



# Wuskwatim

**PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AGREEMENT**

## Review

# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS



## **NCN MEMBER QUESTIONS**

From Round 1 Meet and Greets, October 13-20 2009





**PDA REVIEW Fall 2009 Meet and Greet**  
**NELSON HOUSE – OCTOBER 13, 2009**

**Q. Who is initiating this PDA Review process? NCN or Hydro?**

A. This is a review process Chief and Council has initiated and is undertaking.

**Q. Why are Quebec people benefitting more from jobs at Wuskwatim ?**

A. One of the major problems faced by our Citizens is getting sufficient experience on industrial sites. We are working with Manitoba Hydro, the contractors and the union to try to address this issue. We hope there will be additional on-the-job training initiatives implemented shortly to help address this problem. In the meantime, there have been generating stations built recently in Quebec so some of the workers are from Quebec as they have recent experience building dams.

As one of the owners of the WPLP, NCN wants to ensure the generating station is built in the most cost effective manner possible. Sometimes it is difficult to balance these competing interests.

**Q. This is our land, not Quebec land. Why are we not getting the contracts in Manitoba?**

A. We needed to get the best contractor for the best price, someone with experience, and the Quebec contractor had both the experience and the best price. As a "co-owner" of the project, NCN wants the project to be built at the lowest possible price while at the same time ensuring our people get as many jobs as possible on the site.

**Q. I heard there is discrimination at Wuskwatim. How are NCN people being protected against racism? When people there call us squaws, that is very hurtful.**

A. We have a cross-cultural program at the site. We have hired an Employment Liaison Officer to assist

our workers and to address these types of issues. Members of Chief and Council try to go to the Wuskwatim site at least once a month. We have also implemented a new program so Elders will go to the site once a month to help mentor and advise our workers. We have tried to investigate each incident brought to our attention or to ensure it is addressed.

Any worker who believes he or she is being harassed or discriminated against should go to the union representatives on site or contact the Employment Liaison Worker or one of the on site counsellors.

**Q. If the dollar goes up, shouldn't our value in Wuskwatim go up too?**

A. Export power sales are predominately sold to US-based customers who pay their bills in US dollars. As the Canadian dollar strengthens, we will receive fewer Canadian dollars for each US dollar received. However, the Canadian dollar may not always stay at the current high level and then we would once again get more Canadian dollars for each US dollar. Fluctuations in the exchange rates are very difficult to predict.

**Q. Was the contractor told or given direction about who they should hire? NCN and Hydro should have sat down with the contractor and discussed the issues. Was the contractor given the contract without any direction?**

A. The hiring procedures are set out in the Burntwood Nelson Agreement, the collective agreement that applies to most work at the Wuskwatim site. During the first phase of the project, most NCN workers were directly hired by the JVs. All contractors on site are bound by the terms and conditions of the hiring processes. All preferences for qualified staff must be followed. One of the biggest challenges facing our people is getting industrial experience.

**Q. I do not understand why the Province is getting the revenue for the water? In other provinces money is paid for oil and gas, for hydro poles standing on our land. Hydro owes us a lot of money don't they?**

A. *Jurisdiction over natural resources including water was transferred to the Province in 1930 under the Natural Resources Transfer Agreement. WPLP must pay the water rental rates set by the Province. However, NCN negotiated an agreement with the Province so that for a period of 25 years, it will receive a rebate of the portion of the water power rentals in proportion to the units it holds in WPLP. The detailed formula is set out in the Agreement.*

**Q. What is being done to respect our land and use our Traditional Knowledge?**

A. *Ceremonies have been undertaken throughout the construction process. Cabins and a cultural centre are being built at the site of the Old Wuskwatim Village. Ethinsewin is being used in the monitoring process and is part of the work to be undertaken by our monitoring company, Ask'i'Otutoskeo Limited. The various activities are reported annually in the Monitoring Overview.*

