

# PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY



Speaker: Hon. Francis (Buck) Watts

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## Standing Committee on Agriculture and Fisheries

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**DATE OF HEARING:** 24 MARCH 2017

**MEETING STATUS:** PUBLIC

**LOCATION:** COMMITTEE ROOM, J. ANGUS MACLEAN BUILDING, CHARLOTTETOWN

**SUBJECT:** BRIEFINGS ON LOBSTER CARAPACE SIZE, ATLANTIC HALIBUT QUOTA AND POULTRY INDUSTRY

**COMMITTEE:**

Hal Perry, MLA Tignish-Palmer Road [Chair]  
Dr. Peter Bevan-Baker, Leader of the Third Party  
Bush Dumville, MLA West Royalty-Springvale  
Sonny Gallant (Minister of Workforce and Advanced Learning)  
Colin LaVie, MLA Souris-Elmira  
Hon. Tina Mundy (Minister of Family and Human Services)  
Brad Trivers, MLA Rustico-Emerald

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:**

none

**MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

none

**GUESTS:**

PEI Department of Agriculture and Fisheries (John Jamieson, Hon. Alan McIsaac)

**STAFF:**

Ryan Reddin, Clerk Assistant (Research, Committees and Visitor Services)  
Marian Johnston, Clerk Assistant (Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees)

Edited by Parliamentary Publications and Services

The Committee met at 10:00 a.m.

**Chair (Perry):** I'd like to call this meeting to order. I'd like to welcome everyone here today. It's nice to see the same faces back from last week. Everybody is ready to go and hopefully we're out in time to go to the Easter Beef sale and spend some money that will go back into the economy of PEI.

I'd like to welcome our guests here today, the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, hon. Alan McIsaac, and Deputy Minister John Jamieson, for coming in today. They are going to give us a briefing on a number of topics within the agriculture and fisheries department.

A few housekeeping rules before we start; cell phones, please turn them off and if you have them on vibrate, please have them in your pocket. Before you speak, please state your name for recording purposes.

With that, we'll give the floor over to the minister and deputy minister. Would you like to have questions during your briefing, or would you prefer to keep them until the end?

**Mr. McIsaac:** I think we'd like to get through the deck and if you want to stop and do that, we have a significant deck here and we want to get through the whole thing because there were a couple of additional items put on it, but it's at the call of the Chair.

**Chair:** Okay, but I was asking you: What you would prefer?

**Mr. McIsaac:** Yeah –

**Chair:** We'll keep questions until the end then?

**Mr. McIsaac:** Okay.

**Chair:** Perfect.

Thank you very much.

**Mr. McIsaac:** It's really good to be here. I know we got bounced back a couple of times over different issues and then changes in the Chair and things like that, but it's great to be here and we're fully committed

to that department. It's the most important department of them all, of course, because it's agriculture and fisheries. Even though we have a couple other ministers here, I'm going to say that anyway.

If you look at agriculture and fisheries, and tourism, supposedly, our top three industries; I always say it and I say it at some of the annual meetings lately too, that, if it wasn't for our farmers who make agriculture what it is, and they look after our farms and our barns and the whole countryside, make it beautiful – and if it wasn't for our fishermen looking after the waters and the fishing ports and making that beautiful, we wouldn't really have a tourism industry. That's what sets us apart, is the beauty of our province. I give a lot of credit of that to the agriculture and fisheries people, and we think they deserve money and to get paid properly for their product.

That's what we're about in our department and work hard at that because it grows our economy and that's the ultimate goal, to make sure our farmers make money and our province grows.

We're going to run you through a deck. You can see we use high-tech equipment here, but our objective is to provide an – this is today – an update. Just on that note, John and I were just talking; we have some higher-tech equipment that we're using now with regards to runoff and stuff, and if you want to have an update on that, John is quite willing to come in and show you some of the technology we have on that.

**John Jamieson:** Yes, just on that piece, we've hired a new hire about a year – no, about six months ago, a guy named Evan MacDonald. We now have drone technology and we're doing some really neat work in terms of soil runoff. In the past, whenever there's a fish kill, you put a lot of effort into one watershed while everyone else – all the other areas, were still at risk. We have a new piece of work that we're doing that identifies at-risk fields right across the province. I'd really like to come in and have Evan show you what we're doing there. I think you'd be quite interested and quite impressed too.

**Mr. McIsaac:** It's a step up on this –

**John Jamieson:** Yes.

**Mr. McIsaac:** – the model we're using right there (Indistinct). Good, okay let's go through our deck here.

We're going to talk about the halibut first and a little background on it. Management area 4RST, which is the Gulf of St. Lawrence, there are three areas there: 4R, 4S, and 4T, and we're actually in the 4T area. The total quota is 1,036.8 metric tonnes shared by fixed and mobile fleets among the five provinces, so the four Atlantic and Quebec. PEI has 876 fixed gear licenses, which is 20% of the Gulf licenses, and the historical allowable catch, is set at 300 metric tonnes in 1988 to 1998. The quota was increased from 600 metric tonnes in 2010 to the current level of 1,036.8.

During the federal election campaign a commitment was made to inshore fishermen in Newfoundland and Labrador to review the sharing arrangement. PEI couldn't establish the landings history due to the cod moratorium and management plans of the opening dates. The shares in PEI landings are 1.46%.

The thing about it is, when you go back historically, we were fishing lobster at the time so we didn't establish a very high quota. We kind of got behind the eight ball on that. We've had Maritime meetings, or the five provinces got together just over the last couple of days to discuss: What can we do to change these shares? Because we've been hearing from the fisherman we have to do a little more work on the halibut stocks – we need to get that up.

So, they had their meetings now over the last 2.5 days. We hope to have a resolve to that, maybe. It's the feds that make the decision – in a couple of weeks' time. So, we'll hear – the discussions were held again on whether we should get an increase in quota, and how that will be split up. But we haven't got any answers for you on that today. We just can tell you that the meetings were held and the decision is coming whenever the feds want it to come, basically. But we have been meeting with the ministers on that.

Back in May of 2016, when Minister Tootoo was there, he announced a return to the historical fleet shares and we were put back to 1.46. The other fleet shares are: Quebec has got 57, Newfoundland, 32, New Brunswick, 5.2, Gulf of Nova Scotia, 2, and Scotia/Fundy has 1.6. Eighty five per cent of the mobile gear was redistributed equally to the eight fleets. So we got almost 30 metric tonnes back then, which left us – actually – with a PEI quota for 2016 of 40.14 metric tonnes. So, that's where we're at, unless there's a change in the thing.

We've had ministerial bilateral meetings: January 16<sup>th</sup>, here on PEI. I talked to the minister about this whole issue at that time and several other issues as well. Then at our FPT meetings of CCFAM – meetings in January, 2016 and June of 2016 – discussed it again. We met with the minister in Boston when we were at the seafood show to discuss this issue among others. And then the province presented it to the halibut review committee in Quebec in April, 2016 and we've fired off letters as well.

So, we've been pushing this item. And again – meetings held just the last 2.5 days and results coming, hopefully (Indistinct) –

**John Jamieson:** And the letter that the minister sent was a joint letter that was a minister of PEI, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. So, it's just not a PEI issue, it's a broader piece, so all three ministers have intervened.

**Mr. McIsaac:** The three Maritime Provinces are kind of more on the same wavelength and Quebec and Newfoundland feel they should get a bigger share of that, but anyway. We'll see what happens.

The Gulf Groundfish Advisory meeting that was just held – it's just what I'm saying – to discuss halibut shares. The Maritime Province fisherman's group and the provincial reps – it's just what we talked about there – establishing quota. And we'll find out – we just had a little debrief in that by Dave this morning, but word's coming out on that. It's going to be announced by Minister LeBlanc whether we increase it or not and what the splits will be. But, we haven't got that information for you today.

A little background on the lobster: A number of licenses in LFA 25 – which runs from about Victoria through to North Cape. PEI has 226, New Brunswick has 470, and Nova Scotia has 15 fishing in that area 25. PEI's position has been to maintain the carapace size at 72 mils for all three of the 24, 25, 26 A, to stay at 72 mils. In New Brunswick, the MFU has been lobbying for many years to increase that carapace size – they wanted to get up to 76 mils. Our guys wanted to stay at 72. As you can see, we don't have as many fishers. That was our position and we support the PEIFA on that, and we wrote a letter supporting the Prince County Fisherman's Association. We take our lead from there and we work with the PEIFA for sure.

As you know, the decision was to increase the carapace size from 72 – 77, even though it was only asked by MFU to go to 76. Minister Tootoo came down and he put it up one mil last year, two mils this year, and two mils the following year. That's what the increase is to be and we feel the impact would be larger lobster will be harvested and each lobster will heavier.

It's interesting, in that they jumped one mil, but over a molt, lobsters will grow upwards of 10 mils. Mr. LaVie, you'll likely know that as well as anybody, for sure. So, it's quite a growth and they feel – we just want to make sure the science is looked at before this was studied – and that was the main thing behind our letters and our interventions.

We did have some interventions: January 16<sup>th</sup>, met with the federal minister and we sent letters to the federal minister. Again, we've discussed this issue at the Boston Seafood Show last year and this year. The LFA 25 advisory meeting was in Moncton in April 14<sup>th</sup> of 2016. We presented the information on what impacts we expect to the Prince County during the spring of 2016.

**John Jamieson:** One of the things that we pointed out in our letters and our interventions is that Fisheries and Oceans have something called an Integrated Fisheries Management Plan. They have a number of principles within that Integrated Fisheries Management Plan and the 72 mil lobster meets all the requirements in that Integrated Fisheries Management Plan

because 50% of the population is sexually mature at that age.

There is also, in that plan, there is no discussion on changing based on markets because markets can change from year to year. We base our decisions on, or we are asked to base our decisions on science.

We pointed out to the minister that his mandate letter says that it has to –

**Mr. McIsaac:** Has to be based on science.

**John Jamieson:** – based on science, as well.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Yeah, and that's the one thing we pushed all along.

This is the map of – showing our areas, here. You can see where 25 is there running from Victoria through to the point. Then, 26A is the rest of the southern part of the province. Then 24 is on the North Shore.

Okay, industry supports. The department works with the fishing industry through the PEIFA, including assisting in science studies on lobster and halibut and monitoring programs there.

We got lobster monitoring programs been going on since 1998 and provides the latest science information on lobster. It's a pretty interesting – these monitoring programs are very good, not only in the lobster, but in the other shellfish industries, as well.

We've assisted in the three-year halibut tagging study, so that's going on all the time, too. Halibut work with Maritime colleagues, this was noted, work with the industry, and ongoing discussions with the federal minister and will continue to do that. Again, hope to have an answer back sometime soon, but that's at the call of the minister.

On the lobster, again, support the industry, and work closely with the PEIFA and Prince County on that LFA 25. Continue to support the science, that's mostly important, and work to mitigate any potential market impacts.

If anybody has an opportunity to go to the Boston Seafood Show, it's phenomenal to see what goes on down there. We were

down there – I think every fisherman should go to that. I was telling Mr. LaVie, last night, at the banquet at the Easter Beef that every fisherman should go down to see that.

We had – seven companies had booths at that. There were 30 different companies walked the floor from PEI, but there were 100 countries involved in that show. We put \$130 million worth of seafood into the New England area. We put out quite a bit of product. It means a lot to our area. We put on a reception down there. It was very well accepted, too. Everybody raves about it, but it's a big business, and it's needed. You pretty well have to be there – I talked to some of our processors that were down there and it's a place you have to be. Not only to pick up a new markets, but also to ensure you keep the ones you had, and to see what the markets are looking for. It's pretty interesting.

Transport Canada fishing vessel regulations. This is one of the issues that you wanted an add-on to. On July 13<sup>th</sup>, last year, the new federal safety regs were put in, or gazetted to take effect in July of this year. This will affect all vessels 12 metres or 39 feet. Transport Canada reps have attended several of the meetings. Colin, like you saw (Indistinct) at the meetings, talking about what the changes should be, and what the needs will be for upgrading; life rafts; survival suits and EBIRPs, with an estimated cost of between 3 and \$6,000 for commercial fishers.

The industry is requesting a longer phase-in; maybe even up to three to five years to get those new needs in place. The regs there now has to be in place by July. The spring fishery, they don't have to be in for those fishers, but the fall fishery in LFA 25 they'd have to have them in place the way the regs sit right now.

**John Jamieson:** One of the things that we're hearing from industry is that the equipment – because there are 20,000 vessels that have to be impacted, the equipment may not actually be there for them to purchase.

