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**EVIDENCE**

**Tuesday, February 24, 2009**

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**Chair**

**Mr. Bruce Stanton**

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## Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development

Tuesday, February 24, 2009

•(0905)

[Translation]

**The Acting Chair (Mr. Bruce Stanton (Simcoe North, CPC)):**

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. This is the fifth meeting of the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development.

[English]

Today we have presentations from Statistics Canada and the First Nations Statistical Institute. We have the director, Jane Badets, from Statistics Canada, and we'll lead off with Ms. Badets.

Perhaps you could start by introducing the person who is with you today. You have approximately 10 minutes. We'll have your presentation, followed by that of the First Nations Statistical Institute, and then we'll go to questions from members.

Ms. Badets.

**Ms. Jane Badets (Director, Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division, Statistics Canada):** I want to thank the chair and the committee for inviting Statistics Canada here today.

I'm going to try to do this in 10 minutes, but we always have so much data and so many interesting trends to present that it is always a little challenging.

I am here with my colleague, Cathy Connors, who is the assistant director of the aboriginal statistics program at Statistics Canada. We'll be pleased to answer your questions after the presentation.

I think you have copies of the presentation in front of you. I'm going to be presenting some data, so I'll just tell you where I am on various slides.

I am now on slide 2. We were asked to present some selected results from the 2006 census. We have recently released information from two aboriginal surveys, the 2006 aboriginal children's survey and the aboriginal peoples survey, and you asked me to speak a little bit about our relationship with the First Nations Statistical Institute.

There is certainly too much information from these data sources to present to you in this short period of time, but I'll present to you some very key trends today.

Turning to slide 3, before presenting the trends, I'd like to first talk about concepts. Statistics Canada has four concepts for identifying the aboriginal population, and we ask about them on the census and generally in our aboriginal surveys. They are aboriginal ancestry, aboriginal identity, whether a person is a registered Indian or a treaty

Indian according to the Indian Act, and whether a person is a member of an Indian band or a first nation.

Users can use these concepts in different ways according to their own program or information needs. In this presentation we're going to focus primarily on the aboriginal identity population, and that is people who self-identify as an aboriginal person and/or are registered and/or are a member of an Indian band or first nation.

Just beginning with the data trend for the census on slide 4, in 2006 1.2 million people reported having an aboriginal identity—that is the short pink line on the graph in front of you—compared with 1.7 million who reported aboriginal identity, the long blue line. As you can see, there has been a steady increase of people reporting either aboriginal ancestry or aboriginal identity in the census. These increases in recent years can be attributed to demographic factors such as higher birth rates, as well as to non-demographic factors—for example, increased numbers deciding to self-identify as an aboriginal person in the census.

On slide 5, of the three aboriginal groups, the largest increase in population between 2001 and 2006 was observed for the Métis, with a growth rate of 33%. Most of this increase was due to increased numbers self-identifying as Métis in the census. The second-highest growth rate was with the first nations or North American population who did not report as registered Indian. This group grew by 28%. In comparison, the non-aboriginal population grew at a much slower rate during this five-year period. In terms of actual population size, the first nations people were the largest group, followed by Métis, then the Inuit.

On slide 6 and the next couple of slides I'll just show you where the aboriginal population lived. Slide 6 shows that most first nations people live in Ontario and the west. They make up 3% or less, though, of the population of Ontario, Alberta, and British Columbia. In terms of the Métis, on slide 7, like the first nations population, most of the people who were identified as Métis live in the west and Ontario, and as you can see from this graph, the largest Métis population was in Alberta, then Ontario, and Manitoba.

On slide 8, in terms of the Inuit population, three-quarters or 78% lived in one of the four regions within Inuit Nunaat. This is an Inuktitut expression for Indian homeland and stretches from Labrador to the Northwest Territories.

Now I'll turn to the 2006 aboriginal children's survey, and I'll just present you some initial findings from this survey. On slide 10 you'll see information about this survey, but I'll just say that it was conducted following the 2006 census. Up until now there had been little data available about the health and development of aboriginal children under the age of six, and the survey was designed to address this gap. Although the survey was primarily conducted off reserve and in the north, children living in some first nations communities in Quebec and the territories were included. You can see more information about how we conducted that survey on that slide.

On slide 11, first of all, from the census we learned that young first nations children living off reserve, and Métis and Inuit young children, that is, those under the age of six, are growing up in families that are unique in many ways, compared to the families of non-aboriginal children. Young aboriginal children are more likely than non-aboriginal children to have young parents, be part of a large family, be living in a lone-parent family, and be living with grandparents. You see some of the data supporting these statements on this slide.

On slide 12, parents were asked in this survey how the child spends time with various people in their lives, so you see that young first nations children living off reserve regularly spent time with not only their immediate family, such as their parents or siblings, but also with extended family and community members such as elders. Of note is that many young first nations children living off reserve, 68%, are spending time with their grandparents on a weekly basis. Similar trends were observed for Métis young children.

Slide 13 provides the same results for those who are spending time with young Inuit children. It is clear that Inuit children are spending time with a network of extended family and community members. About seven in ten are also receiving focused attention from grandparents, aunts, uncles, and cousins at least once a week. We've outlined that in the bars in the graph. These were higher proportions than those observed for young Métis and young off-reserve first nations children.

On slide 14, parents of off-reserve young first nations children were also asked to rate their feelings about their community as a place to raise children, in a number of areas, as listed on the slide. From this chart, we see that off-reserve first nations children, generally speaking, have parents who are satisfied with many aspects of the community as a place to raise children, but they were less satisfied with access to activities that promote traditional aboriginal culture and values. Similar trends were also observed for young Métis children.

Finally, regarding ratings of community as a place to raise children for Inuit, on slide 15 we see higher ratings of community facilities given by those living outside Inuit Nunangat. The only characteristic that did not receive higher ratings was aboriginal cultural activities, which were rated more highly by those living in Inuit Nunangat.

Now we'll look at the aboriginal peoples survey. On slide 17 there is information about this survey. The aboriginal peoples survey, which we refer to as the APS, was conducted between October 2006 and March 2007. It provides extensive data on Inuit, Métis, and off-

reserve first nations children aged 6 to 14 and adults aged 15 and over living in urban, rural, and northern locations across Canada.

Three analytical articles were released just recently, providing initial findings from the survey. I will give you a brief overview of the school experiences of off-reserve first nations children aged 6 to 14, which was one of the analytical articles released.

On slide 19, parents of off-reserve first nations children were asked in the APS how well their child was doing based on their knowledge of their child's school work, such as report cards. In 2006, seven in ten off-reserve first nations children aged 6 to 14 were reported by their parents to be doing very well or well in school, based on their knowledge of their child's school work. These findings were similar to those for children aged 6 to 14 in the general Canadian population.

