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8:08 p.m.

[Mr. Tannas in the Chair]

### Subcommittee C - Public Works, Supply and Services

Tannas, Don, Chairman  
Fischer, Robert, Deputy Chairman  
Barrett, Pam  
Cao, Wayne  
Clegg, Glen  
Evans, Iris  
Gibbons, Ed

Hlady, Mark  
Klapstein, Albert  
MacDonald, Hugh  
McFarland, Barry  
Nicol, Ken  
Smith, Murray  
Soetaert, Colleen

Stelmach, Ed  
Stevens, Ron  
Strang, Ivan  
Thurber, Tom  
Trynchy, Peter  
Woloshyn, Stan

THE CHAIRMAN: I'd like to call the committee to order. This evening we have for our consideration the considerable estimates of the Department of Public Works, Supply and Services.

We'd call upon the hon. minister to make his comments, and then we can proceed. Hon. minister.

MR. WOLOSHYN: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Good evening. I should say that it's a pleasure to be with you tonight, and it is.

MRS. SOETAERT: But not in this room; right?

MR. WOLOSHYN: No. I would much sooner we did this somewhere, in the Inn on 7th or wherever, but not in this room. I'd much prefer it. However, Spruce Grove-Sturgeon-St. Albert, we have to be here tonight.

Before I get started, I'd like to introduce the folks that are here with me. They're mostly here, I guess, for entertainment value. I'd like to start with Gregg Hook, who's our acting deputy minister. If you can stick your hand up or stand, Gregg, so the folks can see who you are. Dan Bader is the deputy minister of strategic information technology initiatives, which is a new section of the government. Dan is also partly responsible still to Public Works as well as to Health. Joyce Ingram is his executive director. Grant Chaney is the ADM for information management and technology. Gord Shopland, the executive director of human resources, is at the back. Tom Neufeld is director of communications. Dennis Mitchell, director of business information, is pinch-hitting for Bob Smith. Blake Bartlett is acting manager of financial planning. Sheila Hepditch is a budget analyst in planning and business support. George Samoil is the chief information officer. I do thank these folks for coming out.

I'd like to take a few minutes to give the members of the committee an overview and start off by saying that Public Works, Supply and Services is a central agency that supports government program delivery by providing accommodation in government-owned and leased facilities and capital infrastructure for others, including health care, seniors' lodges, and water management. Public Works also provides a variety of cross-government services including procurement, air transportation, land management, information technology, and telecommunications. These services are delivered through four business areas: property development, property and supply management, realty services, and information technology.

As you may be aware, strategic information technology initiatives was recently created, as I indicated, with the appointment of Deputy Minister Dan Bader. Mr. Bader will report to me for his responsibilities relating to cross-government information technology initiatives, including Imagis, which is the Alberta government's integrated

management information system. Dan will also be responsible for development and implementation of Alberta Wellnet and will report directly to the Minister of Health on those issues. Mr. Bader and his officials will work closely with the office of the chief information officer to support the development and implementation of other cross-government information technology and telecommunications initiatives. The office of the CIO also reports directly to myself.

Our customers are primarily provincial government departments but also include boards, agencies, publicly funded hospitals, as well as seniors lodge foundations. Our stakeholders include suppliers, consultants, contractors, and professional associations such as architects and engineers. The mission of Public Works is "to facilitate effective government program delivery by providing quality, cost-effective, shared services and professional expertise." As outlined in our business plan, we are focused on the services we provide through our four core businesses: shared common services, provision of government accommodation, government-funded infrastructure, and information technology. We have included key initiatives in our business plan that directly support cross-government priorities such as capital planning initiatives, children's services initiatives, and a corporate human resource strategy.

Our '99-2000 budget is \$544.1 million and includes \$90 million in lottery proceeds from the general revenues of the government. In response to feedback from Albertans, lottery proceeds will be directed at broad-based initiatives that benefit the people of our province. In our '99-2000 estimates Albertans will be able to see that lottery proceeds within Public Works have been allocated to ongoing work in the health care facilities, seniors' lodges, and water infrastructure programs.

Some of the highlights in our budget allocations that we have made to serve our customers are as follows: \$115 million is going to be allocated for the construction and upgrading of health care facilities; \$16.2 million is allocated for the renovation of seniors' lodges in compliance with current standards; \$31.8 million to water management projects; \$74.6 million for the leasing of space for government programs; \$91.9 million for the operation of government facilities; \$29 million allocated for the construction, upgrading, and maintenance of government facilities; and \$67.1 million allocated to support and maintain the Alberta government's information technology infrastructure.

The government, including the ministry of public works, has committed to maintaining and enhancing Alberta's physical and technical infrastructure to ensure that the appropriate foundation is in place to support future development and growth in our province. Public Works, Supply and Services is working with other ministries to address priority infrastructure maintenance requirements as well as priority capital works projects through careful management of our resources.

As I mentioned, we've allocated \$115 million to health care facilities in '99-2000. For those of you keeping track, this includes \$60 million in lottery proceeds. This \$115 million represents about

2 percent of the \$5.4 billion estimated replacement costs of these facilities. These projects have been included in our budget based on proposals from health authorities and provincial priorities established by the ministries of health and public works.

Some of the major capital projects we have budgeted for in '99-2000 are as follows: \$17.2 million is to complete design and begin construction of redevelopment projects at the Walter C. Mackenzie Health Sciences Centre in Edmonton, and these projects will consolidate acute pediatric programs and expand emergency, trauma, and intensive care facilities; \$27 million to complete design and continue construction of the new health centres in places such as Drumheller and Peace River; \$21.4 million to complete the design and begin or continue construction of and to renovate long-term care facilities in Lethbridge, Calgary, Spirit River, La Crête, and Edmonton; \$5.2 million for the Tom Baker centre in Calgary; another \$1 million for the health centre in High Level. As well, \$25 million is going for capital upgrading with respect to hospitals, nursing homes, health units, and other health care facilities.

We are also continuing to work with regional health authorities to ensure that we have compliance with the new Canadian air regulations that require transport certification for air ambulance landing sites. We started on that about a year ago.

As I mentioned, Public Works has allocated \$16 million to the upgrading of seniors' lodges to address life safety, building code, mechanical, electrical, and building envelope requirements. This allocation includes \$10 million in lottery proceeds. The allocation of \$16.2 million represents approximately 5 percent of the \$350 million estimated replacement cost of these facilities.

In '99-2000 the department will continue to undertake additional capital works funded by large foundations in conjunction with a provincially funded lodge upgrading project. Public Works is also responsible for the construction upgrading of space for government departments and the maintenance of government-owned facilities, with the exception of schools. In '99-2000 \$29 million has been set aside for this purpose, which is roughly 1 percent of the \$3.5 billion estimated replacement value of the facilities. These projects include things like improvements and renovations. Again, health and safety are the primary ones as well as improving the overall functionality of the facility in meeting the program needs.

Of the \$29 million budgeted, \$16 million has been allocated under accommodation services for projects requested by planning departments and boards and agencies of the government. They facilitate the reorganization or accommodation of space due to such things as changes in program responsibility as well as shared accommodation between ministries, other levels of government, and government-sponsored organizations. Over the next three years Public Works will be undertaking projects to support several government initiatives, including establishment of offices for child and family services authorities and the labour market development agreement. Three million dollars have been allocated for cross-government initiatives, which include improvements and renovations in multitenant or multi-use facilities. These projects often result in savings to the government.

8:18

For facilities maintenance \$9.7 million. This is comprised of projects initiated by Public Works for required maintenance of government facilities to maximize their life and efficiency. Our facilities have been generally well maintained, but we are focusing on the improvement of our long-term preventive maintenance programs.

Public Works will continue to be actively involved in the government's initiative to improve capital planning, which supports goal 10

of the government's business plan, that "Alberta will have effective and efficient infrastructure." Public Works will take a lead role in working with other ministries to ensure effective and innovative management of infrastructure through best use of partnerships with the private sector and best approaches to identifying making use of underutilized facilities.

MRS. SOETAERT: Like . . .

MR. WOLOSHTYN: Westerra.

MRS. SOETAERT: Thank you.

MR. WOLOSHTYN: My department is also responsible for design and construction of major water development and rehabilitation projects. In '99-2000 \$31.8 million, which includes \$20 million in lottery proceeds, will be allocated for design and construction of four projects. This allocation of \$31 million represents approximately 1 percent of the \$4 billion estimated replacement value of this particular infrastructure. One million dollars will be used to complete the \$48 million Pine Coulee project near Stavely. The project will help to secure water supplies, improve water quality, and provide recreation and irrigation opportunities for the area and should be totally completed in the year 2000.

To continue with the Little Bow River project near Champion and the South Heart River project, \$10.7 million has been allocated. The Little Bow project will provide water for municipal, domestic, livestock, and irrigation uses. During '99-2000 we hope to complete land assembly and engineering design, and the construction is planned in 2000-2001, subject to cabinet approval. To continue with the replacement of the St. Mary Dam spillway and the Waterton-St. Mary headworks, \$14.1 million has been allocated. This system provides water for approximately 500,000 acres of agricultural land in four districts, a number of municipalities, and a variety of industrial, domestic, and other uses. The existing spillway is undersized by present-day safety standards. Its replacement will ensure safe and reliable operation of the dam. The overall project completion is scheduled for the year 2000.

