for many, many years. It was increased to \$12 million. There was a significant reduction in the wait-list, which was the intention of the increase, to

reduce the wait-list, and now this year it is \$10 million. It was three times what it was traditionally and now it is two-and-a-half times what it was traditionally.

Under modernization and improvement, the budget on modernization and improvement was \$32 million, and as I have indicated, there have been significant improvements made to the Housing portfolio. A good example of that is the reduction in major repair vacancies. A few years ago we had over 100 units that required major repairs, major upgrades, and right now it is down to thirty units. As well, a good number of units have been updated, so it is increased to about 70 per cent or more of our stock that is now considered to have undergone modernization and improvements. So that budget line has gone from \$32 million to \$29 million.

The Residential Energy Efficiency Program is at \$2 million this year – previously it was at \$4 million – and it will allow us to serve 500 homeowners with that budget amount to help improve their homes' energy efficiency.

We have sixty-one partnered-managed housing. We have spent \$15 million to renovate this portfolio which has reduced our maintenance requests and their operational costs, and we have made an adjustment of \$600,000 on partnered-managed housing.

Also on the Residential Energy Efficiency Program, we used to hire contractors to actually do audits on what work has been done, it was a \$300,000 cost to the program. We have now taken that audit process in house, and training our staff in house to carry out those energy audits.

We have reduced our general administration, travel, telephone usage and cell phone packages, office supplies, those types of items by \$600,000. We have also eliminated twelve vacant positions. All of that was outlined in a press release that went out a few weeks ago.

**MR. JOYCE:** Yes, I know, sometimes press releases do not –

**MR. DAVIS:** There are a lot of press releases sometimes.

**MR. JOYCE:** I have to ask a general question because I deal with – and my office is in Corner Brook, where Judy deals with it on a regular basis. We hear all this decrease in time for apartments, but it takes so long to get an apartment redone. I know one person where it took almost six months. We hear about this decrease in time and the amount of work that needs to be done for the apartment.

I know in Corner Brook, because I drive by them, apartments are vacant for three, four, five, six months. What is being said here about the big decrease is not happening in reality. It is not that I am saying I am hearing it, I drive by them. This one is vacant, and four months later it is still vacant. We are getting calls they are still vacant. With all due respect, the stats that are being put here today are not what I see with my own two eyes driving by the units.

**MR. DAVIS:** Are you referring to Newfoundland and Labrador Housing owned homes and units?

**MR. JOYCE:** Owned units.

**MR. DAVIS:** That is the ones you are referring to is it? Because we have a whole number of different –

**MR. JOYCE:** Owned units.

**MR. SIMMS:** Is he referring to his own district?

**MR. DAVIS:** Are you referring to in your own district?

**MR. JOYCE:** In my own district, Humber West, I drive by them.

**MR. DAVIS:** Mr. Simms is going to respond to you on that.

**MR. JOYCE:** Yes.

**CHAIR:** Len.

**MR. SIMMS:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

As far as we can identify in the Bay of Islands District, there is one that has been boarded up for several months in Halfway Point, I think it is. Is that your area, Halfway Point?

**MR. JOYCE:** Yes.

**MR. SIMMS:** Yes, the reason that has been boarded up is simply because there has been no demand for the unit. Although we do have somebody for it now, so we are repairing it.

All the others that we have on the list of major repairs, which would have been boarded up and closed up for quite some time, most of them are up in what is now called the Crestview Avenue area, in an area where we are doing a heck of a lot of renovations. As the minister alluded to earlier, four or five years ago there were 108 units which were in a major –

**MR. JOYCE:** I am talking about units where someone would get an apartment, like a Newfoundland and Labrador Housing unit –

**MR. SIMMS:** Yes, that is what I am talking about.

**MR. JOYCE:** – that is not boarded up. Someone walks out today with their furniture and four or five months later that unit is still – people cannot move back in the unit.

**MR. SIMMS:** Yes, and it is quite possible they may be major repair units closed for five or six months and they may be major repair units because of damages inside, it frequently happens, or it could be a foundation issue of a unit or whatever. In Corner Brook itself, there are ten or a dozen that have been boarded up but they are under renovation inside. There are people doing work inside to repair them.

**MR. JOYCE:** We hear today that all the major improvements have been done and (inaudible) on the time. I am just talking about waiting for someone to get the rooms painted. Is there a decrease in staff? Go ahead, Minister.



**CHAIR:** Minister.

**MR. DAVIS:** Thank you, Mr. Joyce.

I would just like to give you an example in my own district, in one similar kind of circumstance, because I asked the same questions. There was a unit that became vacant earlier this year. I drive by it regularly and I noticed that it is still vacant. It required repairs, which was done by a contractor. We had to enter into a contract. The contractor went out and carried out a number of repairs. There was a door to be replaced, there was a window to be replaced, and there were some upgrades inside.

When it was ready for occupancy, Newfoundland and Labrador Housing then signed a client to that unit. I think that actually happened in March, if I remember correctly. Then in early April the person signed a lease, but it is still vacant. I asked: Why is it still vacant?

Well, the person who is now fortunate enough to be able to move into this home has their own circumstances they have to sort out by giving a notice where they are. All of that can run into a few months. Now you see a unit vacant and you feel like it is vacant, nothing has happened with it, but in actual fact when you look at all the circumstances there is much gone on there.

**MR. JOYCE:** I can understand individual, but I am talking on a regular basis. What you are saying here today about the major work being done, the time for the units and no major repairs does not jive with what I see in Corner Brook and around the Curling area. It just does not jive, Minister.

I know it is easy to come out and say we did all this work, but the majority of the units that become vacant, Minister, are up to months upon months upon months to get the earliest and the easiest kind of repairs, painting. I do not know if it is a lack of staff, I do not know.

**MR. DAVIS:** No, that is not it.

**MR. JOYCE:** There is no one who can tell me that when I drive by units just waiting, no major repairs, not barred up, waiting to get paint or something done or just some minor stuff. It is happening on a regular basis.

**MR. DAVIS:** Mr. Joyce, there are a lot of people moving in and out of housing now, probably more than ever before. There are a lot of new clients coming in and a lot of clients moving out of housing, more than ever before. If you have an address that you can identify as here are a couple of examples, we can gladly give you a timeline.

**MR. JOYCE:** I can give you lots.

**MR. DAVIS:** I did it myself, Mr. Joyce.

**MR. JOYCE:** (Inaudible).

**MR. DAVIS:** As an example like I just gave you, that is one that has been vacant for months only to find out there was a whole number of steps going on that were not visible from the street, if I can use that terminology, to make that unit repaired, put in good order, and identify a client. It is taking some time, the client is not moved in there yet. It was identified, if I remember correctly, in late March, signed a lease in early April, the person is not there yet.

**MR. JOYCE:** Okay, thank you.

**CHAIR:** Okay. Eddie, I am going to hold you on that one.

Gerry.

**MS ROGERS:** Thank you very much, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIR:** Good morning.

**MS ROGERS:** I want to thank the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation and its fantastic team and staff who have done some very excellent work. Although we are going to be talking about some of the great challenges that both face you and face the people of our Province in the area of housing

today, I do want to say our experiences for the most part in dealing with Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation has been very positive. We are very aware of the great challenges we all face in this housing crisis that faces us Province-wide.

I would also like to congratulate you on some of the very creative initiatives you have taken that have or will become best practices in other parts of the country. I think that is a great feather in your cap in the area of social housing. The whole issue of universal design is just smart thinking and will pay off in the long run down the road. Congratulations to you all for some of the leadership you have taken in this area.

I asked a lot of my constituents about issues they may like addressed today. I have also been very engaged on Facebook and encouraging people to send me any questions they might like to have answered today. I will be bringing forth some of those questions, as well as questions that we have.

I would say at this point some of the highest volumes of calls that we get as MHAs, for most days, are around housing and the challenges that people face in trying to find affordable housing. It is young people, it is single people, it is young working families, it is people with physical disabilities, it is people with complex needs, and there does not seem to be much – although we have seen some movement in the affordable housing initiatives and the partnerships, and those are great, it has been, it is still, a great, great challenge for many people.

So, I am just wondering, the revenue for the Housing Corporation, the federal part, the \$51.9 million, is that the same as last year?

**MR. DAVIS:** There is no change in the federal contribution this year – Mr. Simms. There are three levels of revenue Newfoundland and Labrador Housing has.

**CHAIR:** Minister.

**MR. DAVIS:** One is the provincial portion, which you have in front of you –

**MS ROGERS:** Yes, I know that.

**MR. DAVIS:** – the federal contribution, and the third level of income –

**MS ROGERS:** Is rental.

**MR. DAVIS:** – is rental income.

Mr. Simms, do you want to comment on that?

**CHAIR:** Mr. Simms.

**MR. SIMMS:** I think - directly to Ms Rogers' question - that is part of the Social Housing Agreement reached back in 1997. This past year there has not been a reduction, but there has been a reduction since 1997 in the federal contribution, and it will continue until 2037-2038 – I will be gone; you may still be here, I do not know.

**MS ROGERS:** Probably not.

**MR. SIMMS:** So the Social Housing Agreement was signed with a number of provinces and territories with the intention of downloading the responsibility for housing. They gave us, in our case, the Province, all of the housing portfolio –

**MS ROGERS:** Yes.

**MR. SIMMS:** – and gave us money with the instruction and understanding that that money will diminish to zero in 2037-2038, I think it is. This year there was no reduction, there was a couple of years ago, and there will be again – I think the next one is due in 2022 when we take over the Buckmaster's Circle project.

**MS ROGERS:** So, with the renewal of the housing and homelessness initiative, the federal-provincial, that would be renewed next year?

**CHAIR:** Mr. Simms.

**MR. SIMMS:** We have been negotiating, ministers, deputy ministers, behind the scenes to try to get the federal government to announce

that they would agree to extend what used to be called the Affordable Housing Initiative, AHI –

**MS ROGERS:** That is right.

**MR. SIMMS:** It is now called the IAH because they have broadened what you can use the funding for. They did announce in their budget of a month or so ago, an extension of that agreement by five years instead of the normal three.

**MS ROGERS:** That is right.

**MR. SIMMS:** Our next step, of course, we have to go through our own Province, our own Cabinet, and our own government to get funding to commit to cost share that for the following five years.

**MS ROGERS:** Do you have any idea at all how much the federal funding will be for that? What are you expecting?

**MR. SIMMS:** We have not negotiated it. Deputy Ministers usually do the negotiating with CMHC. We have not gotten to that stage yet. I can only assume, and it is an assumption, that it would be the same as it has been in the past, which has been on a per capita basis. The AHI component I think was \$2.7 million per party for a total \$5.4 million a year.

**MS ROGERS:** Yes.

**MR. SIMMS:** That is just for the affordable housing component. Then there is another \$4 million towards the Home Repair Program which as you know is also a cost-shared program, 50-50. That is all included in that IAH. For AHI, the affordable housing components, it is \$5.4 million over five years.