On slide 20, the study also looked at factors: factors associated with perceived achievement at school among off-reserve first nations children after holding constant other factors such as gender and age. The study found that factors associated with relatively high perceived achievement at school included—the slide lists these, but I will just give you a few—getting along well with teachers or classmates, having parents who were strongly satisfied with school practices, and reading books every day. Factors found to be associated with lower perceived achievement were: having missed school for two or more weeks in a row during the school year, having been diagnosed with a learning disability or attention deficit, or having parents who had attended residential schools.

We also released two articles, one on Métis health and one on Inuit health. I will just give you some very brief highlights from those and then conclude the presentation.

● (0910)

On slide 22, respondents were asked to rate their health in a five-point scale ranging from excellent to poor. This is a standard question that we ask in many of our health surveys. In 2006, nearly six in ten, 58%, Métis aged 15 and over reported that their health was excellent or very good, the same proportion as in 2001. This compared to 62% of the population of Canada who rated their health as excellent or very good.

Turning to slide 23, in 2006, just over half, 54%, of all Métis aged 15 and over reported that they had been diagnosed with a chronic condition, about the same proportion as was reported in 2001. The most commonly reported chronic conditions among Métis adults were arthritis, rheumatism, high blood pressure, and asthma. In all three cases, rates among Métis were higher than they were in the general population after standardizing for age differences.

Finally, in terms of health care utilization—slide 24—Métis aged 15 and over were slightly less likely to have seen a family doctor in the 12 months prior to the survey, compared with the total population of Canada.

I'll just give you a couple of similar highlights on Inuit health and chronic conditions.

Slide 26 shows the percentage of Inuit and of the total population aged 15 and over who self-rate their health as excellent or very good. For all age groups, a lower proportion of Inuit rated their health to be excellent or very good than was the case for the total population.

The most frequently reported chronic conditions among Inuit, on slide 27, were arthritis and high blood pressure. The rates were about the same as those for the total Canadian population, after differences by age group were controlled for.

In terms of health care utilization, on slide 28, Inuit were less likely than others to have contact with a doctor. This was true for Inuit in all age groups. Few Inuit communities have a resident doctor. The point of first contact with the medical system is with a nurse. Inuit requiring the services of a doctor are usually flown out of their community for treatment in a larger centre.

Finally, we were asked just to speak briefly of our relationship with the First Nations Statistical Institute, the FNSI. I know you're going to have a presentation today from the chair of FNSI. I'll just talk very briefly on this. In terms of the relationship, the relationship is outlined to some extent in the legislation, the First Nations Fiscal and Statistical Management Act. That states that FNSI will work in cooperation with Statistics Canada to ensure that the national statistical system better meets the needs of first nations and the government. As well, the chief statistician is an ex officio member of the FNSI board of directors. FNSI will play an important role in the national statistical system. Both FNSI and Statistics Canada will work together, building on their respective strengths to improve statistics for first nations.

That concludes my presentation. On the very last page, there are links to other information on our website where you can find more detail on some of the analysis I presented today. Thank you.

• (0915)

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** Thank you, Ms. Badets.

[*English*]

We went a little over there, but we do have some latitude here today.

Our next presenter, as Ms. Badets alluded to, and a good segue to our next presentation, is the chair of the First Nations Statistical Institute, Mr. Mark Dockstator.

Mr. Dockstator, ten minutes. Please, if you wish to introduce who's attending with you today, that would be wonderful. Thank you.

**Dr. Mark Dockstator (Chairman, First Nations Statistical Institute):** First, thank you very much, Mr. Chair and committee, for the invitation to come and present this morning. It is wonderful to be here, but I have to extend the apologies of our vice-chair, Judy White, who was intending to be here. Unfortunately, she was coming in from the east coast and was stuck yet again at another airport. I think this was the third trip when she has tried to get out to somewhere other than the east coast and couldn't make it, so I am passing along her apologies to the committee.

I'll introduce Carla Di Giusto, who is one of our staff members for the First Nations Statistical Institute. She is here to assist.

I don't have a written presentation for the committee. I thought I would give a verbal update as to where we are as an organization.

The First Nations Statistical Institute, or FNSI, the acronym most people refer to us by, is a brand-new organization. Last year at this time we did not yet have a full board. We've only had a full board and been legally constituted as an organization for one year. I thought I would take a few minutes of your time to give you an update as to where we are, where we have come from, and our relationship with Statistics Canada.

As I mentioned, last year at this time we had yet to have our full board appointed. I was appointed in the spring of 2007, and I'm a part-time chair. A year later the board was fully constituted, and we have met four times in the last year to get the business of the organization up and operating; that is, to become legally constituted as an organization, to pass our bylaws, to appoint our officers with the requirements in the legislation, to get our audit committee up and operating, and essentially to get us to the position where we could develop and then pass our first corporate plan, which we did. We put that into the Treasury Board submission process. Our corporate plan and Treasury Board submission went in front of Treasury Board in November of last year and we received our funding this year. We are now in the process of developing and passing our second corporate plan and putting that into the Treasury Board submission process as well.

Up until this point in the development of FNSI, we have received interim funding from Statistics Canada and the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs, where they were expending moneys on behalf of FNSI. We have secured our own budget only recently and are operating with that.

From the perspective of accomplishments of the board to date, the board has been very active to get us up and operating. Again, it's unique to be a crown corporation and not to have been an organization before. There wasn't an organization in place where we just changed the name to FNSI. We are essentially starting from the ground up. There was no infrastructure, no organization, and the staff we have been working with—and we have three or four staff at this point—have been on loan from other organizations through various measures within the government.

Essentially we've accomplished everything we have with a very limited budget, a small number of staff, and no outside consultants. We are a very active and a very small organization, but one that, at this point, is just starting to build the organization with its own budget and to look into our future development.

Looking to the future, our next big task is to hire our chief statistician. Under the legislation, the First Nations Fiscal and Statistical Management Act, the chief statistician first has to be hired in order for us to then hire our staff. Until then, we're still essentially an interim organization with interim staffing arrangements. Once our chief statistician is hired, and that will be a thorough and transparent national competition, we can then start hiring our staff and become operational as an organization.

● (0920)

In the meantime, the board and the staffing that we do have on an interim basis are very active in building the organization, building the crown corporation, in order to ensure that when we get to the point of hiring our chief statistician, the organization will be in place and everything that we require will be there for us, as an organization, to meet the challenges that we find in front of us.

It has been a very active year for the board, in summary. We have, I think, accomplished a lot with a minimal amount of funding, with a very small number of staff and with little outside assistance from consultants. We've had our full slate of four board meetings in one year to pass the corporate plan and get it accepted into the Treasury Board submission process.

We do have in front of us, as a board, a number of very important challenges in building the organization. Our next board meeting is to take a breath somewhat and go back and look at some of the things that we had to rush through as a matter of necessity to get to this point, such as what the organization will look like and the details of how we will work with our partners such as Statistics Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs, the Assembly of First Nations, and other organizations that we will be developing strong partnerships with.

That is a very brief update of a newly formed crown corporation that has a very active board and has accomplished a great deal in the last year to get us to the point that we are at right now.

Thank you, Mr. Chair and committee members.