Six million dollars has been allocated to the \$12 million East Arrowwood siphon replacement project. The existing siphon is at the end of its useful life, and reconstruction of the structure is currently under way. This project will ensure the continued operation of the Carseland-Bow River headworks system.

As I noted earlier, we have allocated \$67.1 million to support and maintain the Alberta government's information technology infrastructure. This includes \$23.2 million for the operation and maintenance of provincewide networks which serve data communication, telephone, and mobile radio needs of government ministries; 17 and a half million dollars for data-processing facilities and services for electronic mail and the Internet; and \$6.1 million to provide information technology infrastructure and expertise to government in areas such as security, electronic commerce, and the Internet.

A key issue which is currently being addressed by the government is the year 2000. The CIO and Public Works have been actively working with ministries to provide cross-government co-ordination and communication of year 2000 activities including decisions related to systems assessment, testing, repair, and replacement. Progress has been reviewed monthly on all systems identified as important to government operations, and progress reports are issued to senior officials. The team continues to provide common services in areas such as guidelines and best practices, including attention to certification and contingency planning.

We've also been working with Alberta disaster services to address emergency preparedness issues and business continuity planning related to year 2000. A communication strategy for the circulation of information related to these issues is currently under development. Through a co-ordinated effort, we've been able to make good progress in addressing the year 2000 issue. The office of the CIO, Public Works, and the other ministries are taking the necessary steps to ensure that government systems are up and running on January 1 of the year 2000.

This about concludes my opening remarks. I'd be pleased to answer questions that the committee members might have. If they wish, we can listen to lots of questions and give them short answers or have short questions and lots of answers. I'd open the floor to you, Mr. Chairman.

Thank you.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Spruce Grove-Sturgeon-St. Albert.

MRS. SOETAERT: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I thank you, Mr. Minister, and your staff that so ably assist you for this opportunity. I'm new to this portfolio, as you're well aware. I'm on yet another learning curve, a fast one, so I appreciate your patience with my questions, and hopefully I'll get a better idea of what this department all involves.

When you make your budget, how do you decide what money is going where, and how do you decide the priorities of what lodge gets fixed when? I'd appreciate knowing how you set that. You have a limited budget, I'm assuming, yet it seems that whichever ministry lobbies for lottery dollars gets more. So if you lobby better than Transportation, then public works gets more money than highways. I don't know how that works, and I would just appreciate knowing how it's decided that the lottery dollars come to your department and how many of them end up there. So if you wouldn't mind giving me an overview of how you come to those decisions.

I appreciate the list of items that are here. Is this everything that has been addressed this year or in the past two years? Are there other things that are being done but aren't on here? Is there a certain, you might say, price range that you include in this, or are there some things that aren't mentioned? All the projects that you've undertaken, are they in this book today? That's what I'm asking.

One thing I don't understand. Under lots of the different projects, for example "Municipal Hospital - Stony Plain," one says, "Operating Expense" and the line under it says, "Operating Expense funded by Lotteries." How do you divvy that up and decide what portion is paid by lotteries? How does that work? If you don't mind explaining that to me.

I guess in a nutshell is it possible to have also an updated inventory of the buildings and the structures and the land currently owned by the department? If possible, their addresses, legal descriptions, and occupancy rates by building. Do you have that? I don't want anybody behind me rolling their eyes and saying: oh, my God, she's nuts. But if that's there, I'd love to see a list of that just so I get a picture of what this government owns and where it's at in the province.

What goes hand in hand with that is an update of the buildings and the land leased by the government. As I understand it, you have leased locations. Where are they? Are they subleased? I think those expenditures were up a little. Is that because rates are rising, or do you have additional square footage that you are leasing right now? So I would ask that question.

One of the things that of course is near to your heart and mine is the Stony Plain hospital. Where is that at? Can I be at the ribbon cutting too?

MR. WOLOSHYN: But of course.

MRS. SOETAERT: I'll be there. [interjection] Not "where is it at."

AN HON. MEMBER: Well, that's what you said.

MRS. SOETAERT: I know. I don't like this room.

AN HON. MEMBER: The legal description?

MRS. SOETAERT: The legal land description of Stony Plain - I don't like this room yet again, Mr. Chairman.

Will it be open on time, is maybe how to properly word it. It is nice to know people are listening.

I also wonder about Westerra. You mentioned it fleetingly but didn't describe what your plans are for it in your introduction. The issues of the archives are a little hot with some Edmontonians, and I'd like to know what is going to happen to the Westerra facility.

8:28

I have some questions about the long-term care facilities. When a long-term care facility is built that is not in your department or not under the Department of Health - people are saying to me that private contractors now are building the facilities and then Health provides the operating dollars - does Public Works oversee any of that? Because it's private, they don't have to follow - well, they still follow a building code, but it's not the same as a public health care facility. Am I correct in that? [interjection] I'm not. Well, they can explain that to me. That's good.

I also have a few questions about the air service. That was contentious for a while. I believe there's an increase in that. Is it possible to get a breakdown of how much of this is for, you might say, shuttling around the Premier, Executive Council, government MLAs, and how much is for other functions? It's always a question that I get asked by people. Why would the government prefer to run a state-owned air service rather than using the private sector? I think that's a fair enough question.

I'm going to start at the beginning here. I see a few things that I'm interested in. Line 1.3.2, nominal sum disposals.

MR. WOLOSHYN: What page?

MRS. SOETAERT: Sorry. Page 348. That hasn't been recorded before, as I understand it. Is that new, and what are we disposing? So I'd ask that of you.

With respect to the construction and upgrading of health facilities, 2.2, are all of these tendered? Would you mind indicating which ones are tendered and which ones are not? [interjection] I didn't ask it quite that bluntly, Mr. Chairman, if they give it to their friends first. I know they would never do that. In my very, ever polite way I am asking: what was tendered out? Oh, Mr. Minister of Public Works, you've got your hands full with some of your colleagues.

I know that the minister provided us with a list of architect contracts that had been let in 1998-99. These contracts were for the review of the capital needs of regional health authorities. Would you mind advising us how much in health facility construction and upgrading has been recommended by the architectural studies assigned to the regional health authorities?

The seniors' lodges. Would you mind explaining to me the criteria for choosing which lodges are upgraded, specifically the ones in the year 1999-2000? What I wonder about is: aside from upgrading are there are a lot more, you might say, wheelchair accessible rooms being needed? I know that the lodges, though it's

not supposed to be a care facility - in some ways I think people who are in there sometimes, of course not all of them, tend to need more care than before. It's kind of like a place now just before a long-term care facility in some cases, and I'm wondering if you aren't having to do a fair bit of renovations to those.

I read something about a Beijing plan. Would you mind explaining that to me? I forget where I saw it, but I jotted it down. I wanted to know exactly what that was. It was a brand-new expense this year. Would you mind explaining what project that was and what it meant? Was it in Beijing? We don't know, but he'll get back to me, I'm sure. It's a Beijing expense, so he went on the plane too. But, anyway, that's another point.

With regard to seniors' lodges, how many beds and rooms do we have in those lodges? Do you have any idea of the extent of the total bill facing you for lodge upgrading? When you think of the task force for the public education system, there was a need for about \$700 million just in education. I'm hoping you don't have a similar total for seniors' lodges, but it would be interesting to know.

I looked at accommodation projects on 4.4.1.

MR. WOLOSHYN: What page are you on?

MRS. SOETAERT: I'm flipping here. You can tell I'm all over. What it says in it is that it's an accommodation project. It's under a few things, 4.4, 4.5. I'm just wondering what accommodation means. What does that define in those projects. By the next time we do these estimates, I'll know this inside and out, but I obviously have the wrong - when I find it, I'll get back to you with that page. There were three things, and within it it said accommodation projects. I just want to know what that means. In fact I've got a couple of questions on that. Accommodation services, 2.4.1, not 4.4.1. There we go; page 353.

Now, with the facilities budgeted for in 2.4, would you mind explaining exactly what facilities are referred to here as "accommodation services" and "cross-government initiatives"? I know you mentioned that you were working with some department. I forget now, not that I wasn't listening attentively to you, but I'd like to know a definition of those cross-government initiatives. Why is the capital investment for accommodation services up over \$5 million from last year? I'd appreciate an explanation of that.

Maintenance is up \$1.175 million over the last year. Is that inflation or are more facilities getting better maintenance? This seems like a rather large increase in maintenance. I'd appreciate knowing where those extra dollars went.

I have a few other questions, then, with the clean air strategy too. I was reading about that. When you talk about a clean air strategy, that must be a facility or some project that I'm not in the know about. If you wouldn't mind explaining that one.

I also notice that the Jubilee in Edmonton got some dollars. Would you mind explaining what was renovated there?

