

Standing Committee on Alberta Heritage Savings Trust Fund Act

Tuesday, August 17, 1982

Chairman: Dr. Reid

3:40 p.m.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Perhaps the minister can introduce the gentleman with him, and if he has an preliminary statement he wishes to make. Mr. Minister.

MR. KROEGER: Mr. Chairman, Deputy Minister Bob Cronkhite is with me. I don't really have a preliminary statement to make, other than to say that we cover two areas: the air terminal building program, and we deliver the road system to Kananaskis. It's funded through the heritage trust fund. Usually Kananaskis Country and Kananaskis Park is covered by the Minister of Recreation and Parks, because that's where the funding is requested and where the approvals come. We deliver whatever is approved. That doesn't mean we're not prepared to answer or comment if there's any interest in the Kananaskis side of it. Essentially the part we are totally responsible for is the air terminal building program.

We're in your hands.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any questions for the minister from members of the committee?

MR. PAHL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I guess it is a question, in a sense. I had an opportunity to fly into Cold Lake and was very impressed with the quality and, quite frankly, the quantity of the investment in the air terminal at that location. Perhaps the member who represents that area might have been asked the question first, but I wondered at the arrangements made to have that facility on what appears, driving in and out of it, to be on the air base. I just wondered at the status of that investment, if you will, given that it's on federal lands. That's an assumption on my part, of course.

MR. KROEGER: When you say the status, do you mean how come we're there on federal property?

MR. PAHL: Well, I guess just the continued use of it. Obviously, the priority on the air base is military traffic. As a curiosity, I just wondered what sort of accommodation had been made. I assume that's quite a precedent, actually. I don't know that there are all that many other provincial government investments on what you'd call federal lands.

MR. KROEGER: I'll let Mr. Cronkhite comment as well. It isn't a precedent. Various approaches have been taken. For instance, we've built Grande Prairie and Lethbridge, and they will be federal eventually. We built the terminal buildings, not through heritage trust fund money. Presumably, eventually the federal government will pay them out and then will own them. So you have another mix.

Bob, you might comment on the specific arrangement.

MR. CRONKHITE: Mr. Chairman, at Cold Lake there was the opportunity, by agreement with the Department of National Defence, to accommodate up to the jet-sized passenger aircraft we were used to without having to build very long

runways. We have a very firm agreement with the Department of National Defence to use the runways for civil aviation, providing we provide the civil aviation handling, the passenger handling facility, secure it with security fences and keep it in the place they would accept. It's basically on separate utility. It's a completely separate entity to the operation of the airport, so there's no spin-off cost exchange between the two parties. That was one of the things we identified in the agreement. We built it on those terms. I think we have a 49-year renewable lease or something. In any event, the air operations would be controlled by the federal government, whether they're regulated into there or anywhere else, so there's no problem that way.

You mentioned the size. The size was to accommodate passenger loads in the size of a 737 or equivalent, in anticipation of the ultimate development in that area.

I think that's about all. I believe it gave us an opportunity to provide for large aircraft without having to build a 6,000 or 7,000 foot runway.

MR. PAHL: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I must be very complimentary on it, because it's nice to see that sort of capital in place in facilities in use such as the air base. To be able to work out a co-use agreement with the military speaks well for co-operation and also provides you with a lot more buck.

MR. CRONKHITE: Just like we do the national defence [inaudible].

MR. PAHL: Louder, I think.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think that was an aside.

MR. ISLEY: Mr. Chairman, as a follow-up I might add that it does provide the northeast with probably the best air control facilities and the most up-to-date equipment. It's working out very smoothly. We don't have any 737s, but Southern Frontier is servicing the area. Everyone seems very pleased with it, which would lead me into my question. I see that \$11 million was spent on airport terminals in 1982. Which communities benefited from the most recent terminal buildings?

MR. KROEGER: Was it that high?

MR. CRONKHITE: I don't believe there's \$11 million in 1982-83. Airports?

MR. ISLEY: Airport terminal buildings.

MR. KROEGER: Not just terminal buildings.

