



MANITOBA PUBLIC UTILITIES BOARD

Re: MANITOBA HYDRO 2025  
INTEGRATED RESOURCE PLAN AND MAJOR NEW  
FACILITY PUBLIC REVIEW  
PUBLIC HEARING

Before Board Panel:

|                  |                     |
|------------------|---------------------|
| Robert Gabor, KC | - Board Chairperson |
| Marilyn Kapitany | - Board Vice Chair  |
| Kurt Simonsen    | - Board Member      |
| Kim Sharman      | - Board Member      |
| Hugh Grant       | - Board Member      |

HELD AT:

Public Utilities Board  
400, 330 Portage Ave.  
Winnipeg Manitoba  
August 21, 2026  
Pages 4046 to 4297

## 1 APPEARANCES

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6 David Thiessen ) Board Counsel

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12 Brent Czarnecki (Counsel) (np)) Manitoba Hydro

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14 Cory Tokar ) Counsel

15 Matt Ghikas (np) ) Counsel

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17 Dave Bowen )

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12 Victoria Cloutis (np) ) Consumers Coalition

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13 Elder Nelliane Cromarty )

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18 Leslie Dysart )

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| 10 | MELANIE MOLIN                |          |
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1 --- Upon commencing at 9:01 a.m.

2

3 THE CHAIRPERSON: Good morning,  
4 everyone. Ms. Brown, do you want to take us through  
5 today.

6 MS. AVRIL BROWN: Thank you. Good  
7 morning, everyone. Happy Friday.

8 So, this morning, we welcome back  
9 Manitoba Hydro Panel 1 to conclude the cross-  
10 examination by Wa Ni Ska Tan. After the morning  
11 break, we will have the presentation of Dr. McLachlan,  
12 followed by cross-examination by Manitoba Hydro and  
13 Board Counsel.

14 After lunch, we'll have the  
15 presentations of Mr. Kanu and Mr. Dysart, followed by  
16 cross-examination by Board Counsel. And then we will  
17 conclude with the panel of Wa Ni Ska Tan members. And  
18 there will be no cross-examination of those -- that  
19 Panel.

20 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. I want  
21 to thank Manitoba Hydro for changing their schedule  
22 and being available for this cross-examination. I  
23 would say to everybody today is a very tight day.  
24 We've got a lot going on. We have very tight time  
25 frames. We're going to keep everybody to those time

1 frames.

2                   If Panel members have questions, it's  
3 not going to affect anybody's time frame, but I'd like  
4 to keep on schedule. And we're going to have a  
5 shorter lunch today. We'll have forty-five (45)  
6 minutes rather than an hour to try and keep on time.

7                   So, Ms. Connolly...?

8

9 --- EXHIBIT NO. MH-61: Response to Undertaking 14  
10

11 CONTINUED MANITOBA HYDRO PANEL 1:

12                   DAVE BOWEN, previously Affirmed

13                   LINDSAY MELVIN, previously Affirmed

14                   MARGARET BRATLAND, previously Affirmed

15                   CHERYL SANCLEMENTE, previously Affirmed

16

17 CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY:

18                   MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Thank you  
19 very much. Good morning, everyone. Charlotte  
20 Connolly, for the record.

21                   I'd also like to sincerely thank the  
22 Board, Board staff, Board counsel, and Manitoba  
23 Hydro's witnesses for accommodating a last-minute  
24 change in schedule due to an -- very unexpected  
25 medical issue. I very much appreciate it.

1                   My questions today will deal  
2 principally with the topics of planning objectives,  
3 the development process, and public engagement, as  
4 well as resource options.

5                   I believe the first set of questions on  
6 engagement will be answerable by Ms. Bratland, and  
7 then the second set of questions on resource options.  
8 Mr. Bowen or Ms. Melvin, you may wish to answer. I do  
9 have a final set of questions about future iterations  
10 of the IRP which anyone may wish to answer if we get  
11 there. I will be conscious of my time.

12                  So, to begin, to refresh our collective  
13 memory, the International Association of Public  
14 Engagement Spectrum consists of five (5) levels,  
15 specifically inform, consult, involve, collaborate,  
16 and empower, correct?

17                  MS. MARGARET BRATLAND:    Ms. Bratland,  
18 for the record. Correct.

19                  MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY:   And Manitoba  
20 Hydro relied solely on the inform and consult levels  
21 of engagement when developing the IRP, correct?

22                  MS. MARGARET BRATLAND:    I don't think  
23 I would say it that way.

24                  I would say that as we were looking at  
25 the decisions we had to inform and considered what the

1 promise we could make to the public was in terms of  
2 the level that would most represent that, that we  
3 could confidently commit to inform and consult.

4 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Okay. And  
5 that leads into my next question.

6 Manitoba Hydro selected the consult  
7 level where it determined that engagement feedback  
8 could influence decisions, correct?

9 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: Correct.

10 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: And that --  
11 would you agree that in order to deliver on this level  
12 of engagement, proponents or government should be able  
13 to articulate what was heard and how that feedback  
14 influenced decision-making?

15 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: I would say  
16 that part of consult is making sure that you can say  
17 how decisions were influenced or how feedback was  
18 taken or when it wasn't taken.

19 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Okay. Thank  
20 you. And can you confirm that the consult level of  
21 engagement was applied to key inputs and scenarios  
22 such that feedback gathered in these areas could  
23 influence decisions where determined by Manitoba Hydro  
24 that it could?

25 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: So, key inputs

1 and scenarios was one (1) of the areas where we  
2 actively sought feedback.

3 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: And could you  
4 confirm that First Nation representatives and  
5 individuals participated in public engagement  
6 activities during the Round 1 and 2 engagement phase  
7 and that feedback was gathered through workshops and  
8 surveys and other methods from First Nation  
9 representatives and individuals?

10 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: Yes.

11 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Could you  
12 explain how engagement feedback gathered from First  
13 Nation representatives and individuals received  
14 through the methods of engagement we just discussed  
15 influenced the identification of resource options?  
16 And as -- and anyone -- any witness is free to answer  
17 that question.

18 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: I'm just going  
19 to repeat your question back to make sure that I  
20 understood it.

21 You're asking if I can explain how  
22 feedback received through engagement may have  
23 influenced the selection of resource options? Or was  
24 there another element to it that I missed there?

25 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: How

1 engagement feedback gathered from First Nation  
2 representatives and individuals received through the  
3 various methods of engagement, how did that influence  
4 the identification of resource options.

5 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: I'm just going  
6 to take a minute to confer. Thank you.

7

8 (BRIEF PAUSE)

9

10 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: Thank you for  
11 your patience on that. So, the feedback that we heard  
12 about resource options weren't about new resource  
13 options that we weren't considering, they were about  
14 the different aspects and attributes of those resource  
15 options.

16 In terms of how that factored into the  
17 IRP, I think I'd ask Ms. Melvin to jump in in terms of  
18 the different places that resource options are  
19 considered, but that feedback would have just coloured  
20 and helped us understand if we had considered all the  
21 different attributes of those resources.

22 Ms. Melvin, did you want to add to  
23 that?

24 MS. LINDSAY MELVIN: Well, I would  
25 first seek clarification just to confirm that if

1 you're -- if you're looking at how resource options  
2 were identified for it to become an input into the IRP  
3 versus -- versus how they were then selected as a --  
4 as a feasible option and -- and evaluated throughout  
5 the IRP.

6 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: You foretold  
7 my second part of my question, which is how was the  
8 feedback then used to look at possible resource option  
9 strategies that were included in development  
10 scenarios.

11 But if you'd like to answer that now,  
12 you're welcome to. But the first part of the question  
13 was about the identification of the resource options  
14 that would be included as an input. You're correct.

15 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: I -- I can  
16 recall some questions regarding some -- some longer-  
17 term options that -- that if they weren't, for  
18 example, in the inventory, but those answers were  
19 provided.

20 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Okay. Thank  
21 you. The next part of my questioning will zero in on  
22 resource options.

23 Can you confirm that Manitoba Hydro  
24 included 600 megawatts of Indigenous-owned wind as a  
25 resource option in the Recommended Development Plan?

1 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: Confirmed.

2 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: And will  
3 those proposed wind form projects be physically  
4 located in Southern Manitoba?

5 MR. DAVE BOWEN: It it's Mr. Bowen  
6 for, the record.

7 We're in an active procurement. That  
8 procurement's identified through the process,  
9 identified the -- for lack of better words, the most -  
10 - the best wind sites and in the province.

11 And those sites have attributes where  
12 there's more wind on a -- on a statistical basis. And  
13 they're close to load, i.e., so there's -- there's  
14 small amounts of transmission. And -- and we fully  
15 expect that those sites are all in southern Manitoba.

16 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Okay. Thank  
17 you. And did Manitoba Hydro ask First Nations located  
18 in northern Manitoba whether they believed it would be  
19 feasible or appropriate to take part in the ownership  
20 of wind generation projects located in southern  
21 Manitoba before selecting this as a preferred resource  
22 option?

23 MR. DAVE BOWEN: I -- I think the --  
24 the -- so, the government's given us a mandate to make  
25 sure there's 51 percent Indigenous ownership for the

1 wind. In terms of the procurement process, the  
2 process is available to all First Nations within --  
3 within the province.

4 So, that -- that process allows any one  
5 of the First Nations to -- to be part of that  
6 procurement.

7 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: But to  
8 confirm, Manitoba Hydro didn't ask First Nations in  
9 Northern Manitoba during engagement processes or  
10 otherwise whether it would be feasible or appropriate  
11 for them to take part in ownership of projects in  
12 Southern Manitoba?

13

14 (BRIEF PAUSE)

15

16 MR. DAVE BOWEN: Would you mind  
17 repeating the question, please?

18 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Sure. Did  
19 Manitoba Hydro ask First Nations located in Northern  
20 Manitoba, during the public engagement process or  
21 otherwise, whether they believed it would be feasible  
22 or appropriate to take part in the ownership of wind  
23 generation projects located in Southern Manitoba  
24 before selecting this as a preferred resource option?

25 MR. DAVE BOWEN: So, I -- there were

1 multiple engagement sessions that happened through the  
2 wind procurement. You're at -- I'm at the edge of my  
3 knowledge as to was something -- were Northern First  
4 Nations specifically asked that question. I -- I  
5 don't know that answer.

6 I do know that the multiple engagement  
7 sessions were open to all First Nations within the  
8 province.

9 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Okay. Thank  
10 you. In the event that a Northern First Nation did  
11 take part ownership of one (1) of these projects, do  
12 you think it would be difficult for their members who  
13 reside in northern Manitoba on reserve or off reserve  
14 to benefit from the economic opportunities such as  
15 training, employment, and business opportunities that  
16 may stem from these projects located in the south?

17 MR. DAVE BOWEN: I -- I think that  
18 geography matters. So, much like a hydroelectric  
19 station, Keeyask, for example, where it's built in  
20 Northern Manitoba, our experience is that, yes, the  
21 people that live close to that worksite have more  
22 opportunities because of logistics.

23 And so, if work was happening in  
24 southern Manitoba, the people that live closer to  
25 those -- those were those worksites would have more

1 opportunities, so I would agree with you there.

2 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Okay. Thank  
3 you. And was this potential difficulty in accessing  
4 the benefits of employment, business opportunities,  
5 procurement, was that difficulty accounted for when  
6 Manitoba Hydro applied the criteria of economic  
7 reconciliation when evaluating the development plans?

8 MR. DAVE BOWEN: Again, I think -- I  
9 think context matters. So, we're -- Manitoba Hydro's  
10 doing work throughout the province every day. And we  
11 -- in many of our projects, we are doing work to  
12 provide training, employment, business opportunities.  
13 Where those projects are physically, we'll provide  
14 more opportunities for the communities and the people  
15 living in those communities for -- for that work.

16 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Okay. And  
17 just to clarify, was that geographic element applied  
18 when applying the criteria of economic reconciliation  
19 when evaluating the ability of a Proposed Development  
20 Plan or -- or resource option to contribute to  
21 economic reconciliation?

22 Or was there no differentiation when it  
23 came to the application of that criteria?

24 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: Hi. It's Ms.  
25 Bratland, for the record.

1                   During the evaluation metric process,  
2   through the evaluation framework, consideration of  
3   economic reconciliation did not consider who,  
4   specifically where, those benefits were attributed to.  
5   I think that's --

6                   MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY:    Yeah.

7                   MS. MARGARET BRATLAND:    -- what your  
8   question was.

9                   MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY:    Thank --  
10   thank you.   Exactly.   Yeah.

11                  MS. MARGARET BRATLAND:    Thank you.

12                  MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY:    I'd now like  
13   to move to the topic of alternative energy sources or  
14   alternative resource options.   Ms. Paige, could you  
15   navigate to the Round 1 survey at page 34 of the book.

16                  So, this is an extract from the Round 1  
17   First Nation leadership survey.   And I would just ask  
18   that you confirm that this survey took place around  
19   the fall of 2024.

20                  MS. MARGARET BRATLAND:    Subject to  
21   check.   I would scroll up to the first page, and then  
22   we would see that.

23                  MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY:    Yes, Ms.  
24   Paige, if you'd like to scroll up a bit.

25                  I believe it was around November 13th,

1 2024, to January 2025, agreed?

2 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: Agreed. Thank  
3 you.

4 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Okay. And  
5 are you aware that some survey respondents identified  
6 natural gas, wind farms, solar farms, as well as  
7 additional energy supplies, like hydrogen and  
8 biomethane, as resource options they were interested  
9 in?

10 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: Yes, I am  
11 aware of that.

12 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: And can you  
13 confirm that Manitoba Hydro scoped the IRP in such a  
14 way that community led or community scaled projects  
15 weren't considered as a resource option?

16

17 (BRIEF PAUSE)

18

19 MS. LINDSAY MELVIN: This is Ms.  
20 Melvin. With respect to community led projects, those  
21 -- there -- we are aware of show up in the load.

22 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Okay. Thank  
23 you. So, at any point in the engagement process did  
24 Manitoba Hydro inform First Nations that community  
25 scale or community led projects wouldn't be considered

1 as resource options in the IRP in terms of an option  
2 that has the ability to contribute to Manitoba Hydro's  
3 energy future, if you will?

4 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: So, the  
5 conversations that we had with First Nations  
6 communities, for example, one (1) of those methods of  
7 conversation were through energy planning workshops,  
8 those were multifaceted conversations. So, in some  
9 cases, communities wanted to talk about community led  
10 energy.

11 The IRP itself as an exercise is an  
12 exercise in planning supply and demand at the scale of  
13 the province, a system wide exercise.

14 So, as we've noted in our evidence,  
15 it's not a place to problem solve and have those very  
16 specific conversations with communities. It's a  
17 consideration of those things in the aggregate.

18 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Thank you.  
19 That's a helpful clarification. I'd like to move to  
20 the Round 2 survey. Mrs. Paige, could you please  
21 navigate to page 60 of the book.

22 And I'd just like to confirm that this  
23 survey took place in -- I believe it was in December  
24 2025 over to January 2026.

25 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: That's

1 correct.

2 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Okay. Thank  
3 you. This question displayed on the screen here asked  
4 survey respondents for feedback on the six (6)  
5 resource options in the Recommended Development Plan,  
6 correct?

7 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: Yeah. The  
8 question is at the top there. So, we're asking about  
9 the six (6) options that emerged as feasible ways to  
10 meet energy demand.

11 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Okay. And we  
12 see here though it's the six (6) options, as in the  
13 six (6) options included in the Recommended  
14 Development Plan, just to be sure. Or sorry.

15 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: Yeah.

16 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Yes. My  
17 apologies. That's my mistake. So, I'm just going to  
18 read the highlighted bullets on the screen here.

19 "Many of the options are limited  
20 to north Manitoba and there needs  
21 to be consideration how -- for how  
22 they could be implemented in the  
23 north.

24 Biomethane may be a feasible  
25 option in the north that should be

1 explored further. First Nations  
2 should have a meaningful role in  
3 enhancements to existing hydro  
4 power, which should -- could  
5 include equity participation.  
6 First Nations should be provided  
7 with capacity to explore advancing  
8 solutions to meet energy needs in  
9 north Manitoba and provide  
10 additional energy resources to the  
11 entire province."

12 THE CHAIRPERSON: Pardon me. I have  
13 to interrupt for a second. We've lost the connection  
14 with our reporter. So, if you could just hold on.  
15 And we'll get you to go back to the question once we  
16 know.

17

18 (BRIEF PAUSE)

19

20 THE CHAIRPERSON: Ms. Connelly, would  
21 you -- could you please repeat the question.

22

23 CONTINUED BY MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY:

24 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Sure. So for  
25 the record, we are looking at an extract from the

1 Round II survey of First Nation leadership and the  
2 question displayed on the screen is:

3 "As part of our work, six (6)  
4 options have emerged as feasible  
5 ways to meet energy demand over  
6 the next ten (10) years. Do you  
7 have any feedback on these six (6)  
8 options?"

9 I'm now going to read some of the  
10 responses given:

11 "Many of the options are limited  
12 in Northern Manitoba and there  
13 needs to be consideration for how  
14 they could be implemented in the  
15 North.

16 Biomethane may be a feasible  
17 option in the North that should be  
18 explored further.

19 "First Nations should have a  
20 meaningful role in the  
21 enhancements to existing  
22 hydropower, which could include  
23 equity participation.

24 "First National Energy needs in  
25 Northern Manitoba and provide

1 additional a viable option  
2 anywhere in the province.  
3 Wind should be considered a viable  
4 option anywhere in the province."

5 I'd like to go to another extract of  
6 the survey before I provide my question for Manitoba  
7 Hydro. Mrs. Paige, could you scroll up to page 59,  
8 please, one page up.

9 I'd just ask Manitoba Hydro to confirm  
10 that this question in the Round II survey asked  
11 respondents for feedback on the roadmap components,  
12 correct?

13 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: It's Ms.  
14 Bratland, for the record. Correct.

15 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: And I would  
16 like to draw your attention to bullet 4, 5, and 6,  
17 which I will again read for the record:

18 "Manitoba Hydro should invest in  
19 infrastructure in northern  
20 communities to meet efficiency  
21 goals and reduce energy costs.  
22 Meaningful partnerships between  
23 Manitoba Hydro and First Nations  
24 should include equity investment  
25 opportunities and greater First

1 Nation control over new  
2 developments.  
3 Indigenous communities should lead  
4 energy planning efforts.  
5 Indigenous communities currently  
6 have inadequate power supply and  
7 have very high energy costs."

8 Now, considering the qualitative  
9 feedback we just reviewed from the Round II survey,  
10 did Manitoba Hydro at any point in the IRP development  
11 process consider whether there were other resource  
12 options that could be Indigenous owned or led aside  
13 from wind located in Southern Manitoba?

14 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: It's Ms.  
15 Bratland. I'll start off, and feel free to jump in,  
16 my colleagues. So in general, the resource options  
17 considered in the IRP did not consider who would own  
18 it or where.

19 In the consideration of the economic  
20 reconciliation metric in the evaluation framework,  
21 there was consideration of ways that Indigenous  
22 communities could be involved, those things that did  
23 have the opportunity for partnerships, et cetera.

24 So that was considered in that part of  
25 the consideration of the resources. But in general,

1 identifying different resources that might have  
2 different participation options, the resources were  
3 considered in their own sake as resources.

4 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Okay. Thank  
5 you. So if ownership wasn't a factor considered, how  
6 does Manitoba Hydro explain or justify the selection  
7 of Indigenous-owned wind?

8

9 (BRIEF PAUSE)

10

11 MS. LINDSAY MELVIN: This is Ms.  
12 Melvin, for the record. Can I ask you please to just  
13 repeat the question?

14 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNELLY: If ownership  
15 wasn't a factor considered in the IRP development  
16 Process, how does Manitoba Hydro explain or justify  
17 the selection of Indigenous-owned wind as a resource  
18 option?

19 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: With respect  
20 to the wind that's in the Recommended Development  
21 Plan, we've discussed previously the many benefits  
22 that come from wind.

23 And with respect to what was inputted  
24 into the Potential Development Plans with respect to  
25 the 600 megawind -- megawatts of wind, that reflects

1 our understanding of the government-led program  
2 currently underway with respect to wind, so being a  
3 total amount of 600 megawatts and with increments that  
4 reflect our best understanding at the time.

5 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Okay. Thank  
6 you. Mrs. Paige, could you please turn to page 68 of  
7 the book. All right.

8 And we see here this question from the  
9 Round II survey invites respondents to make open-ended  
10 comments about Manitoba Hydro's energy planning.

11 Agreed?

12 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: It's Ms.  
13 Bratland. Agreed.

14 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNELLY: I'd like to  
15 read out the highlighted book -- bullets for the  
16 record:

17 "First Nations need to be at the  
18 forefront of the IRP. Early and  
19 meaningful participation with  
20 First Nations is needed. There  
21 should be opportunities for equity  
22 participation on both generation  
23 and transmission projects.  
24 Energy planning needs to consider  
25 the unique needs and circumstances

1 of the North. Communities should  
2 be engaged for potential solutions  
3 rather to understand how they can  
4 participate in a plan that has  
5 already been developed. A  
6 diversified grid should be  
7 developed."

8 Based on the qualitative feedback we've  
9 just reviewed, would you agree that some respondents  
10 felt that the energy needs, goals, or priorities of  
11 First Nations are not addressed or not adequately  
12 addressed in the Integrated Resource Plan?

13 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: I don't think  
14 that I could speculate that that's what they were  
15 saying. I -- I think this is a summary of what we  
16 heard, and whether it was adequately addressed isn't  
17 highlighted further in these sentences.

18 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Thank you.  
19 Mrs. Paige, could you please navigate to page 70 of  
20 the book.

21 Despite -- on the screen here is 'What  
22 We Heard' report published in April 2026, stemming  
23 from a First Nations-led energy readiness form titled  
24 'Grid Strong, Nation Strong'.

25 And are you aware that a representative

1 of Manitoba Hydro attended and participated in this  
2 two (2) day form?

3 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: It's Ms.  
4 Bratland. I am aware.

5 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Thank you.  
6 Mrs. Paige, could you please navigate to page 98.

7 I'd ask you to confirm that this  
8 section, Section D, highlighted in yellow, lists  
9 recommendations related to "economic reconciliation  
10 directions raised by the forum."

11 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: It's Ms.  
12 Bratland. I will acknowledge that that's the title of  
13 this section. I will, however, say that I have not  
14 had time to review this report in detail, so my  
15 ability to talk about the intent of the section is  
16 limited.

17 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Sure. Thank  
18 you for that. Looking at the highlighted portion, can  
19 you confirm the following as a recommendation:

20 "Major projects and energy growth  
21 strategies should be structures in  
22 ways that improve First Nations'  
23 safety, infrastructure readiness,  
24 and long-term wellbeing rather  
25 than deepening dependence or

1 extracting value without adequate  
2 return."

3 Considering the feedback we reviewed  
4 from the survey as well as the recommendation from  
5 this 'Grid Strong, Nation Strong' report, can you  
6 explain why Manitoba Hydro believes that First Nation  
7 priorities when it comes to energy planning should not  
8 or cannot be addressed through the IRP as a system-  
9 wide planning exercise?

10 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: I think we  
11 have spoken at length on the record about this topic.  
12 And Manitoba Hydro has many processes in which we  
13 engage with Indigenous communities about various  
14 topics, one of them specifically being community-led  
15 energy and the resilience and reliability of energy to  
16 those communities.

17 I think we've also stated that the IRP  
18 is a system-wide planning exercise, looking to make  
19 sure that we have enough overall energy to serve  
20 Manitobans. So that is -- I -- I disagree with the  
21 premise that Manitoba Hydro does not consider those  
22 things. It considers them in detail in other  
23 processes.

24 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Thank you.  
25 Are you aware that Daymark's witnesses testified in

1 this hearing that some IRPs in other jurisdictions may  
2 treat certain regions or populations within an IRP  
3 differently where specific policy or planning  
4 objectives exist either externally or internally?

5 MS. CORY TOKAR: Just for the record,  
6 it's Cory Tokar. Ms. Connolly, do you have a  
7 reference in the transcript perhaps we can look at?

8

9 CONTINUED BY MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY:

10 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Sure. Mrs.  
11 Paige, could you navigate to page 145 of the Book of  
12 Documents. And if we scroll down a bit to the line 25  
13 here, bleeding over into the next page, this is a  
14 transcript from the hearing date, July 31st, 2024.  
15 Can I just ask that you confirm that?

16 MS. CORY TOKAR: Again, for the  
17 record, it's Cory Tokar. And the date is July 31st,  
18 2026.

19

20 CONTINUED BY MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY:

21 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Oh, sorry.  
22 I'm stuck in the past. My apologies. And so here in  
23 the highlighted portion, we see Mr. Smith of Daymark.  
24 He testifies:

25 "There are other ways that

1 [apologies]. I am not aware of  
2 anything within the objectives  
3 that were established for this IRP  
4 that would require a specific  
5 separation of or separate planning  
6 activity for those sixty-five  
7 thousand (65,000) retail  
8 customers."

9 Here he's referring to First Nation  
10 customers. Continued:

11 "There are -- we could certainly  
12 imagine circumstances where, based  
13 on certain objectives, where that  
14 could be relevant and could be  
15 something for future IRPs."

16 Now, scrolling to the next page at the  
17 very bottom here -- oh, sorry. And so apologies. I'm  
18 getting lost in the transcript here.

19 So are you aware of any external policy  
20 directive that exists which may encourage or permit  
21 Manitoba Hydro to pay attention to the needs and  
22 circumstances of First Nations in IRP planning  
23 processes?

24

25 (BRIEF PAUSE)

1

2

MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: It's Ms.

3

Bratland, for the record. I have conferred with my

4

colleagues.

5

We aren't aware of any specific to the

6

IRP direction that articulates that. However, there

7

are broad sweeps of information, for example, in the

8

mandate letter to Manitoba Hydro that talk about the

9

importance of working in collaboration with Indigenous

10

communities and First Nations.

11

MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Okay. Thank

12

you for that.

13

Are you aware of the United Nations

14

Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples?

15

MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: I am.

16

MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Are you aware

17

that the Government of Manitoba has stated its

18

commitment to the principles of the Declaration in

19

provincial legislation, specifically the Path to

20

Reconciliation Act?

21

MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: I am aware.

22

MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Manitoba

23

Hydro is an agent of the Crown, agreed?

24

MS. CORY TOKAR: This is Cory Tokar.

25

For the record, yes. The Manitoba Hydro Act states --

1 I believe it's Section 4.

2

3 CONTINUED BY MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY:

4 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Thank you.

5 Are you aware that the principles of the United  
6 Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People  
7 include the requirement to seek their free, prior, and  
8 informed consent before taking administrative or  
9 legislative measures that may affect them?

10 MS. CORY TOKAR: Again, this is Cory  
11 Tokar. If that's what the legislation -- we'll take  
12 your word if that's what it says.

13

14 CONTINUED BY MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY:

15 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Okay. Thank  
16 you. The IRP was published and submitted to the  
17 government in I believe it was January 15, 2026,  
18 correct?

19 MS. LINDSAY MELVIN: This is Ms.  
20 Melvin. Subject to check, but I believe that's the  
21 correct date.

22 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Okay. Thank  
23 you. And this is the same date that the Round II  
24 First Nation leadership survey closed, correct,  
25 January 15, 2026?

1 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: Ms. Bratland.

2 Yes, correct.

3 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Thank you.

4 And as we discussed, this survey sought feedback on  
5 the roadmap and the Recommended Development Plan,  
6 correct?

7 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: Correct.

8 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: In light of  
9 the timeframes we just discussed, it was not possible  
10 for Manitoba Hydro to consider changes to its  
11 Recommended Development Plan based on feedback  
12 received from First Nations during the Round II  
13 engagement phase, agreed?

14 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: Sorry. The  
15 way that you phrased that question, you're referring  
16 to the entirety of the Round II engagement phase, or  
17 are you referring specifically to the survey? I just  
18 want to be clear.

19 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: The survey.  
20 Apologies, yes.

21 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: The survey.  
22 Right. So the survey closed on January 15th.  
23 Analysis was conducted after that point.

24 It did not inform the Development Plan  
25 that was submitted to government. A lot of the focus

1 of that survey was to get feedback on the roadmap,  
2 particularly the near-term actions and how we work  
3 together in an ongoing way in engagement and continue  
4 to enhance the process.

5 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Thank you.  
6 And that leads into my next line of questioning on  
7 future iterations of the IRP.

8 Is it fair to say that Manitoba Hydro  
9 is committed to contributing to reconciliation by  
10 supporting collaboration with Indigenous nations in  
11 energy planning and ensuring that their perspectives  
12 help guide Manitoba's energy future?

13 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: It's Ms.  
14 Bratland. Yes, that's fair to say.

15 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Mrs. Paige,  
16 could you please navigate to page 3 of the Book of  
17 Documents.

18 Mrs. Bratland, can you confirm that  
19 Figure 1 displayed on the screen here represents the  
20 IAP2 spectrum of public engagement?

21 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: I can confirm  
22 that.

23 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: And can you  
24 confirm that the inform and consult levels of  
25 engagement are lower on the spectrum than involve and

1 collaborate, agreed?

2 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: The inform and  
3 consult levels have a different promise to the public  
4 and show up towards the left-hand side of the  
5 spectrum.

6 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Okay. In  
7 general, the involve and collaborate levels of  
8 engagement increase a stakeholder's participation in  
9 planning and decision-making, agreed?

10 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: They increase  
11 their direct impact on the decision-making, yes.

12 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Okay. Thank  
13 you. Can you confirm that the involved level of  
14 engagement requires Proponents to ensure that the  
15 concerns and aspirations of stakeholders are  
16 consistently understood, considered, and directly  
17 reflected in the alternatives developed?

18 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: I can confirm  
19 that.

20 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: And can you  
21 confirm that the collaborate level of engagement  
22 requires Proponents to partner with stakeholders in  
23 each aspect of the decision, including the development  
24 of alternatives and the identification of preferred  
25 solutions?

1 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: Yes.

2 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Could you  
3 explain why Manitoba Hydro felt it could not deliver  
4 on the involve or collaborate levels of engagement,  
5 particularly, with respect to First Nations with whom  
6 the minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro directed  
7 Manitoba Hydro to partner with and whom Manitoba Hydro  
8 itself has committed to collaborate with in energy  
9 planning?

10 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: So I'll start  
11 with the word 'collaborate'. And I think those mean  
12 two (2) different things in those two (2) different  
13 contexts. The minister is using that term in sort of  
14 the more common way that we all understand the concept  
15 of collaboration. And it's given a very specific  
16 definition within the spectrum.

17 I addressed at length with the Board  
18 during my cross-examination Manitoba Hydro's thinking  
19 and constraints in terms of how it applies the  
20 spectrum in terms of the levels of decision-making.

21 We discussed that there are places  
22 within our engagement where we feel we can confidently  
23 promise that we could achieve involve, that one of  
24 those areas was the Technical Advisory Committee,  
25 which includes representation from First Nations

1 organizations.

2 Can we move to collaborate? And is  
3 that something that we can achieve through some level  
4 of engagement at Manitoba Hydro? I think yes,  
5 absolutely. But again, part of what's important in  
6 transparency is not over-promising a level that you  
7 can't commit to.

8 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Thank you.  
9 So to clarify, Manitoba Hydro feels it cannot  
10 commitment (sic) to a higher level of engagement that  
11 would increase impact on decision-making with any  
12 stakeholder, including First Nations?

13 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: No, that's not  
14 what I said. I think what I'm saying is that we are  
15 very careful about what we promise can be achieved.

16 We are committed to continually working  
17 in dialogue and in the spirit of collaboration with  
18 First Nations and Indigenous communities.

19 I think that's demonstrated by the many  
20 ways that we are undertaking that; one being the  
21 funding of liaison positions with umbrella  
22 organizations, ongoing energy workshops with any  
23 community that indicates that they want to have one,  
24 and having those conversations about what matters to  
25 them.