I also notice that the Leg. got a few dollars for renovating. Obviously we're not finished in the women's washroom, so we'll have to keep pestering the minister to finish that project. However, on those good notes - and this room? Well, we can forget about this room. Hopefully next time we'll negotiate something where this member is not in estimates in this room, since I can't stand it. Maybe an air exchanger in here.

I do have other questions, but I know there are more people who want to get up, so if we have time to come back to me, that's fine. I also know that if we don't get them all up, you'd willingly take my questions in letter form because we just get along so well. Anyway, with those questions, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

8:38

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister, do you wish to reply now?

MR. WOLOSHYN: Yes, I'll reply. If there are some things that I miss, the hon. member can write me a note, and I'll get back to you on that basis if you don't mind. Or catch me in a hallway.

The first question, I believe, came on how we set our allocations. As I indicated to you in my opening notes, we serve government across the board, so we respond to other departments' needs primarily. In health facilities we have a fixed sum that has gone up somewhat from the 108 to 133. Those are the parameters within which we work to do new facilities in the capital upgrades, and yes, we can always use money. Is it sufficient? I would say that we're getting by quite okay.

I will jump around a little bit. You indicated some desire with respect to the architects' lists that we gave you. They were doing an evaluation on our health facilities to determine the state of them so that when requests came in from health authorities, we could actually have a realistic scale, if you will, of the state of repair or disrepair of these particular buildings to see where they should fit on an overall provincial scale. The result of that is we are only through phase 1. This is the basis under which I had my colleague the Minister of Education indicate in the House that we weren't prepared to give that out through Written Questions because it was premature. We've gone through what would be phase 1, and that is the preliminary report on all the health facilities from the architects. They've identified 40 some odd million dollars, in general terms, which could go into that for upgrades, for lack of a better term.

We'll be going through phase 2 to vet these out and see if in fact there are 42 or 47 or whatever million dollars. Having said that, we have an ongoing allocation of approximately \$25 million, but that number will vary depending upon need. For example, if you check in last year's actual spending in that particular line - and don't ask me exactly what number it is in there - if I remember, you will see that last year we spent \$33 million in that same category. So we respond to the needs.

We have to keep up the state of the facilities for health and safety. We have no choice in the matter. So that's where we're going. When we have that all done, then we certainly will have a little better handle, although I am very comfortable with how we've been doing it in the past. It's just a matter of fine-tuning a little.

Now, lottery dollars. I look at this, quite frankly, as through whatever reasons, as you know, lottery dollars are being identified as to where they go. This is a sourcing of revenues that - from my perspective it's all general revenue funds. They're assigned to the department.

MRS. SOETAERT: They're just assigned.

MR. WOLOSHYN: Well, we go through the budget, and then the lottery dollar people allocate that so much of this percentage will be lottery. To me, it's all part of the whole envelope. If we use them up, fine. If we don't use them up, not. But it's money that we need to expend regardless of the sourcing of it. This year, as you know, we've gone through the process of identifying in a little bit more detail due to popular demand where that money is coming from.

Are all projects in the book, those 18 or 19 or whatever you saw there? Obviously there are a lot of projects. We've got hundreds of buildings and whatnot. Every one of them isn't in the book, or else the book would be that big. But all the significant ones are in there. Definitely.

You wanted an update on inventories. Boy, you know, we could

give you paper that would drive you around the bend. If you want to make a date sometime with someone in the department to have a look at what we have on there, to go through some of the stuff, I'll be glad to arrange it for you so that you can have it. Otherwise, we could give you the whole pile of paper, or else we can do it in my office. Whatever. If you want to have some feeling of how big the government inventory is, both lease and otherwise, we're certainly prepared to give you that.

You asked about the Stony Plain hospital: where is it?

MRS. SOETAERT: I know where it is.

MR. WOLOSHYN: Okay.

The status of the hospital, for your information, is that the piling contract has been let, and they're currently in the process of doing the piling. We should be going to tender soon, hopefully by the end of the month. I'm not sure on that date. It will be close to the end of the month; it depends on the architects and the health authority. Hopefully it will come in under the allocated sums and we can proceed on it. Everything is on schedule in terms of the hospital: the planning and whatnot. As a matter of fact, in some cases some people may feel it's even ahead of schedule, but that particular one is going well and hopefully will be at the ribbon cutting on time.

You mentioned archives and them wandering around needing a home. Yeah, they do need a home; that's right. Someday we'll find them a home.

MRS. SOETAERT: What about Westerra? What's happening there?

MR. WOLOSHYN: Westerra? We're really doing great things at Westerra, and we'll be having an opening there in April which if you choose, although it's not in your constituency, and if you are prepared to be nice, we can let you come to.

MRS. SOETAERT: I'm always nice, Mr. Minister.

MR. WOLOSHYN: Whatever.

We're moving government users into that facility.

MRS. SOETAERT: Government what?

MR. WOLOSHYN: Government users. Environment is in there, and other departments that are needing space will be moving into that building also. It's got a big building. We could do all sorts of other things in it including archives and the current users. If we chose to go that route, the facility is there.

Are the archives going to Stony Plain? To be direct and fair to you, no.

You made references to the long-term care facilities' falling standards. As you know, extended care and nursing homes are basically the government, if you will, for the most part. I could best answer your question by saying to you: have a look at what's happening with the Good Sam facility, that you're familiar with. Now, before the health authorities will fund the operating dollars, they have to meet a particular standard of size and whatnot. This is not so. Are the private facilities - and Good Sam is a private facility - following the standards? Very definitely. Quite frankly, I think they're very good.

You made some references to our air service. People have a very narrow view of reality when it comes to this topic. To begin with, the most frequently forgotten aspect is that we also operate four water bombers under that particular thing - that's a part of the service - as well as the other four passenger aircraft if you will. These have got a priority. Basically the first priority in fire season

is moving of fire crews. We use the Dash 8 quite significantly for moving fire crews around the province. That's, as a matter of fact, its major operation during fire season. Then emergencies come after that and executive travel after that.

With respect to - I take exception. Well, I won't take exception to anything. You made reference to having the government aircraft versus commercial.

MRS. SOETAERT: I just asked.

MR. WOLOSHYN: You asked, and that's a very legitimate question.

I'll point out to you that the commercial carriers fly very poor schedules within Alberta other than between Edmonton and Calgary. We've got over 100 airports in communities that we use within the province that we fly into, and this is quite frankly a very efficient method of bringing the people to government and government to the people, if you will. So that particular service is extremely good if you have occasion - and I think some of your colleagues have gone to places with respect to that Pacific Northwest group that we belong to.

AN HON. MEMBER: PNWER.

MR. WOLOSHYN: PNWER.

You'll find that if you have on a long distance one more than three people, four or more, on the actual direct costs you're saving money, which is money back into the tax dollar, plus it gives you the flexibility of scheduling. So you'll find when you go to PNWER and places like that, whenever possible if the numbers are right, we do send the government aircraft. It's for that reason. So there's a whole host of areas where it is more efficient to use the government airplanes.

Can you look at who rides the airplanes? Yes. That's no problem. You go down to the public works building and sit there and pore over the manifests to your heart's content. There are no secrets with respect to that one either, quite frankly. Now, if you have anything further on that, I'll be glad to pursue it.

8:48

You mentioned on page 348, line 1.3.2, nominal sum disposals. Well, we don't have revolving accounts and things like that. That's a different issue. That particular item is put in if you have sales, if you will. For example, we're currently doing a sale to the city of Edmonton, or a gift if you will, of the Gainers' lands. Obviously that's nowhere near the value. We have to show that there is a disposal, a nominal sum disposal. It would come out of that \$5 million category. So that's what that is. That's a new line item. For example, in the public accounts you'd say: okay; you've expanded half of this; what did you give away worth that much money? That's where that one is coming in from I believe.

You asked about 2.2.2. Looking at the list quickly, I would say that those are all tendered. There's no single sourcing of those, although we do a small bit of single sourcing.

I referred to your architectural studies on health.

Lodges with the criteria. When the program first started up three or four or five years ago or whatever, all the lodges were evaluated at the beginning. There are over 100 lodges. They were all prioritized over the multiyear program. We keep putting them in there. These were set basically, if you will, on the need for the upgrading as well as the age of the lodge. We worked very closely with the foundations and the municipal, as you know. That program has been working exceedingly well. It's very, very well received and very well planned.

Also, what we do in that program is: if the aspects of the renovation that we will fund - and we have to be careful that we don't step out of that envelope, if you will, or else we create a whole new demand across the whole board. For lodges that want to go beyond what we are prepared to fund through the program, we will supervise that extra construction. So we have done extra work for lodges at the same time as we're doing the lodge renovation program, and that seems to be working exceedingly well.

You mentioned . . .

MRS. SOETAERT: The Beijing thing.

MR. WOLOSHYN: . . . the Beijing thing.

MRS. SOETAERT: Are you still looking at that?

MR. WOLOSHYN: I don't know.

MRS. SOETAERT: You can get back to us.

MR. WOLOSHYN: I wish I were more on the ball, and I'd make up a story for you, but I can't.

