

MEMBER STATEMENT—KEVIN O'REILLY MLA FRAME LAKE
CABINET COMMUNICATIONS WITH REGULAR MEMBERS
October 13, 2016

MR. O'REILLY: Mahsi, Monsieur le president. The Process Conventions on Consensus Government developed by the last Assembly stated the following as a guiding principle: "Open and respectful communication between all members is the most essential feature of consensus government."

Furthermore, the Process Convention on Communications between the Executive Council, Ministers, Standing Committees and Regular Members, and signed by Premier McLeod on September 8, 2014 states: "Except under extraordinary circumstances Members of the Legislative Assembly should be made aware of and have opportunity to discuss significant announcements, changes, consultations or initiatives before they are released to the public or introduced in the Legislative Assembly."

This past summer there were several major policies or decisions that were either made by Cabinet or others where Regular MLAs found out through the media. These matters have a direct relationship to our mandate and work together. They included:

- A media story about secret negotiations between GNWT and Newmont over the Con Headframe. When I asked for details I was told that we could only find out what was going on after a deal was reached;
- A news release where the Northwest Territories' Premier came out against a carbon tax despite promising to consult with Regular MLAs and the public before taking a position;
- A media story and public briefing for Yellowknife City Council where it was revealed that the federal government has put the GNWT proposal for a Mackenzie Valley Highway on the back burner; and
- Another media story and presentations to third parties and even a media briefing earlier this week with details about proposed changes to the Yellowknife Airport including increased fees before briefings to Regular MLAs.

It's not clear to this Member what extraordinary circumstances precipitated this flow of information without bothering to inform Members on this side of the House. I don't want to get into a debate about each of these examples I cited, but there is a disturbing pattern continuing, and this is not in keeping with consensus government.

I will have questions for the Minister of the Executive later today. Merci, Mr. Speaker.