1                   So, I think we get into a little bit of  
2 semantics there. I think the spirit of our  
3 participation is what matters.

4                   MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY:    Okay, thank  
5 you. Mrs. Paige, could you navigate to page 103 of  
6 the book. I'll identify this as another extract from  
7 the Grid Strong, Nation Strong Report we discussed  
8 earlier.

9                   Can you just confirm that this section  
10 highlighted in yellow is titled Non-Negotiables for  
11 First Nations Lead Energy Futures?

12                  MS. MARGARET BRATLAND:    I confirm  
13 that's the title.

14                  MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY:    Thank you,  
15 and I'll read the highlighted paragraph for the  
16 record. Quote:

17                                "If lessons from this forum are to  
18                               be reflected in future policy,  
19                               planning, regulatory, utility, and  
20                               project frameworks, several  
21                               minimum conditions should be  
22                               treated as non-negotiable for  
23                               First Nations energy planning,  
24                               utility engagement, project  
25                               development, and public policy."

1                   And can you confirm on the page here we  
2 see one of the non-negotiable recommendations is that  
3 quote:

4                   "First Nations must be engaged as  
5 rights holders from the beginning  
6 of planning and project design,  
7 not after major directions have  
8 already been set,"

9                   End quote.

10                  MS. MARGARET BRATLAND:    I can confirm  
11 that's what the bullet says.

12                  MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY:   Thank you.  
13 And, I think we discussed this, but can you also  
14 confirm that the IRP is an iterative and living  
15 planning process that will be updated?

16

17                               (BRIEF PAUSE)

18

19                  MS. LINDSAY MELVIN:    This is Ms.  
20 Melvin, for the record.

21                               I agree that the IRP is iterative. I'm  
22 uncomfortable with exactly what the word 'living'  
23 means because that can have many -- many  
24 interpretations.

25                  MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY:   Okay, thank

1 you. I'd like to return to the Round II survey. Mrs.  
2 Paige, could you navigate to page 54.

3 I'd just like you to confirm that this  
4 slide is titled Key Findings from Respondents, which  
5 were summarized by Manitoba Hydro.

6 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: Ms. Bratland,  
7 for the record. Sorry, I was reading the bullet, and  
8 I missed your question. If you could ask it again.

9 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Oh, that's  
10 the trouble with the highlights. Apologies, it's  
11 easier for me.

12 So, the slide is titled Key Findings  
13 from Respondents, and these key findings were  
14 summarized by Manitoba Hydro, correct?

15 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: Correct.

16 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: I'll now read  
17 out the four -- fourth bullet for the record. Quote:

18 "Respondents called for more  
19 investment in resources, training,  
20 and employment opportunities to  
21 support project development,  
22 potential ownership opportunities,  
23 and operation of projects,  
24 enabling communities to meet local  
25 energy needs while contributing to

1 Manitoba's broader energy system."

2 Having read that quote, is Manitoba  
3 Hydro opening to considering community-led or  
4 community-scale energy projects, or other Indigenous-  
5 owned utility-scale projects aside from wind in future  
6 iterations of the IRP?"

7

8

(BRIEF PAUSE)

9

10 MS. LINDSAY MELVIN: Could you please  
11 repeat the question? This is Ms. Melvin.

12 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: With respect  
13 to the development of future iterations of the IRP, is  
14 Manitoba Hydro open to considering community-led or  
15 community-scale projects or other Indigenous-owned  
16 utility-scale projects aside from wind in the next  
17 iterations?

18 MS. LINDSAY MELVIN: Yes.

19 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Thank you.  
20 And with respect, again, to the development of future  
21 iterations of the IRP, is Manitoba Hydro willing to  
22 change its engagement approach to enhance  
23 inclusiveness and effectiveness?

24 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: It's Ms.  
25 Bratland. I'm on record throughout the proceeding

1 that we are committed to ongoing and continual  
2 improvement and engagement.

3 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Thank you.  
4 I'd like to take us back to another extract from the  
5 Grid Strong, Nation Strong Report. Mrs. Paige, could  
6 you navigate to page 96 of the book.

7 Can you confirm that Section B  
8 displayed on the screen is titled Governance,  
9 Planning, and Regulatory Recommendations Emerging Most  
10 Strongly from Day 2?

11 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: I can confirm  
12 that's what 'B' says.

13 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: And can you  
14 confirm that one of the recommendations is, quote:

15 "Establish a Manitoba First  
16 Nations focused electricity and  
17 infrastructure technical working  
18 process or standing table to  
19 address infrastructure pressure,  
20 clean energy pathways, demand  
21 planning, and rights holder input  
22 on major projects while also  
23 tracking commitments, unresolved  
24 issues, implementation progress,  
25 and required follow-up arising

1 from Utility, Provincial, and  
2 Federal engagement,"

3 End quote?

4 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: That's what it  
5 says.

6 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Is Manitoba  
7 Hydro open to creating such a working process or  
8 standing table with First Nations to help guide future  
9 iterations of the IRP?

10 Or, in the alternative, is that  
11 something Manitoba Hydro could consider bringing to  
12 the Province as a measure to collaborate with First  
13 Nations?

14 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: Sorry, are you  
15 asking this in the context of the IRP or something  
16 broader than that?

17 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: In the  
18 context of the IRP.

19 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: Manitoba Hydro  
20 is open to continual feedback from Indigenous  
21 communities and their leadership in terms of the best  
22 ways that we can engage on this topic.

23 We have ongoing energy planning  
24 workshops; we have a leadership survey that will be  
25 coming out soon, once again; we have funded energy

1 liaison positions; and we are in continual dialogue.

2                   So, as we look to ongoing engagement,  
3 which is what I would say we are in now, between  
4 active development cycles, we'll continue to discuss  
5 the best mechanisms for that.

6                   MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY:    Okay, thank  
7 you. And then I see I'm making record time, which is  
8 great. I only have a very few questions left here.

9                   In the last iteration of the IRP,  
10 Manitoba Hydro formed a Technical Advisory Committee,  
11 correct, to inform the IRP?

12                  MS. MARGARET BRATLAND:    Yes, we had a  
13 Technical Advisory Committee for the 2025 IRP.

14                  MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY:    And would you  
15 agree that the Technical Advisory Committee  
16 represented one of the most sustained and interactive  
17 forms of engagement?

18                  MS. MARGARET BRATLAND:    Yes, I would  
19 agree.

20                  MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY:    And can you  
21 confirm approximately how many members sat on the  
22 Technical Advisory Committee?

23                  MS. MARGARET BRATLAND:    I can confirm  
24 that it was approximately nineteen (19), I believe,  
25 subject to check, and those numbers changed over time.

1 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Yes. It  
2 varied between meetings, but it was around that.

3 And how many members represented First  
4 Nation organizations?

5 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: There's two  
6 (2) members.

7 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Could you  
8 confirm those two (2) members?

9 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: The  
10 organizations are MKO and the MMF.

11 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Okay, thank  
12 you. I'd just like to clarify that MMF, Metis, is  
13 distinct from First Nations.

14 And so, could you confirm that there  
15 was one (1) First Nation organization represented at  
16 the Technical Advisory Committee?

17 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: That being  
18 MKO. Yes.

19 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Thank you.  
20 How many meetings were convened with the Technical  
21 Advisory Committee total?

22 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: I believe  
23 there were eight (8).

24 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Thank you,  
25 and were you aware that the MKO representative only

1 attended the first three (3) out of the eight (8)  
2 meetings?

3 MS. MARGARET BRATLAND: I can confirm  
4 that.

5 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Okay, thank  
6 you, and that concludes my questioning. So, I gave us  
7 back half an hour, which is great.

8 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. I'll ask  
9 the Panel if they have any questions related to this  
10 morning. No. Mr. Tokar, any redirect ...?

11 MS. CORY TOKAR: No, there's no  
12 redirect. Thank you.

13 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. I'd -- I'd  
14 like to thank Manitoba Hydro for attending this  
15 morning.

16 We're going to take the morning break  
17 now so that we can move Ms. Connolly and deal with the  
18 presentation by Dr. McLaughlin. So, we'll be back at  
19 10 after 10:00. Thank you.

20

21 --- Upon recessing at 9:56 a.m.

22 --- Upon resuming at 10:16 a.m.

23

24 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay. We'll resume.  
25 I'm going to call on Mr. Tokar.

1 MR. CORY TOKAR: Yes. Thank you.  
2 Earlier this morning, Ms. Melvin gave an answer that  
3 was subject to check. And I believe Ms. Melvin can  
4 confirm. Ms. Melvin...?

5 MS. LINDSAY MELVIN: Thank you. I was  
6 asked regarding dates for the IRP. I can confirm that  
7 the IRP was submitted to government on February 2nd,  
8 2026.

9 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you.

10

11 CONTINUED BY MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY:

12 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Thank you.  
13 In the interest of time, I will not be asking Dr.  
14 McLachlan detailed -- the qualification questions, but  
15 I will ask him to confirm that his CV is attached to  
16 Wa Ni Ska Tan's Intervener Application, which has been  
17 entered on the record as Wi Ni Ska Tan Exhibit 1.

18 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Yes, I can  
19 confirm.

20 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: And, Dr.  
21 McLaughlin, can you also confirm that as part of this  
22 proceeding, you have pre-filed testimony dated June  
23 22nd, 2026, marked as Exhibit Wi Ni Ska Tan-17?

24 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Also  
25 confirmed.

1 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: And you have  
2 also answered several Information Requests in this  
3 proceeding?

4 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Yes.

5 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Can you  
6 confirm that the report and Information Request  
7 responses were prepared by you or were prepared under  
8 your control and direction?

9 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Yes, I can  
10 confirm that.

11 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: And this  
12 morning, you've also prepared a slide presentation,  
13 which has been marked as an exhibit, although I'm not  
14 sure the number?

15 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Yes.

16 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: That you.  
17 And finally, do you do you adopt the evidence you've  
18 prepared as well as the responses to Information  
19 Requests and slide presentation as zero?

20 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Yes.

21 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Thank you.

22 And with that, I will pass it over to Dr. McLachlan to  
23 introduce himself and present on his background.

24 THE CHAIRPERSON: Sorry. You have two  
25 (2) other gentlemen here. Are they planning to

1 participate as well?

2 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Yes, they do.

3 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: This

4 afternoon.

5 THE CHAIRPERSON: Oh, just this

6 afternoon. Thank you.

7 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Yes.

8 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay.

9 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: They're here

10 for the whole day.

11 THE CHAIRPERSON: Great. Thank you.

12 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Oh, okay.

13 Yeah. Great. Thank you. So, I confirm that the

14 slide presentation was entered as Wa Ni Ska Tan

15 Exhibit 25.

16

17 PRESENTATION BY MR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN:

18 STEPHANE MCLACHLAN, Affirmed

19

20 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Dr.

21 McLachlan. Yes.

22 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Great.

23 THE CHAIRPERSON: It's usually the

24 toughest thing in this room. You've got fifty (50)

25 minutes. And I will -- it -- it's a lengthy

1 presentation. I'll give you a countdown at -- at  
2 about ten (10) minutes to go.

3

4 EXAMINATION-IN-CHIEF BY MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY:

5 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Perfect.

6 Thank you. Well, thank you, everyone, for the  
7 opportunity to present to you today on what I think we  
8 all agree is a tremendously important IRP process.  
9 And -- and I look forward to -- to sharing these ideas  
10 with you all, and -- and also responding to any  
11 questions.

12 And so, if -- so, the title here is  
13 "Throwing Logs," and it's a -- it's a critique or  
14 critical evaluation of the IRP, especially as it  
15 relates to Indigenous engagement. And my -- my  
16 critique is -- is meant in the most positive and --  
17 and I hope solution-oriented way possible. Next  
18 slide, please.

19 So, as you can see here, I have a  
20 background in remediation and restoration and  
21 agricultural science. But over the last thirty (30)  
22 years since arriving in Manitoba, almost all of our  
23 work has been community-led and community engaged and  
24 really bridging western science with Indigenous  
25 knowledges of different sorts.

1                   And so, while formally publishing and -  
2 - and presenting on and testifying to Indigenous  
3 engagement, I put it in practice every day, both  
4 around research, teaching, but also advocacy. And  
5 it's with that in light that I was asked to present to  
6 the IRP as an expert witness. Excuse me.

7                   And so, as you can see on the bottom  
8 here with Order 39/'26, I was asked to focus on public  
9 engagement, especially as it relates to the  
10 constituency of Wa Ni Ska Tan, and -- and I have done  
11 so. And in so doing, I've also kind of engaged and  
12 interacted with Dr. Fitzpatrick and Dr. Datta on a  
13 number of occasions to -- to avoid any redundancies.  
14 Next slide, please.

15                   So, just really generally speaking,  
16 what I'll be doing today is talking about our overall  
17 approach. I have a few comments around public  
18 engagement, but really kind of what I then do is I  
19 deep dive on Indigenous engagement through looking at  
20 surveys, IRPs from other jurisdictions, TAC, and then  
21 our own survey.

22                   And then in so doing, what -- what  
23 you'll see is that we -- we engage with various actors  
24 and various kind of northern community members to --  
25 really to -- to come up with what we hope were

1 solutions and ideas for sure for the PUB, but also  
2 with Manitoba Hydro. And it's with that spirit that -  
3 - that I make the presentation, a very solutions-  
4 oriented way. Next slide, please.

5 And so, generally speaking, our  
6 approach that we took, as you will see in the next  
7 slide, is -- is a two (2) phase approach.

8 So -- yeah. So, the first phase, most  
9 of our work focused on information that either was  
10 provided by the IRP itself and -- and the various kind  
11 of appendices and the public engagement report, as  
12 well as the Information Requests.

13 We did some analysis on the survey,  
14 especially a spatial analysis that we -- we thought  
15 was really useful. In this case, we're talking about  
16 the Manitoba Hydro Survey as well as some TAC meeting  
17 notes. The notes were summarized by Manitoba Hydro  
18 staff. And so, we have to be a little bit cautious  
19 that they -- that they weren't kind of recorded data  
20 and so, but -- but we still looked at those  
21 systematically.

22 And in large part, because of the gaps  
23 in information that was provided through those various  
24 processes around engagement, both in terms as a  
25 process, but also in terms of the outcomes, what we

1 decided to do is we -- we decided -- and this was  
2 reflected in the proposal -- was to do a series of  
3 interviews up north, both individual and group  
4 interviews.

5                   We also thought there was an  
6 interesting and important parallel between the BC IRP  
7 around Indigenous engagement that we looked at. And  
8 then we did, as everyone knows, our own online survey,  
9 focusing as much as we could to -- to amplify those  
10 northern voices that -- and northern Indigenous voices  
11 that we saw as being missing from the record. Next  
12 slide, please.

13                   So, what you can see here is a list of  
14 the different folks that we interviewed, some of whom  
15 will be reflected in -- in the witness Panel today  
16 from five (5) different First Nations, all of whom are  
17 hydro-impacted communities up north. And -- and it  
18 was a diverse approach, so both in terms of Elders and  
19 knowledge keepers and former or active leaders as --  
20 as well as gender and -- and experiences.

21                   And so, we -- we did a formal analysis  
22 of -- of the outcomes of those interviews. Next  
23 slide, please.

24                   And so, what you can see here, and  
25 you'll see that reflected in -- in the short video

1 that we're showing this afternoon, we presented a card  
2 that on one hand, just talked about what was  
3 represented as an infographic and the -- the different  
4 major components of the IRP, and then some prompts  
5 kind of thereafter kind of with each of the interviews  
6 that we took in in terms of possible talking points,  
7 obviously, it wasn't restricted to that, as well as  
8 opportunities if people wanted to further engage with  
9 the process, how they might do so. Next slide,  
10 please.

11 And so, here, what you can see is a --  
12 is photo of a -- of a group interview that -- that we  
13 did in Pimicikamak Cree Nation. And -- and again,  
14 some of those people you would see in the witness  
15 Panel this afternoon. Next slide, please.

16 What we also complimented that was with  
17 kind of three (3) interviews, again, to help address  
18 some of the gaps that we saw in the record. One (1)  
19 was a representative from the First Nations Energy and  
20 Mining Council from BC, which is a nonprofit  
21 organization that played a strong -- perhaps the  
22 strongest role in terms of representing First Nations  
23 concern in the BC IRP.

24 We talked about kind of what worked,  
25 what didn't work, ideas kind of for the IRP, and so

1 that was really useful. We also talked with a senior  
2 researcher from the Climate Action Team around  
3 community scale alternatives and their ideas around  
4 that.

5 And then we interviewed a  
6 representative -- or -- or a participant in the  
7 Technical Advisory Committee just trying to get a  
8 sense of what had taken place there and their sense of  
9 what worked and what didn't work. Next slide, please.

10 Around the one you -- what we call the  
11 WNST Survey, Wa Ni Ska Tan Survey, it was -- it was,  
12 again -- and -- and with -- with the -- with the  
13 Board's approval, was really to identify and to  
14 address some of the gaps that -- that were part of the  
15 -- the public record as it related to the Manitoba  
16 Hydro Surveys in Round I and II.

17 It wasn't ideal in the sense that we  
18 only had a week to do this because of the very, very  
19 tight timelines. And it was sent through our networks  
20 and through social media. There were fifty-five (55)  
21 completed responses, fifty-three (53) of which  
22 formally made the -- the report. And -- and I would  
23 argue that it was still a really important and useful  
24 endeavor in ways that will be reflected herein. Next  
25 slide, please.

1                   In terms of the outreach, what you see  
2 here is on the left introduction is the template, the  
3 boilerplate that every -- every survey has that  
4 explains -- and -- and again, I -- I just include this  
5 to show that it wasn't meant to be biased or -- or  
6 just to -- to -- as selective. And -- and we -- we  
7 were genuinely open to any perspective around the IRP  
8 or people's experience or aspirations there.

9                   And -- and on the right, you can see  
10 kind of some of the outreach in this case. It was  
11 reflected by the Facebook outreach. And so, Facebook  
12 is a tremendously important form of social media in  
13 community.

14                   And so, we weren't restricted to that,  
15 but that's how we kind of reached out, albeit through  
16 our networks. And so, we don't pretend that it's a --  
17 you know, it's an independent or random sample. It's  
18 purpose of -- and -- and so. But with those  
19 limitations in mind, it was still useful. Next slide,  
20 please.

21                   So, public engagement broadly speaking.  
22 Next slide, please.

23                   Here is -- here is a kind of a  
24 transcript from -- from July 27th, 2026. And so, in  
25 this case, we -- we have Board Member Simonsen who

1 really asks about the -- the industry best practices  
2 that -- that are really prevalent through much of the  
3 -- the work that's done in the IRP. It's not  
4 restricted to public engagement.

5                   And I guess it's Ms. Melvin, not Ms.  
6 Bratland, as indicated in the -- in the transcript  
7 here, who talks about how, yes, that it was important  
8 and that -- around robust analysis, but also  
9 engagement. And just wanted to -- to highlight that  
10 it -- it's reflected in the ongoing conversations that  
11 we see in this room. Next slide, please.

12                   We have seen this perhaps to death.  
13 And -- and so, what we see is a -- is a spectrum of  
14 public engagement or public participation from one  
15 extreme, inform, to the other extreme, empower, and  
16 then in between, consult, involve, and collaborate.  
17 And so, that will obviously inform a lot of what we do  
18 here.

19                   To avoid redundancy, I'm focusing here  
20 largely on Indigenous engagement and providing a  
21 context therein, but just to highlight that. Next  
22 slide, please.

23                   What I also -- and this is going back  
24 now over fifty (50) -- almost sixty (6) years, is  
25 Arnstein's ladder, which is still seen as -- as really

1 the important thinking around resource management  
2 options as -- as ways of engendering public  
3 engagement. It's similarly, albeit not a spectrum.  
4 It's a ladder. Goes from manipulation all the way up  
5 to citizen control.

6 Sherry Arnstein, unlike the -- the  
7 IAP2, really talked about power dynamics and -- and  
8 the importance of those. And really, she argued that,  
9 unlike some of the -- the witnesses in this process,  
10 that -- that we should do whatever we can to further  
11 active engagement or to climb up that -- that  
12 participation ladder. It's -- it's an ongoing  
13 process.

14 And what -- what we can see here are  
15 two (2) quotes from very recent publications. The --  
16 the one (1) quote by -- Hoicka, Christina Hoicka from  
17 UVIC and -- and co-authors talks about top-down,  
18 technocratic and the side, announce, and defend  
19 approaches to energy infrastructure development,  
20 dominate energy project development, and have been  
21 widely identified as major sources of injustice to  
22 affected communities.

23 And I would argue that -- that a lot of  
24 what we see in the IRP is top-down. It is  
25 technocratic or technocentric and it really is a

1 decide, and ounce, and defend approaches,  
2 notwithstanding the attempts to -- to engage with the  
3 public.

4                   Secondly, Novacevski and -- and Legacy  
5 in 2025, they highlighted down here another recent  
6 publication, talk about the main means through which  
7 participatory practice is being standardized in  
8 western settler colonial context is through the  
9 deployment of frameworks such as the International  
10 Association of Public Participation, or IAP2,  
11 approach.

12                   And so, it's not just them. The IAP2  
13 and the -- the -- kind of the standards --  
14 standardized protocol that it represents has been  
15 widely castigated as being inadequate, especially as  
16 it relates to Indigenous engagement, and so too has  
17 Arnstein's ladder as well.

18                   And there are many kind of alternatives  
19 that people talk about, community-led or place-based  
20 approaches that -- that we can chat about later on.  
21 Next slide, please.

22                   And, you know, there's no doubt that  
23 Manitoba Hydro claims and -- and argues that public  
24 engagement underlies a lot of what it has done. And -  
25 - and we've heard the wide diversity of tools that it

1 has used in this regard. And so -- and as reflected  
2 in this quote. Next slide, please.

3 And -- and Ms. Bratland talks about the  
4 spectrum as not something that -- that you aspire to  
5 in -- in the way that one level is better than or --  
6 or worse than another level and -- and argues, as --  
7 as we've seen, that -- that there's a defensible  
8 position why -- why they restricted their public  
9 engagement to inform and -- and consultation. And  
10 next slide, please.

11 And -- and so, in -- what -- what I did  
12 is I -- I felt if you're talking about best practices,  
13 it's fair to talk about worst practices and as being  
14 too little, too late with little impact. And -- and  
15 as we can see in this quote here and as we've heard  
16 today, that this was by design, that -- that Manitoba  
17 Hydro apparently felt it was more transparent and  
18 honest to restrict their engagement to the inform and  
19 -- and consult levels.

20 I would argue that that's -- there's a  
21 missed opportunity to -- to engage in collaboration  
22 and involvement, and even in empower, in ways that we  
23 can talk about. Next slide, please.

24 And so, one (1) of my recommendations  
25 was that we -- we really not just embrace IAP2

1 structures, especially as it relates to Indigenous  
2 engagement, in that we explore unique Manitoba  
3 grounded solutions, place-based solutions that are  
4 informed and led by Indigenous communities and  
5 organizations. Next slide, please.

6 So, that Indigenous engagement. Next  
7 slide, please.

8 So, what we see through here, again, as  
9 -- as claimed by Manitoba Hydro, that -- that -- and  
10 we can see this highlighted -- that they -- they  
11 support the advancement of reconciliation, will  
12 continue to engage with Indigenous communities around  
13 future energy planning processes and community-led  
14 environmental -- or energy planning.

15 And so, it's in that spirit that we --  
16 we offer a lot of these suggestions and -- and the  
17 feedback that we got from the interviews. Next slide,  
18 please.

19 And we see that kind of reflected, some  
20 would say in a -- in an inadequate way in the land  
21 acknowledgement at the beginning of the IRP. And --  
22 and again, accepting it at face value, it certainly  
23 suggests that Indigenous engagement is important.  
24 Next slide, please.

25 When we took a look both at the

1 Manitoba Hydro data through the surveys and -- and  
2 through -- whether it's the leadership or the public  
3 surveys or through our own survey or through  
4 interviews, it's widely recognized that there was  
5 inadequate, little to no engagement with Indigenous  
6 partners, especially at the grassroots level. So,  
7 whatever engagement took place took place with  
8 leadership.

9                   And -- and so, people here have found  
10 all sorts of ways and -- and responses to help the  
11 Board and to help Manitoba Hydro move forward in this  
12 iterative IRP process. And -- and so, that will be  
13 reflected here today. Next slide, please.

14                   What we can see in -- in the, I -- I  
15 would say, powerful, critical electronic art by Robert  
16 Spence from Tataskweyak Cree Nation, there are power  
17 dynamics that are taking place. There's the geography  
18 that we talked about this morning, but there's also  
19 huge power dynamics that are not made explicit  
20 anywhere in the IRP, and -- and perhaps because of  
21 this -- kind of this blind faith in the IAP2 process.

22                   And then -- and so, some of its  
23 geography. And some of it, as you can see in the --  
24 the ties that bind on the right-hand side, these are  
25 systemic barriers. And -- and we would argue that the

1 -- the IRP as presented represents one (1) such  
2 systemic barrier. And there are multiple ways of  
3 addressing that. Next slide, please.

4               So, you know, part of it is -- is kind  
5 of wellbeing, right. A cultural where -- cultural  
6 wellbeing, livelihoods, health, traditional  
7 livelihoods seem to be absent from the public record.  
8 I mean, people talk about it in -- in their responses  
9 to the survey in some cases, certainly in all the  
10 engagement that we did ourselves, but it's not  
11 explicitly referenced anywhere.

12              And so, it's a lost opportunity to --  
13 to have some of those, whether it's (INDISCERNIBLE) or  
14 the different metrics, evaluation metrics, to take a  
15 more holistic approach. And -- and so, I suggested in  
16 -- in this recommendation we might do so. Next slide,  
17 please.

18              And it's tremendously important to  
19 communities. And so, what we see here is from a --  
20 from a Facebook post by Angela Blacksmith from -- from  
21 Pimicikamak Cree Nation, you know, people are talking  
22 regularly around health and wellbeing, thinking about  
23 future generations.

24              I would argue that this is in scope  
25 because it -- it points to the inadequacy of the IRP,

1 that it's not more holistic an approach. And in a  
2 sense, it reflects that technocentric rather -- and --  
3 and top-down process ultimately that we'll talk about  
4 today rather than something that was co-designed and,  
5 you know, and as reflected in collaboration, for  
6 example, with stakeholders, and especially rights  
7 holders. Next slide, please.

8                   Now, in terms of the outcomes, it was  
9 interesting that one (1) of the things that -- that  
10 came out of our outreach that we hadn't anticipated or  
11 seen reflected anywhere in terms of the public record  
12 was a really positive response to the IRP on the part  
13 of many First Nations and -- and the, you know, the --  
14 the participants in -- in our outreach, because it  
15 represented the opportunity to reduce a burden in the  
16 North by -- next slide, please.

17                   In a sense -- oh. Yeah. So -- so  
18 what we see here is -- is a -- is a quote from the  
19 Manitoba Hydro Survey that -- that this idea of -- of  
20 not just being dependent on -- on Northern generated  
21 hydro. And -- and next slide, please. Oh, that's --  
22 that's weird. I'm missing a slide.

23                   Anyway, it was this idea that -- that  
24 kind of right now, 97 percent of the -- of the hydro  
25 is generated in the North and this idea that if -- if

1 some of it, a sizable amount, is generated in the  
2 South through the natural gas turbines, through wind  
3 power, through customer side solutions, mostly  
4 concentrated in the South, that it hypothetically  
5 might enable Manitoba Hydro to manage its operations  
6 differently, to allow for traditional values, to allow  
7 to reduce impacts up in the North and, in a sense,  
8 challenges some of the assumptions around the IRP that  
9 it's just granted that -- that the Northern  
10 electricity production will continue as usual.

11                   And so, it's this idea that it's  
12 something that's more equitable and it's something  
13 that communities have been calling for. And so, I  
14 would argue that this is in scope because it -- it's  
15 directly related to the IRP and some of the  
16 assumptions therein around continued hydro production  
17 up North. Next slide, please.

18                   So -- so, what we also did is we did a  
19 critical evaluation of the surveys. Unlike Dr.  
20 Fitzpatrick and her team, we took a largely spatial  
21 approach and -- and really looked at -- with these  
22 forward sorting areas, or FSAs, we were able that --  
23 that Manitoba Hydro rightly included in their survey,  
24 we were able to break down and to see where these  
25 responses were located to the people who actually

1 included that, which was about half respondents.

2                   What we can see on the right of this  
3 slide is Northern Manitoba, just in terms of total  
4 numbers, response rates per thousand residents are  
5 underrepresented in general in both Round I and Round  
6 II.

7                   That said, fewer people live up North,  
8 and so, everything else being equal, you would expect  
9 that. And so, it was important to standardize some of  
10 those -- those data. Next slide, please.

11                   Similarly, what you can see here kind  
12 of prior to standardization, that both in terms of  
13 Indigenous and non-Indigenous responses, when we start  
14 dividing those as reflected in this map, that -- that  
15 you see a higher concentrated -- concentration of  
16 responses in the South. Next slide, please.

17                   So -- so, there were two (2) ways that  
18 we got at this. On the left-hand side, you see,  
19 "Engagement Equity Index," where it's -- basically, we  
20 standardized it according to the proportion of  
21 Indigenous respondents compared to ratepayers of  
22 Manitoba Hydro, and so that standardizes it.

23                   And then on the right-hand side, we did  
24 something similar, but we looked at census data rather  
25 than Manitoba Hydro data. And we looked at --

1 according to each FSA.

2 In both cases, what we can see, even  
3 when we account for the lower population in -- in the  
4 North, that we still see a concentration of  
5 respondents to the surveys, in this case, Round I, but  
6 it's true of both in -- in the South, so much so, that  
7 we found that -- the Northern most FSA, which is R0B,  
8 represents about 70 percent of Manitoba's land area  
9 had one (1) Indigenous respondent in Round I and three  
10 (3) Indigenous respondents in Round II, so four (4)  
11 for over twelve thousand (12,000) respondents.

12 And so -- and so, that was the  
13 rationale supported by the Board, that -- that we do a  
14 follow-up online survey. Next -- next slide, please.

15 And we see that reflected here again.  
16 Again, this is the equity index rather than the census  
17 data, but it shows the North are substantially  
18 underrepresented around Indigenous participation and  
19 then compared to what would be anticipated. And in  
20 Winnipeg, it's -- it's actually a little bit higher  
21 than -- than was anticipated. Next slide, please.

22 And it's important to distinguish  
23 between First Nations and Metis respondents. And so,  
24 what you can see here is that, in fact, with Metis  
25 respondents, there were as many -- or perhaps in the

1 North, more than would be expected, and -- and -- but  
2 that First Nations representation in all parts of the  
3 province, but especially the North, were what was --  
4 what was underestimated substantially or are -- are  
5 underrepresented substantially. Next slide, please.

6                   And so, as Dr. Fitzpatrick said, with  
7 respect to, broadly speaking, hard-to-reach groups,  
8 but in this case, think -- thinking and focusing on  
9 Indigenous engagement, what you need to do is you need  
10 to be kind of creative and innovative and use a wide  
11 diversity of tools -- and -- and we can talk about  
12 those later on -- to -- to address those gaps in  
13 representation.

14                   And -- and one (1) such thing was the  
15 use of online surveys, such as the one that we did,  
16 which kind of worked through networks. And so, it  
17 doesn't claim to be random or represent the whole  
18 province as a whole, but it does act to address some  
19 of those gaps. Next slide, please.

20                   What we also did is we looked at the BC  
21 IRP as an important case study to learn from,  
22 acknowledging, of course, that they have had longer to  
23 work at it. And -- and so, what we -- mostly through  
24 content analysis of documents that are part of the  
25 public record, as well as that -- that interview that

1 I was talking about. Next slide, please.

2 And -- and in fact, right on the first  
3 day, kind of Manitoba Hydro recognizes that -- that it  
4 can also learn from what's taking place in other  
5 jurisdictions around IRPs. Manitoba Hydro is  
6 relatively late to the game.

