

Minister's Statement 186-18(2), Update on the A New Day Program

May 31, 2017

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): I now call Committee of the Whole back to order. Committee, we have first agreed to consider Minister's Statement 186-18(2), Update on the A New Day Program. Minister, do you have witnesses you wish to bring into the Chamber?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: I do.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Sergeant-at-Arms, please escort the witnesses into the Chamber. Minister, please introduce your witnesses to the House.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chair. To my left is Leanne Gardiner, director of community justice and policing. To my right is Deputy Minister of Justice Martin Goldney.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. I will open the floor to general comments. Do I have general comments on this tabled document? Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I will have a number of questions for the Minister about this new contracting relationship based on the fact that this is a non-profit organization that has not been a service provider of this kind in the past, and so I will have questions that relate to the qualifications of this service provider to provide the A New Day program.

I am also interested in finding out whether there have been changes to the RFP that was put out earlier and what those changes might be. I will also have some questions about attracting clients who are not offenders to the program. Of course, John Howard is related services for offenders, and so, those people who are not offenders and who are using the A New Day program, I do wonder if they will feel the stigma of using the program in that location.

Finally, we know that there was a very rigorous evaluation of the initial program, but I have not heard very much about how the successor program will be monitored and evaluated. That will be the gist of my questions when the time comes. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. The time is now if you would like to start asking those questions of the Minister.

MS. GREEN: Oh, I thought this was a time for general comments. Okay. Very good, then. My first question is: what are the qualifications of the "qualified counsellors" who are providing this program? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Perhaps Ms. Gardiner could assist with that.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Gardiner.

MS. GARDINER: Thank you. What we asked for in the RFP and what we will continue to require from our contractor is counsellors with a counselling degree and several years' experience or equivalent, and that is what we will require our contractor to provide, as well, to contract with counsellors who are qualified to deliver this program, same as the program has done in the past.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Gardiner. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Have you finished, Ms. Green?

MS. GREEN: No.

MR. O'REILLY: You should keep going.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Do you understand from this, then, that the John Howard Society is not providing the counselling itself but rather subcontracting the counselling, and, if subcontracting, then to whom? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, that's correct. The John Howard Society is in the process of contracting with counsellors. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you. And so do I understand that the John Howard Society will require the same qualifications of counsellors as in the original RFP? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, that's correct. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you. The next question concerns the RFP that was let during the winter and received no takers. I understand there have been some negotiations to get to this point, so could the Minister tell us what changes have been made to the RFP in order to secure the agreement announced today? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: I understand there were not changes to the RFP, but perhaps Mr. Goldney could expand on my answer. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Mr. Goldney.

MR. GOLDNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Recalling that what was offered was a request for proposals, it was always anticipated that proponents might come back with some potential options, always recognizing, of course, that it would have to be within the bounds of what we were looking for. I am happy to report that is where we ended up

with the John Howard Society, so there hasn't been anything that I would describe as a change to the request for proposals.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Goldney. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you. Could the Minister please outline, then, the program that will be undertaken by the John Howard Society? Is it the one that he most recently discussed with us, which is basically a group counselling program? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: I understand that it's the same. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Is it the Minister's intention to make the proposal in this case available to the standing committee and/or public? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. We will have to examine the procurement guidelines to determine whether we are able to do that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. May I take that as a commitment that the Minister will undertake that examination? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: I will undertake that examination.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My next question is about the evaluation and monitoring process for this contract. Could the Minister please describe how this program will be monitored and how it will be evaluated -- or not this program but the revamped program delivered by this contractor? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I wonder if I could defer that question to Ms. Gardiner. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Ms. Gardiner.

MS. GARDINER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Currently, there is a logic model that was already developed for the pilot project. We are currently evaluating that based on our experiences and our lessons learned from the previous evaluation to make sure that the outcomes that we are measuring are appropriate and reflect what we have learned during the pilot. So that logic model isn't complete as of yet, but we are expecting in the next few weeks to have that with the benefit of some expertise in program evaluation, and when we have a formal plan for when that evaluation will be, we can provide it.

Other than that, we will have a structure in place in terms of reporting on statistics for the program. Part of the changes we made was in the administration of the program, and we recognized a need for additional information, and about participants' progress through the program, and that will be part of our evaluation outcomes. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Gardiner. Recognizing the time, I will allow one more question. Ms. Green.