**Mr. McIsaac:** So they may need a little longer time. Anyway, we'll work with them on that and talk to them.

New entrants into the oyster culture, there is increasing interest in growing oysters, that's for sure, in the water column, off-bottom. If you want to see one of the most interesting parts of the whole fishery it's the off-bottom oyster, where they're growing them in the basket and things like that. It is phenomenal. They're all, basically, all choice oysters. No twisty standards or anything like you get with the wild fishery, but they're needed as well. There is need for both off-bottom and bottom fishery. There is just a great demand out there for them. If you haven't been out on the water to see what they're doing with the off-bottom, the mussels and all that sort of thing, it's worth a trip out on the boat.

We took Minister LeBlanc out in Savage Harbour to look at that just after he became fisheries minister, and just to show him exactly what our guys are doing here, guys and gals are doing here, with regards to the oysters and the mussels, so he could see first-hand what we need here and what we're doing here. Then, he came back for the Shellfish Festival in the fall, too, just to get a real good feel for what's happening on PEI. It's pretty amazing when you see it. Actually, Minister Colwell from Nova Scotia and Minister Doucet from New Brunswick come over to the Shellfish Festival, as well, and they were blown away by that event. It's terrific.

This is a sample of – which estuary was this?

**John Jamieson:** Pardon me?

**Mr. McIsaac:** Which estuary was this?

**John Jamieson:** I'm not sure.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Anyway, that's what it looks at like there. It's pretty neat and well cared for, that's for sure.

New entrants in the oyster culture industry. Growers can apply for new bottom oyster leases, but there is a moratorium on applying to change them to off-bottom, where you can grow oysters using the water column. The bottom leases that were issued pre-2006 can be converted to off-bottom oyster leases, but moratoriums on those, is on those converting the ones that were post-2006.

Existing leases, of course, can be purchased by growers.

The leasing policy, currently under review, and all policy decisions are part of the review process. Industry requested that all applications for new leases be suspended until a review is complete.

Part of the review process, the current zoning system is also being reviewed. The zoning system determines the type and the location where aquaculture can occur at each river system, which is very important. We have, of course, people have the boats and things like that, too, pleasure boats. We got to work together with the non-fishery. Review is taking into consideration the increase interest in growing oysters in the water column and where leases best be located for success of the grower and other users. It's a team thing.

The other thing you want to talk about was the poultry. There are two sections here. There is the supply-managed and the non-supply-managed. In the hens, the layer, egg sector, of course, is supply-managed and the broiler sector is supply-managed.

In the non-supply, there is the poultry fanciers, one of which we have at the table here. Non-supply you'll see, too, there are smaller growers of eggs and of broilers. We'll get into the numbers there. Then, the turkeys, the turkeys in every other province are supply-managed, but we don't have a quota here. We'll discuss that.

On the laying hens, there are seven registered quota holders on PEI with a total allocation of just under 140,000 layers and 2016 production was 3.72 million eggs with a farm cash receipt of \$6.78 million.

There are two federally registered plants. The Maritime Pride, used to be Omega just past the Cavendish plant, there. The other one is Burns Poultry Farm, right on the farm there. Eggs supply the local market, and surplus is sold through the Egg Farmers of Canada and CEMA, the Canadian Egg Marketing Agency.

Food safety and animal care programs are in place with third-party audits just to make sure it's up to scratch.

Nathan Burns and his new cages there; this is a new technology that came out of Europe. It's a cage, but it's for more hens in the cage and it's like living at the Hilton, perhaps, than the little drive-by motel. It's absolutely beautiful. If the hens are a little bashful they can even go in behind a curtain and lay their eggs. It's right up-to-date but it's expensive, but it's what they need.

We talked – there is a code of practice now pretty well for all types of animals that we have to be involved in. The consumer is pretty wary of where their food comes from and they want to know where their food comes from and how the animals are handled. Our guys are working very closely on that. It's a big investment, but if you're going to keep in the business you have to watch both sides of it, not just collecting the eggs, but how the eggs are collected. This is some pretty nice equipment. If you have the opportunity to get out and see some of these buildings, it's well worth the while.

**John Jamieson:** This was the first one in North America that actually went to European-style enriched housing. There is an area, as the minister said, that the birds can go in behind if they want to lay their eggs. There's an opportunity for them to file their nails while they're eating. They can basically do whatever comes natural to a bird and the square footage is much larger than the traditional cages that we've seen in the past.

**Mr. McIsaac:** It's like the Hilton, I think. John Dennis, I think, has these in place too, up in Tyne Valley there now. So they're moving that way.

On the broilers, the meat birds, there are eight broiler producers; five million kilograms of meat. These are supply-managed again, too. Farm gate receipts of 7.5 million and all the processing is done off-Island for these. Animal care program has international certification, again. The poultry fanciers: Association with the goal of maintaining purebred and heritage breeds. There are 70 members, 20 active breeders and exhibitors; 2000 birds, and the value of this sector is uncertain, but we consider it to be priceless. I'll throw that in for Hal.

**Chair:** Yes, I'm a member.

**Mr. McIsaac:** On the non-supply-managed side now; in the laying hens you're allowed to have up to 299 hens without requiring a laying quota. Over that, you have to have a quota and become part of the system. So 299 is the limit you can have there. On the broiler side you can have up to 499 meat birds. After that, you have to have a quota.

The eggs in these areas are not inspected and they can be sold at the farm gate or at a farmers' market, which is considered to be an extension of the farm gate, that's all. The broilers are killed at inspected abattoirs. The province has funding available for provincial egg grading facilities. We have offered that. There are no takers at this time; though there have been some who talked about getting together and putting up a station. But, now the Amish are considering setting up an egg grading station in eastern PEI, so there may be some uptake on some funds in that area.

On the turkeys, turkey is a supply-managed commodity in the other provinces. But like I say, we don't have any of that quota here in PEI. Larkins raise between 12 to 13,000 a year and 70-80% of the Island's total production, but not near that of what we consume here. Turkey farm gate receipt is estimated around 700,000. The value-added product; we actually had them in to our staff day and they were showing us some of their products they are making here, including sausages and turkey burgers and meatballs. They're looking at further processing there, which is great. The Larkin turkeys are sold within the province.

Our department and other departments have been working with the Larkins with the potential for a new building, a new processing facility. They have been working on that for a few years now. The Borden operation at the meat plant there, requires an upgrade to their waste treatment facility, so there's some talk we could bump up to them; use the same waste treatment facility. There needs to be some work done there for sure. And 75 to 80% of the turkeys consumed on PEI are imported. When we discussed with the ones who are growing the turkeys right now if they want to go to a quota system, there doesn't seem to be a real need to uptake on that, but there is a possibility there. I think if we had killing plant facilities here it would be different.

Going forward, we're going to work on a local food act which is really exciting at the present time. There have been questions in the House about that from several different directions and that will support the local food producers, encourage local consumption and examine potential for an additional tax to producers. There is a tax right now, but we're looking at an additional one that will bump this program up.

We're working on a local food in schools project and right now we're working with the department of education and the department of health on that, and hope to have, possibly, a pilot project to come out very soon on that to see how it works and see how well it will run. Procurement rules are being examined with the goal of increasing local participation, so anything – by the time you get into this you have the agreement and internal trade that you have to watch for. But, it will be good for the farmers and it'll be good for, hopefully, schools and those who need the food.

**Chair:** I'd like to thank both of you for your presentation and we're going to entertain questions from the committee members.

Colin LaVie will start.

**Mr. LaVie:** I don't know how long you want to be here, but I've got a full page of questions here all over the place.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Yes (Indistinct)

**Mr. LaVie:** Thanks for coming in.

I know it was – we were trying to get you in for a long time and I know John and I spoke off-season and summertime, wherever we got a chance to talk and –

**Chair:** At the wharf?

**Mr. LaVie:** At the wharf.

**Mr. McIsaac:** (Indistinct) just at the wharf in Souris, but (Indistinct)

**Mr. LaVie:** Yes we did. Anyway, thanks for coming in. We'll get right at it because I imagine there are a lot of questions here because it's a big agenda.

When was your last meeting with Minister Leblanc?

**Mr. McIsaac:** That was – what day is today? It was –

**Mr. LaVie:** Monday.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Monday, in Boston,

**Mr. LaVie:** Okay.

Who was at that meeting?

**Mr. McIsaac:** John and I were there. Quebec was there. New Brunswick was there. Nova Scotia was there and Newfoundland was there. The Quebec minister wasn't there; he was already gone, but he had a couple of representatives from Quebec (Indistinct)

**Mr. LaVie:** What were the topics there at that meeting?

**Mr. McIsaac:** Marine protected areas. We didn't get into the new fund because Quebec is not involved in that so we avoided that one. What else was on that agenda?

**John Jamieson:** We talked about aquaculture and the feds are looking at an aquaculture act and those were kind of the two –

**Mr. McIsaac:** Yes those were –

**John Jamieson:** – two basic key areas.

**Mr. McIsaac:** That was basically the key areas –

**John Jamieson:** And this is (Indistinct) management programming for aquaculture. Now, that was the formal meeting. There were a number of informal discussions that the minister had with Minister Leblanc in Boston.

**Mr. LaVie:** So –

**Mr. McIsaac:** We met with him regularly. I mean, Newfoundland had a reception. Nova Scotia had a reception. New Brunswick had a reception and we had a reception, so there were lots of chances to interact but then he called a formal meeting on Monday.

**Mr. LaVie:** Wouldn't it have been a good chance to bring up the halibut, the carapace size?

**Mr. McIsaac:** Yes.

**Mr. LaVie:** Was that all brought up at that meeting?

**John Jamieson:** Not at the bi-lateral – not at the meeting where they had the round table at.

**Mr. McIsaac:** We had a, let me say: The Maritime Provinces agree on that. Quebec and Newfoundland have their own take on that.

**Mr. LaVie:** On which one?

**Mr. McIsaac:** On the change to the halibut, if there are chances to the quota or whether it's opened up, and those discussions – Dave was at those the last couple of days, but it was something we discussed at informal meetings, not at the table because there is a difference of opinion there, so it didn't come up at that table. It was just a short meeting, but we could have got into the fireworks I guess, but anyway we tried to keep it (Indistinct) –

**Mr. LaVie:** That's where to get into it.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Pardon?

**Mr. LaVie:** That's when to get into it, when everybody is at the table.

We have 876 ground fish licenses? How many does Nova Scotia have?

**John Jamieson:** I don't have Nova Scotia's numbers, but Gulf Nova Scotia –

**Mr. McIsaac:** Dave may have it.

**John Jamieson:** – is quite a bit less than what we'd have.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Do you have those numbers, Dave?

**Unidentified Voice:** I'm sorry. It's hard to get those numbers –

**Chair:** I'm sorry –

**Mr. McIsaac:** Okay.

**John Jamieson:** He's not at the table.

**Mr. LaVie:** That's all right.

**Chair:** If the committee chooses, we can ask Dave to come to the table. If so, the request is there –

**Mr. McIsaac:** We can get you those numbers (Indistinct)

**Chair:** Okay.

**Mr. LaVie:** For New Brunswick too, how many does New Brunswick have?

**Mr. McIsaac:** We'll get you those numbers, unless –

**Mr. LaVie:** Quebec?

**Mr. McIsaac:** – you want Dave up at the table.

**Mr. LaVie:** Quebec?

**Mr. McIsaac:** Same thing.

**Mr. LaVie:** And Newfoundland?

**Mr. McIsaac:** Same thing.

**Mr. LaVie:** Okay –

**John Jamieson:** Quebec and Newfoundland, I do know, have smaller numbers and so it's a much more lucrative fishery for them because they have fewer licenses. PEI has the vast majority of licenses. I can't remember the number of licenses we have in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia, but we can come back and update you on that.

**Mr. LaVie:** It always goes on history. I know back in the history days we were either fishing cod, hake –

**Unidentified Voice:** Exactly.

**Mr. LaVie:** – flounder or lobster so that's why we have no history, but we have all of the history in tuna and we have the least quota in tuna so let's not talk – when you get to that table, don't talk about history with

them because we have all of the history in tuna –

**Mr. McIsaac:** That's where the division comes.

**Mr. LaVie:** I know, but we have all the history in tuna and we're shut down again, even on the tuna.

**John Jamieson:** The other issue with the halibut is that the season was split into two, so the spring halibut quota, Quebec and Newfoundland were able to get at it and most times they were actually able to overrun the quota. So, by the time the summer came that our fishers were done fishing lobster that actually could have participated in that fishery, the quota was cut and we weren't able to build that history. Plus, then the moratorium came in, that again, we weren't able to build that history. We do have the history in terms of the licenses so we do have – and we do know we have as quarter of the licenses overall. Now, I'm not sure what the other breakdown is.

**Mr. LaVie:** See, what's happening on PEI – and I'll go back to when I started fishing with my father; we used to start in April and finish in December. Now we're fishing May and June. Well, I mean, we fish some tuna and stuff in between there. These other provinces are still drag fishing; they are still mackerel fishing. PEI is – we're closing in two months now. We've got to get the season spread out. Ottawa is up there. Ottawa doesn't want us on unemployment and fishermen don't want to be on unemployment.

