

KEVIN O'REILLY—MLA FRAME LAKE
MVRMA Regulatory Review
Committee of the Whole—2021-2022 Operating Budget Review
Dept. of Lands—March 8, 2022

In the Minister's opening remarks, he mentioned that there's money in here for something called the MVRMA regulatory improvement and engagement. Can the Minister explain what that is all about? Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Lands.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: Yeah, for that detail, I think I'll turn to Ms. Macdonald. Yeah, thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Ms. Macdonald.

MS. MACDONALD: Thank you, Madam Chair. The department has been the lead on coordinating the GNWT's responses to MVRMA amendments and policy development, and our funding that we've had for two legislative advisor positions to support this work was sunseting at the end of this fiscal year. So we received additional funding for four years to continue this work. Lands will be supporting EIA as we carry out further analysis on devolving MVRMA responsibilities to the GNWT. Thank you, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. So we just dealt with the Department of Executive and Indigenous Affairs. How does their work relate to what Lands has these two positions for? Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Lands.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: For that detail, I'll turn to the assistant deputy minister. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. ADM Chapman.

MR. CHAPMAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. As Ms. Macdonald had pointed out, we have two positions in our department who are working as legislative advisors who look at the impacts to the Department of Lands and the issues that we are required to inspect against, to manage, to provide advice and guidance on.

Within EIA, they have other positions that are more specific to the overall review and negotiation with Canada. So our positions are very much operational-focused, and that's how they differentiate. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Member for Frame Lake.

MR. O'REILLY: Thanks, Madam Chair. So is any of this work related to the attempt by the federal government to bring through a number of changes like a project certificate and the ability to issue summary convictions, that kind of stuff, that was never passed

and the whole thing kind of got sidelined by Tlicho government's legal action. Is that what some of this work is, to cover some of those changes? Thanks, Madam Chair.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. Minister of Lands.

HON. SHANE THOMPSON: For that detail, I'll turn to the assistant deputy minister. Thank you.

CHAIRPERSON (Ms. Semmler): Thank you. ADM Chapman.

MR. CHAPMAN: Thank you, Madam Chair. As indicated, some of this work has been ongoing. Some of that work that the Member has spoken to was in the early discussions several years ago. That work has pretty much been mothballed, I think, as recently to the best of our knowledge. So we're still engaged with Canada on some of the process improvements, if you want to call it that. But at the same time, we're ongoing our own work related to the Public Land Act and the potential efforts that we can utilize that legislative tool to assist us in some of our ongoing land management obligations. Thank you.