MS. GREEN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. My follow-up question is whether the Minister will be able to share that evaluation criteria, and at what point the program will be evaluated using it? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Green. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think I could be prepared to share that criteria. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair, and I want to thank my colleague who asked some of the questions that I had here, but I just want to understand how this agreement was reached. This was the department of Justice approaching John Howard directly. Is that how? Again, thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, after there were no responses, positive responses to the RFP, we did approach certain NGOs, and amongst those was the John Howard Society. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. The Minister's statement refers to an agreement with the John Howard Society. Is this like a letter of intent, or has an actual contract been signed? What's the status of this arrangement? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Sebert?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. An actual contract has been entered into. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I am not sure if my colleague from Yellowknife Centre asked this question or not, but can we actually get a copy of the contract that has been signed, then, even if it has to be provided on a confidential basis to the Regular MLAs? I would like to be able to compare that against what was called for in the RFP, and what the original New Day program was doing. Can he provide a copy of that contract on a confidential basis to the Regular MLAs? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Sebert, to the contract?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you. I think I will need to speak to the procurement office before I make any obligations in that regard. I, myself, have not seen the contract. I'm not certain whether there are certain elements in it that are confidential or proprietary, so that's my answer. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. When does the Minister think he will be able to get back to the Regular MLAs on the availability on the contract being shared with us? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Sebert,

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think I could commit to give the members a response by the end of next week.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. I guess I would hope for something a little bit quicker, but I will take the Minister's word. Can the Minister tell us how long this contract runs for? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Sebert,

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I can advise that the contract runs until March 31st, 2021. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Well, that is a lot longer than I would have expected to hear. Can the Minister tell us: is there any sort of probationary period or ability for the department to back out of this arrangement? Indeed, the contractor, if things are not going the way either party expected, what sort of period would that arrangements -- is there an escape clause in the contract, and when would it be triggered, or could it be triggered? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Sebert,

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am not aware of any escape clause. One of the things that NGOs generally want is a long period of the contract in length to last for a significant amount of time so they can have certainty in their plans going forward. Of course, contracts can be amended if both sides agree at any time, but I am not aware of any "out" clause but again, I have not seen the contract myself. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes I guess I will go on record as having expressing some concern about this. As I understand, the RFP was for a one-year term, and now this is, I guess for four years. That is a significant departure from what the RFP had called for. Does anybody have any explanation of how we went from a one-year to a four-year arrangement? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Sebert,

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: As I mentioned earlier, NGOs such as the John Howard Society generally want the stability of a long-term contract, so that's why this period of time was agreed upon. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Did the department look at the option of actually reissuing the RFP for a longer period of time, or making other changes to the RFP rather than to enter into some sort of a negotiated arrangement? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Sebert,

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes. Of course, with the RFP, we were always aware of constraints on time that we needed to have something in place by July 1st. There initially was, of course, no applicants to our RFP. We then went out to NGOs. We are speaking to the John Howard Society, and it was their wish should they decide to take this up, which they did, that they be given a lengthy contract so that they would have some certainty for the future. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. Again, I will express some concern here that the Regular MLAs, we actually asked for the program to be reinstated for a full year, and the most the Minister would commit to was six months; and then, all of a sudden, it jumps from a one-year RFP to a four-year contract. That's a very significant change in course, so I will just leave it at that for now. The reason why I am going to ask this next question is, I understand, I have worked for NGOs. All of them sort of go through ups and downs over the years, but there have been some recent changes at the John Howard Society in terms of their leadership that might raise some issues around their capacity to deliver on a program like this. How can the Minister provide some reassurance that the minimum qualifications for this organization, or the ability to deliver on this, any minimum qualifications have been met, and that this organization actually has the capacity to deliver this very important program? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Sebert,

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, Mr. Chair. I certainly concur with Mr. O'Reilly's observations that this is a very important contract, which it is, and there are certainly terms in the contract which the John Howard Society must adhere to, failing which they would be in breach of the contract. Now, the John Howard Society, I see some notes here, has been around for 150 years; not perhaps, delivering this exact type of program, but somewhat related program, so we do have some confidence in their ability to deliver, and should they fail to do so, they would be in breach of the contract. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair. John Howard may have been around for 150 years, but how long have they been here in the Northwest Territories or, indeed, in

Yellowknife? Thanks, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: I see from my notes here that they have been around since 1994 in the Northwest Territories. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Recognizing the time, I will allow one more. Mr. O'Reilly.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Mr. Chair, and I do appreciate the time. Can the Minister's staff let us know whether the John Howard Society has ever delivered a program like this in the past? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Perhaps I could have Ms. Gardiner answer that question. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Ms. Gardiner.