**MS ROGERS:** What does the “I” stand for in the new one, the IAH?

**MR. SIMMS:** Investment in Affordable Housing.

**MS ROGERS:** Investment in Affordable Housing.

**MR. SIMMS:** Yes. They changed the rules the last time to allow provinces that wanted, to use that affordable housing money on renovating units, to use it for –

**MS ROGERS:** On social housing units?

**MR. SIMMS:** Yes. They could use it, because some provinces wanted more money to fix up their units. We were lucky in the sense that we had a fairly significant investment from the government here. They tripled the funding.

We did not use it for that. We used all of our affordable housing money to build new affordable housing in partnership with the non-profit groups and the private sector groups.

**MS ROGERS:** Have there been discussions at this point with the provincial government in terms of looking at being prepared to increase the budgets –

**MR. SIMMS:** Next year, yes.

**MS ROGERS:** – to be able to participate in the proposed program?

**MR. SIMMS:** No, because this was just announced a few weeks ago. We now have to negotiate with CMHC to see what the terms are going to be. If there are any more changes that provinces are going to bring, then our process would be to put a Cabinet paper forward to Cabinet for consideration in the Budget next year.

**MS ROGERS:** Okay, thank you very much. You have twelve vacant positions. Twelve positions have been eliminated. Can we have a list of those positions?

**CHAIR:** Minister.

**MR. DAVIS:** Sure.

There were three administrative positions, a financial systems accountant, an accounting clerk A as it is classified. They are positions that have people retired several months ago. Also, there was a secretary in corporate

administration that was vacant. There have been seven positions throughout the Province that were maintenance or maintenance-related positions: a painter, two maintenance repair persons, a labourer, and three carpenters. I should point out as well those carpenters have been vacant for a very long period of time.

There were also two other positions, two management positions, a provincial maintenance co-ordinator and a provincial modernization and improvement co-ordinator. Their roles have been transferred and combined with other management.

**MS ROGERS:** Thank you very much.

It is kind of interesting because, similar to Mr. Joyce, I have had calls from several constituents who say: How come this unit in Buckmaster's; or how come this unit in Froude? I can see this unit. I walk by it, I have been walking by it for months, and it is not repaired. It is vacant. It is not ready to use; yet, we are laying off, or cutting positions in maintenance, in carpentry, and in painting.

**MR. DAVIS:** No, we did not lay anybody off.

**MS ROGERS:** Well, not filling vacancies and eliminating jobs.

**MR. DAVIS:** Some of these vacancies, like the carpenters, have been vacant for two or three years in this case and have been very hard to fill. It would depend on the locations. Directly to your point on having units vacant for a period of time, it would depend on the unit and the circumstances. If you ever know of a unit that has been vacant for a period of time, we can check on the circumstances particular to that one unit.

**MS ROGERS:** As you can imagine, it is a real problem when we have people who are very desperately looking for housing. The optics – people are wondering.

**MR. DAVIS:** Ms Rogers, there is a number of circumstances at play. Again, quite often, like in the case when I would look at, when you look at

a particular unit, well, how come that has been vacant for three months? Well, we have a contractor to go in and do repairs to it. They needed to do repairs. They have gone in and had a contract for a period of time to carry out those repairs. They complete the repairs.

Once the unit is then ready for occupancy and a person is selected, it can take some time to go through your priority listing, to say to person number one on the priority list, we have this unit available. They may say: Well, give me a day or a few days to consider this; or, I have to look at my circumstances today, as how they are now.

We have had, in the last year –

**MR. SIMMS:** Yes, in 2012.

**MR. DAVIS:** In 2012, we had 200 people turn down offer for housing. So, that just speaks to –

**MS ROGERS:** Turning down the offer of housing because of the location or because they did not want the housing, period?

**MR. SIMMS:** There are hundreds of reasons, but the fact of the matter is if you are –

**CHAIR:** Mr. Simms.

**MR. SIMMS:** I am sorry, Mr. Chair.

It is one that is fairly irritable when you are in the operation of housing for low-income people, supposedly the last-ditch effort or desperation – we had over 200 people. Some did not like the location, but you have to wonder how important it was for them. Others just turned it down because it was not where they wanted to go, was not on that street.

**MS ROGERS:** I have had –

**CHAIR:** Okay, Gerry, I am going to ask you to hold your thoughts because I gave you extra time.

**MS ROGERS:** Can I just finish this –

**CHAIR:** Okay, the last question.

**MS ROGERS:** I have also had a number of constituents who have called me because they have turned down units, but some of them because their children were special needs and they have no transportation to take their children to the school they are at. I think some of these are really valid concerns, particularly when you are talking about people without independent transportation and the means.

**MR. SIMMS:** I have to say that we are not cold-hearted.

**MS ROGERS:** I know that.

**MR. SIMMS:** We have had occasions where people have put forth special reasons why they could not take a unit. If it is special, they need to be near a hospital, or it is something like you have described, depending on the circumstances, we will not cancel them. We will give them another opportunity. These are –

**MS ROGERS:** So I imagine –

**MR. SIMMS:** These are people who just said, no, I do not want to go there because I want to be out where my cousin is. I mean there are all kinds of reasons.

**CHAIR:** Minister, a last comment on this one, please.

**MR. DAVIS:** Yes, thank you.

Back to your point, the point I raise at this point in time is that your question is about why and your comment was about why sometimes units are vacant for a period of time. The purpose of my referencing the 200 is sometimes there is a lot of work that goes on behind the scenes in selecting and putting a person into a unit, and sometimes that can take a while.

If we call someone today and say we have a unit available for you, and they say: Well, I need to think about this. You give them the opportunity to think about it and consider that. If you give them those opportunities and you do that through a number of people, you can say: Why is that unit still vacant? Well, you are going

through your priority listings, you are considering your applications, you are giving people an opportunity to consider the offer to decide if it is in their best interest or not.

Those things all add on to the time it takes to – then if they do accept and they have a period of time where they say, well, I need now to give my – if you call them on the fifth of the month and they pay monthly, if they have a landlord now they are paying rent. They say: Well, I have to give my landlord a full month's rent notice. They cannot give notice until the end of that month. So, someone on April 5 says you can move into a unit. I have to give notice to my current landlord at the end of April to end my lease at the end of May. Then you are two months down the road just so the client can give proper notice to their current landlord.

**CHAIR:** Thank you.

Mr. Joyce.

**MR. JOYCE:** Minister, it is not the way it always works, trust me.

**MR. DAVIS:** No, it is not.

**MR. JOYCE:** It is just not being done. I do not know if it is a lack of staff or what, but trust me, it is not being done. I know what you are saying in (inaudible).

I will you an example. Mr. Simms was talking about people – I just had a person who could not go to a certain apartment because the washer and dryer was on the lower level and she could not walk stairs, so she is off the list. She put it right on her application: I cannot go to this place because, and here is the reason. She is off the list, and trying to get her back on the list is just like pulling teeth. It was right on the application, and boom. So, it sounds good but in reality it is not always the way it works, with all due respect.

**MR. DAVIS:** As you are aware, Mr. Joyce, if you have a circumstance like that – I know my executive assistant who is here this morning deals with those cases quite often on a case by

case basis with the staff from Housing. As Mr. Simms said –

**MR. JOYCE:** I tried that, it did not work.

**MR. DAVIS:** She is aware of that case that you are talking about?

**MR. JOYCE:** Yes.

**MR. SIMMS:** No. The Corner Brook office, is that the one you are talking about?

**MR. JOYCE:** Yes.

**CHAIR:** Mr. Simms.

**MR. SIMMS:** I am just saying, I do not think you –

**MR. JOYCE:** No, I did not speak to Veronica, no. I deal with the office, but anyway.

Can I get a breakdown of the staff? You mentioned the staff, can I get a breakdown of the positions and what part of the region? What part of the Province?

**MR. DAVIS:** They are all over the Province, and I do not have region by region actually in front of me. I do not know if any of – just give them a moment now and I think they might be able to put their heads together and sort them out. Mr. Simms.

**MR. JOYCE:** Yes.

**CHAIR:** Mr. Simms.

**MR. SIMMS:** None of the maintenance positions are on the West Coast in the Corner Brook office. None of the two management positions were on the West Coast. The financial accountant, systems accountant, I would assume is in Finance at the head office. The accounting clerk is at the head office and the corporate secretary is at the head office. There are none in the Corner Brook office, where I guess you are asking.

**MR. JOYCE:** Yes. I know you said it before, Minister, but I am just going to ask some general questions. How many people are on the wait-list across the Province for Newfoundland and Labrador Housing, for housing units?

**MR. DAVIS:** As of April 12, is the last number I have, the wait-list has 890 people, but it is a very fluid number, as you know. Then we have a number of units which are now prepared, actually thirty-one that are now being prepared for selection. That actual number would bring it down to 859.

**MR. JOYCE:** Yes. That is for the entire Newfoundland and Labrador?

**MR. DAVIS:** Yes. I have it broken down by district, if you wanted the information on your own district as well.

**MR. JOYCE:** Sure.

**MR. DAVIS:** In Bay of Islands we have seventy-two units.

**MR. JOYCE:** Yes.

**MR. DAVIS:** There are four occupancies on a rent supplement. There are fourteen families placed in the last year, and twenty-one on the wait-list.

**MR. JOYCE:** Does that include the Curling part of Corner Brook?

**MR. DAVIS:** That is based on the Bay of Islands district.

**MR. JOYCE:** Okay.

**MR. DAVIS:** Yes, the City of Corner Brook wait-list is – in 2010 there were 135 applications. Currently there are sixty-two on file for the City of Corner Brook.

**MR. JOYCE:** A lot of people get confused when a part of Corner Brook is the Bay of Islands.

**MR. DAVIS:** Yes.

**MR. JOYCE:** A lot of Curling.

**MR. DAVIS:** Yes. The number I gave you is based on your district.

**MR. JOYCE:** Okay, thank you.

In Labrador, Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Labrador West, is there anything going to be done to try to help solve the housing? I know the housing issue is becoming more and more of an issue up in Labrador because of the investments and the work going ahead.

**MR. DAVIS:** There are. There were a number of things that occurred in Labrador West. The threshold for housing eligibility in the Province is \$32,500. In Labrador West it is twice that. It has been double that to \$65,000. That was a result of a consultative process with the provincial housing and homelessness group. A recommendation came forward through consultation with them to increase that in Labrador West to \$65,000. However, the impacts on the wait-list I can tell you have been negligible; have not been great for that area.

As well, in the Affordable Housing Initiative, there are two programs where we provide assistance and support. One is through private sector affordable housing units. When the private sector develops housing units, they apply under the affordable housing program.

What used to be provided was \$15,000 per unit. If someone wants to build a ten-unit property that would be rented at the lower end of the market rental rate, we used to provide a subsidy of \$15,000. They had to rent those ten units at the lower end of the market rental rate for a ten-year period. For non-profits, we used to provide a \$40,000 grant for privately owned, private companies and private business. That is now increased privately to \$40,000 and for not-for-profit it is at \$125,000. In Labrador, the supplement or the grant is \$50,000 for private and \$150,000 for non-profit per unit.

**MR. JOYCE:** Are you seeing a difference or is too early?

**MR. DAVIS:** On the affordable housing grant?

**MR. JOYCE:** In Labrador, Lab West.

**MR. DAVIS:** I know Mr. Simms can talk to you in detail about this. The wait-list in Happy Valley-Goose Bay and Labrador West, I should tell you, are based out of the office area, so the catchment area for that office. When I say Happy Valley-Goose Bay, it is a much larger part of Labrador that is included. Labrador City includes Labrador West.