**Unidentified Voice:** Yes.

**Mr. LaVie:** We want to be on the water. Fishers want to be on the water, so let's see if we can get some of these quotas spread out, some more quota and put these fishers on the water.

**Mr. McIsaac:** That's what the discussions have been about –

**Mr. LaVie:** You know?

**Mr. McIsaac:** – we don't make that decision though, Colin.

**Mr. LaVie:** No, I know. But, you've got to pound on the tables and you've got to –

**Mr. McIsaac:** We'll meet with them on a regular basis.

**Mr. LaVie:** We've got to pound on the tables on that –

**John Jamieson:** About 300 of those 876 licenses are active on Prince Edward Island.

**Mr. McIsaac:** How many, John?

**John Jamieson:** About 300.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Okay.

**Mr. LaVie:** 300 are active?

So, what do we do with the other 576 licenses?

**John Jamieson:** The fishermen's association has been working on a rationalization plan and trying to buy them out a little bit at a time, but it's a fairly expensive proposition.

**Mr. McIsaac:** We have 1,300 oyster fishers too, but there's only, what, 300 of them used.

**Mr. LaVie:** Does the feds help with the buy-out program?

**John Jamieson:** I think they were. They had given the FA some quota that they were using to sell to try to rationalize the fleet a little bit.

**Chair:** Colin, do you have any more on the halibut? There are other people on the list, but if you want to finish up on halibut we can come back to you.

**Mr. LaVie:** No. (Indistinct) a chance.

**Chair:** Okay, we'll come back to you, all right?

**Mr. LaVie:** Oh yeah.

**Chair:** Okay, Brad Trivers.

**Mr. Trivers:** Well, thank you, Chair and, thanks for coming in.

I had some questions on the various different topics, as well, Chair. Did you want me to stick to halibut?

**Chair:** No, you can go wherever you want with it, yes.

**Mr. Trivers:** I wanted to follow up on a halibut question that Colin just had. I just want to make sure we understand – so 876 licenses, only 300 active. Can you explain why those other ones wouldn't be active? Is the stock not there?

**John Jamieson:** There's only 40 tonnes quota and some of them wouldn't necessarily have the gear. It's a fairly short fishery.

**Mr. McIsaac:** A couple of days could do you in.

**John Jamieson:** Yes.

**Mr. Trivers:** So, just to be clear. Your position – just for the record – is you want to see the quota increased to PEI so you can get those licenses active. Is that correct?

**Mr. McIsaac:** We'd like – if the science says there's need – it's allowable to increase the quota, then we'll push for a quota increase. However, it's got to be based on science, and when it is divided, it has to be split up – not historically, because we got behind the eight-ball on the historical, as Colin has said. Because we were fishing cod or lobster or whatever at the time and by the time we got to fishing the halibut, the quota was filled.

**John Jamieson:** So, the sharing arrangement needs to be looked at.

**Mr. McIsaac:** But we differ there, the Atlantic Provinces, and Quebec and Newfoundland on that. So we have a (Indistinct) –

**Chair:** Okay, Brad Trivers?

**Mr. Trivers:** And again, just to be clear, because it's a little bit confusing to me, you're saying: Have the studies been done? Is the science in? Or is that still ongoing? Do you know what the science is at this time?

**Mr. McIsaac:** We haven't had a report back on the science to say whether there should be an increase in the quota.

**Mr. Trivers:** Chair?

**Chair:** Brad Trivers.

**Mr. Trivers:** So, the federal minister is going to make a decision on quota this spring and you're having negotiations and discussions about quota, but the science is not in yet?

**Mr. McIsaac:** That's right. But if the study comes back and says one way or the other, he'll make the decision. And it may be that no increase happens.

**John Jamieson:** So we had staff, for the last two days, in Moncton, at the groundfish meeting, and science reported there that they didn't seem to have enough data to be able to warrant whether there should be an increase or not. I think Newfoundland and Quebec were requesting an increase in quota – although the science hadn't quite come back.

One of the things that they're looking at is doing a much more rigorous science assessment on the halibut stocks in the 4RST. One of the things they don't know is: What's the breeding biomass. As I said to one of the staff this morning, we don't want a northern cod or a cod 2.0, that we move on quota before we have the ability to understand what the stock is.

Now, what they are looking at doing is a much more rigorous science assessment in the next year or so – with some of that money coming from the sales of fish through some quota identified to pay for that, and, that's how they do it in the snow crab fishery.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Money comes off that to pay for the study. That's what we need to do; we need to do a better study on the halibut to find out exactly what is there. Because like John says: They overfished the cod, and where were they? So, if the federal minister increases the quota for the halibut before we know exactly what's there, we could be in the same position.

**Chair:** Brad Trivers.

**Mr. Trivers:** Final question about the halibut and then maybe you can come back to me for the (Indistinct).

So, what is your expectation, then? If the minister doesn't have the scientific data, can you speculate, or would you care to speculate, as to whether he'll make any changes at all?

**Mr. McIsaac:** We're just pushing the fact that it should be science-based. That's where we're at.

**Mr. Trivers:** But, I mean, if he doesn't have the data, do you expect him to make a science-based decision?

**Mr. McIsaac:** I hope he would make a science-based decision.

**John Jamieson:** His mandate letter indicates that he's supposed to.

**Mr. McIsaac:** So, we're expecting that's what it'll be. And likely, if he doesn't have the science, there will be no changes at this time. But if there are changes, let's do it on a non-historical basis.

**John Jamieson:** And that's where we're saying that if the quota, at some point, does increase, then we want to share it equally – the increase – as opposed to going back to the historical shares.

So rather than –

**Mr. McIsaac:** Quebec and Newfoundland want the historical piece, so.

**Chair:** Brad, thanks for coming back to you.

Bush Dumville.

**Mr. Dumville:** Thank you, Chair.

I'm just trying to figure out here what are we trying to do? Are we trying to up the quota to fit the license or do we cancel unused licenses? Is it in our best interest to keep all our license, and if we do keep all our license, we want the quota to support the license, but you're only allowed – what 40 tonnes?

So, do we want the tonnage for each license increased? There are three parameters here:

We've got licenses, then we got the quota, and then we got to have enough quota to fill a license.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Well, you'll find, is that not all the licenses are being used, but not all the licenses in other fisheries are being used, as well. Like in oysters, we have 1,300, but there's only about 300 fishing. At some time, maybe, they'll use them again, but I think it costs \$25 to renew them for the year so at sometime maybe they'll be of value. Or maybe they'll decide to fish that year.

**Mr. Dumville:** There's not a disadvantage to the province to leaving those licenses out there as long as they're willing to renew them.

**John Jamieson:** Most of those license were required in the 1970s and early 1980s, when you could basically tick off what licenses you wanted and DFO issued them. Fisherman were thinking that: I might as well have a groundfish license – it may have some value – I may want to fish at some point. That's why we have – in most of our fisheries – a lot of licenses here. I don't know if that 876 – if they ever were fully utilized at any time during our fishing history.

I know back in the 1980s, very few fixed-gear licenses were actually active on Prince Edward Island. There's actually probably more active now – because of the way the halibut fishery is set up – than there was in the past.

**Mr. Dumville:** So there's no perceived – a lot of value to the license, not like a lobster license.

**John Jamieson:** It'd be pretty tough to sell.

**Unidentified Voice:** Yeah, pretty tough.

**Mr. McIsaac:** There's only so much quota, so if 800 fish it or 300 fish it, the amount that each one can catch is going to change considerably.

**Mr. Dumville:** Can I go off halibut here for a second, Chair?

**Chair:** Sure.

**Mr. Dumville:** Carapace size 72, 76. You didn't mention anything – what about the outcome on the stocks? Obviously we have a smaller quota than New Brunswick. New Brunswick is pushing for a higher carapace size, because they've got twice as many fishes as we've got. What's going to happen to the stocks? That's got to be part of the equation.

**Mr. McIsaac:** We studied the stocks as well – the monitoring program – to check those. The stocks are in really good shape at the present time. A lot of that credit goes to the fisherman, because they've done a lot of good things like: escape hatches on the traps; they've lowered trap numbers in certain areas – such as that. So, they've done a lot of work to improve the stock. They're looking at the markets and where they're going to sell the product. They think a 76 mil lobster is going to be better. They want to get to that.

**Mr. Dumville:** Better for –

**Mr. McIsaac:** Pardon me?

**Mr. Dumville:** Better for money, or better for the consumer?

**Mr. McIsaac:** Well, a bit of both. When you talk to some of the processors, it's interesting too, what's selling these days – and that changes from time-to-time. I had a chat with Francis Morrissey down in Boston and one of the things they're looking at right now is a half a lobster when they go on the cruise ships and stuff. So, they pull the stuff out of the claws and the knuckles and they put it in with the half-shell. It's very easy to eat. You're not splashing all over yourself. And, that's a market right there that's growing and they don't want the 72 for that, they want a bigger lobster for that. So, they just – you buy a half a lobster. So, you have to follow the markets.

In New Brunswick, they feel that their market is saying: we need a bigger lobster. But, the issue there is: They want to go to a bigger lobster, but they're fishing in the same waters as our guys who are doing 72. So, if they go up to 76, they'll be throwing some back that our guys can catch because they cross each other in the strait. What they want – they want to increase it and they want it increased for the whole area so that

everybody fishing in that area is catching the same sized lobster.

**John Jamieson:** To go back to your question on the stock, we have our Lobster Resource Monitoring Program and there's two areas: the Northern Strait that they look at and the Southern Strait in area 25. And the data this year – and the last couple of years – have shown a high incidence of buried females, a very solid number of sub-legals, which are undersized lobsters. Years ago, it would be averaging one or two per trap. We're up to six, and in some cases, up to nine lobsters undersize in the traps right now. The stock is extremely good in the Northumberland Strait, I think. I shared some of the – I shared with you the presentation that was given at the –

**Mr. McIsaac:** In that monitoring program there are no escape hatches in that, so every now and then, in the run they put in a trap where there are no escapes or anything, so they can actually see what is being caught, versus the trap where the little ones can get away. That's how they monitor how much is actually in the water.

**Mr. Dumville:** Interesting.

**Mr. McIsaac:** It is.

**Mr. Dumville:** Chair, I have one on leasing.

**Chair:** Sure.

**Mr. Dumville:** Do you want to leave that?

**Chair:** No, you can go ahead.

**Mr. Dumville:** Okay.

On the bottom versus the top leasing for –

**Mr. McIsaac:** The (Indistinct) fishery.

**Mr. Dumville:** Are you having many complaints from boaters and recreational users? Are they conflicting with them?

I'm just kind of curious, is where are we heading? Are we heading for floating at the top or are we going away from bottom fishing?

**Mr. McIsaac:** There's a need for both, for sure. The bottom fishery is not causing any

problem, I don't think, with regards to recreational. The off-bottom, where they're growing them on top of the water, there have been a few concerns about that where we're going there, but we're watching that very carefully.

**John Jamieson:** And, just as a point, any off-bottom lease, or bottom lease, has to be approved by Transport Canada. Transport Canada has to do an assessment. They, actually, are not allowed to put them in the channels. There always has to be an identification corridor for any new –

**Mr. McIsaac:** So you make the right –

**John Jamieson:** – leases, so –

**Mr. McIsaac:** – (Indistinct) corridor (Indistinct)

**John Jamieson:** – they do take into account recreational boating when a lease is approved.

**Mr. Dumville:** So the upper leases can be fished year-round off the ice. Bottom leases, can they be fished off the ice? Like cutting the ice –

**John Jamieson:** Floating leases, they actually sink them in the wintertime, and put them under the ice. Then, what they'll do is they'll dive under the water to access those oysters during the winter.

**Mr. Dumville:** Yes.

**Mr. McIsaac:** The wild fishery has two seasons, a spring and fall season. They don't fish when the ice is there.

**Mr. Dumville:** Okay.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Okay.

**Mr. Dumville:** All right. I didn't know that.

Just one quick question, Chair.

You're talking about the boaters not having the gear for life equipment and that sort of things. I've seen the fishers go out and I've seen the back of the boats, how they're loaded down. What are they going to do, put the life raft up – I know they're compact and they blow up, but can this be rigged onto the

front of the boat or what? What's the story there? Are there going to be any problems?

**John Jamieson:** The life crafts are usually fixed to the roof of the cabins –

**Mr. Dumville:** Cabins. So it's not going to –

**John Jamieson:** – and they're usually in around – and you'll see them –

**Mr. Dumville:** So, it's doable, is what you're saying, even though the boats are loaded heavily going out.

**John Jamieson:** Some of them that are involved in the – where they take the tours out in the summer, most of them would already have that equipment. You'll see those boats in the summertime with the life crafts attached to the front of the boats somewhere.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Some of the fishers already have the equipment, but now it's going to be mandated.