**The Chair:** Merci beaucoup.

Members, I appreciate your patience with the extra heat in here. We have asked the staff of the building to see what they can do to correct this. I appreciate your patience and understanding. We'll do our best.

[*Translation*]

We now move to questions from members. Let us start with the Liberals.

Mr. Russell, you have the floor.

[*English*]

**Mr. Todd Russell (Labrador, Lib.):** Good morning, Mr. Chair, and thank you.

Good morning to each of our witnesses.

I have just a couple of questions for clarification.

In terms of FNSI, what was the rationale for the development of this new, I believe you used the words, “crown corporation”? I know in the past there's been some angst, I guess, about Statistics Canada and the work they have conducted, particularly on reserves. There were some debates about the accuracy of the information and how it was being relayed.

Is that part of why FNSI came about or are there other reasons? What's the mandate of FNSI itself? I just want some clarification on that.

● (0925)

**Dr. Mark Dockstator:** Thanks very much.

The question has three parts. I'll respond to the first part. I wasn't involved in the lead-up to the creation of FNSI, so I have to rely on the record as much as anybody else. In the creation of FNSI and outside of that, I think there were a number of discussions about the nature of the information that first nations had access to or that they could use.

We as a board took that background, and when we looked at that question of what is the purpose of FNSI, what is our mandate, it was in more of a positive manner and we said, “Well, whatever has gone on in the past, we are here to be a mechanism to build better and stronger relationships with first nations. We will do that by improving the communications that occur between first nations and the other partners that we work with as an institution.”

As we know, the world works on information, works on data, and we said, if we could, in our role as FNSI, improve the communications between those who are generating the data, whoever that might be, and those who are receiving the data or using the data, either first nations or organizations on their behalf, we would do so, and then we took that as being our mandate in the very positive way of saying that our role here is to build better and stronger relationships with first nations.

The second part of the question concerns the specific mandate we have. That's the philosophical approach that we bring as an organization. Our specific mandate has two components under the legislation. The first component is to support, essentially, economic development on first nations territories, on reserves across Canada. The First Nations Fiscal and Statistical Management Act has within its purpose the ability for first nations to tax real property interests and to then take that and pool those reserves in order to issue a bond on the public market to fund the infrastructure. We are there to support those first nations and those three other institutions under the legislation to ensure that there is up-to-date information for that bond issue.

Under the legislation, we also have another component to our mandate, which is a much broader one, to look at all other issues surrounding first nations data and information, not just with respect to those first nations going forward under the legislation, for that bond issue.

The third part to the question is that when we look forward we know we'll be revising our vision in going forward with that. As I said, we do have very good relationships with all our partners. For example, as Jane was mentioning, the Chief Statistician of Canada is on our board as an ex officio member, and we do meet on a regular basis to ensure that we have strong communications and that our efforts as we go forward will be meshing one with the other.

**Mr. Todd Russell:** So FNSI itself doesn't have the capacity or doesn't have the mandate to gather information. That still rests with Statistics Canada. Is that correct?

**Dr. Mark Dockstator:** There are two parts to that. We would have the mandate but not the capacity. We are a very small, limited organization that would not have the types of financial resources to do the things that a larger organization such as Statistics Canada could, although our mandate would cover that type of activity.

**Mr. Todd Russell:** Okay, thank you.

My next question is for Statistics Canada. There's quite a lot of information here in the stretch of 10 minutes, and you can only be so comprehensive, but there was very little data on first nations on-reserve populations within the presentation itself. Was there some reason for that?

**Ms. Jane Badets:** No. We had been here in June and we presented quite a bit from the census on that. We included quite a bit of on-reserve information. We just thought that this time we needed a little bit different perspective. Also, the two post-census surveys—the aboriginal children's survey and the aboriginal peoples survey—were not yet conducted on reserve. But there's certainly lots of information from the census. We just didn't have the time here to present everything.

**Mr. Todd Russell:** Thank you. I noticed that some of the questions are very perception oriented—you ask how they feel about education or how they feel about their community—particularly with some of the populations you surveyed in the APS, generally, and in the children's survey.

I just want to go on to health for a second. When you talk about the prevalence of chronic disease among a couple of population sets, how big a factor is the lack of access in some population areas to

screening, for instance, or health professionals? Does that get factored in at all?

If you just do the comparisons in Nunaat, the Inuit homeland area, and then decide to see how that compares with the rest of the Canadian population, what kinds of factors do you bring into play in determining that comparison?

Being from Labrador, I know that not only in Nunaat but in the government areas, throughout Labrador, there's a lack of access to health professionals and screening. I know thousands of people in Labrador who for various reasons just don't go to a doctor or a nurse at all. For some it's just that they can't afford to get to a health professional.

How is the comparison made? Is it a good comparison? Do you take those methodologies into play? How does that methodology work?

•(0930)

**Ms. Cathy Connors (Assistant Director, Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division, Statistics Canada):** One of the things we do with the surveys is ask a number of different questions to try to get at some of those things. Along with asking questions about chronic conditions, we also ask questions about access to health care so that researchers can take those types of things into account when they're analyzing the data.

[Translation]

**The Chair:** Thank you. Your time is up.

Mr. Lemay, you have seven minutes.

**Mr. Marc Lemay (Abitibi—Témiscamingue, BQ):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Mr. Dockstator, I have to confess that I have one small problem. I do not understand the mandate of the First Nations Statistical Institute, the FNSI. Can you explain it to me again quickly? I do not want to spend the entire seven minutes on it. My feeling is that it is in competition with Statistics Canada. Does the FNSI have specific responsibilities vis-à-vis First Nations that Statistics Canada does not?

I am very worried by the fact that we have no figures. Ms. Badets gave us figures in June, but we do not know the real status of Aboriginal groups who live in communities or on-reserve. Do you intend to do a statistical study on the impact of the 2% ceiling. By that I mean that is not possible to devote more than 2% of the funds to First Nations. It is no good gathering statistics on First Nations' economic health; if they have no education, no work and are in poor health, it is no good at all.

I have to say that I am in two minds on this matter. I will let you respond and then I will ask Ms. Badets a question.

[English]

**Dr. Mark Dockstator:** Thank you. I'll answer specifically the mandate question first.

As a new organization, a newly formed crown corporation, the first task we looked at was to define what our mandate as a board would be. It is very clear in the legislation that our mandate has two parts to it. The first part we took as our initial priority was to assist the other three institutions that were created under the legislation—the First Nations Finance Authority, the First Nations Financial Management Board, and the First Nations Tax Commission. A number of first nations are, under the legislation, ready to go forward, working with all four of these institutions in order to have a bond issued at some point in the future. It is very important, if not imperative, that the First Nations Statistical Institute play a key role with those other three organizations and with those first nations who are signed up, under the legislation, to go forward.

So our immediate goal as an organization is to fulfill that part of our mandate, which is right in front of us, for those first nations who are ready to go, and the other three institutions who are working with those first nations, in order to proceed to the bond issue. As a board, we took that as a primary aspect of our mandate that, in the near future, as we develop as an organization, we would key our resources into.