In the Happy Valley-Goose Bay office, which is coastal Labrador, in 2010 there were twenty applications and currently there are twenty-eight on file. For Labrador West in 2010 there were eighteen and currently there are twenty-four.

**MR. JOYCE:** In the Corner Brook region, that private partnership with Newfoundland and Labrador Housing; how is that working out?

**MR. DAVIS:** They work well. I cannot tell you Corner Brook. I am sure Mr. Simms can. My experience has been that they work well. I know the question that quite often is asked: Well, what happens after ten years? We do not know that yet for Newfoundland and Labrador because we have not reached that ten-year point. We have developed 743 private sector affordable housing units since this program began in 2004 and 275 supportive living and non-profit projects since 2004. We know that in the next year we are going to have another eighty-seven.

We have not reached that ten-year mark to see what happens, but this particular program in other Provinces, what has resulted is that you see a building of a relationship between a landlord and a tenant. Quite often the landlord is happy with their tenant. They do not want to see them go, especially if you have a person who is caring for it and is a good neighbour and a good tenant. They do not want them to go.

The impacts after the ten years, in other provinces, the experience has been you do not see those increases in rental that some people would think could happen or may happen. It has not happened. The experience in other

provinces has been they keep the rents down because they have built that relationship with their tenant.

**MR. JOYCE:** In the Corner Brook area, I know some of the housing units are working out well. I know some of the people who are living there, are very happy and have affordable rent. In the ones who I have spoken to, it is working out. I do not know what is going to happen now once ten years are up, but right now it is helping out to some degree for some of the people with the lower rent.

Is there any consideration been given to construction of new units, just Newfoundland and Labrador Housing itself?

**MR. DAVIS:** The development of new unit availability has been primarily through this Affordable Housing Initiative. As you just said or just reviewed in the numbers of what has been developed in the last ten years, it works well. It significantly reduces capital costs and management costs for Newfoundland and Labrador Housing and for governments. It provides for housing at rates that are affordable to the clients, as well. That program seems to be well, but it has been a number of years since Newfoundland and Labrador Housing has built and developed new units.

Having said that, there are some units around that I have seen, even in the greater St. John's area I have gone to look at myself, where units have been taken and then reconfigured because traditionally you needed several bedrooms for large families, which you do not need any more. Newfoundland and Labrador Housing has done a really good job of taking some of those, what use to be, four- or five-bedroom units, or four-bedroom units, and converting it two singles or a single and a double, those types of reconfiguration, to put them to better use.

**MR. JOYCE:** I will come back. I am pretty good with my time.

**CHAIR:** Thank you, that is good.

Gerry.

**MS ROGERS:** Thank you very much.

Are there currently any vacant positions, aside from the vacant positions that have been eliminated?

**MR. DAVIS:** Mr. Simms.

**MR. SIMMS:** Sorry?

**MS ROGERS:** Aside from the ones that are being eliminated, will there be any other current vacant positions?

**MR. SIMMS:** I hope not. There is no plan for that. We still hold competitions internally if there are vacancies, so we can do that. At the moment there is nothing out of the ordinary, let's put it that way.

**MS ROGERS:** Okay.

Can we have the total amount of salaries in 2012 and then the total salaries for the budget of 2013?

**MR. SIMMS:** I guess we would have to get that because as you realize the only thing we are discussing here is the provincial grant to the Housing Corporation, which is \$46 million.

**MS ROGERS:** Yes.

**MR. SIMMS:** The total budget for the Corporation is \$118 million.

**MS ROGERS:** Yes.

**MR. SIMMS:** So contribution toward the salaries comes from the federal government, comes from our rental revenue, and it comes from a portion of the Province's thing – Tom, do you have the total salary or do you know it off the top of your head or give a rough idea?

**MR. LAWRENCE:** It is approximately \$24 million a year, our total salary.

**MS ROGERS:** So that is what it was for 2012-2013 and that is what it will be for 2013-2014?



**MR. LAWRENCE:** That is correct.

**MS ROGERS:** Even with the elimination?

**MR. LAWRENCE:** Well, it will go down by those vacant positions, but it is around \$23 million or \$24 million.

**MS ROGERS:** Thank you.

The public rental housing operations and social housing, the total for 2013 is \$29 million, so we see a \$3 million reduction there. Where will the cuts be made? How will that be absorbed?

**MR. DAVIS:** As I mentioned earlier, there has been a significant investment in recent years on the modernization and improvement of housing units. It has come with good benefits, by the way, also for the clients and for the people who live in these homes and these units. As for how the complete reduction will take place, specifically how that \$3 million will be reduced, I do not know if I can break it down more specifically than that, but I am sure Mr. Simms can provide more comment on it.

**MR. SIMMS:** Generally speaking, it is just a reduction in our modernization plan. So instead of doing fourteen buildings Province-wide, we may do eleven. We found a way to reduce it without affecting anybody individually. That was our objective. To be frank with you, I know you agree because we have talked about it before, if you drive around the city, even in Corner Brook where there is a huge amount of work that has happened over the last several years, the portfolio of the Housing Corporation has improved considerably.

We are just going to continue to do a lot of modernization again this year. Actually, there is a fair bit carried over from last year that has not yet been done, so there will still be a lot of activity. The portfolio improvement has gone from 30 per cent six or seven years ago or whatever it was, up to probably 75 per cent.

So we are just going to continue to make progress, maybe a little more slowly, that is about all, but the amount of work that is left to

be done has also been reduced considerably, so we figure that was one place we could find a reduction that we were required.

**MS ROGERS:** Are there any units that would be affected then that are not habitable at this point?

**MR. SIMMS:** That would be the major repair area. There is about thirty out of 108.

**MR. DAVIS:** It used to be 108 units that were not usable.

**MS ROGERS:** So now we are down to thirty that are not habitable?

**MR. DAVIS:** Now we are down to thirty, yes.

**MR. SIMMS:** A couple of them are in Buckmaster's, by the way, for different reasons as you probably know.

**MS ROGERS:** Yes.

So, what is the plan? How many of those will be back in the stock and be ready for occupancy this year?

**MR. SIMMS:** The remaining thirty?

**MS ROGERS:** Yes.

**MR. SIMMS:** Well, we have a plan ongoing. I cannot remember how many we have ready to go. We have about a million dollars worth of work to do on those remaining thirty.

**MS ROGERS:** On the thirty?

**MR. SIMMS:** Yes.

**MS ROGERS:** You have that million dollars allocated this year?

**MR. SIMMS:** No, that is what we have left. We have money allocated this year to bring it down to thirty, let us put it that way. We have been doing this for four years.

**MS ROGERS:** Right.

Okay, I am a little bit confused. So, there are currently thirty units that cannot be used right now?

**MR. SIMMS:** Right, and our plan is to –

**MS ROGERS:** This year, how many will you renovate so that, in fact, they can be used?

**MR. SIMMS:** There is probably forty left, of which we have funding now to do ten more this year.

**MS ROGERS:** Ten this year.

**MR. SIMMS:** Yes.

**MS ROGERS:** Out of forty.

**MR. SIMMS:** Yes, which brings it down to thirty that will remain at the end of the year.

**MS ROGERS:** Okay, thank you.

For the wait-list – I am curious about the waitlist – do you have data showing the age of people on the wait-list, the unit size that they are requesting, and the region?

**MR. SIMMS:** Yes.

**MS ROGERS:** Could we have that?

**MR. SIMMS:** Sure. Well, perhaps I will send it to you is probably the easiest thing to do.

**MS ROGERS:** Absolutely, yes, that would be great.

**MR. SIMMS:** We do have data and information that relates to the wait-list by age groups, most of which are –

**MS ROGERS:** Family units –

**MR. SIMMS:** – family units. Half of our wait-lists require one bedroom.

**MS ROGERS:** That is a challenge.

**MR. SIMMS:** That is our biggest problem.

We have 106 over sixty-five years of age, out of 850.

**MS ROGERS:** One hundred and six.

**MR. SIMMS:** So that is about, what, 10 per cent, 12 per cent or something, seniors. The biggest bracket is from twenty-two to forty-three.

**MS ROGERS:** Those are the twenty-two to forty-three single people looking for one bedroom?

**MR. SIMMS:** No, these would be ones or twos.

**MS ROGERS:** Ones and twos.

**MR. SIMMS:** There are very few family three-bedroom units needed. If anybody needs a three-bedroom, as long as they have – we place people by the protocol, not necessarily by the date of their application, and their need, but if somebody fits the protocol and pops up on the list and they need a three-bedroom, chances are they are going to pretty well be assured of getting that three bedroom.

We cannot put a one person in a three bedroom any longer because of criticism by previous Auditor Generals, but we do try to make the units fit, and we tell people that when they apply: When you apply, if you need a one-bedroom, do not apply for a four-bedroom - that sort of thing.

We have fifty-eight couples who need a one bedroom.

**MS ROGERS:** Yes.

**MR. SIMMS:** That is a single bedroom need. We have, for example, applicants who need four bedrooms or more, nine; even three bedrooms or more, seventy-nine.

**MS ROGERS:** Yes.

**MR. SIMMS:** It is mostly ones and twos, 80 per cent of the wait-list.

**MS ROGERS:** I know that you did adapt some of the units to make them smaller. Is there a plan to do that with any of the units this year?

**MR. SIMMS:** Yes, in fact we did the reconfiguration up behind the Tim Hortons on Mundy Pond Road which was –

**MS ROGERS:** Yes, was that last year or the year before?

**MR. SIMMS:** That was last year it was completed.

**MS ROGERS:** Yes.

**MR. SIMMS:** Also, when we do vacancies we are reducing the room numbers in a three bedroom down to a two to make sure we have twos and allow us –

**MS ROGERS:** Yes.

**MR. SIMMS:** As a matter of fact, up on Prospero Place where we have just done a major, major renovation, we had one of our older buildings that were under that category of major repairs burn down. It still being investigated, let's put it that way.

We have applied to the city to allow us to build four one-bedroom units. We do some of those wherever we can when we can. Most of our partnerships are with the affordable housing people.

**MS ROGERS:** Okay. Are there any concrete plans this fiscal year to reconfigure any of the existing units to make them smaller?

**MR. SIMMS:** Oh yes, we are doing that on an ongoing basis. We call that not reconfiguration, but conversion.

**MS ROGERS:** Conversion.

**MR. SIMMS:** Not to confuse. A reconfiguration is to do something like we did on that Mundy Pond project. We would like to do that, but again it costs probably \$400,000 or \$500,000 to do that kind of a reconfiguration.

We are doing it in a sense because we are doing it up on Prospero ourselves, building four units. It will look like the one on Mundy Pond Road.

**CHAIR:** Minister.

**MR. DAVIS:** Also, in Prospero when you do a major renovation, if you have a three-bedroom unit, if you are doing a major renovation and you have to take out gyproc and you have to really tear back to that level – in Prospero, we have units where we are changing them from three-bedroom units to two-bedroom units. It is the same size of a unit; you just made the bedrooms larger, more comfortable, made a better unit out of it that can address the greatest need.