MR. CRONKHITE: Sorry, that's a cumulative from the previous . . .

MR. ISLEY: Oh, that's a cumulative total? Okay. Where do we have terminals under active construction now?

MR. CRONKHITE: In this current year, 1982-83, we're starting at Peace River. We have a contract out now. The ground footing work is starting. The firefighting water supply and that sort of thing is being put in, so it will be off and going. It will be about 50 to 60 per cent completed this year. The rest will be completed next year.

A small terminal of about 1,400 square feet is being built in Fort Vermilion because of the isolation. One is being built at Manning. These will be provincial airports. They'll be manned, and both provide for firefighting

services as well. We have some wrap-up work in the Lloydminster terminal building. I think the total budget was something in the order of a little over \$3.5 million, something in that range.

MR. ISLEY: I thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any further questions for the minister? Perhaps the Chair can have a crack at them about something. Recently there has been some indication by the Alberta Aviation Council of some interest in an airport development in Jasper National Park, as opposed to using the one built just outside the park boundary few years ago for Jasper and Hinton. Has there been any contact with the department about that?

MR. CRONKHITE: There has been a strip inside Jasper Park, which many of you have probably used. Periodically it's been touted as being one they've wanted to expand, but we've never had any official representation on it that I know of. The flying club group at Entrance have also made some overtures to get that old strip improved some.

No, I think the Jasper-Hinton one is serving reasonably well, although there have been some requests again to increase it so it will take a larger jet passenger aircraft. You would have to spend a pile of money to get that one lengthened out at that elevation, as you know.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I wasn't addressing that problem. It was the one inside Jasper National Park.

MR. CRONKHITE: We haven't had anything official that I know of.

MR. CHAIRMAN: In view of the co-operation with the Department of National Defence, I thought we might get a little more degree of co-operation with the national parks.

MR. CRONKHITE: We'll check on that and report back.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. Thank you. Are there any more questions from members for the minister regarding the airport program or the Kananaskis roads? It would seem that everybody is satisfied and there are no problems, Mr. Minister.

MR. KROEGER: Mr. Chairman, the total program was valued at \$25 million. The committed construction is about \$17 million. That's where we are as far as the status report is concerned.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If there are no more questions, we'll thank the minister and Mr. Cronkhite for coming. I think the committee can now stand adjourned until next Monday at 2 p.m.

Before we adjourn, the Member for St. Albert wanted confirmation of the next dates: next Monday, August 23, the Minister of Energy and Natural Resources at 2 p.m., followed by the Minister of Agriculture, and then the Associate Minister of Public Lands and Wildlife is in the evening. If things move well, I suggest we should have the Hon. Bud Miller in the latter part of the afternoon. On Tuesday, August 24, the schedule is now the Auditor General at 10 a.m., and the Treasury Department visit at 12 noon. We will move the Minister of the Environment to 2 p.m., following the visit to the Treasury Department. The Minister of Housing and Public Works isn't available on the 24th, neither is the Minister of Tourism and Small Business. We are currently attempting to schedule them in September, hopefully prior to the appearance of the Provincial Treasurer on Monday, September 13, at 2 p.m., and the Premier

on Tuesday, September 14, at 10 a.m. Hopefully we can get these other two ministers before the appearance of the Provincial Treasurer and the Premier, but it's obviously going to be a problem. It will have to be right at the end of the week before, on Thursday or Friday, September 9 and 10. I'll have to notify members of the committee of that once the arrangements are finalized.

MR. ISLEY: Is it true that we're no longer meeting on August 30 and 31?

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's correct.

MR. ISLEY: But we may be meeting on September 9 and 10?

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's correct, if it's possible to schedule those meetings at those times because of the ministers' other commitments. If we run much longer than that, we'll get into trouble for getting recommendations through the committee in time for the presentation of the report in the Legislature, which has to be the Monday following the opening of the Legislature, which is the second week of October. We'll really get into a time problem by then. I'll notify members as soon as I get verification from the ministers concerned.

We shall now adjourn.

The meeting adjourned at 3:55 p.m.