



First Session, 38th Parliament

OFFICIAL REPORT OF  
DEBATES OF THE  
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
(HANSARD)

Thursday, November 3, 2005  
Morning Sitting  
Volume 4, Number 4

THE HONOURABLE BILL BARISOFF, SPEAKER

ISSN 0709-1281

**PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA**  
(Entered Confederation July 20, 1871)

LIEUTENANT-GOVERNOR  
Her Honour the Honourable Iona V. Campagnolo, CM, OBC

**FIRST SESSION, 38TH PARLIAMENT**

SPEAKER OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
Honourable Bill Barisoff

**EXECUTIVE COUNCIL**

Premier and President of the Executive Council .....	Hon. Gordon Campbell
Minister of State for Intergovernmental Relations .....	Hon. John van Dongen
Deputy Premier and Minister of Education and Minister Responsible for Early Learning and Literacy .....	Hon. Shirley Bond
Minister of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation .....	Hon. Tom Christensen
Minister of Advanced Education and Minister Responsible for Research and Technology .....	Hon. Murray Coell
Minister of Agriculture and Lands.....	Hon. Pat Bell
Attorney General and Minister Responsible for Multiculturalism.....	Hon. Wally Oppal, QC
Minister of Children and Family Development.....	Hon. Stan Hagen
Minister of State for Childcare .....	Hon. Linda Reid
Minister of Community Services and Minister Responsible for Seniors' and Women's Issues.....	Hon. Ida Chong
Minister of Economic Development and Minister Responsible for the Asia-Pacific Initiative and the Olympics.....	Hon. Colin Hansen
Minister of Employment and Income Assistance .....	Hon. Claude Richmond
Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources .....	Hon. Richard Neufeld
Minister of State for Mining.....	Hon. Bill Bennett
Minister of Environment and Minister Responsible for Water Stewardship and Sustainable Communities .....	Hon. Barry Penner
Minister of Finance.....	Hon. Carole Taylor
Minister of Forests and Range and Minister Responsible for Housing .....	Hon. Rich Coleman
Minister of Health .....	Hon. George Abbott
Minister of Labour and Citizens' Services .....	Hon. Michael de Jong
Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General.....	Hon. John Les
Minister of Small Business and Revenue and Minister Responsible for Deregulation .....	Hon. Rick Thorpe
Minister of Tourism, Sport and the Arts .....	Hon. Olga Ilich
Minister of Transportation.....	Hon. Kevin Falcon

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

Leader of the Official Opposition .....	Carole James
Deputy Speaker .....	Sindi Hawkins
Assistant Deputy Speaker .....	Sue Hammell
Deputy Chair, Committee of the Whole.....	Harry Bloy
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly .....	E. George MacMinn, OBC, QC
Clerk Assistant .....	Robert Vaive
Clerk Assistant and Law Clerk .....	Ian D. Izard, QC
Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees .....	Craig H. James
Clerk Assistant and Committee Clerk .....	Kate Ryan-Lloyd
Sergeant-at-Arms.....	A.A. Humphreys
Director, Hansard Services .....	Anthony Dambrauskas
Legislative Librarian .....	Jane Taylor
Acting Legislative Comptroller.....	Brent Cunningham

## ALPHABETICAL LIST OF MEMBERS

Abbott, Hon. George (L).....Shuswap  
Austin, Robin (NDP).....Skeena  
Bains, Harry (NDP).....Surrey-Newton  
Barisoff, Hon. Bill (L).....Penticton-Okanagan Valley  
Bell, Hon. Pat (L).....Prince George North  
Bennett, Hon. Bill (L).....East Kootenay  
Black, Iain (L).....Port Moody-Westwood  
Bloy, Harry (L).....Burquitlam  
Bond, Hon. Shirley (L).....Prince George-Mount Robson  
Brar, Jagrup (NDP).....Surrey-Panorama Ridge  
Campbell, Hon. Gordon (L).....Vancouver-Point Grey  
Cantelon, Ron (L).....Nanaimo-Parksville  
Chong, Hon. Ida (L).....Oak Bay-Gordon Head  
Chouhan, Raj (NDP).....Burnaby-Edmonds  
Christensen, Hon. Tom (L).....Okanagan-Vernon  
Chudnovsky, Dave (NDP).....Vancouver-Kensington  
Coell, Hon. Murray (L).....Saanich North and the Islands  
Coleman, Hon. Rich (L).....Fort Langley-Aldergrove  
Conroy, Katrine (NDP).....West Kootenay-Boundary  
Coons, Gary (NDP).....North Coast  
Cubberley, David (NDP).....Saanich South  
de Jong, Hon. Michael (L).....Abbotsford-Mount Lehman  
Dix, Adrian (NDP).....Vancouver-Kingsway  
Evans, Corky (NDP).....Nelson-Creston  
Falcon, Hon. Kevin (L).....Surrey-Cloverdale  
Farnworth, Mike (NDP).....Port Coquitlam-Burke Mountain  
Fleming, Rob (NDP).....Victoria-Hillside  
Fraser, Scott (NDP).....Alberni-Qualicum  
Gentner, Guy (NDP).....Delta North  
Hagen, Hon. Stan (L).....Comox Valley  
Hammell, Sue (NDP).....Surrey-Green Timbers  
Hansen, Hon. Colin (L).....Vancouver-Quilchena  
Hawes, Randy (L).....Maple Ridge-Mission  
Hawkins, Sindi (L).....Kelowna-Mission  
Hayer, Dave S. (L).....Surrey-Tynehead  
Hogg, Gordon (L).....Surrey-White Rock  
Horgan, John (NDP).....Malahat-Juan de Fuca  
Horning, Al (L).....Kelowna-Lake Country  
Ilich, Hon. Olga (L).....Richmond Centre  
James, Carole (NDP).....Victoria-Beacon Hill  
Jarvis, Daniel (L).....North Vancouver-Seymour  
Karagianis, Maurine (NDP).....Esquimalt-Metchosin  
Krog, Leonard (NDP).....Nanaimo  
Krueger, Kevin (L).....Kamloops-North Thompson  
Kwan, Jenny Wai Ching (NDP).....Vancouver-Mount Pleasant  
Lali, Harry (NDP).....Yale-Lillooet  
Lee, Richard T. (L).....Burnaby North  
Lekstrom, Blair (L).....Peace River South  
Les, Hon. John (L).....Chilliwack-Sumas  
Macdonald, Norm (NDP).....Columbia River-Revelstoke  
MacKay, Dennis (L).....Bulkley Valley-Stikine  
Mayencourt, Lorne (L).....Vancouver-Burrard  
McIntyre, Joan (L).....West Vancouver-Garibaldi  
Neufeld, Hon. Richard (L).....Peace River North  
Nuraney, John (L).....Burnaby-Willingdon  
Oppal, Hon. Wally, QC (L).....Vancouver-Fraserview  
Penner, Hon. Barry (L).....Chilliwack-Kent  
Polak, Mary (L).....Langley  
Puchmayr, Chuck (NDP).....New Westminster  
Ralston, Bruce (NDP).....Surrey-Whalley  
Reid, Hon. Linda (L).....Richmond East  
Richmond, Hon. Claude (L).....Kamloops  
Robertson, Gregor (NDP).....Vancouver-Fairview  
Roddick, Valerie (L).....Delta South  
Routley, Doug (NDP).....Cowichan-Ladysmith  
Rustad, John (L).....Prince George-Omineca  
Sather, Michael (NDP).....Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows  
Simons, Nicholas (NDP).....Powell River-Sunshine Coast  
Simpson, Bob (NDP).....Cariboo North  
Simpson, Shane (NDP).....Vancouver-Hastings  
Sultan, Ralph (L).....West Vancouver-Capilano  
Taylor, Hon. Carole (L).....Vancouver-Langara  
Thorne, Diane (NDP).....Coquitlam-Maillardville  
Thorpe, Hon. Rick (L).....Okanagan-Westsides  
Trevena, Claire (NDP).....North Island  
van Dongen, Hon. John (L).....Abbotsford-Clayburn  
Whittred, Katherine (L).....North Vancouver-Lonsdale  
Wyse, Charlie (NDP).....Cariboo South  
Yap, John (L).....Richmond-Steveston

## LIST OF MEMBERS BY RIDING

Abbotsford-Clayburn.....Hon. John van Dongen  
Abbotsford-Mount Lehman.....Hon. Michael de Jong  
Alberni-Qualicum.....Scott Fraser  
Bulkley Valley-Stikine.....Dennis MacKay  
Burnaby North.....Richard T. Lee  
Burnaby-Edmonds.....Raj Chouhan  
Burnaby-Willingdon.....John Nuraney  
Burquitlam.....Harry Bloy  
Cariboo North.....Bob Simpson  
Cariboo South.....Charlie Wyse  
Chilliwack-Kent.....Hon. Barry Penner  
Chilliwack-Sumas.....Hon. John Les  
Columbia River-Revelstoke.....Norm Macdonald  
Comox Valley.....Hon. Stan Hagen  
Coquitlam-Maillardville.....Diane Thorne  
Cowichan-Ladysmith.....Doug Routley  
Delta North.....Guy Gentner  
Delta South.....Valerie Roddick  
East Kootenay.....Hon. Bill Bennett  
Esquimalt-Metchosin.....Maurine Karagianis  
Fort Langley-Aldergrove.....Hon. Rich Coleman  
Kamloops.....Hon. Claude Richmond  
Kamloops-North Thompson.....Kevin Krueger  
Kelowna-Lake Country.....Al Horning  
Kelowna-Mission.....Sindi Hawkins  
Langley.....Mary Polak  
Malahat-Juan de Fuca.....John Horgan  
Maple Ridge-Mission.....Randy Hawes  
Maple Ridge-Pitt Meadows.....Michael Sather  
Nanaimo.....Leonard Krog  
Nanaimo-Parksville.....Ron Cantelon  
Nelson-Creston.....Corky Evans  
New Westminster.....Chuck Puchmayr  
North Coast.....Gary Coons  
North Island.....Claire Trevena  
North Vancouver-Lonsdale.....Katherine Whittred  
North Vancouver-Seymour.....Daniel Jarvis  
Oak Bay-Gordon Head.....Hon. Ida Chong  
Okanagan-Vernon.....Hon. Tom Christensen  
Okanagan-Westsides.....Hon. Rick Thorpe  
Peace River North.....Hon. Richard Neufeld  
Peace River South.....Blair Lekstrom  
Penticton-Okanagan Valley.....Hon. Bill Barisoff  
Port Coquitlam-Burke Mountain.....Mike Farnworth  
Port Moody-Westwood.....Iain Black  
Powell River-Sunshine Coast.....Nicholas Simons  
Prince George North.....Hon. Pat Bell  
Prince George-Mount Robson.....Hon. Shirley Bond  
Prince George-Omineca.....John Rustad  
Richmond Centre.....Hon. Olga Ilich  
Richmond East.....Hon. Linda Reid  
Richmond-Steveston.....John Yap  
Saanich North and the Islands.....Hon. Murray Coell  
Saanich South.....David Cubberley  
Shuswap.....George Abbott  
Skeena.....Robin Austin  
Surrey-Cloverdale.....Hon. Kevin Falcon  
Surrey-Green Timbers.....Sue Hammell  
Surrey-Newton.....Harry Bains  
Surrey-Panorama Ridge.....Jagrup Brar  
Surrey-Tynehead.....Dave S. Hayer  
Surrey-Whalley.....Bruce Ralston  
Surrey-White Rock.....Gordon Hogg  
Vancouver-Burrard.....Lorne Mayencourt  
Vancouver-Fairview.....Gregor Robertson  
Vancouver-Fraserview.....Hon. Wally Oppal, QC  
Vancouver-Hastings.....Shane Simpson  
Vancouver-Kensington.....David Chudnovsky  
Vancouver-Kingsway.....Adrian Dix  
Vancouver-Langara.....Hon. Carole Taylor  
Vancouver-Mount Pleasant.....Jenny Wai Ching Kwan  
Vancouver-Point Grey.....Hon. Gordon Campbell  
Vancouver-Quilchena.....Hon. Colin Hansen  
Victoria-Beacon Hill.....Carole James  
Victoria-Hillside.....Rob Fleming  
West Kootenay-Boundary.....Katrine Conroy  
West Vancouver-Capilano.....Ralph Sultan  
West Vancouver-Garibaldi.....Joan McIntyre  
Yale-Lillooet.....Harry Lali



## CONTENTS

Thursday, November 3, 2005  
Morning Sitting

### Routine Proceedings

	Page
Committee of the Whole House.....	1627
World Trade University Canada Establishment Act (Bill Pr401)	
R. Hawes	
G. Robertson	
C. Trevena	
Reporting of Bills .....	1630
World Trade University Canada Establishment Act (Bill Pr401)	
Third Reading of Bills.....	1630
World Trade University Canada Establishment Act (Bill Pr401)	
Committee of Supply.....	1631
Estimates: Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General	
Hon. J. Les	
J. Brar	
M. Sather	
N. Macdonald	

### Proceedings in the Douglas Fir Room

Committee of Supply.....	1639
Estimates: Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts	
Hon. O. Ilich	
N. Simons	
C. Wyse	
H. Bains	
R. Fleming	
G. Gentner	
C. Evans	



THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 3, 2005

The House met at 10:03 a.m.

Prayers.

### Orders of the Day

**Hon. G. Abbott:** In this House, in the big chamber, I call committee stage debate of Bill Pr401, followed by the estimates of the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General, and in Section A, estimates debate for the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts.

### Committee of the Whole House

#### WORLD TRADE UNIVERSITY CANADA ESTABLISHMENT ACT

The House in Committee of the Whole (Section B) on Bill Pr401; S. Hawkins in the chair.