**Q. Who is responsible for the loss from the Blockade? Is it true the amount was about \$1 million a day?**

A. *Yes it was up to \$1 million a day and we are responsible for one-third if we decide we want to continue being partners in the project. The blockade also damaged NCN's credibility.*

## **THOMPSON – OCTOBER 14, 2009**

**Q. Is Nelson House and its Chief and Council set up to properly go through the figures and assess the future economic situation that is invisible right now? What will be the impact on the Nations overall finances? Will the Band go in the hole?**

A. *NCN Chief and Council hired advisors to assist them in reviewing the numbers and complexities of the investment. When both Hydro and NCN were looking for more certainty, they hired outside, independent advisors to provide information about certain aspects of the project. NCN cannot "go in the hole", since the only recourse Manitoba Hydro has is to the partnership units, and not to the assets of the Nation.*

**Q. There was supposed to be \$140 million paid to Nelson House under the NFA. Was that ever paid? Can there be an agreement to give our children benefits? If not, then can we get out of it?**

A. *The Northern Flood Agreement (NFA) was signed in 1977. It included a "claim by claim" process. If NCN, an NCN group (like the trappers or the fishers), or an individual NCN Member suffered an adverse effect from the Churchill River Diversion (CRD), they could file a specific claim against Canada, Manitoba and/or Hydro. These claims might be paid out or might be sent to arbitration. Once an individual received a payment, the money belonged to that individual to spend as they wished. Before 1996, about \$53 million was paid to NCN and its groups and Members.*

*The 1996 NFA Implementation Agreement replaced the claim-by-claim process, and included payments of about another \$65 million to NCN. NCN has also received about \$4 million a year in interest on the investments since 1996. It funds*



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various programs annually after approval through the Community Approval Process (CAP). Over \$40 million is still invested in Nisichawayasihk Trust. NCN has also established the Taskingahp Trust and the revenues from the partnership will be paid to that Trust so that our children and grandchildren will also benefit from the project.

**Q. Why were our people laid off when there is still work going on at Wuskwatim?**

A. Some of the jobs at Wuskwatim are seasonal. Some workers get laid off because of shortage of work during the slower seasons. Other workers get laid off as the work they are hired to do gets completed. A good example is the road. It took about two years to complete and then different kinds of experience was needed to build the generating station structures. Some people have worked at the site since construction started in 2006.

**Q. Could a First Nations' union oversee things?**

A. Setting up a separate First Nation union would involve many problems. Firstly, there is an existing collective agreement and only certain periods during which a new union could be organized. Secondly, some Wuskwatim workers are Members of First Nations other than NCN and some workers are Métis. Third, setting up a union that only allowed First Nations' Members to join might be contrary to human rights legislation.

The union has an obligation to represent the workers covered by the BNA so it should be approached if there are problems or concerns. NCN's Employment Liaison person is now also available to assist with any issues.

**Q. Where did the other \$4.2 million for the equity come from?**

A. We have now actually invested \$7.188 million in WPLP. We put in \$1 million at Initial Closing. We received a \$3 million grant from the federal

government which we had to match. This all added up to the \$7.188 million.

**Q. What else has NCN done to raise money for this? Has there been fundraising?**

A. We have not done fundraising like raffles or socials, but we do have a plan in place. We have the potential to get \$6 million from Taskingahp Trust and another \$750,000 was recently approved through the 2010 CAP/CIP process. We will continue applying to Nisichawayasihk Trust next year, so we expect to get a few more million there, which will bring us up to about \$10 million and then we have businesses we can use – like the Mystery Lake Hotel. We can also dedicate the moneys in the last year of Nisichawayasihk Trust so we will have access to another \$3 to \$4 million. We also continue to apply for grants to enhance our equity position.

We are pretty sure we can meet our equity, particularly since Hydro has also given us some new proposals for our consideration. We also have the \$40 million Hydro bonds as an absolute last resort.