This is keeping in mind that we do have an overlap between Statistics Canada and us with respect to the second component of our mandate, which is to look at first nations in a broader sense. Statistics Canada here is presenting that type of information. The field is somewhat occupied at this time. We took that as saying, well, that is the second part of our mandate that we will get to as we build our organization and as we support the other three institutions and those first nations, under the legislation, that are going forward. As a second part, we will work with Statistics Canada to ensure that when we get to that part of our mandate, there is no overlap; we're working in conjunction, one with the other.

• (0935)

[Translation]

**Mr. Marc Lemay:** Ms. Badets, I would like to know if you share the same understanding of the mandate that Mr. Dockstator has just described for us? The statistics that you are showing us today worry me a lot. Last June, I asked the following question and I think it was you I asked. Do you remember?

Am I to understand that, if I am telephoned, I can identify myself as Aboriginal or First Nations with no documentation needed?

[English]

**Ms. Jane Badets:** I do remember, very much, the discussion we had on that in June. However, I first want to answer a little bit with regard to FNSI and the role of FNSI with Statistics Canada.

In no way does Statistics Canada see FNSI as being an overlap of what we do. I think it will be very complementary. We are looking forward to FNSI becoming more operational. The need for statistics, as you can see, and the explanations—I'm probably going to hear a lot of questions from you, asking for more explanation and more data—is vast. We do need an organization like FNSI, which will bring a first nations perspective to the collection, analysis, and examination of data; add to the statistical capacity among first nations; and get information to them, to the communities, so that they can use it. That's critical. It's an important part of the national

statistical system, which we will both be players in. I just wanted to respond in that sense.

In terms of your question on the Métis and on the questions we ask in a census, we've asked them for a number of years. We do extensive testing leading up, making sure that these questions do respond to the needs of our stakeholders or partners and data users, and communities themselves. Certainly many of the questions in the census are self-identification, self-enumeration questions. We rely on the goodwill of Canadians to respond.

In terms of Métis—and we do get this question, it's not a new one—there is no universally accepted definition of Métis. Even among the Métis organizations, there are different perspectives on who's Métis and who's not. But this is not unlike some of the other questions we ask, too, in the census.

[Translation]

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Lemay.

[English]

Now we go to Ms. Crowder, for seven minutes.

**Ms. Jean Crowder (Nanaimo—Cowichan, NDP):** Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the witnesses for coming today.

I also want to start with FNSI.

I believe it's an important organization and I'm looking forward to the organization becoming more fully operational. I think when I get to my questions for Statistics Canada you'll see some of my concerns with how information is currently collected.

But in the Montreal *Gazette* on February 18 there was an article that talked about Ottawa pondering big asset sell-offs and some names raising eyebrows. Your organization is on a list of the possible crown corporations under review.

Have you been contacted about the fact that you may actually be on the chopping block?

• (0940)

**Dr. Mark Dockstator:** I take it the article is in reference to the budget?

**Ms. Jean Crowder:** Yes.

**Dr. Mark Dockstator:** I read in the paper, like most people, the overarching details of the budget, but being a very small organization with limited staff, we don't have the resources to go into the budget. Nobody has contacted FNSI to say that we are under specific review, although that might be the case.

**Ms. Jean Crowder:** I think it would be unfortunate, because I believe that with the mandate you're being provided, there will be an important lens, both on the information around economic development and data gathering to support the bond issue and in terms of the kind of information that is gathered with first nations.

Now, is your focus on reserve, or is it broader than that?



**Dr. Mark Dockstator:** Again, our mandate is very specific in the legislation. Although there is some flexibility in certain areas to go outside the reserve, our primary focus in our legislation is first nations reserve-based.

**Ms. Jean Crowder:** And of course we know that the data gathering on reserve has been problematic, which is where I want to turn to Statistics Canada for a minute.

In your presentation you talked about the fact that your focus has been on aboriginal identity, and that does raise a number of concerns. I wonder if you could talk specifically about why the focus has swung to aboriginal identity. This is a significant funding issue. There are two issues around it. One is that in June, when Mr. Guimond came before the committee, he talked about the fact that there was a difference in the information between Indian and Northern Affairs and Statistics Canada. He talked about the fact that using aboriginal identity can skew policy development and that the misinterpretation of urban population growth could result in the overemphasis of migration from Indian reserves to cities. I think there's significant concern that first nations on reserve will get lost in policy development if there is this notion that there's this large migration.

I wonder if you could talk about why we use aboriginal identity.

**Ms. Jane Badets:** Well, as I said, we certainly do extensive consultations with our stakeholders on—

**Ms. Jean Crowder:** So who are those stakeholders?

**Ms. Jane Badets:** They would be Indian and Northern Affairs, many federal departments, provincial governments, national aboriginal organizations, aboriginal communities, researchers.

**Ms. Jean Crowder:** Is there any group that you would say has the bigger stake in the stakeholder group? I'm hearing anecdotally from NAOs and from first nations on reserve that they don't feel they have been represented in the stakeholder discussion.

**Ms. Jane Badets:** Well, we certainly go, and we certainly talk to them. We don't get to all reserves. That would be a difficult task to consult with everyone, but we do at the time of the census, when we decide to go on reserve.

Identity is not the only concept. What we do at Statistics Canada is provide the building blocks. We have those four questions. Identity is not the only one, but we do have ancestry, we have people who have reported as treaty or registered Indians as well as first nations band members.

Those are the building blocks we provide. Different organizations or different partners or stakeholders will decide to use the data as they feel necessary according to their program needs. And that's what our purpose is, to put that out so that they can use it.

We've just completed a number of regional discussions across the country, and people still do like the concept of identity. But what we do is make sure we provide all the information for all of those different concepts.

• (0945)

**Ms. Jean Crowder:** But on slide 4 you only provided ancestry and identity.

**Ms. Jane Badets:** Yes. Given the historical nature, we wanted to show the historical growth of that population.

**Ms. Jean Crowder:** When you report out, then, you would report out as ancestry, identity, status....

**Ms. Jane Badets:** Registered and band and first nations. If you go to our website, you would have all of that information, including from our surveys as well.

**Ms. Jean Crowder:** I think Mr. Lemay expressed this in the past. You're quite right that people can self-identify. When it comes to identity, any one of us here could self-identify as having aboriginal identity and yet not be aboriginal people in any way, shape, or form. I think part of the concern is that this information can be used to skew policy decisions.

**Ms. Jane Badets:** Certainly. That could be for any of the questions to ancestry as well and registered Indian. It is self-enumeration and self-reporting on a census.

**Ms. Jean Crowder:** When I come to the registry, the registered first nations, INAC's registry says there are over 805,000. The census says, I believe, around 600,000. So in fact there is a discrepancy between INAC's registered numbers and what the census is reporting. That's a significant gap of 200,000. It does start to bring into question the validity of some of this information.

**Ms. Jane Badets:** Those are two different data sources. One is administrative and one is census. Census provides you with a snapshot of the population on census day.