**Mr. Dumville:** Thank you very much.

Thank you, Chair.

**Chair:** You're welcome.

Minister Gallant.

**Mr. Gallant:** Thank you, Chair.

Thank you minister and deputy; great presentation.

Just a question and Bush just alluded to it. But did I hear you say there is a moratorium on off-bottom?

**John Jamieson:** What?

**Mr. Gallant:** Moratorium on off-bottom right now on the oysters? What are some of the reasons (Indistinct)

**John Jamieson:** I sit on the lease management board and we're doing a complete policy review right now. There are a couple of things that are happening. That there was a rule and it was an arbitrary date that was picked years ago, in 2006. So any bottom leases prior to 2006 can be converted

to off-bottom; anything after that have to remain a bottom lease.

Up until a few weeks ago, you could still apply for bottom leases. I think there were about 300 that applied for it just recently because people are thinking that that 2006 date –

**Mr. McIsaac:** May change.

**John Jamieson:** – likely change.

Now, what we're doing now to our policy review is we're looking at each individual, almost a bay-by-bay management area. Where can oyster and mussel aquaculture be successful in a bay?

A good example of an area we're looking at is in the Mill River. In the Mill River there is one area that is quite heavily – there are a number of cottages along there and there are a number of bottom leases along there. The bottom leases aren't very successful.

We do know, off of Fox Island where the Elite Seed Potato Farm is, there is some deeper water there that's not being utilized right now. One of the things we're looking at is moving those bottom leases that are not very successful, moving them out into the deeper water where there is enough water for them to sink their cages for the winter, and be more successful.

The other thing that does is that, bottom leases that they're using now that aren't very successful, there would be an opportunity to enhance those leases so that the wild fishery will be able to utilize that area, which they're not, they can't fish on right now.

We're doing that on almost a bay-by-bay basis. We're setting up some kind of overall perimeters. What we're really trying to do is set people up for success and allow some new entrants into the fishery, as well, or into the oyster aquaculture, as well.

**Mr. McIsaac:** We do have the enhancement program funding for that. If we move that lease from here, which, it's my lease, my area right now, and I move that; transfer it over to off-bottom, this becomes – we can enhance that. Then, everybody can fish there if they want because –

**John Jamieson:** We also –

**Mr. McIsaac:** – it's (Indistinct)

**John Jamieson:** – have a Quality Oyster Aquaculture Program that assists people in getting equipment for the off-bottom, as well.

**Mr. Gallant:** Okay.

**Mr. McIsaac:** As I say, the oyster thing is the most interesting, actually growth area, in the way the industry is changing.

**Chair:** Minister Gallant.

**Mr. McIsaac:** We still need the wild as well as the off-bottom.

**Mr. Gallant:** You talked about carapace size and the one-two-two. I know I was some fisheries meetings and they wanted to see it go one-one-one, like one over five years. Is there any – is that discussion –

**Mr. McIsaac:** We lobbied –

**Mr. Gallant:** – closed?

**Mr. McIsaac:** – and we talked to the minister and wrote to the minister about that, the desire of PEIFA and PCFA to have that changed, the one-two-and-two to stretch it out a little bit.

**John Jamieson:** We're starting to see a little movement, too, in New Brunswick. I know at least one New Brunswick processor has written to Dominic LeBlanc because we were copied on the letter, asking for something similar. We're hearing about some fishermen in New Brunswick that are also saying that they would prefer the one-one-one. When we start that there may be a bit of an opportunity.

**Mr. McIsaac:** We are lobbying on that, too, following the lead of the PEIFA, but the decision is left in the feds' hands.

**Chair:** Minister Gallant.

**Mr. Gallant:** This may be, maybe you can or can't, okay – you touched on it briefly, but is there any room for discussion today on the new money that's coming? The \$325 million –

**Mr. McIsaac:** Well –

**Mr. Gallant:** – for the fisheries?

**Mr. McIsaac:** – we know the fund has been announced –

**Mr. Gallant:** Yeah.

**Mr. McIsaac:** – the perimeters on it are not announced at the present time what our share will be; what it will be for, whatever. But we discussed this. We kind of started the discussion on this fund with Tootoo, and then with LeBlanc because of what we have in agriculture. That's kind of why it's nice we have agriculture and fisheries together. Because of the Growing Forward Program we have in agriculture where it's 40% funded by the province, 60% by the feds. We put \$100,000 into the shellfish enhancement project. If that was 40% instead of 100% of the money in there, then we could use this fisheries fund, similar to the growing forward, a 60/40 split. It just helps our program so much and there's more dollars go in that.

What the perimeters are going to be for that fund, we do not have that, yet. We know the whole envelope is 325 where it splits down between the four Atlantic Provinces, and it's only in the four Atlantic Provinces, we do not know. What it's all used for, we'll be working together with LeBlanc on that.

**John Jamieson:** The other important thing to know is that when the announcement came, the New Brunswick – sorry, the Newfoundland and Labrador premier said: A \$100 million of that is for Newfoundland.

So I immediately wrote to the deputy in Ottawa and I said: Is that number correct? Their response was: That's a number articulated by the province, it's not articulated by the federal government.

**Mr. McIsaac:** We're waiting for all that.

**John Jamieson:** Yeah.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Yeah.

**Chair:** Thank you, Minister Gallant.

Next we have Peter Bevan-Baker.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Thank you, Chair.

Thank you, minister. Thank you, deputy.  
Nice to see you.

We know that global fisheries are in decline everywhere; 85% of the global fisheries are either overexploited or fully exploited. It used to be that the limits on catches were how many boats you could get out on the water. Now, it's not. It's the management of the resource and DFO has not got a great record in some respects in terms of managing the resources.

In terms of the halibut quota, if research is ongoing, as I hear you say, almost guarantee you that they're going to employ the precautionary principle and they're going to say: We're not going up the quota until we have more solid evidence.

The opportunity for PEI then is restricted to getting a better share of the current quota. With two provinces controlling almost 90% of the quota, and we're left to pick up the scraps; I understand that history is where that came from. First question is: What are you employing, what negotiating tactics are you employing to get a fairer share of the quota that's currently there?

**Mr. McIsaac:** Firstly, and foremost, we're pushing to have the decision based on science. So, if there's no more halibut to be taken, we're not taking any more halibut, that's our position. But if it is, we lobby that it be an equal split among the five provinces, not –

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Twenty percent each?

**Mr. McIsaac:** Yeah.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Okay.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Not historical shares, because we just keep falling behind on that. We want it equal. They have the advantage right now. That's fine, we'll have to live with that, but going forward let's split it equally. That's our position.

**John Jamieson:** As I mentioned, the three ministers from Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia are also presenting the same argument. Also, industry from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick,

and Prince Edward Island are also in-step with presenting the same position. So you have the three ministers supporting the industry from the three provinces. You do have a minister from New Brunswick now and New Brunswick was disadvantaged in this, as was Prince Edward Island and Gulf Nova Scotia.

**Mr. McIsaac:** And we have the prime minister's letter to the minister as we noted saying: Base your decisions on science.

**Chair:** Peter Bevan-Baker.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Thank you, Chair.

One thing that didn't compute for me was that we have a number of unused licenses in the halibut fishery at the moment, but you mentioned that buying up those licenses would be very expensive. Can you explain how that works, John?

**John Jamieson:** They're essentially a privilege that is given to someone, or actually we use the name license but they are actually a privilege to fish that is granted to an individual. Again, of that 800 and some that we have, about 300 are active. A lot are inactive and there are probably more active now than there ever been because of the way the halibut fishery is set up. You can go out in a day or two and able to catch your quota. They're not just halibut licenses; they're what you call groundfish so they would cover cod if there's a quota, hake, those types of things.

**Mr. McIsaac:** But why would we put our money into buying them out? We only have so much we can catch and if you're sitting there and saying: Well, I'm only going to get two days fishing. Then, if everybody fishes – maybe it's only part of the day fishing before the whole quota is cut – why would we go out and buy them out, because if they're not being used let them sit there. If you want to have your license, go ahead. If you're not using it, fine. I guess they're rationalizing something else.

**John Jamieson:** I guess the fishers are thinking that they have probably more value than they actually do, so it's –

**Chair:** Peter Bevan-Baker.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Thank you.

I'm going to stick with halibut for now, Chair, if I can.

**Chair:** Sure.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Yes, I wasn't advocating, by the way, that the department should go and buy. I just couldn't understand why because **Tony (Indistinct)** was here a few months ago saying: It's hardly worth your while, putting the rig out there because you're done in a day or two. I just couldn't quite understand –

**John Jamieson:** Tony was actually leading the project to try to rationalize some of those licenses, so he also understood that they were only able to buy three or four a year because the asking price was so high.

**Mr. McIsaac:** If we put a notice out that we're going to buy them up, the prices will certainly increase on them. We'll put our money somewhere else.

**Chair:** Peter, can I just have an interjection? Bush Dumville.

**Mr. Dumville:** Just quickly: Why would you have to buy them out if they're renewed yearly? Why would you just not renew them?

**John Jamieson:** It's not us that issue the licenses, it's federal fisheries. If it's – in a tradition – it is a privilege.

**Mr. McIsaac:** If you think it's worth something, you've the license and you want to renew it, give us more money and you can renew it. It's not going to be of any value to you, but we're not going to buy it out if you want to keep renewing.

**Chair:** Peter Bevan-Baker.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Thanks, Chair.

One of the problems with science in the fishery is that fish do not respect jurisdictional boundaries. On top of that, we have a very increasingly active climate change here which is causing changes in water temperature and salinity and all kinds of problems. Or, I shouldn't say problems; changes. Those changes are affecting the

distribution of stocks, whether we're talking lobster, halibut or anything else, tuna.

Do you know to what extent the department, DFO, takes into account the projections for climate change when it's looking at the longevity of stocks and the location of them?

**John Jamieson:** I do know that at the present time they are starting to look at climate change models and including that in their assessment. One of the discussions, right now, they're having is on marine protected areas and they have asked for 5% of the Canadian coastline by the end of 2017 and 10% by the end of 2020 –

**Mr. McIsaac:** 2020.

**John Jamieson:** One of the things that we're saying and industry is saying, is that when you create these marine protected areas, because of climate change, what you may be protecting in that box today may not be there tomorrow, and there may actually be a commercial fishery there.

If you look at the shrimp fishery in Newfoundland, Prince Edward Island had an allocation in shrimp area 7, which we used for projects under the shrimp corporation, those shrimp have gone, they've moved on. You look at what's happening in snow crab; now we're seeing a huge abundance in snow crab now, probably 100% increase in the quota for this year. I think they are getting to the sense where they need to take into account, climate change models in the management of their fishery. Instead of advocating for more lines, they probably should be advocating for less and allow some flexibility down the road in their decision-making.

**Mr. McIsaac:** I think the feds are really keyed in on this too, because even in their next policy framework for Growing Forward 3, whatever you want to call it, the new funding envelope has a distinct piece on climate change and another one on the social licensed and (Indistinct). But climate change is a piece that we are going to have to share that pot of dollars; whatever it might be, we don't know that yet either. But, there's two new pieces to it: Climate change is one of them so they are doing that in the ag and I'm sure they are going to do it in the fish. Like I

say, we don't know what the parameters are with regards to the new Atlantic Fisheries Fund, so maybe there will be a piece in that as well.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** I have questions on the other parts of the presentation, but if you want to move on.

**Chair:** Sure, Peter. What we'll do is we'll continue to move on and I'll add you to the list again.

Colin LaVie.

**Mr. LaVie:** Thank you, Chair.

Just a couple more questions on the halibut because there are some good questions here and we're going to base it on science right around the Atlantics – that's what you're going to push for, which is good.

The satellite on the – we did satellite tagging on the halibut. Is that going to be an ongoing tagging process?

**John Jamieson:** I can't remember. I know we supported it.

**Mr. LaVie:** Yes.

**John Jamieson:** I think it's a –

**Mr. LaVie:** We do that in the fall, right?

**John Jamieson:** Yes.

**Mr. LaVie:** Is that going to continue?

**John Jamieson:** I can't remember. I know if the fishermen's association lead it, I know if they came to us we'd certainly be supportive of it again. I honestly can't remember, Colin, if it's continued for this year or not. I know it's certainly something that we would support.

**Mr. LaVie:** What was the outcome of that satellite tagging?

**John Jamieson:** I saw the presentations on it. Actually, I'm starting to think that that project may have come to an end because it was a student working on his PhD that was doing that piece of work and it was kind of all over the map. Some of the fish showed up in Nova Scotia, some of them showed up

off Newfoundland. A lot of them were fairly localized and I don't think there was any real conclusion. What they were trying to establish at the time, was whether we had a separate stock of halibut that was kind of a Prince Edward Island, a 4T stock. I'm not sure that was actually established in the project.