**Q. You said you have a business plan. Are there any houses for NCN members in Thompson?**

A. Meetah Building Supplies is an NCN company that builds houses in Thompson and elsewhere. The houses in Thompson range from \$250,000 to \$500,000.

We are looking at a lot of things, another hotel in Thompson, a casino, a gas station and if we can get the conversion of the Mystery Lake property approved, then we will look at building a mall. We are also looking at an option in Flin Flon. This year we have started a home-ownership fund to help our Members purchase homes if they can not qualify for regular mortgages. We want to encourage home ownership programs.

**Q. People are quitting work at Wuskwatim because of culture shock. What is NCN doing to help them?**

A. *NCN counsellors are helping NCN Members with various problems. Life in a work camp will always involve some hardships. The counsellors are doing good work, but it takes time and perseverance to adjust to life in a work camp. There are NCN workers who are doing very well at the site. In addition to the counseling program we are also trying other ways to help our workers adjust. Members of Chief and Council and a group of Elders are going to the site at least once a month to mentor or advise our workers. We hired Charlie Joe Hart as the Employment Liaison worker to assist our workers or citizens who want to work, with a whole range of issues.*

**Q. What kind of advice are they giving to prepare workers for working on Wuskwatim?**

A. *Counselling is available there. We also have hired Charlie Joe Hart as the Employment Liaison worker to work with our people. It was also recommended members of Chief and Council and Elders go to the site at least once a month and the first visit took place on March 11, 2010. A number of NCN workers also took a life skills program at ATEC to help them understand the expectations they would face as well as what life is like in a camp situation.*

**Q. How will our youth be assessed for a high-school apprenticeship program? Are the tests culturally biased with questions they cannot answer?**

A. *NCN is currently looking into new ways to assess community Members in a better way, and to arrange appropriate training. As soon as funding is approved, we will be conducting a community skills inventory and offering CAAT (Canadian Adult Achievement Testing) for NCN Citizens between ages 15 and 49, both on and off the reserve.*

**Q. What kinds of supports will there be for students who are disabled, who are blind or who cannot hear?**

A. *It will depend on the individual circumstances. If accommodations are required, we will try to build it into the programming. It is difficult to determine the needs until the students are assessed. Certain types of construction jobs may not be safe for persons who are blind or have hearing problems. It will all depend on the circumstances.*

**Q. What is being done for the kids who dropped out? They are often not kids, they are parents. When looking at academic upgrading programs, will parenting programs also be implemented?**

A. *The ATEC facility includes a daycare. It may be possible to offer parenting programs in Nelson House. We are also examining barriers to employment so will add these concerns to our list of issues that must be examined.*

**Q. Who is evaluating ATEC?**

A. *Chief and Council retained Curtis Nordman an independent expert to do an objective evaluation of ATEC. He has considerable experience in adult education and was an Assistant Deputy Minister of Advanced Education, Dean of Continuing Education at the University of Winnipeg and involved in establishing the University College of the North. His report was submitted in February and adopted by Chief and Council and the ATEC Board. The recommendations are now being implemented.*

**Q. Will NCN Members get the chance to evaluate the programs also?**

A. *Those who take training at ATEC are interviewed about their experiences. This process will likely be improved in the future. If NCN Members have an opinion about ATEC programs, please put it in writing and address it to Chief and Council. It will be taken seriously.*



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**Q. The cost of construction has gone up. How much more do we have to pay? Has it doubled?**

A. *The latest calculations indicate in order to have a 33 percent equity stake in the project, NCN would have to invest about \$34 million of its own money when construction is completed (initially this was about \$20 million). Hydro would make an "equity loan" to NCN for about \$68 million. There are various proposals being discussed as part of the PDA Review process and NCN hopes to report on the final outcome of our discussions at the Meet and Greet in June.*