[1005]

The committee met at 10:07 a.m.

On section 1.

**R. Hawes:** First, I'd like to introduce the staff I have here with me today: Renata Neufeld from Advanced Education and Paul Goyan from the Ministry of Finance.

I would like to correct the record from the remarks I made at second reading. During my remarks I made note that the member for Chilliwack-Kent had a great deal of input into this project. In fact, it's the member for Chilliwack-Sumas. While the member for Chilliwack-Kent is a very hard-working MLA and minister, the member for Chilliwack-Sumas actually did the work on this. So I would like to correct the record on that.

Section 1 approved.

On section 2.

**G. Robertson:** On section 2 we have some questions related to the not-for-profit status of the university. Is it normal (a) for universities and (b) for private universities to be conferred with this status?

**R. Hawes:** Public universities are always not for profit, but private universities can be either for-profit or not-for-profit. The proponents have chosen to make this a not-for-profit university.

**G. Robertson:** Then a question there is.... According to the documentation, we have a public-private partnership involved with the university to design, build and operate. Is it normal for not-for-profit status to be conferred when there is a public-private partnership involved?

**R. Hawes:** If the member is referring to buildings that might be constructed, then it is common practice for even public universities to be involved in P3s for building construction. Certainly, it would be not out of the norm for a private university to be involved in a venture like that.

[1010]

**G. Robertson:** With regards to the operation of the building and the ongoing operation of the university, is there an issue there related to a private entity operating and a not-for-profit status being in place for the university?

**R. Hawes:** Perhaps the member could clarify the question, because we don't quite understand what you mean by the question.

**G. Robertson:** I will try and do that. If there's a P3 operating and there's a not-for-profit status granted to the university — in this case, the ability for a private partner to operate and profits to be generated through to the operating partner whereas there is a tax-free status conveyed to the university — I'm curious if there is a conflict involved at that stage with conferring that status when there is the ability to make profit within the operation of the university.

**R. Hawes:** If the member is willing, we'd like to take that question on notice. There is a further staff member that will be joining us when we get to the tax section, and he can respond to that question. We will respond at that time.

**G. Robertson:** I'll look forward to getting more clarification on that later.

A question more generally on the provincial government's involvement in the establishment of this university: was the provincial government involved in the establishment on behalf of British Columbians in some way?

**R. Hawes:** The government involvement has been limited to.... They have made some comments, and ultimately the government will be involved to the extent that under the degree-granting act, there will have to be.... This university is going to be given university status so it can grant degrees, which must be conferred on them by the government. Other than that, there has been some work by individual MLAs on this, but there has not been any direct government — British Columbia government — work. There has been a great deal of input at the local level by the city of Chilliwack.

**G. Robertson:** A question. I know we've heard reference to the establishment of this university through two throne speeches now, and I understand there is a memorandum of understanding as well. The language in the throne speech refers to technical support that the provincial government would be providing. Can the member please specify what technical support means?

**R. Hawes:** The technical support has been limited to providing advice on legislation and how to proceed through the legislation, but there has been no financial assistance of any kind, if that's what the member's question is leading to. There has not been financial support, but there has been some technical support in terms of guiding the proponents through a process.

**G. Robertson:** That technical support regarding advice on legislation — has it involved staff people from the Advanced Education Ministry or other ministries?

**R. Hawes:** Yes, it has involved staff from Advanced Education.

[1015]

**G. Robertson:** So there has been some staff time invested in the establishment of this university. Can the member give some sense of what that adds up to in terms of cost or FTEs?

**R. Hawes:** There was staff time allocated to this, but it was not significant. Certainly, this is a practice that has happened in the past. For example, when the Sea to Sky University was established, staff time was also allocated to that. This university will be granted university status and degree-granting status and, as such, must be in conformity with the legislation and, in fact, requires legislation. So there has to be conferencing between the proponents and staff to make sure that their plans are aligned with the ministry's requirements.

**G. Robertson:** A question related to the establishment of the World Trade University, around the petitioners for this bill. I'm curious: are these petitioners actually recognized by the United Nations Secretariat in some way?

**R. Hawes:** I will make reference to a bit of the CV for Dr. Sujit Chowdhury, who is present CEO of the Global Secretariat and secretary general of the World Trade Forum. This is a long CV, and it's on many, many websites. He's secretary general of the World Summit of Young Entrepreneurs through the United Nations. He is co-chair of the APEC Young Leaders hosted by China in 2001 in Beijing and Shanghai. It was a China-Canada joint venture. He's an associate fellow of the World Academy of Arts and Science, which is a prestigious global think tank, a board member of two international foundations, an advisor to a number of governments, and a frequent participant in governmental and multilateral eminent persons panels. Mr. Chowdhury has very extensive credentials and strong links to the UN going back a number of years.

**G. Robertson:** I wasn't looking for detail specifically on the petitioners. I was asking exactly whether or not the petitioners are actually recognized by the United Nations Secretariat in some way and if the member could provide some documents that confirm that for British Columbians.

**R. Hawes:** We are not in possession of a specific document from the UN that establishes Dr. Chowdhury and his associates. However, the government has recognized the initiative, and the UN has recognized the initiative. They are the proponents that have brought it to the government. Given the credentials of Dr. Chowdhury, we have not gone further and see no need to go further.

[1020]

**G. Robertson:** Actually, I have no further questions on section 2.

Section 2 approved.

On section 3.

**C. Trevena:** I have a couple of questions on section 3, the purpose of the university. It's very clearly laid out that it's going to be offering degrees and diplomas. However, I just wanted to get a bit of clarification. According to the UN Secretariat, the purposes of a World Trade University are to alleviate global inequalities from globalization, to create a bridge between disparate groups because of globalization, to provide opportunities for growth and shared prosperity, to be bridge-building and to provide affordable, accessible global trade capacity.

I also would like clarification further.... I'll stop there on that one and just ask for clarification on that point, and then come back with the other one.

**R. Hawes:** The training that is going to be provided there, and is basically laid out in some detail here, actually accomplishes the goals that were set out. So within the framework of legislation, there has not been a need to build that into the legislation, but the courses that the university is offering do advance those goals.

**C. Trevena:** I wonder if the member could give some explanation about how these courses are going to deal with these goals, when it has been mentioned that this is going to be an elite university.

**R. Hawes:** When this bill went through the Committee on Ethical Conduct and Private Bills, these issues were canvassed fairly extensively and unanimously accepted by all parties. At that committee meeting Dr. Chowdhury explained, among other things, that building capacity within the people in some of these underdeveloped countries is how you advance their ability to enter the global trade and the global markets to improve the economies of their country. These courses in international trade advance knowledge and build capacity within the people of those countries. That's one of the targets that the proponents are aiming for and believe will be accomplished with this university.

**C. Trevena:** In the establishment of the university there's a reference to the Third UN Conference on Least Developed Countries and that Brussels conference. The

actions by development partners listed included capacity-building, helping the least developed countries develop plans for their own education systems, encouraging young women to get into the education system, supporting governments in strengthening education and assisting through technical support the least developed countries. I wondered how this university will play that active role within the least developed countries listed by the UN under the Brussels conference.

[1025]

**R. Hawes:** The Chilliwack location is the world headquarters, but there will be at least nine other campuses which will be established in countries around the world, each of which I'm sure will have its own programs to advance this. The students will be encouraged to come to Chilliwack to finish their degrees, and international students will be brought to Chilliwack. But within their own countries there will be programs that advance the causes, as laid out by the member.

**C. Trevena:** One further question on this, on the capacity-building side. In the resolution that's referred to in the establishment and in the Secretary General's report, it's talking exclusively about south-south cooperation. I wanted a further explanation about how a university in Chilliwack is going to enhance south-south cooperation to build up skills and capacity-building.

**R. Hawes:** The campus in Chilliwack, when it receives these international students, would give them training to go home and advance the causes, as laid out by the member. She's asking about a specific location in Chilliwack. I, frankly, don't know whether you're thinking there should be a different location or... Is there a problem with the Chilliwack location? Is that what you're getting at? I'm not quite sure why you're asking about the location.

**C. Trevena:** I'm not referring specifically to the Chilliwack location. I'm referring to the UN resolution and the UN reports which are talking about south-south cooperation. It was how this university is going to ensure that there is south-south cooperation and how this will be encouraged beyond simply offering degrees and diplomas.

**R. Hawes:** Again, this is the world headquarters, and there will be a campus.... I can't remember if it's Sao Paulo. I think it's Sao Paulo that they're talking about having a campus. There will be campuses in locations internationally, and they will be linked into Chilliwack as the world headquarters — south-south. There will be an east-west connection. There will be a number of connections here. This is an international university with the headquarters here, with campuses in other countries and around the world. The students are going to come from international locations.

Sections 3 to 10 inclusive approved.

On section 11.

**G. Robertson:** On section 11, related to property, we understand that the city of Chilliwack bought the former Canadian Forces Base in Chilliwack from the Canada Lands Co. for \$9.8 million and is holding it in trust for CEPSCO, which is the Chilliwack Economic Partnership Corp., essentially as a design-build-operate P3.

My question is: what will happen to the outstanding or future aboriginal land claims associated with this parcel of land as a result of the passage of this bill?

**R. Hawes:** My understanding is that this has been to the Supreme Court of Canada, I think on two occasions, and the outstanding land claims against that portion have been settled.

Section 11 approved.

On section 12.

**G. Robertson:** We have a report that I've looked through, commissioned by the World Trade University Global Secretariat and Chilliwack economic partners, and funded in part by Western Economic Development. It projects that the provincial government revenue through until 2010 will be approximately \$7.8 million flowing from the university.

I am curious how that has incentivized the provincial government to offer preferential or exempt tax status, non-profit status, when there is a P3 in place here operating.

[1030]

**R. Hawes:** Any property tax exemption would be against any future buildings that the university may own, but in this particular case, property taxes would actually accrue to the city of Chilliwack who, under the Community Charter, have the right to waive property taxes, if they wish, to a non-profit. So at this time there is not a property tax exemption being granted by the provincial government.

**G. Robertson:** A question, then, on what exactly the member foresees here as being university purposes that qualify for exemption status.

**R. Hawes:** The exemption status allows the government to grant an exemption for anything that's used for university purposes, which are fairly broad. However, under the regulation section, it does allow the government to impose tax should the university become involved in anything that is of a commercial nature. Then the government can tax or not grant the exemption for anything done by the university for that purpose, for a commercial purpose.

Section 12 approved.

On section 13.

**G. Robertson:** On section 13, "Winding up and dissolution," a question on what will happen to taxpayer dollars should they ever be invested in this project.

**R. Hawes:** Madam Chair, he beat me to the punch getting up. I would like to move the amendment to this section that is standing in my name in the orders of the day.

[SECTION 13, by adding the text shown as underlined:

**Winding up and dissolution**

13 (1) On the winding up or dissolution of the university, the funds and property remaining after

- (a) payment of all costs, charges and expenses properly incurred in the winding up or dissolution, including the remuneration of a liquidator,
- (b) payment to employees of the university any salaries or wages,
- (c) payment of any debts of the university, and
- (d) setting aside funds necessary to finish student transcripts

shall be distributed to the Secretariat provided that the Secretariat is a registered charity as defined in the *Income Tax Act (Canada)*, or, in the event that the Secretariat is not a registered charity or has been dissolved or has ceased to exist, the remaining property of the university shall be distributed to qualified donees, as defined in the *Income Tax Act (Canada)*, having similar objects as the university, as designated by the board.

(2) For the purposes of distribution under subsection (1), any funds or property originally received for specific purposes must, wherever possible, be distributed to qualified donees concerned with purposes similar to the specific purposes for which the funds or property were received.

(3) The provisions of the *Business Corporations Act* relating to the winding up of a company apply to the university, but wherever there is a reference in that Act to a special resolution, the reference is deemed to be a reference to a resolution of the board.]

Amendment approved.

On section 13 as amended.

**G. Robertson:** Do you want me to repeat my question? My question was related to taxpayer dollars, provincial tax dollars. Should they be invested? What happens to them in that circumstance?

**R. Hawes:** I'll answer the question, although we're not really sure if this is the question the member was asking. If there were tax owing to the provincial government on a windup, we can only assume that since they are a non-profit, it would be tax that could have been on some commercial endeavour, should there ever be a commercial endeavour. That tax, I'm assuming, would have been collected. If you're talking about property tax, I'm also assuming that property tax would be paid as it falls due. Regardless of the status, if there is property tax payable, the municipality has levers to collect that tax regardless. The property doesn't leave.

Section 13 as amended approved.

Section 14 approved.

On section 15.

**G. Robertson:** Section 15 is on application of other acts. Section 5 of the Offence Act — which, it's stated here, does not apply to this act — reads: "A person who contravenes an enactment by doing an act that it forbids, or omitting to do an act that it requires to be done, commits an offence against the enactment." My question is: why, if the university qualifies as a person under the general powers in section 4, would section 5 of the Offence Act not apply?

**R. Hawes:** This is standard language, and it has been used in previous acts such as with the Sea to Sky University establishment. So there is precedent here, and the act follows that precedent.

Sections 15 to 17 inclusive approved.

Preamble approved.

Title approved.

**R. Hawes:** I move that the committee rise and report the bill complete as amended.

Motion approved.

The committee rose at 10:38 a.m.

The House resumed; Mr. Speaker in the chair.

### Reporting of Bills

#### WORLD TRADE UNIVERSITY CANADA ESTABLISHMENT ACT

Bill Pr401, World Trade University Canada Establishment Act, reported complete with amendment.