**Mr. LaVie:** Okay, there were some good questions on halibut and hopefully they go with the science.

Let's touch the carapace size. The fishermen are not against carapace size. What the fishermen want – they have a 72 millimeter lobster. They have a market; they have a unique market. That's what they want to save. They want the unique market, is what they want. It was mentioned here that some of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, or whoever, are firing back lobsters that we are catching.

**Mr. McIsaac:** No, I said: They don't want to get into that. The New Brunswick ones want to go up to a higher one. But they want – if PEI is fishing in the same area, they don't want to be catching bigger ones and throwing back ones that PEI will be catching.

**Mr. LaVie:** We'll be catching.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Yes.

**Mr. LaVie:** So that is the problem? Has anybody looked at the problem? Did we try to determine to fix the problem?

**Mr. McIsaac:** We lobbied with the PEIFA to leave it at 72.

**Mr. LaVie:** Yes.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Even though New Brunswick wanted to go to 76.

**John Jamieson:** I guess what we'd say is there is not really a problem because if you look at the integrated fisheries management plan, and you look at the socio-economic piece, the piece on sustainability; the 72 mi lobster meets that.

**Mr. LaVie:** Yes.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Science says 72 is good.

**Mr. LaVie:** Yes.

**John Jamieson:** And our concern is, is that if you change –

**Mr. McIsaac:** That's what we've been lobbying for.

**John Jamieson:** If you change your management plan to match a market piece, markets change all the time. A few years ago when fuel prices were through the roof, who would expect that they would have gone down and every second vehicle on the road now is a big four-wheel drive truck. Things change and –

**Mr. McIsaac:** If you put the map up again, you can see right around the area.

**Mr. LaVie:** Yes.

**Mr. McIsaac:** You know it, but there's 81, 83, 76, 77 – we're all 72 except now we're 73 in LFA 25.

**Mr. LaVie:** I know this all came about last fall, area 25 got the increase of one mil.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Yes.

**Mr. LaVie:** They got their first increase. Then 25 said they'll go to 76 if the rest of the province goes and then 26 voted it down, 26 A votes it down. So where are we at? Is it –

**Mr. McIsaac:** The federal minister came in and made the decision. We lobbied in favour of 72 but we don't make the decision on it. That's a federal decision. The federal minister came in, Minister Tootoo at the time come in and said –

**Mr. LaVie:** Yeah.

**Mr. McIsaac:** – one, two and two. So, 73, 75, 77.

**Unidentified Voices:** (Indistinct)

**Mr. LaVie:** And the fishermen, they understand the science and where the science is at, but they got this unique market. That's what they want to hang onto is this unique market, and there was a demand out there for it at 72.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Yeah. You can see – just as I was pointing out there, like off the Cape Breton area, see the –

**Mr. LaVie:** Yeah.

**Mr. McIsaac:** – 26B is at 82.5, 26B south is 81, so it does vary around there. PEI is all 72 except for LFA 25, now 73.

**Mr. LaVie:** Yeah. So the fishermen are not against the increase. They want to hang on to that unique market that they do –

**John Jamieson:** (Indistinct)

**Mr. LaVie:** – and we're the only ones with that market.

**John Jamieson:** And to your point, there's been a couple of processors that have written to the federal minister indicating that as well.

**Mr. LaVie:** Yeah, because –

**John Jamieson:** We know Royal Star has written. We know B.A. Richard from New Brunswick has written. We know – I think it's Acadian Seafoods – several processors have written to the federal minister indicating that: Yes, it meets the science, but there's also a market for that lobster as well.

**Mr. McIsaac:** And that's what we lobbied for, same as the PEIFA.

**Mr. LaVie:** So you mentioned – let's touch the regulations first.

**Unidentified Voice:** Sure.

**Mr. LaVie:** These regulations, when were these put in place? How long have –

**John Jamieson:** Transport Canada one?

**Mr. LaVie:** Yeah.

**John Jamieson:** They were issued – the *Gazette* came out in July 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016 –

**Mr. LaVie:** 2016?

**John Jamieson:** – saying they would come in a year later.

**Mr. LaVie:** Yeah. So did the industry have any input into the regulations?

**John Jamieson:** Depends on who you ask. I met with industry the other day. You'll know that industry walked out of a meeting with Transport Canada –

**Mr. LaVie:** Yeah.

**John Jamieson:** – in Halifax and I think there was like 15 groups there. I met with a bunch of groups when we were in Boston and they told me that the reason they left the meeting is they felt that they weren't being listened to, that proper consultation didn't take place, and that they had concerns that the equipment may not even be available.

They were worried about what they call Transport Canada saying: Well, we'll do soft enforcement. Well, what's really soft enforcement? You either have a regulation or you don't. The issue the fishers were concerned about is that if there's an accident or if there's a fatality, that soft enforcement goes off the table. So they would prefer to have it done properly. I don't think anyone's against safety.

**Mr. LaVie:** No.

**John Jamieson:** You can't be.

**Mr. LaVie:** No.

**John Jamieson:** No one's against safety. I think they're just saying we want to have a proper process –

**Mr. McIsaac:** A little more time.

**John Jamieson:** – and a roadmap on how we get to have the equipment that we require.

**Mr. LaVie:** Yeah, there's nobody against safety on the water. (Indistinct)

**John Jamieson:** But I know – and I felt it was really disrespectful. I was at the fishermen's association annual meeting and they had a presentation from Transport Canada, and the PowerPoint presentation that was given was based on Newfoundland crab fleet; and I said: You couldn't even put together a deck that represented the inshore fishery of Prince Edward Island. It would

have taken about an hour to do that. To me, it was very disrespectful, and I think that's the message that the fishers are getting, that it's not a very respectful discussion.

**Mr. LaVie:** Yeah, I think industry should have had some input into it because I have some questions on it myself. Who's going to regulate this? Do they have the manpower to regulate this?

**Mr. McIsaac:** Who's going to what?

**Mr. LaVie:** Who's going to regulate this? Who's going to police it? Do they have the manpower to police it?

**John Jamieson:** I –

**Mr. LaVie:** You know (Indistinct) –

**John Jamieson:** – it's Transport Canada (Indistinct) decision.

**Mr. LaVie:** Yeah, I know. There's a lot of questions there that are not answered, and they should have allowed industry to have a little bit of input into it, because you ask a fisherman and he's definitely not going to –

**John Jamieson:** The other thing is the survival suits are typically one size fits all; but if you look into a room with fishermen, there's quite a variation in size there. A big guy would have to order a special suit, and again there's an issue around whether the equipment can actually be purchased.

**Mr. LaVie:** Just one question on the regulation and I'll move on: What was the water temperature you had to have your survival suit? Do you remember?

**John Jamieson:** Fifteen degrees.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Fifteen degrees.

**Mr. LaVie:** Fifteen degrees was the water temperature? I heard different numbers and I just wanted to make sure on the (Indistinct)

–

**Unidentified Voice:** Under 15.

**Mr. LaVie:** Just on the oyster, on the new fisher: How does the new – who put the moratorium on the leases?

**John Jamieson:** The moratorium on off-bottom would have been put on by the – the way it's structured, the lease management board is chaired by an independent chair. It's Lewis Creed right now, the former deputy minister –

**Mr. LaVie:** Yeah.

**John Jamieson:** – that chairs it; and the people that sit on it are the Island oyster growers group and the cultured mussel growers group, the province of PEI and DFO. The committee has been operating on consensus and they make a recommendation to DFO and again then the minister makes a decision. The moratorium on converting – on no more new off-Island leases would have been by Fisheries and Oceans, but with a recommendation likely from the lease management board. It was done quite some time ago.

**Mr. LaVie:** So is that moratorium going to be lifted? (Indistinct) –

**John Jamieson:** I expect you'll see some changes to it because, again, what we're doing is looking at what can we do to make people successful in each particular area, as opposed to having an arbitrary date that says: Okay, if you're lucky enough to have an off-Island lease before 2006 you're good to go, and if you're unlucky enough to have one after, then you're not. To me, that's a very poor way.

Just to give you an illustration of how we've moved the bar in the last couple of years, there was a moratorium on leases in Foxley River that was eight years old and we managed to get that lifted and there's a number of new leases in Foxley River now, and a number of young fishers that are young aquaculture people who are working that area.

You think of Martin O'Brien, who graduated from university in the US with a golf scholarship, is now growing oysters in Foxley River and he has a barge there that he's actually doing the grading right on site, so he's reducing his footprint so he's not running his boat back and forth.

**Mr. LaVie:** I know I have more than two, but two that stick out in my mind are trying to get into the oyster fishery. One has been

trying to get in for two years now and one is trying to get in –

**John Jamieson:** Is that the fishery or aquaculture?

**Mr. LaVie:** Aquaculture.

**John Jamieson:** Okay.

**Mr. LaVie:** One trying to get in now for two years, one for four years. How do these people – you just can't. You've got to buy somebody out, or –

**John Jamieson:** You have to buy someone out, but you can – up until a couple of weeks ago, you can apply for a bottom lease. Like I say, I expected that that 2008 (Indistinct) will likely be changed, because we are trying to manage it in a much more reasonable way in terms of what's the best water to use for aquaculture and how do we make people be successful, as opposed to just giving them lease somewhere and hoping that they do well.

**Mr. McIsaac:** There was a new guy got in just up your way, just bought out someone else just in the last short little while. It's how he got in. He was brand new, get in, buy them out.

**Mr. LaVie:** Yeah, he bought – yeah.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Yeah.

**Mr. LaVie:** (Indistinct)

**Mr. McIsaac:** He could get in.

**Mr. LaVie:** Yeah.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Yeah.

**Mr. LaVie:** I'll get your number after the meeting then.

One more?

**Chair:** Colin LaVie.

**Mr. LaVie:** One more question: You mentioned the snow crab was up 100%?

**John Jamieson:** That's what they're expecting.

**Mr. LaVie:** Are you concerned over that with our snow crab? Because there are big quotas now, there's going to be a lot of crab landed, and these are processed in New Brunswick at 50% of our fish. Lobsters go to New Brunswick during May and June. Are you worried there's going to be a glut?

**John Jamieson:** Of snow crab or processing capacity?

**Mr. LaVie:** Both; processing capacity.

**John Jamieson:** That could be a concern, the amount of crab that could be coming in for processing. I do know there are some Island interests that are starting to look at whether they could process some of that snow crab. Montague Bay, in fact, has indicated that they're interested in processing crab. I think the limiting factor for them may be finding enough labour to do it, because they are going to do their lobster.

**Mr. LaVie:** I think that'd be awesome, if we can get snow crab processed –

**Mr. McIsaac:** They want – when they set up, they wanted to do different species if they can. Again, John says there's a labour issue, so –

**Mr. LaVie:** So it's a labour issue. So are we preparing in case there is a glut?

**John Jamieson:** We've been working –

**Mr. LaVie:** At the processing level?

**John Jamieson:** – with all the processors in terms of finding labour.

We have the seafood program that provides support to young people and to university students. We've been having fairs –

**Mr. McIsaac:** Team Seafood, yeah.

**John Jamieson:** – with them. We've been working with the companies also in developing their HR practices, which they didn't have to years ago because they had a ready supply of labour. So we're trying to help them get to a better place in terms of managing people. The minister knows that quite well. It actually falls within his department.

**Mr. LaVie:** So there's – I know they're looking for buses to bus people from Charlottetown out to Cavendish to work, for the students out there to work. What about a bus going from Charlottetown to these plants across the Island?

**John Jamieson:** Montague Bay was, they were bussing their people last year. There were buses that we used in the fishing industry.

**Mr. LaVie:** Is that your department?

**Mr. McIsaac:** The Team Seafood thing is pretty interesting, though. Actually, Francis started that; giving, I think it was \$500 a student to come up here. You stayed for the season, you get that. We've, through to Minister Gallant's department, tag on top of that. It's really interesting what's happened there. It creates good employment for –

**Mr. LaVie:** One more –

**Chair:** Okay.

**John Jamieson:** (Indistinct) private session we had.

**Mr. LaVie:** This crab, it bothers me that it does go off-Island to be processed. We have our own crab fleet right here on Prince Edward Island and it bothers me that it's going off-Island to be processed, same as our lobsters, but anyway. One hundred percent of our crab is going off.

Is there any way – it's one of our primary industries that – and it touches all ministers that we can fund to get our crab processed on Prince Edward Island.