**Q. How many went through ATEC and completed their apprenticeships and how many got jobs at Wuskwatim?**

A. *About 25 completed and there were about 75 at various levels. In the past, ATEC's records were not always well-organized so the information is not easily available. This was an issue identified in the ATEC Evaluation and steps are being taken to improve this situation.*

**Q. Why do I not have a job when I went through the Aboriginal Pre-Placement program and through ATEC to complete ironwork and have Level 1?**

A. *We are providing as much information as possible to Hydro about our Citizens who want to work at the site. We hope we can improve the opportunities by direct dialogue with Hydro. We are also working with ONE to have trainee positions created so our workers can get experience. It is hoped that if they get experience on Wuskwatim that they will be able to have long term careers working on projects in the north.*

**LEAF RAPIDS – OCTOBER 15, 2009**

**Q. The project is within our traditional territory. Did we get anything for that?**

A. *We do not get royalties. We did get the Water Power Rental Rebates (WRR) and will get revenue from the project. Some could argue the WRR is like royalties. We also have lots of protection so that we can decide not to be partners and get our money back. Under the PDA, NCN also received at total of \$5.7 million in payments for adverse effects of the Generation and Transmission Projects on NCN Members in the Nelson House Resource Management Area and will continue to receive annual payments of between \$200,000 and \$300,000 for transmission benefits.*

**Q. A lot of the job bulletins are not seen by the NCN Members who are in Leaf Rapids. Can we get training here in Leaf Rapids?**

A. *We are trying to improve the way we get information to Members outside of Nelson House. You can look at the WPLP, NCN and Hydro websites for other information about the project, including potential job opportunities.*

**Q. I worked on the Hydro project and got laid off and was promised I would be called back. I have been calling the JRS and I have not been able to get back on. I joined the union but they have not been doing anything to help me. Who do I talk to?**

A. *Call the Allied Hydro Council (the union), the staff at ATEC or WIO to assist you. Charlie Joe Hart is NCN's Employment Liaison Worker and he will also try to help you get in touch with the right people.*

**Q. Does the Keeyask Agreement mean that the other four First Nations and NCN must share 33 percent with the government getting the rest?**

A. *No, it is a different agreement. War Lake, Fox, TCN and York together can own up to 25 percent.*

**Q. Are NCN Members able to work for Keeyask?**

A. *They have direct negotiated contracts also. The Keeyask Agreement makes provision for direct negotiated contracts, but they have not yet been negotiated. However, if the project goes ahead, there should be jobs for NCN Members with Wuskwatim experience because, the preference provision in the BNA will continue to apply.*

**Q. What percentage of NCN Members are going to be hired at the dam site?**

A. *There is no guaranteed percentage, no quotas. People have to have the training and experience to qualify for many of the jobs. When the road was being built, mostly NCN Members were hired. Now the numbers have shifted dramatically. We currently have about 32 people on-site, mostly in catering and security. This is one of the reasons we hired Charlie Joe Hart as Employer Liaison Officer to be able to try to get people to stay out there. It seems our people do not know who to talk to about concerns they have.*

**SOUTH INDIAN LAKE – OCTOBER 15, 2009**

**Q. Do you know how much the project is going to cost? How long will it take you to repay the money you are borrowing?**

A. *If NCN wants to have 33 percent equity, it would have to invest about \$34 million of its own money when construction is finished. We have already invested \$7.188 million. We will earn money right from the time the first turbine starts to operate. If we are partners we can also get dividend loans and the WRR payments while the loans are being repaid. We can decide even after 50 years that we do not want to be partners and we will still get our money back without interest.*

**Q. If the revenues are lower, will that impact NCN's dividends?**

A. *In a year when the project does not make more than the minimum formulaic guarantee, lower revenues would not impact the dividends of NCN, but it would increase the debt against the partnership units. In a year when revenues are above the formulaic guarantee, but revenues are less than the projected amount, that would reduce the expected revenues.*