7 And -- and, in a sense, there's lots of  
8 opportunity to learn about what works and what doesn't  
9 work when it comes to these other IRPs around  
10 Indigenous engagement. We -- we thought there was  
11 lots -- lots to learn from the BC IRP. Next slide,  
12 please.

13 And so, what -- what we see here is,  
14 unlike the IRP here, where Indigenous representation  
15 of whatever sort, mostly through umbrella groups, what  
16 -- what you see is -- is it's buried in a long list of  
17 stakeholders and not even at the first place. What we  
18 see in the BC IRP is that they made a special stream  
19 of engagement that was Indigenous-centered and -- and  
20 Indigenous focused.

21 I -- I know the MKO has talked about  
22 doing something similar. I would argue that that  
23 would be a tremendously important opportunity, and I  
24 would say responsibility to do that, to -- to  
25 recognize explicitly that Indigenous communities and

1 Indigenous organizations reflect rights holders rather  
2 than just a long list of stakeholders.

3 And there are unique responsibilities  
4 and obligations to do so, and that we can learn from  
5 BC Hydro in the way that they did this. What they  
6 also did around scale, which we haven't seen reflected  
7 thus far here, is they basically divided the province  
8 up into three (3), into the coastal area, into the  
9 Southern interior area, and to the Northern area.

10 And so -- and then their strategies  
11 were kind of -- in a sense, were adapted to reflect  
12 the -- the unique regional needs and -- and  
13 responsibilities and priorities of each of those three  
14 (3) regions, again, something that we would argue  
15 would be really important.

16 It's too late to do it for this IRP,  
17 but this is an iterative, and I would say it's a  
18 living process, but let's just go with iterative  
19 process, that -- that there are unique opportunities  
20 to address some of these shortcomings and future  
21 iterations. Next slide, please.

22 And -- and also just to add that --  
23 that the number of organizations, the number of people  
24 was that -- that -- and number of that -- a number of  
25 First Nations that were reflected in that Indigenous

1 engagement kind of eclipsed what has taken place and  
2 was much richer and much more impactful than anything  
3 that's taken place thus far in the Manitoba IRP.

4                   Part of that, as identified in -- in  
5 this interview, is that it began early on in the  
6 process. Yes, it's a longstanding process that  
7 extends back into the 1990s, but -- but that is an  
8 ongoing relationship building, which I think we -- we  
9 -- we've seen people talk about how -- from Manitoba  
10 Hydro, how this might occur in the future. And,  
11 again, there's lots to learn from this.

12                   Also, this adaptive process, this  
13 iterative, organic process, recognizing and being  
14 upfront and transparent when things don't work, rather  
15 than just defending things that don't work as being  
16 desirable, in -- in this case, saying, okay, we didn't  
17 get this right. Let's co-design. Let's collaborate.  
18 Let's figure out how to do this better. And that was  
19 reflected throughout the -- the BC IRP, as seen in my  
20 report. Next slide, please.

21                   And that said, there were shortcomings.  
22 And -- and while -- while, for example, de-risking and  
23 kind of investment, lowering it from over 50 percent  
24 to 25 percent as part of the BC IRP, which we heard  
25 from Bruce and, you know, one (1) of the MKO

1 Interveners, that -- that there were -- that there's  
2 still longer to go along that way. Engagement  
3 timelines were short. There was inadequate support  
4 still for community-led and -- and engaged processes.  
5 And so, BC IRP will continue to -- to iterate as it  
6 moves forward as well. Next slide, please.

7                   And so, in -- in this case, if we look  
8 at -- at the transcript from July 28th and -- and  
9 Margaret --- or Ms. Bratland's response, so -- so,  
10 yes, we can learn. Yes, they do things that are  
11 better, but we -- we can -- we can -- by -- by  
12 emulating what they do and adapting it to a Manitoba  
13 context, we can take advantage of that longer period  
14 that -- that the BC IRP is around and expedite  
15 processes to -- to further Indigenous engagement.  
16 Next slide, please.

17                   So -- so, again, one (1) of my  
18 recommendations here is to explicitly -- to -- to  
19 learn what we can from other jurisdictions as it  
20 relates to Indigenous engagement and to see ways that  
21 we could address some of the gaps that we've seen thus  
22 far in the engagement in a Manitoba context. Next  
23 slide, please.

24                   Okay. We -- we also looked at TAC, and  
25 we were limited to -- to summary notes written by

1 Manitoba Hydro staff. And so, we have to -- we have  
2 to be a little bit cautious about interpreting much.  
3 That said, we -- we went through systematically and  
4 took a look at -- at those meeting notes and pulled  
5 out what we could around Indigenous engagement. Next  
6 slide, please.

7                   And so, they -- as we've heard, they  
8 met eight (8) times. We had the meeting notes and  
9 then the interview with the -- with the TAC member.  
10 And -- and what -- what we found is that there were  
11 really two (2) levels of consultation. One (1) level,  
12 kind of which was more common, which was solicited  
13 feedback on ideas that had been generated by Manitoba  
14 Hydro, but they were really kind of, in a sense, pre-  
15 identified.

16                   And then another possibility is being  
17 open to ideas shared by TAC members and incorporating  
18 them in what we know through testimony today, that  
19 that was rare if it occurred at all. Next slide,  
20 please.

21                   And -- and so, what we see around the  
22 Recommended Development Plan here is that -- that  
23 despite efforts to the contrary, that there weren't  
24 going to be any changes to the Recommended Development  
25 Plan. Next slide, please.

1                   Even the -- the represent -- or the  
2 member of the TAC said even switching from a longer-  
3 term plan to a ten (10) year plan, they weren't aware  
4 how -- how that decision was made and -- and why it  
5 occurred, and so there was no discussion even around  
6 timeframes. Next -- next slide.

7                   And so -- so, what we see is that --  
8 and -- and, you know, if -- if we see here, never,  
9 rarely, sometimes, frequently, always, that looking at  
10 those notes, again, with the caveat, we have to be  
11 cautious that there was kind of an -- really, it was  
12 just around information sharing on the part of  
13 Manitoba Hydro and getting feedback.

14                   And that -- and -- and in fact, kind of  
15 ideas, for the most part, generated by TAC members  
16 that didn't fit within those preconceived ideas were  
17 received with skepticism and -- and sometimes rejected  
18 outright. Next slide, please.

19                   And -- and so, here, what we see is  
20 there's a recognition that -- that TAC represents, an  
21 opportunity to do things differently and to -- when it  
22 comes to involvement. So, we're not talking about  
23 collaboration or empowerment here, but it's something  
24 that's being reserved for the future, and there's  
25 caution around this.

1                   And -- and I would agree that that's  
2 the case for TAC, but potentially also for the  
3 Indigenous advisory circle that has been recently  
4 created by Manitoba Hydro. Next slide, please.

5                   And -- and so what we see from this  
6 kind of slightly jokey AI-generated kind of a -- that  
7 -- that kind of a graphic is that -- that these are  
8 all kind of options that have been identified and, in  
9 this case, branded by Manitoba Hydro. And so there's  
10 a lot of opportunity to do things in a more inclusive  
11 way further along the spectrum with both -- with  
12 respect to both advisory bodies. Next slide, please.

13                   Okay. Our survey itself. So we put a  
14 lot of work into that, and it really built on a lot of  
15 our interviews. It was an iterative process. So  
16 earlier on, we -- we had done the interviews. We'd  
17 reached out to people. We had a sense of what was  
18 important through those interviews, both individual  
19 and group interviews.

20                   And so we really wanted to broaden it  
21 and to use a similar kind of survey design to Manitoba  
22 Hydro to see what was reflected in that -- in that  
23 week-long opportunity or window that we had. Next  
24 slide, please.

25                   And so what we can say here is that,

1 for the most part, the majority -- and -- and what we  
2 see here, 71.7 percent of the respondents were  
3 Indigenous, mostly First Nations, a mix of folks in  
4 the north and the folks in the south. So some people  
5 on reserve, some people off reserve.

6 And so -- and so that in itself  
7 addressed one of the gaps, which is  
8 underrepresentation in general of Indigenous people,  
9 especially First Nations people in the Manitoba  
10 surveys, but also folks from the north. Next slide,  
11 please.

12 What we have here is a bit of a  
13 complicated kind of diagram where we have the IRP  
14 Round I and Round II from Manitoba Hydro, the targeted  
15 Wan Ni Ska Tan survey. And what we can see here is  
16 that, on average, it's just over 5 percent for the  
17 Manitoba Hydro was from the north from their survey.  
18 And it was 23 percent of -- of ours were from the  
19 north.

20 And -- and, in fact, we almost doubled  
21 the number of respondents from the ROB, kind of that  
22 that northernmost FSA. And -- and so it was far from  
23 perfect, but it -- it was still an important  
24 initiative. And so that will be reflected in a lot of  
25 our respondents for the rest of my presentation. Next

1 slide, please.

2                   So we asked, of course, if people had  
3 heard about the IRP. And what we can see is almost  
4 half of the respondents hadn't heard. And some -- but  
5 surprisingly, I think, people had heard probably  
6 because of the the -- the public, given the timing  
7 that was reflected in the media coverage of the IRP  
8 hearings that we are all part of thus far.

9                   But also reflecting our network, for  
10 the most part, Wan Ni Ska Tan, with the limitations  
11 that that does represent, they -- they are all engaged  
12 around energy, especially as it relates to Hydro.  
13 Next slide, please.

14                   This is important. So what -- what we  
15 see here is that over 90 percent of the respondents  
16 felt that Aboriginal and treaty rights should be  
17 reflected in the IRP process. It is reflected in the  
18 BC IRP.

19                   There were multiple mentions of -- of  
20 Indigenous rights in the BC IRP and not a single  
21 mention in the -- of -- of even rights holders in --  
22 in the -- in the Manitoba IRP. And -- and so -- so  
23 that's an important distinction between the -- the two  
24 (2) sets of surveys. Next slide, please.

25                   And -- and so -- and so one of the --

1 the recommendations of -- of our report was that --  
2 that in future iterations, that -- that Indigenous  
3 rights and sovereignty is to be integrated within the  
4 IRP process itself, much in the same way as we see in  
5 BC. And -- and so next slide, please.

6 A lot of the outreach that we that --  
7 we did was -- was really around coming up with  
8 solutions and ideas for moving forward. And so it was  
9 a very forward kind of focused process.

10 As part of that relationship building,  
11 both within the survey, as well as our outreach and --  
12 and interviews, people wanted to talk about what the -  
13 - the impacts that had been seen thus far, and so --  
14 and at the same time, the -- the -- kind of it -- we -  
15 - we reflected that in -- in our engagement and -- and  
16 in the reporting.

17 But it was always through that lens of  
18 being -- of feeding into the IRP as a whole and -- and  
19 using the IRP process potentially to -- to rethink  
20 some of those impacts. But people generally, at the  
21 same time, really had all sorts of ideas how to how to  
22 engage better in future iterations of the IRP. Next  
23 slide, please.

24 MS. CHARLOTTEE CONNOLLY: Dr.  
25 McLachlan, if I could just interject to clarify

1 something.

2                   Could you explain why it would be very  
3 hard to engage Indigenous peoples by -- by separating  
4 out past impacts? Why is it important to talk  
5 holistically? If you could just explain that.

6                   DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: So in part,  
7 it's because people want to have their concerns heard  
8 whenever you engage respectfully with communities.  
9 It's not like going out and choosing groceries. It  
10 it's really -- and -- and, you know, having your own  
11 objectives. And so it becomes a conversation.

12                   And -- and so, in part, it's reflecting  
13 that. But as we saw with -- with reducing the burden,  
14 there -- there also -- it also represents an  
15 opportunity by talking about impacts in that forward-  
16 thinking kind of way that may be future iterations to  
17 the IRP and some of the assumptions around Manitoba  
18 Hydro has made around continued electric production  
19 that -- that people can -- can talk about ways of  
20 doing things differently.

21                   And -- and in this case, when we talk  
22 about alternatives to -- to consultation, people are  
23 going to talk about what didn't work. And in -- in  
24 part, it's because of perimeter vision. And -- and we  
25 just don't know in urban centres what has worked and

1 what hasn't worked around Manitoba Hydro engagement.

2                   So if we're going to talk about  
3 alternatives, we have to talk about what hasn't worked  
4 so we can talk about how we can address some of those  
5 gaps. And -- and so, in a sense, we have to take a  
6 holistic approach when interacting with community to  
7 make room for that holistic thinking, which arguably  
8 has been missing from the IRP and arguably has been  
9 missing from the -- the Order in Council. So -- so  
10 thanks for that.

11                   And so -- so here what we do moving  
12 forward -- here what we do kind of is -- is that folks  
13 were split on whether Manitoba Hydro had their best  
14 interest at heart. They were more positive about  
15 Manitoba Hydro than I had anticipated, and -- and so  
16 that's a good thing. Next slide, please.

17                   What experiences made you feel this  
18 way? We asked them, encoded those open-ended  
19 respondents. And so it was things like economic harm,  
20 lack of meaningful engagement, kind of impacts, but  
21 also outages and the -- the lack of safety and  
22 reliability in terms of the existing service that  
23 people have up north. And again, it was important to  
24 make room for those. Next -- next response.

25                   And so we can see this again from

1 Pimicikamak and kind of where the community was  
2 evacuated because of power outages. Next slide,  
3 please.

4 So -- and again, you know, people felt  
5 that -- that there was an opportunity to do things  
6 differently, and as reflected in all these quotes from  
7 the surveys and from the Manitoba Hydro Survey as  
8 well. And so we'll talk about these now. Next slide,  
9 please.

10 So -- so in terms of what might be done  
11 is a structural and policy reform, which -- which has  
12 come up here. Early and meaningful consultation,  
13 people talked about equitable and accessible  
14 engagement, and importantly, go out into communities.  
15 Just don't rely on convenient surveys. Oops. Stop.  
16 So I've got five (5) minutes. Is that you or me?

17 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: No, that's  
18 you.

19 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Is it me?  
20 Okay. There we go. Okay. Next slide, please.

21 THE CHAIRPERSON: Ten (10) minutes.

22 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Pardon me?

23 THE CHAIRPERSON: Ten (10) minutes.

24 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Oh, ten (10)  
25 minutes. Okay. So this is wrong. Okay. Next slide.

1                   So -- so one of the things was that the  
2 importance of reaching out, not assuming that -- that  
3 just by reaching out to elected leadership, that  
4 you've -- you've done things adequately.

5                   And so what we've heard again and again  
6 and again is that Indigenous nations, communities are  
7 just like the rest of our communities down south.  
8 They're diverse, and we have to talk about publics  
9 with an 'S', not just assume that they're homogeneous  
10 in relation.

11                  Many of the folks, the -- the "land  
12 users", the grassroots are most impacted and -- and at  
13 the same time have the most insight into how to reduce  
14 risk both to Manitoba Hydro and to themselves that  
15 could be better reflected in the IRP. And so that's  
16 reflected in this recommendation here, too. The next  
17 slide, please.

18                  Again, engage early on we hear again  
19 and again, maybe even starting next week for Manitoba  
20 Hydro. It's an ongoing iterative process. These are  
21 relationships. We can't wait until it's convenient to  
22 actually locate in the south. That -- that has to be  
23 ongoing. And -- and so that's reflected in this  
24 recommendation. Next slide.

25                  Kind of proactive training capacity

1 exchange. So in this sense, what we heard again and  
2 again is that there's lots of opportunity to build  
3 capacity or to exchange capacity.

4                   So Manitoba Hydro -- folks down here  
5 might not know very much about what's taking place up  
6 north in terms of the risks and the uncertainties  
7 around the IRP. And at the same time, there's  
8 opportunities for Manitoba Hydro to put funding.

9                   And -- and so here we're talking about  
10 the empowerment side of the spectrum -- maybe not the  
11 IRP as a whole, but if it's made explicit the way that  
12 BC IRP does, that Manitoba Hydro is interested in  
13 building that -- that capacity, that technical  
14 capacity, then that's great.

15                   One of the interviewees from Fox Lake  
16 talked about how he went to workshops in the south and  
17 was taught how to negotiate. And this was a funding  
18 and an opportunity provided by -- by Manitoba Hydro.  
19 I would say, you know, a lot of those tools are  
20 already there. We just need to make space for them in  
21 the IRP. Next slide.

22                   And, you know, it's also thinking also  
23 about future generations. Yes, it's about Elders and  
24 allowing them to be engaged, but so much of it is  
25 technology centred in terms of communications, but

1 it's building opportunities for youth as well.  
2 Relationship building, multi-way communication, not  
3 just grocery shopping, but actually making room for --  
4 for other perspectives is important.

5 And -- and, you know, visiting in  
6 community, taking time. So we've become reliant, I  
7 think, a little bit too much on video conferencing.  
8 And, yes, it works sometimes, but especially in the  
9 north, meeting in person. Next slide, please.

10 And so a number of people in our  
11 outreach, especially in terms of the interviews,  
12 really talked about -- really talked about kind of a  
13 welcome to the -- to you, the Board, to come up and to  
14 visit some of these communities and to learn from  
15 these experiences firsthand.

16 We've done what we can by -- by having  
17 Indigenous experts here and the witness panel this  
18 afternoon. But, you know, some of these nations are  
19 only an hour drive away, and -- and so there's an open  
20 invitation. You know, again, something to think about  
21 in the future. And so next slide, please.

22 The importance of having senior  
23 management. And so just echoing whether it's the  
24 Board, whether it's senior Manitoba kind of Hydro  
25 staff, or whether it's government staff -- in this

1 case, we have the --the Liberal MP, Rebecca Chartrand,  
2 visiting community, engaging with Elders, and making  
3 room for that.

4 So it's kind of convenient sometimes to  
5 send people who don't have as much decision-making  
6 authority. In this case, they -- they would like to  
7 speak to people who are decision-makers. Next slide,  
8 please.

9 Capacity sharing with communities. So  
10 again, that idea of cross-generations, youth  
11 mentorship, things that I've talked about as well all  
12 the way through here, where, in the spirit of  
13 collaboration and co-design -- and this can definitely  
14 be upscaled at the level of the IP, that there's lots  
15 of opportunity here to do things differently, where we  
16 learn from mistakes in the past and we breathe again  
17 that solutions-oriented, community embedded approach  
18 moving forward. Next slide, please.

19 And so ,yes. So people-centred  
20 approaches are tremendously important. I think we all  
21 become kind of technology-centred in our approaches to  
22 the IRP. And if we make room for people-centred  
23 approaches in these -- in -- in this planning, even at  
24 the provincial scale, then -- then that is a desirable  
25 thing. Next slide, please.

1                   Okay. So we -- we also had questions  
2 around community-led energy solutions. We've heard  
3 that Manitoba Hydro is considering these, but it isn't  
4 -- kind of doesn't think it appropriate to be  
5 reflected in the IRP. I would respectfully disagree,  
6 but let's talk about these and -- and then talk about  
7 the whys. Next slide, please.

8                   And so -- so open-ended comments about  
9 proposed resource options. Yes, people talked about  
10 the shortcomings of engagement we can see down at the  
11 bottom here. But -- but they also talked about in --  
12 in our -- in our survey about the importance of  
13 community-led solutions. We've heard this again and  
14 again already. Next slide.

15                  And thinking beyond wind power, again,  
16 looking at other alternatives here -- geothermal,  
17 solar, maybe wind, you know, biomethane -- kind of as  
18 ways of addressing the real problems around  
19 reliability and safety with the existing services,  
20 especially for the communities that are relatively  
21 remote, potentially selling back into the grid, and  
22 having that reflected as a more holistic, richer  
23 version of economic reconciliation, and so not just  
24 limiting to these big mega Indigenous majority-owned  
25 wind power projects. Next slide.

1                   And so people had examples around how  
2 to do this, whether it was customer side solutions,  
3 like energy efficiency changes in policy and -- and so  
4 but installing own community-led solutions. And my  
5 sense was, well, why not?

6                   You know, we -- we -- over half of the  
7 IRP in terms of the electricity that's going to be  
8 generated comes from customer-side solutions, right?  
9 And though, yeah, we can -- I mean, at one level, we  
10 can say, well, that's household by household. But at  
11 the same time, they -- they made a lot of allowance  
12 for that, and it's a real dependence.

13                  So why can't we do the same thing? Why  
14 can't we talk about -- we talk about 5 percent for  
15 battery storage. Why can't we talk -- make a  
16 commitment to 5 percent for community-led projects and  
17 have that reflected in the IRP? And then -- and then  
18 let it work out at the community level, but make that  
19 commitment.

20                  And so I would encourage people to --  
21 to think that these aren't mutually exclusive  
22 solutions. You can have your cake. You can eat it  
23 too. You can have the IRP and you can have the  
24 community-embed solutions that -- that Manitoba Hydro  
25 recognizes. Next slide, please.

1                   And so kind of the huge majority of  
2 people supported the importance of Indigenous-owned  
3 energy projects and, you know, both around  
4 affordability and reliability, safety, and -- and also  
5 economic opportunity. Next slide, please.

6                   And so what -- what we see here then is  
7 rethinking some of the assumptions around how and --  
8 and being kind of creative and innovative around how  
9 we could make room for community-led alternatives  
10 within IRP processes and say, yeah, 5 percent, 10  
11 percent, whatever seems -- and that -- that number is  
12 identified in collaboration with communities, and then  
13 -- and then work towards that, and then the details  
14 will take care of themselves.

15                  There is a danger, though. If there's  
16 no explicit mention of that in the IRP, then it will  
17 fall to the wayside. It will be less of a priority.  
18 And so these approaches can strengthen and complement  
19 one another, and I would argue that.

20                  Also in my report -- I just made a  
21 slight mention of it here -- is that I think even  
22 around customer side solutions, that -- that we can  
23 do, I think a better job of making them accessible to  
24 First Nations, given the importance in the current  
25 IRP, and -- and have those -- those processes and

1 those outcomes reflected in -- in solutions moving  
2 forward, which thus far seem to be quite urban-centred  
3 when it comes to -- to customer side solutions. And  
4 with that, next slide, please.

5 I just want to thank everyone. Addis  
6 Benyam and his son, Denetto McLachlan, who -- who were  
7 -- did all sorts of work in terms of helping with the  
8 research; Hosna (phonetic) and Michael, who did the  
9 geomatics and the -- the video work that we see here;  
10 the communications team, as well as logistics; and of  
11 course, the interview participants and -- and the  
12 respondents in the survey, as well as the witness  
13 panel that we'll see this afternoon and First People's  
14 Law; and of course the Board and Manitoba Hydro. And  
15 thank you.

16 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you very much,  
17 Dr. McLachlan. Mr. Tokar...?

18 MR. CORY TOKAR: Thank you, Chairman  
19 Gabor. Thank you, Dr. McLachlan. We confirm that  
20 Manitoba Hydro has no questions for this witness.

21

22 CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MR. DAVID THIESSEN:

23 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: Thank you, Mr.  
24 Chair. So for the record, my name is David Thiessen.  
25 I am Counsel to the Public Utility Board.

1 Dr. McLachlan, thank you for your work  
2 and your presentation. I have some clarifying  
3 questions and would like to put some of Manitoba  
4 Hydro's rebuttal evidence to you to hear your  
5 perspective. Please let me know if you need anything  
6 repeated or clarified.

7 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Of course.

8 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: Ms. Paige, could  
9 we please first turn to Dr. McLachlan's report, being  
10 Wa Ni Ska Tan Exhibit 17 at PDF page 57, please.  
11 Thank you.

12 So in this section of your report, just  
13 to give some context, you're discussing the British  
14 Columbia IRP using it as a comparator, correct?

15 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Yes.

16 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: Looking at  
17 paragraph 159 -- pardon me, 158, let's start with --  
18 you say:

19 "BC Hydro engaged Indigenous  
20 nations through regional sessions  
21 (virtual engagements, surveys, and  
22 follow-up smaller group  
23 meetings)."

24 And, pardon me, I said you said that.  
25 That's actually a quote from your respondent, correct?

1 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Yes.

2 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: I understand that  
3 there were three (3) regional workshops in the BC  
4 comparator, and you said those were in three (3)  
5 different regions of the province, correct?

6 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Yes.

7 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: But they were in  
8 fact virtual engagement sessions, correct?

9 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: My  
10 understanding is they were virtual, but there was an  
11 opportunity for -- for follow-up meetings and  
12 workshops in person as well.

13 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: I see.

14 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: But -- but to  
15 -- to clarify, the -- the starting point was the  
16 initial virtual workshop. You're right.

17 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: Okay. And to  
18 clarify that response, there was the opportunity for  
19 follow-up face-to-face. Are you aware whether there  
20 was, in fact, face-to-face engagement as a result?

21 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: My  
22 understanding is that there was, yeah.

23 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: Okay. You  
24 described in your report there were sixteen (16)  
25 interviewees that you engaged with.

1                   Are you able to tell us to what extent  
2 were they virtual as opposed to in-person?

3                   DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN:    So they were  
4 -- I would say that ten (10) of the -- so the -- the  
5 ones in Tataskweyak, we had planned to do an in-person  
6 meeting down here, and that didn't work out. And so  
7 there were four (4) people there, so that was a  
8 virtual. And then there was one other from Fox Lake  
9 that was virtual as well, and the rest were in person.  
10 So eleven (11) of the sixteen (16) were in person.

11                  MR. DAVID THIESSEN:    Okay. That's  
12 helpful. So with respect to the BC comparator, would  
13 it be fair to say that virtual engagement was one  
14 aspect of successful engagement?

15                  DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN:    Oh, yes. I  
16 would say it's a -- it's a diverse toolkit, and it  
17 absolutely -- if the choice is virtual engagement or  
18 no engagement, then absolutely it makes sense to make  
19 use. But to be -- become reliant on those digital  
20 technologies or on surveys is -- is a mistake. And I  
21 would say you need to take advantage of multiple tools  
22 in that toolkit.

23                  MR. DAVID THIESSEN:    Okay. And just  
24 to -- to bring the point home to the Manitoba context,  
25 in your opinion, could virtual engagement form part of

1 a successful engagement strategy here as well?

2 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: It -- it will  
3 never be as good as going out in community. And --  
4 and again, you know, it -- it -- virtual engagement  
5 can be a stepping stone. In some cases, you have no  
6 alternative but to do virtual engagement, especially  
7 as communities up north become more and more kind of  
8 linked to video conferencing.

9 And so that's -- you know, with some of  
10 the low-flying satellites, that's an opportunity now  
11 that didn't exist even five (5) years ago. And -- and  
12 so yes, I would say, but I would say that it has to be  
13 part of a strategy that's worked out ahead of time and  
14 -- and again doesn't become reliant.

15 People want to see folks in decision-  
16 making power visit their communities and to understand  
17 and to learn, and at the same time, to -- to learn  
18 from them as well in those relationships. And -- and  
19 so, yeah, I -- I think virtual conferencing can be one  
20 part of it, but it shouldn't become a dependent.

21 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: Thank you.  
22 That's helpful.

23 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Yeah.

24 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: Ms. Paige, page  
25 58, please. And I'll take our attention to paragraph

1 164.

2 Here again, in the context of the  
3 British Columbia IRP, you identify that British  
4 Columbia Hydro's 2025 First -- First Nations  
5 engagement material contains examples of continued  
6 collaboration, Indigenous ownership, stewardship,  
7 economic participation, and frequent IRP updates.

8 Is that correct?

9 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Yes, that is  
10 correct.

11 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: And then on the  
12 following page -- or pardon me -- yes, paragraph 165,  
13 you say one of the clearest examples of that above  
14 list was procurement, correct?

15 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Yes.

16 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: And then in turn,  
17 you described the British Columbia 2024 call for  
18 power?

19 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Yes.

20 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: And that's what  
21 you mean by procurement?

22 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: (NO AUDIBLE  
23 RESPONSE)

24 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: Are you aware  
25 that in Manitoba's IRP, they have the 600-megawatt

1 Indigenous majority-owned wind project?

2 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: I am, yes.

3 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: And is that  
4 Manitoba wind project an example as well of Indigenous  
5 ownership, stewardship, and economic participation?

6 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: It is one  
7 such example. If it becomes the only example, then I  
8 think that's problematic. It -- it's a huge  
9 investment, and there's certainly financial risk  
10 involved in that for communities.

11 What we -- we will hear today, I think,  
12 is that it excludes communities up north. I talked to  
13 my report about the double bind where communities that  
14 have been hydro-impacted don't have the economic  
15 resources to invest.

16 And so they -- they -- it's a double  
17 bind because they're impacted, and then they're  
18 prevented potentially, unless there are these  
19 alternative de-risking solutions, as we see here, that  
20 -- that require less investment or multiple  
21 communities investing that -- that it's -- so I would  
22 say, yes, it's an important first step, but it -- it's  
23 ideally something that's co-designed with Indigenous  
24 organizations and -- and nations together to figure  
25 out how best to unroll those alternatives.

1 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: Thank you.

2 That's helpful clarification. PDF page 60, please.

3 On this page, you note that Indigenous  
4 rights played a key role in the way that the British  
5 Columbia IRP was drafted, correct?

6 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Yes, it did.

7 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: And you go on to  
8 explain in paragraph 171, where it's highlighted  
9 there, that there -- there's a reference in that  
10 paragraph to UNDRIP, the United Nations Declaration on  
11 the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, correct?

12 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Yes. Yes.

13 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: And then also BC  
14 DRIP, which I understand is the British Columbia  
15 Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People?

16 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Yes.

17 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: Now, I'm not  
18 soliciting or asking for a legal opinion here, but is  
19 it also your understanding that UNDRIP has not been  
20 equivalently implemented in Manitoba?

21 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Okay.  
22 Without providing any legal insight, my -- my general  
23 understanding is that the -- the -- yeah, DRIPA, you  
24 know, the -- the act, the BC Act that you talked  
25 about, has played an important role in bringing those

1 issues to the forefront.

2                   That said, I don't think that we need  
3 those kinds of -- you know, those acts in place, those  
4 policies in place to do what's important and what's --  
5 what's good and what most Manitobans would agree is  
6 important is to better engage and to reflect  
7 Indigenous rights and -- and decision-making in this  
8 case around energy.

9                   So I would say yes, no doubt it did  
10 play a role. But that maybe is one of the things that  
11 we can learn from that, you know, it's, well, either  
12 we create regulations like that in -- in Manitoba, or  
13 maybe we just move ahead with it in principle.

14                   MR. DAVID THIESSEN: I think that  
15 answers, in part, my next question.

16                   But in your opinion, does the  
17 difference in -- in legislation have any bearing on  
18 the extent to which the British Columbia IRP is still  
19 a helpful comparator for Manitoba?

20                   DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Absolutely,  
21 because we don't need those acts in place to do the --  
22 the right thing. And -- and again, I think, you know,  
23 we could we could have done a much better job of  
24 reflecting Indigenous rights in the broadest kind of  
25 way as principles, you know, and -- and even talking

1 about people being rights holders, explicitly  
2 recognizing that within the existing or future IRPs.

3 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: Thank you. Still  
4 on this page, I'll draw our attention to paragraph  
5 172, please.

6 Dr. McLachlan, here you note that, in  
7 your words, only eleven (11) First Nations leaders and  
8 staff responded to Manitoba Hydro's Round I First  
9 Nation Leadership Survey, correct?

10 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: That is my  
11 understanding.

12 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: And then in  
13 Paragraph 175, you observed that only fourteen (14)  
14 participants completed Round II First Nations  
15 leadership survey, correct?

16 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Only fourteen  
17 (14) participants, yeah.

18 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: You observed that  
19 this demonstrated why protocols other than surveys  
20 should have been used to achieve this feedback,  
21 correct?

22 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Yes.

23 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: Now, given your  
24 words "only" in -- in your description here, can the  
25 Board conclude you do not consider this level of

1 engagement satisfactory?