**Mr. Speaker:** When shall the bill be considered as reported?

**R. Hawes:** With leave, Mr. Speaker, now.

Leave granted.

[1040]

### Third Reading of Bills

#### WORLD TRADE UNIVERSITY CANADA ESTABLISHMENT ACT

Bill Pr401, World Trade University Canada Establishment Act, read a third time and passed.

**Hon. G. Abbott:** I call estimates debate for the Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General.

## Committee of Supply

### ESTIMATES: MINISTRY OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND SOLICITOR GENERAL

The House in Committee of Supply (Section B); S. Hawkins in the chair.

The committee met at 10:43 a.m.

On Vote 36: ministry operations, \$500,222,000.

**Hon. J. Les:** I'm pleased today to have the opportunity to present the estimates of my Ministry of Public Safety and Solicitor General. Let me start, first of all, by introducing the staff that are with me here at the moment: Deputy Minister David Morhart, Assistant Deputy Minister for Police Services Kevin Begg, and Jim Crone, who is the ADM for Management Services.

Interjection.

**Hon. J. Les:** The finance guy.

Madam Chair, every branch of the ministry, obviously, is in the business of protecting public safety. Every day the staff in my ministry work to make sure that B.C.'s communities and residents are safe and that they stay that way. I am proud to say that our programs, policies and special programs are giving British Columbians a strong sense of safety and security and peace of mind in their communities.

[1045]

My portfolio includes a wide range of public safety programs such as law enforcement and corrections, crime prevention and victim services, emergency preparedness response and recovery, coroner services, driver safety, fire prevention, consumer protection, liquor and gaming regulation and, of course, more recently the new crystal meth secretariat.

We are all working to meet the new government mandate and the five great goals as they relate to health and public safety of all British Columbians. We're committed to public safety, as I've said, and today, more than ever, threats to that safety come in many different forms. The recent devastation that we've seen in the southern United States as a result of Hurricane Katrina and Hurricane Rita, the devastating earthquake in Pakistan very recently, and about a year ago, or just less than a year ago, the tsunami that occurred in South Asia all serve as grim reminders of the severity and brutality of natural disasters and how quickly they can strike. By their very nature, these events are unpredictable in their timing, scope, severity and impact. But through our provincial emergency program, we are always working hard to be prepared. Our past experience and ongoing research and training has given us in British Columbia one of the best-structured and best-trained provincial emergency management programs in the country.

In the months ahead we are going to continue to build upon our previous achievements and through

local, regional and cross-ministry cooperation focus on mitigating the negative consequences of potential emergencies in the future. The expansion of the provincial emergency program through the addition of emergency social services, as well as the transfer of the office of the fire commissioner, will also contribute to the ministry's work in promoting the safety and security of all British Columbians.

In addition to natural disasters, there are a host of other challenges to public safety that are not unique to British Columbia. Governments and law enforcement agencies throughout the world deal with many of the same issues. These are things like organized crime, grow ops and drug labs, drug addiction, auto theft, impaired driving, property crime, youth gangs and also new and emerging crimes like Internet luring and cybercrime. What is unique to British Columbia, however, is our response to these challenges.

We have started simply. We have worked with our policing and community safety branch to give the police the tools they need to do their job. We now have high-tech communication systems in place, like PRIME, so that police can report crime instantly and share those details about that crime with officers in other jurisdictions on a real-time basis. There are integrated policing units like ISPO, which monitors known sexual predators, as well as an integrated homicide unit which has one of the best solve rates of any homicide unit in North America. There are new integrated traffic units which will hire up to 100 new officers to focus on road safety and enforcement of traffic bylaws. The units have officers from the RCMP and municipal police forces dedicated to protecting the public against such things as drunk drivers, street racers and aggressive drivers.

A common theme throughout my ministry and other ministries as well is the concept of integration. We want to make sure that all of our agencies and particularly all of our policing agencies work in a very integrated fashion. We've also worked with the office of the superintendent of motor vehicles to bring in tough new laws, some of the strictest in the country, targeting impaired drivers to make our streets safer. We have increased penalties and fines. We have allowed police to impound vehicles immediately, and, for the first time in British Columbia, there is a mandatory rehabilitation program for impaired drivers. For repeat offenders, there is a new ignition interlock program that can be ordered by the superintendent of motor vehicles.

We're on the verge of commissioning a designated policing unit for SkyTrain so that commuters will be safer in the lower mainland. There is a new Integrated Gang Task Force to help deal with the high rate of murders among Indo-Canadian men and other gang-related crime. To date \$8 million has been spent, with almost 80 police officers available for that function.

[1050]

The bait car program has been highly successful in pushing back on auto theft. We have seen statistics, particularly here on the South Island, for example,

where auto thefts have decreased in some cases by as much as 41 percent, which I think is certainly great evidence of a program that's working very successfully.

We also brought in AMBER alert to help find abducted children more quickly and more successfully.

Earlier this year we announced the biggest investment in policing in over 20 years in British Columbia — a three-year, \$122 million investment that translates into 215 new RCMP officers for the province. We've also announced and implemented the return of 100 percent of all traffic fine revenue to municipalities so that they can spend that money on policing and public safety.

As always, there is much more work to do, but as you can see, we have made real and significant progress in helping keep our communities safe. I believe the steps that we've taken have made this province a safer place to live and to raise a family, and that is the key measure of our success.

One of the things that I've learned as Solicitor General is that perhaps my most important job is to give people across the province a sense of hope, optimism and confidence. That is why I want parents to know that we are working hard to protect their children from crystal meth with a cross-government, integrated strategy which will include enhanced treatment and a provincewide education campaign. I want families to know that we are fighting marijuana grow ops that have turned some of their neighbourhoods into base camps for organized crime. I want business owners to know that we are committed to making sure that city streets and downtown areas are safe for retailers and their customers alike.

I am proud of our ministry's record and excited about our future progress as we continue to promote and implement cutting-edge approaches to enhancing public safety. In particular, I would like to mention two initiatives that promise to have a wide-ranging and positive impact on public safety. In December we will be hosting a provincial congress on public safety, providing an opportunity for public discussion and an opportunity to create new partnerships with local communities and across all levels of government. We have also recently passed in this House civil forfeiture legislation. This will help ensure that criminals will not be able to profit from the proceeds of unlawful activity.

Now I'd like to talk in a bit more detail about what we've done with some of the specific branches and services within the ministry and what we're planning to do in the future. I've outlined some of the many things that we're doing to fight crime and prevent crime before it happens. I would love to be able to say that no one will ever be victimized in the province again, but I know, obviously, that cannot be true, unfortunately. But when crime does happen, there are, invariably, victims of crime. That is why, through our victim services division, we are working hard to make sure that victims of crime get the benefits and, just as importantly, the support they need when they need it.

Every year this government pays out about \$12 million through the crime victim assistance program. We also provide ongoing assistance and monthly pensions for over 400 claimants. In addition, there are over 150 police and community-based victim services programs across the province as well as a 24-hour multilingual victim support line. We are providing much-needed financial assistance, referral services and practical support, but perhaps most importantly, we are helping to restore dignity to crime victims so that they can continue on with their lives.

The mandate of the corrections branch in the ministry is to protect public safety through the management and control of offenders. The branch runs ten correctional facilities throughout British Columbia which house approximately 2,400 inmates. The branch also operates a wide variety of programs and strategies that assist in rehabilitating offenders for the time when they will once again be part of the community. For example, since the inception of the substance abuse management program, more than 10,000 offenders have attended that program. The branch also works with police to protect the public from high-risk offenders by sending out public notifications.

[1055]

My ministry is also responsible for both the distribution of liquor through liquor stores and also for regulating liquor in licensed establishments. There are 208 government liquor stores, 559 licensed retail stores, 230 rural agency stores and more than 150 other private retail establishments. The liquor landscape in British Columbia provides both access and competition through a mix of public and private liquor outlets.

When it comes to liquor in licensed establishments, the key job of the liquor control and licensing branch is to protect public safety through the enforcement of regulations dealing with, amongst other things, overservice, overcrowding and service of liquor to minors. The branch ensures that liquor licensees protect and uphold the public interest. They do that by working closely with police, local government and licensees to make sure that there is a careful balance between the maintenance of a positive environment for business and the responsible use of alcohol.

One of the projects underway at the branch is the development of new policies and procedures to ensure that all liquor applicants undergo increased scrutiny and investigation so that we can better target the involvement of possible criminal elements within licensed establishments.

In 2005-2006 the province is projected to receive an estimated \$900 million in net gaming revenue. That money will be distributed to the people and communities of British Columbia. One of the key goals of our gaming policy is to ensure that as many charities and community organizations as possible benefit from gaming funds. At the same time, the gaming policy and enforcement branch makes sure that when people are participating in gaming, they do so in a safe and regulated environment. They are also working to reduce the impacts of excessive gambling and encourag-

ing responsible gambling practices through the responsible gaming strategy.

The B.C. Coroners Service is responsible for the investigation of all unnatural, sudden and unexpected, unexplained or unattended deaths in the province of British Columbia. The coroner's office also has a mandate to review the deaths of all children in the province. The office is not a fault-finding agency but, rather, a fact-finding agency that makes recommendations to improve public safety and prevent future deaths in similar circumstances. The coroner's office has released a comprehensive report on safe sleeping practices for infants and publishes regular statistical reports on the number of deaths from various causes throughout the province. The chief coroner is working with the recently announced review panel to ensure that our system of child-death review in British Columbia is the best that it can possibly be.

Executive and support services is a core business area that plays a strong role in supporting the entire ministry. It consists of my office, the deputy solicitor general's office, the corporate policy and planning office, the B.C. Board of Parole, the consumer services and the film classification office.

In conclusion, we are working hard to support the five great goals of the newly elected government: firstly, to make B.C. the best-educated, most literate jurisdiction on the continent; secondly, to lead the way in North America in healthy living and physical fitness; thirdly, to build the best system of support in Canada for persons with disabilities, special needs, children at risk and seniors; fourthly, to lead the world in sustainable environmental management with the best air and water quality and the best fisheries management bar none; and, fifthly, to create more jobs per capita than anywhere else in Canada.

I have said before that everyone in my ministry is in the public safety business. When you think about it, every British Columbian is as well, because public safety and preventing crime always begin at home and in each individual community.

In closing, I would simply say that we will continue to work with all British Columbians to implement new and innovative responses to crime and to enhance public safety in our homes, neighbourhoods and communities. We will also work closely and in partnership with all levels of government, local partners and jurisdictions, both across the country and internationally.

Madam Chair, I will conclude my remarks and look forward to responding to any questions that members of this chamber may have.

**J. Brar:** Following the new spirit of new tone and cooperation, I've been working with the Solicitor General and his staff to ensure we have a very productive, meaningful estimate debate. But in doing that, I think I have earned the right to have very specific, appropriate, simple answers to my questions. I understand that the estimate debate is stressful, particularly to the minister responsible and staff members and, to some extent, on this side of the House as well. That could be-

come a safety issue, so I'm aware about that. So I will continue to be sensitive when I'm asking my questions.

[1100]

I would like to start with a very simple question to begin with. If the minister can table any significant changes — not everything, but any significant changes — we have in the budget and the rationale for those things, very briefly.

**Hon. J. Les:** First of all, let me assure the member that I'm feeling fairly mellow this morning, no stress whatsoever, and I will do my best to ensure that the members opposite's stress levels are relieved as well.

In reply to the question in terms of significant changes within the ministry from last year to this. First of all, there's been an operating budget increase of almost \$45 million. The key budgetary changes are as follows. There was \$30 million for the cost of adding 215 RCMP officers to the provincial police service and \$8.9 million that accrues to additional RCMP salaries. As the member may know, that really is an increase over which we have little if any control. It's simply part of the policing contract, the provincial contract.

To address increased workload and safety requirements in the correctional institutions and probation offices: \$6.2 million; half a million dollars for the sex offender relapse prevention program; \$800,000 for the implementation of new measures to combat drinking and driving; \$670,000 for funding of operational pressures in the coroner's office; \$300,000 for added corrections costs related to the 215 new RCMP officers being added; and \$190,000 for various miscellaneous increases.

[S. Hammell in the chair.]

**M. Sather:** I wanted to ask the minister some questions and make some observations about the relationship violence treatment program — treatment for men who have been convicted of spousal assault or who have entered into an undertaking of the court to receive treatment for that offence.

By way of background, I worked in that program for a number of years, and so I wanted to make some of my comments about what I observed and get some feedback from the minister. I was a therapist in the relationship violence treatment program, a 17-week treatment program for men which was preceded by a ten-week program administered by probation officers, called Respectful Relationships. Are those two programs still in place?

[1105]

**Hon. J. Les:** I can advise the member that both of those programs are still in place.

**M. Sather:** One of the observations that I had has to do with the length of the probation order. What I observed was that a number of times, the men's probation order would expire after they had finished the Respectful Relationships program, and they would not then

get into the treatment program because their order had expired. Is the minister aware of this issue? Is it a concern, and is there anything being done to address that?

**Hon. J. Les:** I want to thank the member for the question. It is a very relevant question and one that does cause us concern. Obviously, when there isn't an appropriate match between the probation order and programming that might be available, that is a crack through which people can fall.

We are available and from time to time do have input at the sentencing stage. We are in discussion from time to time with the judiciary and endeavour through that mechanism to make them aware of those concerns and perhaps to make better use of input that can be provided by the corrections service, so that judges are aware when they're passing sentence that there has to be a certain cohesion between the probation order and the availability of programming.

**M. Sather:** I believe the member for Surrey-Panorama Ridge is watching me with a jaundiced eye, so I will try to get in at least one more question or concern that I have. It has to do with the nature of the two programs that I mentioned.