**Q. Has NCN done its own independent analysis? Why did the regulators only review the Hydro numbers?**

A. *NCN and Hydro jointly retained four or five firms to review the export rates. NCN and Hydro are currently involved in further due diligence analysis and will continue to do so up to the time NCN must make its investment decision about fifteen months from now. NCN also has its own, independent financial advisors who assess the information, as do the regulators. In addition, during the CEC and PUB processes there were various intervenors who also asked questions.*

**Q. How can Hydro base their numbers on contracts that have not even been signed?**

A. *The price of power NCN receives for the energy is based on a whole basket of sales Manitoba Hydro sells. Hydro experts and NCN's own financial, legal and engineering advisors have reviewed various future scenarios to assess the economic viability of Wuskwatim. NCN receives various confidential financial information and assesses that information independently from Hydro. NCN advisors also ask questions of Hydro and then make recommendations to Chief and Council.*



**Q. Has an analysis been done about whether Hydro will be able to pay the dividend loans? Based on information that came out in the media today (October 15, 2009), how does NCN know whether Hydro's information can be relied upon?**

A. *The future of Manitoba Hydro's finances is based on many variables, including which new projects Hydro decides to build in future decades. The important thing for NCN Members to know is that NCN has its own, independent business, engineering and legal advisors, who continue to give NCN expert advice about Wuskwatim and other issues. NCN has also been following the discussions related to the American consultant retained by Manitoba Hydro and the analysis of the issues before the Public Utilities Board and in the courts. Unlike a private energy company, Manitoba Hydro's activities are subject to review by the PUB and various other committees. NCN has previously reviewed and discussed the PUB's findings and will continue to do so.*

**Q. How can you fully trust Manitoba Hydro? With the CRD they said the water would come up 8 feet and then it came up a lot higher.**

A. *We know that Hydro looks after its own best interests. NCN looks after its own. We have not yet decided if we will maintain our investment in the project. We will make that decision by the summer of 2011 based on an updated analysis of the economics of the project. Things have changed since the CRD was built. Our 1996 Agreement gave us new rights in respect of Future Development. Before we signed the PDA, we got independent advice from our own engineering, legal and financial advisors. We also conducted a ratification vote where a majority of our people voted and of those voting a majority approved proceeding with the project.*

**Q. You mentioned the CRD. The permanent licensing process is finally going to take place. The AFP was agreed to in 1986. What about Notigi? How is that going to impact the profit margin of the projections? What participation will there be with NCN and OPCN, Manitoba Hydro and Canada? What will happen in terms of NCN being partners with Hydro given the impacts on Southern Indian Lake?**

A. *The Notigi hydro project is just a concept. It may be built some day, but there are no concrete plans right now. NCN and OPCN's engineering advisors previously confirmed the operation of the Wuskwatim project will have no impact of any kind on Southern Indian Lake and this information was reviewed at the CEC hearings in which OPCN and CASIL participated and asked questions and were asked questions by counsel for the CEC.*

#### **WINNIPEG – OCTOBER 20, 2009**

**Q. Are all the Members of the Band supposed to be rich by now? Millionaires?**

A. *As you know the project is not yet completed and we are trying to find the money for equity. There is no provision to provide payouts from the profits, unless they reach a certain level, which would be a long ways in the future. We have said all along that Wuskwatim has good potential for long-term financial benefits for NCN. We have also said no one will become "rich" but we hope to obtain sufficient revenues from the project so we do not always have to go cap in hand to the government to fund basic services for our Citizens.*

**Q. Who are the partners at the moment if NCN does not have all the money now?**

A. *The partners are Taskinighap Power Corporation (TPC), Manitoba Hydro and a numbered*



Manitoba company that is referred to as the General Partner. These entities make up the Wuskwatim Power Limited Partnership ("the WPLP"). We have paid off enough for 11 percent of the units already and we have a plan to get the rest of the moneys needed for to pay for the remaining units so we can keep 33 percent. We can get some moneys from Nisichawayasihk Trust, from the hotel, up to \$6 million from Taskinigahp Trust if the Members approve. The amount we need has increased. Chief and Council think we can do it and we have a workable plan in place and it is doable. We have received approval for another \$750,000 from the Nisichawayasihk Trust this year. We have some money set also from OT - \$1.2 million. We also hope to qualify for additional government grants. If we want to pay off the loans sooner there will be more money available for distributions to fund community programs.