MRS. SOETAERT: I'll wait for that answer.

MR. WOLOSHYN: We're not taking airplanes there.

MRS. SOETAERT: Oh, okay.

MR. WOLOSHYN: Did you mention something about accommodation projects?

MRS. SOETAERT: Yeah, I did.

MR. WOLOSHYN: That's the development of new space, and that's improvements, renovations, and the things that have been requested by departments for a variety of reasons; okay? Some examples would include the child and family services authorities that are, you know, looking for a bunch of offices currently. We would have the Court of Appeal expansion in Calgary with Justice; we're planning on that. We had one with the family youth court. That would be one there. The AADAC recovery centre in Calgary, the Alberta crop research centre in Lacombe: these are the kinds of things that that accommodation stuff is referring to. There is a whole host of them. For example, one of them that we have is also the southern Alberta auditorium. I believe they're doing some stage lighting and whatnot, and we're fixing that up for them.

The other one you were asking for, I believe - what was that last one?

MRS. SOETAERT: Well, probably the washrooms.

MR. WOLOSHYN: That's in there also.

Just a minute now. Oh, I believe you were referring to: what is facilities maintenance? What does that cover? That's where you get into things like boiler replacements, roof replacements, building control systems, energy consumption reduction projects, basically that stuff that we do through there to maintain that the integrity of the asset keeps on trucking.

To the best of my recollection and notes, that's about what you asked. Oh, the number of beds and rooms for lodges. There are well over 100 lodges. The size and that: I suppose we could dig that up somewhere for you. Off the top of my head I can't give it to you.

With that, Mr. Chairman, I think I've touched on most of the questions. As I indicated, if there's anything I missed, please feel free - and I would appreciate you doing this. You write the note to me and I'll get the answer to you, as opposed to having my staff trying to dig through *Hansard* to see what I missed, because that burns up a lot of staff time. They've got better things to do. We'll find Beijing and whatever else, but if you don't mind, we'll do it that way and make sure that you get all the information you need by the time the process is over.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you, Mr. Minister.

I have Dunvegan and then Calgary-Buffalo, since Spruce Grove-Sturgeon-St. Albert has had two chances at a series of questions.

MR. CLEGG: Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just have a comment and a couple of questions. Firstly, I want to thank the minister. It's been since 1974 that we've asked for long-term care in Spirit River; they call it the Central Peace health centre. Finally we're getting it, so I want to thank you for that.

AN HON. MEMBER: You haven't got it yet.

MR. CLEGG: Well, we've just about got it.

My questions are firstly under program 4, office of the chief information officer. I see he's here tonight. It says \$500,000. Is that just for George's wages, or are there some other expenses to that?

One other question I asked two years ago and didn't get the answer. I asked the question of how much money we saved by selling the helicopters. I argued that we weren't going to save any, but I never got those figures yet on how much we saved by selling them. I think we sold them about four years ago or something. I'm sure that somebody can tell me how much money was saved by selling those helicopters, especially when we had such a fire year this year and were paying \$800, \$900 an hour for helicopters. So if I could get that, I'd be very happy.

Those are the only questions I have, Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Right. Mr. Minister, do you want to consult with anyone before you answer the questions from Dunvegan?

MR. WOLOSHYN: No. We'll fly on this one.

You're welcome for your Central Peace health centre. It's going to be a good, first-class, properly done thing, and I do thank the hon. member for his assistance and for his patience on it. I do believe the folks - we won't go into the details on that, but what we're doing there now I think is a vast improvement on what we started off with, and the people of Spirit River will be very well served by the time this project is completed.

With respect to George's wages, no, he doesn't get \$500,000 for himself. He does have an office staff that burns up a good chunk of that in wages. I can't tell you off the top of my head how much, but as you know, he's located over in the Annex. Also with that would go the support for all the other activities in which they take part. Most of the time they're dealing the Y2K business, but it's a rather frugal budget for the overall operation. If you really want heartburn, we'll get you a little bit better breakdown on that for this line item, which we fund through the department.

With respect to the helicopters, did we save money? I would say from my understanding of the helicopters that we had, which were those Rangers or whatever, that they were high-cost, high-maintenance machines, and the time to dispose of them was right. Should we have replaced them with other helicopters? My personal opinion

is yes, we should have replaced them to give us a little bit more flexibility. The size of the fleet would be questionable. But as you're indicating with respect to this year, especially with the high level of fires, we certainly could have used some of our own rotary wings, and we could use them on an all-year basis.

I think one of the things down the line is that various departments, mainly environment and ourselves, should look at the feasibility of getting back into it, because now the new machines, especially some of the French ones that are out, are a lot more economical to purchase and a lot more economical to operate on a per hour basis. So I hope we're looking quite seriously at whether we should do that. But did we save money overall? I would say probably not, but that's a personal opinion as opposed to the facts, and you can't really dig into it that much.

8:58

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. The next person is the hon. Member for Calgary-Buffalo.

MR. DICKSON: Thanks, Mr. Chairman. Good evening, Mr. Minister. With all this talk about helicopters, I was feeling nostalgic for Brian Mulroney.

Mr. Minister, I've got a number of questions. I also want to thank you for acknowledging the need for a new health facility in Spirit River. I remember meeting with the folks there last spring, and I'm amazed at the kind of patience and perseverance they've had. Both seniors' advocacy groups and the councillors and of course the one physician there have been looking for this for a long time. So it's great that finally their needs are being met.

I've got some questions with respect to program 4. This is the chief information officer and the \$500,000. I'm a bit surprised, Mr. Minister, when I look at your key performance measures, because the only thing that seems to relate to the office of the chief information officer - I look under customer satisfaction, and down at the bottom I see that you've got the item Information Management and Technology Services. The one question would be why you have such modest expectations there. I mean, they're the lowest targets of any of the different areas. They're significantly lower than all of the other areas, from internal mail handling to air transportation to procurement. You might advise me why that is.

Now, with respect to Mr. Samoil's position and his program, because I couldn't find any key performance measures that related to what he's doing, I went back, Mr. Minister, to the information resource strategic plan for the government of Alberta that was produced in July of 1997, and that identified some things that the CIO Quality Assurance Task Force was going to address. You might firstly tell me whether the Quality Assurance Task Force still exists or whether that's been dissolved. Then you might tell me how we have done in terms of which critical information resource business processes have been benchmarked. That was one of the targets. So which ones, and what are the benchmarks?

Definition of core business processes. Which ones have been defined? Development of benchmarks that can be used by all ministries: if you'd tell me just what those benchmarks are, because once again, Mr. Minister, if they're in the plan or the budget book, I didn't spot them straight off. Maybe I just overlooked them.

Monitoring of year 2000 benchmark activity. We've heard a number of comments and assurances from government generally, and I know that certainly the CRHA has already completed their year 2000 compliance in terms of their critical patient support machines and so on. But I'm interested in terms of benchmark activity in the other regions in terms of critical hospital equipment, life-support equipment.

One of the other goals of the Quality Assurance Task Force going back to July of '97 was the selection of best practice models for strategic technologies. So if you can give me an update in terms of whether that goal's been achieved, and if so, what practice models have been identified.

Then, Mr. Minister, this is that time of the year when we try and measure the extent to which the office of the chief information officer has met the goals and action steps that have been set. Going back to the same document, I notice there were some targets like that by August of 1998 the office of the CIO was to revise document management processes to accommodate all types of electronic and paper records. Has that been done?

In October of 1998 the goal was to develop and communicate practice guidelines, standards for electronic records, data security, cryptology. Has that been done? By August of 1999 there was to be a report to all ministries on the government and the province's benchmark position relative to other jurisdictions and organizations in the areas identified as core areas. So I guess my question is: has it been done? Which core areas, and what are the benchmarks? It seemed to me that this item, which was identified back in July of 1997, would be a really useful tool to measure the success and performance of the CIO office, so if you can share that with us.

Speaking of the CIO, Mr. Minister, I'm interested specifically with respect to Bill C-54. It was Mr. Samoil, as I recall, who sent a letter of two or three pages to Industry Canada and Justice Canada on consultation (a) around encryption and (b) around protection of privacy in the nongovernmental sector. Now, other than that one fairly skeletal letter that went from the province of Alberta, I'm wondering whether the chief information officer has had some role in co-ordinating the Alberta strategy around C-54. I guess by that I'm thinking that there is a Uniform Law Commission. I know Mr. Clark Dalton of the Justice department and some people are talking to other provincial representatives around Bill C-54, but who's co-ordinating this effort?

I'm assuming it's your department, I'm assuming it's Mr. Samoil, but perhaps you can clarify that. Then you might tell me: how many businesses does this government expect are going to be affected by Bill C-54? In other words, how many sole proprietorships, partnerships, limited corporations trade outside the borders of Alberta and therefore will be subject to Bill C-54 after the three-year time lag?