MS. GARDINER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The John Howard Society is responsible for the administration of the contract. They will have subcontracts with qualified counsellors whom we are working with in partnership with them. They are close to having those contracts in place. The staff member at the John Howard Society is not responsible for the actual delivery of the program. As we mentioned, qualified counsellors are required, the same as we required in the RFP process. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Ms. Gardiner. Mr. Simpson.

MR. SIMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank my colleagues for proposing the questions.

Every time this is brought up in the House, the Minister states that minor changes were made to this program based on the evaluation report that was done. Right near the beginning of this report, it recommends that consideration should be given to the fact that the program is more than a curriculum, and community outreach should be considered a part of any future program.

The community outreach that has been happening at The Tree of Peace includes workshops at the North Slave Correctional Centre, I believe the only program available to those in remand. It has happened in adult education centres, with the YKDFN, the Salvation Army, the Bailey House, and more. In addition, there have been training sessions delivered to nurses in the Stanton Psychiatric Unit which the nurses seem to find quite useful.

However, as I understand it, the RFP states that program facilitators must strictly adhere to the curriculum as set out by the department, which excludes all of this community outreach. The evaluation report also states that some men are not well-suited for group counselling sessions, and future programs should include provisions for individual counselling based on A New Day's curriculum. Yet, as I understand it, in the new RFP, men who are not well-suited will be referred to outside counselling services, in stark contrast to this recommendation. The one recommendation that I did find that was followed was to break the program up into segments so that if you drop out partway

through, you can get right back in without having to wait the 20 weeks.

The evaluation also stated that many of the individuals that they interviewed would not change the program the way it operated. Yet, we have a letter from the Coalition Against Family Violence which spent years developing the New Day program tailored for the North, and this organization was made up of - the Government of the NWT was a part of it; Disabilities Council, Status of Women Council, Tree of Peace, Yellowknife Women's Society, White Ribbon Campaign, Alternatives North, Salvation Army, and the RCMP.

Most of the organizations I just mentioned sent a letter to the Minister on May 10th stating essentially that they have no faith that the program the way the department envisions it is going to be successful. They write, "It remains the position of the coalition that a successful program must be a community-based therapy program. The work with men who abuse must be ongoing while healing and treatment options that are designed to be flexible enough to address the actual needs of those who seek help from this program. As such, the new program design as described in the recently advertised RFP was met with a degree of surprise by members of the coalition. The new program design has some aspects that appear to us to be incompatible with program success and with continued widespread community support."

I ask the Minister: why was the coalition engaged in the first place if now their input is being disregarded? They are begging the department to -- well, I will not say "begging." They would like the department to work with them to retool this program into something that they think would be successful. How do they know what is going to be successful? Well, they work with these people every day. They developed the first program. They are the people on the ground. It still boggles my mind that they are being completely ignored and left out of this process. It has been front page news that all the coalition members refused to bid on this RFP, because they felt so strongly that it was such a poor program. These are people who are dedicated to helping end family violence, and yet they were not willing to put their name behind a program that the department says is going to do that.

I do not want to use unparliamentary language, but there is some arrogance from the department on this, I find, and I am at loss. Why will the department not work with these people who have years, decades, hundreds of years between them, of experience in this field? Maybe I will start there with questions. Why did the department flat out refuse to work with the coalition or coalition members to come up with a program design that would be palatable, at the very least, to the coalition? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Simpson. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you. I am going to refer that question, if I may, to Martin Goldney, my deputy minister. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Minister Sebert. Mr. Goldney.

MR. GOLDNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and there is a lot to unpack there. I am going to do my best, but I certainly would welcome follow-up questions as well.

First, I think I have to challenge the notion that the department was unwilling to work with the coalition. I think we are very appreciative of our community partners, but I think

there might be a bit of a disconnect. We do commend our community partners for their commitment to addressing this issue, but I think where there might be a bit of a disconnect is in the department's recognition that this is not a program that will fix all family violence issues or even is appropriate for all offenders and men who use violence in their intimate relationships. It is a program that is very specific, is designed for men of a certain risk profile, and cannot be the solution to all of our family violence programs or issues. It is not a one size fits all solution.

I think what we hear our partners saying is they are looking for additional supports and additional avenues to address all aspects of family violence, and we agree. We are happy to work with any community partner with a proposal that could be complimentary and that could tackle some of these related issues perhaps in another way, perhaps for a different segment of the population with a different risk profile. But when we talk about A New Day, when the department talks about A New Day, it is talking about that very specific curriculum and very specific program, and our challenge was really to do the best we can with that program and the resources that we have available.