**Mr. McIsaac:** The plant in Montague hadn't processed anything in what, six years was it? It started up last year.

**Mr. LaVie:** Yeah, well, he –

**Mr. McIsaac:** That's up and going.

**Mr. LaVie:** – was set-up and –

**Mr. McIsaac:** That's what needed. I mean, there was a need there. He was an entrepreneur; he came in and did that. He did the plant in Souris, as well. That's a very positive thing as far as we're concerned.

**Mr. LaVie:** What about the western and – let's get this crab – we're looking for work on Prince Edward Island. This is work. We're sending our crab off-Island to be processed for work in New Brunswick. Let's see if we can get this crab processed on PEI and create jobs on PEI. If it takes some government funding to create jobs –

**Mr. McIsaac:** We're looking for work and we're looking for workers.

**Mr. LaVie:** Yes, and let's fund somebody to process this crab. That's creating work; that's job creation, because 100% of our crab is leaving Prince Edward Island. Let's get this crab processed on PEI. That's job creation. That's one of our primary industries.

**Chair:** Mr. LaVie, are you finished?

**Mr. LaVie:** For now.

**Chair:** Brad Trivers.

**Mr. Trivers:** Thank you, Chair.

I wanted to ask a question, first of all, about the egg quota on the Island. There are a large number of eggs that produced on the Island, but I wanted to know how many of those are consumed here on the Island, and how many are exported? Maybe you mentioned that, but I might have missed it.

**John Jamieson:** I think the majority of them are actually consumed here.

**Mr. Trivers:** Is there a need for –

**John Jamieson:** Because it's supply-managed to try to match the consumption with the – it's the same with the dairy, or any of the other supply-managed.

**Mr. McIsaac:** In the dairy, though, we consume about a quarter of it.

**John Jamieson:** Okay.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Yeah. The rest of it goes into cheese and it's shipped off province.

**Mr. Trivers:** Getting back to the eggs, then, so there's, as you say in your slide there, 3.72 million eggs produced in 2016. The majority of those, you believe –

**John Jamieson:** I read the egg producers annual report and I think the majority of them are eaten here. Some of them go into processing, of course, because they're not, you know, and some that are shipped off. I think the majority of them are consumed here. I can get the exact break down for you.

**Mr. Trivers:** From your understanding, that actually serves the vast majority of our market as well. So that we produce our eggs on the Island and we also consume them on the Island. There is very export and there is very little import of eggs.

**John Jamieson:** There is some exporting, and there's a little bit –

**Mr. McIsaac:** We have one farmer that ships his eggs to the plant in Amherst and they get graded there.

**Mr. Trivers:** Okay.

I guess what I'm getting at is, there is not a lot of room for growth in the egg industry on PEI at this point.

**John Jamieson:** Not on the supply management side, but there are a number of people that are outside the supply management that have up to that 299 birds that do sell at the farm gate or at the farmers market, which is an extension of the farm gate.

We've offered funding for several years now, that if anyone wants to set-up a grading facility. That would allow broader opportunities for them. They would be able to use them in bakery products and would also be able to sell them in some of the corner stores.

Some of the larger supermarkets require that you have the Start Clean-Stay Clean program, which is a food safety program that the egg farmers have that have a third-party audit. The opportunity for a non-quota grower to sell into somewhere like Sobeys, is probably pretty limited, but there may be other opportunities to them.

**Mr. McIsaac:** The quotas are split up on a provincial basis, as well. PEI has a quota. You can't come from Nova Scotia and buy our quota. We can't go to Nova Scotia and buy their quota.

But if there is an increase, and we've seen, I think, a significant increase in the quotas across the country, of which we get a share each year. Same think in the dairy.

The dairy is a little bit different. They changed it a few years ago. It used to be a historical thing, like in the fish. It was 90% historical quota, 10% market growth. Then, they changed it because we almost lost BC out of the system because their population was growing so fast they needed a different split. They actually flipped it in the dairy so it's 90% population growth in your province, 10% historical, but the quota doesn't move across the borders.

**Mr. Trivers:** Next question.

**Chair:** Brad Trivers.

**Mr. Trivers:** I mean, in there, your slide, you've got 139,000 layers. As those birds, I guess, die, as they outlast their ability to lay eggs, what happens to them, where do they go?

**Mr. McIsaac:** In the cannery.

**Mr. Trivers:** Is that cannery on PEI?

**Mr. McIsaac:** Some are run through Waddell's, some are shipped off province.

**Mr. Trivers:** Okay.

**Mr. McIsaac:** You will find those little cans of chicken that Waddell's put up. They have their own little cans of meat. Some of them go into that, but they only last a year, the 22 weeks before they start to lay, basically. By the end of the year, they're gone; you put a new flock in. Some people used to molt them, put them through – almost starve them, and then put them through a very low-protein diet sort of thing, try to run them again. People have gotten past that. Now, they put the new flock in.

**John Jamieson:** Yeah, I don't think that's –

**Mr. McIsaac:** There's nobody doing the molting thing anymore. The seven that are there, they're big, they're professional, and they have the big cages and everything. It's quite different than it used to be years ago.

**Chair:** Brad Trivers.

**Mr. Trivers:** Moving on to the meat birds, now. You called them broilers. I understand that is split up into quota and non-quota, again.

You said there was \$7.5 million in farm gate receipts for the quota portion of the broilers, but all of the processing is done off-Island. I just wanted you to clarify, I think I know why, but just clarity why that processing –

**Mr. McIsaac:** We don't have a processing plant here that can handle all of them. Waddell's is basically, and a couple other little ones, are the only ones that can process here. They do the non-quota birds, but most of them, I think, go to the ACA in the valley.

**John Jamieson:** Which is federally inspected.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Yeah.

**Mr. Trivers:** The key thing is we need a larger and federally inspected plant on the Island to accommodate those birds if we wanted to.

**Mr. McIsaac:** If we wanted to process them here for markets off-Island.

**Mr. Trivers:** Do you feel that that's a realistic goal? To process those birds on-Island? Will there be push back from the processing plants off-Island that they're going to now. Is this a significant portion of the business over there?

**Mr. McIsaac:** I don't think we have ever been approached by them to get into –

**John Jamieson:** (Indistinct) we've been –

**Mr. McIsaac:** – processing.

**John Jamieson:** – in discussions with Larkin's about having them build a new one. Then, in their plan, it's a federally inspected plant that would kill both turkeys and chickens, but I don't – I'm not sure that their business model, and I've seen it, would include taking birds from the current supply-managed group.

**Mr. McIsaac:** It's also a timing thing. They're a processing plant. They know they're getting so many birds from Peter this

week, and Colin next week and you the next week, and it's all set-up like this. They'll go through about what, 2.5 flocks a year or whatever through the building. It's a change-over. They have to know when they're taking birds in, when they're taking the birds out. Whatever it might be –

**Unidentified Voice:** (Indistinct)

**Mr. McIsaac:** It may be more than that. It may be four times. It's all scheduled on a calendar and that calendar meets with the markets, too for whether those birds go. It's a little more complicated than just growing birds –

**Mr. Trivers:** Right.

**Mr. McIsaac:** – and deciding when you're going to kill them.

**Mr. Trivers:** There's logistics involved –

**John Jamieson:** Yes, there sure is –

**Mr. Trivers:** – (Indistinct) management and the rest of it. It seems to me there could be an opportunity, though to, again, have more jobs on PEI and have less shipping of birds.

Do you know what portion of those birds, that are processed off-Island, that are actually shipped back onto the Island for consumption, or is it pretty much they – most of them are exported for consumption?

**John Jamieson:** I'm not clear on that –

**Mr. McIsaac:** We don't have the numbers on that. We could get that.

**John Jamieson:** Yeah.

**Mr. Trivers:** That would be really good to know.

Again, it just seems very inefficient if you're producing the birds on the Island, shipping them off to be processed and then shipping back on.

Chair?

**Chair:** Brad Trivers.

**Mr. Trivers:** I just wanted to clarify, again, how many abattoirs are there on PEI right now that serve the non-quota birds?

**Mr. McIsaac:** Three or four, I think it is.

**John Jamieson:** Yeah, something like that. There is one east and one at Waddell's –

**Mr. McIsaac:** Crapaud (Indistinct)

**John Jamieson:** I think there are maybe, three or four smaller ones. Waddell's would be the larger one and then two or three smaller ones that do what we call, kind of, the non-quota birds.

**Mr. Trivers:** Are those plants at capacity right now? Do you know?

**John Jamieson:** I don't know.

**Mr. McIsaac:** There's no quota structure on them, so the range to get them done is quite different than this where you have a window of time to get them in there.

**Mr. Trivers:** Okay.

**Mr. McIsaac:** There's a few smaller ones around, I believe.

**Unidentified Voice:** (Indistinct).

**Mr. Trivers:** These abattoirs right now on the Island, they're not under the federal inspection rules, but they would be under provincial health regulations. Is that correct?

**Unidentified Voice:** (Indistinct).

**Mr. Trivers:** Okay.

**John Jamieson:** And it wouldn't be our department that would be inspecting them. That's done by Health PEI.

**Mr. Trivers:** And again, it's great to hear. You mentioned that you're working on getting a new processing facility, and possibly in the Borden area, sharing the (Indistinct) –

**Mr. McIsaac:** We're looking at that and seeing what it would take. There's all different angles on that and there has to be some updates to that waste plant there before we could make it work. But, that's

the area we're looking at and working with Larkin's on that.

**Mr. Trivers:** Do you have any time frames on when that might happen? Or where (Indistinct) –

**John Jamieson:** It's really in the proponent's court. We've provided them funding under our SIGI – our Strategic Investment Growth Initiative Program, which would help them do a market study and an analysis of what their business model would be. We've also met with them, along with ACOA, Finance PEI, Innovation PEI –

**Mr. McIsaac:** We're not funding (Indistinct) –

**John Jamieson:** – and Agriculture Canada. We've been kind of the facilitator there. But really, it's up to when the company itself decides.

Now we did identify, through that process, that the Borden waste treatment facility would need to have an upgrade in order to have a second plant there, and we've applied to the federal government to have that included in our infrastructure program going forward. We expect that that'll be approved. All indications are that it (Indistinct)

**Mr. McIsaac:** We're working with them, but we don't do the funding on it, so that's a big piece, and it's their project, but wherever we can help, we help.

**Chair:** Okay, Brad Trivers.

**Mr. Trivers:** And I would think it would be good for you to advocate for them, as well, from the perspective of getting that CFI inspection going on – food inspection agency. So, that's part of, and parcel, what you're doing right now, I would assume.

My last question is: When it comes to some of the government tenders that are issued on the Island for our schools and our hospitals and those things, I mean the – in Health PEI, for example, there's the provincial protein tender. That's something that I've talked a lot about. In the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries poultry is one big area where they buy.

Have you had discussions to try and represent local producers to make sure that they can actually have access to bid on those tenders and get their product into our government institutions?

**Mr. McIsaac:** We've talked about this many times when the contracts come through Treasury Board or whatever, but you have to take into consideration the Agreement on Internal Trade, which is up for discussions again, because we trade out. If we want – maybe we want to put potatoes into QEII, you know? And, so if we're going to put potatoes in there we have to be in agreement to take some product from Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and here. It is a tradeoff, and we have agreements on that, so we can't put up a solid line that said: The only turkeys we're putting into QEH are Larkin's turkeys. Because the trade goes both ways.

But, we certainly try to get as much local. We impress upon that fact, and we encourage other areas to buy local as well.

**Chair:** Brad Trivers.

**Mr. Trivers:** And just to be clear, I'm not saying you put a protectionist line in place and say, we're only going to buy local for any given product, but I want to make sure Island producers have a fair chance.

Right now, we're seeing, very specifically, national producers and brands targeted in the tender itself, so there's no way for local brands to even actually apply for it, and that's what I'd like to see you push for with the other departments.

**Mr. McIsaac:** We do push for that, and when we are in discussions on the Agreement on Internal Trade, there's always somebody wanting to put up a barrier on something, which is what we fight against.

But, at the same time, you say: Hey, I'd love to have all our product in here, and each province looks at that from both angles.

**Chair:** (Indistinct).

**Mr. Trivers:** One final comment on that: I mean, we – it was on a different standing committee we talked to the Atlantic – or to finance about the Atlantic Procurement

Agreement, and in the eight years that those folks had actually sat on the board that oversees the Atlantic Procurement Agreement across the Atlantic provinces, there has never been a single challenge to any tender that has been issued, so I would say that there's probably room here for us to go out and promote purchasing of local product a little bit more. Perhaps you're being too risk-averse and Island producers are suffering.

I wanted to throw that out there just to push you to maybe go out and see if you can actually (Indistinct)

**Mr. McIsaac:** Right now we are in discussions on the AIT and we're fighting those walls right now, so we're in discussions on changes to the AIT. We have to look at it from both sides.