The RR program, if I may call it that, Respectful Relationships, is a program whereby men are given latitude — at least they were up to the time I left it a year and a half ago — as to their participation in the program. If they did not want to answer a question, they were told they didn't have to, and their level of participation was somewhat, quite considerably, at their discretion.

However, I and other therapists found that that is a problem when they then come into treatment, where the expectation is different. This is not a therapy program in the usual sense. These men have committed a crime. We have a duty to society and to their female victims to hold them to account, so it's very important that they be required — and they always were required — to answer questions about what, in fact, they had done.

I and other therapists found that the men who come through the RR program oftentimes were actually less ready for treatment and more resistant to treatment than when they didn't have the RR program, so that's a big concern. It makes it much, much harder to deliver the kind of service that needs to be delivered to be effective to protect society and to protect women.

I just wondered if the minister had any comments about that.

**Hon. J. Les:** Again, I appreciate the question from the member. Obviously, he has considerable personal background in these issues, and I appreciate that and certainly wouldn't mind at some point, perhaps over lunch in the dining room, discussing these issues further.

What I can advise the member, however, is that we have an ongoing review process of these programs, and I think that is appropriate. In that review we involve academics and other authorities, as well, to en-

sure that we have a process of continuous improvement in place.

[1110]

It is my personal interest, obviously — as I think it should be — that when offenders are eventually released from incarceration or when they complete their programs, we release a person back to society who can actually function properly within society. We see, in too many instances, evidence of offenders being released no better than the day that they entered into incarceration. I think that is a somewhat disturbing trend. Sometimes the police will tell you that they can almost predict in advance an offender reoffending. All they need to know is his release date, and they can predict the next offence happening.

I think we all need to work constructively to ensure that our treatment programs work better. I'm committed to doing that. I know my ministry is as well, and I would certainly, over time, welcome any further input the member might want to provide.

**J. Brar:** Before I say anything, I would like to say thank you to the staff members. I've had a meeting with them, and they have been very, very helpful, and supportive even. I was offered a tour of two different corrections service facilities. Thank you very much to all the staff members for your support.

One of the comments that the minister made in his opening remarks was about traffic fines. I want to ask the Solicitor General.... On September 24, 2004, the Premier made the announcement at the Union of B.C. Municipalities convention in Kelowna that his government would return to communities 100 percent of all net traffic fine revenue generated within any municipal boundaries. The Premier further said: "We will be providing the revenues from all traffic fines to municipalities to make sure that they can have the support they need for additional policing, public safety programs and crime prevention." The government, in fact, has returned approximately \$116 million over a two-year period.

My question to the Solicitor General is very simple. Can the Solicitor General inform whether the \$126 million in traffic-fine revenues has been used by all municipalities for its intended purpose or not? Does the government have any stats they can produce explaining what the cities, towns and districts did with that funding?

**Hon. J. Les:** I just want to, first of all, correct the figures that the member is using. By my figures.... I believe the member referred to \$126 million over a two-year....

Interjection.

**Hon. J. Les:** Pardon?

Interjection.

**Hon. J. Les:** No, actually, it's not that high. The figures I have over a two-year period are something in the area of \$90 million — \$41.8 million plus \$49 million.

In any event, it is a significant amount of money that has been made available to municipalities. I remember well, when I was a mayor myself, how irked I always was that this significant amount of revenue that accrued from policing activities that were paid for by municipalities actually went to provincial general revenue and were never seen again. Although by September of '04 I was on the other side of the fence, I was certainly very pleased, as I thought the transferring of that revenue to the municipal sector was, indeed, very appropriate. I think it has been well received, obviously, by the municipal sector as well.

Concern has been raised that these moneys do, in fact, go to policing and public safety enhancement activities. The Union of B.C. Municipalities has recently completed a survey which has proved to our satisfaction that the vast majority of the funding is, in fact, going into policing and public safety initiatives across the province. I have certainly been vocal, as well, with those municipalities where there has been an expression of concern that we do want to see those revenues transferred directly into police and public safety-related programs.

[1115]

At this moment in time I can advise the House that I think that is happening in an adequate way across the province. Every community is doing that in a somewhat different way, but the funding is actually going to the purposes intended when the Premier made the announcement in September of last year.

**J. Brar:** Well, I'm pleased to see what the Solicitor General is saying in response to my question. When this announcement was made, it was very, very well received, particularly by the police organizations and associations, as a very positive initiative to assist in dealing with crime and other issues that were unique to each community. It was understood that this funding would assist in buying new equipment, hiring new police officers and dealing with concerns of the community via crime prevention initiatives.

I just met — and probably the Solicitor General also met — with the B.C. Federation of Police Officers representatives just a couple of weeks ago. That's not what they mentioned to me. They mentioned something much different from what I heard from the Solicitor General.

Is it true that many municipalities put the traffic fine revenue into general revenue and never spent it on policing initiatives?

**Hon. J. Les:** As I'm sure the member understands, the municipal finances, frankly, are one general fund, with the possible exception sometimes of utilities. So yes, these traffic fine revenues, when they flow from the province to the municipality, would go into their general fund. As I said earlier, though, we are confident — given the survey that has been recently accomplished by the Union of B.C. Municipalities and from our own observations within government — that the vast majority of that funding is in fact going into the

purposes intended. It does not necessarily always translate directly into additional officers.

As the member indicated in his remarks, there are a variety of things in which this money can be invested, but all with the objective of enhancing public safety, crime prevention and crime fighting. I say again that I think that has been accomplished to our satisfaction. There was certainly the odd community here and there that seemed to be having some difficulty obtaining or achieving that objective, but we are monitoring that closely. We'll continue to do so to make sure that that significant amount of money is actually being used for the purposes that government intended in the first place.

**J. Brar:** I understand that the UBCM has done a survey to find out what this money has been used for, but I think that if I were the Minister of Public Safety and Solicitor General, of course, I would be concerned that the money the province has given to municipalities is in fact spent on the purpose which is very clearly defined by the province.

I would like to ask another question. Probably, the minister can help me on that. Are there any policies, procedures or legislation in place to ensure that the funding — the traffic fine money — is used for community safety and policing issues only?

**Hon. J. Les:** First of all, let me say this. Having been elected myself in municipal politics for a considerable length of time and now having had the privilege of being elected provincially for four or five years, I believe it's fair to say that the Union of B.C. Municipalities enjoys a great reputation around the province and has always worked very constructively with provincial governments for.... Well, I guess it's exactly a hundred years now.

[1120]

I have found them always to be very constructive. Currently in my role as Solicitor General.... They were certainly very aware of concerns we were starting to express that maybe not all of the revenues that had been collected under traffic fines and thus transferred to municipalities were being used for police and public safety purposes. It was in response to that that they undertook the survey. Frankly, I have complete confidence in the work that was accomplished by the UBCM.

In a similar vein, in response to the member's question, "Is there legislation or other compulsive mechanisms that direct that money specifically through municipal budgets into policing...?" We do not employ a heavy-handed approach when it comes to our relationship with the municipal sector in British Columbia. Municipalities are valued partners and, I think, responsible partners. They clearly have understood that the money that accrued to them through traffic fine revenue was to be used for the purposes intended and as laid out by the province.

Again, as I've said before, we are satisfied that, by and large, they have complied with that direction

without any need for the province to impose legislation, which I think would be, frankly, quite a disrespectful thing to do. I know of no particular other area where that might have been done in the past.

**J. Brar:** I would like to conclude this part of the debate. I will take the remarks made by the Solicitor General this way. Basically, the Solicitor General gave us the assurance that the money which has been handed over to the municipalities under traffic fines is in fact used for the purpose for which it was intended. I will take that comment on that one.

I'll move on to the other, probably bigger issue on police. My understanding is that the Solicitor General supports the integration of police at this point in time. That process was started a few years ago and is still working forward on that direction.

My question to the Solicitor General is: can he list the different units which have been integrated in the last few years under this new initiative — just a list of those different task forces or whatever?

**Hon. J. Les:** The member is correct. Frankly, I enjoy repeating the fact that integration is an absolute necessity and something that we are promoting aggressively. The member will be aware that the "a" word sometimes comes up as well, and that's amalgamation. That is not something that I am particularly pursuing at the present time.

[1125]

My message to policing agencies and communities, as a matter of fact, would be that we do not necessarily need to amalgamate, but I do expect that we integrate resources wherever possible. I think that is the responsible thing to do — both in view of using taxpayers' dollars efficiently but, perhaps more importantly, making sure we get the policing results that we need. As we certainly are aware, the nature of crime changes along with the rest of society, and crime and criminals are becoming more sophisticated.

The member asked specifically about the areas where we have already integrated resources, and I can list a number of them: the ISPO program, which is the Sexual Predator Observation Team; IHIT, which is the Integrated Homicide Investigations; traffic and road enforcement; cybercrime; PRIME, which is the communications structure that I referred to earlier, which I have actually seen in operation in police cars. If the member wants to take advantage of an opportunity, I think that would be something well worth having a look at.

There's the IMPACT program, which we sometimes know as the bait car program, and the emergency response teams. Dog sections are being integrated, and the Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit.... Those are all areas, for the most part, of fairly recent integration of police resources between the provincial force and municipal forces.

**J. Brar:** Are there any other specific initiatives going on at this point in time that this House should know of,

with regard to the integration of police in the near future?

**Hon. J. Les:** In response to the member's question, I can refer to two areas that are currently under consideration. There is a serious crime unit being talked about for the lower part of Vancouver Island. There's some significant interest in that, and it's certainly, again, something that I'm very supportive of.

Another area where we are giving consideration is for an expansion of the Integrated Homicide Investigation Team in the lower mainland area. There are still a few independent police forces that are not included in that integrated team. Frankly, I would like them to be, and we'll work to help ensure that that happens.

**J. Brar:** I think one of the purposes of the integration is effective communication across different police jurisdictions as well as support and collaboration. During the long Air India trial, we read a lot of stories about the miscommunication or lack of communication between the RCMP and CSIS. I think that is kind of alarming sometimes, when you hear through the media as to what was going on. So did we learn anything from that — what is defined as a lack or gap of communication when it relates to the global situation of policing and community safety?

[1130]

**Hon. J. Les:** As all members of the House will know, 9/11 was a very significant event in the history of the world, at least in recent history, and from that, we all learned many things. Communications strategies were certainly right at the top of the list of things that needed attention.

As a result of 9/11, a committee was established that meets immediately after every emergency event, whether that is here at home, domestically or abroad — I remember as recently as the train bombings in London, England, for example. There is now an open, full and free flow of communication between various agencies to make sure that everybody has recent and up-to-date information on which to make decisions. There are also mechanisms in place that ensure that information is fanned out to all agencies that require that information.

Recently there was a review of that process when there was an apprehension of a tsunami event on the west coast. I believe that was back in July. There were some concerns with the dissemination of that information at the time that the incident was in progress, or at least there was an apprehension that it was in progress. Luckily, nothing transpired at the end of the day, but there was a review process implemented to ensure that we made improvements to that fan out system.

Clearly, we need to have an ongoing dialogue, and there is an ongoing dialogue between our police forces domestically, as well as CSIS and international agencies, to ensure that we have the most up-to-date information possible that will allow us to deal with threats not only from here at home but also from abroad.

**J. Brar:** I agree with the Solicitor General that 9/11 and the bombing in London have had significant impact as to how we think about our safety, as well as how the police forces and intelligence forces can work more effectively to respond in a more effective way.

[1135]

When we talk about the Air India thing.... That happened inside the country. We have collected tons of information on that, and we have the luxury of having that information here inside the country. I would like to ask specifically if the minister can respond to it from British Columbia's point of view: is there any learning? Is there any lesson we learned from that? That, in people's minds, was a huge gap of communication between these forces.

**Hon. J. Les:** Clearly, the Air India tragedy was one of the most tragic events that ever happened originating from Canadian soil, and it has consumed an enormous amount of time, effort, energy and resources from a vast variety of agencies, not only here in British Columbia but nationally and abroad as well.

I should point out to the member that that was a federal investigation, and it was clear as the years unfolded and as the investigation unfolded that there were concerns raised with respect to communication between various agencies. I think those agencies have taken note of the concerns that have been expressed over time, and there are certainly improved procedures available today.

Again, I want to stress the importance of technologies like PRIME, which allow police to enter new information from the scene on a real-time basis and make it available to other police everywhere. It is those kinds of technology-enabled approaches to policing that are making a huge difference today. I was recently on a ride-along with the Vancouver police department, and the VPD, of course, has PRIME installed in its police cars.

We were at a scene where a number of people were being apprehended, and within five minutes we knew of their gang connections and of the fact that the vehicles they were driving had been part of other investigations related to drug smuggling, for example. It was pretty amazing to me how quickly information is available to police today on an integrated basis, and it certainly gives me great comfort that these are important new tools that will enable the police to do their jobs much better.

**J. Brar:** Because of the time issue, I will move on to the next question. The Victoria police department did a report on the use of the Taser gun, because there were some questions. One of the recommendations in that report was made to a provincial coordinator, who will be responsible to set some standards of training that go across the province and provide intelligence, again, to be made available across the province to all the forces. I want to know: has that been done? Where are we in that process? Can the minister just update?

**Hon. J. Les:** I have breaking news for the member. One of the recommendations, as he points out, was for

a provincial coordinator to be established and hired. That was, in fact, just done in the last few days. The person hired is Joel Johnson. He will be starting work next week, and we will then have a provincial coordinator in place with respect to the use of Tasers.