**MS ROGERS:** Yes. I am not quite clear. Are there any specific plans for the number of units that you would convert then to smaller units?

**MR. SIMMS:** Specific plans are always on the paper, always in our mind.

**MS ROGERS:** Yes.

**MR. SIMMS:** We have been doing this not just recently; we have been doing this for a number of years. We say to the people involved with our vacancy program, when you go in to do a vacancy, if you have the time and you have the extra \$5,000 that might be needed – it is not huge amount of money – reduce a three bedroom down to a two bedroom, do whatever is required internally to do that.

**MS ROGERS:** Then that is -

**CHAIR:** Okay, Gerry, your time is up, so I am going to make you hold that thought. Thank you.

Eddie.

**MR. JOYCE:** Thank you.

I was talking earlier about any new units. Is there any land available in Corner Brook for new units? I know Newfoundland and Labrador Housing had some land and they sold a lot of it

off to private contractors. I am going back a while.

**MR. SIMMS:** Most of the land that Housing had available back in 1996, I think, there was an agreement signed – Mr. Letto might even recall this – there was an agreement signed with twenty-two municipalities to divert all of the land that the Housing Corporation owned, but it was usually that industrial park area and the towns were able to do what they wanted with it.

We diverted all the land to the municipalities, they were the best ones to try to see it or do a development, and there as an agreement made. That agreement allowed the municipality to sell the land, get the money they could for it, and we got half of the profit, whatever they sold. That is still in existence in about fifteen of those municipalities.

As for residential land in the City of Corner Brook, we have a bit here and there. I know we have some up on back of Crestview or Bayview, up in that area.

**MR. JOYCE:** Bayview Heights.

**MR. SIMMS:** I think we have a couple of lots up there that we sort of have in our own little small bank. We did have a spot up in Humber Mouth and we are building a duplex up there in the Humber Mouth area, by Station Road area somewhere. We do not have large amounts like we do, say, here up in Southlands, that kind of thing.

**MR. JOYCE:** The Home Modification Program, is that still active? How many people availed of that, say, last year? How much is in the budget for this year?

**CHAIR:** Minister.

**MR. DAVIS:** The Home Modification Program is a pretty important program, especially for people who need it most. It helps keep people in their own homes when, for one reason or another, they find themselves now requiring an easier-access, barrier-free living environment.

In 2011-2012, there were 458 applications; in 2012-2013, there are 378.

**MR. JOYCE:** Okay.

The \$3 million that was in last year's budget, did it all get spent or is there any carryover?

**MR. DAVIS:** Yes, there is some carryover on it but, as well, we have increased the grant. The cost for doing this type of work has gone up. The grant has gone up. It used to be \$5,000 and it is now up to \$7,500.

**MR. JOYCE:** Yes. How much of that \$3 million was spent last year? Did it all get spent or allocated for?

**MR. DAVIS:** No, some of it is carryover. Some of it is projects underway and some of it is carryover, two point eight in the last year.

**MR. JOYCE:** I am going to ask a question now, and I cannot say the person's name because I have it here. It is more of a policy thing. I did not know how to get around it and I do not want to give her name out. I know in one community this older lady who already had the Residential Assistance Program but now she cannot stay in her house because her roof is leaking. I was trying to get some funding for it but the thing is she received funding within five years and she cannot receive any more funding.

**MR. DAVIS:** PHRP.

**MR. JOYCE:** Yes.

**MR. DAVIS:** It is seven years, yes.

**MR. JOYCE:** Seven years, and I think it was four years ago. She cannot live in her own house. The family is trying to patch it up a bit here and there. I do not know, is there any – you can go down and see the water running through. I do not know if there is any such thing as an emergency –

**MR. DAVIS:** There is.

**MR. JOYCE:** I understand the policy. I am not disputing the policy and the legitimacy of the policy.

**MR. DAVIS:** There is emergency circumstance which can affect a person's application. So, you should provide us, or provide Veronica with the information and then we will –

**MR. JOYCE:** Okay. I will provide it to Mr. Simms.

**MR. DAVIS:** Yes, you can certainly do that.

**MR. JOYCE:** I understand the policy because if not you would have the same people trying to get funding every year. I understand that, but this is a senior trying to stay in her home.

**MR. DAVIS:** We have developed a priority for people who have not received it before. So you can apply once, seven years later you can apply a second time, but we have had people who have had two grants and people who have had none.

**MR. JOYCE:** I agree.

**MR. DAVIS:** We have moved the priority to people who have never received a grant.

**MR. JOYCE:** Okay. I will get you that information.

**MR. DAVIS:** There are people who have had it more than that.

**MR. JOYCE:** Oh yes, and people trying to get it more.

**MR. DAVIS:** Yes.

**MR. JOYCE:** Is there a wait-list for this program?

**MR. DAVIS:** For PHRP?

**MR. JOYCE:** Yes.

**MR. DAVIS:** Yes, there is. It was 4,376 in March of 2006 and currently it is 989, I believe. Of those, 681 are first-timers.

**MR. JOYCE:** Of those people who are on the wait-list right now, what is the breakdown of regions? Would you have that or is it all across the board?

**MR. DAVIS:** I have a breakdown by districts of what was delivered last year.

**MR. JOYCE:** Is it, say, all across the Province?

**MR. DAVIS:** Yes, it is. It obviously varies from district to district on REEP, the provincial Home Modification Program, and PHRP, Provincial Home Repair Program. It varies from district to district.

In Bay of Islands, as an example, in 2012-2013 there was \$174,500 in REEP, just under \$63,000 in Home Modification Program, and there was \$378,000 in PHRP.

**MR. JOYCE:** Yes.

**MR. DAVIS:** It does vary from district to district.

**MR. JOYCE:** I am not sure if this was done or is it too early, was there ever an audit done to see how effective the program is?

**MR. DAVIS:** On the Provincial Home Repair Program or on REEP?

**MR. JOYCE:** No, on the Home Modification Program.

**MR. SIMMS:** It just started.

**MR. JOYCE:** It just started.

**MR. SIMMS:** About two years ago.

**MR. JOYCE:** Okay.

**CHAIR:** Mr. Simms.

**MR. SIMMS:** It is effective – I should not be saying this.

**MR. JOYCE:** No, go ahead.

**MR. DAVIS:** Go ahead, but do not say it.

**MR. SIMMS:** Force of habit; I have lived here for sixteen years, and it is a force of habit sometimes. For the HMP program, there is a lot of work done in consultation with the OTs, the occupational therapists. Most of the approvals are done on their recommendations.

**CHAIR:** Minister.

**MR. DAVIS:** Everybody's personal circumstances are different. There is a bit of work done to determine what is actually needed.

**MR. JOYCE:** Oh no, I think it is a good program.

**MR. DAVIS:** Absolutely, I do too.

**MR. JOYCE:** There is no doubt. I know people who got it and it helped them. It is a good program.

The Residential Energy Efficiency Program, how much money is in the Budget in this program for this year?

**MR. DAVIS:** In REEP this year it is \$2 million. It has been \$4 million for the last couple of years and this year it is \$2 million. Two million dollars will provide a grant to 500 homeowners.

**MR. JOYCE:** How many people are availing of that? I know when the federal had their program out it was just so cumbersome for anybody to get any funds. Is this much easier or friendlier to use? When they had the federal program people used to have to – I can see why they dropped it because no one ever used it.

**MR. DAVIS:** Yes, it is done differently than that. Mr. Simms would be more familiar with both, what the federal required and the provincial required, more than I am, but he can comment on it. It is a good program. We will provide assistance, like I said, to 500 homeowners this year. We will not have any difficulty expending that investment this year.

Do you want to comment further, Mr. Simms?

**CHAIR:** Mr. Simms.

**MR. SIMMS:** The program itself has been phenomenal, a very strong program in place four years. We gave 1,000 grants in each of those four years. Once the funding was used up we did not accept any further applications, and we advised people of the same. That will happen again this year. We have less than we had last year, but nevertheless the program is good.

The stats are the same, and have been for four years. We see a household making about \$19,000 income, which is not a lot of money, save \$800 a year in heating costs. We also were able to save 30 per cent to 35 per cent of emissions less in the air.

It was a very strong program and no difficulty in – we had oodles and oodles of money. Although last year I think we gave out 1,000 grants, and I think there were 1,100 applications. So almost everybody who applied actually got –

**MR. JOYCE:** Once you apply, is there a time limit to apply again or just a one-shot deal?

**MR. SIMMS:** Just a one-shot deal.

**MR. JOYCE:** A one-shot deal. This year that will go down to about 500 applications, or pretty close.

**MR. SIMMS:** Yes.

**CHAIR:** Okay. I am going to hold you there Eddie, and I am going to go to Gerry.

**MR. JOYCE:** Yes.

**MS ROGERS:** I will continue on that particular issue.

I am curious. Since it is such a wonderful, phenomenal program and we see that governments worldwide are taking leadership and helping their citizens make their homes more energy efficient. Why in God's name would you cut it back?

**CHAIR:** Minister.

**MR. DAVIS:** There are a number of great programs that Newfoundland and Labrador Housing administer and provide. When we went through our process there were three programs we felt were programs that we could not, and we did not want to make any changes on or any reductions to, being the Supportive Living Program, the Provincial Homelessness Fund, and also the Home Modification Program.

Then we looked at our other programs, including the Residential Energy Efficiency Program and the Provincial Home Repair Program. We knew those reductions were going to reduce the amount of work that we did in those, but we have made good gains in the four years doing 1,000 homes per year. We know we can continue to have a positive effect by doing 500.

**MS ROGERS:** The eligibility rate again for this particular project, did I mishear \$19,000, household income?

**MR. DAVIS:** No, that was an example that they gave you; \$32,500 is still the eligibility.

**MS ROGERS:** Okay. It is a curious thing, though, again when, worldwide, we see the efforts of governments to help citizens make their homes more energy efficient.

At this point –

**OFFICIAL:** (Inaudible).

**MR. DAVIS:** I am sorry, go ahead.

**MS ROGERS:** Last year when did the money run out in terms of applications? At what point in the year?

**MR. SIMMS:** Three months.

**MS ROGERS:** Within three months?

**MR. SIMMS:** (Inaudible).

**MS ROGERS:** Word went out then that the money had run out and a lot of people then did not apply. To even say that 1,100 applied,

probably there would have been more applications had the money not run out.

**MR. DAVIS:** Could have been, yes.

**MS ROGERS:** Thank you.

I know you cannot foresee the future, but this was a pilot project that has been extended, is there any discussion about next year at all?

**MR. DAVIS:** It was a pilot project brought forward by the Minister of Natural Resources of the day who is now the Premier, actually. It was a good vision, as you mentioned, it was a good project, and it assists homeowners in their energy costs.

I would like to point out that the Provincial Home Repair Program also assists people in their energy costs and also creates a healthier environment for people to live in as well. So when you put both of those programs together, REEP being more specific than the Provincial Home Repair Program, then we are making great investments for the people of the Province who need it most.