**Mr. Trivers:** If I go and look at the provincial protein tender from Health PEI, for example, right now would you say that this year there would not be specific requirements: Buy brand that are national brands in there? Is that something that you fought to have changed?

**Mr. McIsaac:** Again, we try to fight to get our local in there but at the same time, you have to make sure when you open the door for this local, you don't close it for someone else who is trying to ship into Nova Scotia and New Brunswick. It's a fine balance there, Brad.

**Mr. Trivers:** But it's never been challenged. No, it's never been (Indistinct)

**Mr. McIsaac:** We're doing discussions on it right now.

**Mr. Trivers:** Okay, all right.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Okay?

**Mr. Trivers:** Thank you, Chair.

**Chair:** Okay, thank you (Indistinct)

**Mr. McIsaac:** It gets tougher and tougher because people want to put up the walls. They say it's easier to trade internationally than in some cases that it is nationally within our country, so that's one of the things we (Indistinct)

**Chair:** Okay, moving along. I have Bush followed by Peter and then Colin.

**Mr. Dumville:** Just going back to our leasing policy: Why was 2006 the year –

**Mr. McIsaac:** That was the year that was picked at the time.

**Mr. Dumville:** Okay.

**Mr. McIsaac:** And the reviews are on now to see whether we open that up or not.

**Mr. Dumville:** Okay. Now, you were mentioning that a lease was just in the – just purchased. Is that one of the first ones that's purchased? Are these leases going to go the same way as the new quota? They are very valuable now. Or is it just starting to establish itself?

**John Jamieson:** No, there have been a fair number of leases that have changed hands over the years.

**Mr. Dumville:** Okay. Now, is there a way around that? Could a person apply for a bottom lease? Is what you're saying, it's quite easy to do, and then automatically shift over to –

**Mr. McIsaac:** Well post-2006 you can't. There's a moratorium on it.

**Mr. Dumville:** Okay.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Unless the changes come about, the lease management board is working on it right now.

**Mr. Dumville:** Okay.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Yes.

**Mr. Dumville:** Thank you.

**John Jamieson:** And in a lot of cases, the bottom leases don't have the depth of water that's required to grow them on the surface because you do need to sink them and you need probably about two or three feet between your cage and the top of the ice.

**Mr. Dumville:** Yes.

**John Jamieson:** That's why we're doing the review, because we want people to be

successful and we want to provide a quality product, so that's why we're doing what we're doing in terms of the oyster lease program.

**Mr. Dumville:** Thank you very much for your presentation today, gentlemen.

**Chair:** Peter –

**Mr. Dumville:** Thank you, Chair.

**Chair:** You're welcome.

Peter Bevan-Baker.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Thank you, Chair.

I'm going to carry on in the oyster sector for a couple of minutes. We know when it comes to owning land here on Prince Edward Island; there are very strict land limits in place. Are there any limits in place in terms of owning leases in the public fishery?

**Mr. McIsaac:** You mean maximum?

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Yes. Can somebody buy as much of the public fishery as they like? Are there no limits to that?

**John Jamieson:** The public fishery is the people that use the (Indistinct). Those are individual licenses and there are 1,300 of them, or 1,200 of them and I think there's about 300 –

**Mr. McIsaac:** 300 that are used.

**John Jamieson:** – I think that are active.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Yes.

**John Jamieson:** And then there's the leasing program where you lease a portion of water and –

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Which is still public fishery, right?

**John Jamieson:** Yes, well no. It's kind of considered aquaculture, but yes. It's a public resource, I guess you're saying. Yes.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Yes, okay. That's what I mean.

**John Jamieson:** I don't think there are any limits on how much you can own.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Why was the moratorium on changing leases put in place?

**John Jamieson:** Again, it goes back to quite a few years before my time. I'm trying to remember what was presented to us. The moratorium was put on off-bottom. At the time, there was a moratorium on off-bottom leases and that remains in place. They just felt that some of the bays were getting to a capacity that couldn't handle any more and we want to make sure that there's enough food in the water to feed the animal. I think that was one of the reasons.

The other – the date on the conversion from –

**Unidentified Voice:** Bottom to the top.

**John Jamieson:** – bottom to off, I think 2006 was just an arbitrary date that was picked because there were just so many leases that were being applied for and so many that were being applied for – I don't think there was a whole lot of science behind why that date was picked. I think the lease management board just drew a line in the sand and that's why, like I said, that's why we're undergoing a complete policy review now which will look at those types of issues. Again, how do we make people successful?

Do we situate it – do you grant a lease that you really know that there's very little opportunity for someone to be successful on? We want to make sure they are in good water, that there's transportation corridors there, that there's water for over-wintering, that you have enough to sink them; those types of things. We are undergoing a complete review right now and hopefully we'll get to a better place.

I think the other thing is the industry was kind of developing at the time. No one really knew where it was heading and I think some of the decisions that were made were based on the information that was available at the time.

**Mr. McIsaac:** It's really growing right now and there are areas that are not as good. John talked about, earlier; some of the beds and

it's why we have our enhancement program for that to bring that in because there is all kinds of market for both the off-bottom and for the wild fishery, and we want to work with both groups on that. When the decision is made here, we want to make the best use of the water corridor whether it's off-bottom or whether it's bio.

**John Jamieson:** Just an indication of the interest in our Quality Oyster Enhancement Program, we actually have to do a draw to the folks that could win opportunity to access that program. Industry is has asked that we reduce the amount to each individual grower that can receive it. What we did this year was we had an accounting firm come in. they managed the draw. We actually streamed it live as well and it was surprising how many people watched it. We had industry there to watch the whole process. There's a lot of interest in this industry, but again, if people are investing money we want to make sure they have an opportunity to be successful, and that's why we're undergoing the lease review that we're doing now.

We also have to – you have to understand, too, that when you're trying to situate a lease in the repairing zone, you actually have to get approval of landowners too and that's difficult to get sometimes if they are non-residents who are seasonal folks. There's a lot of balls in play.

**Chair:** Peter? Peter Bevan-Baker.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Thank you.

Just to follow up on what you said there, John, the health of the oyster fishery – you talked about good water and you talked about the right pairing and (Indistinct), and a very common problem in the oyster fishery is anoxic events and the problems that that causes; it kills off the whole stock in some cases. That was almost on an annual – it does happen on an annual basis in a number of rivers. One of the challenges of being the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries is that you have to hold both of these things in your hands at the same time.

My question is: What are you doing? And it was interesting that you started your presentation by talking about at-risk fields and Evan MacDonald is going to employ

drones to give us better information on that. If we can identify at-risk fields, and therefore at risk-fisheries, what are you doing to enforce strict crop rotation and buffer zones in these areas?

**Mr. McIsaac:** We have regulations in place on that, but you know what? I'm going to put this on a more positive point of view because we have so many of our farmers who are doing an excellent job on watching their buffer zones. We have one issue that goes bad and I'll say it's front-page news and we all lose. But, so many of our farmers – I was down at a meeting of the watershed in Vernon River a couple of weeks ago there. We had three farmers who were recognized and given an award, a little plaque, for the great work they're doing in working with the ALUS program, working on their own watersheds. But, there are things that happen.

If you get a crazy heavy rain and I guess climate change is happening, those things do happen. But, we first and foremost, our guys and gals are doing a super job on farming and unfortunately, that does happen. But, we are watching that very carefully. We put dollars into the ALUS program. We have buffer zone regulations in place. We work with our farmers in many ways that we can to make sure – and you know what? Being Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, I think, is a bonus for that because I speak to both groups with regards to that and get them to work together and recognize that: Hey, these are the two most important industries in the province and we have to work together on this. I think, for the most part, they're doing a super job.

**John Jamieson:** Could I just add a point? We actually don't enforce the regulations for buffer or crop rotation within our department. That falls under the department of environment. There's really not a conflict by the minister having agriculture and fisheries in his department because he doesn't actually enforce the regulations.

Now, in the case when there's a fish kill, the role that our department plays is that we send our soil conservation people out there to try to figure out and work with the folks who are investigating to try to figure out what happened and how we offer some remedial help.

I know last year, I think there was 165 soil conservation projects that our department funded this year. Also, when you talk about the oyster industry, one of the benefits of the oyster industry is they remove nitrates from the water. Oysters are even better than mussels because they feed on a broader spectrum of phytoplankton so they actually draw more out of the water than. In a lot of cases, in the US, oysters are placed in estuaries in order to improve water quality.

Again, when we have Evan come in one of the things I have challenged staff with, is I said: How do we have a broader way of dealing with at-risk fields rather than, when there is a fish kill and you'd spend a lot of targeted resources on one particular watershed.

What they came with, is that we can use (Indistinct) we can use GPS. We got to actually do a virtual flyover now, and it'll be a pretty neat piece of work that we'll show you when we come in, that where we can identify where water will run. Really what we're asking, showing farmers, that if you leave a grass waterway in this particular area your risk is going to be reduced significantly. It's a pretty simple, cheap piece of work. Again, we can do most of it.

We've also just purchased a drone. We can survey a field in an eighth of the time that we were doing in the past with this drone equipment. We also have a lot more data points with the drone than we would have even when we have our actual surveyors out there.

**Mr. McIsaac:** You're (Indistinct) presentation (Indistinct) committee (Indistinct)

**John Jamieson:** Yea, but it's (Indistinct), Evan can show a lot more visual than I can. It's a little different approach that we're taking to dealing with at-risk fields. We're saying to a farmer: You know, all you have to do is lift the plow and we'll show you where to lift the plow. That's a really effective way to deal with soil erosion and run-off.

The other thing we've also done is we've hired an integrated pest management specialist. That position had been vacant for a number of years. We hired a guy named

Sebastian Ibarra, he was – a lot of field work, he was teaching at Simon Fraser University, originally from Mexico, an extremely capable person. We are targeting resources that we didn't necessarily have before.

I really don't see the – I think it's actually complimentary, as the minister said, to have the department working together.

**Mr. McIsaac:** We also have enforcement officers now that are going out, and it's not just waiting for a fish kill, but doing inspections; working with our farmers to make sure that their books are up-to-date. They go through issues that they think may cause a problem down the road instead of just walking in with the fine book and saying: You're against this; you need to fix this; get it fixed before there is an issue. Those are, I think – that's been a terrific improvement that we have made there, kind of, preempting any possible problem down the road. It's working more directly with the farmers because we don't want to be into a, you're guilty, but when you're in court, that sort of thing.

We had it in the dairy, too. Where they come and they do the inspection in the barns and they say: Here's your score sheet right here. You're doing fine here, but you need to fix this up; I'll be back in a week. Can you get it fixed up, or I'm back in three weeks or whatever, because you have to have that.

It gets back to the public trust. We don't want anything to happen in our streams. We don't want it to be caused by our agriculture area. We need to work together on it.

**Chair:** Peter Bevan-Baker.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** I want to salute our farmers, too. Please don't think that I'm sitting here to bash farmers. I'm not. It's not, Alan, crazy events that lead to – and we want to keep foreign bodies out of our waterways, whether that's soil, whether it's nitrates, whether it's pesticides. You brought up fish kills.

Specifically, with the oyster industry, it's nitrate run-offs that we're talking about here. Absolutely, our farmers are doing great

work. David Francis, good friend of mine, won one of the awards this year –

**Mr. McIsaac:** Gilbert Clements Award, yeah.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Yeah. There are so many exceptions to the crop rotation act that the strict enforcement of that does not happen. We know what to do. I've looked forward to this new technology, John. I think that will be really something that is going to augment the safety – enhance the safety of our waterways. But are you looking at doing anything to remove some of the exceptions for the crop rotation act that currently exist?

**Mr. McIsaac:** One of the things that we're really interested in doing and working with the farmers on is – it used to be there was always, there was like potatoes, barley, hay; potatoes, barley, hay. Sometimes it got shortened up even more that, but if we can find other crops that will go into the crop rotation for potatoes to stretch that rotation from unfortunately, two, but from three to four to five, and that actually can make money for the farmer. Because, for many years you don't make any money on barley, and the hay was in there to build up the nitrogen in the soil from fixation and it's there for the potato crop. It also puts some more humus back into the soil. They weren't making any money in year one, two and three and if it was a bad year in potatoes, they didn't make any money in that year either.

We need alternative crops that can fit into the rotation that work with potatoes, and our guys are really interested in doing that.

We've got pulse crops. Not all of them may work. Soy beans are not the greatest match for that rotation. You have to stretch out five years, but we're up to almost 60,000 acres of soy beans now, but we have to do our job in helping them find alternative crops that have a market that return a good dollar into the pocket into of the farmer. They'll certainly pick it up.