2 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Again, if --  
3 if I saw indicated more explicitly within Manitoba  
4 Hydro's responses to the Board's questions, to -- to  
5 some of the Interveners, that -- that we can do better  
6 and, you know, identifying that these as gaps and as  
7 shortcomings rather than just saying, you know, we can  
8 -- what we've done is adequate and appropriate.

9 Yeah, of course, we can't engage with  
10 every nation. We can't engage with every -- with  
11 every Indigenous organization. But I think we can  
12 make explicit commitments and to come up with  
13 solutions to better do that and to do it in a  
14 transparent way as -- as a part of a process like this  
15 one.

16 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: Are you able to  
17 suggest any specific protocols other than surveys to  
18 engage leadership in particular?

19 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Well,  
20 certainly, just as I was saying, visiting communities.  
21 You know, having -- having virtual engagement would be  
22 one such stepping stone, but again, not becoming  
23 reliant on that.

24 Certainly, people put a lot of value in  
25 my understanding. And again, I speak as someone non-

1 Indigenous here, and so I'm not speaking for people.  
2 But what we've heard again and again is that it's  
3 tremendously important to take the time and to -- and  
4 -- and that's true of all of us. It's true of me as a  
5 university researcher/professor as well as taking time  
6 out.

7                   And so people in senior decision-making  
8 capacities, you know, creating, you know, rather than  
9 piggybacking existing meetings on the part of the  
10 Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, for example, is coming up  
11 with your own -- sorry, your own opportunities to --  
12 to -- you know, to create -- you know, to -- to fund  
13 and to help support gatherings, much like the one that  
14 we saw in the Grid Strong, Nation Strong, right?

15                   But, you know, Manitoba Hydro can co-  
16 design those things side by side. So it doesn't mean  
17 always having to go up. So in this case, we have this  
18 amazing witness panel that will be part of the process  
19 this afternoon. And so, yes, that's important, but  
20 it's -- it's -- it -- maybe it's better to -- to find  
21 other ways that are located in the north to increase  
22 accessibility.

23                   MR. DAVID THIESSEN:    Thank you.  
24 That's helpful. Ms. Paige, PDF page 140, please. And  
25 I'm looking for Finding 15A, so if we could scroll

1 down, please. Perfect.

2 Your Finding 15A provides that there is  
3 an interest for community-led energy alternatives that  
4 were explicitly excluded from the 2025 IRP, correct?

5 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Yes. Yeah.

6 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: And we've  
7 discussed this somewhat this morning already. Moving  
8 to Finding 16A, you say:

9 "There is tremendous interest in  
10 community-led and controlled  
11 energy alternatives, including  
12 solar, geothermal, and micro  
13 dams."

14 And you conclude this paragraph by  
15 saying:

16 "Manitoba Hydro continues to  
17 undermine such opportunities, both  
18 by unfair criticisms of the  
19 technology and by continuing to  
20 exclude northern Indigenous  
21 concerns and priorities."

22 Correct?

23 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Yes.

24 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: Could you  
25 elaborate on your -- your use of the word 'undermine'?

1 What caused you to use that word in particular?

2 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Well, in the  
3 sense that clearly Manitoba Hydro, through the  
4 presentations that I've heard as part of this process  
5 and looking at the documents, recognize that  
6 community-led energy alternatives are important. We  
7 all recognize it.

8 And -- and yet they still, in this case  
9 I was saying, maybe excluding them from the IRP, from  
10 the broader provincial scale rather -- and -- and I  
11 trust that at least some of those initiatives are  
12 taking place in the north. I've heard people from the  
13 north talking about some of those frustrations that  
14 they've had around the Manitoba Hydro experience when  
15 it comes to some of the success stories, quote  
16 unquote.

17 But around thinking here around the  
18 IRP, I think we can do both. We can have -- we can  
19 commit to those much in the same way that I've already  
20 said we do it with household solutions and the  
21 customer side, you know, solutions that -- that we  
22 could -- we could make a commitment to 'X' percentage  
23 at the IRP level, and then at the same time use that  
24 to -- to -- in a sense to further those otherwise kind  
25 of ad hoc community by community.

1                   So it's -- it's part of a strategy.  
2   It's part of a plan. You know, a long-term commitment  
3   to doing that, that's spoken and reflected in the IRP.  
4   And then in terms of the details, just like the  
5   household energy efficiency, it gets worked out, but  
6   in this case by community.

7                   We've also heard about district level  
8   energy plans. We've heard about opportunities for  
9   investment where multiple First Nations can -- can  
10   become involved. You know, Bruce talked about the  
11   utility corridor in -- in Alberta where you had seven  
12   (7) First Nations kind of investing in it and lowering  
13   the risks and then the uncertainty that -- that become  
14   involved after the construction, so -- so again,  
15   lowering the risk and the uncertainty in that regard.

16                  And so all of those things could be  
17   spoken to and could be explicitly within an IRP. And  
18   then always the devil is in the details and you need  
19   to work those out on a case-by-case basis. But again,  
20   I would always push back and say that they are not  
21   mutually exclusive approaches.

22                  MR. DAVID THIESSEN:   Right. And --  
23   and to that point, I'd like to take us to Manitoba  
24   Hydro's rebuttal evidence on this question. So, Ms.  
25   Paige, if we could turn to Exhibit Manitoba Hydro 41,

1 Volume 2. This is Manitoba Hydro's Rebuttal Evidence,  
2 Volume 2, PDF page 17, please.

3 So Manitoba Hydro here disagrees that  
4 community-led energy initiatives must be included in  
5 the IRP. And starting at line 27, it provides:

6 "Manitoba Hydro recognizes the  
7 importance of Indigenous and  
8 community-led energy priorities  
9 and notes that the 2025 IRP is not  
10 the mechanism through which to --  
11 through which these priorities are  
12 identified and advanced.

13 Community energy priorities are  
14 advanced through ongoing  
15 engagement and complimentary  
16 planning processes that allow for  
17 direct collaboration with  
18 interested Indigenous nations --  
19 for example, through direct  
20 engagement, partnership  
21 agreements, and community-focused  
22 planning initiatives."

23 Could you please respond to Manitoba  
24 Hydro's contention that community-based energy  
25 initiatives are important, but do not belong in the

1    IRP?

2                   DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN:   And so this  
3    is what I've already been speaking to. And so I hope  
4    I don't just repeat myself, but I think you can do  
5    both, right? You can -- that the IRP is a ten (10)  
6    year, ideally longer, you know, twenty-five (25) year  
7    plan and a commitment. And it's a strategy that --  
8    that is engaged with different stakeholders -- and I  
9    would say right holders here -- in terms of how to  
10   provide energy in the -- the best possible way that  
11   meets a wide diversity of priorities.

12                   And I would just say that we need to  
13   find ways of making those community-led alternatives  
14   more visible in those strategic plans, rather than  
15   just taking it on faith that Manitoba Hydro is going  
16   to do the best that they can on a community-by-  
17   community basis.

18                   And so I would say, you know, much in  
19   the same way that Efficiency Manitoba now, if -- if  
20   they deviate substantially from the 54 percent or  
21   whatever it is in terms of the -- the commitment that  
22   they've made to the IRP around customer side  
23   solutions, then there'll be an accountability  
24   mechanism there.

25                   Similarly, I could see a case where

1 there was 5 or 10 percent that was identified as  
2 community-led initiatives alongside the 5 percent of  
3 the battery storage within and then -- and -- and then  
4 we -- we get the best of both, right?

5 And -- and, of course, I'm not saying  
6 that it should be a top-down process. I'm saying that  
7 it should be community-led or collaborative in  
8 approach, but that we can highlight the importance of  
9 those. And we should highlight the importance of  
10 those in the IRP as well.

11 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: So if I'm  
12 understanding correctly, you agree it's -- it's  
13 possible to do both. And your preference or your  
14 opinion is that it's better to do both within the  
15 context of an IRP because that draws visibility to the  
16 community-led projects.

17 Did I understand that correctly?

18 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: To -- to the  
19 -- the visibility of the projects, but also the  
20 commitment on the part of Manitoba Hydro to actually  
21 do what it said it would do in a -- in a way. And --  
22 and again, you know, I'm not -- it's -- I'm not  
23 casting aspersions here on the part of Manitoba Hydro,  
24 but there are any number of reasons why people will  
25 underachieve.

1                   And I would use again the parallel with  
2 customer side solutions. How -- how can we do that at  
3 a household-by-household basis and have that reflected  
4 in the IRP but we don't do it at the sub-regional  
5 level?

6                   Because I would say potentially, you  
7 know -- and again, I'm not speaking for anybody -- but  
8 you could work with some of the umbrella organizations  
9 like MKO and say, well, how do we do this in the best  
10 possible way? How do we bring attention?

11                   How do we build capacity and awareness  
12 on the part of communities strategically, as reflected  
13 in the IRP, and then unfold it through gatherings like  
14 the Grid Strong, Nation Strong to figure out the  
15 details, and then that occurs on a nation-by-nation  
16 basis?

17                   MR. DAVID THIESSEN: Thank you, Dr.  
18 McLachlan. One more aspect of this rebuttal evidence,  
19 Page 18, please. And at line 10, thank you.

20                   So, here, Manitoba Hydro writes:

21                   "More than half of the First  
22 Nations in Manitoba or their  
23 representatives have had dialogue  
24 with Manitoba Hydro regarding  
25 customer generation opportunities.

1 And Manitoba Hydro remains open to  
2 continued discussion regarding  
3 community-owned generation  
4 projects of 10 megawatts or less."

5 Do you see that there?

6 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: I do.

7 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: And were you  
8 aware of this -- these commitments when forming your  
9 conclusions about community-owned generation projects?

10 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: I was, and I  
11 am, but I would still say that we can do both. Right?

12 And -- and I would say the community-  
13 by-community approach, in a sense, doesn't allow for  
14 sub-regional or district-level approaches, like --  
15 like the example that I used. Potentially, with MKO  
16 or Southern Chiefs Organization or whatever Indigenous  
17 umbrella organization is interested, saying, well,  
18 let's work across multiple communities. Let's -- let  
19 communities learn from one another's experiences.

20 We've got a wonderful example here in  
21 Manitoba with Fisher, you know -- you know, and -- and  
22 -- and so, in that case, you know, with Fisher River  
23 Cree Nation, where -- where -- where they've got the  
24 largest solar project in -- in -- they -- they have  
25 all sorts of kind of learnings that they can share

1 with other communities. And that could be facilitated  
2 by umbrella organizations.

3 And so, I would say, that's another  
4 reason to move from the community-by-community  
5 approach and say, yes, that's essential, but we can do  
6 more and we can take a more diversified approach from  
7 the province down to the sub-region or district down  
8 to the individual nation.

9 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: Thank you. I'll  
10 change topics, please. Let's go back to Dr.  
11 McLachlan's report, that being Exhibit 17, Wa Ni Ska  
12 Tan Exhibit 17, PDF page 12.

13 And in the highlighted portion, you  
14 write, in part:

15 "There is no doubt that Northern  
16 Indigenous voices were almost  
17 entirely excluded from the 2025  
18 IRP as a process and as an  
19 outcome."

20 Correct?

21 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: I -- yeah, I  
22 agree.

23 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: Holding that in  
24 mind, could we please turn to Manitoba Hydro's  
25 rebuttal evidence, Exhibit 41, Volume II, PDF page 10,

1 please. And, scrolling up just a bit, Ms. Paige,  
2 please.

3 Line 6, Hydro summarizes you as giving  
4 the opinion that there was very little meaningful  
5 Indigenous -- Indigenous engagement at any stage along  
6 the IRP. Correct?

7 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Yes.

8 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: And in today's  
9 presentation and, elsewhere in your report, you, in  
10 fact, describe Manitoba Hydro's engagement efforts as  
11 a worst practices' approach. Is that correct?

12 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: I do. Yeah.

13 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: Now, in response,  
14 in the rebuttal evidence, Manitoba Hydro lists a  
15 somewhat extensive range of engagement tools that they  
16 attempted to employ, or employed, including the  
17 following: senior leadership dialogue, participation  
18 in the Technical Advisory Committee, First Nation  
19 leadership surveys and follow-up workshops, senior  
20 leadership participation in events such as the AMC  
21 Climate and Energy Gathering, and the funding of a  
22 liaison position with both AMC and MMF.

23 And then, to conclude, jumping down,  
24 engagement with umbrella organizations, as well as  
25 direct communication with First Nations, Manitoba

1 Metis Federation Leadership, social media advertising,  
2 and public surveys.

3                   Could you, please, help the Board  
4 reconcile this long list of engagement efforts, with  
5 your conclusion, that it nevertheless employed a worst  
6 practices' approach?

7                   DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN:    So, I -- and  
8 -- so, I spoke to that in one of my slides.  So, I  
9 would say it -- when -- we need to separate the  
10 outcomes from the processes, right, and so, I would  
11 say very little of that was Indigenous led.  Very  
12 little of it was based on co-design or collaboration.

13                   Again, thinking the caveats around  
14 IAP2, aside, thinking around that spectrum of -- of  
15 participation.  And so, it was just -- it was just  
16 reaching out -- Manitoba Hydro reaching out and often  
17 using the opportunities to provide information and --  
18 rather than true exchange.

19                   Certainly, we saw very, very little  
20 evidence of -- of ideas being reflected in the IRP.  
21 And so, and that -- that gets at, again, both the  
22 processes and the outcomes.  So, I would say you could  
23 use a lot of those same tools, but if you don't have a  
24 receptor site, if you don't have an ability to uptake  
25 those ideas and to translate them tangibly into

1 planning, then it just becomes performative. Right?

2 Then it just becomes a checkbox approach.

3                   And, again, not to cast dispersions,  
4 but to say whether it's the Technical Advisory  
5 Committee, whether it's, kind of one-way survey kind  
6 of, you know, that -- that -- that whether it's  
7 virtual workshops.

8                   And we -- we have very little insight  
9 into the details around those because, of course, they  
10 want to respect confidentiality and a lot of those  
11 things. But, when we actually say, well, the proof in  
12 the pudding is the actual IRP, I see very little  
13 evidence of that.

14                   And so, basically, you know, there --  
15 there was no formal analysis of -- of -- of the survey  
16 results. The second survey, arguably, was still open  
17 after that, you know, the -- the final draft was and -  
18 - and then the -- the -- the version of the IRP was  
19 submitted to -- to government. And -- and so, I would  
20 say it's a lost opportunity. There's no doubt they --  
21 they were busy. A lot of these reflect useful  
22 approaches.

23                   Again, I think there was too much of a  
24 reliance on surveys and so-called distal processes as  
25 opposed to embedded interactive multi-way

1 communication. But people still feel left out and  
2 excluded.

3 And, you know, when we -- when we see  
4 the huge majority of people not knowing anything about  
5 the IRPs, you know -- you know, two (2) or four (4)  
6 years down the road, then I think that's really  
7 problematic.

8 And so, again, I would just say you  
9 need to have a receptor site. You -- you need to have  
10 a -- a way in which you can take people's ideas, early  
11 on, and have that reflected in the IRP.

12 Our hope here as a -- as a -- as a  
13 group of -- of, you know, of folks working with -- and  
14 Wa Ni Ska Tan, as an Intervener, that we can share  
15 some of those ideas. And so, they are very forward-  
16 focused solutions and I'm -- I'm really hoping that  
17 there's follow-up meetings that we might even help  
18 facilitate through Wa Ni Ska Tan and through our  
19 networks with Manitoba Hydro.

20 It's not like we're anti-Manitoba Hydro  
21 activists, you know, we're just pro-community. And  
22 so, I -- so, I would say we need to come up together  
23 with receptor sites for some of those ideas and then  
24 find a way of -- of moving forward on them.

25 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: Thank you for

1 that response. I'll take us next to PDF page 14,  
2 please. And line 11 or -- I'll start at line 10,  
3 actually.

4 Here, Manitoba Hydro provides that, in  
5 response to one of its Information Requests:

6 "Dr. McLachlan explains that when  
7 responses to the surveys and  
8 interviews, conducted by Dr.  
9 McLachlan, were compared with  
10 responses to Manitoba Hydro  
11 surveys, respondent insights,  
12 concerns and solutions were  
13 largely aligned."

14 Could you elaborate on that? That's --  
15 those are your words. Correct?

16 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Yeah. I  
17 would add the caveat that they were taken out of  
18 context.

19 And so, basically what we were saying  
20 is that one of the issues is that when -- when you do  
21 qualitative or descriptive research, that it becomes  
22 difficult to assess credibility, right? If -- if you  
23 have a random sample, you can do probability values.  
24 It's pretty common. You -- you know, the -- the --  
25 the metrics around credibility.

1                   And so -- so, in the -- in the end, you  
2 know, what -- what we're saying in, as -- as part of  
3 this in -- in -- in the response, is that because our  
4 approach, potentially, and Manitoba Hydro's,  
5 potentially, leads to an -- a kind of -- we have no  
6 idea how representative the sample is, right?

7                   And -- and so -- so what I -- what I  
8 was saying is that, one common tool with qualitative  
9 research, and this is true of all qualitative  
10 research, is how you assess credibility is by  
11 triangulating.

12                   So, you look at -- you look at  
13 different sources of data. And if they -- if they're  
14 independent -- especially if they're independently  
15 collected or collected in different ways, and they  
16 tend to agree with one another, then -- then that  
17 speaks to the credibility. And so, what I said is  
18 that, yes, we had our individual interviews. We had  
19 our focus group interviews. And then we had -- we --  
20 we had the WA Ni Ska Tan survey.

21                   And then I said, in that light, that --  
22 that they even aligned to some degree with -- with --  
23 or it's, in some ways, in a course enough level, to a  
24 large degree, with the northern responses, as limited  
25 as they were with the Manitoba Hydro. That speaks to

1 the credibility of the data.

2 But 'A', we didn't know that before we  
3 went into that and 'B', with 0.03 percent of the  
4 respondents in both surveys coming from that  
5 northernmost FSA, then we had no way of assessing  
6 whether that was to the degree.

7 Now that said, we -- again, we have to  
8 be cautious because there's no receptor site. So --  
9 so Manitoba, you know, Manitoba Hydro surveys were one  
10 useful approach. You know, kind of their limitations,  
11 notwithstanding, but -- but there was no ability to  
12 include that feedback, both in terms of timing and --  
13 and -- and both the kind of -- the kind of information  
14 that was being shared within the IRP process.

15 And so -- but so, in -- but back to  
16 this. So, it was taken a bit out of context, you  
17 know, because I've also been explicitly critical  
18 around -- around the shortcomings of the surveys as  
19 well.

20 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: Thank you.  
21 That's helpful. Dr. McLachlan, those are my  
22 questions.

23 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Thank you.

24 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: Mr. Gabor.

25 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. I'll ask

1 the panel if they have any questions.

2 Do you have any questions Mr.

3 Simonsen...?

4 BOARD MEMBER GRANT: No -- no, sorry,  
5 he's going first. Okay? If I must.

6 THE CHAIRPERSON: Okay.

7 BOARD MEMBER SIMONSEN: Thank you, Dr.  
8 McLachlan. It's a very interesting presentation. I -  
9 - I think I learned a lot.

10 The one element that you brought  
11 forward was to set a percentage target for community-  
12 led generation, if I recall.

13 Do you have a sense for what that  
14 target might be? And I guess, as a corollary to that,  
15 what communities would you suggest would be engaged in  
16 -- in that kind of -- of activity?

17 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Just around  
18 community-led alternatives of whatever sort, like a  
19 wide diversity of those?

20 BOARD MEMBER SIMONSEN: Yeah.

21 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: You know, my  
22 sense would be to work with the umbrella  
23 organizations, to work with the other organizations,  
24 like Wa Ni Ska Tan, potentially, that have networks in  
25 place. And there are many such, you know, LWIC, Lake

1 Winnipeg Indigenous Collective. There are others that  
2 work with multiple communities.

3                   And just, you know, if -- if it was me,  
4 I would set up a gathering that could just be an  
5 opportunity for people to share a mix of their  
6 concerns and -- and keep it open-ended so people can  
7 talk about what they want to talk about. And at the  
8 same time, kind of highlight -- kind of the -- the --  
9 the value and the opportunities around these  
10 community-led solutions.

11                   And then, I would say, given the level  
12 of interest that's being reflected again and again in  
13 terms of all of our outreach, you will have more  
14 interest and capacity to take that on. And -- and --  
15 and so, I would be hesitant to -- to set a number.

16                   But I would say, again, everything that  
17 we've done around the IRP but, beyond that, you know,  
18 with Wa Ni Ska Tan, is there's tremendous interest  
19 there because the -- the system is broken. And -- and  
20 -- and I would trust that process to come up with --  
21 with ready ready interest to move forward.

22                   BOARD MEMBER SIMONSEN:    So, you -- you  
23 don't have a hard number for this Board to take back.  
24 It's more of an engagement process to possibly see  
25 where that number might be.

1                   Is -- is that what I'm hearing?

2                   DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN:    My -- my --  
3 my inclination would be if -- if you push me, I -- I  
4 would say to double, you know, what Manitoba Hydro is  
5 already doing. So, if they -- if they are working  
6 with thirteen (13) or fourteen (14) communities, why  
7 not double? Why not go for 50 percent? And -- and  
8 you might -- you might be higher than that, you might  
9 be lower.

10                  But, again, those numbers have to be  
11 arrived at in -- in concert with some of the real  
12 proponents of this. Indigenous-led organizations, for  
13 sure, Indigenous organizations, but also other  
14 organizations.

15                  BOARD MEMBER SIMONSEN:    Just a quick  
16 follow-up. Sorry, Dr. Grant -- I'm --

17                  When you talk about communities, are  
18 you talking about strictly Indigenous communities, or  
19 are you suggesting that other communities could also  
20 participate, who are also in the north or more  
21 isolated communities as well?

22                  DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN:    So, I think  
23 it's important to make special room for Rights Holders  
24 as a separate stream. That said, I -- I think  
25 northern, non-Indigenous communities have many of the

1 same concerns, you know, and so, you know, I -- I  
2 think we -- it -- so, they can be separate processes  
3 and they can learn from one another. Maybe there's  
4 opportunities for them to meet and to figure out where  
5 interests are aligned or -- or not.

6 But I -- but I would -- I -- I would  
7 put special emphasis on Indigenous northern nations,  
8 just because they've been, thus far, so dramatically  
9 excluded from the planning processes.

10 BOARD MEMBER SIMONSEN: Thank you very  
11 much.

12 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Thank you.

13 THE CHAIRPERSON: Dr. Grant ...?

14 BOARD MEMBER GRANT: Finally, I get a  
15 chance to -- thanks for this. Under this heading of  
16 Engagement in the last few days, we've heard a lot  
17 about surveys.

18 And I think you're the first to  
19 acknowledge that in the long laundry list of ways to  
20 try to elicit some feedback, it maybe is not the best  
21 practice. You -- you know, you noted in your own case  
22 of an online survey has technology biases to it.

23 I think you only got forty-six (46)  
24 respondents; is that correct?

25 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Well, there -

1 - there were the very tight timelines. There were  
2 fifty-three (53) completed respondents. And then we  
3 left the survey open, but we missed that, you know,  
4 the -- the kind of what was reasonable in terms of  
5 being able to have it reflected in the report.

6 So, there were over eighty (80)  
7 respondents, but your point, while taken, it's just a  
8 -- it's a drop in the bucket, right.

9 BOARD MEMBER GRANT: Okay, that was  
10 just -- that's my, you know, negative preamble.

11 But I think you'd acknowledge -- like,  
12 community engagement can be very expensive, and I  
13 don't think you had the, you know, great deep pockets  
14 and a short timeline.

15 And I do appreciate your comment about  
16 the timing of surveys and the ability to process the  
17 results.

18 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Right.

19 BOARD MEMBER GRANT: But -- but, so  
20 let me just, you know, throw you a, you know, the big  
21 easy...

22 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Okay.

23 BOARD MEMBER GRANT: What do you call  
24 it?

25 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Beach call.

1 BOARD MEMBER GRANT: Beach ball, yeah.  
2 Knock it out of the park.

3 So, what is the best practice? And --  
4 and again, cognizant that there's going to be -- these  
5 could be very expensive forms of engagement, but you  
6 want sort of a Berger style inquiry.

7 I -- I take your point about, like, if  
8 surveys are -- are individual-based and you talked  
9 about community-based and then you talked about  
10 regional-based, you know, if you had the chance to  
11 advise Hydro in the next round, what exactly would you  
12 tell them?

13 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Well, I  
14 again, I -- you know, I -- hopefully that would be in  
15 a spirit of discussion rather than -- oh, here we go  
16 again, all my -- all my electronic timers.

17 So -- but I -- but I -- but I -- so  
18 around the surveys, we use surveys all the time,  
19 right. You know, there can be the online surveys,  
20 there can be paper-mailed surveys, there can be --  
21 there -- there -- there can be household surveys where  
22 you have, you know, around health, you know, kind of,  
23 you know, documenting trends in health. People either  
24 use household surveys.

25 And so, they're an important tool,

1 right. Because it -- it does allow for a -- a kind of  
2 bird's-eye perspective. But -- but -- but I would say  
3 that you need to compliment those with -- with a --  
4 kind of setting up gatherings, meetings, right.

5                   You know, it's clear. We've heard from  
6 Manitoba Hydro that they had a hundred and fifty (150)  
7 people, I think, working full-time on the IRP, right.

8                   And so, you know, that's, you know, you  
9 can correct my math. That's -- but that's, I think,  
10 \$15 million a year, right. So, we can -- we can do  
11 the engagement at a -- at a fraction of that kind of  
12 cost, right, if it's made a priority.

13                   And -- and I would say setting up those  
14 gatherings and, you know, Wa Ni Ska Tan, as an -- as  
15 an example of an organization that's publicly funded,  
16 mostly through research grants through the university,  
17 has a very limited budget, but it -- it in partnership  
18 with other organizations, it sets up gatherings and  
19 opportunities for people to connect and to meet.

20                   And so, I think you can do it in ways  
21 that don't break the bank, and at the same time, that  
22 are respectful and transparent, and that allow people  
23 to share what it is that they know what's important to  
24 them, and their ideas for moving forward.

25                   And so, yes, I -- I think there's lots

1 of good examples, and some of those examples might not  
2 differ, you know. So, workshops that Manitoba Hydro  
3 talks about, you know, video conferencing, you know,  
4 all of those things, you know, they can all play a  
5 role. And -- and you will know this, too, as a  
6 researcher.

7 But I -- I think you can do it in ways  
8 that are transparent, inclusive, that are community or  
9 Indigenous-led, and that -- that are really kind of  
10 pragmatic and outcome-oriented at -- at very little  
11 cost.

12 And -- and the time to do it is -- is  
13 now, right, for the next IRP. And -- and, you know,  
14 my sense would be, ideally, the, you know, you -- the  
15 rest of the Board see the importance of -- of doing  
16 that, right, and making space for that.

17 I mean, that's -- that's the great  
18 thing about IRPs, right, is that they are iterative.  
19 That they can say, well, we didn't get it all right  
20 the first time.

21 Even Manitoba Hydro, through some of  
22 their presentations, have said, yes, we're open to  
23 that moving forward. And so -- but we can do it at a  
24 reasonable cost, and -- and again, as I would say, we  
25 should do it.

1 BOARD MEMBER GRANT: Just and one  
2 smaller point, maybe based on your own experience.

3 A significant portion of northern First  
4 Nations population be off reserve. And any insight or  
5 thoughts about, are these two (2) very distinct  
6 groups? And how do you -- how do you make sure you  
7 get -- they're both heard? I guess that's my question  
8 and -- and...

9 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Sure, and --  
10 and, you know, with the caveat that there are people  
11 who know much more about this than me, I would say  
12 absolutely there's folks in the south.

13 There's folks up north that are urban-  
14 centered in the south. There's obviously nations in -  
15 - in southern parts of -- of the -- the Province as  
16 well. And there's people who regularly go back and  
17 forth, right, and so, we had all of those reflected in  
18 our survey as indicated by the open-ended responses.

19 And so, your point is well taken. We -  
20 - we need to come up -- we don't want to exclude  
21 people who, for whatever reason, are located in the  
22 south, but have connections up north, or maybe they --  
23 they don't have connections in the north. And so, it  
24 would be important to have some of those gatherings  
25 kind of located in the south in urban centers or in

1 some of the southern First Nations.

2 And as an example, with Wa Ni Ska Tan,  
3 we -- we -- we have annual gatherings and we rotate  
4 with going up north and down south precisely for that  
5 reason. And I would say, generally speaking, those  
6 urban-centered Indigenous voices are also excluded and  
7 absolutely important to include. Thank you for your  
8 questions.

9 THE CHAIRPERSON: Dr. -- Dr.  
10 McLaughlin, syndication, is that something you see as  
11 an option for future projects?

12 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: If -- if you  
13 -- if you could be a bit more explicit on what you  
14 mean by syndication.

15 THE CHAIRPERSON: So, if you would  
16 have a project, for example, further -- wind turbines  
17 where instead of a First Nation be -- owning 51  
18 percent, that you would have it syndicated so you  
19 could have a number of First Nations having equity  
20 positions in one (1) or more projects?

21 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: I -- I think  
22 it makes sense to me, it's been tried. We heard about  
23 the utility corridor in Alberta where it's been done  
24 with seven (7) First Nations. It makes absolute  
25 sense.

1 I would say it's important to do the  
2 outreach to make sure, a) that it's -- it -- it is  
3 viable in a Manitoba context, and b) that there's  
4 community interest. And if -- and if those -- if  
5 those projects are, in a sense, co-designed, you know,  
6 with different stakeholders and, in this case, with  
7 Rights holders, then absolutely it makes sense to me.

8 You know, having -- we -- we -- we've  
9 heard, and we will continue to hear today, that  
10 having, you know, a 51 percent buy-in for, you know, a  
11 multiple million dollar project removes it as an  
12 option for many -- for many nations, and especially  
13 hydro-impacted nations whose livelihoods have been, in  
14 many cases, decimated by those very same kind of  
15 energy projects.

16 And so, -- so, yes, I would say -- I --  
17 like, as soon as -- I hadn't read much about it or  
18 heard much about it, but I -- I think that's the kind  
19 of -- the kind of precedence where we can learn from  
20 what other people have done, and I would say it  
21 absolutely makes sense to me.

22 THE CHAIRPERSON: In terms of all of  
23 the ways to improve engagement, do you see it working  
24 as part of a Province-wide engagement process, or do  
25 you think there needs to be a separate engagement

1 process for the Indigenous community?

2 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Again, I  
3 would -- I would -- I think those kinds of responses  
4 need to be done in concert with multiple Indigenous  
5 parties, right. You know, nations you're reflecting,  
6 you know, some -- some people come from remote  
7 communities; other people are located in the south;  
8 some have kind of community contacts; others, you  
9 know, our urban centers we've been talking about.

10 But -- but I would say absolutely, yes.  
11 I think, as a researcher, a lot of my kind of  
12 professional life has been about creating networks to  
13 take it to -- to have the strengths that -- that are  
14 reflected in community-led processes.

15 And at the same time, the benefits that  
16 come from people learning from one another, from  
17 involving multiple parties or actors at larger scales.  
18 And perhaps even, I would argue, it makes absolute  
19 sense to -- to -- to do it at the local scale, the --  
20 the -- the district or sub-regional scale, and then  
21 the community scale.

22 And -- and you would use different  
23 approaches for each of those, but -- and each has its  
24 own strengths and shortcomings. And so, that's why  
25 you need all three (3) of them existing -- coexisting.

1 THE CHAIRPERSON: I appreciate that.  
2 In terms of doing community engagement in -- in First  
3 Nations, you'll have Chief and Council.

4 How do you engage with community  
5 members if community leaders are the gatekeepers? So,  
6 for example, if you want to go to a community, you  
7 would normally go to Chief and Council with the  
8 understanding that you don't go behind Chief and  
9 Council, you go to them.