How many jobs are involved with those corporations, partnerships, and proprietorships? What's the volume in terms of dollars? What does that mean to the Alberta economy? I have no idea how many corporations and businesses here trade outside the provincial boundaries, but I suspect there are plenty. I'm really interested in terms of what the financial downside is and the number of people and businesses and employees who are going to be directly affected and in some cases adversely affected by Bill C-54. My final question, Mr. Minister, is: what are you doing to ensure that the voice of Alberta businesspeople is heard in the debate that's going on in the House of Commons now?

The other item I wanted to turn to quickly was program 3, information technology, \$58.8 million. Now, I maybe didn't hear all of it, but I understood that your department was playing a role in Wellnet, Mr. Minister. I assume that means that your department is leading the dealings with the IBM consortium that's doing the work around Wellnet.

I'd just go back to the spring of 1997 after Bill 30 was aborted, and at that time the Minister of Health made an undertaking to me and to Albertans that the major architectural decisions with respect to Wellnet and our health information management systems would not be taken before we had legislation in place that defined Albertans' privacy interests and privacy rights. Well, that was fully two

years ago. We haven't yet seen the daughter of Bill 30, although we understand it's coming, and I guess my question is: can you affirm or I guess repudiate the assurance we got from the Minister of Health two years ago in terms of whether any of those key architectural decisions around health information have in fact been made? I'd just say parenthetically that we're spending potentially hundreds of millions of dollars with the IBM consortium, and if they haven't gotten around to making key architectural decisions, what the heck have they been doing? I just have those kinds of questions around that.

Changing direction a little bit, I'd written you, Mr. Minister, with respect to a proposal by the Calgary Parks Foundation. On the northeast corner of 7th Avenue and 6th Street SW in Calgary - this is that little lot which is just grassed area right now. Immediately west of the Bowlen Building, the land titles, youth and family court building is a park area. It's actually just a grassed area with a couple of picnic benches. The Calgary Parks Foundation has come up with actually a really neat plan to beautify that area and turn it into a park.

9:08

Now, since the grand design of Queen's Bench services in Calgary has been on again, off again for at least the last decade and no other or better use is being made of that land, I'm interested, Mr. Minister, whether we can't enter into a lease arrangement with the Calgary Parks Foundation to do something to enhance that corner. You get huge pedestrian volume there. There's this plan to develop the LRT station on 7th Avenue, and the Calgary Parks Foundation has come up with actually a really interesting plan. So I'm interested in terms of what your perspective on that is. My understanding is that the Parks Foundation would be prepared to commit. I mean, they're not looking at taking title outright. Presumably you'd want to retain that for long-term court development, but I'd be interested in what's going to happen with that.

I just have a couple of questions. The Drumheller health centre has been talked about for a very long time. I see there's some money for that. You might indicate how many beds that facility is going to be and some indication of the size of that project, because I can't tell from the material you've provided us with.

With respect to the Bow Valley centre, you might indicate what the \$700,000 represents; 2.2.7 is the vote.

MR. WOLOSHTYN: What page is that?

MR. DICKSON: I'm looking at page 349.

MR. WOLOSHTYN: What did you say it was?

MR. DICKSON: It's 2.2.7, Bow Valley centre. Is this for hauling away the debris? What kind of work are you doing on that site? If you can just give an update in terms of what's involved in terms of the changes. Line 2.2.4, Bethany Alzheimer care centre, the Carewest Alzheimer care centre at 2.2.6, and the operating expense of \$1.7 million for the Tom Baker cancer centre: if you can give me some particulars on those.

I know I've got colleagues with plenty of other questions to ask, so I'll give them a chance to jump in. I might just say again: is there a plan to share with Albertans what's going on in terms of the information resource strategic plan? The government seems to generate so many revisions to three-year plans. I can't believe that this July 1997 report, that I referred to at the top of my questions, is the latest iteration. I'm assuming that there were some other versions of it, and if there's a more current report, if you'd share that with me and with Albertans.

Thanks very much, Mr. Minister.

MR. WOLOSHTYN: Okay. Your first run of questions with respect to the information resource strategic plan primarily. Those are being addressed basically by the working groups reporting, if you will, to the CIO Council. Those issues are still out there, and they're going to go through a review process with recommendations back to their ministries. When we have that, that's going to be made, you know, obviously as public as is prudent with respect to it. So that one you're just going to have to be a little bit patient on.

The other thing that I think is worthy of mentioning is that with respect to Y2K, we have a Y2K Alberta, if you will, that is a coalition of all sorts of volunteer participants representing over 50 essential services across the province. These are outfits like utilities, industries, businesses, health and emergency organizations. Their goal is to ensure, if you will, that we have the whole problem under control. I'll go through a bit of a list to give you some idea.

Under business we have the Canadian Bankers Association and the Canadian Council of Grocery Distributors involved in there, Northern Alberta Institute of Technology, the Alberta Fire Chiefs Association, the Calgary and the Edmonton Police Service, as well as RCMP K Division. All of these are volunteer participants.

With respect to the federal government, we're working with the Department of National Defence, Emergency Preparedness Canada, Environment Canada, Indian Affairs and Northern Development Canada, Public Works and Government Services Canada, Transport Canada, Treasury Board of Canada.

As you indicated, both Calgary regional health and Capital health are on there. With municipal governments we've got a good cross section of all these folks: the Alberta Association of Municipal Districts and Counties, the Alberta Urban Municipalities Association. Calgary, Edmonton, Grande Prairie, Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Red Deer: they've all signed on. Nongovernment outfits: the Red Cross. The provincial government: virtually every department. This is one that I think gets very special consideration if you will.

With respect to utilities - and people are always focused on that particular one - you'll find the Alberta Federation of REAs is on there, Alberta Power, Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers, Canadian Chemical Producers' Association, Canadian Petroleum Products Institute, CANTEL, AT&T, Centra Gas Inc., ENMAX Corporation, EPCOR, ESBI, Federation of Alberta Gas Co-ops, Northwestern Utilities, Alberta power pool, Telus, and TransAlta.

I'd like to take this opportunity just for a moment to say that I would hope that within the country but certainly within Alberta I'm personally extremely confident that the whole Y2K issue is very much under control. Yes, there will be a few glitches, but I don't anticipate that there will be any major ones. All of the people that are involved have been very responsible. We're doing our thing on the government side, and there'll be some announcements as to where we are after this Easter break, as promised. We were going to report back as to where we were in terms of within the government itself.

Just to give you a good example of what's happening, TransAlta Utilities is currently operating on various portions of the year 2000. They cranked their computers ahead, so they don't anticipate glitches. Now, it's not something that they went running to the media with a big announcement, but in my discussions with them they're actually, as far as their systems are concerned now, not at one spot; they're staggered throughout the year. They have encountered virtually nothing, no problems at all. The gas distributors are also telling us that there shouldn't be any disruptions in service. The telecommunications are saying, you know, that there may be an unforeseen hiccup.

Alberta Health, as you well know, has expended quite a few dollars with respect to addressing the critical health in terms of



facilities. They're currently, as I understand it, undergoing a bit of a review to ensure that they have met all those needs. With respect to the equipment on-line and whatnot, that should be well under control. They'll probably be benefitting by getting early replacements of their questionable equipment.

That whole Y2K question I think is under control. That has taken up the majority of the time in the CIO's office, and the CIO accounts will be focused largely on that. I for one think that we've done a pretty good job on the whole business.

You also referred to Wellnet. That, I would say to you, quite clearly is not a part of Public Works. I think maybe I didn't make it clear, but Mr. Bader is the deputy minister responsible for the new strategic information technology initiatives, if you will, that new area of government under which Wellnet falls. As I indicated, on that project he reports directly to the Minister of Health. Quite frankly, it would be inappropriate for me to walk down that path. The IT portion is still within Public Works, and he reports to me on that particular aspect of it.

You asked about the Calgary Parks Foundation. You wrote the letter to me? Did I respond to you?

9:18

MR. DICKSON: I don't think so.

MR. WOLOSHTYN: Well, if I didn't, I apologize. Your response would have been that at this particular time the land is not available. I mean, obviously if you want to use it for a park, we'd enter into some sort of agreement as long they wouldn't spend any money on it.

You refer to the Court of Queen's Bench being on again, off again, but quite frankly we've been wrestling to come up with a cost-effective solution for all of the Calgary courts. Being from Calgary, you'd be familiar that we've got the family court in the Bowlen Building, I believe it is. Then you've got the Court of Appeal in the old, historic building, whatever that was. Next to it is the Queen's Bench, and then you go all the way downtown to traffic court and Provincial Court halfway above or underneath - I've forgotten which way - the old remand centre. We're, like I say, trying to get an effective and cost-effective at the same time reorganization of the courts.

As you're probably aware, we dealt with the family court in the Bowlen Building last time, and the people there seem to be very satisfied with what was done. I can't tell you what will be done because I don't know. If I knew, I'd bring it forward, but I can assure you that we're trying to find a solution, probably somewhat different than what it was before. Consequently, any of the lands in that Bowlen, Court of Appeal, Queen's Bench - and we don't want to commit under lease or any other way for any kind of long term, if you will, or even semi long term. Until such time as we've got a direction hammered out in terms of the Calgary courts overall strategy, it wouldn't really be fair to the Calgary Parks Foundation for us to say, "Well, go ahead; you've got it for a few years," and then next year come up and say, "Whoops; we're now going in this direction." So that's where that's at.