**MS ROGERS:** Except we have cut it in half.

**MR. DAVIS:** On the REEP part, yes, we have. If you look at the Provincial Home Repair Program, in all fairness, the Provincial Home Repair Program existed before the Residential Energy Efficiency Program, existed for many years. The Provincial Home Repair Program, we tripled that program. If you add the REEP and Provincial Home Repair Program together, we are still three times what we used to spend, what we used to invest, in allowing people and supporting people to make investments in their own homes.

**MS ROGERS:** Okay, thank you.

Specifically, folks from Lab West were wondering about the many large units that are there and the fact that family sizes are smaller. Is there any plan at all to convert any of those units in Lab West?

**MR. SIMMS:** Our units?

**MR. DAVIS:** Yes, our units.

**CHAIR:** Mr. Simms.

**MR. SIMMS:** There are no specific plans. Other than from time to time if there is a vacancy, we will take it into our own hands to do those.

**MS ROGERS:** Thank you.

**MR. DAVIS:** I am sorry, Ms Rogers, just to point out, quite often what happens is when they become vacant then there is a full assessment done on the needs and now that it is vacant, while there may not have been major plans planned for that particular unit, it is an opportune time to make those upgrades. If you are going to spend some time doing some upgrades, then it might be a good time to put in more.

**MS ROGERS:** I cannot remember, did we already ask for a list of where the vacant units are across the Province?

**MR. DAVIS:** On the vacant units?

**MS ROGERS:** Yes.

**MR. DAVIS:** You did not ask but –

**MS ROGERS:** Did we get that?

**MR. SIMMS:** That changes every day.

**OFFICIAL:** What day do you want?

**MS ROGERS:** I mean in terms of the ones that are not –

**MR. SIMMS:** Oh, the major repair ones?

**MS ROGERS:** Yes.

**MR. DAVIS:** Yes, we can get that for you.

**MS ROGERS:** Great.

Can I have a little update on the Train for Trades Program? Some of the people are working with the Housing Corporation. How is that going?

**MR. DAVIS:** A fabulous program administered through Choices for Youth here in St. John's. I think the first program they did was the Lilly Building. The actual clients worked on construction of the Lilly Building and then lived in it for a period of time. It is a really good program that gives young people, who previously never had experience or education, background to move into good, solid employment and a career path.

I think the current number of at-risk youth who have either moved from that program to post-secondary education or to full-time employment is up around – I just do not remember now – the 70 per cent area I believe, which to me I think speaks volumes that it is a very successful program.

**MS ROGERS:** Great.

**MR. DAVIS:** It is funded and supported by Newfoundland and Labrador Housing.

**MS ROGERS:** Great. They are doing great work.

**MR. DAVIS:** We are extending that program.

**MS ROGERS:** Oh good. You are extending it, what does that mean?

**MR. DAVIS:** That means they still get the funding.

**MS ROGERS:** At the same level?

**MR. SIMMS:** They actually get more money –

**CHAIR:** Mr. Simms.

**MR. SIMMS:** Yes.

**CHAIR:** Just your red light, Sir, that is all.

**MR. SIMMS:** Oh, sorry.



**CHAIR:** I am just letting the people at Hansard know, and down in the Broadcast Centre.

**MS ROGERS:** You have been called.

**MR. SIMMS:** We have expanded the program in partnership – you may recall, Minister, you were down for that big official opening and the new partnership they have with it. Was it Hibernia? I think it was Hibernia – Hebron or Hibernia –

**OFFICIAL:** Hibernia.

**MR. SIMMS:** Hibernia.

We have given them more houses to do this year. We have expanded it in that way, plus we pay their salaries. We pay their employees a salary. In the past, they were doing it for experience, and we have developed a partnership with them over the last three years that has seen us give – I think we are giving them sixty units this year to work on, and they are expanding what they used to do, which was more internal –

**OFFICIAL:** More like REEP.

**MR. SIMMS:** Yes, like REEP, efficiency things. This time they wanted to do some external work: siding, windows, doors. We agreed, and we got them to convince CUPE, who is our union down there, to agree, because it is their work, normally –

**MS ROGERS:** Yes.

**MR. SIMMS:** They agree, so they are a full partner, and yes, it is working very, very well.

**MS ROGERS:** Perfect, great.

**MR. DAVIS:** Just on that, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIR:** Mr. Minister.

**MR. DAVIS:** So, I think it is interesting and worthwhile to point out as well that the work they are doing there, there are a couple things. Again, they are improving the environment inside a home with the work they are doing, and

many of the projects they were doing were insulating previously uninsulated basements and that type of thing, which also reduces the heating cost for the occupants of those particular units.

**MS ROGERS:** I would like to move on to the community centres, and the neighbourhood centres, and the tenants' associations. So, the eight community centres received \$150,000 each last year, is that correct? Will they be receiving the same this year?

**MR. DAVIS:** On the eight community centres – sorry, your question again?

**MS ROGERS:** Will they be receiving \$150,000 each again this year?

**MR. DAVIS:** They will.

**MS ROGERS:** Our ten neighbourhood centres, last year I believe they received \$10,000 each, did they? Will the funding be the same this year?

**OFFICIAL:** (Inaudible).

**MS ROGERS:** Great, thank you.

The tenants' association will be the getting the same as they got in 2012?

**MR. SIMMS:** Who was the other group?

**MS ROGERS:** The tenants' associations, do they receive funding?

**MR. SIMMS:** Yes.

**MS ROGERS:** They will be receiving the same?

**OFFICIAL:** (Inaudible).

**MS ROGERS:** Were there any new neighbourhood centres formed in 2012?

**OFFICIAL:** (Inaudible).

**MS ROGERS:** Okay, great.

The education incentives – I was just wondering how that is going. Has there been any evaluation of the incentives, in terms of the cost-benefit analysis, has it kept kids in school? What have the results been?

**CHAIR:** Mr. Simms.

**MR. SIMMS:** It is off the top of my head, but fairly close. When we started the program four years ago 48 per cent of our kids – our kids, who were eligible for school – 48 per cent or so were in high school; today, it is over 70 per cent. Then a couple of years back, we added the junior high, because educators told us that is really where the problem is, it is not so much at the high school level. That was at 73 per cent, somewhere in that area; today, it is 78 per cent for our kids.

The graduation rate has not changed, unfortunately, considerably, but it is more than most people thought. I used to hear people say there was only one person who ever graduated from this area (inaudible), I remember that being said one time, but actually 50 per cent of the kids who make it to Grade 12 do graduate. It has had good success.

We have done evaluations for the Poverty Reduction Strategy. We do that on an annual basis ourselves, but it looks like 75 per cent of our kids overall now are staying in school, at the high school level, and 50 per cent or so are graduating.

**MS ROGERS:** Are community centres speaking to you at all about the impact of the cancellation of the employment assistance positions?

**MR. SIMMS:** No representation at all.

**CHAIR:** Gerry, I am going to hold you there and I will go back to Eddie.

**MS ROGERS:** Thank you.

**CHAIR:** Thank you.

**MR. JOYCE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Provincial Homelessness Fund, how much money is in that program this year?

**MR. DAVIS:** It is \$1 million.

**MR. JOYCE:** How much was in it last year?

**MR. DAVIS:** It was \$1 million.

**MR. JOYCE:** So there has been no decrease. Okay.

Do you have a list of who accessed this program?

**MR. DAVIS:** Yes, we do.

**MR. JOYCE:** Can we get a copy of that?

**MR. DAVIS:** Yes.

**MR. SIMMS:** The last time it was announced by the Premier. It is always announced publicly.

**MR. JOYCE:** Pardon?

**MR. SIMMS:** It is on your Web site in the old releases, but we can get a copy.

**MR. JOYCE:** How do you find that program is working, or is there more of a demand than actual funds?

**MR. DAVIS:** As mentioned, we maintained the funding on the homelessness fund this year. I am starting to repeat myself. I do not know if Mr. Simms wanted to weigh in on this one as well.

This fund, like many of them, depending on your perspective, every fund here someone would say this is the most important fund. We realize that we have had good success with many of these funds and many of these programs that operate. The Homelessness Fund is one as well. The Homelessness Fund is one of the ones we consciously did not want to reduce the funding on, but I will let Mr. Simms comment further on it.

**CHAIR:** Mr. Simms.

**MR. SIMMS:** I was trying to remember Mr. Joyce's question. Is it taken up pretty well every year, was your question. The answer is yes. Since we brought the program in, recommended by the community advisory board of the Housing and Homelessness Network here several years ago during one of our charettes, since we brought it in, a lot of it is tied into our affordable housing supportive and non-profit projects.

For example, there is one in Goose Bay that we are going to be opening soon, the Mokami Status of Women. They received \$150 per unit, or \$1.5 million to build the project, but they needed more funding because that funding does not cover internal wraparound services, offices and things of that nature. That is why we brought in the Homelessness Fund. We give them an extra \$200,000, for example, to help do their wraparound services.

A lot of the funds from the Homelessness Fund are tied into the bigger AHI projects undertaken by the non-profits in particular. However, a couple of years ago we expanded the definition, if you want, to allow smaller groups and we started advocating to churches that have soup kitchens. I know the Salvation Army in Corner Brook a couple of years ago got some money.

We have been pushing that a fair bit too. There is enough there if somebody needs a cupboard built down in the kitchen parish hall and it is going to cost them \$10,000 or something like that for carpentry work – churches do not have a lot of money – they can apply under this program. It is pretty straightforward simple, a one-pager and it is on the Web site.

Any time you can encourage a group in your community that has a small kitchen, or provide anything to people who are at-risk of homelessness, seniors in particular, some people have a monthly soup kitchen or whatever the case is, this is the pot that is available to them for smaller grants. It is also there for the larger projects. Gathering Place, people like that, we have given funding to just in the past year.

**MR. JOYCE:** I know it helped out the Salvation Army when they supplied for their soup kitchen in Corner Brook, yes.

**MR. SIMMS:** I remember something about that, yes.

**MR. JOYCE:** Yes. They do a good job and do supply a lot more.

**MR. SIMMS:** They do.

**MR. JOYCE:** In affordable rental housing there were some projects outstanding. Can you tell me how many projects are outstanding and the status of the projects?

**MR. DAVIS:** On the Affordable Housing Initiative?

**MR. JOYCE:** Yes.

**MR. DAVIS:** When you say outstanding, uncompleted?

**MR. JOYCE:** Not completed, ongoing now.

**MR. DAVIS:** Eighty-seven units in total. I think it is eighty-seven units in total. I am not sure how many projects that takes in. Probably eight, nine, or ten projects – just a moment now.

**MR. SIMMS:** We look at it from the approval perspective as opposed to completed. They have until next year to complete the projects.

**MR. JOYCE:** Okay.

**MR. SIMMS:** There are six of those private sector ones that are still trying to get all of their information together. The bigger issue is with –

**CHAIR:** Minister.

**MR. DAVIS:** The maximum amount, especially with the private, is ten units. Most of the privately-owned projects that are done will include ten units. Some could be eight or some could be some smaller ones but a lot of them are ten. Then, of course, a number of those have to be fully accessible units as well in the project

that they do. There is a minimum of one, I think, in each project but it is not unusual to see some that do a couple or three that –

**MR. SIMMS:** (Inaudible) because they do not have the capacity.

**MR. DAVIS:** Non-profit groups are a little bit slower moving along sometimes. They have a little bit more – instead of being a full-time private business, when you have a not-for-profit group then sometimes it takes a little bit longer to get those projects moving but there are a number of those as well.