10 How do you have the engagement with  
11 community members if Chief and Council don't want you  
12 to engage with community members only with -- with the  
13 leaders?

14 MS. CHARLOTTEE CONNOLLY: If I may  
15 interject, I think this would be a great question to  
16 ask our community witnesses.

17 THE CHAIRPERSON: Great, okay.

18 MS. CHARLOTTEE CONNOLLY: Because Dr.  
19 Laughlin is kind of an intermediary of the first-hand  
20 experience.

21 THE CHAIRPERSON: No, that's -- that's  
22 superb because it's --

23 MS. CHARLOTTEE CONNOLLY: Yeah. We'll  
24 make time for that record.

25 THE CHAIRPERSON: It's an important

1 point and I've had to deal with it in the past.

2 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Absolutely.

3 THE CHAIRPERSON: So, okay.

4 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: But I would  
5 just -- thank you for that question. That's  
6 tremendously important.

7 THE CHAIRPERSON: Well, they know what  
8 they're doing over --

9 MS. CHARLOTTEE CONNOLLY: Yeah.

10 THE CHAIRPERSON: Those are my  
11 questions. Thank you very much, Dr. Laughlin. Really  
12 appreciate it.

13 We'll adjourn for lunch for 45 minutes  
14 and then resume after that. Thank you.

15 DR. STEPHANE MCLACHLAN: Okay. Thank  
16 you, everyone.

17

18 --- Upon recessing at 12:03 p.m.

19 --- Upon resuming at 12:48 p.m.

20

21 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. We'll  
22 proceed. Ms. Connolly...?

23 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Thank you.  
24 So, I'm going to let Mr. Kanu, as well as Mr. Dysart,  
25 introduce themselves and their background just in the

1 interest of time rather than asking questions. So,  
2 with that, I'll turn it over to Ms. McMillin to affirm  
3 Mr. Kanu.

4 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you very much.

5

6 --- EXHIBIT NO. WNST-22: Community witness panel  
7 Biographies

8

9 --- EXHIBIT NO. WNST-23: Manitoba Hydro Book of  
10 Documents

11

12 --- EXHIBIT NO. WNST-24: Daniel Kanu presentation

13

14 --- EXHIBIT NO. WMST-25: Stephane McLachlan  
15 presentation

16

17 PRESENTATION OF GLADU KANU:

18 GLADU KANU, Affirmed

19 LESLIE DYSART, Affirmed

20

21 MR. GLADU KANU: Hello. Okay. Well,  
22 yeah. My name is Daniel Gladu Kanu. And well, first,  
23 I just want to extend gratitude for having us set the  
24 -- this hearing, having myself here and able to  
25 present.

1                   And, in particular, I also have been  
2 very -- I've been heartened to see some of the efforts  
3 been made to bring community members to speak and  
4 bring that -- those experiences, things that I think  
5 years ago, I wouldn't have imagined possible for --  
6 for a process like this. And certainly, it's good to  
7 see progress on this front and getting -- getting  
8 those perspectives that have been dearly missed. Ms.  
9 Paige, can you advance the slide.

10                   So, I'm myself from Red River Metis  
11 Anishinaabe from Treaty 3 area, a community called  
12 Animakee Wa Zhing, or Northwest Angle. I've been --  
13 I've -- I've had over twenty (20) years experience  
14 just working with communities on a range of kind of  
15 economic development, food, and then science  
16 monitoring, restoration work.

17                   And I find myself to be in the position  
18 as the executive director for the Lake Winnipeg  
19 Indigenous Collective, which I'll get into in a little  
20 bit. And I -- I have trained in biology at the  
21 University of Winnipeg, so. Can you advance to the  
22 next slide, Ms. Paige.

23                   So, Lake Winnipeg Indigenous  
24 Collective, which is an organization I work with on a  
25 day-to-day basis, we have -- really we're established

1 to -- to advance some -- both Indigenous knowledge,  
2 perspectives, practices, and values in protecting and  
3 restoring Lake Winnipeg for all future generations.  
4 We do that through, you know, gatherings and public  
5 education, advocacy, and then guardian work, right.

6                   And I think it's -- it was important to  
7 come here and -- and speak because I -- I have been  
8 hearing over the years many -- many points of view  
9 around Lake Winnipeg and experience with Manitoba  
10 Hydro.

11                   And while we -- I think from -- from  
12 the outside, we probably look like an environmental  
13 organization as it were, a lot of the focus really is  
14 about traditional livelihoods, about how -- ways of  
15 life around the lake and how to make sure that those  
16 continue for generations to come, and that includes  
17 traditional things, access culture, but also economic  
18 -- economic pieces as well. And I thought -- we  
19 thought it would be important to come speak to some of  
20 that. Can you advance aside, please.

21                   So, for -- as working with the Wa Ni  
22 Ska Tan Group, we have -- you know, we were -- we are  
23 here to talk about public engagement, about some of  
24 the risks that come from the ways public engagement  
25 was -- you know, fell short and -- and Indigenous lead

1 energy resource options.

2 And I had provided some evidence  
3 through, I guess, WNST 14 and responded to some  
4 Information Requests as well all on the slide. Can  
5 you advance aside again. Or -- or, Ms. Paige, can you  
6 advance slide. Oh, there.

7 So -- and then importantly, there is  
8 some elements that are not in scope, things that I  
9 would have loved to have spoken to, but, of course,  
10 given time, given the -- the needs of this preview, we  
11 -- we won't be, of course, talking about a number of  
12 issues. But one thing I do wanted to -- will touch  
13 close to, but it's mostly for distinction purposes in  
14 terms of talking about public engagement. Ms. Paige,  
15 can you advance the slide. Thank you.

16 So, first, I wanted to start really  
17 with the -- the mandate letter, which we heard a  
18 little bit about this morning. So, this -- this  
19 mandate letter by the -- the Minister responsible for  
20 Manitoba Hydro, you know, clearly states this  
21 resetting of a relationship between Manitoba Hydro and  
22 Indigenous communities.

23 I think speaking not just to ideas of  
24 collaboration, but really directly partnership, that  
25 Indigenous communities are partners here and -- as

1 opposed to someone who would be informed or -- or  
2 otherwise.

3                   And in a lot of ways, I think that this  
4 -- this statement speaks to a lot of what we have to  
5 say today about how -- the importance of this  
6 partnership, not just for doing the right thing  
7 ethically, I suppose, but also something that is good  
8 for all of us in the -- in the -- in the future -- in  
9 our in our energy future. Can you advance a slide,  
10 please.

11                   And then I was also interested to hear  
12 some discussion about the United Nations Declaration  
13 of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples. And I'm not  
14 going to get into detail about those -- those rights  
15 specifically because, again, timing and -- but there  
16 is -- we have an interesting connection here in  
17 Manitoba around the Path to Reconciliation Act, both  
18 affirming the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and  
19 -- and the principles set out in the United Nations  
20 Declaration of Rights of Indigenous People.

21                   And I wanted to point out, too, more  
22 specifically the Truth and Reconciliation Commission  
23 also had a call to action directly to all governments  
24 in -- in Canada, so Canada, Manitoba provinces, and  
25 municipalities, to adopt and implement the United

1 Nation Declaration on the rights of Indigenous Peoples  
2 as a framework for reconciliation.

3                   And I think that in contrast to some  
4 areas who have set up legislation around that, this is  
5 part of the steps we would take, part of that pathway  
6 to recognizing those rights. Can you advance the  
7 slide, Ms. Paige.

8                   As I mentioned, so we first talk about  
9 this public engagement side, something we've heard a  
10 lot about from Dr. McLachlan and -- and Dr.  
11 Fitzgerald. Maybe I wanted to contrast a little bit  
12 with -- there's the concept of consultation, which  
13 sometimes is -- is thought of as, like, well, this is  
14 a separate process for Indigenous people to use. And,  
15 yes, that -- that is true, but also being part of  
16 public engagement being fully represented there and  
17 being part of other public engagement processes is  
18 equally -- or is also very critical.

19                   And I think a real important part of  
20 any future IRP would be having Indigenous people  
21 directly informing what goes into it. And really,  
22 it's -- I -- I see the IRP process to -- you know,  
23 this one and future iterations as an opportunity to  
24 continue to build Manitoba Hydro's relationship with  
25 Indigenous people.

1                   This is something that they are doing  
2 through other means, alternatives, direct engagement,  
3 but also at the IRP, that this is yet another place to  
4 build that -- that relationship. And this is  
5 important, right, because there has been broken trust,  
6 right. There has been difficult -- extremely  
7 difficult history, which we don't need to get into.  
8 But it's going to take a while to come out of that, to  
9 dig our way out of that, as it were.

10                  And if we start today trying to make it  
11 perfect, I think it's going to take quite a long time  
12 to get to a place where we can have good, productive  
13 conversations. Yeah. So, you know, I -- I like to  
14 see where Manitoba Hydro is doing things. And I would  
15 like to see that continue, of course. But I would  
16 like to see that built upon. Ms. Paige, can you  
17 advance the slide.

18                  So, public engagement sort of broadly  
19 in terms of being foundational to planning process.  
20 The -- you know, as a satisfy -- or Dr. Fitzgerald  
21 also noted how the province has expectations around  
22 stakeholder input being part of the -- of the IRP  
23 approval itself.

24                  And then, of course, what I -- what I  
25 want to talk about is where Indigenous peoples being a

1 critical component of that public engagement. Ms.  
2 Paige, can you advance the slide. Thank you.

3 So, Indigenous people, just in terms of  
4 numbers, right, are a big part of this population in  
5 Manitoba, 18 percent or, like, nearly one-fifth. It  
6 includes First Nations and -- and Metis people, and --  
7 and Inuit as well.

8 As Dr. McLachlan noted, you know, part  
9 of a large geographic area -- area -- a large  
10 geographic area that also generates most of the energy  
11 that we -- we enjoy here today.

12 And importantly, though, there's the  
13 experience of real gaps in energy equity, among other  
14 things, but having a safe, reliable energy for all  
15 Manitobans. We do need to look at the places where we  
16 don't have that, right, where there isn't the  
17 redundancies that allow, you know, economic  
18 development to happen, that allow a good life to be  
19 built.

20 And then, as mentioned before -- and I  
21 -- I -- I'll probably say it a few more times, right -  
22 - about building trust, right. Every time you -- you  
23 engage a group of people, you are, you know, building  
24 that trust or you're taking away from it, right. And  
25 this is -- this is, again, this the long journey that

1 I think everyone has to take around reconciling who --  
2 who we are as a -- as a province and as an energy  
3 utility, and, you know, it's something we can't let go  
4 of, really.

5                   And then finally, there are -- there  
6 are, of course, risks, right. So, for -- for  
7 Indigenous people being excluded from the process,  
8 maybe we could be left open to climate-related risks  
9 that MKO pointed out, legal risks. We are -- we have  
10 outstanding legal battles that -- that, you know,  
11 could -- could point to any number of engagements,  
12 including the development of an IRP. Ms. Paige, can  
13 you advance the slide.

14                   So, for -- for instance, one (1) of the  
15 things we had -- we had asked Manitoba Hydro about was  
16 their -- you know, if they were willing to make  
17 changes in operating parameters. You know, if you  
18 looked at a change in licenses, for instance, that  
19 could happen in the future, how will that affect these  
20 plans, how will it affect the different resource  
21 options.

22                   And at this point, it's considered an  
23 assumption. And I think we have concerns that, well,  
24 if those changes do happen, what are -- is the IRP  
25 still relevant, right. Are -- are we just immediately

1 throwing out all this planning, all this effort that  
2 goes into creating a plan and then having to make  
3 changes? I think having some modelling, some  
4 preparation for that would have been -- would have  
5 been reasonable. Ms. Paige, can you advance slide.

6                   Yeah. Dr. McLachlan showed about  
7 Indigenous underrepresentation in -- in his  
8 presentation, testimony this morning. And, yeah, we  
9 did see -- we did see, like, less than half of what is  
10 the population being participating in the Round I  
11 survey.

12                   I noted that there was no interviews  
13 with, I should say, First Nation interested parties  
14 versus -- and when you compare that to major  
15 industries or municipalities who had -- who had  
16 interviews and were able to inform.

17                   I'm -- I'm not a technical -- I don't  
18 work with surveys and -- and the -- and the like.  
19 I've tended to find that they are a difficult way to  
20 get good, honest feedback from people. So, I like to  
21 see more interviews as part of a process.

22                   And then there's we -- heard of other  
23 arrangements, like the community energy planning  
24 workshops, which are not informing the IRP directly.  
25 And I think I -- I wonder where -- if that information

1 could be -- could have been useful for something like  
2 an IRP.

3 And of course, I -- I do want to  
4 recognize that that -- those community energy  
5 workshops could be very positive, could be very good  
6 for local community-specific needs. They could --  
7 they could be beneficial in the future.

8 What I would have liked to have seen is  
9 though some of those -- some of that work happening  
10 already, right, and that where -- where falling short,  
11 there's effort to -- to recover.

12 So, there -- there are challenges, of  
13 course, working with -- with Indigenous communities,  
14 isolated communities. We -- you know, again, we --  
15 we're talking about trust. If -- if we don't have  
16 trust, it is hard to start a relationship. It's hard  
17 to believe that it's worth participating.

18 So -- so sometimes that participation  
19 takes time, right, and it's going to be some  
20 repetition. And it's going to have a cost to it,  
21 unfortunately. This is -- that's the reality of -- of  
22 cutting corners in the past, is that you pay for them  
23 in the future.

24 So -- and then for -- for Indigenous  
25 communities, there is an issue I -- I'd like to point

1 out around capacity to participate. Sometimes with --  
2 within engagements, people who aren't making any money  
3 to participate in a process might receive an  
4 honorarium or something like that, which is -- which  
5 is good and kind of a base thing.

6 But I think we should remember that  
7 participating in any policy process usually had  
8 required previous experience, you know, having  
9 financial security to do research to consider these  
10 kinds of processes, and not just be able to show up  
11 and divulge all of the information you have.

12 So, that kind of investment does take  
13 time and I think is an important part of ongoing  
14 engagement with -- with any community, but certainly  
15 with Indigenous people.

16 And then of course, having more  
17 opportunities for dialogue. So, whereas you have  
18 surveys or other ways of informing people and -- or --  
19 or there's other ways of receiving feedback or  
20 informing people, having some back and forth, some  
21 question and response is really critical.

22 And then, of course, follow through,  
23 which is, you know, so easy for me to say, let's  
24 follow through on something, hard to do, I -- and I  
25 understand that. And where I -- what I've been

1 wondering about through this process is where are the  
2 areas that Manitoba Hydro has left space for  
3 Indigenous feedback to support changes in the -- in  
4 the IRP. I think that has to be planned out.

5                   And if you are -- if you're making --  
6 making a plan, if you're modelling, it's with the idea  
7 that it would inform your plans. If you build a  
8 survey hoping that that information simply makes  
9 changes or informs it in some way without a plan,  
10 you're going to -- you're not going to be able to  
11 really follow through on the kinds of feedback you're  
12 receiving. And Dr. Fitzgerald certainly touched on  
13 that the other day. Can you advance the slide, Ms.  
14 Paige.

15                   So, as mentioned in my evidence, I -- I  
16 -- this isn't a really a comprehensive way of doing  
17 meaningful engagement, but just some really key things  
18 that I think should be part of any process.

19                   We've -- everyone has talked about  
20 early participation. And in -- in an integrative  
21 process, that is just -- that's already happening,  
22 right. Yeah, that needs to be continued. And -- and  
23 when it comes to that, that next IRP, I am -- I am --  
24 I would expect that Manitoba Hydro is already planning  
25 those -- those sessions. I would -- I would hope they

1 are, at least, and then some frequency, coming back  
2 and not just having a single -- single event.

3 I think we see some example with the --  
4 the leadership survey being repeated, I think is a  
5 positive -- positive step. I would like to see that  
6 with some of their other engagement processes. Of  
7 course, commitment to time and -- and resources, as I  
8 discussed.

9 When it comes to time, there -- there  
10 is an element of we want to -- we want to be able to  
11 say, oh, we're -- we're meeting with you today, where  
12 is the -- you know, what's the result, are -- are we -  
13 - are we succeeding. But I -- I think often a meeting  
14 might not have a specific target or result, right.  
15 And it will take time coming back to them to actually  
16 see those changes, to actually get that feeling of  
17 like, okay, we're building something here.

18 And then -- and then related, again, to  
19 all of this is just really having multiple scales of -  
20 - of input. So, what I mean by that, quite frankly,  
21 is I -- I think that you -- you have your survey, you  
22 have your interviews, you have direct workshops, you  
23 have meetings with leadership, and you have meetings  
24 with -- with other community members, you are -- if  
25 you open up to many places so that you're not just

1 left with a single point of view from a community.

2 No one really speaks for a community,  
3 as -- as we can all imagine, so having more people  
4 participate is really a way of ensuring that you're  
5 actually hearing from people. Ms. Paige, can you  
6 advance the slide.

7 So, the -- the other thing we've heard  
8 a bit about is -- a lot about is community-specific  
9 planning. So, I think a lot of what we raise is there  
10 are needs for communities. We're not bringing those  
11 to -- to the -- to this -- this process. But the  
12 concern was that those -- those weren't -- those  
13 weren't part of the IRP. And that reasoning, I think,  
14 is that more detailed planning was needed, of course.

15 And, yeah, of course, detailed planning  
16 is always needed. If you want to follow through on  
17 any project, you're going to need more detailed plans.  
18 There is -- I can't imagine there's anything coming  
19 out of the IRP that isn't going to need further  
20 budgeting, planning to actually be successful and be  
21 implemented.

22 Absolutely the same is true for  
23 communities. Where my concerns are is that this  
24 overarching plan sets a path forward and that if  
25 communities aren't on that path, they -- they won't

1 just magically be part of it, right, it'll be --  
2 they'll be lost.

3                   And maybe -- and -- and the other areas  
4 that I think that this kind of public review does open  
5 up some amount of accountability, transparency, and  
6 allowing for community-specific needs to be part of  
7 this kind of process allows that public scrutiny that  
8 could otherwise go missing in more smaller detailed  
9 planning sessions. Ms. Paige, can you, next slide.

10                   The other -- the other thing that I  
11 wanted to note was around Manitoba. Specifically, we  
12 are -- as a province, we have -- we have a lot more  
13 remoteness and isolated communities than other  
14 provinces in Canada. We have challenges with that,  
15 so, like socioeconomic challenges that are -- like,  
16 deeply affect Indigenous people living in those  
17 communities.

18                   And that I think an Energy Plan is  
19 going to -- an Energy Plan to me is going to need to -  
20 - to wrestle with that. That if you have -- if you  
21 have unreliable energy going to some people, then  
22 that's a -- that's an unfair system. It's a -- it's a  
23 plan that didn't really plan for those people, right.

24                   And I -- I wouldn't -- I wouldn't say  
25 we should just leave it to -- to hope or some other

1 process, that it should be part of an overarching  
2 plan. You know, that -- that's the risk. I mean,  
3 that's that is how we've dealt with it in the past as  
4 a province. By not planning, it's -- it's leaving  
5 those communities more exposed. Ms. Paige, can you  
6 advance the slide.

7                   So, this -- of course, what -- what  
8 happens when you -- you don't have energy, right, that  
9 reliability? You have living in emergencies and  
10 crisis -- crisis. It -- it affects economic  
11 investment, the ability to start a business, to  
12 continue running that business, to have jobs from  
13 that, keeping infrastructure.

14                   If your power goes out, there's all  
15 kinds of things that just will fail and need to be  
16 replaced. It can be a real nightmare. And, of  
17 course, affordability is -- is really key for people  
18 who -- well, for all of us, right. That's why we're  
19 all -- we're all here. If -- if you -- but if you  
20 don't have that reliable energy everywhere in the  
21 province, then -- then there's risks for those folks  
22 as well. Ms. Paige, can you advance the slide.

23                   So, economic reconciliation as a  
24 metric, I think, is really too muddy. I -- I think of  
25 it as a very load -- it's a loaded term where when

1 some people hear -- hear the word, they're going to  
2 think it means new jobs and Indigenous procurement.  
3 Some folks are going to think of it as changing the  
4 relationship between Indigenous people in Canada and -  
5 - and Manitoba in this instance. And those are very  
6 different -- that's a very different thing to measure.

7                   And when we're looking at a plan and  
8 you say, well, this is -- this one's meeting some  
9 criteria of economic reconciliation, I would -- I  
10 would wonder how you -- how you could convey that in a  
11 way that everyone understands. Yeah.

12                   I do think that, like, thinking about -  
13 - about Indigenous procurement is important, but we  
14 maybe need to just call it that if that's -- if that's  
15 all it is. And if we want to go further -- and I  
16 would -- I would love to see it go further -- then  
17 then those things should be named as well.

18                   When we talk about partnership, if  
19 that's what it is, if it's about having access to  
20 equitable energy, those -- those would just need to be  
21 named in -- in the metric as such; otherwise, it -- it  
22 feels too much like an exercise in looking good rather  
23 than doing good. Ms. Paige, can you advance the  
24 slide.

25                   And then, of course, there are other --

1 when we talk about socioeconomic metrics, they do go  
2 beyond economic development, I -- with things like  
3 health -- health and wellbeing, housing  
4 infrastructure.

5                   We have cultural impacts, important to  
6 a lot of our members, traditional livelihoods, like,  
7 the -- the ways that we continue to live and survive  
8 on the land, even education and -- and different forms  
9 of employment, things that can be radically different  
10 when you choose different energy resources, whether  
11 it's something that's built in the community,  
12 something that can employ people, or will have other  
13 effects that I didn't see considered in -- in the IRP  
14 and I think are gaps there. And maybe just a sign,  
15 too, that Indigenous people weren't part of developing  
16 this kind of process. Ms. Paige, can you advance the  
17 slide.

18                   Oh, yeah. Further to that, so I want  
19 to talk a little bit more about the housing side of  
20 things. So, again, Manitoba is particularly -- you  
21 know, people on reserve are -- have more crowded  
22 housing than really any other province in Canada.  
23 This is something that we could look -- we could seek  
24 to address, really.

25                   Things like -- like Manitoba Hydro, of

1 course, is not responsible for -- for housing, but, of  
2 course, being part of that solution is -- is something  
3 I -- I would like to see, that -- that by providing  
4 reliable energy or solutions that support better  
5 infrastructure in those communities, we could -- we  
6 could start to achieving some good things here, right.

7                   Yeah, notably, something like customer  
8 side solutions often can come with some just  
9 improvements in wellbeing in housing that are sorely  
10 needed. Ms. Paige, can you advance the slide.

11                   For -- yeah, I wanted to talk a little  
12 bit about the call for power, mainly that -- that this  
13 -- this was a plan -- well, okay, there's two (2)  
14 parts to the call for power. One (1) is that I think  
15 this undertaking, it's -- it's a major undertaking by  
16 Manitoba Hydro, something that took a lot of -- a lot  
17 of planning.

18                   And by from -- from, as I understand  
19 it, Manitoba Hydro devised it as part of their --  
20 their 2023 IRP, so that planning process that then  
21 became policy through -- through the province.

22                   Of course, that's -- that kind of  
23 planning, like an IRP, was important in informing  
24 something like a call for power and allowing it to  
25 happen today. It took years for it to get to this

1 point, of course.

2                   So, I'd like to see these kinds of --  
3 I'd like to see the iterations of the IRP have that  
4 kind of consideration for -- for other Indigenous  
5 needs.

6                   And then I think, as Dr. McLachlan and  
7 -- and Les Dysart will -- will talk further, too,  
8 right, around opportunities for -- for Northern  
9 communities, right, where if you -- if you situate  
10 things in one place, it is, of course, beneficial to a  
11 group of people in that area, but it excludes a whole  
12 other group.

13                   This was viewed as, again, from what I  
14 can tell in the evaluation, a win for economic  
15 reconciliation. But, of course, that is only for some  
16 people, right. It didn't include many and probably  
17 most First Nations in this instance. Ms. Paige, can  
18 you advance the slide. Sorry, advancing the slide's  
19 something I'm not used to.

20                   And then finally, just talking a little  
21 bit about Indigenous lead energy options. So, mainly  
22 here, I just wanted to talk about that there is --  
23 there is excitement in the -- in the province by many  
24 First Nations, not -- not everyone, of course, in --  
25 in developing new forms of energy and supporting their

1 community, but also supporting their economic goals,  
2 too, participating with Manito Hydro in some  
3 instances, in some instances is not, keeping to  
4 themselves so they can improve their community's  
5 wellbeing.

6                   And I -- and I think hearing Dr.  
7 McLachlan, you know, mention having some consideration  
8 for what could be planned, what could be part of the,  
9 you know, kind of energy budget, makes a lot of sense  
10 to me. How we get to that number is a -- is a bigger  
11 question, I suppose. But one (1) of the ways to -- to  
12 move forward and still look -- look at community's  
13 needs while thinking of the whole province as a  
14 system, of course, so.

15                   And -- and I think the other thing,  
16 too, maybe just to mention that, in terms of  
17 expectations from -- from the province and from First  
18 Nation communities, when they hear -- when they heard  
19 of the promises around, you know, affordable energy,  
20 they -- there -- I heard excitement about wind power,  
21 of course, but also other forms of energy. So, it  
22 wasn't just -- it wasn't just wind. And this is from  
23 First Nations that are in the South as well as the  
24 North and -- and, of course, the -- the Manitoba  
25 government as well that said that they wanted to

1 explore other forms of energy as part of their  
2 Affordable Energy Act plan, so. And -- yeah. Ms.  
3 Paige, can you advance the slide.

4 And, yeah, (ANISININEW SPOKEN) for  
5 listening to me. And I really appreciate all the work  
6 that's gone into this review. It's -- it's really  
7 tremendous, so thanks.

8 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you very much.  
9 Just hold on for a second. I think we're going to  
10 break a little away in the sense that we we're going  
11 to have Panel members ask Mr. Kanu questions now  
12 rather than wait till the end, okay. So --

13 MR. GLADU KANU: Yeah.

14 THE CHAIRPERSON: -- Ms. Kapitany...?

15 VICE CHAIR KAPITANY: Thank you, Mr.  
16 Gladu Kanu, for that presentation. It was largely  
17 future-focused, and I understand why. But on your  
18 slide 14, you say:

19 "IRP sets a pathway that  
20 undermines community-specific  
21 needs."

22 Do you have any specific  
23 recommendations for us for this IRP that you could  
24 share?

25 MR. GLADU KANU: Yes. So I -- I guess

1 I am -- have been future-focused, of course, because I  
2 think -- I think I'd like to see further iterations,  
3 of course, build on what could happen.

4 For -- for community's needs right now,  
5 for this current plan, I -- I do think that directions  
6 can be -- or recommendations should be -- could be put  
7 forth to, say, to have some targets towards what --  
8 what they are talking about in terms of community-  
9 specific planning.

10 If -- you know, we -- if you hear of a  
11 process that's happening, that's great. But if no  
12 one's there to, like, see it happen or see it through,  
13 then we don't know if -- then we don't know if it's  
14 ever going to happen, right?

15 And so I think there could be  
16 recommendations put forward to expect that they  
17 happen, that they do achieve some -- some level of the  
18 implementing those plans. And if they don't, then we  
19 would want to know why, right?

20 Certainly mention about how Hydro could  
21 reflect on what worked and what didn't and what they  
22 could improve in -- in the future as well. This is  
23 work that I understand is ongoing right now, right?  
24 So without the -- with that planning, with those  
25 partnerships, they would be able to, yeah, hold

1 themselves to -- to that account, right and -- and  
2 speak to it.

3 VICE CHAIR KAPITANY: And on your next  
4 slide, drilling down a bit further --

5 MR. GLADU KANU: M-hm.

6 VICE CHAIR KAPITANY: -- you speak  
7 about diesel reliance systems. And you know we have  
8 four (4) diesel communities in Manitoba.

9 Do you have any specific  
10 recommendations for this IRP regarding those four (4)  
11 diesel communities?

12 MR. GLADU KANU: Yeah. In some ways,  
13 I think a lot of my -- from my point of view was about  
14 making sure that they had more input. So if that's a  
15 possibility that there is recommendations that could  
16 be about bringing those -- those affected to -- to  
17 here, yeah.

18 In some ways, my -- my -- I stumble a  
19 little bit because I wonder about the right kind of  
20 process that -- that could exist in a -- in a very  
21 short time frame where I -- I imagine this -- this  
22 plan is going to be put forward to the province for  
23 approval.

24 Is there time to hear from those  
25 communities to make sure that their needs are being --

1 being met? I guess they could always try, right? But  
2 that's all I can say.

3 VICE CHAIR KAPITANY: Thank you.

4 THE CHAIRPERSON: Ms. Sharman...?

5 BOARD MEMBER SHARMAN: Thank you. And  
6 thank you very much for your presentation. Much  
7 appreciated.

8 I do have a very -- I think it's a  
9 quick question, perhaps. A couple of slides earlier,  
10 on slide 12, you are -- you have four (4) bullets  
11 there in terms of ongoing engagement challenges for  
12 Indigenous communities.

13 We've spoken quite a lot about trust,  
14 opportunities for dialogue, and follow-through,  
15 perhaps. I'm -- I guess I'm -- I'm wondering if you  
16 could just expand a little bit more on the capacity to  
17 participate, please. I -- I heard you mention, you  
18 know, previous experience, et cetera.

19 But just wondering if you could  
20 elaborate a bit more on what that capacity issue  
21 represents.

22 MR. GLADU KANU: Sure. That'd be --  
23 so I'll try and keep it short. But the basic -- I  
24 mean, if you think of it, all of the -- the experts  
25 that participate in this kind of process, we have -- a

1 lot of us have benefited from university education,  
2 which is, you know, at least partially publicly  
3 funded. There's government research. There's lots of  
4 -- lots of funding that goes towards developing those  
5 kinds of expertise.

6 For -- for a knowledge holder, they  
7 don't have anything like that scale of -- of  
8 investment. So what does that mean when they want to  
9 participate in a policy process? These kinds of  
10 things can be very intimidating and challenging to  
11 participate in. And without prior experience and --  
12 and like resources and financial stability, it would  
13 be hard to be ready to participate, let alone  
14 participate in a fulsome way, so.

15 BOARD MEMBER SHARMAN: Thank you.

16 MR. LESLIE DYSART: My name is Leslie  
17 Dysart. I'm --

18 THE CHAIRPERSON: Oh. It's like -- I  
19 think that might have been AI. Are you -- are you  
20 planning to ask the computer?

21 So she asked a short question. I'm  
22 going to ask you a long question.

23 MR. GLADU KANU: Sure.

24 THE CHAIRPERSON: It appears there are  
25 -- I'm sort of hearing two (2) different approaches --

1 MR. GLADU KANU: Sure.

2 THE CHAIRPERSON: -- for the  
3 consultation. One is focused on an IRP. Let's  
4 participate with Manitoba Hydro on the IRP. And the  
5 second one I'm hearing you talk about is more based on  
6 trust.

7 So what I would put to you is, doesn't  
8 it depend on what the purpose of the consultation is?  
9 If the purpose of the consultation is participating in  
10 an IRP process, then effectively you need an IRP or a  
11 starting point or whatever.

12 If the purpose is to develop an ongoing  
13 relationship built on trust, then the IRP is something  
14 that simply comes at some point, because, you know,  
15 the evidence we've heard so far is that there -- this  
16 is a living and breathing document. There will be a  
17 further IRP. It's not certain when. It could be  
18 three (3) to five (5) years from now.

19 So the question I put to you is: When  
20 do we, and in -- in what timeframe and for what  
21 purpose, do you think?

22 MR. GLADU KANU: Yeah. Okay. The --  
23 we'll -- we'll be here a long time. So in the -- in  
24 the simplest way I can think of is that -- well, okay.  
25 Two (2) -- two (2) parts.