I certainly would not be critical of what they would like to do there. I mean, obviously we could use a little bit of a nice park setting in the middle of downtown. Certainly everybody would be a beneficiary of it. So that's basically where that is. If I didn't write you that in a letter, hon. member, I do apologize for not getting back to you.

With respect to Bill C-54, if I recollect properly, I do believe that Labour is the lead ministry on that particular one. Although we

would be funding it through our interactions, it would likely be through Labour.

That's about the best I can do for you. If I missed anything, I do apologize.

MR. DICKSON: Thank you.

MR. WOLOSHTYN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. The hon. Member for Edmonton-Meadowlark.

MS LEIBOVICI: Thank you. It's a pleasure to be here again tonight, Mr. Minister. Last year it was in my role as critic for Public Works, Supply and Services, and today I am a help, hopefully, to the current critic. I'd like to also compliment you on always being forthright with the answers to the questions that we've had in the past and in assisting us to do our job as the Official Opposition. Perhaps having been there once yourself, you understand how hard that role can be and understand that we can work together.

A couple of preliminary comments, if I may, with regards to the ministry business plan both within the government and lottery estimates and the Public Works, Supply and Services business plan within the other document that has that particular portion in it. I, too, found that the key performance measures were lacking. If my memory serves me correctly, last year there were a large number of performance measurements that seemed to actually indicate where the department was heading. What I find this year is that we're looking at five performance measures in actual fact. The other measurements deal with internal organizational satisfaction and one with customer satisfaction. When we look at the other business plan document, there are not very many more performance measurements within. I also have questions on the detail of those performance measurements that we can get to as we get a little closer.

The other thing that I noticed was that when we look at the major strategies of the department, it appears to me that there is a fair amount of overlap between what your department is doing and what other departments are doing as well. With the rumours that are abounding as to the change in ministers and the fact that Public Works, Supply and Services might well become another department or amalgamated with other departments, I wonder if this in fact reflects what those rumors are about.

If I can go through them in a little bit more detail, on page 358 when we talk about "protecting Alberta's infrastructure investment through appropriate maintenance and upgrading," that in effect is a function of the transportation department as well as Municipal Affairs, and there seems to be the overlap there.

When we go to the second point, "in partnership with Alberta Health," I note that though the department is involved in "the construction and upgrading/rehabilitation of health care facilities," in fact the department doesn't have any control over the construction and upgrading other than to provide the cheque. It's my understanding that those plans are in fact approved and the tendering is done through the regional health authorities.

When we look at Alberta Environmental Protection, my comment there is: what is the department's relationship with Environmental Protection, and is there in fact a policy component to Public Works, Supply and Services in the protection of our water management systems? I noticed in today's paper that there was an article about our water supply being sold to international corporations. Does in fact the Department of Public Works, Supply and Services have any input into that at all?

When we look at "providing information technology, information

management, telecommunications” - and that’s mentioned twice actually - “and air transportation services,” I wonder if that doesn’t overstate what the department actually does, because again we see further on “developing and managing telecommunications and information management systems to maintain Alberta’s technological advantage.” I thought telecommunications was a privatized function within Alberta with the telecommunications industry actually developing and managing. So I’d like to know what in fact is the role of Public Works, Supply and Services in the development of telecommunications.

“Providing opportunities for Alberta businesses by maximizing cost-effective utilization of the private sector”: I would have thought that was a function of Economic Development.

The last comment with regards to “enhancing relationships with Aboriginal people” is surprising. I see no other mention, I believe, within the business plan or within the budget documents that talks about or shows how the department enhances relationships with Aboriginal people, and again I thought that was a function of intergovernmental affairs.

When we look at the core businesses of Public Works, Supply and Services on page 358, one of them is the information technology component. We know that the CIO - and now it’s strategic information technology, I believe. I’m not sure if it’s a branch or what it is, but it’s a separate funding program within the department that is becoming a larger and larger component of Public Works. My question is: is it properly placed within that particular department, or would it be more properly placed within the department of science, research, and information technology?

The change in the mandate of the office of the chief information officer, which has substantially changed from its first inception under the Premier’s office. It was under Executive Council originally when it was first formed, and now it seems to be a growing component in Public Works, Supply and Services. I have some questions around why it is there.

9:28

Accommodation for seniors. I’d like to know where the interim Broda report had any implications or had any impact on the accommodations and the recommendations that were provided within that particular department.

Now, when we look on page 359, if I can just go back to some of the key performance measures, I notice that when you look at from 1992-1998, there are some huge fluctuations. I know there’s an explanation as to why there’s a fluctuation in ’97 and ’98. That’s evident in the other business plan. My question is: if you’ve got a performance measure that has these huge fluctuations, is that actually the appropriate measurement, and should there be another measurement that’s provided instead of that one?

Building Condition, on page 360, talks about the measurement of “percentage of government-owned buildings over 1,000 square metres with condition information established,” and I think that’s a good thing to do. My question is: when actually is it going to be completed? It says 2001-2002. That seems to be overly ambitious given what the increases have been from ’96-97 to ’97-98, where you have approximately a 7 percent increase, and within the next, ’98-99, the target is 65 percent, which will be a 9 percent increase. In three more years you’re hoping to have a 35 percent increase. That’s much more than you’ve been able to do. What is going to make that a possibility? What in actual fact is going to ensure that you do reach that hundred percent target by the year 2001-2002? Are you hiring more staff? Are you able to somehow quicken the ability to evaluate what the situation is?

I’d like to know where the Provincial Archives fit within that

particular measurement. I know that there has been a study done as to whether the Archives is suitable or not, but I’d like to know where the Archives fits into that particular range. Where in Edmonton can another building similar to the Archives be found to ensure that the archives stay within the city of Edmonton?

Your customer satisfaction survey on page 361: it doesn’t say here whether that’s internal, external. Is it public users that are being questioned to find out what their satisfaction is, or is it mostly government employees that are questioned?

There’s no indicator in here, no explanation as to how much office space the government of Alberta still owns. How much is rented? How much is empty? That would be interesting information given that the minister has talked about finding space for the children’s authorities so that they would be able to have office space. Now, just as a comment on the side, I don’t think the minister’s department looks for space for the regional health authorities, so why in fact are the children’s authorities being treated differently than what the regional health authorities would be?

When we looked at the Public Works, Supply and Services business plan, page 276, one of the core businesses that is listed in here is to provide “reliable and cost-effective computer processing services.” I know that the Member for Calgary-Buffalo has touched on that a little bit. My question is: what is the profit margin of the companies that are contracted with? Unless we’re doing it completely in-house, what are the profit margins of those computer services that are being provided? Are we ensuring that there is not a monopoly of services within the government of Alberta when it comes to the provision of computer services so that we are in fact able to shop around for the best provider as opposed to being tied to one provider because we are in a monopoly situation with regards to computer services?

Air transportation. I know the minister knows that this is one of my favourite questions. Are there any new planes that are being looked at? I understand that a lot of that is because of upgrading requirements, but is there anything built into the budget? I didn’t see it, but they might be there. Are there any new requirements with regards to that?

I know that I’m going to run out of time, so I’m going to move on ahead to the information technology area. I found it quite curious that we’ve got a section on page 287, goal 4, “Lead and support the innovative use and effective management of information technology and telecommunications,” and then on page 290 under Office of the Chief Information Officer, lo and behold, we’ve got “co-ordinate and facilitate information management strategies across all government ministries.” Are these two separate functions? Is one, then, in fact dealing with technology and the other dealing with management systems, and if that is the case, why can they not be co-ordinated as one program? Why are they split aside? On page 347 when I look at the department summary and operating expense, program 3 is information technology, program 4 is office of the chief information officer.

I understand that Mr. Bader is the new deputy minister. What is his exact position? Deputy minister? So the question, then, comes to play: who reports to whom? Does the chief information officer report to . . . [interjection] Okay. So they all report to the minister. But who, then, ensures that what’s happening in information technology actually is integrated with what’s happening in the CIO office? Too often we see these independent structures being set up within departments. [interjection] And the Department of Labour is also involved. What ends up happening is that you have these independent structures that are being set up, and it’s almost like fiefdoms that are starting within the department. I know the minister would not want to see that occur, and I know that the members are

very vigilant as to the costs of setting up something like this. So I'm very concerned about what the interplay is between these two separate functions.

The other question I have is on Imagis, which seems to be new. It's a new cross-government financial and human resource management system. I do have some background in human resources, and I'd really be curious to know what exactly this new Imagis provides for. Is it for classifications? Is it for tracking full-time equivalents, part-time equivalents? Is it for benefit purposes? I'm curious to know what the effectiveness of this human resource and financial management system is going to be, what it costs us to put it in place, who runs it, and who ensures that the systems are up and operational. I've seen too many of these that come into play, and they seem to be products that are never-ending, and we don't get the results that we're looking for.