**Q. How long is Manitoba Hydro giving us to come up with the money to get to 33 percent? Are all the loans from Manitoba Hydro?**

- A. We have until Final Closing to raise the money. Final Closing means when the first turbine is operational. It is currently expected this will be sometime in the fall of 2011. Under the terms of the PDA all of the loans will likely be from Manitoba Hydro unless we meet a number of conditions that would allow us to get funding from elsewhere. At this time, Hydro's loan terms and conditions are still better than we could get on the open market.

**Q. Your information shows there are 250 jobs for NCN Members. How many of those jobs are long term? What are you doing to accommodate NCN Members to ensure they will succeed? Everyone knows if you want an Aboriginal person to fail, then disconnect them from family and community. These**

**camps do that. What is Chief and Council doing to help our Members?**

- A. We established an Employment Committee with Hydro that involves senior Hydro officials, members of Chief and Council, the WIO manager and our advisors. This Committee has been very helpful in getting issues resolved. A lack of transportation for our workers to get to and from the site was an issue. Through the Committee we were able to work out the arrangements for transportation to be provided and two more jobs for NCN workers have been created.

We have an on-site counselling service and we have hired Charlie Joe Hart, Employee Liaison Officer, to be able to go to the contractors and to talk to people. We hope more of our people will be hired as a result of having Charlie Joe work with the contractors. We are also planning to take a group of Elders into the camp once a month to encourage our workers to stay on. We are also taking the success stories of our workers who have stayed and how they are planning to continue their education and training while working.

We hope there will be more success stories over the remainder of the project. One of the biggest differences seems to have been the changes in managerial and HR positions with both Sodexo and ONE. The relationship between these contractors and NCN has improved and our sense is that they are really trying to make improvements for our workers. We hope this will continue.

**Q. What is the point of doing a community skills assessment when the first turbine will be turned on in 2011? What contingency plans are there in place to deal with H1N1 if it hits the camp?**

- A. We want to develop an understanding of the overall skill levels and capabilities of our people for many purposes, including identifying jobs



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*in Hydro's regular operations that may be of interest to our people. We are trying to get our people to work on their education and skills so our people will meet the requirements for electrical maintenance, mechanical maintenance and finance jobs. These jobs all require high-end math so we can help our people access those jobs.*

*NCN checked to ensure that all the proper protocols were in place and was impressed with how proactive Hydro and the contractors were to ensure the health and safety of the workers at the site. It now appears that H1N1 will not be a major issue and that all the planning worked. Workers have been and will continue to be urged to use good hygiene, including hand-washing and sanitizing.*

**Q. Is it true men are allowed to drink over there?**

A. *They cannot drink while they are working. There is a bar at the site with limited hours. Before it was open, there was a certain amount of travel to Thompson to visit the bars there.*

**Q. Since a number of Members have alcohol and drug problems, what is being done about it?**

A. *Counselling services are available. We are not adopting a paternalistic approach, which is not fair either as our people are entitled to make choices, good and bad. We are Aboriginal people, who want to manage our lives. We don't want to be told we can't do something. At some point we have to be responsible for our own actions and the impact those actions have on our families and community. In terms of the bar at Wuskwatim, we discussed the risk driving 45 miles to Thompson and decided it was safer to have a bar with limited hours on site.*