1                   One is that we are -- like, building  
2 this relationship is -- it's just something that kind  
3 of has to happen, I guess I would say. So for -- and  
4 even just to think of Manitoba Hydro and Indigenous  
5 communities, I think there's a very long period of  
6 time following this -- this IRP where ongoing  
7 relationship is going to be just critical, right?  
8 It's going to be part of generations to come, frankly,  
9 until we, you know, for some reason stop needing  
10 energy or something like that.

11                   So, yeah. So that -- so that's very  
12 much necessary and why I see a process like this as an  
13 important part of building that relationship.

14                   The other thing I see is that -- is  
15 that there is -- to really build relationship, you'd  
16 have to test it and -- and come through on the other  
17 side. And this is true of, you know, sort of like any  
18 -- it's kind of a metaphor of any relationship, I  
19 imagine, but -- but also very true for Indigenous to  
20 government relations.

21                   When you see processes that have  
22 started somewhere and then had -- had a falling out,  
23 had a disagreement, do they come back around? Do they  
24 reconcile?

25                   If they do, those are stronger --

1 stronger -- those end up being stronger. They can end  
2 up existing into the future. The ones that find those  
3 disagreements and then never come back to the table,  
4 they -- well, they don't exist anymore, right? That -  
5 - that's sort of what -- that's how that works. So I  
6 do think they'll have to be tested to some degree.

7                   And then, yeah, for an IRP in terms of  
8 consultation, a kind of small 'C' consultation, I  
9 guess. I think that this then becomes just another  
10 point for Manitoba Hydro, for the PUB, and the  
11 Province of Manitoba to show where they stand in terms  
12 of building this relationship. Yeah.

13                   THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you, sir.  
14 If we could turn to Mr. Dysart, please.

15                   MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Again, I'm  
16 going to let Mr. Dysart introduce himself and his  
17 background and proceed with his testimony. And he's  
18 been affirmed.

19

20 PRESENTATION BY MR. LESLIE DYSART:

21                   MR. LESLIE DYSART: Good afternoon.  
22 I'd like to thank the Public Utilities Board and  
23 members for the opportunity to address the Integrated  
24 Resource Plan as submitted by Manitoba Hydro and hear  
25 our reality -- our reality and concerns from an

1 Indigenous perspective living with Manitoba Hydro on a  
2 daily basis over the last fifty (50) plus years.

3 My name is Leslie Dysart. I'm a  
4 hunter, fisher, and trapper from South Indian Lake  
5 Manitoba, the O-Pipon-Na-Piwin Cree Nation, but also  
6 the CEO of the Community Association of South Indian  
7 Lake, which has an agreement with Manitoba Hydro and  
8 Manitoba.

9 This is my lived experience and  
10 knowledge of Manitoba Hydro. South Indian Lake is in  
11 Northern Manitoba and was once a thriving Indigenous  
12 community until Manitoba Hydro and the Churchill River  
13 Diversion Project. This statement is driven by my  
14 lifelong lived experience on the CRD with the land and  
15 the water, also actively participating in processes  
16 over the many years.

17 And I do attempt to stay in scope of  
18 the IRP limitations, as restrictive as they are.  
19 Specifically with the Indigenous engagement or lack  
20 thereof, the risks which are significant, on-the-land  
21 experience with climate change, with the existing  
22 impacts, and importantly, the trust in Manitoba Hydro  
23 going forward all require articulation that are not  
24 detailed in the IRP.

25 I'm going to go a little off here. And

1 in respect to staying in scope, I ask the PUB Board  
2 members to have some latitude. And I recommend to the  
3 PUB that in relation to past impacts, if they're  
4 argued as such, should be considered as relevant facts  
5 that may impact future power generation going forward.

6 I have lived every second of my life  
7 under the oppression of Manitoba Hydro and its  
8 developments, witnessing firsthand not only the  
9 destructive nature of Manitoba Hydro, but also  
10 experience in its lack of caring for the environment,  
11 the wellbeing of Indigenous people, and communities  
12 and impacts.

13 Most of my life, I've tried to  
14 understand Manitoba Hydro, why it operates the  
15 Churchill River Diversion, why it operates to extremes  
16 with additional flooding and dewatering outside of its  
17 original licence.

18 I have participated in many forums in  
19 an attempt to educate, change operating parameters,  
20 and engage Manitoba Hydro in meaningful discussions to  
21 change the negative socioeconomic impacts of the CRD  
22 and other projects for a better future, all to no  
23 avail.

24 The PUB has an important -- has an --  
25 an important opportunity here to make significant and

1 meaningful directives to Manitoba Hydro and future  
2 projects. Everything must be considered.

3                   The -- the IRP assumes a clean slate  
4 with no baggage with Manitoba Hydro, a starting point,  
5 if you will, ignoring the dark history that remains  
6 mostly unresolved. This can affect any new  
7 development, projects, partnerships, and addressing  
8 socioeconomic issues. As it has been said, without  
9 addressing the past, we are doomed to repeat it.

10                   Sorry. Having participated in forums  
11 like the Clean Environment Commission with the  
12 Wuskwatim hearings in 2003, being co-chair of the  
13 South Indian Lake Environmental Committee with  
14 Manitoba Hydro from 2003 to 2013, the National Energy  
15 Board for the Manitoba-Minnesota Transmission Project  
16 hearing in 2018, Public Utilities Board in 2019 in  
17 respect to Keeyask, presenting at the United Nations  
18 Permanent Forum in 2019, and Senate hearings into Bill  
19 C226 in respect to addressing environmental racism in  
20 2024, I believe I know Manitoba Hydro well and its  
21 failing to Indigenous community.

22                   I want to address several topics in  
23 relation to the IRP. First, Manitoba Hydro's land  
24 acknowledgement on Page 5. I quote:

25                   "We acknowledge these lands and

1 pay our respects to the ancestors  
2 of these territories. The legacy  
3 of the past remains a strong  
4 influence on Manitoba Hydro's  
5 relationship with Indigenous  
6 communities today, and we remain  
7 committed to establishing and  
8 maintaining strong, mutually  
9 beneficial relationship with  
10 Indigenous communities."

11 I find this offensive, knowing and  
12 witnessing firsthand the destruction of burial sites  
13 of our ancestors to this day, the legacy of the past,  
14 which is still actively rooted in environmental racism  
15 practices, destroying the lands, the waters, fish  
16 populations, habitat, economics, Indigenous community,  
17 and the very culture of Indigenous peoples who live  
18 directly on or adjacent to Manitoba Hydro projects and  
19 its infrastructures.

20 Further, I repeat, "establishing and  
21 maintaining strong, mutually beneficial relationships"  
22 is something we have been desiring, requesting, and  
23 demanding for over five (5) decades with Manitoba  
24 Hydro and that has fallen on deaf ears with this  
25 public Crown corporation.

1 I recommend that Manitoba Hydro remove  
2 this acknowledgement and immediately implement  
3 meaningful reconciliation that includes immediate  
4 significant economic reconciliation and perhaps ask  
5 for forgiveness along the way.

6 Public engagement with Indigenous  
7 community. I found engagement severely lacking in the  
8 IRP and processes, especially regarding First Nations.  
9 Frankly, I would state this did not happen in a  
10 meaningful way for First Nations. Any engagement may  
11 not have happened at all or was highly selective if it  
12 did occur.

13 Who did they engage in Northern  
14 Manitoba? Certainly not our community of South Indian  
15 Lake, the O-Pipon-Na-Piwin First Nation, leadership of  
16 the First Nation, ground zero of the Churchill River  
17 Diversion Project.

18 This continued practice of saying there  
19 is engagement while not engaging in a meaningful way  
20 can and has effectively silenced First Nations, I  
21 would say by design. Consultation needed to happen.  
22 We -- we needed meaningful say going forward. This  
23 did not occur with the IRP.

24 I'm a forced partner with Manitoba  
25 Hydro. I must live with their decisions, good or bad,

1 as a stakeholder, ratepayer, and trying to live with  
2 the environmental degradation.

3           They necessarily do not and continue to  
4 work to deflect and deny reality. The IRP does not  
5 address these issues, which are real, significant, and  
6 will impact future projects and relations.

7           Manitoba Hydro -- while Manitoba and  
8 Manitoba Hydro have a long history of not meaningfully  
9 engaging with First Nations or have done so on a  
10 highly selective basis, further causing harm and will  
11 impact positive relations and harm for future  
12 partnerships. A bit repetitive there, but it needs to  
13 be said.

14           Specific to risks, there are many  
15 significant risks that need to be addressed. While  
16 there may be other processes which have not been  
17 clearly defined or identified or may not even exist  
18 today, the risks need to be stated for the record.

19           The IRP makes huge assumption that  
20 power generation with Northern Manitoba hydro dams  
21 will remain the same, perhaps more dam construction.  
22 That is an erroneous assumption. Dam operations and  
23 licensing remain contentious, impacting water -- water  
24 flows, which are very important to us. It should be  
25 important to everyone.

1                   The Augmented Flow Program was not part  
2 of the original CRD licence of 1973, yet is now the  
3 final CRD licence. We have been working to change  
4 that. Manitoba Hydro is aware, yet this is not  
5 included in the IRP.

6                   Current licensing issues with not only  
7 the CRD, but Lake Winnipeg regulation are relevant and  
8 can and has impacted relationship with many Indigenous  
9 communities in a negative way with Manitoba Hydro.

10                  Lake Winnipeg regulations licence  
11 expired on August 1st, 2026. The CRD is set to expire  
12 on September 1st, 2026. Manitoba appears to be  
13 woefully unprepared for meaningful reconciliation.  
14 Manitoba Hydro remains silent, does very little to  
15 mitigate and improve relations.

16                  Status quo on the CRD with licensing  
17 will be met with resistance and opposition. Future  
18 projects or initiatives can be put at risk without  
19 meaningful and possible -- positive change.

20                  Environmental racism has formed a basis  
21 of most, if not all, Manitoba Hydro projects, is -- is  
22 still very active, and there appears to be no plan or  
23 willingness for change.

24                  As a result of environmental racism  
25 towards Indigenous people, we were branded as

1 squatters on provincial Crown land. Our -- our homes  
2 were burned or dismantled, and our traditional  
3 economic and cultural camps were destroyed. We were  
4 forced to relocate from our traditional homes and were  
5 subjected to a foreign government structure. I was a  
6 child when this happened.

7           Clear indications of status quo appear  
8 to be the plan. Impacts of generating stations along  
9 with control structures are staying in the north,  
10 predominantly impacting First Nations. The IRP itself  
11 recommends more hydro be added, and it appears no  
12 other alternative development projects will be built  
13 in the north. This will result in continued or  
14 increased impacts with no benefits. I say no.

15           Bill C226 passed in June 2024 is not  
16 acknowledged or addressed in the IRP with current and  
17 future projects. Manitoba Hydro and/or Manitoba --  
18 or, sorry, Manitoba and/or Manitoba Hydro have not  
19 shown any indication of a process to implement Bill  
20 C226, in my view very clearly laying ground --  
21 groundwork for more litigation.

22           There are currently eight (8) recent  
23 statements of claims against Manitoba Hydro with its  
24 current operations: Berens River First Nation, June  
25 17th, 2025; Dakota Tipi First Nation, and Canupawakpa

1 Dakota Nation, October 21st, 2025; Black River First  
2 Nation, January 30th, 2026; Norway House Cree Nation,  
3 February 19th, 2026; York Factory First Nation, August  
4 28th, 2025; O-Pipon-Na-Piwin Cree Nation, CASL --  
5 which is the Community Association of Southern Lake --  
6 and the Fishers Association, May 19th, 2023; Mathias  
7 Colomb Cree Nation, November 29th, 2023; Southern  
8 Chiefs Organization and Named Individuals, September  
9 19th, 2024.

10                   How does the IRP propose Manitoba Hydro  
11 partner with these First Nations that are filing claim  
12 against them? Meaningful, positive partnerships do  
13 not include one partner suing the other. The negative  
14 aspects of past Hydro deals or so-called partnerships  
15 have a real risk of being replicated in wind power  
16 projects if the same business model is utilized.

17                   Manitoba Hydro has not -- Manitoba  
18 Hydro has not changed. The IRP does not address or  
19 acknowledge the failures and ignores the reality.  
20 Manitoba and Manitoba Hydro cannot continue to view  
21 the world with rose-colored glasses. Reality can no  
22 longer be ignored. Doing so will be harmful to all  
23 stakeholders.

24                   Climate change -- excuse that --  
25 broadly here. Net-zero by 2030, net-zero energy grid

1 by 2035, as mentioned in the IRP, is highly  
2 optimistic, perhaps unachievable due to the failure to  
3 acknowledge that Manitoba Hydro reservoirs are active  
4 and continuous emitters of greenhouse gases.

5 I have and continue to witness  
6 emissions due to the annual flooding, continuous  
7 erosion, melting of permafrost, and the continued  
8 degradation of acres and acres of northern boreal  
9 forest on the CRD-impacted waterways that include over  
10 3,700 kilometers of shoreline.

11 The IR -- the IRP talks of economic  
12 reconciliation, Indigenous partnerships, and  
13 Indigenous-lead energy projects. Without addressing  
14 the past and current devastating impacts of projects  
15 like the CRD, this has a low likelihood of being  
16 achieved.

17 Manitoba Hydro has not changed in its  
18 mentality in its approach to First Nations and  
19 partnerships. Alternative economic reconciliation  
20 must also be considered so impacted First Nations can  
21 enter into agreements on a level and equal manner.

22 Watching and learning how the current  
23 partnerships have left multi -- multi-generational  
24 debt to Manitoba Hydro is certainly not a path I would  
25 recommend to anyone. The Wuskwatim Limited

1 Partnership has left the First Nation with a  
2 significant debt load consisting of loans and advances  
3 on future profits -- profits that may never  
4 materialize.

5                   The current equity payments of the  
6 Spill Revenue Adjustment may not address the debt  
7 load. Equity payments have an end date. The First --  
8 the First Nations partnerships with Keeyask Generating  
9 Station is less than 3 percent equity.

10                   Part of an equal partnership -- and has  
11 left poor relations in communities. Other First  
12 Nations have been left out of these partnerships,  
13 intentionally, yet they realize the continued negative  
14 impacts.

15                   They all contribute to poor Indigenous  
16 relations going forward. There is little transparency  
17 with partnerships and are shrouded in silence with  
18 non-disclosure agreements. All of Manitoba Hydro's  
19 recent projects have gone over budget, significantly,  
20 even into the billions, including with First Nations  
21 partnerships.

22                   The Keeyask, originally estimated at  
23 \$6.5 billion, the actual cost is \$8.7 billion.

24                   Wuskwatim, originally estimated at \$800  
25 million, the actual cost, \$1.7 billion.

1                   The Manitoba Minnesota Transmission  
2 Project, original estimate, \$350 million. The actual  
3 cost, \$453, and I think that excludes the cost into  
4 Minnesota, which is around \$900 million or a billion  
5 dollars that ratepayers pay for. Subject to check.

6                   Bipole III, the original estimate, \$2.2  
7 billion. The actual cost, \$4.7 billion.

8                   Even the -- the Hydro headquarters next  
9 door here, which, personally, I think is -- is a  
10 headstone for Indigenous Culture in Northern Manitoba.  
11 Its original estimate is \$180 million. The actual is  
12 \$283. Some of it was that -- just ridiculous  
13 renovations.

14                  Projected profits have not materialized  
15 for some projects, perhaps never will, contributing to  
16 the Manitoba Hydro debt load and sustainability of  
17 First Nations growth. How can any First Nation or  
18 business entity take that risk in a reasonable manner?  
19 The IRP ignores all of these Manitoba Hydro  
20 recommended projects and proposes more. No thanks.

21                  Trust, in any business relation -- in  
22 any -- any business partnership relation, there must  
23 be a fair amount of trust. Manitoba Hydro cannot be  
24 trusted. Manitoba Hydro has shown time and again,  
25 they care little for Indigenous people and community,

1 agreements may be broken, remain unimplemented,  
2 changed and are unbalanced to the benefit of the Crown  
3 Corporation, leaving First Nations wanting.

4           Licence limits are exceeded without  
5 meaningful address, causing further harm. Again, we  
6 are forced partners with Manitoba Hydro with the CRD,  
7 realizing no benefits. Manitoba Hydro has not engaged  
8 us in a meaningful way since 2013. They don't even  
9 talk to us, yet we have an agreement with them. This  
10 is the Manitoba Hydro I know. I have to live with.

11           Wind and solar power initiatives, while  
12 positive, will do little for Northern First Nations as  
13 -- as the preferred areas are in southern Manitoba.  
14 Recent northern projects on our -- relatively on our  
15 doorsteps and employment opportunities have benefited  
16 predominantly southern communities and residents, at  
17 times, outside of the province with little lasting  
18 benefits to local communities. How will southern  
19 projects change this? I don't believe they will,  
20 given the current mentality within Manitoba Hydro.

21           Resources to participate in  
22 partnerships and developments are non-existent for  
23 most First Nations, like my own. Our local economy,  
24 that would have created opportunity to contribute in  
25 the multi-million dollar range, over time, has been

1 decimated by Manitoba Hydro under the lax oversight  
2 and apparent approval of Manitoba governments.

3                   We have little options. There are no  
4 current actions that change any of this. Again, in  
5 current -- incurring generational debt is not positive  
6 with Manitoba Hydro as a partner.

7                   Meaningful reconciliation and economic  
8 reconciliation. While great statements and goals  
9 remains relatively unachievable, in my view, with the  
10 current state of Manitoba and Manitoba Hydro and the  
11 IRP. The words ring hollow without meaningful,  
12 significant and immediate action. Without truth, we  
13 cannot have meaningful reconciliation.

14                   On September 13th, 2022, in my  
15 community, South Indian Lake, O-Pipon-Na-Piwin  
16 and Cree Nation, the leader of the NDP, the official  
17 opposition at the time, now the premier of Manitoba,  
18 Wab Kinew, visited us for two (2) days to learn,  
19 engage, listen, witness firsthand ongoing Manitoba  
20 Hydro impacts, but also hear solutions moving forward.

21                   He stated, in writing, without our  
22 request the following, I'll quote here.

23                   "Manitoba Hydro is a tremendous  
24 Utility owned by the people of our  
25 great province, including by the

1 people of OPCN, that delivers  
2 affordable electricity, good jobs  
3 in every region of the province  
4 and a path to addressing the  
5 climate crisis. Yet in order for  
6 us to have Manitoba Hydro live up  
7 to its full potential on these  
8 fronts, we must reconcile its past  
9 and ongoing impacts on Indigenous  
10 communities like OPCN.  
11 Today, the Manitoba NDP team is  
12 committing, should we earn the  
13 great honour of forming a  
14 government for the people of  
15 Manitoba, to giving Indigenous  
16 communities like OPCN and other  
17 hydro-affected First Nations and  
18 the Metis, a meaningful say in the  
19 future decisions of Hydro. This  
20 means ensuring the future  
21 operations of Hydro is flexible  
22 and responsive to the needs of  
23 these communities.  
24 This also means revisiting the  
25 final licence for the Churchill

1 River Diversion Project so the  
2 future of communities like OPCN  
3 and other hydro-affected  
4 communities can be as bright as  
5 communities in the province."

6 THE CHAIRPERSON: Mr. Dysart -- sorry,  
7 Mr. Dysart, you've got five (5) minutes.

8 MR. LESLIE DYSART: Okay, I'm -- fine  
9 with -- I'm finished.

10 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you.

11 MR. LESLIE DYSART: We are still  
12 waiting for these things to occur. We will be  
13 pressuring the premier to honour his words. The IRP  
14 fails to address any of these issues in a meaningful  
15 and in a short-term way.

16 We want to look forward and -- and  
17 we're not against progress, but we will no longer be  
18 sacrificed for power generation. (ANISININEW SPOKEN)  
19 I thank you.

20 THE CHAIRPERSON: Sir, I just want to  
21 clarify one thing in your statement.

22 At one point you said -- you were  
23 talking about us issuing directives to Manitoba Hydro  
24 as a result of this process.

25 And I just want to clarify, we're not

1 issuing directives. What we're doing is we're filing  
2 a report with recommendations to the government and  
3 then the government will make decisions. But I just  
4 want to clarify that.

5 MR. LESLIE DYSART: I -- I respect  
6 that. And I respect the comment that I just -- choose  
7 to use more -- more -- stronger language.

8 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes. That's  
9 correct.

10 MR. LESLIE DYSART: That -- that was  
11 my intention.

12 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yeah. Thank you.

13 Mr. Simonsen...?

14 BOARD MEMBER SIMONSEN: Just a quick  
15 question for clarification. Thank you for your  
16 presentation, by the way.

17 You mentioned something about risks of  
18 the current wind power proposals that are being sought  
19 by Manitoba Hydro.

20 Could you explain that for me a bit  
21 where you see those risks?

22 MR. LESLIE DYSART: Well, the risks  
23 speaking from a -- coming from a -- a hydro-impacted  
24 community that the IRP proposes we partner with -- I  
25 mean, those will be in -- in -- in south -- in

1 southern Manitoba. I mean, that's the preferred area.

2 I've experienced, my community  
3 experienced its members projects relatively on -- to  
4 repeat, on our doorstep. We're not fully included in  
5 these projects. So, I don't see how we can be  
6 included in projects that are further and further away  
7 from our communities. I mean, the facts speak for  
8 themselves as far as employment and lasting benefits.

9 I see that as a risk, specifically, if  
10 things don't change in Northern Manitoba with  
11 relationships, licensing and impacts, I would strongly  
12 recommend to First Nations, not just my own, that we  
13 oppose further projects until these things do change.  
14 So that, in itself, is a risk. It's real.

15 BOARD MEMBER SIMONSEN: Thank you.

16 THE CHAIRPERSON: Sorry, Dr. Grant...?

17 BOARD MEMBER GRANT: Thanks. Could  
18 you explain the Churchill River diversion a bit more  
19 to me? I don't quite understand the nature of that  
20 agreement. And it -- it's an ongoing -- has to be  
21 renewed, just that sort of thing.

22 MR. LESLIE DYSART: Do you have three  
23 (3) hours? Some of the members of the group will know  
24 I can talk about this without taking a breath for  
25 quite a long time.

1                   The Churchill River project was  
2 proposed in the late 1960s. It was -- it was very  
3 contentious. I'm going to try and really shorten  
4 this, but it is a -- a longstanding, devastating  
5 project.

6                   It -- it changed governments. It was  
7 initially proposed by the PC government. The NDP  
8 government under Schreyer promised no forced  
9 relocation, possibly not even going ahead with the  
10 projects. I mean, he made that promise to our -- my -  
11 - my Elders, my family. He reneged on that promise.

12                  The project went forward. Our lake,  
13 our lifeblood of our community, was flooded ten (10)  
14 feet. Our community was forced to relocate. We were  
15 -- we weren't given choices. As I said, in the  
16 presentation, our homes were burned down.

17                  The project diverts 75 percent of the  
18 natural flow of the Churchill River through an -- a  
19 manmade unnatural channel, south, into the Rattan  
20 Burtn Wood Rivers. And to use Hydro's numbers,  
21 powering up to 25 percent of the power that benefits  
22 Manitobans and is sold on -- on -- on the markets.

23                  It's hugely devastating. It destroyed  
24 our community. It is currently destroying our  
25 economics. Our community relied on commercial

1 fishery; Lake Whitefish predominantly sold on the  
2 international market. It was the third largest  
3 fishery in North America on this continent.

4 For a small northern Indigenous  
5 community, roughly about six hundred (600) people,  
6 that (INDISCERNIBLE) we were prosperous. We our --  
7 our annual income was five (5) to seven (7) times that  
8 of any other northern community and I, think, across  
9 Canada.

10 Manitoba and Manitoba Hydro didn't care  
11 to deal with that. They still don't care to deal with  
12 that. There is still opportunity there. Anyway, I'm  
13 starting to go on my -- but, yeah, it's a contentious  
14 project. I -- I would debate it was unnecessary. It  
15 became a project of arrogance. It had never been done  
16 before in the world, as far as I know.

17 So, there was a great push by the  
18 corporation and other parties to -- let's see if we  
19 can do it, you know. They basically melded two (2)  
20 watersheds, the Churchill River -- sorry, Churchill  
21 River watershed and Lake Winnipeg watershed, which is  
22 a whole topic that hasn't really been fully addressed.

23 One last thing here. The Churchill  
24 River Diversion and the operation of the Augmented  
25 Flow Program, which was never part of the original

1 licence, but is now the final licence, has never  
2 undergone an environmental or legal or socioeconomic  
3 review. That needs to happen.

4 BOARD MEMBER GRANT: So, a couple  
5 things. You're referring to South Indian Lake when  
6 you're --

7 MR. LESLIE DYSART: Yeah.

8 BOARD MEMBER GRANT: Okay. And -- and  
9 the nature of this licensing and agreement, so this is  
10 up for annual review or regular review? Is that how  
11 it --

12 MR. LESLIE DYSART: Well, were -- were  
13 never asked. We're not engaged meaningfully on  
14 licensing.

15 Initially under the Water Powers Act, a  
16 licence, an interim licence is granted. The Water  
17 Power Act is a colonial document, archaic, that  
18 shouldn't be used anymore.

19 But, anyway, the -- the -- the project  
20 would receive, I'm paraphrasing here, a -- a final  
21 licence, shortly after the project is complete.  
22 Manitoba has -- is on record saying that project was  
23 complete in 1977. They only applied for a permanent  
24 licence -- or a final licence in -- in 2019, forty-six  
25 (46) -- forty-eight (48) -- forty-seven (47) years

1 after so-called completion.

2                   They have operate -- they haven't  
3 followed the terms of their 1973 interim licence since  
4 1978. They almost immediately went outside of licence  
5 and so-called testing of -- of our lake with more  
6 flooding, more dewatering.

7                   They were finally granted the Augmented  
8 Flow Program in 1986, formally, which only went  
9 forward with annual approvals requested by Manitoba  
10 Hydro by simple letter, and then approved by Manitoba  
11 Government, again by simple letter, on an annual  
12 basis, May 1st of any given year to the -- to May 1st  
13 or whatever -- the -- the day before is.

14                   Now, Hydro has operated that program  
15 outside of its original parameters for -- for -- since  
16 1986. And in 2021, the government issued the CRD  
17 final licence, really just changing the name from  
18 Augmented Flow to the CRD final licence, with one  
19 major change.

20                   They took out the mitigation clause.  
21 It's a license to destroy. It's a license to destroy  
22 the waterways, Southern Indian Lake, and us as  
23 Indigenous people who rely on that water.

24                   It needs to change and we're -- we're  
25 going to try and force change.

1 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Mr.  
2 Thiessen ...?

3

4 CROSS-EXAMINATION BY MR. DAVID THIESSEN:

5 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: Thank you, Mr.  
6 Chair. And thank you, Mr. Dysart and Mr. Kanu.  
7 Mindful of the time and the Board's other questions, I  
8 will keep my questions brief.

9 But Mr. Dysart, you'll recall that you  
10 submitted verbal testimony as an exhibit in this  
11 proceeding earlier, correct? The recording?

12 MR. LESLIE DYSART: I guess I did.  
13 Yeah.

14 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: Thank you, and  
15 for the record, that's Wa Ni Ska Tan Exhibit 15.

16 You expressed in that evidence your  
17 concern that Manitoba Hydro sometimes will come into a  
18 community with pre-selected community members with  
19 whom they want to engage.

20 They'll engage with those folks, but  
21 not the community as a whole. Do you recall that?

22 MR. LESLIE DYSART: Yes.

23 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: So, I'm curious  
24 if there are, in your opinion, members of the  
25 community whose voices are particularly important to

1 seek out. And I'm -- I'm thinking of Elders or  
2 Knowledge Keepers.

3 Would that be a -- a fair summary?

4 MR. LESLIE DYSART: Definitely. I  
5 mean, they are Knowledge Keepers and have a long  
6 history with Manitoba Hydro pre-flood and -- and --  
7 and now. So, yes.

8 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: Earlier this  
9 morning, Dr. McLaughlin shared one Elder's perspective  
10 in a quote. And I can pull it up, if necessary, but I  
11 don't think we'll need to.

12 That Elder expressed concern with an  
13 online survey as a way to engage them because in that  
14 Elder's view, they didn't know how to engage that  
15 survey just from a technological perspective.

16 Now, recognizing that won't be  
17 everyone's experience, what would you suggest might be  
18 a good way to engage Knowledge Keepers or Elders?

19 MR. LESLIE DYSART: Yeah. I mean,  
20 that's -- it's a very good question. It needs to  
21 happen. I can't speak on behalf of the Elders, just  
22 for the record. So, you need to engage them in a  
23 meaningful and fair way and not just visit. Manitoba  
24 Hydro likes to visit and leave.

25 And it's been my experience, they are

1 selective in what they use, some of the knowledge  
2 they're given. They only take selective parts of it  
3 and twist it. So, there has to be a -- an open  
4 engagement with -- with Knowledge Keepers and Elders.

5 And a clear understanding that there is  
6 -- their -- their words or knowledge will be utilized  
7 in the decision-making.

8 There's been Elders who will refuse to  
9 talk to Manitoba Hydro because of the abuse they  
10 suffered when sharing their -- their knowledge openly  
11 with the expectation it would be taken and used to  
12 improve situations.

13 One of my late aunts literally threw  
14 out people who wanted to talk about Manitoba Hydro. I  
15 mean, she invited them into her home, offered them  
16 tea, and as soon as they said, we want to talk about  
17 the Wuskwatim project, she literally grabbed them by  
18 the neck and threw them out the door. She was -- she  
19 was a powerful woman.

20 So, that's their lived experience from  
21 -- from what I've witnessed over the years. So, they  
22 have to repair the harm probably, first of all, and  
23 not just say, we want to come talk to you and go away.  
24 You know, that's what they do.

25 So, and they do it poorly and

1 selectively. So, it -- it definitely needs  
2 improvement.

3 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: Thank you for  
4 that. So, if I could just -- and, Mr. Kanu, you can  
5 weigh in on this as well to expand on that.

6 If -- if the two (2) of you were tasked  
7 with making a plan to engage all those Knowledge  
8 Keepers, where would you begin? And that may be a  
9 question for the --

10 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: I was going  
11 to say, look -- turn around and look behind you,  
12 but...

13 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: Thank you.

14 MS. CHARLOTTEE CONNOLLY: But yeah,  
15 let's well, I'll -- I've been noting the questions for  
16 the Community Witness Panel, so I'd invite you to ask  
17 then Board Member or yourself.

18

19 CONTINUED BY MR. DAVID THIESSEN:

20 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: Thank you. I'll  
21 next ask Ms. Paige to please pull up Wa Ni Ska Tan  
22 Exhibit 14. So, this is Mr. Kanu's written report,  
23 and PDF page 4, please.

24 Mr. Kanu, in this section of your  
25 report, you list some features of what, in your

1 opinion, constitute meaningful engagement, correct?

2 MR. GLADU KANU: That's correct.

3 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: And I've taken  
4 the liberty of highlighting some parts, which I'll  
5 just summarize.

6 They include early engagement, frequent  
7 connections before and after, and multiple scales and  
8 touch points, correct?

9 MR. GLADU KANU: Correct.

10 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: If we go to the  
11 next page of your report, PDF page 5, please.

12 You also identify a series of questions  
13 that leaders and community members must often consider  
14 when deciding if engagement is even worthwhile,  
15 correct?

16 MR. GLADU KANU: That's correct.

17 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: This strikes me  
18 as a significant observation. So, it's not only  
19 having more opportunities to engage, there has to be a  
20 certain quality of engagement in order for it to be,  
21 in your words, worthwhile.

22 Am I understanding that correctly?

23 MR. GLADU KANU: Yeah. That -- when  
24 we think of -- a lot of -- year, a lot of leaders are  
25 -- have a lot of responsibilities and a lot of

1 meetings they have to attend, and they can't be at all  
2 of them, so.

3 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: And earlier, the  
4 Board asked you questions about capacity.