Y2K. Can the minister - and I think I asked this last year as well - provide progress reports for every department and agency and as well release the contingency plans so that the public can be assured that essential services and systems like water, heat, health care, power will not fail? I did ask this question because you've got this expertise in your department on information technology. I had asked it in Health, and I will ask it here as well. Can anyone tell me what the effect of Y2K will be on pacemakers? This is a huge concern, and I keep coming across it in various magazines that deal with the issue, but I've never heard a definitive yes, no, or this is the type of pacemaker that will be affected. So if the expertise in your department can bring that forward, that would be wonderful.

9:38

There's a number of other issues as well that have been addressed by some of my colleagues. The one that concerns me is the budget line that deals with the lottery estimates: operating expense funded by lotteries. Now, I know that Public Works, Supply and Services deals with capital expense, so I'm curious to know what the operating expense line is under all of the funding that's being provided for construction and upgrading of health facilities and why that is deemed operating expense as opposed to capital expense. Maybe I'm just not aware of what the accounting terms are.

The other thing that I noticed - and perhaps Edmonton did not put forward enough requests - is that there are 13 facilities in Calgary that are listed under upgrading of seniors' lodges, and actually some of them, not all of them, are receiving dollars. The same is true of the five in Edmonton. I'm wondering why there's a discrepancy between the numbers of Edmonton and Calgary, and I'm sure the minister has the answer for that.

The concern around the lottery funding is that it is not sustainable dollars that any organization can count on for a prolonged period of time. If it's one time only, I guess that's useful information, but I'd like to know about the different terminology. There's "Operating Expense funded by Lotteries" and "Capital Investment funded by Lotteries." There are a few different terms that are utilized.

That sums up my comments at this point in time, and I look forward to the minister's response. Thank you.

MR. WOLOSZYN: Where do I start?

MS LEIBOVICI: You can put it in writing.

MR. WOLOSZYN: No, I'm not going to put it in writing.

Your discussion started off with overlap with departments. That would be better rephrased in that we do work with all departments. That is a part of our role. Consequently, if it's in waterworks, we overlap, work with, if you will, the environment department largely.

With respect to Health, we are working very, very closely with Health, and we do and we are involved in part of the approvals of the individual projects with the Department of Health. Both ministers have to sign off on the projects before they go ahead. So that should be kept in mind: it's a collaborative effort to ensure that in fact we're getting the best bang for our buck. Again, we go back to that architectural study. That was a part of the whole process. That was done as a Public Works function because we do it.

With respect to the health authorities and hiring, we work with them on an ongoing basis right through the whole project on all projects Public Works is involved with. So it's not a matter that we just write the cheques. That's not accurate at all. We're with them through the whole process. The authorities, if they have the personnel and the abilities, will take on more of it for ownership, if you will. On the smaller ones they may back off, and we'll do more of it. So it's very much a good and collaborative effort.

With respect to Health, we certainly work with them as opposed to overlapping, as you put it, and looking at making silos. One of the things we have been very conscious of - and I think Public Works is a leader in this area - is that we are looking at government as a whole process as opposed to a bunch of little silos, if you will. It may appear on the surface that it's duplication, but rest assured that it's not.

The Broda report, the interim report. No, we have not been looking at implementing at this point. We will not be until the report is final, and I don't know which direction that will take. It could take funding; it could take a lot of things. When that happens, we would be looking at implementing, obviously, as much of it as we can, looking at what we can, what we should, what we should not. In the meantime there's nothing on hold, if you will. We're proceeding with getting facilities. For example, we worked with Edmonton on opening up more beds, as we have in the last couple of years. I believe Edmonton has opened up in excess of 100 beds in the last 18 months or so. It may not be widely publicized by the health authority, but it's there. They'll be opening more beds, and that's done directly with Public Works. So we are more of a support mechanism.

You made some other references: what do we have to do in common with Alberta Environment? Well, we're supporting fire fighting through aircraft. That's a part of our role, and they're the user department, if you will.

Accommodations. Currently we're doing quite a bit of accommodations, if you will, with respect to the relocation in the west end. I'm just using that one with Environment at the current moment, but we have ongoing accommodations with most departments right across the province.

Are we into surplus land sales as well? Do we do that on your behalf? We do land acquisitions. If you have a reservoir, for example, that may need rehabbing or whatnot, then we go down the line and end up doing the land acquisitions for that. As we indicated, for some of the waterworks projects that do come forward as ones that are going to be worked on, we also do those; for example, the Pine Coulee. I'm not sure whether it's turned over or soon will be, but Public Works is responsible for the construction of it. After it's commissioned and meets various criteria including emergencies, in case something should happen, then the operators become Environmental Protection. There isn't an overlap, although you'd say: why are they both doing it? We are the builders; they are the operators.

In the references you made there with respect to working with aboriginal people. I'm very proud to say - and I don't know why it hasn't got much play - that Public Works was responsible for doing a landmark co-operative venture with the Blood tribe in the St. Mary

area that was not a single-source contract, that was not a token approach to them but was in effect a collaborative effort to employ aboriginal people on the St. Mary project through the contractor. We had a goal set of some 60 or 65 percent of time to be spent by Blood tribe members, and that was in fact exceeded. The program works so well that we are losing people off it who are going to get other jobs because of the training they received on that particular project.

That was one that I would like to see highlighted as a classic example of being able to work with the aboriginal community in the most positive sense without being tokenistic towards them, if you will, and letting them benefit from some of the activity. This particular project, the St. Mary, was extremely appropriate because it is on what used to be their land and now currently borders on the reserve.

I'll speed up a little bit so we can get your colleague in for at least 10 minutes here. There is a difference between the children's authorities and the regional health authorities. The boards are there, but there is still a much stronger tie because I believe employees are being seconded, for one aspect. The other is that we are providing facilities for health authorities. I mean, every hospital that's built, we're providing it. We have health authorities in provincial buildings, whatever. In this particular instance, in order to be able to set it up and give it the number of offices it needs, it's more appropriate that we do the office search for them, because that's in fact the business we're in. It wouldn't be very prudent management to have 18 authorities trying to go into the real estate business to find their own shops. So it's just a service that we provide and should be providing, and quite frankly it works pretty good.

You said something about computer services. We're always on the best-buy basis. There is no monopoly that's in there; I can assure you of that. Whether it be the IT service end, if you will, or it's equipment or whatever, we do go to the marketplace and shop. We're continually getting the best bang for our buck, so there isn't a monopoly where all of a sudden a large company has, if you will, taken over the government. You'll find that on transmission we're dealing with AT&T as well as Telus and so on.

You mentioned the relationship between the CIO and IT. I think a good thing to keep in mind is that the CIO is basically policy oriented; IT delivers. The two go hand in hand, if you will. Technology and research are totally separate, although the name is the same, and that may be misleading. In my opinion it shouldn't go there. I don't know if it should go anywhere. It's a delivery service. The CIO's office is policy, where the CIO reports directly to the Premier or to the minister of public works. Really, as long as you've got somewhere to report to, it doesn't matter. Public Works makes a lot of sense because we also do the delivery end. So we become the catalyst, and they work closely together. Then they've got the CIO Council and the deputies' council. There's a lot of interaction across the whole government with the CIO and IT activities.

9:48

You mentioned aircraft. Yeah, we're always looking for new aircraft. Whether we buy one this year or not, I couldn't say to you yes or no, but we always have our eyes open. If we have a good deal that should come up on a replacement, we'd certainly look at it, given that we could afford it.

Imagis and financial. This would stay under Deputy Minister Bader, and that's working along well. We're moving right along, and that basically, if you will, standardizes the process. We'll give you more detail, if you want, at another time. Right across government it is working well and getting better and will give a good return on both the financial and human resource sides. What does it track?

Almost everything, but at some point we'll give you a little bit more info on that.

In keeping with promising a bit of time for your other colleague, if he promises to shut down at 10 o'clock, we'll give him a bit of time.

Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: All right. Thank you, Mr. Minister. We took two in a row on this side. We'll get two short questions on this side, as I understand it.

The hon. Member for Whitecourt-Ste. Anne, followed by West Yellowhead and then back to the minister.

MR. TRYNCHY: Thank you. I'll be very short. Mr. Minister, I'll take you back to 2.3, seniors.

MR. WOLOSHYN: What page are you on?

MR. TRYNCHY: What page am I on? Pages 351 and 352, upgrading of seniors' lodges. I want to talk about long-term care. The community that I talk about - and you're familiar with it - is Evansburg, where 20 percent of the population is seniors. They're in need of long-term care. I know you're familiar with it, having been there with me a number of times. I'd like to know from the minister: what is the first step for them to do in respect to getting their project on the list? I know it's not on now, but what do they have to do to get that project on the list? What support can they expect from you, sir, and your department with respect to getting this a reality? That's my question for the evening, short and sweet.

MR. WOLOSHYN: Well, they need to do their feasibility study. Have they done that? The next step is to, I guess, get through the health authority and Health and myself the bucks for them to proceed on planning. Then if it hits the list and it's ready to go, once money becomes ready, it's approved. What can I do? We'll do everything we can to get as many bucks as we can to spread out, if you will, as far as we can across the province. Do they need the facility? Obviously you've got me on that one. They do, and I certainly support it, but I do have to be fair and work it within the overall system.