I would suggest we did not make any significant changes apart from focusing the administration to make sure that we get the best results possible, and we did look at the evaluation very carefully. We are also informed by our experience delivering the program and looked at what needed to be improved. Clearly, we recognize that outreach is one component, but if you look at the number of men who were made aware of the program, very few actually enrolled in the program and made the commitment to do the work required. We think, frankly, there are better ways to connect men with the services that they need. That tells us that a very small number of the men who were made aware of the program felt it was the appropriate program for them or maybe they were not ready at that time.

The new program designed does offer the opportunity in that structured assessment phase to connect people with different supports, and we hope that leads to improved outcomes.

Certainly, one of the biggest changes was that modularity, that flexibility to recognize that we need to deliver it in a more flexible model, so we did focus on that change. As I mentioned, we are very willing to work with community partners. I think there has been some disappointment expressed that the department didn't go to the coalition to discuss the changes. I think it has to be appreciated, at the balance, the need for and the potential benefit for further input, with the reality that we had a pretty clear understanding of what changes needed to be made.

Again, we are not saying this is the program that is going to fix everything. We do recognize that there are going to be continued conversations required, but we also had to balance the need to have a fair procurement process, as well. It wouldn't have been appropriate for us to talk about things that would show up in an RFP, which is a select group of organizations recognizing that that might create some unfairness to other potential proponents who aren't members of that organization.

I think it is also fair to note that not every member of the coalition supported that letter. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. McNeely): Thank you, Mr. Goldney. The time allowed is up. I will move Mr. Simpson further down. We only had one question, one answer during that time period. We will move on to the next. Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Chair, I just wanted to take an opportunity to seek some clarity and understanding and ultimately seek reassurance that the spirit and intent of this program has not been affected. My understanding, with the previous speaker recalling Mr. Simpson, stated very clearly that vision that the groups had in terms of coming together, in terms of trying to address the very big issue of family violence in NWT. The program that was conceived, developed, and established was operating ineffectively and unsuccessfully, from my understanding.

The recent meetings with some of the people who work on the front lines -- I was very disappointed that the program had tanked and, in a sense, it is demoralizing that perhaps the initial vision of the program has dramatically changed. I understand the sense for keeping programs and funding resources in the stream of being uncomfortable, but it shouldn't be systemized so much where it becomes very stringent. It discourages people from taking a step to seeking help.

From my understanding, that is what it was and that is what it came to be. project. After its assessment evaluations, there are some recommendations and changes were implemented. It went to RFP, and a lot of the groups that could have perhaps put their name forward were discouraged. I was deeply disappointed to see, perhaps, just the diminishing of the program when it was first originally started.

What I am seeking from the Minister is if he could explain this question that was asked. I want to understand and seek some reassurances that the original vision of A New Day, with input from, as an example, the Coalition of Family Violence. A lot of the NGO organizations have played a hand in developing the initial vision. They know the philosophy behind that. I wanted to have the Minister explain: are those features still intact as we go forward with entering a new stage with the John Howard Society? Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, I want to make it clear that the A New Day program, the group's therapy model, and the basic curriculum is not changing. That will stay the same. What is changing is some of the administration around the program, the flexibility which has already been mentioned today, so that men might be able to rejoin more easily. Efforts are going to be made to make more facilitators. We also think that should the program well, which we are confident of, that the new slightly changed model will enable us to take it outside of Yellowknife to other communities, where this type of program is also badly needed. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Nadli.

MR. NADLI: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, I think the Minister answered my second question. It was whether the terms would outline the possibility of building upon the successes of the A New Day program to see if there are opportunities for outreach. It has been pointed out that sometimes people, especially men, can't access the program

because they are incarcerated.

There should be some efforts made to try to see if they could have an established program, as an example, the North Slave Correctional Centre and, at the same time, looking within the possibility of maybe, in the long term, seeing if this program could be expanded in one or two communities. Mahsi.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Nadli. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. As I may have mentioned earlier, this of course is a program for men who are not in custody, but there are certain programs they can access in the custodial setting. However, we are hoping to have better connections with probation services. Perhaps those who have been in custody and are released, in completing their sentence, may be able to access the program more easily.

Again, as I mentioned, in the future, should the program work out well, which we are certainly hoping for, we may be able to expand it to communities outside of Yellowknife. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. I see nothing further from Mr. Nadli. Next item, Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Minister, in his statement this morning, the statement we are discussing right now, seeks cooperation and support of all Members of this Legislative Assembly to move forward. I think that has been a challenging proposition for many of us. The merits of this program are undeniable. I have a few questions. I would like to thank my honourable friends on this side of the House for canvassing well the concerns of both the community and honourable Members on the many questions that they are still waiting on for this program.