[1140]

I would point out that the reviews that have been done around Tasers have proven that that is a perfectly acceptable way of arresting people — often, of course, far less lethal than the alternatives. I would point out, as well, that anyone who is permitted to use a Taser in British Columbia must pass the standard that is set out by the Justice Institute.

**J. Brar:** Thank you for the information. This is a very quick question. Is it possible to get a copy of the job description of the coordinator?

**Hon. J. Les:** I will undertake to make that available to the member.

**N. Macdonald:** I am under strict instructions to keep this very, very quick, so I will. It is around the tradition of the province paying for the full cost of policing for communities under 5,000. Five of the seven municipalities in my area are under 5,000, and concerns around the cost implications of any change.... Now, I know this has been around for a while, and I just wanted to give the minister an opportunity to explain the direction that he's taking the ministry on this issue.

**Hon. J. Les:** I appreciate the opportunity to respond to the member's question with respect to this issue. The member is correct; we have certainly indicated clearly that this is an issue that needs to be addressed.

Up to now the municipal entities of under-5,000 population have not paid for policing services, and I think the case is rather easily made that that's an inequitable situation. We have been in almost constant correspondence with the Union of B.C. Municipalities on this matter. We were hoping to implement a solution a year or two ago. For a variety of reasons, we decided to hold off that implementation, but we have clearly signalled that in the year 2007, municipalities under 5,000 will have to start making payments in respect to the policing services to their communities. What we have not yet arrived at is a formula that will be implemented at that time.

[1145]

I am certainly sensitive to the cost pressures that might bring to bear in some of those smaller communities. I am not oblivious to that in any way, and I'm certainly committed to working with those communities and with the Union of B.C. Municipalities so that we have a predictable and manageable situation in 2007, one that will not provide property tax rate shock to the residents of those communities in any great and unanticipated degree. But it is something that we are moving forward with. That will not be a surprise to the UBCM or to their membership.

**N. Macdonald:** I'll be really quick. Once again, I just have a minute to do this, so we can have the debate about the equitability. I'm glad that you're mindful of the implications for the communities — the implications are huge, of course — and that you are going to take those into consideration, and we can have the debate around whether it's truly equitable or not. Thank you for your answer.

**J. Brar:** I want to move on because, as I mentioned again.... Maybe I'll keep mentioning that, because we have a very limited time. I would appreciate it if the minister can provide us with a brief response so that we can go through all the questions. I will move on to Corrections. Is there any capital funding to build a new correctional facility in the budget?

**Hon. J. Les:** I'm going to take the member's advice. The answer is no.

**J. Brar:** I think that in the opening remarks the Solicitor General made a comment, I know, that was not about the capital but about \$6.2 million with regard to safety requirements. Can you please provide a description of that — as to what that is?

**Hon. J. Les:** The \$6.2 million is being spent as follows. It's for the addition of 57 front-line positions in correctional centres to help in supervising an increasing number of inmates that are in custody and increasingly difficult-to-manage inmates — those that are mentally disordered, gang members and high-profile cases — and also for safety and security improvements that will be implemented in probation offices in order to protect professional and administrative staff. As a result of that, we think the safety of staff, offenders and the general public will improve.

**J. Brar:** I have one more question. This is the follow-up question. Just a few years ago the government closed about 12 correctional facilities. I know that because of that, there has been tremendous pressure on the corrections staff members in providing effective support in the correctional facilities. Is this new funding a reflection of those facilities which have been closed in the past?

[1150]

**Hon. J. Les:** I should point out to the member that three or four years ago, when we closed those various locations, we actually had a declining inmate population in British Columbia. That has since reversed.

It wasn't only a declining prisoner population that brought about the need to close a significant number of those institutional locations. It was very much an effort driven by the need to be as efficient as possible in spending taxpayers' dollars. This is a very expensive enterprise. Operating in ten locations as opposed to 22, I think everyone would agree, has some inherent operational efficiencies that go with that that we have been able to take advantage of.

As I have already pointed out, we now have increases in terms of the number of inmates that are in custody at any given time, and it might be of interest to members of the House to know that the increases are actually more apparent on the remanded-inmate side as opposed to the sentenced inmates. That is part of an ongoing trend that's been apparent for some time. We anticipate that there might be some increases on the sentenced side as well.

As the member may be aware, there was legislation introduced just several days ago in the federal House that is going to further limit conditional sentencing. I would suspect that as a result of that, we are going to see more sentenced prisoners in custody in our prison system across British Columbia.

**J. Brar:** I need to ask one more question, because the Solicitor General made the very interesting comment that those facilities were closed because the number of inmates was declining at that time. Now what I've found out is that the number of inmates is going up. Is that in any way a reflection of crime going up, or what is that? Why is it that the numbers are going up? What is the rationale behind it? Do we have any information on why it is that suddenly the numbers started going up?

**Hon. J. Les:** Several factors. One that I've already touched on is the increased number of inmates that are actually on remand. That is one of the trends that is heading up.

Secondly, it's clearly evident that we are getting better results out of our policing efforts, and that, obviously, will translate into more people incarcerated.

The member will be aware, as well, that conditional sentencing was put in place in the '90s and, I think, with some exuberance. Since that time, a number of people on conditional sentencing have actually breached their provisions, which has resulted in them being incarcerated in our facilities.

There are a number of factors. Those are three of them. There may well be others. What it has led to is increasing numbers of incarcerated individuals.

**J. Brar:** Madam Chair, keeping in mind the time, should I continue? I think we have five more minutes to go.

Interjection.

**J. Brar:** I would like to move on to the B.C. Integrated Gang Task Force. Over 70 young people have been murdered during the last about ten years, particularly belonging to the South Asian community. This issue seems to be out of control at this point in time.

There are young people who somehow mistakenly get involved in the youth gangs. However, they don't want to be part of that anymore. But there's significant peer pressure, and there's a lot of fear, because if they leave the gang, there are very serious, serious repercussions.

[1155]

My question is: what kind of support is available to assist those young people who want to get out of gang life?

**Hon. J. Les:** I appreciate the member raising this question. Obviously, it is a very serious one and with some serious ramifications in our communities. We all know of the case just in the last four or five days where a woman in Port Moody was a victim of flying bullets, shall we say, in what is suspected to have been a gang-related incident as well.

There are a number of programs, some of which are part of my ministry — victim and crime victims programs — where there's a variety of moneys available: in some cases, \$5,000; in other cases, \$2,500 for ongoing maintenance of programs. There's also the Safer Schools program, which is being conducted in conjunction with the University College of the Fraser Valley. There's a victims line that's available for people to access.

As I said before in our previous discussion around additional resources that are being made available to communities, some of that money can be directed towards programs to stem gang violence as well.

The situation, I think, has certainly commanded our attention. We've responded appropriately. The Integrated Gang Task Force is hard at work to deal with this issue, and I know they have been successful in some places — actually successful in stopping the commission of crimes in progress. So we understand that it is a serious public policy issue and one that we think we are addressing proactively. We'll be looking for more ideas in the future as to how we can work constructively with communities, not only geographical communities but also ethnic communities in the province, to ensure that we get a handle on this threat to the safety of individuals in our communities.

Noting the hour, Madam Chair, I move that the committee rise, report progress and ask leave to sit again.

Motion approved.

The committee rose at 11:59 a.m.

The House resumed; Mr. Speaker in the chair.

Committee of Supply (Section B), having reported progress, was granted leave to sit again.

Committee of Supply (Section A), having reported resolution, was granted leave to sit again.

Hon. G. Abbott moved adjournment of the House.

Motion approved.

**Mr. Speaker:** This House stands adjourned until two o'clock this afternoon.

The House adjourned at 12 noon.

## PROCEEDINGS IN THE DOUGLAS FIR ROOM

### Committee of Supply

#### ESTIMATES: MINISTRY OF TOURISM, SPORT AND THE ARTS

The House in Committee of Supply (Section A): H. Bloy in the chair.

The committee met at 10:08 a.m.

On Vote 39: ministry operations, \$176,967,000.

**Hon. O. Ilich:** I'd like to just begin with some introductory remarks and introduce some of the people with me here today. We have a large crowd here, and they're not here just because we need a lot of support. They're here because there's no heat or lights in their building, so they decided they would like to have the free coffee and come over here and sit in the warmth and watch us.

With me today is Virginia Greene, our deputy minister, and Bill Irwin, the acting assistant deputy minister of tourism and resort development. Shauna Brouwer is here behind me. She's the executive financial officer, and Russ Anthony is the president and project director of the Vancouver Convention Centre Expansion Project. We also have Charles Parkinson, who is the director of sport.

The Premier has both honoured and challenged me with a new ministry and a new mandate, which is to bring British Columbians together to build participation, celebrate excellence and increase the social and economic benefits of tourism, sport and the arts.

[1010]

This ministry is about who we are as British Columbians, who we are today and who we can be in the future. We engage all British Columbians — youth, aboriginals, seniors, and private and not-for-profit sectors — in creating a province in which to live, work and invest. To build an economy that is already doing well is a challenge, but it's a challenge we must take up if we are to retain our edge in today's highly competitive global economy.

For example, tourism is B.C.'s third-largest economic generator, contributing more than \$9 billion a year to our provincial economy and employing more than 114,000 people in 18,000 tourism enterprises across B.C. But worldwide, tourism is highly competitive, and we can't be satisfied to just sit on our successes. We need to continually be looking to the future and making ourselves even more attractive than we already are.

Still, it isn't all about economic growth. Before one visitor enters our province, we are already more than four million people, with a rich heritage, a firm sense of community and a desire to live our lives fully. British

Columbians are active in outdoor recreation, in the arts and other cultural pursuits, and in team and individual sports.

More importantly, the people of our province understand the strong link between communities and volunteering, and volunteer they do — in huge numbers — doing everything from coaching youth soccer to raising money for hospital societies to rehabilitating salmon streams. I see encouraging and supporting volunteers as one of the most important aspects of this job.

Our ministry is structured around three core business areas: tourism and resort development; sport, recreation and volunteers; and art, culture and heritage. Let me expand on some of these initiatives planned for the core areas.

Earlier this year the government reaffirmed its commitment to tourism and the opportunities for tourism to create new jobs and new private sector investment. The government also set out an ambitious goal: to dramatically increase tourism and employment and to double tourism revenues by 2015. To help industry achieve this, we've made it possible for Tourism B.C. to double its budget to \$50 million per year. We also gave \$25 million to UBCM to help communities develop marketing initiatives to maximize their tourism potential, and as well, we provided \$12 million in one-time funding to the province's six tourism regions to enhance tourism infrastructure and marketing.

Doubling tourism within the next ten years is an aggressive target, and funding is only part of the equation. To achieve this, we'll need to take a new look at where we're heading. We'll need a larger strategy to guide our activities. To this end, we are planning to host an industry summit in 2006 that will involve government, industry stakeholders, first nations and communities. Once we've pooled our ideas, the result will be a new road map that will outline how we as government can best support industry and communities in doubling tourism revenues by 2015.

Other key initiatives in our mandate include strategic planning for tourism related to the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games; hosting the world partnerships; research and analysis to support B.C.'s tourism associations; and working with Aboriginal Tourism B.C., first nations and other partners to support the development of aboriginal tourism, including capacity-building, increased employment and identification of new tourism opportunities.

I can't stress too much the effect of the entrepreneurial spirit when it comes to B.C. tourism. Just today the Okanagan Falls Wine Festival Society announced that 2005, the 25th annual festival, was their most successful yet, with an increase of 16 percent in direct revenues to \$3.7 million over ten days. This is a testament to the 67 wineries and more than 40 tourism operators who provide this increasingly popular experience.

Our ministry is also responsible for resort development and adventure tourism, including backcountry skiing and ecotourism. Following up on the work done by the B.C. Resort Task Force, our ministry will be leading the implementation of the British Co-

lumbia resort strategy and action plan. We have undertaken comprehensive updates to our policies and guidelines, including tenure terms, land sale regulations and pricing. These changes will enhance B.C.'s competitive advantage and bring fresh investment to our province.

With the cooperation of local governments in UBCM, we're developing a new harmonized resort approval process that will bring together all provincial and local government approvals into one single process. The 44 existing alpine ski resorts for which we are responsible are projecting new capital investments of more than \$1 billion over the next two to five years, and proposals for new projects in every part of the province worth over \$4.5 billion in estimated capital investment are currently under review. We will continue to work to fully implement the resort strategy and action plan in 2005-2006 to further encourage the growth of B.C.'s resort sector.

[1015]

We have assumed responsibility for forest recreation sites and trails, and we are committed to maintaining and developing these resources, including honouring the existing management and maintenance contracts. We will be looking for additional ways to enhance these resources, because we know how important they are to British Columbians. That importance is demonstrated by the wide range of individuals, businesses, community organizations and societies that manage many of these sites.

Kim and Kevin Coulter manage Five-Mile Boat Launch, Pitt Creek, Potlatch Creek and Sprague Bay recreation sites in the Columbia forest district. The Backcountry Horsemen Society of B.C. manage the Red Mountain Trail, Bear Mountain Trail and Mission TFL recreation trails in the Chilliwack forest district.

Other sites and trails are managed by groups as diverse as New Skeena Forest Products, Skatin nations and Squamish nation, Kaslo to Sandon Rails to Trails committee, the West Coast Dirt Riders, the B.C. Conference of the Mennonite Brethren Church and the Sunshine Coast regional district.

We have a natural beauty that is beyond compare in B.C., and we will take our stewardship responsibility seriously to ensure development in sensitive areas is done properly and sustainably.