5 So, along those lines, is it fair to  
6 say that not every community has capacity to fully  
7 engage?

8 MR. GLADU KANU: Yeah, that's correct.

9 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: And in your  
10 opinion, what opportunities or obligations does  
11 Manitoba Hydro specifically have to address capacity  
12 issues?

13 MR. GLADU KANU: Well, as -- as we  
14 heard from -- from Mr. Dysart, there is, yeah -- the  
15 history of -- of generating quite a lot of wealth off  
16 of -- of energy, natural resources, around  
17 communities, but not with communities.

18 And so, there is the need for capacity  
19 building and supporting participation, I think, comes  
20 from there. That -- that -- that's from my point of  
21 view, at least.

22 And if we want to have anything in the  
23 future where we're working together and trusting each  
24 other, then that's -- those kinds of resources are  
25 needed.

1                   And then the other thing is just most  
2 of the people who are able to spar -- participate in  
3 these kinds of processes have other sources of -- of  
4 income and resources, students that they work with  
5 that -- that can support them.

6                   And a lot of -- many communities don't,  
7 right, and -- and governments, same thing. We have  
8 whole departments of multiple people who can focus on,  
9 like, an environmental issue.

10                  And then when they go to a community,  
11 there's a single, sometimes a counselor, who has that  
12 as part of a broad bunch of portfolios. Maybe there's  
13 a land manager who's really dealing with a lot of  
14 community infrastructure issues, maybe they have a  
15 department, if -- there's very -- very different --  
16 big differences in capacity.

17                  MR. DAVID THIESSEN:    Thank you for  
18 that. And, Mr. Dysart, anything to add to that  
19 response?

20                  MR. LESLIE DYSART:    Could you repeat  
21 your question?

22                  MR. DAVID THIESSEN:    Oh, I hope I can.  
23 What -- what role do you see Manitoba having in  
24 building capacity? What obligations or opportunities  
25 do you see for Manitoba Hydro specifically to assist?

1 MR. LESLIE DYSART: Yeah. Manitoba  
2 Hydro has a huge responsibility to repair the damage  
3 it continues to inflict on First Nations, like my own  
4 specifically.

5 They're actively, with their  
6 operations, impacting our economics. Any land and  
7 water-based activity is -- is almost unachievable and  
8 cannot be maintained because of the operations of the  
9 Augmented Flow Program, which is now the final  
10 licence.

11 We haven't, as an -- a -- a prime  
12 example, our -- our local economy was heavily reliant  
13 commercially since 1941 on South Indian Lake. Hasn't  
14 -- we haven't fished for three (3) years. I don't see  
15 us fishing anytime soon unless there's changes.

16 So, that's a specific example where  
17 it's quite simple, the solution is change the  
18 operating par -- parameters of the CRD going back to  
19 its original license, which they never really followed  
20 to begin with, which they wrote and asked for.

21 And investing in and repairing the harm  
22 so we can build capacity to possibly entertain future  
23 development, future partnerships, future projects.

24 That's just one very specific example.

25 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: Thank you. Ms.

1 Paige, PDF page 8, please.

2 Mr. Kanu, the last highlighted portion  
3 on this page reads in part:

4 "This means that employment [or  
5 yeah] this means that employment  
6 is a major focus of the economic  
7 reconciliation metric, remains  
8 critical to the IRP.

9 Could you help -- could you expand on  
10 that a bit for me? In what way is employment a factor  
11 that could have been considered in the IRP process?

12 MR. GLADU KANU: Okay. Well, two (2)  
13 parts. One is that employment makes up some portion  
14 of the -- the socioeconomic metrics, like the -- both  
15 economic reconciliation and then economic development.

16 It's clear that jobs are part of that,  
17 both for all Manitobans and it's more specifically for  
18 indigenous people. That remains important. So, I  
19 didn't want my criticism to be seen as, like, we need  
20 to look at everything but jobs, for instance.

21 Then the other was that -- that  
22 different kinds of resources just have -- they -- they  
23 have different implications in terms of what -- what  
24 kinds of jobs are available, whether it's something  
25 short-term or long-term.

1                   Is it just construction? Are there  
2 things that are more around operations? So, if a --  
3 if a community has an ongoing program that employs  
4 people for a long period of time, that's obviously, in  
5 my opinion, is much more beneficial than something  
6 that is a larger, you know, just a 10-year or five-  
7 year build-out, and then -- and then there's no jobs  
8 left after that, or they have to import people because  
9 it's so much at once.

10                   So, different -- yeah, the -- the --  
11 different results in terms of what resource options  
12 you pick.

13                   MR. DAVID THIESSEN: Okay. Thank you  
14 for that, and one final question.

15                   Mr. Kanu, when you were answering  
16 questions about community-led energy opportunities, I  
17 believe you said one of the reasons that ought to be  
18 within the context of an IRP is that it makes it  
19 transparent and subject to public scrutiny.

20                   Did I hear you correctly?

21                   MR. GLADU KANU: Yeah. You heard me  
22 correctly.

23                   MR. DAVID THIESSEN: So, my question  
24 is about public scrutiny.

25                   So, does that mean the public ought to

1 have a voice in how those community-led energy  
2 projects proceed?

3 MR. GLADU KANU: Well, you know, this  
4 is -- I would say, this is my opinion, really, first  
5 of all, is that presumably our -- I think we're  
6 assuming, like, Indigenous leaders are democraticl --  
7 democratically elected, but then are also sometimes  
8 treated more as, like, the owners of a company or a  
9 business where they have much more confidentiality  
10 than provincial or municipal leaders.

11 I think there's challenges there in  
12 terms of, like, just saying, well, the public at large  
13 should be the ones evaluating those leaders.

14 But also, if the people who elected  
15 them also can't do that, then -- then there's no  
16 scrutiny there, right. And so, I think it's -- it's a  
17 thing of, like, do we see Indigenous nations as  
18 governments that have -- have that responsibility to  
19 those people, or are they, you know, they're not, you  
20 know, are -- are they just the sole voice that needs -  
21 - has any importance?

22 I mean, I -- I think that they should  
23 be part -- they should be responsible to their own  
24 people.

25 And if processes like that, that have

1 some resources can support scrutiny, accountability,  
2 transparency, both for those leaders and then their  
3 partners, say, at Manitoba Hydro and -- and elsewhere,  
4 I think, yeah, I would say that's important.

5 MR. DAVID THIESSEN: Thank you for  
6 that, and those are my questions. Thanks to both of  
7 you. Mr. Chair.

8 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. We're --  
9 sorry, Mr. Dysart, did you have a comment?

10 MR. LESLIE DYSART: With the Board's  
11 permission, I just want to elaborate.

12 THE CHAIRPERSON: Sure. Sure, please  
13 go ahead.

14 MR. LESLIE DYSART: I'll be brief.

15 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yeah.

16 MR. LESLIE DYSART: There's been,  
17 like, assumptions here and -- that only Chiefs and  
18 Councils may be spoken to by Manitoba Hydro.

19 Manitoba Hydro's history doesn't --  
20 that's not true. In relation to, specifically to our  
21 community, Manitoba Hydro engaged our Fishermen's  
22 Association decades ago on an independent basis,  
23 recognizing they had a membership that focused on  
24 fishing. They signed an agreement with the  
25 Fishermen's, a number of agreements, actually, going

1 back to 1988.

2 Also, they spoke independently with the  
3 Trappers Association away from Chief and Council to  
4 say, not that they weren't included, but they  
5 recognized these were elected representatives of -- of  
6 their membership, and -- and with specific priorities,  
7 like, for trapping and fishing issues. They signed an  
8 agreement with our Trappers Association in 1984, you  
9 know.

10 So, it's -- it's a choice and a fairly  
11 recent choice by Manitoba Hydro not to talk to other  
12 independent groups elected by their membership.

13 Like in our case, they haven't talked  
14 to us since 2013 in a meaningful way, even though we  
15 have an agreement with them signed in 1992 that  
16 includes the Manitoba government, you know.

17 So, this -- I don't even know if it's a  
18 policy, but it just -- they -- one day they decided,  
19 we're only talking to Chief and Councils, and they  
20 shut the door on resource users, so. Thank you.

21 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. We're  
22 going to take the afternoon break so that we don't  
23 have to interrupt the Wa Ni Ska Tan Panel.

24 So, we're going to break for 15  
25 minutes, so we'll resume at 2:30. Thank you.

1

2 --- Upon recessing at 2:17 p.m.

3 --- Upon resuming at 2:36 p.m.

4

5 THE CHAIRPERSON: Ms. Connolly...?

6

7 WA NI SKA TAN ALLIANCE PANEL

8 ELDER RITA MONIAS

9 ELDER NELLIANE CROMARTY

10 ELDER ELLEN COOK (TEAMS)

11 MERVIN GARRICK

12 TANYA MCDOUGALL

13 MELANIE MOLIN

14

15 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Thank you.

16 I'd like to start by sincerely thanking the Board for  
17 welcoming this amazing Panel of community witnesses,  
18 Elders, and Knowledge Keepers to deliver their  
19 perspectives to this Board.

20 I'll just walk us through our plan for  
21 this afternoon so you know what to expect. So, I'm  
22 going to offer very short comments just on the purpose  
23 of this Panel and the voice video will be showing.  
24 Elder Nelliane is going to do a opening prayer, and  
25 we'll ask everybody to stand for that, and it will be

1 in her language.

2 We'll then show a short video,  
3 approximately five (5) minutes, which includes some  
4 witnesses who couldn't be here in person. And we felt  
5 that was important because Indigenous knowledge is  
6 place-based, and so the ability to provide testimony  
7 from their home territory is important.

8 I'm then going to allow each witness to  
9 introduce themselves. They'll say their name, their  
10 community, and why they felt it was important to come  
11 here.

12 And then I'll facilitate an open  
13 conversation with the Panelists, drawing on some of  
14 the questions we've already heard today. So, I  
15 encourage you to jump in and ask the Panelists any  
16 questions you'd like to.

17 We'll then have a closing prayer again  
18 from Elder Nelliane, and I'll again ask everyone to  
19 stand.

20 So, very briefly, the purpose of this  
21 Panel. Wa Ni Ska Tan believes that planning processes  
22 must be grounded in lived experiences and not abstract  
23 models alone. The intention of this Panel is to  
24 create a space where First Nation people can speak  
25 directly to this Board about energy-related challenges

1 and risks without collapsing those issues into  
2 technical and Western ways of knowing.

3               The Panel, as I mentioned, is composed  
4 of elders, knowledge keepers, and advocates from  
5 different communities with diverse perspectives. They  
6 are here as individuals and are not representing their  
7 nations as a whole.

8               The witnesses may speak to energy  
9 challenges relating to affordability, reliability,  
10 safety, access to efficiency programming, engagement  
11 with Manitoba Hydro, as well as their interests or  
12 experience with energy-led alternatives.

13              Now, I -- I think it's very important  
14 for me at this point to address the scoping issues.  
15 So, I did have a conversation with our witnesses about  
16 what was in scope and out of scope in this hearing.  
17 And I just want to -- maybe this isn't very lawyerly  
18 of me, but when I explained it, the reaction I got  
19 from one of the Elders here was, do I matter, does my  
20 voice matter.

21              And so, I think it's just very  
22 important for the record to state that what I've heard  
23 so far in interacting with some of the Indigenous  
24 witnesses is they feel that they've been scoped out of  
25 the IRP. They feel that they've been scoped out of

1 the government's review of this process.

2                   And I think what we've heard today is I  
3 -- I know I'm veering into testimony, please forgive  
4 me, but I just want to set the tone here. I think  
5 we've heard today that there are some ongoing  
6 injustices that require a remedy if the relationship  
7 is going to be repaired. And I think the IRP could be  
8 a vehicle to rectify some injustices and bring  
9 benefits.

10                   And so, I encourage this Board, when  
11 the witnesses may veer into out-of-scope issues, to  
12 think creatively about their relevance to this IRP and  
13 future iterations of IRP. So, sorry for the soapbox  
14 speech there.

15                   So, Elder Nelliane, I'd ask you if you  
16 could kindly lead us in an opening prayer. And I'll  
17 ask everyone to stand, please.

18

19                   (OPENING PRAYER)

20

21                   MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Thank you  
22 very much, Elder Nelliane. And now I'll just ask  
23 either Ms. McMillin or -- if you could play the voice  
24 video. Fantastic. Thank you.

25

1 (VIDEO PLAYED)

2

3 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Okay. I'll  
4 ask each of our witnesses here to introduce themselves  
5 with their name, community, and why you're here before  
6 we ask questions from the Board. Ellen Cook, I  
7 believe is -- she's -- okay. She -- I think she was  
8 waiting to be let in the waiting room, but I'll let  
9 these witnesses proceed and I will problem solve our  
10 virtual witness. Thank you. So.

11 ELDER RITA MONIAS: Good afternoon.  
12 My name is Rita Monias. I'm from Pimicikamak. And  
13 I've been involved in advocating -- advocating for the  
14 -- for the environment and -- and our future  
15 generations for a long time.

16 I have been involved with Manitoba  
17 Hydro for a long time as well. And there are things  
18 that we didn't really agree with what Manitoba Hydro  
19 was doing to our people.

20 There were agreements that were made  
21 between Manitoba Hydro and our other four (4)  
22 communities. We had the Northern Flood Agreement, but  
23 then everybody went for their Master Implementation  
24 Plan or Comprehensive Implementation Plan -- Plans.  
25 We didn't, not Pimicikamak.

1                   The very reason why we didn't -- our  
2 people didn't want to take the agreement is because of  
3 -- we have had years of experience with Manitoba Hydro  
4 about not implementing -- implementing anything that  
5 they had agreed upon. It'll be forty-nine (49) years  
6 now in December 16 -- on December 16th, forty-nine  
7 (49) years that we had the Northern Flood Agreement.

8                   And then there were agreements they  
9 wanted us -- other agreements they wanted us to take,  
10 like global negotiations, public proposed basis of  
11 settlement, and then CIA, Comprehensive Implementation  
12 Agreement. And in that agreement, lobbying was --  
13 wasn't allowed by them.

14                  I mean, who are they to tell us that we  
15 cannot speak out for what we believe in lake  
16 advocating for the environment, protecting  
17 environment? So, that agreement didn't go through,  
18 but with the other four (4) plans, it did. And there  
19 were paid substantial amount of money to speak against  
20 environmental impacts.

21                  Anyway, to make -- to make my -- my  
22 presentation a little shorter, there were -- I'll just  
23 mention three (3) alternative energy plants that we  
24 had we -- we had talked with Manitoba Hydro about.  
25 The -- the biggest, I think would have been -- if it

1 went through, was the biomass because biomass would  
2 have had the opportunity for us with Manitoba Hydro to  
3 clean the waterways of our system, and then use the --  
4 the debris to make a biomass -- biomass energy. And  
5 then there would have been employment. There would  
6 have been economic -- economic opportunities for other  
7 matters other than making our own bottled water to  
8 sell.

9                   But the biggest of that project that we  
10 were hoping for was to clean the environment and for  
11 be able -- for water to be able to flow freely as it  
12 should have been.

13                   Another project that we talked about is  
14 solar energy. Solar energy was never a big thing for  
15 Manitoba Hydro. And we did a little program of using  
16 one (1) solar panel, testing one (1) solar panel in a  
17 in a trap -- in a cabin on a trap line. Just one (1)  
18 worked. It produced energy. And then, unfortunately,  
19 when we had the wildfire, it burned down.

20                   As far as I have been -- as far as I  
21 know and as far as I've been told, it five (5) or six  
22 (6) solar panels would be able to accommodate a  
23 household. That's as far as we went.

24                   And then we were talking about CMHC  
25 housing, CMHC houses. To -- to have wood stoves, it

1 we -- we knew when we talked to people from the CMHC  
2 housing that those houses could have been -- were able  
3 to be converted into -- into using as wood -- wood  
4 stove heaters.

5                   So, that's -- those were just a few of  
6 the alternative energies that we had talked about with  
7 Manitoba Hydro, but none of them ever went anywhere.

8                   So, when we come -- when it comes to  
9 this hearing here, we were already attacked by  
10 Manitoba Hydro from years before that we are not  
11 supposed to speak out on anything. Like, you know,  
12 we're -- they think they could shut us up, but then  
13 some of us are not. The taipo (phonetic) can be shut  
14 up.

15                   I -- I never quit. I didn't quit and I  
16 won't quit. I had two (2) bans from Parliament Hill.  
17 It is very, very important for some people to put  
18 their -- themselves ahead for other people to be able  
19 to get the message that we are unjustly -- unjustly  
20 attacked by a corporation with the help of Manitoba  
21 Hydro -- I mean, the province. It's devastating, but  
22 we move on. And we will move on. We'll move on. Got  
23 more to say, but I think that's good enough.

24                   MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Thank you  
25 very much, Rita. And, Melanie, I'll ask you to

1 introduce yourself.

2 MS. MELANIE MOLIN: Greetings to all.

3 (ANISININEW SPOKEN). I would like to introduce myself

4 with my traditional name (OTHER TONGUE SPOKEN) Flying

5 Eagle Spirit Woman. And my missionary name is Rose

6 Melanie Molin. I am from Pakitihogany, meaning a good

7 fishing place. It is located in North Manitoba.

8 Northern Manitoba, my homeland is accessible by air,

9 train, and with -- with a winter road for three (3)

10 months, okay.

11 My family consists of surviving mother

12 and ten (10) children. My father, two (2) siblings

13 are in the spirit world. My parents have always

14 encouraged us to get a good education and repeatedly

15 told us (ANISININEW SPOKEN) which translates to get a

16 good education.

17 I am the third oldest of the twelve

18 (12) children. I proudly state that I have fulfilled

19 their instructions to get an education. I completed

20 my Bachelor's of Arts, Bachelor's of Education from

21 Brandon University in 2023.

22 I enrolled in the environmental

23 geography master degree in September 2025 at the

24 University of Manitoba. I believe my progress is

25 rooted in the wisdom of the land and has benefited my

1 studies.

2 My lived experience from childhood to  
3 the present is the intergenerational gifts from our  
4 ancestors bestowed by the (ANISININEW SPOKEN) creator.  
5 These gifts are embedded within the land, water, sky,  
6 and fire, elements that are a life and possess a  
7 spirit and have been passed down through generations.

8 So, far too long, the land has been  
9 silenced. Respectively, the voice of the land and the  
10 voice of the Indigenous people must be heard. The  
11 growing balance of life remains heavily screwed  
12 towards the colonial interests.

13 Northern Indigenous communities have  
14 consistently been marginalized, subject to control and  
15 harsh treatments. Although the unseated lands were  
16 never owned, in the Western sense, the Indigenous  
17 people has always served as -- as their rightful  
18 stewards.

19 The history of displacement and  
20 disruption is root -- is deeply rooted. In -- in  
21 1875, Indigenous people of Northern Manitoba were  
22 forced to surrender their Traditional lands to the  
23 Crown.

24 1901, in -- Traditional territories  
25 were forced into designated reserves. 1960, a major

1 industrial initiative began to take shape. The  
2 government relocated Northern Indigenous populations  
3 into restricted plots of land without transparency or  
4 clear communication, making -- marking the start of  
5 the major Manitoba Hydro projects.

6 The provincial government created  
7 Manitoba Power Commission 1999 under the Electric  
8 Power Transmission Act to bring power to rural areas.  
9 This is the fact in our province of Manitoba.

10 In 1985, Manitoba Hydro built a 69 K5  
11 transmission line extending roughly 70 kilometers from  
12 the Laurie River Power System to Pagawagon (phonetic)  
13 connecting to remote First Nations community of  
14 (INDISCERNIBLE) Cree Nation, with electricity and  
15 supplying reliable power to its residents.

16 I often question why Manitoba Hydro  
17 buried the old diesel tanks at the former site of the  
18 Paganowagon School. Instead -- instead of fulfilling  
19 its duty to be environmentally responsible, the severe  
20 damage from diesel and oil pollution caused health  
21 issues, skin conditions, cancers, and other chronic  
22 alignments.

23 I understand the increasing number of  
24 cancer patients in my community and my loss of my  
25 father due to this disease as he worked at the school.

1 Manitoba Hydro remains a constant threat to the  
2 environment with transmission stations spanning the  
3 landscapes and water -- water diversions that continue  
4 to degrade local wild -- wild habitats, plants, and  
5 ecosystems.

6                   Despite repeated effort by Indigenous  
7 communities to raise their formal concerns regarding  
8 their Traditional territories, these warnings have  
9 been largely ignored.

10                   While Manitoba Hydro promotes its  
11 operation as environmental-friendly, the ongoing  
12 disturbance, destruction, and contamination of the  
13 land contradicts these claims. Current government  
14 policies continue to prioritize utility developments  
15 over Indigenous sovereignty and rights. Despite these  
16 challenges, the wisdom of our ancestors endures paving  
17 the way for future generation to advocate even more  
18 effectively.

19                   (ANISININEW SPOKEN). Mother Earth is  
20 sacred and has a living spirit that must be respected  
21 and protected. Just as this person seeks medical care  
22 with injury, as stewards of Mother Earth, we must  
23 continue to acknowledge that our land requires healing  
24 before damage occurs that may be beyond repair.  
25 Protecting the environment is an urgent priority for

1 the survival and wellbeing of all future generation.  
2 And why I'm saying this, because we matter as  
3 Indigenous people. (ANISININEW SPOKEN).

4 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Thank you  
5 very much. And Mervin, if you could just press your  
6 microphone.

7 ELDER MERVIN GARRICK: Good afternoon  
8 to the Board, to the Counsel, and to the Interveners  
9 and those present here at this hearing.

10 My name is Mervin Garrick, and I am an  
11 Elder. I'm seventy-nine (79) years old, going on to  
12 eighty (80) in May. And pretty much I have grown up  
13 with the -- the disaster of our -- of our community.  
14 The disaster continues to happen.

15 I am also a product of the Residential  
16 School. The government's position at that time was to  
17 get rid of me. I was also a product of the Indian  
18 hospitals of which I suffered tuberculosis because of  
19 the -- the environment that we live in -- in  
20 Pimicikamak. The houses that were built for us were  
21 not really, really houses supposed to be. They were  
22 more or less a shed, according to Indian Affairs.

23 So many people have -- have survived  
24 the conditions. I remember an -- an Elder chief, a  
25 first chief, Albert Sinclair, that went to Ottawa back

1 in 1938. And these conditions have already started to  
2 be noticeable by the community.

3 His purpose that -- there in -- in  
4 Ottawa was to address issues that are confronting us  
5 as peoples and as a community. He spoke about the  
6 health, the health, and continues to be a problem in  
7 our area.

8 He spoke to the government saying, How  
9 do you expect my people, my woman, my ladies to be  
10 healthy, and our children to be healthy. Where -- my  
11 mother, my grandmother, gave birth in a corner of a  
12 house that's not properly heated without running  
13 water, a corner where we gathered our old clothes to  
14 put on a floor for the baby to be delivered there.

15 How is that acceptable in other  
16 society? It hurts. It continues to hurt.

17 We agreed to share our land. We sang  
18 treaties and trust only to be hunted down through what  
19 I've mentioned. Our land is our best surviving tool  
20 that we have, and the governments continue to want to  
21 take that away from us also.

22 Are we happy? Are we crying? Yes.  
23 We're crying because our mother earth is being hunted  
24 down, being raped. Our waters are not drinkable now.  
25 At one time, my father was a fishing -- went fishing.

1 He kept a glass of water from the lake.

2 He said, Son, years from now, you're  
3 not going to have this. You're going to have to buy  
4 your water. And not long ago, our water we bought  
5 from the store. Today with the powerhouse that we had  
6 our people separate.

7 Our water was destroyed. They promised  
8 clean water, but how can it be clean when every  
9 garbage is coming down the river towards our lake?  
10 How do you expect that? How do you expect our kids to  
11 be swimming in the lakes?

12 The liberty, the -- the freedom that  
13 that we had. That destruction is such a big  
14 destruction. It hurts every individual in our  
15 community. It's starting to show up in our children  
16 as well.

17 They hear Manitoba Hydro, they hear  
18 power outage. Schools are interrupted because of  
19 power outages. Our people suffer that are on  
20 machines, breathing machines. And this is the -- this  
21 is the issue that our -- our chief addressed in Ottawa  
22 in 1937/'38.

23 It's still here. I'm still here. Do I  
24 matter? It hurts. If you lived where I lived, I  
25 think you would've had a change of heart. You took

1 advantage of us. You took advantage of us, of our  
2 children as well now.

3                   You promised us this hydro project was  
4 not going to damage much. For every acre of land that  
5 we flipped was the -- was the promise. Since 1982, we  
6 only received a few acres of land. In the meantime, I  
7 don't know if any calculations were done by our  
8 engineers on the Nelson River.

9                   The Nelson River was this. The Nelson  
10 River is from that house to that -- to that corner.  
11 That's how high it widened. And millions of acres  
12 have been destroyed. We were never compensated. We  
13 were never compensated for that yet.

14                   Yet the -- the government wants to buy  
15 out, was trying to buy us out. We fought against it.  
16 We knew that there was a lot of damage coming up. It  
17 still continues to happen.

18                   My father was a commercial fisherman.  
19 My father was a trapper. We never had to line up for  
20 -- well, we never had to line up for welfare till one  
21 time. There was nothing my dad could do because he  
22 suffered some illness, so he couldn't fish.

23                   We would have to go and line up at the  
24 welfare office. He took us there, and we -- we didn't  
25 -- we didn't qualify for welfare because he had

1 earnings before, three thousand (3,000), but then  
2 three thousand dollars (\$3,000) on that profit that he  
3 made, he had to pay for his men also.

4                   So we ate fish three (3) times a day.  
5 Three (3) times a day we had fish because the  
6 government didn't want to help us out. But we're  
7 still here. The voice is still here. The herds is  
8 still here. I continue to voice these concerns, many  
9 indications.

10                   And on terms of the consultation,  
11 ladies and gentlemen, you need to talk to us, not just  
12 the chief and council, because we were the living  
13 spirits in that -- in that land. We were the fishers,  
14 the trappers. The Chief and Council arrived  
15 yesterday, and they don't know our story. They don't  
16 know our pain. We continue to cry. We continue to  
17 love our children as much as we can.

18                   They took me away to a residential  
19 school to kill the little Indian in me, but they  
20 didn't succeed. I got through in school, became the  
21 first employee, more or less, in the development of  
22 our governance in (INDISCERNIBLE).

23                   We were assigned a document on self-  
24 government. My brother was the chief at that time, my  
25 -- my cousin, first cousin. He asked me, Brother,

1 come here, come and see this. Come and read this. It  
2 was a letter from the Minister from the Department of  
3 Indian Affairs, self-government proposal.

4 I read the letter and I told him, I  
5 don't -- I don't think I will go for that because this  
6 proposal, they're still going to control you. You're  
7 not going to have any control, no power to -- to do  
8 whatever you want to do. So I said, don't sign it.

9 There's another agreement that was  
10 called the Framework Agreement for Self-Government. I  
11 told the other chief, don't sign it.

12 Now, with this thing now that's coming  
13 up when the -- with the -- with the ministry with the  
14 federal government, they're still after us. They want  
15 to terminate contracts. They want to terminate  
16 treaties, pardon me. But we know we have people that  
17 are standing up for us now.

18 Our land, we were destroyed. We were  
19 destroyed as a people and as people and as fish and  
20 everything else on our land. Destroyed.

21 I think we need to implement the  
22 Marshall Plan. Fix what you destroyed the way it  
23 was ,the way they did it in Germany when -- in the  
24 Great World -- World War. We are -- we are the same.  
25 We -- we care. We -- we need to be involved.

1                   The last part is consultation. You  
2 need to talk to us, not just the leadership. We need  
3 to be consulted. (ANISININEW SPOKEN.) Thank you.

4                   MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Thank you  
5 very much. Mervin and Tanya now. I'll note, too,  
6 that we are hoping to have some time for questioning  
7 from the Panel. And I don't want to take time from  
8 you, but just to be conscious, I want them an  
9 opportunity to ask you questions, too. Talk fast.  
10 Got it.

11                   MS. TANYA MCDUGALL: I knew you were  
12 the person. All right. My name is Tanya Dawn  
13 McDougall. My traditional name is Dipiskew Geezik.  
14 Dipiskew Geezik means the day straight up in the sky,  
15 and I think it comes with a perspective because I can  
16 -- I can see things that are happening everywhere the  
17 sun touches.

18                   And this is my mother. It's important  
19 to acknowledge where I come from. She's my warrior.  
20 She leads the way for me and my generation in a way  
21 that I hope I do for my children and their generation.  
22 I am Anisininew. I come from St. Theresa Point,  
23 Anisininew Nation in Northern Manitoba. That's an  
24 island lake.

25                   And when we were looking at the

1 pictures of the hydro-affected communities, it hurt us  
2 because these are our relatives. And we know how much  
3 we value our land, our water, our animals.

4                   And then I was trying to think how we  
5 were affected by Hydro. And I really feel like  
6 empathic towards how it must feel to listen to all the  
7 pain. But I have a -- I have a master's in education  
8 and a master's in psychology, so I don't really know a  
9 lot about how Hydro works or even the history, a lot  
10 of it.

11                   But one thing I do know about is about  
12 relationships. And relationships have to be built on  
13 trust. And trust can only be built if there's  
14 transparency and openness.

15                   Our community a few years ago had a  
16 four (4) day blackout. And the blackout was caused by  
17 an eagle's nest. And I'm just hearing through the  
18 grapevine. Obviously, we didn't have the radio on to  
19 tell us what was going on. But there was a large  
20 eagle's nest that had blown that transponster (sic).  
21 I don't even have the language, but blown the -- what  
22 do you call it -- transformer. Thank you.

23                   And when the men came back to the  
24 community to -- that had witnessed where the problem  
25 was, they said it's inaccessible. And they couldn't

1 believe the size of that nest. The size of that nest  
2 was indicative of how many years ago it had been  
3 built.

4                   And they said -- the Elder said the  
5 line was neglected. It was like debanac (phonetic).  
6 I don't know how to explain that in English, but it  
7 was like we weren't being valued. As a community  
8 person, I felt very marginalized, discarded, forgotten  
9 by society, and the systems that claimed to value us.

10                   That being said, that experience also  
11 taught me a lot about what the animals were trying to  
12 tell us. If it hadn't been for that eagle, we  
13 wouldn't have known how overgrown and at risk we were.

14                   I mean, building up to that, we knew  
15 something was wrong. Like, why does the power go out  
16 every time there's a -- there's a storm? We knew  
17 something was wrong.

18                   Not all our houses have running water,  
19 but everybody values water. And it became that much  
20 more important to have clean drinking water when the  
21 power went off. And there was none. We didn't have  
22 any in the community for our Elders, for our babies.

23                   And we were -- I was outside with my  
24 neighbours and we were saying, like, I think Manitoba  
25 Hydro would at least drop off a few cases of water.

1 That's just how -- how much in desperation we felt,  
2 like we were ignored and discarded.

3                   And then I try as a person not to stay  
4 in that place of hurt and pain. I can be somewhat of  
5 a Pollyanna where I look for the good in people. And  
6 I was trying to see it. I was trying to see where is  
7 this consultation when I was listening today, and I  
8 listened to part of yesterday as well.

9                   Just going to maybe a chief or maybe  
10 your cousin's friend. Just going to select people is  
11 not consultation. Like my uncle said here, you have  
12 to talk to the grassroots people. Everybody needs to  
13 have that opportunity to have that voice.

14                   And then we wonder, okay, what's the  
15 capacity of the people? If I'm going to talk to you  
16 about psychological processes, I'll first explain a  
17 little bit about where the context is so that we can  
18 have a fair and just communication about it.

19                   If I'm going to talk to you about my  
20 language, I'm going to share some of the words in my  
21 language and then discuss the concepts that we're  
22 going to be talking about.