The Minister said that all counsellors will be properly trained. We have had a brief discussion about that training, but does this new contract include a training component, and is the John Howard Society charged with delivering that training? What competencies exist around that? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. The Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I am wondering if I could have Ms. Gardiner answer that question. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Gardiner.

MS. GARDINER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The contract with the John Howard Society doesn't explicitly lay out what additional requirements for training on top of the minimum requirements to meet, as we have done with the pilot program, and as was made clear on the RFP document is the level of cooperation with our department to make sure that any opportunities available for professional development are met and there's a requirement in the contract that counsellors do maintain a minimum level of professional development hours. It's our intention as we've done previously to work with the contractor to make sure that those opportunities -- and from our division, for example, we have many opportunities with our community justice coordinators providing training

for those coordinators and victim services workers, as well as upcoming through the family information liaison office -- that training opportunities that are appropriate for many of these service providers and they would be included in that. Our intention to continue that and provide whatever support we can to make sure that the counsellors are receiving the support they need as well as of course as the requirement for the clinical supervision. It still exists for this program which would provide additional support in that way as well. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Gardiner. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Does that mean that additional training spaces will be opened up for these counsellors or will they be competing with existing public service employees? I say this because I know some of these training opportunities are quite limited and I'd like the Minister to give a commitment then that the department will make these opportunities available and provide additional resources if required. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister.

MR. GOLDNEY: Thank you for your answer to at least a portion of that question. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Pardon me. I'm sorry, Minister. Can you please repeat that?

MR. GOLDNEY: I'd ask Ms. Gardiner to answer that question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Gardiner.

MS. GARDINER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. There will no competition for spots. The training needs are similar and we will be including those opportunities for all of those service providers that we're connected to, so it will not be a competition. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Gardiner. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate that response. The Minister acknowledged the community partners that the honourable Member for Hay River North brought up in his line of questions and further recognizes the hard work done by the clients to heal themselves, but at the same time we know that the RFP was not taken up; that it was a rejection of that by those community partners and that as much as we, the Minister, has given kudos to these individuals who have worked hard to rehabilitate themselves is the recognition that only a small number of men. The message is a bit confusing, but does the Minister -- does this new deal -- is this new deal going to take those considerations into account? How are we going to be continuing to work with community partners and ensure they have input in the future. I want to make sure we're not just paying lip service -- political lip service -- to people who are benefiting from this program and we're actually showing real support and we are listening to our grass roots when they deliver things. I know this question has already been somewhat been posed, I'd like if the Minister can answer this rather than the department officials. I think they've already well explained the department's position, but I'd like to know how the Minister is going to ensure that the viewpoints of clients and of these groups are well connected to

this program on an ongoing basis. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister. The Member requested that you answer. Of course, you are under no obligation. Minister Sebert.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, of course, we are always hoping to work with community organizations. We are, of course, always interested in hearing what the clients have to say. The whole point of this exercise is to review the -- the very expensive review -- that took place, that was tabled in the House in November was to the effect that not that the program was broken in any way but that it could be improved. Ultimately, that improvement is for the clients. We're hoping as we move forward the program having become more flexible that we will be able to better serve those clients that wish to avail themselves of the A New Day Program and that we're optimistic that will take place. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'm not sure if the Minister addressed my concerns about working with the community service providers, but I'll leave that alone for now. My final question is the concerns from the department about this program have always been on an administrative basis. I appreciate the program is more flexible, but these admin -- and we just heard that the John Howard Society will be administering the program but not actually operating it. They'll be doing that through subcontractors.

Why is it the GNWT then not just subcontractors and handling the administration it itself? Why do we need that third party step? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Perhaps Mr. Goldney could answer that question.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Goldney.

MR. GOLDNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Certainly, as the program evolves, we do anticipate and do hope that they'll be opportunities to build capacities with other facilitators. The reason the John Howard Society and an NGO was selected was because we did recognize there is some value and we have heard this from NGOs of having a bit of distance from government and having an independent storefront-type scenario available to make it a less onerous or a less intimidating for prospective clients. We did hear that concern. Moving forward though, we might look at other options that might see the government taking a more of a direct role. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Goldney. Mr. Testart.

MR. TESTART: On that point the intention of this move is to have that separation with government to create a more client-friendly atmosphere. The previous operators of this program had very good relationships with our many, many clients. I may not have heard the response to this question that has been asked, but what is being done to retain their expertise for the nationally recognized program they developed? Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Testart. Minister.