I am just looking to see if there is anything in your way, and I do not see anything here, Mr. Joyce.

**MR. JOYCE:** As you know, anything in Corner Brook affects people living in the Bay of Islands also.

**MR. DAVIS:** Yes, I am aware of that.

**MR. JOYCE:** A lot of those units that are built in Corner Brook, people do move up.

**MR. DAVIS:** The last one would have been last year. The Canadian Mental Health Association was a partner, and you are aware of that one of course.

**MR. JOYCE:** Yes. The native housing up in the North Coast is that a major issue or is there major concern?

**MR. DAVIS:** There has been work done on the Coast of Labrador. We have actually sent staff down on occasion to the Coast of Labrador to visit and assist and help people complete applications, but the number of applications received I think is much lower than what it could be.

**MR. SIMMS:** You are having a meeting next week with the Government of Nunatsiavut (inaudible).

**MR. DAVIS:** Did you hear that?

**MR. JOYCE:** No.

**MR. DAVIS:** We have some meetings planned, scheduled upcoming meetings again with the Nunatsiavut Government to have these discussions. I have had them already to find ways that we can help their population take advantage of opportunities that are available through Newfoundland and Labrador Housing, but the uptake on applications is generally low.

**MR. JOYCE:** I have a few minutes left. I am just going to ask a few general questions.

We hear all this today about the number of units that are available now and the wait-list has dropped, why do we hear – and I am not putting anybody on the spot here because I do not think any one of us here can answer this, but from the information that Newfoundland and Labrador Housing can receive. Why do we see such a public issue about lack of homelessness and lack of affordable housing, yet we see all of this good news coming out that the rates are down, people applying are down, and people looking for help is down, but we see the rise –

**MR. DAVIS:** There are more people leaving Newfoundland and Labrador Housing than there ever has been. Those are people leaving the assistance and supports of Newfoundland and Labrador Housing and either moving to purchasing their own homes, or renting on their own, those types of things. A lot of it is directly related to their own revenues. Their own revenue now – it is not in their best interest to remain in Newfoundland and Labrador Housing because of the way the formulas operate.

I have given a lot of thought to that, Mr. Joyce. My own history and my own background in policing – and I have had a fair bit of engagement over the years in people who require housing, are in need or housing, or people who have housing but have affordability issues, or housing that they should not be living in because the housing is not conducive to that.

I think it is very fair to say and I think it is important to point out that when people have a housing issue, then it can be very critical to

them. On an individual basis that person may be termed or seen to be in a crisis at that time. Versus describing the housing circumstance in a larger issue, we have a provincial crisis; versus we have people who have crisis.

I think we will always have people in our population who have a crisis in their life at one time or another, and it could be through no fault of their own. They could have a marital breakdown, a relationship breakdown today, and now today they are in crisis of finding a place to live tonight. I think that will always be the case. I mean that in the most respectful way because any one of us can find ourselves in a personal crisis at a moment's notice for any number of reasons.

I think it is fair to say housing is such an important part of life and is so important to each and every one of us that when you suddenly find yourself faced with a circumstance in which housing is an issue for you, then that would quite often become your first most important issue that you have to deal with.

**MR. JOYCE:** Do you want me to come back, Mr. Chair?

**CHAIR:** Are you cluing up, Eddie?

**MR. JOYCE:** I will clue up with this part and just that general discussion. I have one more question on that.

**CHAIR:** Okay, go for it.

**MR. JOYCE:** I do not mean to put anybody on the spot. Do you think there is a housing crisis in the Province? Or when you hear different groups saying that there is and like from your stats – and I am sure you have done studies and getting feedback from a lot of these groups that you help support. Is the crisis in Newfoundland and Labrador as serious as it appears to be from some of these groups?

**MR. DAVIS:** From my perspective, if you look at all of the information, I think it paints a picture of a Province that is doing very well. If you look at the number of people who have been

relying on Newfoundland and Labrador Housing, living in a rent-supplement, that type of circumstance, that are now moving off to living without those supports, the numbers are higher than they ever were before.

There is a large turnover in people coming in and leaving Newfoundland and Labrador Housing. As I said last year, the number was a little bit higher of people who were placed, versus what is now on the waiting list. We never saw that years ago – there was a bigger turnover, such a large turnover.

I think that speaks to what is happening in the Province today. Having said that, it does not mean Newfoundland and Labrador Housing can close the doors at any time soon. They never will, because there will always be a demand for housing. There will always be a range of socio-economic parameters from the very high people who are very high earners to the people who need those supports and assistance. Wherever we move as an economy, I think that will always exist.

I do not know if Mr. Simms wants to comment any further on it. I can tell you housing and his clients are, as you are aware, very important to him. He engages with his clients all the time on a regular basis. I know him personally, so I know that he probably has some personal comments that he would like to add to that. Mr. Simms.

**CHAIR:** Mr. Simms.

**MR. SIMMS:** Well, I think it is a difficult question to answer, because first of all, there are many definitions of affordable housing; that is the first thing. Oftentimes, I know people in the public ask me: What is all this about prices and affordable housing? I just heard you people on yesterday announcing the opening of a ten-unit, non-profit, supportive living affordable housing project. So, it is a very complex issue, many definitions.

People get confused, because I have had it said to me – for example, the Housing and Homelessness Network does not use the word

crisis; they use the word that we often use, which is we are facing many challenges in the housing area. I think they acknowledge that what we do at Newfoundland and Labrador Housing – and I have heard others in other political parties say the same kind of thing – they acknowledge the work that the Housing Corporation does is to provide social housing and assistance to people who are most vulnerable, need the most help, the low-income people.

The average income of the 5,000 households that we have is \$12,500. We are talking about low-income people. There is another issue which is also often referred to as affordable housing and that is the issue of people who cannot afford to buy their own homes; the price is crazy and the rent is too high. That is why we are looking at this other little program to maybe help some of those people, called the Mortgage Assistance Program that the minister referred to earlier.

I just think it is so complicated and complex that people get confused. Affordable housing means one thing to us and the people I work with across the country, my counterparts, deputy ministers, we are always talking about money for complex needs people, providing funding under the Affordable Housing Program to help people who are victims of family violence, those organizations, and we work with them hand in hand and are very close to them.

That is a definition of affordable housing in our minds; in other people's minds, the definition of affordable housing is the crazy cost of housing. We do what we are mandated to do and I think we do it very well. If I can speak on behalf of our staff, they do a very good job. Our staff are there thirty years, many of them long-term, and they love it. They like helping people who are in that kind of category.

We do not have a lot of involvement in the other issue, which I call housing affordability, as opposed to affordable housing, and that is the issue of not being able to buy a house or afford the house because of the costs.

**CHAIR:** I am going to say we take five minutes. Ms Rogers wanted five minutes, so we will take five minutes for a break so everybody can go and stand up and do a boogie-woogie or whatever –

**MR. SIMMS:** Is there coffee anywhere?

**CHAIR:** Mr. Simms, we might be able to do that for you.

**MR. SIMMS:** What is that?

**CHAIR:** We will take a five-minute break and I might be able to get you a coffee.

**MR. SIMMS:** I have just been invited into the government caucus room. The Opposition would not invite me over; I do not know why.

### Recess

**CHAIR:** Thank you, and welcome back all.

Gerry, you are on the clock.

**MS ROGERS:** I want to pick up where the discussion left, only because I feel compelled to do so. In terms of the housing crisis, many workers in the housing and homelessness area are using the word crisis I find.

Also, the municipalities met here in St. John's only two months ago. Without a doubt, they spoke strongly about what they feel is a housing crisis Province-wide with skyrocketing rents and zero per cent vacancy rates in a number of places, particularly in areas where we see large resource development happening. It is not just people with complex needs; we are talking about young working families.

Happy Valley-Goose Bay, in their correctional centre, they cannot find relief workers because corrections officers who would come and work there cannot find affordable places to live. It affects businesses, it affects young working families, and it affects young people who are starting out. There is no relief in sight. I would like to just get back to the potential –

**MR. DAVIS:** Can I just comment on that?

**MS ROGERS:** Sure.

**MR. DAVIS:** As Mr. Simms just outlined to you before we took the break, I think what you just described is what is referred to as housing affordability and the challenges around housing affordability.

**MS ROGERS:** Yes.

**MR. DAVIS:** Versus Newfoundland and Labrador Housing's mandate is affordable housing.

**MS ROGERS:** Yes, absolutely.

**MR. DAVIS:** I just want to clarify that.

**MS ROGERS:** Absolutely. Thank you.

The Provincial Homelessness Fund, can we have a list of the grants?

**MR. DAVIS:** Yes, we can provide that.

**MS ROGERS:** Great. Thank you.

**MR. DAVIS:** They are right on the Web site?

**MR. SIMMS:** The last ones announced are on the Web site in our releases, but we can send it to you. It is not an issue.

**MS ROGERS:** Oh, great. Thank you very much.

I would like to ask a few questions about the rent supplements. For this year, will we have the same amount of money going towards rent supplements as last year?

**CHAIR:** Minister.

**MR. DAVIS:** Yes.

**MS ROGERS:** Yes, thank you.

Will we have the same number of rent supplements? Are there any, for instance, where

the contracts are coming up for renewal? We know that rents are going up. I know the Housing Corporation has contracts for certain periods of time with certain landlords. Will we, in fact, have the same number of units by the end of 2013-2014?

**MR. DAVIS:** There is some fluidity to it but they are renewed annually. It should be sustained this year at last year's levels.

**MS ROGERS:** Okay, thank you.

Has there been any evaluation on how the whole Rent Supplement Program is working in terms of the cost-benefit analysis of that?

**MR. DAVIS:** The cost benefit in what regard?

**MS ROGERS:** There is a lot of money that is being spent on rent sups. Are there better ways of doing it? We know as well that the rent sups are attached to a unit rather than to – they are not portable. In many jurisdictions the rent supplements are portable and people have choices.

**MR. DAVIS:** If we have done a study, I do not know historically if there has ever been an in-depth study done on the Rent Supplement Program itself. I know it is quite often asked about and quite often inquired about any time there are public meetings or consultations done. It is quite often asked about, but I do not think there has ever been an in-depth study done.

**MS ROGERS:** Okay, thank you.

I have a few questions about the rental, the RRAP and the conversion RRAP. The levels from last year will be the same, the budget?

**MR. DAVIS:** I am sorry, I missed the question?

**MS ROGERS:** For the rental RRAP, there was \$1 million in 2012.

**MR. SIMMS:** What is the question?

**MS ROGERS:** Will it be the same this year?

**MR. SIMMS:** Rental RRAP is such a small used program, I cannot remember. I do not think it is the same level because it just has not been used very, very much.