Turning to sport — I just want to talk about that for a few minutes — the sport and recreation and volunteer business area has a mandate to increase participation and achieve excellence in sport and physical activity in British Columbia. In partnership with sport organizations, other ministries and levels of government, we address issues and opportunities affecting over 850,000 members of B.C. sport organizations.

This includes the B.C. Seniors Games, where upwards of 2,500 competitors compete in 23 or more events with the support of more than 1,500 volunteers. This past August, I attended the 2005 games in the Cowichan Valley and was impressed by the spirit and goodwill of the organizers and participants. I was also impressed by the \$1.7 million in economic activity gen-

erated for the local community and the \$80,000 legacy fund that will be distributed to community organizations.

Already Canada's most active province, our goal is to increase physical activity across the province and in every age group by 20 percent by 2010. Our recreation and sporting initiatives support a Ministry of Health program, ActNow, launched in the spring of 2005, an initiative that combines cross-government and community-based approaches to increase wellness and physical fitness. It is through this multilevel, grass-roots support that amateur sport in B.C. will thrive, increasing physical fitness, encouraging excellence and building a system that will enable us to own the podium in 2010 and beyond.

Canada has hosted the Olympic and Paralympic Games twice, but it's the only host country never to win a gold medal, and we hope that support for athletes and better training through our game plan program will remedy that lack in 2010.

Sport tourism generates about \$376 million in revenue for the province every year. It's one of the fastest-growing segments of the tourism sector. Our ministry will continue to aggressively market British Columbia as a destination for major and international sport events. Upcoming events for which we have committed funding include the 2006 Grey Cup — \$500,000 invested in that; the 2006 World Junior Hockey Championships; the 2007 World Youth Soccer Championship; and the 2008 North American Indigenous Games.

These kinds of events attract visitors from across North America and from across the world, and those visitors spend money in B.C. and return home and tell their friends about it. In the case of the world youth soccer tournament, television will beam our province around the world. Of course, we aren't just focused on elite athletes. We want to support the fitness goals of all British Columbians at every age and participation level.

Our province has the second-largest volunteer sector in Canada, with more than 1.5 million active volunteer positions. In 2000, B.C.'s volunteer sector contributed 142 million hours of service. This is the equivalent of 74,000 full-time jobs. For example, our 140,000 sport volunteers are at the heart of our amateur athletic system and a key partner in achieving the great goal of becoming the fittest jurisdiction ever to host an Olympic and Paralympic Games.

[1020]

Volunteers are also crucial to our arts, culture and heritage sectors. From the talented people who put on arts events in every corner of our province to the fundraisers for our cultural institutions to the docents in our museums, volunteers are the real face of our province.

Each year the Royal B.C. Museum in Victoria sees some 550 volunteers, mostly seniors, giving nearly 50,000 hours of service at the museum. Volunteers assist with education programs and serve as interpreters and guides at the museum, and this connection with the community helps keep the museum vital and strong. The volunteers, too, stress the importance of

serving as a role model for their children and grandchildren by demonstrating an engagement with the community, intellectual curiosity and generosity in offering their time, experience and skills. Our goal is to continue building that volunteer force across the province.

Art, culture and heritage, the ministry's third core business area, support the delivery of cultural and heritage policy and programs. Key initiatives for these sectors include.... Cultural services involve developing a sustainable arts and cultural sector and promoting the arts.

The heritage branch encourages and facilitates the protection and conservation of heritage in British Columbia. We demonstrate heritage leadership by identifying best practices and delivering specialized training. We now lead the nation in the number of records in the Canadian register of historic places. A new community-driven B.C. heritage legacy fund has been established, and we look forward to celebrating British Columbia's 150th anniversary in 2008.

The archaeology branch ensures the protection and conservation of heritage sites, and the inventory contains records for about 30,000 sites, information that can be accessed by resource managers, first nations and the general public. We're also responsible for the B.C. Film Commission, which supports and markets British Columbia's film, location and production services to the international market.

The arts and culture sector contributes about \$4.2 billion each year to the B.C. economy, including B.C.'s film and television industry, which is the third-largest in North America. Cultural tourism is also an important and growing contributor to our economy. More than 50 percent of visitors to B.C. indicate an interest in culturally based travel, and the World Tourism Organization projects that cultural tourism will expand at an annual rate of 15 percent globally through 2010. To capitalize on this emerging market, we need to find opportunities for tourism operators to partner with communities and cultural organizations.

We need to help our cultural economy grow. In the coming years we will support new initiatives like the Asia-Pacific museum of trade, sport and culture, which will not only provide an exciting new tourism destination but will foster a greater understanding of the contribution that Canadians from East Asia and the Pacific Rim have made to our history and our heritage.

The Vancouver International Film Festival is a model for how to run a festival. The 24th festival, which ran from September 29 to October 14, enjoyed a big boost in sales over last year, resulting in an overall record figure of \$978,000. In addition, more than \$1 million of the film society's \$2.5 million budget was self-generated, the highest percentage for a major Canadian film fest.

As well, we are committing an additional \$9 million over three years for the British Columbia Arts Council. The Arts Council supports a wide range of organizations, like the Green Thumb Theatre, which for 30 years has been producing contemporary plays for children

and youth that explore the issues faced by young people. Green Thumb original productions have been staged by more than 200 theatre companies worldwide in languages as diverse as Chinese, French, Spanish, German, Danish, Hebrew and Japanese.

In conclusion, you have before you a budget estimate for 2005-2006. With a budget of just under \$180 million and 114 full-time-equivalents, we are a modestly sized ministry, but we are a ministry with broad responsibilities, and the sectors we support have a huge impact on the prosperity and the social well-being of this province. The ministry has been forged from pieces of four other ministries, and for the 2005-2006 budget year we are primarily reconciling the budgets established for those other agencies.

[1025]

Much of our budget allotment actually flows through to five service delivery Crowns. We have responsibility for the Royal B.C. Museum, Tourism B.C., the Vancouver Convention and Exhibition Centre, the Vancouver Convention Centre expansion project and the Provincial Capital Commission. Each of these agencies makes a significant contribution to the development of tourism, our province's third-largest industry and, in the cases of the Royal B.C. Museum and the Provincial Capital Commission, significant contributions to preserving our heritage.

As a new ministry, we have the opportunity to create new plans that will encourage new investment, garner more worldwide attention, strengthen our tourism sector and create a vibrant cultural economy. We have an opportunity to demonstrate leadership on a national level and to focus on excellence, not just in relation to the Olympic and Paralympic Games but also in arts, culture and the pursuit of personal fitness goals. With tourism and recreation, sports and volunteers, arts and culture and heritage all under one roof, we have the opportunity to harness the natural synergies that exist to attract the highest benefit for every dollar invested.

We will need to identify new resources in order to match our investments to our goals of dramatically expanding tourism, culture and heritage resources. As Minister of Tourism, Sport and the Arts, I want to do all I can to encourage creativity and innovation in developing these sectors throughout our province.

**N. Simons:** I'd like to just start by thanking the minister and all of the minister's staff and the assembled congregation in the back. As a classical musician, I've thought of many ways to get people to attend the events in which I was performing. This is the first time that I used the heat and power idea. But I'd just like to thank the minister.

I do have some questions about the new ministry. I think that really, this process is about learning about the process of figuring out what exactly is involved in the minister's purview.

If I may, I'll start with some questions on the area of tourism. I was just wondering if the minister would be able to provide me with a breakdown of.... Well, let me

start with saying that the core business area of tourism and resort development has seen an increase from 35 to 66 full-time-equivalents. My question, essentially, is: where do you see those full-time-equivalents being dispersed?

**Hon. O. Ilich:** We have an increase of 15 percent overall in the full-time-equivalent allocation for tourism. Most of those are going into tourism and resort development. We've increased by 15 people, so that's a 43-percent increase there. All the rest are pretty well staying the same.

**N. Simons:** I also understand from the minister's service plan that the tourism and resort development increase in operating costs will be from \$6.2 million to \$8 million in 2005-2006 and then \$9.3 million in 2006-2007. I'm wondering if the minister can explain what accounts for this increase.

[1030]

**Hon. O. Ilich:** I'd like to just answer the previous question first. Twenty-seven of the 50 people that we have in the budget for the full-time-equivalents for tourism are actually going to be in the forest recreation area. That will be enhanced forest recreation sites.

On the second question, the budget of \$7.972 million includes an increase of \$1.779 million relative to the restated budget, due to the prorated transfer from Land and Water B.C.

**N. Simons:** Just to go back to your answer to the first question regarding the increase of funding towards forest recreation, can you describe what role the new FTEs will be performing in that area?

**Hon. O. Ilich:** Those people actually have been transferred over from Land and Water B.C., so it's the people who were there before that have been transferred, either from there or from the Ministry of Forests. They are going to stay in the regions and do what they were doing before, but the budget has been transferred to this ministry.

[M. Polak in the chair.]

**N. Simons:** Just to clarify, then, that the increase in FTEs is, in fact, actually just a transfer of FTEs and that there's no actual increase.

**Hon. O. Ilich:** That would be correct.

**N. Simons:** The service plan of the minister says that the ministry will be working with other ministries to develop a tourism charter, so I'm wondering if, to date, there has been any initial work on that tourism charter and what that might have comprised.

**Hon. O. Ilich:** What we will be doing is identifying what areas of other ministries impact the tourism business — for instance, transportation, economic devel-

opment, forestry, parks and environment. So what we'll be doing is working with those ministries to make sure that we have a coordinated strategy to enhance tourism.

**N. Simons:** Is there any projection as to the time frame when the tourism charter might be completed?

**Hon. O. Ilich:** We hope that we will have the charter ready to go in the early part of next year. We are planning to host an industry summit where we bring together people not only from the various ministries but also all the industry stakeholders, people that are interested in the tourism business. We will be charting a road map from that which will be part of the tourism charter.

**N. Simons:** Has the ministry identified who these stakeholders are?

**Hon. O. Ilich:** We will be working with the Council of Tourism Associations, which is an association of tourism operators. We will be working with Tourism British Columbia, people like the hotel association. We'll be working with municipalities who have an interest in tourism. Those are the sorts of people we'll be working with. We're developing that list now.

[1035]

**N. Simons:** Thank you for the answer there. I'm wondering: is there any specific funding dedicated to the development of this charter?

**Hon. O. Ilich:** For the actual charter there's no initial cost. We'll be using mostly staff time, so there's no additional cost to government for the charter. We will be spending some money on hosting the summit, because we are going to be bringing a number of people to one place. We'll be required, obviously, to provide them with things like coffee and whatever and to provide a venue. There will be some costs associated with that. We are still in the planning stages, so we don't really have a number for that.

**N. Simons:** The service plan also notes that the ministry will be working towards a vision of sustainable tourism. Can I get a little explanation on that?

**Hon. O. Ilich:** We are working with our industry partner COTA — the Council of Tourism Associations — on that. They have a request for proposals out already and have a successful proponent. They will be reporting out on the sustainable tourism strategy in Penticton in February of 2006.

**N. Simons:** Just for my edification, will COTA be developing the sustainable tourism vision for the ministry?

**Hon. O. Ilich:** They are developing it for the industry. They are an industry organization, and we are participating with them in that.

**N. Simons:** My question: is there any influence that the ministry has over the stakeholders with whom COTA will be consulting?

**Hon. O. Ilich:** Actually, we are working very closely with them. The deputy minister is on the steering committee, and we have a list of people that we've asked them to consult with. They are most open to suggestions from us to consult with other people. But I think what we have to realize is that it's the industry that's involved in tourism. We need their full participation on any strategy that we implement, so we do work very closely with them.

**N. Simons:** My next question to the hon. minister is: is there any indication of who will be invited to the summit? I'm not looking for an invitation at this point, but that might come later.

[1040]

**Hon. O. Ilich:** We are right now developing that list as to who will be invited. We plan to invite the stakeholders that we believe are important to the industry, and obviously, there is a role for the critic there. We will also be open to any suggestions as to who the member might want to see on that list.

**N. Simons:** I play the cello, if you need some entertainment. No, that's an aside.

Now, will there be ongoing public reporting throughout this process or the development of the vision, just to get back to that issue?

**Hon. O. Ilich:** It is an entirely transparent process. We will be inviting the media. The summit will be open. The COTA conference will be open. It will be fully accountable and transparent.

**N. Simons:** My next series of questions relate to the B.C. resort strategy and action plan. My first question is: can the minister provide a brief update on the Resort Task Force initiative?

**Hon. O. Ilich:** There was a task force on the resort strategy which reported out to government in June of 2004. This led to a resort strategy that has led to an action plan. The chief one amongst those is the harmonized resort strategy, which will integrate the approval processes of the municipalities into our approval processes.

**N. Simons:** Has that integrated resort approval process been formalized?

**Hon. O. Ilich:** We have been reviewing the report with UBCM, and we should be in a position to report out on that in the next 30 days.

**N. Simons:** I'm wondering if the minister can tell us if there's been any consultation process and what that might have looked like.

[1045]

**Hon. O. Ilich:** The task force had a number of people on it. It took one year to complete its task. There were representatives of local government, stakeholders and first nations. All together there were 17 groups represented on that task force, and I think there was significant input from a number of areas.

**N. Simons:** I'd like it if the minister could explain how the integrated resorts approval process will be related to other processes such as the integrated land management bureau and the natural resource opportunity centres.

**Hon. O. Ilich:** The harmonized resort approval process actually does not interface with the integrated land management bureau. The harmonized resort approval process is an attempt to shorten the approval process from what we have right now, where we go through a lengthy approval process within our ministry and within government and then, after we've approved it, send it out to the local government for their approval. What we're trying to do is to be much more proactive with municipalities and local governments so we get their input a lot sooner in order to address those issues of concern to them.