**Q. In July, wasn't there a decision made**

**to dissolve the Trust to use the moneys for equity?**

A. *Dissolving Oteteskiwin Trust was discussed last summer. It had about \$2.6 million in assets and was earning about \$80,000 a year. Half the interest went into distribution and half to community projects. The amount of distribution ranged from \$7.00 to \$40.00 so we thought it was better to use the money more effectively. We consulted with our Members and asked them if we could put some into equity for Wuskwatim and some to work on the aesthetics of the community – the roads. There was a vote to approve the dissolution of the Trust and we went to court to obtain approval as is required under the Trustee Act. We still have the Nisichawayasihk Trust and we use it for programs that benefit all our Members – bereavement benefits also help Members here in Winnipeg since if people are sick or die, then they can travel to the community to visit with family.*

*We think WIO will continue to exist after the project is completed because there will still be a lot of things related to the project to administer. There was an application for \$100,000 to Nisichawayasihk Trust to assist off-reserve Members better their lives, business opportunities, education, live on their own, etc. A new program was approved and the guidelines have been recently established.*

**Q. Who is directly benefitting on these business opportunities?**

A. *The companies are NCLP (formerly Forest Industries); NCN Catering, NHDC – Meetah and our laundry service.*

*NCN workers are employed in a number of different areas covered by the Catering contract: food preparation, security, commissary (lounge), housekeeping, maintenance and office and professional and we are working with Sodexo*

to develop long term training plans and opportunities for our workers who are doing well.

A couple of people from Nelson House have been hired as the drivers of the van service that takes our people to Nelson House or Thompson from the site.

**Q. Will the Bipole transmission line down the west side of Manitoba come into our territory? Are there any opportunities for us there?**

A. We entered into a historic MOU with TCN and Fox Lake but there have been some difficulties sorting out how it is to operate. At the moment NCN and TCN are trying to proceed together. We think there are opportunities related to Bipole III and we are going to continue working on them.

**Q. Will there be an opportunity for NCN Members to buy the trailers, etc.?**

A. All the assets sold will come back to the partnership. If there are things Band Members want, NCN Members have first opportunity to acquire them for fair market value.

**Q. What about procurement of food? We should purchase food with an NCN company as a joint venture.**

A. We are doing that with building supplies. We are also operating a laundry service.

**Q. What about the supplies for the catering?**

A. If we had people who had those companies we could try to obtain that work, but at the moment we don't.

**Q. My question is about the people who are not working because the unions have found a loophole in this project. We have people who do not have tickets. What are we doing to deal with this loophole the unions have found to keep our people from working?**

A. The unions supported us in the CEC hearings. The problem is Hydro and the contractors were also negotiating with the unions. Based on our experience we may want to see changes to the way the BNA operates as it appears there may be systemic problems built into the collective agreement. One of the major problems is the discretion the contractors have to choose who works on the project. We are continuing to discuss these issues with Hydro through a Committee set up a few months ago.

**Q. The union gets 5 cents to 25 cents an hour which is a huge amount of money. What are they doing with those moneys?**

A. Union dues go to support all of the services which unions provide to their members. For example, if a union member has a grievance, the union might hire lawyers to take that grievance to arbitration. The union member would not have to worry about legal fees. The union also uses union dues to negotiate the terms of the collective agreement.

**Q. Can moneys be set aside to assist our people who live off reserve?**

A. We made an application to the Trust to have emergency funds available for Members off- reserve as we get a lot of calls at the Band Office. We fund bereavement and with this new program will also make emergency funding of last resort available. The guidelines have just been developed.

**Q. There seems to be a lot of concerns about the jobs. Can NCN not have input into writing job descriptions?**

A. We had concerns throughout the process about job qualifications. We continue to be concerned about whether the contractors have manipulated the job qualifications. Even labourers have to get experience. ATEC is working on this, and we have also hired Charlie Joe Hart as Employee Liaison Officer. We need to work with the contractors to get them to hire more of our workers. We are hopeful there will be improvements in the coming year.