**Ms. Jean Crowder:** I do understand that, that one is administrative—

**The Chair:** We're out of time.

**Ms. Jean Crowder:** Okay.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much. Now, we'll go to Mr. Rickford for seven minutes, please.

**Mr. Greg Rickford (Kenora, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair. Welcome to our committee, to all our witnesses. I'm going to take the first part of the seven minutes for some questions for Statistics Canada, particularly around some of the health data that are contained in your presentation. Then I'll move to some questions for FNSI.

I should make the pre-emptive statement that I'm relieved that this government seems to be on the right track when we look at our accomplishments so far and what we propose in the economic plan. Our job, of course, is to shape policy around a qualitative analysis of the quantitative data that's here. Our priorities in the areas of education, training, housing, infrastructure, and maternal child health seem to be on the right track, but I want to make some sense of a few of these pages.

Some of it builds on Mr. Russell's line of thinking. If we go to page 14, we have what I would consider a fair degree of satisfaction, even if it is perception, with health facilities. Perhaps, Cathy, you could comment on where that satisfaction might come from. Does that include services? What does the word "facilities" mean, because 77% of the people surveyed there had a good or excellent or very good perception of the services in their community?

Before you answer that, I'm going to pull in pages 26, 27, and 28, because they round out our analysis with respect to a couple of interesting points in terms of health services for Inuit people and their degree of satisfaction. I think the statement could be made that the fact that we've identified increases in certain disease processes, particularly high blood pressure, which is more often a symptom of another disease process, means that access to services has to necessarily be improved in the communities because we're identifying more of those. Whether it's diagnostic or access to some kind of primary health care, there may in fact be an improvement and more comprehensive care. Do you have any data on the satisfaction about that care to the extent that it might be different on page 14 as the question is asked?

I ask these questions for some very specific reasons, obviously. I spent eight years working as a nurse in isolated communities across the Arctic and several provinces. I can say that the access to services, particularly around prenatal services, work-ups for diabetics or for even looking at diabetes, and the advancements we've made in a number of communities to getting things like telophamology services, portable services in communities like Pikangikum, Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug, and Muskrat Dam, and KO Telemedicine has in fact improved the access to services in those communities. Quite frankly, as a nurse practising the extended role and for nurse practitioners, which I know is a growing profession in those communities, there is increased access to services, and these support it, although it may not be obvious.

I'm sorry for that rather lengthy question. It may only require a short response. Could you comment on that?

• (0950)

**Ms. Cathy Connors:** Sure. I'll start by addressing your question about slide 14 and what is a health facility.

Basically, this question was asked to better understand how parents feel about their community or neighbourhood as a place to raise young children. So this is for children under the age of six. Here the question was just asked in terms of health facilities. We didn't specify what that was. It was left up to the respondents to decide what they would consider a health facility to be.

**Mr. Greg Rickford:** Obviously, those parents would be preoccupied with a couple of specific services: the maternal child health spectrum, immunization, identification of ear infections, asthma, etc.?

**Ms. Cathy Connors:** Exactly.

In terms of access to health services, we do have a few questions we ask about that. We ask whether there's been a time where people have not received health care in the past year when they needed it. There's also a question for the children's survey, whether the child has seen a doctor or a medical professional in the past year. So there is information like that available.

**Mr. Greg Rickford:** On page 26, the question is "excellent or very good self-rated health". Is that just a healthy person with no known conditions? Can that go further to say that I'm a diabetic and the status of my non-insulin-dependent diabetes is actually quite good because of the access to services I have in my community, for example? Does it drill down and try to explore that?

What is excellent or very good health? I have good health as a new MP, but it could be better, because the lifestyle is chaotic. It's a very subjective question.

**Ms. Cathy Connors:** Exactly, and that really is what the question is. How do people perceive their own health? But we have found that this particular question is really quite accurate in addressing—

**Mr. Greg Rickford:** The general health status, whether you have a condition or not.

**Ms. Cathy Connors:** Exactly.

**Mr. Greg Rickford:** Okay, fair enough.

That's all?

**The Chair:** Yes, that's it.

**Mr. Greg Rickford:** I knew health would just take over and I wouldn't get a chance. I apologize.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

[Translation]

Let us start the second round with Mr. Bélanger. You have five minutes.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger (Ottawa—Vanier, Lib.):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

[English]

Thank you for being here, first of all. I'll go straight to questions to help me understand. On slide 14, what's the difference between good and fair?

**Ms. Cathy Connors:** Really, what we did was we gave the respondents a five-point scale and we asked them whether it was excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor. So when we analyzed the data we grouped some of them together. We grouped excellent or very good as one, good, and then fair or poor as one.

• (0955)

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** I still fail to understand. It's a matter of nuances, but it's when you group fair and poor together that I have a problem, because they're fairly contradictory concepts, and no pun intended here, but you've put them together.

To me, for something that is poor, I would think for most people it's fairly clear that we're not happy, we're not satisfied and so forth. If it's fair, you can be okay with it. But to lump them together doesn't provide me at least with a fair assessment of what they may be thinking. That's just for future use perhaps.

**Ms. Cathy Connors:** And it is possible to look at them separately as well.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Thank you.

On slide 15 you have an appreciation of within the community and outside the community. Correct? What is “outside” the community?

**Ms. Cathy Connors:** Basically when we're looking at Inuit Nunaat, we're looking at the Inuit land claim regions.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** I understand that. That's not my question. What's outside? The rest?

**Ms. Cathy Connors:** Outside are all of the other Inuit living in Canada outside of the Inuit land claim region.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Do you have that a little more defined? That's a pretty vast territory.

For instance, I happen to represent the riding that I believe has the largest concentration of Inuit people outside Nunavut. Is that so? Could you isolate this a little more so that I could get some statistics on how the Inuit population in, say, large urban centres feels?

**Ms. Cathy Connors:** Likely not, because of population sizes and the fact that this was a sample survey. We likely don't have sufficient numbers to be able to produce anything smaller.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Can you identify outside urban and outside rural?

**Ms. Cathy Connors:** I don't think we can do that. We'd have to look at it.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Okay. Would you?

**Ms. Cathy Connors:** Yes.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Thank you.

Mr. Dockstator, the estimates for 2007 and 2008, if my information is correct—and I'm going to ask you if it is correct—would have attributed respectively \$4.8 million and \$4.3 million to your organization. Is that information accurate?

**Dr. Mark Dockstator:** In order to access our budget, which is already allocated, as an organization we had to go through a number of steps. The first step was to get a full board constituted and to pass our bylaw so that we became a legal entity. Then we developed our corporate plan and Treasury Board submission and went in front of Treasury Board.

As I said, last year at this time we didn't have a board, so those estimates were correct, but we weren't able to access it until this year. Even then, it was just for some interim funding to get us up and operating as an organization.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** You're the president.

**Dr. Mark Dockstator:** The chair.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Is that a volunteer position?

**Dr. Mark Dockstator:** It's a part-time position, a Governor in Council appointment.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Okay, but there is a payment to that.