MR. TRYNCHY: Thank you. The Member for Dunvegan says to make sure you don't wait as long as he had to wait.

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. West Yellowhead.

MR. STRANG: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mine will be short too. I guess the one thing is I'd be remiss if I didn't ask you a question for our colleague for Little Bow. To the minister: on page 353 are you really stating there that you're going to go ahead with the Little Bow dam project? Is that what you're saying there? Is that really true? Can I tell him that?

Then the other aspect. I guess I've got to sort of tag along with my colleague from Whitecourt-Ste. Anne. As you realize, in WestView we've been short of beds forever in long-term care, and I'm just wondering if you can give me an update. I looked over these pages umpteen dozen times trying to find my long-term care for Hinton. I wore my eyes out, and I never did see it. So I'm just wondering if you can sort of give me an update of where it is.

MR. WOLOSHYN: Well, it's about the same with Hinton as I answered to the Member for Whitecourt-Ste. Anne. Yes, you're right; WestView is terribly short of acute and other beds in terms

relative to the rest of the province. There are 50 new beds coming into the region in Stony Plain.

Little Bow is subject to cabinet approval for the final little bit, which is coming in terms of when we present our plan. But, yes, we have been working on that. Yes, Little Bow will go ahead, and yes, we're doing land acquisitions and so on. We're basically on schedule for where we wanted to get to at this point in time.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

THE CHAIRMAN: Edmonton-Manning, are you ready to go now?

MR. GIBBONS: Okay. I've got a few questions for you, starting with waterways and so on. With respect to each of the water projects enumerated under subprogram 2.5, construction and upgrading of water infrastructure, can the minister provide a total of what has been sent out to each of the five projects listed to date and how much money the government is going to spend on each one of the projects?

Next question. With respect to each of the water projects listed, can the minister provide the number of Albertans served directly by each of these water projects?

I wanted to ask a couple of questions around what's happening in the town of High River with the floodplain, what work is being done in Calgary with the floodplain, and then some of the problems with different parts of the province, like the lack of water in Lac Ste. Anne last year into the Sturgeon. Years ago there was a plan to reroute water into the Sturgeon from some of that area. Is that dead and gone?

Another question on waterways is up in Cold Lake-Bonnyville with the arsenic water problems in the wells. Can there be any water transferred into Cold Lake from rivers up there so you can keep a constant water level? I think one of the major problems up there - if people knew that the water was coming from the lake instead of what they don't know what's happening under the ground, things might be a lot safer for them.

A couple of questions I promised to bring forward here are from the Valleyview chamber of commerce, about the information centre. Is that in the works? With all the different stuff they bought to operate it again this year, they're still waiting for an answer whether or not they've got the okay to operate it. So just passing along a little tidbit.

Back to the questions here. Why is the estimate of dedicated revenue triple from the forecasted amount from last year? This is under 2.6. What is the composition of the \$12.9 million in dedicated revenue under 2.6? How is the \$22.730 million in dedicated revenue from information technology under 3.0.2 derived? Under the same one, why are these revenues up by \$2 million over the forecasted fiscal '98-99?

I've got a couple more. I'll go under general infrastructure. What is the total amount requested by the regional health authorities for infrastructure upgrades? What has the ministry done with regards to the Auditor General's recommendation that a clear picture of future funding for buildings be put in place for the regional health authorities?

The next question. What is the status of buildings and equipment used by Alberta colleges and universities? Can the minister provide any idea of the amount needed by the colleges and universities for infrastructure upgrade?

Another item around some of these infrastructures. I understand that Fort Saskatchewan hospital has been promised a fast track in building a hospital plus a mental portion.

How much, if any, of this budget is for the upgrade of the AVC

facility prior to this transfer? Is there a breakdown by campus?

The last one. The full-time equivalent employment is to be increased by 37 this year. Why? How is the FTE increase distributed within the department, especially how many management/professions salaries and nonsalaried?

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll give you enough time to consider that.

9:58

THE CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister, before we wind up and adjourn, we've got one question only by Spruce Grove-Sturgeon-St. Albert.

MRS. SOETAERT: Just a minute. Is it okay for him to finish, Mr. Chairman?

THE CHAIRMAN: I'm sorry; I thought he was finished. Okay; keep going.

MR. GIBBONS: The effectiveness and success of the office of the chief information officer therefore will measure against its ability to achieve the action mentioned above, and that is, the office of the CIO is a catalyst. The responsibility of the office shows the true success to be measured by the amount of collaboration and co-operation it can garner. A critical outcome of this collaboration and co-operation will be a more effective and efficient application of technology and information management and practices. It's not good enough. What is the performance measure on this one, Mr. Minister?

THE CHAIRMAN: Okay. Spruce Grove-Sturgeon-St. Albert.

MRS. SOETAERT: Thank you, and I thank the minister. I know you will respond to our questions in written form, but the Member for Calgary-Mountain View and I have decided that MLAs deserve the opportunity to see the palm room, and we understand you're the only one with the key. So we're requesting an opportunity to get the key to the palm room and have a view of the Leg. That's my final question of the evening.

MR. WOLOSHYN: With respect to the water projects money expended this year and last year, we'll give you the costs of the projects whenever we have that, and I'll get that to you in writing.

Sturgeon River and Cold Lake: those issues would be more appropriately directed towards Environment, quite frankly. It's water management, and we don't go down that path. If there's construction involved with it, then it would be down on our land procurement, but certainly this is more Environment.

With respect to Fort Saskatchewan, what was being said locally, there is nothing currently, no promises, nothing out of this minister or this department with respect to that hospital, period. What will happen down the way will depend on how it meets the requirements and fits into the overall provincial assessment and where they hit on the priority list, but I did read the same articles. I know where you're coming from on that, but that is simply the local people wanting, and I don't fault them for that.

With respect to 37 more people out of 1,300 people, sometimes you hire people and sometimes you let people go. When you get busier, you need more people to do the work, and that's where it comes in. Where exactly are they? I couldn't tell you off the top of my head, nor am I really that concerned. I have a few folks who are paid to manage and to make sure that we deliver our programs. I could get back to you on that if it's really that important. One thing I can assure you is that it's not as you implied by your question. It's

not adding to the management layer. These are field people, whether they be secretaries or caretakers or whomever we need to work for us, if you will. But if you're really hung up on that, we could even find for you who they are.

With respect to colleges and universities, we don't get involved with them. They're totally autonomous. The other reference: we're just currently turning over Alberta Vocational College to individual board governance of four campuses. We'll have to tally up the dollars to give you the answer about how much has been expended. It's a couple of million, I do believe. I can't give you an estimate off the top of my head, but what we're trying to do with them is turn over facilities that are in very good condition so they can work on programs, and we will be out of the picture.

You had some reference to future funding, and I don't recall your question.

MR. GIBBONS: Regional health authorities.

MR. WOLOSHYN: This probably emanated from our review of their facilities that was initiated by Public Works, and I can assure you that every facility and every authority that needs repair or upgrade when it deals with patient comfort, safety, whatever, is there. People may disagree, but last year we expended significantly more than we had budgeted for that year. You'll see it in the line item, some \$33 million. So we do pay special attention to that, but obviously if a health authority is looking to replace a facility and if that's possible down the road, we would obviously maintain it to a high and safe level, but we wouldn't go beyond that too much.

With respect to the CIO, I'm not quite sure where you're coming from there. I'll get an answer back to you in writing. Okay?

MR. GIBBONS: The Valleyview chamber of commerce.

MR. WOLOSHYN: What is happening there? Tell me a little bit more. If they were operating in there - and I'll look into it - I'll assume they're going to continue operating. This is something that I'm not aware of.

MR. GIBBONS: All they want is a yes or a no.

MR. WOLOSHYN: If they have operated before, there's no reason

for them not to continue, but I'd have to have a look at it. I don't know the issues here.

MR. GIBBONS: They operated last year. They've already gone out and bought everything they need for it.

MR. WOLOSHYN: Tell them to drop me a line, and I'll find out what's going on. Okay?

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, and thank you.

MRS. SOETAERT: Are you going to respond to questions we didn't get answers to?

MR. WOLOSHYN: If you asked me for them in writing and I can think of it, we'll try our best.

MRS. SOETAERT: No, no. The questions I asked that didn't get answered. I'm not writing them down.

MR. WOLOSHYN: We'll always try our best to give you the answers that we can, but please have patience. They won't come tomorrow.

MRS. SOETAERT: Thank you.

MR. HLADY: Mr. Chairman, I would like to move that we rise and report downstairs.

THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member for Calgary-Mountain View has moved that the subcommittee do now rise and report. All those in support of this motion, please say aye.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: Aye.

THE CHAIRMAN: Those opposed, please say no.

SOME HON. MEMBERS: No.

THE CHAIRMAN: Carried.

[The subcommittee adjourned at 10:05 p.m.]