MR. GOLDNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Well, the previous providers were not interested in bidding or continuing with the contract, so that was their choice to take that path. It was necessary for us to look to other NGOs. I can't advise, however, that there will be, of course, government observation and monitoring of this and also the coordinator will be in-house in the government. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Testart. There's nothing further from Mr. Testart. Next, I have Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you Mr. Chair. I'm going to try to narrow down my questions because my colleagues have provided a number of good comments and questions. I guess my first concern is did not this -- the coalition work with the original RFP and then what I've heard from the Minister is something -- was different. Can you explain why the department work with the coalition to come up with RFOP but then we end up in this situation? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister.

MR. GOLDNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Perhaps Ms. Gardiner could assist.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Gardiner.

MS. GARDINER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I'll do my best to answer what I think your question is. The original program design, when it was established in 2011, was developed with a committee of -- some coalition members and government as well as community subject matter experts. The curriculum and the approach was established through that group and then a request for proposals for the program as designed, which was broader in nature than what we've gone with for the long-term program model. It was a different situation in that case in that it was up to proponents to provide a proposal that encompassed the entire program.

In this case, the RFP was based on one segment of the program delivery, in a modular way, if you will. The balance that we tried to strike was understanding that we knew we had significant interest from members of the coalition and other community members, as well as potentially members of the private sector or other community members such as elders, who may not be associated with any official organization. That RFP was designed in that way to make sure that all of those different groups would be encouraged to provide these services, so that we had the ability to provide that depth across the board.

What we did was try to balance making sure that that RFP process was fair, so that we were not giving information to one group of potential proponents over another, as well as getting information from our community partners, in which coalition members were quite involved and consulted by the third-party evaluators. We took that into consideration, as well as the lessons learned from the delivery and the operation of the program. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Gardiner. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Ms. Gardiner. Thanks for the answer. I guess, to me -- red flags. You want to learn something? You had nobody from the coalition apply for

this. That, to me, is a big red flag. Have you guys taken this as an opportunity to learn something from this? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Well, we were disappointed when we did not receive a response to our RFP from the Tree of Peace or from other possible providers. Therefore, it was necessary to seek other avenues to make sure that this very important program would continue to be delivered. Therefore, we went out to NGOs that we thought would have the capacity to deal with this type of contract. Ultimately, the John Howard Society stepped forward, and that is how they ended up with the contract. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Minister did not answer my question, so I guess four years from now we will probably be in the same boat. It is unfortunate because we could have learned something from it. I guess I will go to my next question. What was the government's response to the coalition letter dated May 10th? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: We did receive the letter. However, we found it absolutely necessary that we move ahead. As mentioned earlier, there was a very extensive report done on the program. It did suggest several changes that we did not see as terribly significant to the overall program. At that point, obviously, there were parties that were not particularly happy with the new RFP, including the previous provider. Therefore, to make sure that the program would still be delivered, we looked to other NGOs, and as I said earlier, the John Howard Society, an organization that has existed in Canada for 150 years, stepped forward. We now have a contract with them, and we are optimistic as we move forward. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Minister for the 150 years update. It was very important to hear that I think for the third or fourth time here. I now understand that John Howard Society is 150 years old. It has been in the Northwest Territories for 23 years. Thank you very much.

However, I guess my big concern is you went out, talked to his organization, and gave them from a one-year term to a four-year term. You did not follow the same process given out to everybody else. To me, I am not worried about John Howard Society so much as the process. You basically said to the coalition that you have heard what they said, but I don't know if you listened to them. Listening to them is different than being heard. Heard, you can sit there and nod your head; listening to them is actually listening to their concerns and making a decision that benefits all parties. It is a win-win. It is a negotiation process. So it is a big concern for me.

Let's move away from the society and that. Let's go to your logic model, the evaluation. Now, the department has had a long period of time to come up with an evaluation tool.

Now, we still do not have an evaluation tool in place. Will the department get an evaluation tool done right away, so that it is not after the fact, it is not a year down the road, but will be done right away, so that you can see if this program or this process that you're talking about works? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Mr. Chair, we would like to think that our decisions are evidence-based. After all, we did go out and commissioned a very extensive report on this program, which suggested certain changes, which after a good deal of consideration, were incorporated into the new RFP. We then went out, and unfortunately, there were not any bidders. Therefore, we had to look further afield to make sure the program continues.

As to evaluating the program, of course, we will be evaluating program, and perhaps I could have Ms. Gardiner expand on my answer. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Gardiner.