**Dr. Mark Dockstator:** That's correct.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** And you have some staff?

**Dr. Mark Dockstator:** Again, under our legislation, we can't really use the word “staff” until after our chief statistician is hired. That person is responsible for hiring staff. So we do have consultants and we do have four people working for us on various arrangements

such as interchanges or secondments, for example, through Statistics Canada.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Are they paid by Statistics Canada or by your organization?

**Dr. Mark Dockstator:** Primarily now through Statistics Canada.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** So you have no expenditures? I'm just trying to find out.

**Dr. Mark Dockstator:** Basically, yes, that's correct.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** So the \$4.3 million or \$4.8 million in estimates would have been totally unspent?

**Dr. Mark Dockstator:** They would, as far as I know, be moved forward.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Would they lapse or would they be carried forward?

**Dr. Mark Dockstator:** That I don't know. They would lapse, I guess.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Could we find that out?

**A voice:** Yes.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Okay.

I have another couple of questions.

**The Chair:** We're pretty well wrapped up there, Mr. Bélanger.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Very quickly, can we get a copy of your corporate plan?

**Dr. Mark Dockstator:** Sure. That's not a problem at all.

**Hon. Mauril Bélanger:** Thank you.

• (1000)

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Bélanger.

Mr. Albrecht, five minutes.

**Mr. Harold Albrecht (Kitchener—Conestoga, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to our witnesses. My apologies for arriving late.

I did get a number of the reports off the web earlier. I just want to focus on a couple of areas as they relate to health care, maybe following up a bit on Mr. Rickford's questions.

First of all, I notice that in the lung cancer rates among Inuit, you indicate here that they're the highest in the world, and you also indicate that, on a daily basis, more than three times as many Inuit smoke as other Canadians do. That really concerns me. Are there any prevention or educational programs in place? Secondly, there is the cost factor in this. One of the very obvious questions is this: how can this many Inuit people afford to be smoking and not affect the rest of their lifestyle in terms of adequate housing, food, and those kinds of things?

It may not be fair to ask you that question as it's out of your mandate, but could you just respond a bit in terms of what you found in your analysis?

**Ms. Cathy Connors:** You're absolutely right about what we found in the analysis. Inuit are smoking more than the non-aboriginal population. In terms of prevention and education programs, that's not really something we can speak to.

**Mr. Harold Albrecht:** Okay.

I would have the same question, then, as it relates to dental care. You pointed out as well that many of them don't have access to dental care. It seems that the emphasis here, in terms of measuring, is on emergency treatment or dental treatment. Again, the question that begs to be asked is whether there are any prevention programs. Are there any hygienists or people trained in oral hygiene instruction and so on who could possibly fill some of this gap?

Are those treatment modalities measured at all, or is it simply a matter of measuring the number of dentists there or how many times they fly in for emergency treatment, and so on? That seems rather like an end result as opposed to trying to actually improve health. You mentioned that it affects overall health as well, and we certainly know from research that this is true.

I'm just wondering how we, as a committee, could be influential—again, I'm not putting blame on anyone here—in advancing the cause of those kinds of treatment modalities.

**Ms. Cathy Connors:** One thing to remember is that these surveys were person-based surveys. The types of things you're talking about would need a different type of survey for which we would actually survey dentists or the dental community in some way, shape, or form.

**Mr. Harold Albrecht:** I think it's something we need to be looking at in the future.

Do I have any time left?

**The Chair:** You have two minutes.

**Mr. Harold Albrecht:** I just want to point out as well one of the off-reserve pages on the website, which talks about the factors associated with relatively higher perceived school achievement. One statistic sort of jumped out at me. It points out that 81% of those off-reserve first nations children, as reported by their parents, get along well with teachers and peers. I would think that this is a very high rate. I'm wondering if the average school in Canada would score that high in terms of parental support of what their kids are getting.

**Ms. Cathy Connors:** This looked at children aged six to 14, and what we found was that for both first nations children living off reserve and the non-aboriginal population, parents rated their children just about equally in terms of how well they were doing at school.

**Mr. Harold Albrecht:** From my perspective as a committee member, I think that is something we should celebrate. It says to me that first nations people off reserve are being accepted and are part of the community. And to have their parents reflect that I think is really healthy.

Do I have any more time left?

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** You have 40 seconds.

[*English*]

**Mr. Harold Albrecht:** I just wanted to point out as well some of the initiatives. Mr. Lemay referred earlier to economic development and the difficulty many aboriginal groups have in getting access to those economic development opportunities. And I think that's key.

I just want to point out that we are continuing to work on those areas in terms of aboriginal skills and training and in terms of continued investment in the SINED, the strategic investments in northern economic development. These are things we need to keep working at.

Those of us who were privileged to travel to Iqaluit last year certainly saw the benefit of that. Again, I just want to encourage us, as a committee, to keep that front and centre in terms of the opportunities we put in front of all aboriginal people to give them equal opportunity to benefit from the same economic opportunities as the rest of Canada.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

• (1005)

[*Translation*]

**The Chair:** Thank you, Mr. Albrecht.

Mr. Lévesque, you have five minutes.

**Mr. Yvon Lévesque (Abitibi—Baie-James—Nunavik—Eeyou, BQ):** Good morning, ladies; good morning, sir.

Your efficiency overwhelms me. First, you give us percentages of Métis. I am looking at page 7 of the document, for example. I am wondering what basis you use to define who is a Métis and who is an unregistered Indian. Generally, an unregistered Indian is registered by a band council. He can register, whether he lives on-reserve or off-reserve.

We hear that there is such and such a number of unregistered Indians. Look, I am Québécois. If I am not registered in Quebec, I will not be considered Québécois. I would like to suggest another way of looking at it.

There is another. I am going to ask my questions all at once; you go ahead and answer.

Mr. Dockstator, we have the First Nations Statistical Institute and, at Statistics Canada, we have the Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division. When you are operational, will the Social and Aboriginal Statistics Division go strictly by your reporting? Will you be in charge of finding all the Aboriginals and Inuit outside the villages or off-reserve? Most of the Inuit in Nunavik, for example, live in villages, not on reserves. Are you going to deal with those on reserves too? Either Statistics Canada will be presenting your report or you will be sending yours to them. Would you explain how the two responsibilities are to be separated?

[English]

**Ms. Jane Badets:** I think your first question, again, was about who's identifying themselves as aboriginal in the census. Again, we have the four questions: aboriginal ancestry, aboriginal identity, and people can say that they're a treaty or registered Indian. And there are separate questions on whether they're a member of an Indian band or first nation. So, again, it's self-reported or self-enumerated. It's up to the individuals on the census questionnaire to self-identify themselves.

We know that "Métis" can be somewhat vague for some people, and we have been asking these questions in a number of censuses. But, again, for the Métis, we don't have a clear definition to put on a census questionnaire, nor do we have one for first nations or North American Indian. Registered Indian is probably a little bit clearer, because we say "according to the Indian Act". People can use these in different combinations, which we've done, I think, on slide 5.

