

PERFORMANCE BONUSES FOR SENIOR GNWT MANAGERS

Thank you Mr. Speaker.

In pretty much every session since I was elected into the 16th Assembly, I have asked questions on performance bonuses paid to Deputy Ministers, Senior Managers and Excluded Employees within the GNWT. Every time I ask I get, generally, the same response back from the Premier.

Yes, bonuses are paid.

In fact around \$1.65 million is paid out annually give or take a couple hundred thousand.

I've heard from the Premier and the Finance Minister that the Bonuses are a necessity. I couldn't agree more. When bonuses are earned, they should absolutely be provided. However, it's clear that pretty much every Deputy Minister and every Senior Manager who is eligible for bonuses receive them on an annual basis. Once a bonus becomes expected they lose their effectiveness. They stop being about increasing results or output and become a part of an employee's base salary.

I know many of our Deputy Ministers and Senior Managers and believe many of them work really hard. Often above and beyond normal expectations. These individuals deserve bonuses.

Unfortunately, it's clear that there is no official process to determine when a bonus should be paid. No mechanism to determine and assess when somebody has taken that extra step.

Last year, the Federal Government developed a rigorous assessment process for their performance pay. With their plan and process in place fewer than 20 per cent of their Senior Executives will receive bonuses.

Under the Federal program Senior Managers are assessed based on performance targets and a 360 degree review which includes input from fellow senior managers, colleagues, ministers, and others. We must ensure that staff are rewarded for outstanding performance -- performance that is above and beyond expectations --for thinking outside of the box, for streamlining government through increased efficiencies and better use of resources. Not pay bonuses because we always have and the staff receiving bonuses expect them.

Last year I asked the Premier to review and implementing a process similar to the Federal government's to ensure that when bonuses are earned they will be paid and, when they aren't earned they will not be paid. A process like this will ensure that we remain competitive with the private sector by providing our high quality performers with

financial incentives, which encourage their continued commitment to the GNWT as opposed to jumping ship, and seeking employment with the Private Sector.

Unfortunately, I never received confirmation that this was done and it appears that, once again, virtually every eligible Deputy Minister and Senior Manager received a performance bonus for the 2007/2008 fiscal year.

Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time I will be asking the Premier some questions concerning bonuses in the GNWT.

Thank you, Mr. Speaker.