MS. GARDINER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I want to clarify that we do have an existing logic model. What we are hoping to do is improve upon it based on our experiences so far, and that is the intention for further program evaluation. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Gardiner. Mr. Thompson.

MR. THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and I thank the Minister and Ms. Gardiner for the answer. Having a logic model and actually implementing something and knowing what you're looking for? It is great that you have a logic model, but you do not have an evaluation tool in place. You've developed this program. You've developed this RFP. Now, you are sitting here talking about how you are going to develop an evaluation process. If you are going to do something, you should have an evaluation process set in place before you implement this. You guys have been working on it, so it is a concern. I understand you have a logic model. My last question, because the time is running out, is there significant cost, yearly cost to this program, from what we originally proposed to the RFP? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Thompson. I request that the Minister keep his answer brief, as we are running short on time. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Member is quite correct. Time is running out, and that is why it was necessary for us to move quickly on this. There is an evaluation process, and we are confident that the provider will live up to expectations. If they do not, then would be in breach of the contract. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): I will allow you perhaps to answer the question briefly. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: There are no additional costs. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Time has expired for Mr. Thompson. Next, I have Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are few points or a few questions that I would like to ask. First, maybe I will just ask some of the basic questions that I understood about the program previously that I just want to make sure are going to still be in place. One is that I understood to some degree that the program was available in the past to those that were in remand. Is it going to be available to those in remand? I am not talking about those who have been sentenced, but those who are awaiting sentencing. Is this program going to be available to those in remand?

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. No, this program is not going to be available to those either serving sentences or in remand. After all, they are both in custody, and in fact, the program was never meant for those groups. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you. Will the program be available to those that are just simply seeking healing? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Definitely. That it is one of the groups that is targeted for this program. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Like it was previously, will partners of men seeking healing, their spouses or common-laws or even family members, be able to attend counselling as well? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: I would like to have Ms. Gardiner assist with this question. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Ms. Gardiner.

MS. GARDINER: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Absolutely, the connection of victims of domestic violence to supports that are right for them and designed for them is a key focus of the program. It remains that way. That will continue in this case, that, with the appropriate privacy policies and approaches in mind, those services and those people will absolutely be connected to services designed for them and meant for them. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Ms. Gardiner. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Okay, thank you. Those are good answers. Mr. Chair, I just wonder, we know that there are a variety of programs that are available to those who are incarcerated, that have been sentenced. We know that there is limited access to programs to those who are in remand. Is there a men's healing program available of some sort to those who are in remand currently? If there is not, why would they not be

eligible to access this men's healing program? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Certainly, Mr. Chair, there are such programs available, but, if I could let Mr. Goldney expand on that.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Goldney.

MR. GOLDNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. There are definitely programs available. The challenge, of course, with remanded inmates it is often difficult to schedule them in those programs. The department has been working, as have other jurisdictions that are facing this challenge, trying to find modular programming that can benefit so remanded inmates can participate in, so we certainly are working in that direction to provide various programs.

With respect to the A New Day program specifically, though, I think we have to recognize it is a group program that is not well-suited to be delivered within institutions and, in fact, it never has been delivered in the institutions. But, certainly, we do anticipate greater connections with inmates as they transition out of the institutions, through correction staff and probation staff, to certainly make individuals that might be well-suited to that program offering to be connected with it. Then, hopefully, they will make a choice to further their healing. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I appreciate the reply. I guess, then, an important question that I would have is: we have those who have gone through incarceration and who are now on probation, and those folks would be eligible, I take it, to access the A New Day. What certainty do individuals, men, in that situation receiving counselling have to be sure that what they may reveal, let's say, to a counsellor is not kind of held against them, those in particular that are in probation?

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Yes, of course, the discussions with the counsellors would be confidential, so we are not anticipating that would be a problem. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Those were the questions I had around the programming aspects, but now I just want to talk a little bit again about the administrative aspects and, call it, the RFP. I don't think I have heard anything today that suggests that changes to -- you know, we are saying changes. There were minimal changes to the programming, but there were more changes administratively, but, from what I am hearing today when you talk about more flexibility, potentially more facilitators, the ability to potentially move it outside of Yellowknife and maybe even into a model that could be used in remand, these do not seem to be administrative aspects that I find daunting, that maybe any other NGO of which have been around Yellowknife for many a year, who have probably provided similar types of services, in fact, administratively. I am just challenged to understand how it was that this particular NGO

had the administrative capacity that others seemingly did not. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think it was more a question of interest than capacity. When we went out for the RFP, there were some pre-RFP meetings to which there were at least several NGOs attending, and we were expecting bids, if I can put it that way. However, none came forward, and that is at that point we started searching further afield. The John Howard Society appeared to be a good fit, and we believe they will be. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think this has been touched on before in a broader scope as it relates to the coalition, but did any individual NGOs outline to you the reasons why they would not have submitted to the RFP and some of the potential challenges that they might have faced? Did you get any feedback from individual NGOs in that regard? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: I did not receive any direct feedback, so I am going to defer the question to Mr. Goldney, if I may.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Goldney.