**MS ROGERS:** It was not used much last year?

**MR. SIMMS:** If I remember correctly off the top of my head, we may have funded maybe a dozen units or something.

**MR. DAVIS:** I am sorry; I thought I might have it there.

**MS ROGERS:** Why do you think that might be?

**MR. SIMMS:** Well, the idea of the program has been used in some other jurisdictions and then dropped. I think Nova Scotia perhaps still has some kind of a semblance of a rental RRAP. The idea of the program of giving private landlords money to fix up apartments or a couple of apartments or an apartment in a house is a good idea as long as they provide the accommodations then to somebody who is of low income. That is the intent and was the intent.

We used to find over a period of two or three years when you check on it or try to monitor it or whatever, they were not being rented to people of low income. We had no way of policing it or anything like that, but monitoring it. When you would phone a tenant and find out: Oh, no, I am paying \$700 a month or something like that. You would be: What? I think that is how it lost its glitter, let's put it that way.

There is also this bit about giving landlords, who some would describe as some kind of a landlord, if you know what I mean, money from the (inaudible). The concept was good, the intent was good, but it just has not been working very well for us, from our perspective, and we do not get too many applicants.

Sometimes over the two or three years we found we were getting the same applicants who have cotton on to the program and figured out how to apply and that sort of thing, if you get my drift.

**MS ROGERS:** Okay. Thank you very much.

The REEP we have done. The Provincial Home Repair Program - we will go back to that - can we have a listing of how many projects in 2012 and by what regions? How many were just regular and how many versus emergency?

**MR. DAVIS:** How many were regular versus emergency, and where were they all over the Province?

**MS ROGERS:** Yes.

**MR. DAVIS:** I can certainly give you what was done for PHRP throughout the Province. We actually have it broken down by district.

**MS ROGERS:** That would be great.

Thank you.

**MR. DAVIS:** There were twenty-four criteria – I am sorry. Sometimes there are applications that are on file, and there may be an application on file that becomes an emergency or a status may change on an application, like it is with many things that Newfoundland and Labrador Housing does. So, to say which ones are emergencies – can we provide them with that?

**OFFICIAL:** Yes, it can be done.

**MR. DAVIS:** Okay. Yes, we can put that together for you. We do not have it –

**MS ROGERS:** Great. Thank you very much.

**MR. DAVIS:** I have the number for your district, if you want it.

**MS ROGERS:** We would like it for the Province, if possible, please.

**MR. DAVIS:** Okay. Yes, we can do that.

**MS ROGERS:** Okay.

There is a current wait-list now of 989. Is there a goal to have no wait-list?



**MR. DAVIS:** On the PHRP?

**MS ROGERS:** Yes.

**MR. DAVIS:** No.

**MS ROGERS:** No.

**MR. SIMMS:** There is (inaudible).

**MR. DAVIS:** Well, yes, but is it –

**MR. SIMMS:** Definition.

**MR. DAVIS:** Yes, that is right. What is the definition of a wait-list? You have applications on file and you have people who want the program. We wanted to reduce or eliminate the wait-list, but still bearing in mind, as Mr. Simms just pointed out to me, it depends how you define what a wait-list is. We have applications on file right now. They are waiting.

**MR. SIMMS:** Yes, but the intention is to get to a point where we are only serving the –

**MR. DAVIS:** Serving the current, yes. The goal is to get to current year applicants, if that is what you mean –

**MS ROGERS:** Yes.

**MR. DAVIS:** – but to eliminate people who want it, no, you are not going to get there.

**MS ROGERS:** No, no, but to deal with the current applicants.

**MR. DAVIS:** Yes.

**MS ROGERS:** Okay, thank you.

**MR. DAVIS:** We are pretty close on that now.

**MS ROGERS:** Except if there is 989 now, there may be new applicants this year.

**CHAIR:** Mr. Simms.

**MR. DAVIS:** Go ahead, Mr. Simms, go ahead.

**MR. SIMMS:** There is a maximum of two grants as opposed to seven.

**MR. DAVIS:** So on that, we have looked at the priorities – and I mentioned this earlier. You can apply a second time after seven years.

**MS ROGERS:** That is right.

**MR. DAVIS:** Currently, anybody who has received a second grant, if you apply the third time, we now will reply to them and advise them you have already received two grants. So they do not stay on the list.

**MS ROGERS:** Okay, thank you.

**CHAIR:** Okay, Gerry, your time is out. I am going to go back to Eddie.

**MS ROGERS:** Thank you.

**MR. JOYCE:** Okay, I will just clue up.

**CHAIR:** Okay.

**MR. JOYCE:** I will just clue up very quickly. I thank the minister and his staff for coming out. I understand the job sometimes is always ongoing, is always evolving.

I want to also thank the staff we deal with on a daily basis out in Corner Brook, for their work and the assistance they give us dealing with people who are requiring housing and other services from Newfoundland and Labrador Housing, thank you for your open and frank discussion here today on that.

If there is only one thing that I would ask, is to see if there is some way the timeline for people moving into apartments, just to see if there is anyway that can be down a bit because it does create frustration for people and myself. Reality or not, there is frustration.

I thank the staff that I deal with. I pass on my thank you to them out in Corner Brook that I deal with on a regular basis. They are open, they are available, and they do give us a lot of service and a lot of help when we need it.

**MR. DAVIS:** Thank you, Mr. Joyce.

I will tell you, I have been over to Newfoundland and Labrador Housing a number of times for different reasons since I became responsible for Housing. Just to point out to you that when Mr. Simms first gave me a tour of Newfoundland and Labrador Housing – currently, there is how many staff there?

**MR. SIMMS:** There are 200 there, 400 Province-wide.

**MR. DAVIS:** Yes. There are 200 at the office?

**MR. SIMMS:** Yes.

**MR. DAVIS:** We went around and he introduced me to each employee. For every employee, he told me something about that employee. Sometimes personal, sometimes work-related, but he told me something about each and every employee he introduced me to.

I only mention that because he can do the same about each and every program, many of his clients, services, and partner agencies that they deal with as well. As you heard this morning, he has a pretty intimate knowledge of all the goings on.

**MR. JOYCE:** That is the only request I have.

**MR. DAVIS:** Right on.

**CHAIR:** Gerry?

**MR. JOYCE:** Oh, just one last thing.

**MS ROGERS:** Go ahead.

**MR. JOYCE:** I mentioned a situation earlier. I just want to thank Mr. Simms for agreeing to, no guarantees, but to follow up on that. He already committed to do that, so thank you for that.

**MR. SIMMS:** I have passed it to the minister's EA. She is going to contact your (inaudible).

**MR. JOYCE:** Okay, and thank you for that.

**CHAIR:** Gerry.

**MS ROGERS:** Mr. Simms, don't go away because I have a few for you, too.

**MR. SIMMS:** I plan to stay until suppertime.

**MS ROGERS:** I have some general questions. The whole issue of surplus land and buildings, is there any plan at all to look at using surplus land or buildings that are provincially owned and/or federally owned in looking at the housing needs across the Province?

**MR. DAVIS:** Not immediately, and I think I know where you are going but I will let Mr. Simms respond to it. If he does not address where I think you are going I will respond as well, but go ahead, Mr. Simms.

**CHAIR:** Mr. Simms.

**MR. SIMMS:** I am not sure where the minister thinks I am going, but there is – let me see, how shall I put this? The Housing Corporation residential surplus land is basically tied up in the Southlands area. You are familiar with that, and we do tenders on that land. Our mandate from this government and the previous government is to get out of that particular land development. We do that every year, or every second year or whatever. There are still two or three lots left up in that area.

Around the city, most of the land – housing does not own a lot of land but we have little pieces of land. Next to Anspach Street over there, there is a piece on the end that might be ours. Any projects like that, there might be a piece perhaps big enough for a block or a unit maybe, things like that. We do not have any big parcels of land. However, we work in conjunction with our partner groups, as I am sure you know, more recently Choices for Youth, for example.

Mr. Pearce, who works at the city now, myself, and another deputy minister met with our minister and his staff. They are looking for land. There is land that I guess public works has, but they have a policy in place and procedure in place that has worked pretty well.

I think what they do is, if somebody requests a piece of land for a project, the department, the deputy minister – I cannot speak for them but I will now – they send out a letter to all the deputy ministers saying: Do you have any need for this piece of land? If not, we reply to them and say, no. Then they can go back to the group that applies and say: Well, yeah, maybe it is available for you, let's see.

From housing's perspective, we do not have a lot of that but there is a process within the minister's department which deals with anything of that nature that might be available, and they work closely with groups that are looking from time to time.

**MS ROGERS:** Okay, thank you.

The Low Income Homeownership Assistance Program; when?

**MR. SIMMS:** I am sorry. That is not where he was going, but anyway.

**MR. DAVIS:** I cannot give you a specific date. Only to tell you that Mr. Simms and his staff have done and are doing some work on it, but I cannot give you a date.

**MS ROGERS:** Are we looking at this year? Has there been any money budgeted for this project?

**MR. DAVIS:** I cannot give you a date.

**MS ROGERS:** In this particular budget, is there any money allocated for a low-income home ownership assistance program?

**MR. DAVIS:** No, there is not.

**MS ROGERS:** There is no money budgeted for this year? Okay, thank you.

This is a grey area I know because we are dealing with the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation, yet there is no seat within government that looks at overall housing policy and strategy. I am not quite sure where to take

some of these questions, unless we can look at them here now.

**MR. DAVIS:** You can go ahead and if it is not something that comes under my responsibility, then I can probably suggest where you go.

**MS ROGERS:** Okay, thank you.

Are there any plans to address some of the real pressing housing needs in large resource project areas like Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Clarenville, and Marystown because of the activity in the shipyard, Long Harbour, Placentia? Where we see people are being evicted right, left, and centre and that their housing rent is doubling or tripling.

You can see it on Kijiji. You can see the signs in the local grocery stores. People are suffering and people are calling us. Seniors are losing their housing; people who are renting are losing their housing. We are not talking just about people with complex needs; we are talking about ordinary working people.

**MR. DAVIS:** It is a broad range you just touched on. In some of these areas what you are referring to is really housing affordability for people. Housing affordability quite often is dictated and driven by the economy for a particular area.

In Labrador West, as I mentioned earlier, we made a change on the threshold for eligibility for Newfoundland and Labrador Housing. The impact that has had on that community has been –

**MR. SIMMS:** It is not a low income.

**MR. DAVIS:** Yes, I know, but it has not made a significant impact, I think, is fair to say. I will let Mr. Simms probably respond to that part of it on not raising the threshold. Other than that, I think what you are referring to is housing affordability.

Mr. Simms.

**CHAIR:** Mr. Simms.

**MR. SIMMS:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Yes, we have talked about this before. My interpretation of the issue that you raise frequently is that it is really about housing affordability. That is not our mandate at Housing and I think you have acknowledged that.

**MS ROGERS:** Yes.

**MR. SIMMS:** It is hard to comment on it if it is not within our mandate, nor in our minister's mandate. I believe some of the answers, when you have raised the question, have been answered by the Minister of Service Newfoundland and Labrador mostly because he is responsible for the Residential Tenancies Act, and I do believe that some of the suggestions to address some of that issue lies with the Residential Tenancies Act, which could be a rent cap or whatever they call it there.

That would be part of their act, and there are other issues under the Residential Tenancies Act could affect or make things easier for the people who are going through the kind of situation you have described. It certainly would not be our mandate or our minister's mandate in that sense.

