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**Geomatics Office**  
**Committee of the Whole—2018-2019 Operating Budget Review**  
**Dept. of Lands—February 22, 2017**

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I'm looking at the business plan that is now a public document, and I see that the geomatics portion of this activity area decreases from about \$3,063,000 to \$2.7 million, so can someone tell me what is happening in here? Are we cutting money in here so we can fund the Western Arctic Geomatics Centre, or what is happening, Mr. Chair? Thank you.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** I'm going to ask Ms. Hilderman to assist with the response to that question. Thank you.

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

**MS. HILDERMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The change in the base funding for geomatics from 2017-2018 to 2018-2019 is \$362,000. That is a reduction of one geomatics officer in the amount of \$112,000, which was the very last of our Phase 2 reduction proposals. A sunset of a business consultant for the Western Arctic Centre for Geomatics, it was only originally approved for a three-year period, and this is the end of the three-year term. That is \$209,000 sunset; \$50,000 is for the agriculture strategy initiative for geospatial data and products for mapping. An increase of \$59,000 forced growth for software, licensing, maintenance, and support. Then a transfer of \$150,000 for aerial photography from informatics to operations division, Commissioner lands administration, and then a net change of zero for the Western Arctic Centre for Geomatics. It was scheduled for a reduction in 2018-2019 from our Phase 2 reduction proposals, and we are pleased to say that that funding has been approved ongoing in 2018-2019. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. That is a helpful, sort of, overview of money moving around there and so on. I guess I want to ask the Minister: are we cutting the staff position that is probably located in Yellowknife and just kind of using that funding, then, to build up the Western Arctic Geoscience Centre in Inuvik?

Look, I have always been on record as supporting that centre in Inuvik and capitalizing on the investment that this government has made in the Mackenzie Valley Fibre Optic Line, but if we are just shuffling money around here to build up that office, that is, you know, a result of Cabinet's fiscal reduction strategy. I am not sure that is the way I wanted this to proceed, but maybe if the Minister can help me understand this. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** Yes, thank you, Mr. Chair. As has been mentioned, the budget includes a reinstatement for the Western Arctic Centre for Geomatics to fund the three

positions there. I understand that that is unchanged. Of course, that reverses the Phase 2 reduction proposal that was to take effect in 2018-2019. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

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

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. I don't think that was in answer to the question I asked. The position in Yellowknife, is it being cut to help fund the position in Inuvik? Thanks Mr. Chair.

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

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** No, that is not the case. Perhaps Mr. Hagen could add something.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Minister Sebert. Mr. Hagen.

**MR. HAGEN:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. The geomatics officer you are pointing to was the last of our reductions from last year, and it has had no impact on bringing back the Western Arctic Centre that you all were in favour of. It has not impacted that. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Hagen. Mr. O'Reilly.

**MR. O'REILLY:** Thanks, Mr. Chair. Yes, I do not think I am going to get an answer, but, look, I support the centre in Inuvik. I have always said that. Just, to me, it looks like we are shuffling around money to support that initiative. I support the initiative, but shuffling around money to do it, that is probably not a good way to do. I will just leave it at that. Thanks, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. O'Reilly. Further comment, any further questions on pages 317 to 319? Mr. Vanthuyne.

**MR. VANTHUYNE:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Not necessarily a question but a comment. That is simply again that, as the chair, of course, of Economic Development and Environment, we found ourselves very supportive of the Western Arctic Centre for Geomatics. What we would encourage, certainly, is that the Department of Lands along with ITI and the Executive work towards having this positive development be very inclusive of our new mandate item, which is to develop the knowledge-based economy. So, maybe if the Minister could give any kind of comment to that regard as to: is there any undertaking or any effort to do that? Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**CHAIRPERSON (Mr. Blake):** Thank you, Mr. Vanthuyne. Minister Sebert.

**HON. LOUIS SEBERT:** What I can say is that we are very happy that this is finally going ahead and reversing the Phase 2 reduction. I think we do understand that the centre is a position to support the knowledge economy, which is very important. So, yes, we will be proceeding with this, of course, in a financial sense. We are hoping that it will lead to further development with ITI or Infrastructure, so yes. We will be working also with Aurora College so that the students will find this to be an area of interest in their studies and also, of course, with the federal government, so yes, we are excited about this initiative. Thank you.