**N. Simons:** I'm presuming that local government and first nations are included.

**Hon. O. Ilich:** Yes.

**N. Simons:** I take that as a yes. Okay.

My next question relates to another framework in the service plan, and that is the integrated commercial tourism and resort policy framework. I'm just wondering if the minister can enlighten us on what has already been accomplished in the development of that framework.

[1050]

**Hon. O. Ilich:** The commercial tourism and resort policy framework has two pieces to it: the all-season resort policy, which is going to be released in a few weeks; and the adventure tourism policy, which will be released sometime next year.

**N. Simons:** I'm wondering if there were any opportunities for public consultation in the development of those policies.

**Hon. O. Ilich:** In the development of those policies we consulted with the key stakeholders and industry associations. Once developed, those policies actually require a large consultation process to be followed when they're released. So that's what is still to happen.

**N. Simons:** Thank you for that answer. At this time one of my colleagues would like to ask a few questions: the member for Cariboo South.

**C. Wyse:** Firstly, minister, I would like to thank you for the response I received with respect to the Ashcroft Manor, sent to your ministry several weeks ago. I'll have two specific questions about two different locations in Cariboo South — both historical in nature, both suffering operating-cost difficulties — so that you have a heads-up on where my two questions are going.

I'm going to go to the one on the Ashcroft Manor. It is one that you responded on, and I do wish to thank you for offering the assistance of your staff to talk with Mr. Jenner on this issue. However, within the last few weeks I've spoken with Mr. Jenner on this issue. The situation financially has not changed and is not anticipated to change much in the near future.

Very briefly for the minister, this particular site, the Ashcroft Manor, has some of the very, very few original buildings left on the site from the Cariboo Gold Rush Trail base. If the individual is not able to find some means to run this himself, they will need to be abandoned, and they will be abandoned. I want to leave that urgency very clearly here at this meeting.

Specifically now to your ministry, not other ones like Canada.... Are you willing to commit support to the Ashcroft Manor and the tea house, as it is a vital part of our province's history and an important destination for the communities of Ashcroft and Cache Creek? Depending upon your answer, I may have a follow-up question and possibly a comment.

[1055]

**Hon. O. Ilich:** I've been advised that the Ashcroft Manor is privately owned. I think that in the letter I sent to you we did give them some options to apply to, and there's every indication that we would be looking at that favourably.

I can tell the member that we are going to be looking at ways to deal more effectively with issues like that. We understand that there's a concern. We're looking in the next budget for a bit of a lift so that we can deal with those, but we don't have anything in the budget for these things right now other than these two programs that we've already outlined.

**C. Wyse:** Hon. Chair, through you to the minister.... I hope I'm getting all these rules right. Anyway, what I would like to say is thank you for your response. I will ensure that that hope is conveyed to Mr. Jenner.

Mr. Jenner, if he didn't relay that to your staff, is willing to look at other options that would remove the private component, if necessary. On the general behalf of the province — and very much my own personal view on this — if something is not done in order to retain these buildings, which, as I've mentioned, go back more than a decade.... They are irreplaceable, and because they have remained in private hands throughout this period of time, they have been maintained and

so on. The historical significance of these items is huge. As I've mentioned, I will convey that item on to you.

My second issue is in the area of the Hat Creek Ranch. Very recently — literally within approximately a month — you would have received correspondence from me on this issue on behalf of Hat Creek. As a very brief reminder, the society that looks after this particular site feels somewhat misled. They had the understanding that operating funds would only exist for a period of time and that the playing field would exist across the province in that nature. Their understanding is that in Barkerville there was an extension of operating funds and a reinstatement to that particular facility, and based upon the assumption that this information is correct, they are wishing your ministry to review the operating arrangements with them.

Once more, a very brief background. The history around this site is huge. It goes back for a long time; it's part of the history. In talking with representatives of the society, they are feeling the pinch in the ability to stay in operation. As a refresher, my question to you is: will you be reinstating funding ability for Hat Creek Ranch, given the situation that they understand has happened in Barkerville?

**Hon. O. Ilich:** I think we are aware of the problem, obviously. We are sympathetic. Barkerville was a recently concluded project agreement that was just done last year. Hat Creek was done a couple years before that.

[1100]

The stated purpose of this ministry is to get on with doing a better job of all of those sorts of things. The estimates we have right now are restated from earlier this year, and there is not any funding, really, for programs. What we will be looking for in the new budget coming up is going to be able to help those sorts of situations a little bit more than we have in the past. We will be looking at those things.

**C. Wyse:** Once more, thank you for your response.

The process for making application and items of that nature... When would that information become available — and that general fit of questions and how people become aware so that they can make sure that they are at the head of the queue, first at the envelope of money?

**Hon. O. Ilich:** We do have a standing capital fund at the moment which they can apply for. It allows them to apply for a maximum of \$15,000. We will be in touch with them, as the year unfolds and as we get more money, to make sure that they are aware of what programs we have.

**C. Wyse:** Thank you.

**N. Simons:** Thank you, member for Cariboo South, for keeping your lectures short.

My next series of questions relates to aboriginal tourism. It appears to me that the service plan is in-

tending to work with Aboriginal Tourism B.C. to develop a tourism strategy. I'm just wondering what has, to date, occurred in that area.

**Hon. O. Ilich:** We are currently working with the Aboriginal Tourism B.C. Association, and there are two items that we're looking at. One is to increase the tourism experience for tourists and to increase participation of the aboriginal peoples in that. The other one is to increase capacity, culture, and awareness of heritage and economic availability, I guess, for first nations.

**N. Simons:** I'm wondering: is there specific funding dedicated to this project?

**Hon. O. Ilich:** The ministry has provided almost \$284,000 in funding to Aboriginal Tourism B.C. over the past four years for the development of the strategy and other Aboriginal Tourism B.C. initiatives. In addition, we've secured matching funds from the Western Diversification Fund in this year, '04-05.

[1105]

**N. Simons:** I'm wondering if the minister has any projected date of completion for this strategy.

**Hon. O. Ilich:** The report will be finished before the end of this year.

**N. Simons:** Can the minister indicate what other ministries might be involved in the development of this strategy?

**Hon. O. Ilich:** The ministry has been working with Tourism B.C., Western Economic Diversification Canada, and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. We've also been working with the Ministry of Aboriginal Relations and Reconciliation.

**N. Simons:** Does this process involve any public consultation or stakeholders besides those ministries and organizations you've mentioned already?

**Hon. O. Ilich:** Currently the association represents 27 majority-aboriginal-owned businesses, in addition to a number of associate members — which are businesses that support aboriginal tourism and communities but are not owned in the majority by aboriginal peoples. The association reflects members that have accommodation facilities, cultural centres. There are tourism operators, art galleries, recreational services, transportation services, tourism-supported services, entertainment businesses and some development corporations, as well as the previously mentioned government and education and training institutions.

They've been working together with the government agencies, and they themselves have been working on the tourism strategy, which is going to be released at the end of this year. I think that's when the consultation will start.

**N. Simons:** My next question has to do with.... It's just a miscellaneous question thrown in that I've been thinking about, but I received information recently. It's regarding the Northern Development Initiative Trust Act. In "Allocations," part 3, there's a reference to: "The government may, without any appropriation other than this Act, pay the following grants...(d) through the Minister of Small Business and Economic Development, up to \$13 million for the promotion of one or more of sport, recreation, music and volunteer initiatives."

I'm wondering if that has remained in that ministry, if it still exists, or where that money might have been. Are there any guidelines for the appropriation of that money, and what might have been spent out of that already?

**Hon. O. Ilich:** Actually, we are not aware of that money being transferred over. We can find out and let the member know.

**N. Simons:** If it matters at all, the minister has my full support in getting it transferred to Tourism, Sport and the Arts. I'm on record now.

If I may turn to some questions around arts, culture and heritage. We are all very aware of the plans around the Olympics coming up. My first question has to do with the relationship between the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts and the Ministry of Economic Development.

[1110]

Can the minister explain how the ministry coordinates their mandate with that of the Minister of Economic Development? Who is ultimately responsible for the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Games?

**Hon. O. Ilich:** The Minister of Economic Development is ultimately responsible through the Olympic secretariat, but we have a program within the Ministry of Tourism called Hosting the World, which is chaired by the deputy. That, ultimately, is responsible for leveraging the Olympic experience for the province.

What we're going to be focused on is.... We're trying not to focus too much on that two-week event. We're looking out over a ten-year horizon for this ministry, and we're trying to make sure that we maximize the value of the Olympics here. We are working with the Ministry of Economic Development in creating the Olympics, but we're trying to make our focus the longer term.

**N. Simons:** My next question is around the Olympic arts fund strategy. Has that been completed?

**Hon. O. Ilich:** The Olympic arts program is a \$20 million fund. We are, actually, only spending the interest off that, which each year is about \$650,000. We have two programs there. One is a commissioning program, where we commission special works. The other one is a special community program that allows us to get in-

involved in art related to the Olympics, leading up to the Olympics.

**N. Simons:** Can the minister provide us with a little bit more detail as to how that funding is allocated?

**Hon. O. Ilich:** The awards are based on published programs with clear guidelines and evaluative criteria. Applications are peer-reviewed and competitively assessed.

**N. Simons:** I have a couple of questions around budget. My first is that capital expenditures for the core business area of art, culture and heritage seem to drop from \$73,000 in 2004 to \$23,000 in the years 2005-2006 onward. Can the minister explain this decrease?

[1115]

**Hon. O. Ilich:** There has been a decrease, which relates to the completion of a project that was completed earlier, so that money has been carried forward.

**N. Simons:** That just made me curious as to what project that might have been.

**Hon. O. Ilich:** It was the creation of a database of heritage sites.

**N. Simons:** That's a convenient segue into a couple of questions around archaeology and heritage. Let me start with archaeology.

A performance measure used by the ministry in the service plan indicates that the number of land use projects proceeding under a permit is one of their performance measures. The target for 2004-2005 was 440 land use projects proceeding under permit. The hope, apparently, according to the ministry service plan, is that in 2006-2007 there will be 540. Now, how do land use permits protect archaeological sites?

**Hon. O. Ilich:** The issuance of the permit governs what happens on the site and how much mitigation has to occur.

**N. Simons:** The Poets Cove Resort and Spa on Pender Island is facing two charges under the Heritage Conservation Act for unlawfully damaging a burial place that has a historical or archaeological value. Did Poets Cove have a permit?

**Hon. O. Ilich:** Yes, Poets Cove did have a permit. That issue is actually before the courts at the moment as well.

**N. Simons:** Thank you for the reminder from the ministry. That is quite true. I'm hoping for a speedy resolution, although I doubt that's going to happen.

I think the essence of the concern people have is that the permitting process is initiated by whoever happens to discover the possible site. I'm wondering if the minister believes that that is proactive enough in

order to protect the, often, first nations sites that are significant to their culture and their history.

**Hon. O. Ilich:** At the moment we have 30,000 known sites, and the only other option is to go out and do an inventory, which it would just not be possible to do. We do have to rely on people and first nations who stumble across sites to report them. In that way, we make sure that they get protected and catalogued, and we are able to preserve them.

**N. Simons:** I remember from the service plan that there was an indication of increased education around the importance of protecting sites. Is there any specific plan on how that education will be provided?

**Hon. O. Ilich:** We are already working with local governments to advise them as to what the procedures are and to make sure that they follow the procedures when something is discovered.

**N. Simons:** Regarding heritage sites, the government has been devolving its responsibility for heritage sites. The service plan notes that the government's role has shifted from direct ownership to transferring to long-term operating agreements with third parties.

[1120]

This process includes devolving the management of 29 provincial heritage properties to community partners. My question to the minister is: who conducts the annual inspections on these heritage properties?

**Hon. O. Ilich:** There are two ministry staff that conduct the inspections right now.

**N. Simons:** The devolution includes a new community-driven heritage legacy fund. All three levels of government are now implementing collaborative policies and programs based on national standards and best practice. What is the annual contribution from the province to the heritage legacy fund?

**Hon. O. Ilich:** There was an initial \$5 million fund set up in fiscal '03-04. That was supplemented by another half-million dollars in March of '05. The money is administered by the Heritage Legacy Society, and they spend the interest in support of community programs.

**N. Simons:** My question to the minister: is there any other funding from municipal or federal governments?

**Hon. O. Ilich:** The Heritage Legacy Society actually does fundraising in support of their programs. We don't have any details at the moment of who they might be getting extra money from.

**N. Simons:** There's also reference to best practices. I'm wondering which government or which organization has determined what are best practices.

**Hon. O. Ilich:** We are in touch with other provincial governments across the country in determining best practices — the federal government — and we also work with municipalities on those best practices.

**N. Simons:** My next question has to do with the B.C. Arts Council. The funding it received, I think, was very well-placed. There's obviously hope among the arts community for increased funding again. Arts groups say that to catch up to the funding levels that were there over 12 years ago, they would need an increase by \$16 million to \$30 million a year.

My question to the minister: has the minister indicated how much her ministry will be seeking in order to support the B.C. Arts Council?

[1125]

**Hon. O. Ilich:** The Arts Council did receive \$3 million in additional funding in this last budget, and we also put out another \$25 million this year to establish the B.C. arts renaissance fund. There was other money that went out to the arts. There was a \$20 million endowment for the Spirit of B.C. arts fund to support community arts and culture opportunities leading up to 2010, and we put \$12 million to ArtsNow this year.

In addition, the B.C. book publishing tax credit program was in effect, and that returned \$1.7 million to B.C. publishers. We have a new \$25,000 B.C. award for Canadian non-fiction in the book category.