MR. GOLDNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I think what we heard from NGOs was simply that they were not interested in the program as it was redesigned, and they were not specific in their concerns. You know, I would only be speculating, so I would have to be careful not to do that, but I might suggest some might have preferred that there were not any changes. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Goldney. Mr. Vanthuyne.

MR. VANTHUYNE: Thank you, Mr. Chair. In the interest of time, just one last question. It seems to me now we are going to have an administrative component and a deliverable component, and the deliverable component is going to be coming from subcontractors that are qualified, and the administrative component seemingly is coming from the local NGO. What percentage of the contract, if you can reveal that, is going to, in this instance, John Howard Society for the administrative aspects. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Time has expired, but I will allow the Minister to concisely and briefly answer the question.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: I don't have that information before me, but perhaps Mr. Goldney might be able to help. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. Goldney.

MR. GOLDNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Unfortunately, we do not have those details yet. A lot will depend on the NGO's discussions with perspective facilitators and the

arrangements that they make with those facilitators, so we just do not have that information yet. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. Goldney. Next on my list I have Mr. McNeely.

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Adding to the already-spoken questions here and as my previous colleague said, you are going to have an administrative component and the subcontractor component. I found the former employees very sincere. Has there been employment extended to those former employees of the old A New Day care program? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. McNeely. Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: I am not certain if I understand the question. Of course, the John Howard Society will be making its own arrangements as to whether the Tree of Peace wishes to employ these people as contractors. This is really up to the Tree of Peace, and I have no information as to whether that might be something of interest to them. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. McNeely.

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Will the Minister provide that information to confirm whether employment has been extended, and if the particular two employees are going to accept the invitation? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. McNeely. I am not sure if that is something that the Minister can do. It is related to a third party, but I will let the Minister respond.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: I have no ability to do that. As to the future employment of the employees who were mentioned in the question, that would really be up to them and the Tree of Peace. I have no information or no ability to have any effect on that relationship. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. McNeely.

MR. MCNEELY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. The Minister had mentioned here earlier that this A New Day program was not being implemented at the YCI or YCC. I think it was, and maybe you should revisit my suggestions to revisit hosting that program with the offenders' community in the areas of reintegration back into the system, in rehabilitation courses, for the reason being it supports an outline in the Auditor General's report that nothing is being done in that area to offer services of rehabilitation and reintegration in that report. I am suggesting to the Minister to take that into account, if he would. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. McNeely. The Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Such a change would be an almost complete change in the program, which is meant for those not in custody, either serving prisoners or on remand. Now, that is not to say there are not programs to assist those who are in custody. There are such programs, but they have a different focus. The

whole point of this program was to assist those not in custody. There are programs for those in custody, and programs for those not in custody. I imagine it would be very difficult to integrate those two programs and, in fact, that is not what A New Day is all about. It is voluntary for men who have issues with their relationships, and it is meant for those not in custody. Again, there are programs for those in custody, presently either on remand or serving prisoners. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. McNeely.

MR. MCNEELY: Let me reword that. My question is: if an offender was incarcerated for family violence as the program is intended for, would the Minister entertain the idea of targeting those with family violence as clients, who have offended in the area of family violence, for counselling and rehabilitation? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. McNeely. The Minister.

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: This program is for those who may be offenders in the sense they have committed assaults and so on, but it is not meant for those actually in custody or on remand, of course, which is also in custody. This program is very directed to those not in custody, who are there voluntarily. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Minister. Mr. McNeely.

MR. MCNEELY: My closing comment is it seems that a decision was made, and there is really no value to provide sound suggestions because that is where it is going to stop. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Simpson): Thank you, Mr. McNeely. Would the Minister like to respond?

HON. LOUIS SEBERT: I don't want anybody to think that a decision was made irrationally. After all, we went out for an evaluation report. This matter has been brought up several times in the House, so there is a very careful evaluation prepared. On the basis of that evaluation, an RFP was issued. There were no responses. We then went out to NGOs, so I am quite confident that we have conducted this whole process properly. Thank you, Mr. Chair.