[Translation]

The two concepts are mixed up: registered Indian and identity.

[English]

**Dr. Mark Dockstator:** To respond, I think your question was that, looking into the future, there could be the possibility of different organizations doing the same thing. We as a board looked at that issue when we first got together. Obviously, having a First Nations Statistical Institute means there is a lot of interest in first nations data; and if there is a large interest, then there are other people who are interested in doing the same thing. So there are, across the country, a lot of data sources, a lot of statistics, a lot of information dealing with first nations.

As an organization focused specifically on first nations, we interpreted our role as that of bringing a higher level of precision and certainty to the information that exists out there.

As we go forward, we are very cognizant of the fact that others have activities in the same area, and we will work with them to ensure that we're not stepping on each other's toes, but work as best we can in conjunction or coordination with them.

So the direction from the board to me, initially, was to ensure that we have good relations with those who are in the area already, such as Statistics Canada. And we are starting to do that. As I mentioned, we have a very regular meeting—

•(1010)

[Translation]

**Mr. Yvon Lévesque:** I am sorry to interrupt you, but I would like to know which report...

**The Chair:** You can ask a quick question.

**Mr. Yvon Lévesque:** Which report are we going to have to rely on? Who is invited to be on the Institute's Board of Directors? Where do these invited people come from?

[English]

**Dr. Mark Dockstator:** Is your question about the actual board membership itself? Okay. The board are all Governor-in-Council appointments, and they are selected by me in conjunction with the minister. We try to represent the regions across Canada and we try to

have as many aboriginal, first nations people as possible. For example, our vice-chair, Judy White, is from Conne River. We have another from New Brunswick, two from Quebec, two from Ontario, and two from British Columbia right now, so it's a wide, diverse board.

**The Chair:** We're really over time now.

**Dr. Mark Dockstator:** Sorry.

**The Chair:** No, not a problem. Thank you very much.

Now we'll go to Mr. Clarke. Are you going to split your time with Mr. Payne or will he take the next spot?

**Mr. Rob Clarke (Desnethé—Missinippi—Churchill River, CPC):** Yes, I will split my time.

**The Chair:** Go ahead. Five minutes.

**Mr. Rob Clarke:** Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you very much for coming today.

My questions basically are for both Statistics Canada and the First Nations Statistical Institute. With gathering information, especially numbers, they can be very misleading or very beneficial for however anyone wants to use them.

Now, about my first question. I know some first nations did not participate in providing information to Statistics Canada, but I'm not sure about the first nations portion of the information gathering. I'm just kind of curious: how many first nations did not participate in this study?

**Ms. Jane Badets:** In the 2006 census, 22 Indian reserves or Indian settlements did not participate. In that sense we call them incompletely enumerated reserves. It may be that we couldn't get onto the reserve or that we were on and we were asked to leave. That's down, though, quite a bit. It was about 77 in the 1996 census, then it went down to about 30 in the 2001 census, so we're seeing quite a bit of progress on that front.

**Mr. Rob Clarke:** Now we know the number that did not participate. With the numbers of individuals, will this affect their core funding in any way down the line for programs or any future programs?

**Ms. Jane Badets:** That we can't answer because our mandate is not to deal with funding issues. What we can say, again, as I said, is that the number of incompletely enumerated reserves is going down. They represented about 40,000 people in 2006. That's quite a small proportion overall for the total population, even the total aboriginal population at the national level and the provincial, though it does have an effect at local levels. So we've been making quite a bit of progress in this area.

**Mr. Rob Clarke:** What was the rationale for them to not participate in this?

**Ms. Jane Badets:** I get this question asked all the time, especially when we were doing the census. You have to ask the first nations leaders, the communities themselves, why they do not participate. There could be a number of reasons. Sometimes we hear, "Well, you already have this information." It may be that they don't feel trustful of the situation. Maybe they don't understand the benefits. Often it is that they don't understand the benefits of the census information for their community.

We don't just arrive on their doorsteps at the time of the census. We have quite an extensive outreach program. We have aboriginal liaison officers who work in between censuses and at the time of the census with communities to understand their data needs and try to get the information back to them, because that's why we're collecting the information, for their benefit, how they can use it. We also have a training program where we build statistical training so that first nations communities can use the information and understand why information is important.

So we do a lot of outreach, and we've been doing it for a number of years now and we're seeing quite a bit of progress from it.

• (1015)

**The Chair:** You have a minute and a half left, Mr. Payne. Do your best.

**Mr. LaVar Payne (Medicine Hat, CPC):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

This question is for FNSI. I understand this is a new organization. Maybe you could tell me this. Are you going to be re-evaluating any of the statistics that Statistics Canada has provided, or are you going to do your own statistical analysis?

**Dr. Mark Dockstator:** To answer that question, some background is necessary, first of all, in that Statistics Canada is obviously a much larger organization. The census is a very large budget item. By comparison, FNSI is a very small organization with a very limited budget, so the chances of FNSI being involved in census-based work is very remote.

Our primary responsibility under our mandate, as I mentioned before, is to work with the other three institutions under the legislation, and with those first nations that have signed up under that legislation, to go forward.

In the larger sense, what we do after that is somewhat constrained by our budget. We have somewhat of an expansive mandate but limited resources to fill that mandate, so our approach would be to work with those who have the budget to do things like that, use their data, and then hopefully get information to first nations with the resources we have.

Again, this is something we would look at when we get to our full funding. We haven't yet reached that milestone, but when we do, those are the types of considerations we'll bring to the table.

**Mr. LaVar Payne:** Okay.

**The Chair:** That's about it. There is another spot, if you want to follow up in the next slot.

We'll now go to Ms. Crowder, for five minutes.

**Ms. Jean Crowder:** I didn't get a chance to finish my questioning around the differences in numbers. It is a serious concern.

I have an article from January 27 that says, "Native group assails StatsCan census results, calls for review". It comes back down to this issue about the difference between Indian and Northern Affairs-registered first nations and Statistics Canada numbers. It looks as though there is a difference of around 200,000. It's an important issue.

In the interview that was done, you said, "StatsCan uses the broader identity figure to peg on-reserve numbers because 'it's how we've shown the data since the 1996 census'...". This interview with the director of strategic research for Indian and Northern Affairs goes on to say that they disagree with how you're doing this. They say, "That is not how we would break the numbers down. ... I've made the point many times myself to Statistics Canada." Then he goes on to say, "I imagine that they'll be doing changes to the way the census questions are done for the 2011 census."

There are two issues. One is that this difference is significant, so it does lead people to distrust the numbers. The second is whether there are proposed changes for the census in 2011 to overcome the challenge of the differences in these numbers.

**Ms. Jane Badets:** We take the quality of our information quite seriously, and we certainly look to make sure each time that we have good questions and are going to get the information we need.

I still want to come back to the differences between the Indian registry and the census. They are two different data sources. There will be differences, and that's not necessarily problematic. They are just different data sources. One is administrative. It gets updated by life events. It also includes people who may be living outside of the country in institutions.