We have a commitment to be seeking more money for arts in the upcoming budget. We can't say what that's going to be right now, because we don't know what we're going to be given, but we are going to be asking for more money for the arts in the coming budget.

**N. Simons:** Thank you, minister. I hope I haven't been acting too friendly, because my role as opposition is, of course, to be much crueller than this.

I would like to turn the floor over to my friend and colleague the member for Surrey-Newton for some questions.

**H. Bains:** As you know, minister, we are living in one of the most diverse societies in the world, and that brings with it the different cultures and arts from all across the world that enrich our lives in this region of the globe. But there's a feeling in certain groups that in order for them to promote, firstly, their own culture and art and educate their neighbours and, secondly, to learn from other cultures, there's no clear leadership or direction or programs they can follow. My question to the minister is: are there any specific programs that different communities can use to promote culture and art diversity?

**Hon. O. Ilich:** We're well aware of the issue of diversity and of the opportunity of diversity, actually, in our communities and in our province. As well as planning a tourism summit, we're also planning an arts summit. We are planning to put together an advisory

group to plan that, and we're going to be looking for representatives to come and talk to us and help us with that strategy. We would like to put together a new arts and culture strategy for the province, but as you know, these are early days for the ministry. As I said, we are very well aware of the opportunity and of the cultural diversity, and we're going to be addressing that problem. We'll make sure that nobody gets left out of that.

**H. Bains:** Is there a time line to put that program together, and if the answer is somewhere in the near future, how would we promote that program?

**Hon. O. Ilich:** We are going to be having that summit sometime in the spring. We're going to be submitted to death in the spring, I think, with absolutely everything we're trying to do. We are going to be looking for people to come forward, to participate in that, and that's part of, I guess, the public consultation process in getting that strategy together. We would welcome any names the member has that he would like to put forward that he believes would be good in helping us do that.

[1130]

**H. Bains:** I appreciate the offer, and we'll certainly be talking to her ministry and people. Just getting a bit specific on the promotion of different cultures, the best place, in my view, to promote any program is through our education system. Right now there are some schools that are actually looking at some of those programs.

I'm especially speaking of bhangra teams for Punjabi boys and girls, and they also have a giddha dance group for women. Some schools have started some of those teams, but they lack resources. I think they are looking for some resources and some guidance. Is this program also left up to the summit, or are there some programs right now? Some teams are in operation right now, so is there somewhere they could go to get that information and some resources to promote those teams?

[H. Bloy in the chair.]

**Hon. O. Ilich:** Currently, through the B.C. Arts Council, we have a program called Artists in Education, which supports artists going to schools. It's to help schools be more integrated with the arts. That is actually one of the things we want to be doing in the future. We are looking at cross-ministries education. Certainly, sports is another one of those things that we want to be working more closely with the schools and health authorities on. Those are things that we hope we're going to be doing a little bit more effectively in the future.

**H. Bains:** Actually, that was a field I was moving on to. My next question was on sports. There are different sports that different communities bring with them that are local sports for them, and they are be-

coming very popular in this region. Kabaddi from Punjab, I could mention, is probably one of the most-watched — the invisible minority sport. Every year there are five or six tournaments held in the lower mainland. It draws up to about 10,000 fans to each of those tournaments, but then again, there are those obstacles.

Is there any specific program that these organizations, individual teams or players can use to promote those games? They are becoming very popular, and other cultures are starting to learn. They are interested in it, and other players are starting to participate in those games. Is there any specific program that those teams and organizations can follow and get some resources?

**Hon. O. Ilich:** At the moment LegaciesNow has a program called Hosting B.C. If there is an event, they can apply for money through that. Again, I would say to the member that these are things that we hope to be looking at and addressing in the future. I know that we keep saying that over in this ministry, but it is a new ministry, and these are all things that we want to be doing and that we are aware of.

[1135]

There is a commitment of \$250,000 for a kabaddi field. We're going to be contributing to that. Those are things we want to be examining to make sure that the sports programs we have do reflect the diversity of our people. We are committed to increasing participation by 20 percent, and making sure that we are one of the fittest provinces. We do know that we have to work diligently on those sorts of things and make sure that everybody in the province is equally able to participate.

**H. Bains:** I actually appreciate the minister leading me into my next question. That was my next question. The kabaddi field that was announced during the last election — \$250,000. Some people are still wondering where that money is, how it will be distributed and how it will be managed.

**Hon. O. Ilich:** I have actually talked to the administrator in Surrey and told him that the money is on its way, so we will be advancing that money shortly.

**H. Bains:** This summit that was being talked about in the spring. How long will it take after that to put those programs in place and running?

**Hon. O. Ilich:** We believe that we will be working on that through next year and will have something completed by the end of next year, which we will be rolling out shortly after that.

**H. Bains:** Those were my questions, and I do thank the minister for those answers and look forward to working with the minister in the future.

**N. Simons:** A few of my colleagues have questions specific to other areas. I will defer to them for now, but I'll cut them off as soon as my attention span goes.

**R. Fleming:** I have just a couple of questions on the Provincial Capital Commission, which the minister is responsible for. I see that the CEO and chief financial officer are with us today, so maybe they want to make their way over.

The first question I have is around the Belleville international ferry terminal. I've looked through the three-year service plan that you've published, and the only reference to it is in the section under "Strategies" that says your ministry supports the implementation of the plan for the new international ferry terminal. The strategy rate prior to that....

[1140]

I should back up for a second. You have another strategy to complete the remediation and optimize the lease at the CP terminal building, subject to funding availability, which means that there's really no commitment over the three-year service plan in terms of dollars to do that. Is that the same case for the Belleville international ferry terminal? Is it subject to funding availability that is not scheduled in any of these three years in the document?

**Hon. O. Ilich:** Two questions. The answer to the one on the CPR building: it is now fully leased and will be fully occupied by the end of this year, Christmas-time. As to the Belleville terminal, the plan is still being worked on. We don't have any numbers on it yet, because it's still in the planning stages.

**R. Fleming:** Okay. The problem with the first answer is that the CP terminal building has not had any heritage remediation. It's had some additions in terms of a new elevator, but the bigger piece — getting a Rattenbury heritage building restored — has not occurred. That was what my question was about — whether funding availability is going to be committed by your ministry.

Back to my second question about the international ferry terminal. You've discussed that there are plans, but my question was really about the funding availability — whether this ministry is going to commit funding for the redevelopment of that ferry terminal. It has been discussed for approximately five years, and the discussions were even more earnest after 9/11.

The U.S. Customs operation there has mused publicly that it may move to the United States side and that its space is totally inadequate for its needs. I want to know whether the ministry will be committing funding to allow that redevelopment to occur.

**Hon. O. Ilich:** The CPR building has not been remediated at the moment. It's been cleaned up and leased out, and what we're waiting for is a long-term plan to deal with that at that time. As for the long-term plan, it hasn't been fully developed so there has been no ask of government for the money at this time.

[1145]

When we get an ask, we can deal with it outside of the budget. We can take that forward at that time, but at the moment the plan has not been fully developed.

**R. Fleming:** Okay. I understood that discussions around money had occurred with the government, but maybe not with the new minister.

Just one final question. It's around the financial outlook summary of the document. There's a "Note one" there that says that capital expenditures for the PCC are amortized against future years' operating income. In the risks discussion section of the plan, it talks about one of the risks to the corporation being the exposure it has from not realizing tenant incomes. So you're banking, basically, on income levels to pay for the capital improvements, but you're also identifying that as a key risk to your corporation.

An example of that is the new B.C. Experience program that's to go into the Crystal Garden building. What happens to the capital plan if it's not ready on May 6, which is its target date? Right there you have an example of income not coming in that you have based your capital plan on.

**Hon. O. Ilich:** This year the revenues have increased by 12 percent. The leases have been renegotiated and have increased the revenue to the corporation by 12 percent. Next year the increase is actually 23.4 percent.

As for the B.C. Experience, we fully anticipate that it will be open. The building is on schedule. The roof is almost finished, the lease has been signed, and the operator is going to be going in there.

**G. Gentner:** Very quickly. I have many questions, but time has taken control. I'll get right to the point. The minister mentioned a \$15 million overrun to the Vancouver Convention Centre expansion project. It went from \$565 million up now to \$615 million. Will the minister please tell me what the contingency was then, and secondly, will the \$615 million be the final cost to this project?

**Hon. O. Ilich:** The \$615 million will be the final cost of the building.

Secondly, we don't like to divulge the amount of the contingency that's currently in the budget, because it's detrimental to the negotiations that we do with subcontractors. But we believe that the contingency is adequate to deal with any contracts that come up, and \$615 million will be the final cost of that building.

**C. Evans:** First, I want to say congratulations to the minister. I think maybe the minister might have the best job in the government, because this would be the most interesting part. You can tell. You witness that all the questions are positive, friendly, thoughtful and interesting, and that's because the minister's portfolio is such. I have lots of questions, which I suppose I'll put

off till the spring estimates, when I hope that we actually can talk about real stuff in a more extensive way.

[1150]

Because I am quite supportive of the ministry.... I actually made three Premiers mad by thinking we should take 10 percent of Health budget and put it into art, culture, sports and heritage because then we'd have healthier people.

At any rate, my concern is that we're doing this wonderful thing and creating this ministry, which makes a lot of sense, at the time that we're doing the Olympics. I would like some assurance from the minister that there's been some vision or conversation that would suggest that the alliance that is being put together here of, essentially, cultural interests is intended to extend beyond the Olympics and not simply highlight that moment in our history.

**Hon. O. Ilich:** Actually, we are specifically not dealing with the Olympics so that we can focus on the bigger picture. We have a ten-year planning horizon. We have the objective of doubling tourism revenues in ten years. We want to make sure that we maximize the experience of having the Olympics here for the benefit of arts, tourism and sport and that we don't focus just on the Olympics. We are fortunate in that we have to work with the people at the Olympic secretariat and make sure that we integrate what we do. But we are in fact looking ten years out, and we have a vision for ten years.

**C. Evans:** That's a great answer that I appreciate. I would suggest that you do your best to tell that story as broadly as you can, given that arts, culture and sport and the like have not had a whole lot of attention in the past. There are three million cynical people out there who might not understand that there's a new vision and that it's intended to stay this way.

My second question has to do with rural British Columbia. Historically, at least in the governments that I was part of, we tended to think, unfortunately — because we were shortsighted at the moment and other people were making decisions — that arts and culture meant opera and symphonies and large, urban world-class activities. Arts Council types tended to be those people who ran large cultural organizations in the lower mainland. All of that is fine, except that with the deindustrialization of rural British Columbia, I think arts and culture is increasingly a part of a real economy.

I noted that when Newfoundland was fighting with the federal government over oil revenues and then Newfoundland won, the Minister of Finance said: "Good — now more money for arts." You would certainly never hear that in British Columbia. My question to the minister is: can you give me some assurance that membership on the Arts Council and the focus of the ministry will include the interests of people in Dawson Creek, Nelson, Fort St. John and Alert Bay as we move arts and culture and heritage into the mainstream part of our economic base?

**Hon. O. Ilich:** We are very, very cognizant of the role that arts and culture play in the economy and in all of our communities. We know it's very, very important. We are going to make every effort to get that message out there, and we're going to do all that we can to be supportive of arts and culture throughout the province, not just in Vancouver, Victoria and what we call the golden triangle.

I can assure you that we're going to be looking at things like membership on the Arts Council, not just from a diversity point of view and to reflect our demographics but also to reflect the fact that we are trying to represent all of the people of British Columbia and not just those bigger organizations that are in areas that have populations that are bigger.

**N. Simons:** I would just like to take this opportunity, on behalf of my colleagues and the opposition caucus, to thank the minister for answering the questions. Next time we hope to have a little bit more time so that we can go into some depth. Thank you to the staff for turning off the power in your building, and we look forward to meeting with you again.

[1155]

Vote 39: ministry operations, \$176,967,000 — approved.

**Hon. O. Ilich:** The committee rises, reports resolution and completion of the Ministry of Tourism, Sport and the Arts and asks leave to sit again.

Motion approved.

The committee rose at 11:56 a.m.

## HANSARD SERVICES

Director  
Anthony Dambrauskas

Production Manager  
Jill Ainsley

Assistant Production Manager  
Robert Sutherland

Editorial Supervisors  
Janet Brazier, Christine Ewart

Galley Editor  
Heather Bright

Technical Operations Officers  
Pamela Holmes, Emily Jacques

Research  
Jaime Apolonio, Mike Beninger  
Dan Kerr, Cristy McLennan

Editors  
Shannon Ash, Andrew Costa, Heather Gleboff,  
Margaret Gracie, Jane Grainger, Iris Gray,  
Linda Guy, Bill Hrick, Paula Lee, Elizabeth Levinson,  
Marg MacQuarrie, Constance Maskery, Jill Milkert, Lind Miller,  
Lou Mitchell, Karol Morris, Dorothy Pearson, Erik Pedersen, Janet Pink,  
Melanie Platz, Kathleen Prendergast, Robin Rohrmoser,  
Robyn Swanson, Camilla Turner, Heather Warren, Arlene Wells

Published by British Columbia Hansard Services, and printed under the authority of the Speaker by the Queen's Printer, Victoria. Rates: single issue, \$2.85; per calendar year, mailed daily, \$298. GST extra. Agent: Crown Publications Inc., 521 Fort St., Victoria, B.C. V8W 1E7. Telephone: (250) 386-4636. Fax: 386-0221.

**[www.leg.bc.ca](http://www.leg.bc.ca)**

Hansard Services publishes transcripts both in print and on the Internet.  
Chamber debates are broadcast on television and webcast on the Internet.