**MS ROGERS:** Right.

I think that we know that the whole issue of rent stabilization would come under Service Newfoundland and Labrador, but in terms of planning an overall housing strategy and policy for the Province, I know, Minister, that I had asked you about – you had indicated previously to one of my questions that there is a multi-departmental committee of quite senior levels, whether it was deputy ministers, who meet looking at housing issues and discuss the issue of housing issues. I had asked for a description of their mandate and when they meet and minutes of those meetings. I have not received any, and I am wondering if maybe I could ask that from you again.

**CHAIR:** Minister.

**MR. DAVIS:** Thank you.

There is a deputy minister's committee that discusses social housing and other related matters. You are saying you have made a request for minutes of those meetings? I am just trying to recall.

**MS ROGERS:** Yes, and I wrote a letter asking actually for the mandate of that committee and when they meet, when they have met, and minutes from that meeting. I would like to ask for that again.

**MR. DAVIS:** I would have to better familiarize myself with the committee, the mandate, the establishment of the committee, in order for me to give you a response to that.

**MS ROGERS:** Okay, thanks. I look forward to that.

Accessible units –

**MR. DAVIS:** Again, it is the deputy minister's committee so I may have Mr. Simms respond to that or through Mr. Simms then we will get you a response to it so you can get a better understanding on that.

**MS ROGERS:** Thank you. I look forward to that.

A quick question on accessibility – I have a number of constituents who call me who need accessible accommodations and are having a hard time. How many units do we have in Newfoundland and Labrador Housing that are accessible? How many rent supplements for accessible units? How many people are on the wait-list who needs accessible units?

**MR. DAVIS:** It is a good question and I do not know if we have that information readily available, and I see Mr. Simms is flipping through –

**CHAIR:** Mr. Simms.

**MR. SIMMS:** We have on the wait-list –

**MR. DAVIS:** I do have it.

**CHAIR:** Minister.

**MR. DAVIS:** Disabled A are categorized as the people who require accessible –

**MR. SIMMS:** Ramps and bigger –

**MR. DAVIS:** Yes, so there are thirteen in total who are on the wait-list.

**MR. SIMMS:** Province-wide.

**MS ROGERS:** Province-wide?

**MR. DAVIS:** The second question was: How many accessible units do we have?

**MR. SIMMS:** Approximately ninety to 100, but –

**MR. DAVIS:** Go ahead.

**MR. SIMMS:** In the provincial housing stock, as a result of the Affordable Housing Program, there have been nearly 300 accessible units as you know, because they have to build one with every project, added to the provincial housing stock. That is a positive thing around the Province.

**MS ROGERS:** Okay. Great, thank you.

For the thirteen on the wait-list Province-wide, can we have an indication of how long they have been on that wait-list?

**MR. SIMMS:** Less than a year.

**MS ROGERS:** Less than a year? Well, yes. How many may have been reapplications as well?

**MR. SIMMS:** There are ten from the Avalon Region. That includes St. John's and Mount Pearl, the whole region. The other three are in Grand Falls and Gander, I think. What was your question? How long –

**MS ROGERS:** Less than a year; that was some saucy.

**MR. SIMMS:** I apologize. I did not mean to be saucy.

**MS ROGERS:** No apology necessary.

**MR. SIMMS:** How long they have been on the wait-list, all I can say is less than a year. We actually give a priority to disabled A people. You have seen our protocol list and it is well up there, number 6 or something just below medical A.

**MS ROGERS:** Yes, and I see what a challenge it is to meet those needs.

**MR. SIMMS:** We usually manage because there are not a lot who require the ramp issue. The bigger issue now in home modification and accessibility is with the Home Modification Program. That is not necessarily for ramps; it is seniors who need their bathroom doors widened, or they need a walk-in tub, smaller expenditure and so on.

We have those listed on our priority application list and there are only seven of those. It is surprising at least, low income under \$32,000 who wish to avail of our homes, our units.

**MS ROGERS:** Are there any plans at all to sell any of the existing stock of Newfoundland and Labrador Housing?

**MR. DAVIS:** No.

**MS ROGERS:** Land or buildings?

**MR. DAVIS:** No.

**MS ROGERS:** Okay, thank you.

**MR. DAVIS:** Would you like me to point out to you what he just whispered in my ear?

**MS ROGERS:** Sure.

**MR. DAVIS:** It does happen from time to time, but there is no plan to sell off housing stock. It happens from time to time when there is an area where there is no demand. Houses are sitting vacant and there is low or no demand, because

that happens as well, but there is no plan to be selling off part of the housing portfolio.

**MS ROGERS:** Okay, thank you.

In the latest land sale for a development, I believe it was in Southlands. Mr. Simms, you were on the media talking about a certain percentage of them will be affordable. Can you give me the number again, the number of units and the number of affordable units?

**MR. DAVIS:** Go ahead, Mr. Simms.

**CHAIR:** Mr. Simms.

**MR. SIMMS:** The last proposal call was successful. We received a buyer or a purchaser, but we required for the first time ever – and other jurisdictions have not yet done that if they sell off housing land. This time we required, made part of the proposal call, that 100 of the housing lots be affordable housing lots.

By law we could not say they would not cost any more than \$225,000. You cannot say that by law. So what we did was we restricted the amount of square feet. The 100 units for two bedrooms – there has to be so many two-bedroom units at 800 square feet and so many units at 1,200 square feet, which will automatically or should make the price, according to the real estate people, within an affordable range, whatever that is today. I do not know what the going affordable rate is, \$225,000 or something like that, I guess.

**MS ROGERS:** So, in fact, will they be held to the affordable rate as dictated by CMHC?

**MR. SIMMS:** No, they will be held to the affordable rate that an 800-square foot unit would fetch.

**MS ROGERS:** So market rate?

**MR. SIMMS:** Yes, whatever it would fetch. Yes, the market rate.

**MS ROGERS:** So, it is market rate. There is really no difference than –

**MR. SIMMS:** Well, there is, because most of the houses they would normally build, without that restriction in it –

**MS ROGERS:** Right, I understand.

**MR. SIMMS:** – would be \$400,000 or \$500,000 homes, as you know. With an 800-square foot unit, I do not think too many people are going to pay much more than – well, I am no expert in that field, but I know –

**MS ROGERS:** Yes.

**MR. DAVIS:** They would be much less, is the point.

**MR. SIMMS:** Yes, much less is the point, and it has never been done before. Like I said, we were acknowledged by the Canadian Housing Association and others, and the local homeless and housing network and so on and so forth.

**MS ROGERS:** It will be interesting to see how this rolls out.

**MR. SIMMS:** Yes.

**MS ROGERS:** There are no guarantees, except for size.

**MR. SIMMS:** Well, it is a guarantee that they have to build 100 units at that size.

**MS ROGERS:** Yes. Is it out of 900, is it?

**MR. SIMMS:** Yes, it is roughly 900 lots.

**MS ROGERS:** Nine hundred.

The Affordable Housing Initiative, the units that were built by private developers, how is that going in terms of being held to the affordable rent rate?

**CHAIR:** Minister.

**MR. DAVIS:** On the Affordable Housing Initiative, they are required to for ten years.

**MS ROGERS:** Yes, I know. I am just wondering: How is that working?

**MR. DAVIS:** We had some really good response from it. The ones that I am aware of and I know people who are clients of them, I have only heard positive about it. There is also an audit monitoring process whereby Newfoundland and Labrador Housing checks with clients to see what their rental rate is to make sure it is in keeping with the agreement.

**MS ROGERS:** Okay. There have been no problems to date?

**MR. DAVIS:** No.

**MS ROGERS:** Okay, thank you.

I have one question. Aside from the Affordable Housing Initiative, where money was given to assist in building to non-profit organizations, was there any other money given to any other groups for builds outside of that initiative?

**MR. DAVIS:** Outside of Affordable Housing?

**MR. SIMMS:** No, we funded every –

**MS ROGERS:** Outside of the actual program.

**MR. DAVIS:** Affordable Housing takes in the private sector and also partner agencies.

**MS ROGERS:** Yes. Outside of the prescribed program, the federal-provincial program, were there any other building projects?

**MR. SIMMS:** That we funded outside of the Affordable Housing program?

**MR. DAVIS:** Other than what has been described here this morning with maintenance and improvements and major retrofits, no.

**MS ROGERS:** Building or assistance to non profits to –

**CHAIR:** Mr. Simms.

**MR. SIMMS:** With the Homelessness Fund, we have done some things there.

**CHAIR:** Minister.

**MR. DAVIS:** Other than what has been discussed here this morning, no. I think we have covered all of the major funding opportunities and partnering opportunities this morning at some point.

**MS ROGERS:** Okay, great. I do not think I have any further questions.

I want to say thank you again for your time. Your staff I know are incredibly involved and committed to their work. I know there is a lot of staff who have been there for a very long time. I know they do a lot of volunteer work and they are proud of the work that they do and have been very supportive to many people.

Thank you.

**CHAIR:** Eddie, do you want a closing word?

**MR. JOYCE:** Yes, I am just going to say thank you again. Just one request, any information that I have requested can you send to Ms Rogers, and any information Ms Rogers requested could you send it to me also, so all of the committee members can have it?

**MR. DAVIS:** Sure.

**MR. JOYCE:** Okay.

Thank you.

**CHAIR:** On behalf of the committee, Minister, and Mr. Simms and your staff, I want to thank you for your time this morning. I think it has been an informative session for all of us. Your frankness and your knowledge of the department is without question, so I thank all of you for your time this morning.

Just a couple of housekeeping things, prior to calling the subheads, I want the committee members to note that we do reconvene tonight at 6:00 o'clock to hear the Estimates of the

Department of Justice and Attorney General and the Labour Relations Agency.

As well, there has been a change in the schedule for Child, Youth and Family Services. Child, Youth and Family Services is now moved from May 1 to May 7; Tuesday, May 7, in the morning. I ask committee members to make note of that change, that our Estimates for Child, Youth and Family Services is now moved from May 1 to the morning of Tuesday, May 7.

On your desk you see the minutes of our previous meeting of the Department of Health and Community Services. Can I have a motion to accept the minutes of April 24, for the Department of Health and Community Services?

Moved by Mr. Little; seconded by Mr. Crummell.

All those in favour, 'aye'.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** Contra-minded?

Carried.

On motion, minutes adopted as circulated.

**CHAIR:** I will ask the Clerk to call the subhead, please.

**CLERK:** Subhead 1.1.01.

**CHAIR:** Shall subhead 1.1.01 carry?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

On motion, subhead 1.1.01 carried.

**CHAIR:** Shall the total carry?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** All those against, 'nay'.

Carried

On motion, Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation, total heads carried.

**CHAIR:** Shall I report the Estimates of the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Commission complete?

All those in favour, 'aye'.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

On motion, Estimates of the Newfoundland and Labrador Housing Corporation, carried without amendment.

**CHAIR:** May I have a motion to adjourn?

Moved by Mr. Joyce; seconded by Mr. Crummell.

All those in favour, 'aye'.

**SOME HON. MEMBERS:** Aye.

**CHAIR:** All those against, 'nay'.

Carried.

Thank you so much, ladies and gentlemen; what a great morning.

On motion, the Committee adjourned.