Census is a different count, in some ways: it's a snapshot of people on census day. We also count people according to their usual place of residence. This is an international concept that is used throughout the world for taking census; that is, where you spent most of your time during the past year, or where you were on census day. It could be that somebody is on the registry and associated with a band but maybe living most of their time through the year in Winnipeg and Calgary, so they are counted there in the census. Those are normal parts of these different data sources. We have known that for a long time. Indian and Northern Affairs is quite aware of it as well.

• (1020)

**Ms. Jean Crowder:** They suggested there could be some changes to the way this information is gathered. Is that correct?

**Ms. Jane Badets:** We are working on our proposals for the 2011 census. We have, as I said, done some consultations to make sure that the questions we are asking are what people want. What we heard back was that these four questions are what we need; they are the building blocks. But different people, different organizations—Indian and Northern Affairs, for example—may want to use the questions differently, and that's fine as well, because that meets their program needs.

**Ms. Jean Crowder:** A big challenge and a big concern that we hear raised fairly consistently is that you can conveniently use Indian and Northern Affairs numbers to do one particular policy or funding pot, which is outside of your purview, and then you can use Stats Canada results to do another funding pot. When you have a \$200,000 difference, that could be a fair chunk of change in terms of deciding how you're going to fund. Again, that's outside of your problem, but it does lead to some concerns from the communities involved.

I just want to ask you a question about Bill C-31, about the second generation cut-off. That was the 1985 bill that reinstated women who had married outside of the community. Are there any census questions that have been asked about the numbers of first nations who've lost status because of the second generation cut-off?

I know the Clatworthy and Smith report made some projections, but has the census specifically asked?

**Ms. Jane Badets:** I'm not quite sure whether that combination of questions would get at that. Sorry—this has just got me thinking about how those questions work together.

I think maybe you can, but I'd have to get back to you on whether you could identify those people.

**Ms. Jean Crowder:** Okay. Am I out of time?

**The Chair:** You have 15 seconds, Ms. Crowder.

**Ms. Jean Crowder:** I have more questions.

**The Chair:** Thank you very much.

I'm going to take just a brief moment. I don't have any other speakers on the list, so I'm going to take the next government—oh, I'm sorry.

I'll defer to Madam Neville for five minutes, and I'll do the follow-up. Then I think we're finished.

**Hon. Anita Neville (Winnipeg South Centre, Lib.):** Thank you.

Actually Madam Crowder preempted me, because her line of questioning just now was where I was going.

I'm wondering whether you have gender-disaggregated data for everything that you have provided us. You provided us with a lot of information. If it's possible to get it by gender, by age group, by geographical area, I think that would be very helpful.

**Ms. Jane Badets:** Can I just respond to that? That's a big task. I'm not sure—

**Hon. Anita Neville:** You don't have it readily available is what you're saying?

**Ms. Jane Badets:** Well, we do. We certainly have all the census information. We would have to know what geographical areas you needed, because we have it in a multitude of ways.

Certainly we'd be willing to provide you additional information if you could just somehow alert us to which information you would need, and especially the geographical breakdowns.

**Hon. Anita Neville:** Geographically right now I would be focusing on western Canada. That would be helpful.

I, too, was going to ask the question about Bill C-31. In your consultation with stakeholders, have you been asked to see whether you can arrive at any information in terms of how Bill C-31 will affect status, what the numbers are, and what potential impact it will have? It's significant in terms of identity, ancestry, and dollars.

Have you done any work on Bill C-31? Has that been identified as an issue for you by any of the stakeholders you consult with?

**Ms. Jane Badets:** I don't know offhand. We'd have to go back and consult and see if that has come up. Offhand, I can't think of whether that has come up. Certainly, it has not in my dealings, but it could have with other people who were consulting on this.

**Hon. Anita Neville:** I would certainly be interested in knowing, because it has profound implications on many levels for communities and women.

My other line of questioning is totally different. It's related to the large increase in the Métis population. I know anecdotally of a huge increase, as you had referenced, in self-identification.

Do you have any way of measuring the increase? Did you ask whether people had self-identified as Métis in the previous census and in this one?

• (1025)

**Ms. Jane Badets:** We haven't asked that. I'm just wondering.... Sometimes we do this in terms of cross-tabulations and looking back. We can't necessarily tell the individual person. We can go by characteristics, if the increase by characteristics is different. But we don't know at the individual level.

**Hon. Anita Neville:** That's fine. Thank you.

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

**The Chair:** Thank you, Madam Neville.

Thanks for joining us here this morning.

Just to carry on, I have a follow-up question.

For the benefit of the committee, there were documents referenced and references made to your previous appearance before this committee in June. I wonder if you would be able to provide us with the deck, because that went into more of the first nations references. We picked up some today.

Could you provide us with that deck, particularly for the benefit of new members of the committee? Those who were on in the previous Parliament will certainly have that.

**Ms. Jane Badets:** We would be pleased to, yes.

**The Chair:** Similarly, the department also has a deck from the same session pertaining to that June 16 presentation, and we will get a copy of that to the committee members, so you will have that.

The question I have arises from that June 16 presentation. This was from the department, and I wonder if you could comment on it.

This is in the area of the issue of individual coverage when you're measuring first nations statistics. It indicated the data was suppressed in 166 inhabited reserves because of the low coverage, the uptake. Presumably, unless you get a certain threshold of participation, the data wouldn't be statistically relevant.

I am wondering what that threshold would be. Clearly there were communities where the participation was high enough that it wouldn't have to be suppressed, and I am wondering what that threshold would be in terms of participation.

**Ms. Jane Badets:** There are different aspects to this, one of which I have spoken to, about those first nations communities that we did not get on to at all. Those are what we call incompletely enumerated. So we have no data for those, and that was 22. That's one aspect.

Then we may get on the reserve and we may not get complete information. We may just get a population count. Because we have a long questionnaire we may not get that complete information of the

quality we put out. As you know, Statistics Canada has high levels of quality.

So I would have to check in terms of our threshold of what we call...they haven't answered so many questions. I've forgotten what that threshold would be. It's a percentage of the questions they have not answered or where the data quality is not of our quality.

On a number of reserves the population is so small that if we released the information we would be releasing individual information. Our concerns about confidentiality of information are there as well.

So I think within those numbers, all of that is a part of it.

**The Chair:** On that last one you're saying that if the volume of data is too low, if there's not a large enough sample, it could be crossing a line in terms of confidentiality.

**Ms. Jane Badets:** Yes, it may be 15 people, for example, and it is not a sample. We go house to house, to every house on the reserve. We have to protect confidentiality. That's in our statistics act.

But then there may be data quality issues as well for other areas. So that is where I have to check on the threshold to see where that point would be.

**The Chair:** Great. That is all I had.

We are going to take a brief recess and allow our witnesses to finish up.

I thank you all for your appearance here today and the information you have provided the committee. I am sure it's going to be very helpful as we continue with our study of these important issues.

So we'll take a brief recess and then reconvene in three or four minutes. Thank you.

*[Proceedings continue in camera]*

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