23                   And it's the same thing here. If  
24 you're coming to a community to talk about some of  
25 these plans or developments, ideas, communications

1 that you have, you're going to bring that context too  
2 and take that time that needs to be taken to ensure  
3 that there's a balanced conversation, that it's not  
4 just informing.

5 Just one little story I want to tell.  
6 In our lake -- I'll talk -- I'll be fast. In our  
7 lake, the airport is across in where -- in our  
8 community, the airport is across the lake.

9 So the times of freeze up and breakup,  
10 we have to cross that lake somehow to get to the  
11 airport, which is our only way in and out of the  
12 community. Medical appointments, medical emergencies,  
13 anything, any reason that we would have to go to the  
14 city, we have to cross that lake.

15 There's a -- a group of people that our  
16 community utilize to make the path across that lake.  
17 And it's different every year because it depends on  
18 the ice condition. And what they do is they -- they  
19 tie themselves up to each other, and the first person  
20 has a big stick, and he taps the ice, determines its  
21 safety, and moves that way.

22 And then the people behind, they work  
23 together to identify the safest route from point A to  
24 point B. It's never a straight line, but the path  
25 always gets built because it has to. And the only way

1 it gets built is if the people on that team trust each  
2 other and work together.

3 So when you're asking, how do we build  
4 relationships with communities, I offer you that  
5 story, that analogy. That's how you work together.  
6 Thank you.

7

8 (BRIEF PAUSE)

9

10 ELDER NELLIANE CROMARTY: I thank this  
11 opportunity to speak on behalf of my communities, on  
12 behalf of the Elders that I have grown up with. My  
13 name is Nelliane Cromarty.

14 I am one of the educators of a  
15 community. There are four (4) communities in our  
16 area, and all those four (4) are very isolated.  
17 They're all around Island Lake. And I feel very  
18 honoured to speak up for that area. We call it the  
19 Anisininew Nation.

20 And my -- my traditional name is Eagle  
21 Woman, and I'm very honoured to carry that name. I  
22 didn't know what it was until I researched it through  
23 the help of the Elders. They told me what it meant.

24 So I am a residential school product,  
25 and I was one of the lucky ones. I spent my time in

1 the community till I reached grade 8. Then I had to  
2 leave because it didn't go beyond that grade level. I  
3 only went when I was 12 until I finished.

4 Most of the time, what I witnessed in  
5 my community, they were taken away at an early age and  
6 they forgot the things that are happening in the  
7 community. They lost contact of the teachings of the  
8 Elders.

9 The Elders, I worked with since I went  
10 back. In 1969, I started teaching there. And I am  
11 still struggling with that work, which is to bring  
12 back all the things that has been lost through this  
13 colonization process, to teach it to the young people  
14 with the help of the Elders.

15 And the rate -- the rate of going at it  
16 is very slow. In the meantime, we are losing all our  
17 Elders. We have to try and, through this generation  
18 here, we have to advocate for these Elders through  
19 them. And we expect them to carry through.

20 I learned a lot through these Elders.  
21 The knowledge they had was so fantastic. I never  
22 really realized how much knowledge they had. Anything  
23 new that comes into the community, they knew what the  
24 consequences would be.

25 And they didn't opt out to -- to

1 explain their opinions and what the results will  
2 happen and what do the people do and all that. They  
3 explained everything, although they were never exposed  
4 to any warning with -- about what's coming. And I  
5 admired them very much. I wish I had their knowledge,  
6 but I'm trying my best to carry it.

7                   This Hydro that they're talking about,  
8 it's not too long ago I got exposed to it, this plan  
9 that's in place. And I don't think some of the people  
10 are really aware of what's in plan. They say ten (10)  
11 year plan. How does it -- how is it going to affect  
12 the people? They're not prepared for anything.

13                   And I don't -- I've never heard -- like  
14 I've been there since 1969 to this time. I'm still  
15 working at the school. I've never heard of any  
16 teachings coming in about what's going to happen to  
17 our communities.

18                   We already observed what had happened.  
19 Although we're not directly exposed to the hardships  
20 that they are experiencing where the flooding exists,  
21 it is slowly seeping into our area.

22                   Every year, there's changes in the  
23 land. We were observing our animals are also changing  
24 their habits and dying off in some areas. And the  
25 people, when they started work, that they knew about

1 this, what's going to happen.

2                   There's too much happening, but they  
3 couldn't fully understand what these technical things  
4 are. They've never been exposed to it. They are  
5 trappers. They are fishermen. They live off the land  
6 half of the year. They live right where the animals  
7 are, where the food is, where the -- the things they  
8 need for living, survival. It's where they are.

9                   And all of a sudden, you find  
10 themselves that you have to stay in the community. you  
11 can have lights and water and stuff like that. Our  
12 lakes and rivers were clear. We just go down the lake  
13 and drink from the -- the lake. None of that exists,  
14 and it's sad.

15                   But considering this plan, I have to  
16 mention as well, what is -- what are the terminologies  
17 that people are using that are in this project  
18 development? Our people don't understand that. You  
19 know, they don't know and they don't have anybody to  
20 go to, to fully explain what it will take to come into  
21 our area.

22                   And just like everybody else in our  
23 community, we like to stay positive of any advancement  
24 that's being taken place in our communities. We'd  
25 like to know what good, except the things that came

1 in, they only highlight the good things that we're  
2 going to get.

3 Yes, we appreciate some of those  
4 things, but we don't appreciate the things that are --  
5 we don't hear about. Like, who are these people who  
6 are coming that want to work with us, and yet we never  
7 see them? When they -- by the time they come in,  
8 everything is finished, all the decisions. And they  
9 have to learn it firsthand of what that is by  
10 experience.

11 And I -- I am very concerned for the  
12 communities in our area. Our fish, our wildlife is  
13 slowly diminishing, from what we don't really know.  
14 There's some rivers and areas, trap lines that is  
15 already -- we see the process of it. Every year, we  
16 hear of little accidents here and there because of  
17 that change of the land, okay?

18 Okay. Okay. I am an Elder, and I  
19 don't excuse myself of being an Elder, but being an  
20 Elder with all that knowledge that I have to share  
21 from the Elders before me, I will never stop talking.  
22 It affects everything in our lives that we have to  
23 deal with daily: medicine, education, transportation,  
24 and all these facilities that we need.

25 Thank you for listening to me.

1 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Thank you.  
2 And I -- I think we're all learning that meaningful  
3 engagement requires time, a lot of time. So I  
4 appreciate the indulgence from the Board to provide  
5 space for them to fully voice their concerns and  
6 perspectives.

7 And so we have one more witness  
8 virtually, Ellen Cook. So Ellen, I'll just ask you to  
9 speak to make sure we can hear you. And, Ellen, I'll  
10 also remind you that we're trying to have a little bit  
11 of time at the end for some questions from the Board,  
12 the most important questions. So just being cautious  
13 of time. Thank you.

14 ELDER ELLEN COOK (by TEAMS): Okay.  
15 I'll be as fast as I was driving to get here. Can you  
16 hear me?

17 THE CHAIRPERSON: We can hear you just  
18 fine. Thank you.

19 ELDER ELLEN COOK (by TEAMS): Can you?  
20 Oh, okay. (ANISININEW SPOKEN)

21 Hello, my name is Ellen Cook. I was  
22 born and raised in Grand Rapids. My Spirit name is  
23 the Northwind Woman (ANISININEW SPOKEN). I'm -- would  
24 like to greet everyone that is there. I don't know  
25 who all is there because I can't see, but I know some

1 of my friends are there, Melanie and -- and Nelliane  
2 and Rita Monias, all the other ones that are there. I  
3 greet you all.

4 I -- I appreciate you, your concern for  
5 the land and our waterways in Manitoba. I was -- I  
6 lived in Grand Rapids at the time that the rapids was  
7 here. So, I have spent the last sixty (60) plus years  
8 grieving the loss of our waterways and of the rapids  
9 and everything, because that is where we spent every  
10 summer for the first eighteen (18) years of my life,  
11 we spent every summer going up the rapids, the series  
12 of rapids.

13 So, there wasn't just the Grand Rapids.  
14 There was also a series of rapids, the Red Rock  
15 Rapids, the Flying Post Rapids, the Demi Charge  
16 Rapids, all along the Saskatchewan River up until you  
17 reach Cedar Lake and Chemawawin and all those other  
18 places.

19 I am -- I have been advocating for  
20 people on -- those that are not heard down south when  
21 they have issues with -- with the -- this Manitoba  
22 Hydro. For the past, well, ever since Filmon was in  
23 power, Gary Filmon was the premier.

24 I started off, my father had trapped --  
25 -- spent a lot of years trapping on the Summer Berry

1 Marsh. And when they started talking about  
2 compensation for -- for trappers and that, I wanted --  
3 what my wish was that they would not allow that Summer  
4 Berry Marsh to be destroyed by the fluctuation of the  
5 water levels. And I wanted a -- a form of dike to be  
6 built around there so that it would save a little bit  
7 of that -- that Summer Berry marsh.

8                   So, I took around a petition  
9 throughout, I guess, all over Eastern Canada to -- to  
10 present to Gary Filmon and not to spend too much money  
11 with financial compensation to our people because, you  
12 know, money comes and then it goes out the other --  
13 comes in one pocket and goes out the other pocket.

14                   So, I wanted that Summer Berry Marsh to  
15 be -- to sort of be maintained as a marsh because it  
16 acted as a kidney for -- for our waterways here in the  
17 north.

18                   So, after two-hundred thousand  
19 (200,000) plus signatures, I represented it to Filmon  
20 and -- because we wanted not as much compensation,  
21 financially, to our people, but to do some reclamation  
22 of -- of land and that. But it -- that didn't go  
23 anywhere.

24                   So, I -- and for the past, I guess,  
25 fifteen (15) or sixteen (16) years, I have been on the

1 Interfaith. Well, first of all, it was called  
2 Interfaith Task Force on Northern Hydro Development.  
3 And then it became Interfaith Task Force on Manitoba  
4 Hydro -- on Hydro. And now it is called ICH, which is  
5 Interchurch Council on Hydropower.

6                   So, I had been with them for -- for --  
7 as a co-chair for many years. And our -- our job or -  
8 - no, I guess not really a job, but our wish was to  
9 advocate for the people up north that weren't being  
10 heard by the people down south and advocate for -- for  
11 the waterways and for the -- all our animals and --  
12 and environment, et cetera.

13                   And -- and that's how -- how -- how I  
14 can -- I think that's how I became involved with this  
15 panel today because I have been speaking out about the  
16 destruction that we've experienced as Indigenous  
17 people and how it has hurt, not -- not just our -- our  
18 land, but also the water and the animals.

19                   And, you know, watching what happened  
20 to our hunting and gathering places up the  
21 Saskatchewan River has had a deep impact on our  
22 social, psychological and -- and environmental health  
23 of our people, because we lived off the land and we --  
24 we hunted and gathered and -- and fished and trapped  
25 and everything. And then everything changed when

1 Manitoba Hydro came into our community, especially  
2 after they flooded thirty-five hundred (3,500) square  
3 kilometers of forest without a single tree being cut  
4 down.

5                   And their -- their promise had been not  
6 one single tree will -- will be wasted. So, and --  
7 and all the promises that they made were, you know,  
8 broken promises. And -- and to this day, like, almost  
9 sixty (60) years later, we still see the impacts of  
10 that (thirty-five hundred) 3,500 square kilometers of  
11 forest that was flooded.

12                   And -- because we still see the -- the  
13 driftwood the -- from the trees uprooting and, you  
14 know, and it's -- it's not just the forests, the --  
15 but also the animals that were impacted by the  
16 flooding.

17                   Can you imagine what the little mice  
18 and the rabbits and -- and the chipmunks and all the  
19 animals that lived in that forest, what they would  
20 have done when the impoundment was taking place and  
21 the water was rising and they, virtually, had no place  
22 to run.

23                   So, it breaks my heart to think of  
24 things like that, you know, the deer and all the  
25 animals that lived in that forest that -- that were

1 impacted by the flooding.

2                   So, it's -- it's been, for me, quite a  
3 large issue, you know, of healing our people. The --  
4 the reason why I -- I was late coming today was  
5 because we are having a Grandmother's Gathering, our  
6 4th Annual Grandmother's Gathering in Grand Rapids  
7 this weekend, which I host -- have hosted for the past  
8 four (4) years. And we -- we would like our  
9 grandmothers and our -- our young women to heal from  
10 the impacts of the man camps, for example.

11                   Because when you think of a community  
12 with seven-hundred (700) plus people that's are --  
13 that are -- that have two-thousand (2,000) men coming  
14 in, most of them without their families, coming into  
15 our community, how that would impact us, as women, our  
16 young girls. So, it's -- a minute -- excuse me.

17                   I was actually burning sage here  
18 because that was my way to -- to swear that I was  
19 going to speak the truth today. So, the sage is still  
20 burning here and causing me to cough.

21                   So, I -- I lost my train of thought,  
22 sorry, but when you think of -- of all the people, the  
23 fishermen that lived off the land, the fun hunters  
24 that -- that hunted those animals, that were impacted  
25 by that flooding and, you know, it -- our economy was

1 just extremely affected by -- by the flooding of the  
2 of the forest.

3 And then what -- what really -- oh, I  
4 was talking about the Grandmother's Gathering. You  
5 got to keep me on track here, buddy.

6 The Grandmother's Gathering is about --  
7 for the grandmothers that grew up with -- hydro-  
8 impacted communities that were young girls at the time  
9 that these communities came in. And then we also  
10 have, in the last couple of years, it included the  
11 young women, like our grand -- granddaughters and or -  
12 - our daughters, that are fairly young teenagers plus.

13 And so, we -- we're talking about how  
14 we can heal from -- from our waterways being  
15 destroyed, our environment being destroyed, our -- our  
16 -- our, you know, the our life, the ways of life that  
17 we enjoyed. Because up until then, we, you know, we  
18 birthed our own children. We raised the -- we raised  
19 -- our children were raised the way the parents wanted  
20 to raise them. And we had our own medicine people  
21 that knew the medicines. And, you know, it's always  
22 been someone else making decisions on how we do these  
23 things.

24 And -- and then when Hydro came, that's  
25 what happened. They started to tell us we could no

1 longer have midwives birthing babies and -- and we  
2 could no longer do all these things. The children  
3 started being taken away to a residential school. And  
4 it's just one -- one thing after another that has  
5 happened to our people, all these abuses that we've  
6 experienced.

7                   So, we need to make sure that -- that  
8 we speak out. We continue to speak out about how we  
9 are treated as Indigenous people, not being allowed to  
10 make decisions of our own as to what happens with our  
11 -- with our lands and our waterways. Although,  
12 already, most of the water, the rivers and lakes have  
13 been manipulated by Manitoba Hydro to serve that  
14 capitalist mentality that they have.

15                   So, I -- I'm not going to speak much  
16 more because we -- I -- I've listened to some of the -  
17 - of the presentations and I -- they've, I would say,  
18 ditto to everything that they -- that was said,  
19 because you said that you needed some time at the end.  
20 So, that's all I'll say for now. I -- thank you for  
21 listening.

22                   MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Thank you.  
23 And I'll just turn it over to the Board. We're at  
24 your discretion. I realize the time.

25                   THE CHAIRPERSON: Sure, we have some

1 questions. Vice Chair Kapitanany...?

2 VICE CHAIR KAPITANY: I would just  
3 like to start by thanking all of you so much for your  
4 stories and for sharing your personal experiences.  
5 And I find it really hard to step back from those  
6 experiences and talk about more nuts-and-bolts things  
7 related to an Integrated Resource Plan.

8 But, as you know, our panel has a job  
9 to do here and we need to make recommendations to the  
10 government. So, I'm going to try.

11 So, Dr. McLachlan made a presentation  
12 this morning. And on page 75 of his report, he had a  
13 recommendation that Efficiency Manitoba conduct a  
14 public review of existing Indigenous-centered  
15 programming and identify successes and gaps in that  
16 programming.

17 Ms. Paige, I don't know if you can  
18 bring up that slide 75, just so that the panel members  
19 can see the recommendation. But, I guess my question  
20 to any of you who would like to answer is: Do you  
21 have any experience with Efficiency Manitoba? And  
22 what would you have to say about any successes and  
23 gaps?

24 How would you feel about this kind of  
25 recommendation that came from Dr. McLachlan this

1 morning?

2 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Thank you.

3 If I may, just to add context. So, some of the Energy  
4 Efficiency Programming could be things like new  
5 insulation, pipe wraps, smart thermostats, new windows  
6 and doors; that's the type of programming she's  
7 referring to.

8 And so, if any of you have accessed  
9 that programming, have you heard of it? Have you met  
10 with Efficiency Manitoba? Kind of speaking to that.

11 MS. TANYA MCDOUGALL: Culturally, I'm  
12 I don't think I'm supposed to go first, but I'm going  
13 to go first just because I -- I don't know -- I don't  
14 know about this program.

15 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Okay.

16 MS. TANYA MCDOUGALL: And I don't know  
17 if -- like, I have a lot of friends and family in the  
18 community. If they have energy efficient doors and  
19 windows and stuff like that installed in our homes. I  
20 wouldn't even know how they would get it there.

21 Yesterday, there was a comment made  
22 about a bus going around Northern Manitoba. Even if  
23 you want a bus around all around Northern Manitoba,  
24 you wouldn't get to our community. It's a fly-in.  
25 Yeah.

1 VICE CHAIR KAPITANY: Fair enough.

2 Thank you so much.

3 I have another question, but I'll wait  
4 until after my fellow panel members have a chance,  
5 just so we don't run out of time.

6 BOARD MEMBER SIMONSEN: Hi, it's Kurt  
7 Simonsen, and, yeah, thank you very much for your  
8 presentations. I -- I took a lot of notes and I -- I  
9 found them to be all very, very interesting and very  
10 moving.

11 But I think, Nelliane, this one might  
12 be for you. You mentioned in your discussion a couple  
13 of things that I thought were quite concerning.

14 And one of them was that your people  
15 had a hard time to understand the technical and  
16 economic and, I guess, social elements of the  
17 Integrated Resource Plan. Obviously, if -- if you're  
18 going to consult First Nations, they need to be able  
19 to understand the material that's before them.

20 Do you have any suggestions for this  
21 Board that we could make recommendations on that would  
22 make that easier for people to understand?

23 ELDER NELLIANE CROMARTY: This lack of  
24 contact with the Elders in the communities is what's  
25 affecting it. And when you talk to them from the

1 outside, with a different language, that's very hard  
2 for them to comprehend of exactly what you're talking  
3 about.

4                   So, if you had a group of other people  
5 listening with her, they help each other understand  
6 what it is you're explaining from your people and from  
7 our people. It's a direct contact with our Elders and  
8 young people.

9                   I work with her and if there is  
10 something I don't understand, I go to her. And same  
11 thing with her, if she wants to know something from my  
12 past, she comes to me. And that's how we work  
13 together in -- within our own family. And that's what  
14 they need is someone that they could talk to, respond  
15 to whenever they question something.

16                   BOARD MEMBER SIMONSEN: Thank you. I  
17 think I can relate to that because I have to go to my  
18 daughter to fix my computers and cell phones. So, I  
19 appreciate your perspective. Thank you very much.

20                   THE CHAIRPERSON: So, sorry, this is  
21 Robert Gabor, the Chair. Thank you very much for the  
22 presentations. It's really important that we hear  
23 this.

24                   Just as background, I -- I need to put  
25 on the record. I worked for Pimicikamak Cree Nation

1 about, over twenty (20) years ago in assisting on  
2 their election law. So, I spent about two (2) years  
3 going back and forth getting ready for the election  
4 and meeting the people. But, I was fortunate in that  
5 I had a structured relationship, in that, there was a  
6 counselor who was assigned to, essentially, show me  
7 around and introduce me. And her name was  
8 Cathy Merrick, who later was the Grand Chief. Yeah.  
9 A phenomenal person.

10 But I show up as -- I'm now an old  
11 white guy. I was a middle-aged white guy, trying to  
12 meet the people and had to understand the First Nation  
13 and the people there. So, I was fortunate and it was  
14 a very meaningful experience to me, but it took time  
15 to do it.

16 One of the things and I -- and I, quite  
17 frankly, I learned, and I -- I might get into trouble  
18 with it, is that the power source in Pimicikamak was  
19 Women's Council. Other people thought they were  
20 running things, but it really was the Women's Council  
21 that was doing things, making decision -- the big  
22 decisions.

23 One of the things -- and I asked the  
24 question before, one of the things we heard here was,  
25 don't just talk to Chief and Council, talk to the

1 members.

2                   So, when I went over a period of time,  
3 I met with all of the Councils, including the Youth  
4 Council. And we had numerous meetings in the  
5 community center where we go over it, probably six (6)  
6 to eight (8) over a period of two (2) years.

7                   So, I could do that. I guess the  
8 question I have is: In relation to Manitoba Hydro, if  
9 they want to come in and meet, who do you contact?  
10 The normal contact would be Chief and Council. And  
11 Chief and Council would have the meeting and they  
12 would be -- control who they meet and -- and I don't  
13 know who it is.

14                   So, if you're going to have meaningful  
15 consultation and you want to actually meet more than  
16 Chief and Council and you actually want to have  
17 community meetings, how do you do that?

18                   We -- we deal with certain  
19 organizations, PUB, and it's the understanding is you  
20 deal with us. Don't go around us, deal with us. And  
21 if they don't want to respond, then we have a problem.

22                   So, that's the question for you in the  
23 different communities. How do you actually set up the  
24 consultation process, and I understand it takes time,  
25 but how do you actually do it so you're actually

1 getting the understanding of the community?

2 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Melanie, I  
3 think you were speaking about this yesterday. So, I  
4 don't know if you want to offer some comments about  
5 going beyond Chief and Council. Is that appropriate?  
6 Why is it important?

7 And I'll just prompt you. Yesterday,  
8 you were talking about traditional governance and why  
9 that's important and Indigenous law.

10 MS. MELANIE MOLIN: Okay. To have a  
11 relationship and to have that interaction with the  
12 community, for example, we were talking about it just  
13 a while ago that when we're to go into our camps,  
14 okay. The young men go into the camps first to go  
15 prepare the way for the Elders, and I think it's very  
16 important for the Elders to be acknowledged.

17 And you -- when Manitoba Hydro or  
18 anybody that comes into the community, they need to  
19 sit down and have a relationship with Elders because  
20 they are the Knowledge Keepers and they carry the  
21 library.

22 And for myself, when I need to  
23 acknowledge Elders, if I have to talk to them about  
24 something, I -- I sit down with them. I have tea with  
25 them; I get to know them; I get to know their

1 interests, and then -- then -- and then you speak  
2 about what needs to be done.

3 Yes, you have to go through the Chief  
4 and Council, but send somebody that needs to prepare  
5 the way for you guys.

6 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: Would anyone  
7 else like to add to Melanie's comments about  
8 engagement with Chief and Council versus engagement  
9 with beyond Chief and Council?

10 ELDER ELLEN COOK (by TEAMS): I can  
11 say a few things. This is Ellen.

12 I had -- I came to -- I was in my  
13 community a couple of weeks ago and I was in a meeting  
14 and I asked -- there was a bunch of fishermen there,  
15 and I asked them if -- if they had heard anything  
16 about this Integrated Resource Plan, and nobody had  
17 heard about it.

18 And I said, well, I know it was  
19 mentioned at, like, in Chiefs' gatherings and stuff,  
20 but nobody had heard anything back from the Chief  
21 regarding it.

22 So, I -- I -- what my suggestion would  
23 be is to find people who are in the community that  
24 are, like, that are leaders in the community and have  
25 them sit with Chief and Council to -- to -- to get

1 some information.

2 And then maybe together with Chief and  
3 Council, you know, discuss this -- these things.  
4 Because if -- if our Chief had been in that MKO  
5 meeting, for example, and they talked about this  
6 Integrated Resource Plan, how come nobody had heard  
7 about it?

8 You know, I think we need to involve,  
9 you know, the leaders in the community, which are not  
10 necessarily Chief and Council, but people who are out  
11 there, you know, that are respected and, you know,  
12 possibly some of the Elders and -- and other leaders  
13 in the community that need to be sitting with -- with  
14 Hydro and whoever else and -- and involve the Chief  
15 and Council.

16 Because Chiefs are always busy.  
17 They're always busy going from meeting to meeting, and  
18 maybe sometimes they forget to come back and inform  
19 people about some -- some of the things that were  
20 discussed at their meeting.

21 So, we need to, I guess, prod the  
22 Chiefs to -- to be more informative to their  
23 communities when they come back from meetings.

24 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Ms.  
25 Sharman has a question.

1                   BOARD MEMBER SHARMAN:    Thank you.  And  
2  again, thank you very much to all of the Panel members  
3  this afternoon and all the presentations earlier from  
4  today as well.  It's very -- it's wonderful to hear  
5  from you.  It's difficult to hear many of the things,  
6  but wonderful to hear from you.  Thank you so much.

7                   I do have a question following up from  
8  this morning's presentation, and if you put it on  
9  screen, that would be great, although it's probably  
10 not necessary.  It's Recommendation 11.

11                  And it's not so much following up from  
12 that presentation, but I would love to get the  
13 viewpoints of the Panel members.

14                  And that recommendation was referring  
15 to the fact that surveys as the primary tool that were  
16 used in the -- in the IRP that substantially under-  
17 represented northern residents of the Province.

18                  And I believe we heard on the video,  
19 starting off the Panel discussion, that in some cases,  
20 those surveys may not have even been received because  
21 of where bills are sent.

22                  And so, this recommendation talks about  
23 using other platforms to communicate, social media  
24 platforms, other mechanisms.

25                  I would just like, if anyone has any --

1 any suggestions to offer about some of those other  
2 communications methods, that perhaps might be more  
3 helpful to increase representation.

4 MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: So, I'll just  
5 add, what -- for example, what would be a good way to  
6 reach folks like you, either Elders or Knowledge  
7 Keepers?

8 So, one method is a survey, but she's  
9 mentioned other potential methods like Facebook, you  
10 know, social media, Facebook, newsletters.

11 And so, if you could offer some  
12 reflections, what is a good way to reach you?

13 ELDER MERVIN GARRICK: Yeah. It's a  
14 process concerning our -- our land and our waters.  
15 It's very, very important. And it's very -- it has to  
16 be shared with the community, community people, the  
17 resource users, and the dangers of -- of the water  
18 fluctuations to educate the young people that are  
19 starting to use the waterways and also the ice  
20 crossings since these people don't really care.

21 All they -- all they want is speed and  
22 speed and speed. So, they don't sometimes listen to  
23 what's -- what's -- what's being aired on the radio or  
24 local radio. They just go and we've lost them -- some  
25 people on a -- on -- on account of that.

1                   Because there was, you know, we have a  
2 radio station and a TV station back home, and we can  
3 easily convey these messages to them. And we tell  
4 them, like, you know, like, I tell my son, take it  
5 easy. Like, don't go over there, things like that.

6                   But sometimes it's pretty hard for the  
7 -- the child not to listen because of his peer  
8 pressure. And they go out and they do all kinds of  
9 stuff out there. You know, it's -- it's -- it's very  
10 -- very difficult to -- to control.

11                  Besides that, also, these children are  
12 -- are -- are our generational impactees of the  
13 residential school. Like, you know, they don't --  
14 they were taught not to listen to their parents  
15 because their parents are no good.

16                  And, you know, they have that  
17 mentality. Like, you know, why do you have to like,  
18 you know, and -- and also blame their parents for let  
19 them go to the residential school and, you know, to  
20 see -- to see the, like, you know, and they get into  
21 those all those abuses that received -- that they  
22 received at the residential school.

23                  So, the trust is really, really not  
24 there. You know, the trust was taken away. It  
25 affected me as well. And, you know, it's -- it's hard

1 to do. It's hard to do the to -- to -- like, that to  
2 go on with -- with that way.

3 But the other one that was about the  
4 passing on information, and how we -- how it should be  
5 done. Or what we did back home when Manitoba Hydro  
6 brought in the -- the buyout agreements to our people.  
7 We, of course, like, you know, we started our little  
8 group, and we told that we -- we -- we have to -- we  
9 have to block this.

10 Like, we know we have to block the  
11 compensation because our children in -- in time will  
12 also have to feel the consequences of this. And if we  
13 don't -- if we -- we ready to go like that, then we  
14 are part of the problem of destroying our people.

15 So, we formed group and we visited  
16 communities. Each had a different tool, like, in  
17 education or training and on traditional way of life.  
18 And, you know, the fishermen and the trappers as well.  
19 So that -- that -- that method really helps. It  
20 really, really helps us.

21 And it -- we created our own like, you  
22 know, that's what stopped the -- the people from  
23 accepting the -- the buyout schemes that they  
24 entertained to the other First Nations (INDISCERNIBLE)  
25 nations.

1                   And what we've done also in our -- in  
2   our --in our territory, in our Misikamach community is  
3   developing our own -- our own laws. You know, we've  
4   developed a First Nation written law, which gives us  
5   the opportunity to -- to develop our own election law,  
6   membership law, Northern Flood Agreement Law, and  
7   administration law.

8                   And we're yet to develop an education  
9   law. So, all these things, like, you know, we need to  
10  get the people involved in them. And the best way to  
11  do it is through the Circle Group model that we used  
12  that was very effective because we had people in there  
13  that were really asking tough questions.

14                  But then the answers came from other  
15  people also to -- from the traditional point of view.  
16  So, they helped -- the -- the Elders helped quite a  
17  bit. A really important -- really, really, really  
18  important thing that we have.

19                  And, like, one Elder in particular,  
20  when I -- when I hear Helen talk about the -- the  
21  project at Grand Rapids. One lady, when we took  
22  occupation of the Jenpeg Control Station a few years  
23  ago, it was in our -- it is in our territory that --  
24  where the -- the generating station is.

25                  And I guess, I think Hydro contacted

1 the trapper users on that area, but the trappers are -  
2 - are only allowed to trap not on the land. So, they  
3 skipped the First Nation contact in the First Nation  
4 until after. But then we knew all this time that it  
5 was in our traditional area, so we had the power to go  
6 there and evacuate all the employees.

7                   And while we were there, we had a camp  
8 also a -- a fire, like, you know, with our people,  
9 some of our young people in there. And we had this  
10 campfire.

11                   And then one of our Elders was sitting  
12 around with us, an Elder lady sat around with us and  
13 while -- while -- while surrounding this fire camp.  
14 And she said, can I -- can I say something to you,  
15 young people? They said, yes.

16                   She says, grandchildren, no sinuk  
17 (phonetic). You see this fire, and you see these  
18 sparks going up like that? Says, our great-  
19 grandfather told us years ago to -- to the children,  
20 to us, the children, you see these sparks on the fire?

21                   These are white people coming into our  
22 territories, and these sparks are going to grow.  
23 There's going to be many -- there's many, many sparks,  
24 many, many sparks. And you know what those things --  
25 those sparks are going to do?

1                   They're going to take away your land --  
2 your land and your lives. They're after your fire.  
3 That's what she told us, and we see that now, and  
4 amazing to us. Just something I wanted to share  
5 because it's so true.

6                   THE CHAIRPERSON: Yeah. We're going  
7 to have to conclude. On behalf of the Board, I want  
8 to thank the Panel. It was important to be here. It  
9 was important that we -- that we hear you as part of  
10 this process. And -- and we thank you.

11                   And, if we could have the conclude --  
12 closing prayer. That's what I was just about to say.  
13 You know, it -- it's -- it's like being at home with  
14 my wife. I was just about to say if we could have the  
15 closing prayer. So, if we could, thank you.

16                   MS. CHARLOTTE CONNOLLY: We'll ask  
17 everyone to stand.

18

19                   (CLOSING PRAYER)

20

21                   THE CHAIRPERSON: So, for the record,  
22 we'll adjourn until nine o'clock Monday morning.  
23 Thank you.

24

25 --- Upon adjourning at 4:12 p.m.

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4 Certified Correct

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8 Wendy Woodworth, Ms.

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