**Chair:** Peter Bevan-Baker.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Absolutely, and the announcement of the company that is moving into Summerside it's –

**Mr. McIsaac:** – (Indistinct) be a great (Indistinct)

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Yeah, exactly. It's great –

**Mr. McIsaac:** It's an –

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** – you need diversity –

**Mr. McIsaac:** – Island guy, too.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Yeah, oh I know –

**Mr. McIsaac:** (Indistinct)

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** I'd like to move onto the poultry industry now, okay, Chair?

**Chair:** (Indistinct)

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Brad already brought up a couple of the issues I was going to touch on.

Firstly, I want to thank you for the work you're doing on the school lunch program. I think getting that pilot in place will be great. The fact that you're working with the health department and the education department, agriculture department, all working together towards a single project, I'm really happy about that.

**Mr. McIsaac:** (Indistinct)

**John Jamieson:** We can make a report of that, too.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Pardon me?

**John Jamieson:** We'll come and report on that someday, too.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** I'll look forward to that, and I know you've done a lot of work, John and I really appreciate that.

I want to pick up on something that Brad said about the Atlantic Procurement Agreement and the potential restrictions that that would place on the scope of this program. A pilot project in a single school is not going to push the limits of the \$25,000 for goods and services that would trigger the APA.

Again, it's never been challenged –

**John Jamieson:** Just to be clear, I'm not saying that it's a single school –

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Okay, all right. Wonderful, I'm getting happier by the minute. If we were to make this an Island-wide project as Tony Geraci, as you would like –

**Unidentified Voice:** (Indistinct)

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** – and I would like. Absolutely, it's a win-win in all kinds of areas.

That would be far over the limits of the Atlantic Procurement Agreement. I think you said that the rules are being examined, at the moment. I'm interested as to what you're hoping to do to, perhaps, make this food program entirely locally sourced.

**Mr. McIsaac:** If we run it as a pilot we may be able to get around that, but we want – this could be a program that goes more than PEI.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Sure.

**Mr. McIsaac:** If we run it as a pilot we can prove to Nova Scotia and New Brunswick that: Hey, this is good.

We looked at this, years ago, about this surplus food, that our seconds and potatoes or what it might be. If you go out to the Vegetable Growers Co-op out there, you could go out there and for \$5 you could buy a half-tonne truck load and guys did it to feel it to the horses. If there was a crack in the carrot, or it was twisted; you get asparagus that's growing that's not straight, the consumer wants it straight. All of that stuff it was just basically waste.

We've seen it in the gleaner's program coming out of Cambridge, Ontario and out of Abbotsford, BC. Where in Cambridge, they go down to the Ontario food market, they pick up anything; cauliflower that is off-colour; anything that's blemished, they take it back to the plant in Cambridge. They have a seniors' program. Seniors are basically sitting there looking for things to do and they'll take – Tuesday morning, I'm going to the gleaners. I'm going to cut out the blemishes on this. It's diced up. It goes through a dehydrator. It's bagged. Three or four times a year they shut the plant, and

change it over to a bagging. They mix it all together; stick a protein source in it of beans or whatever it might be to bring the protein up. They sell it. It's a dehy project that could be used in disaster relief or it might go into the food bank.

All of these things; we do not need to waste any product at all. That's what we want to do. We want to source that, and, at the same time, get a tax relief for the farmers so they're encouraged to put their product into this program.

**John Jamieson:** Just to your point.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Yeah.

**John Jamieson:** What I have done is I've asked my policy staff to take the lead on this. My policy staff have been working with staff from education and health on how we move this bar with the goal, to where you and I both want to go, that we have Island food in Island schools.

One of the things that the staff has looked at is procurement agreements and how we can work around kind of the box that we have to work in. I don't have the paper in front of me but I know that that's part of the piece of work and we're just about ready to meet with the home and school association. We've been in contact with them through this process and we're ready to start meeting with them and try to put some numbers down on what's this going to cost and how would it look.

Again, we want to start not necessarily one school but maybe broader, but get it right and then look at how we can expand that across the spectrum. We also have to look at what facilities are in particular schools and a number of other things. Our policy staff have been taking the lead but working very closely with the other departments, and they have been talking to economic development and tourism around who kind of looked after that procurement agreement, too.

The work is being done, so like I said, we're pretty excited about that; and then, we're also at the same time working on a local food act –

**Mr. McIsaac:** Should be in place by 2018.

**John Jamieson:** Yeah, where we would have measurable goals on local food consumption where we want to promote local food; and again, the procurement piece may be an addition to all that.

We have two or three kind of significant pieces that we're working on there that would support some of our local growers; and some of the newer, smaller operations that are trying to get a foot in the door, too, that would help support them as well.

**Chair:** Peter.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Thank you, Chair.

Really happy to hear that, John, and I think your department is doing some fantastic work in that area. We all know that there's a growing appetite for local food and for knowing the source of your food.

I'd like to talk a little bit about the eggs and chickens that fall outside the quota system here. Currently, as you say, they can sell that at the farm gate or in the farmer's market, but I know a number of restaurants here in town who like to promote locally-sourced organic products; and yet, these farmers are unable to supply those restaurants because of the restrictions that are in place.

What will your department do to make it easier or possible for these suppliers who are outside the quota to supply restaurants?

**Mr. McIsaac:** We have funding in place for an egg grading station. You have to (Indistinct) –

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Can you explain that? You've been saying that a few times.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Yeah.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** So how would that work? How would the egg grading –

**Mr. McIsaac:** Well, at least there would be an inspection level of the eggs that are graded, looked at. Have you ever candled an egg?

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** I have six chickens at home.

**Mr. McIsaac:** If you candled an egg you can see if there's a flaw in the egg, if it's a blood spot or whatever. That's the old way of doing things. Now they always candle every egg to see if there's a blemish in the egg itself.

If you have a small group at the present time and you're selling it out – say the eggs were landed in a community nest, and an egg lands in the corner, it's not picked up for three weeks. It's not what you'd call fresh. You can pick some of those things up when the eggs are candled.

So if they're run through an egg grading station, they'll know the product is fresh, it doesn't have blood spots in it, whatever it might be, but that doesn't necessarily happen if you're running your own, selling at the gate or selling into a farmer's market. That's the way that goes.

To sell into a restaurant or whatever, it has to go through an egg grading station. That's not our rules. That's health –

**Unidentified Voice:** CFIA.

**Mr. McIsaac:** – department of health that says that. If they go through a grading station, and we have funding that will allow for that, and as we noted the Amish are looking at that – we've had farmers talk before, about two or three or four of them coming together and doing an egg grading station. It hasn't happened even though we had the funding there available for that.

**John Jamieson:** So right now the two federal plants that we have are just dealing with the supply management.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Sure, yeah.

**John Jamieson:** So this would be an opportunity for the non-supply management people to have their eggs graded –

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Graded, yeah.

**John Jamieson:** – which would allow them to broaden (Indistinct) –

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Access to those markets.

**John Jamieson:** Yeah, exactly.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** So would that be full government funding to set up that grading facility? Is it like a dollar figure or how would that work?

**John Jamieson:** I think this facility is only like \$15,000 or something (Indistinct) –

**Mr. McIsaac:** It's not a whole lot of money to do it.

**John Jamieson:** We offered 10, so I think we're offering about two thirds of the cost.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** So you're just waiting for the farmers to come to you –

**Unidentified Voice:** Yeah.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** – to access them funds.

**John Jamieson:** We've actually had this offer out for about the last three years.

**Mr. McIsaac:** And I've talked to farmers themselves and they said, mentioned a couple of times, that three or four of them may get together and take us up on the offer, but they haven't done so; but the Amish, I think, are looking at it more seriously.

**Chair:** Okay, Peter Bevan-Baker. Did you have any more questions or –

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Yes. Thank you, Chair.

**Chair:** Okay.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** I'm going to go all the way back to the lobster because I finished after my halibut questions earlier.

We know that New Brunswick was lobbying for an increase from 72 to 75 –

**Unidentified Voice:** Seventy-six.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** No, they were wanting up to 75. DFO imposed up to 76 over the course of three years, a really rapid expansion.

**Mr. McIsaac:** They wanted 76. DFO put it up to 77. We're at 72 and five.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Right, okay. I'm sorry about that. So they went further then – New Brunswick was lobbying for, which suggests

to me that the impetus behind this is coming from somewhere else. I know that Red Lobster is refusing to take tails that are less than four ounces, which is going to be a larger lobster.

**John Jamieson:** I think if you look at the minutes of the lobster advisory meetings, New Brunswick actually asked for 77 thinking they would get 76.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Get 76, yeah.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Okay. I thought you said in your presentation that they asked for 76 and they –

**John Jamieson:** They had been asking for 76 for a whole bunch of years, and the last year they asked for 77 hoping that they (Indistinct) –

**Mr. McIsaac:** They wouldn't get it all.

**John Jamieson:** – their bargaining chip (Indistinct)

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Okay. So my question is: Why the rush? Why did the feds impose that this be done over a three-year period rather than a millimeter per year?

**Mr. McIsaac:** They never gave us any reason –

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** Really?

**Mr. McIsaac:** – for that, and even since then we've lobbied to have it pushed out.

**John Jamieson:** So as you know, you have the assistant deputy minister coming, I think, next week?

**Chair:** Next Friday.

**John Jamieson:** Good question for you.

**Mr. McIsaac:** Exactly.

**Chair:** Okay, Peter? Do you have more or –

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** No. I'm good, Chair.

Thank you.

**Chair:** Okay, we'll move on to Colin LaVie.

**Mr. LaVie:** Thank you, Chair.

Thanks for coming in, gentlemen. The leader, Peter, just asked all my questions, so

–

**Chair:** You're doing great.

**Mr. LaVie:** – you're off the hook.

**Mr. McIsaac:** You're now going down to buy a steer.

**Chair:** Okay, now we have all the – I'm exhausted on my list here of questions, so I want to thank the presenters for coming in today – the Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries, deputy minister of agriculture and fisheries – for coming in and engaging our committee and fielding over 60 questions. They did a very good job, and we'll see you over at the Easter beef sale.

**Mr. McIsaac:** You know what? Do take us up on the opportunity to come back on that land issue, because if you would look at – I think there's over 200 projects that we've worked –

**John Jamieson:** (Indistinct)

**Mr. McIsaac:** – on the land with regards to

–

**John Jamieson:** (Indistinct)

**Mr. McIsaac:** – buffer zones, berms, that sort of thing, working with the farmers on that.

**Mr. LaVie:** (Indistinct)

**Mr. McIsaac:** It's really interesting what they have done –

**John Jamieson:** (Indistinct)

**Mr. McIsaac:** – and the farmers' input into that and the uptake on that program is terrific.

**John Jamieson:** (Indistinct)

**Chair:** Okay, and before you go, Minister Mundy would like to say something.

**Ms. Mundy:** It's not a question. I just wanted to thank you as well. I know I was a

little quiet here today. It's a big learning curve for me. Your knowledge and your passion is evident and I thank you for all the information that you provided here today.

I'm wondering if I might be able to have a copy of the deck just to kind of familiarize myself a little bit more with the department and – so maybe I will –

**Mr. McIsaac:** (Indistinct)

**John Jamieson:** The folks here made a copy of the deck prior to –

**Ms. Mundy:** That would be awesome.

**Chair:** Okay, we have it and we can distribute it.

**Ms. Mundy:** Okay.

**Chair:** Okay?

**Ms. Mundy:** That would be (Indistinct).

Thank you.

**Chair:** Okay. Thank you, guys.

Pardon me? We're going to move on to the next meeting (Indistinct) or – okay; while our guests are leaving we're just going to take a two-minute break?

[Recess]

**Chair:** Okay, we're going to move on with new business, so does anybody have any new business?

Peter.

**Dr. Bevan-Baker:** I would like to take the minister and deputy up on their offer to come in and share with us the new technology on recognizing fields at risk.

**Chair:** Is the committee in favour of that ask?

**Mr. Trivers:** Yes.

**Chair:** Great, thank you.

Clerk, is there any – can you just say what our work plan is from here on out? I know

we have a meeting scheduled with DFO for next Friday. Other than that –

**Clerk Assistant and Clerk of Committees:** Next Friday, 10:00 a.m., the Chair has asked me to see if possibly we could push that a little earlier to 9:30 a.m. I will look into the witness' travel schedule and see if he's available. It is the associate deputy minister of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, and that was Mr. Kevin Stringer. As soon as I have some information I will let everyone know if that's agreeable.

The House, of course, is going back in session April 4<sup>th</sup>, and this committee will be putting in its report, so I would expect once the meeting for Mr. Stringer has been concluded we will, of course, attempt to schedule something with the minister, but you'll turn your attention to drafting your report and recommendations that might be put forward to the Assembly.

**Chair:** Great, thank you very much.

Moving on; was there any other new business? No other new business?

Call for adjournment.

**Ms. Mundy:** (Indistinct)

**Chair:** So called by Minister Mundy.

Thank you.

The Committee adjourned