

ORAL QUESTION—JULIE GREEN, MLA YELLOWKNIFE CENTRE

QUESTION 271-18(2): REVIEW OF GNWT COMMUNICATIONS CAPACITY AND POLICY

June 27, 2016

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, I'll direct my question to the Minister responsible for the Department of the Executive. Mr. Speaker, the 2016-17 operating budget contains funding proposals for four new communications officers in the executive. The positions were recommended in a functional review of the communications activity "To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of government communications through an increased focus on communication that is centered, digital, open, and engages residence."

The budget presentation said that a rigorous, transparent, and public results reporting tool will be created to provide ongoing updates on progress being made to fulfill the government's commitments in the mandate. Can the Minister tell us how he plans to roll this out in collaboration with regular members? Mahsi, Mr. Speaker.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. We will work closely with the Regular Members in developing this report. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

MS. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Premier could elaborate on that answer about how he is going to involve Regular Members?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: We will be developing a draft approach to how we would come up with a report, and we will share it with the Regular Members.

MS. GREEN: I don't feel like I'm going anywhere with that. So I'll move on to whether the Minister can comment on why communication staff will be centralized in the Department of Executive rather than in the departments where they could better serve the needs of residents of the NWT?

HON. BOB MCLEOD: There was an extensive report that was done that indicated that this government was very deficient in a number of communication positions compared to other jurisdictions, and it recommended increasing a number of positions that were approved in the 17th Assembly. Every department in the Government does have communications personnel. So because it is functioning, the responsibilities function over the whole Government, it was determined that these positions would remain in the Department of the Executive.

MR. SPEAKER: Masi. Oral questions. Member for Yellowknife Centre.

MS. GREEN: Mahsi, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, the Minister responsible for the Executive said during the budget debate the more communications officers you have the more they can contribute to open and transparent government. How does the Minister plan to ensure that more communications officers means more outreach and understanding, and how will those ideals be evaluated? Thank you.

HON. BOB MCLEOD: What we find in our travels as we go out to the regions, as we go out and talk to the people of the Northwest Territories is that a lot of the people don't realize what a good job that we do or they don't recognize the number of important programs that we deliver. And so through or communications people we want everybody to know what programs we have, what benefits we can provide so that everybody can make sure that they benefit to the maximum from all of the generous programs that this government provides.