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In 2010, southern Alberta experienced a one-in-a-hundred-years rain event in both the eastern and the western portions of the province. In 2011, while the rainfall amounts were less than what we experienced in 2010, there was significant flooding in many hectares or acres of land. These events led to the discussion between the reeve of the municipal district and the chairman of the St. Mary River Irrigation District on how the main canal of the irrigation district could be used as a conduit to move this excess water off farmland and minimize the effects of flooding.

As you might know, an irrigation district is designed to deliver water to farmland and not as a means to accept flood waters. Irrigation canals get smaller as they move east, as they deliver water to farms along the way. Drainage canals need to get bigger as they move east to accept more drainage water.

A quick example of the size and amount of water that's carried in this canal is where the canal leaves the Chin Reservoir, southwest of Taber. It has a capacity of about 110 cubic metres per second, or roughly 29,000 gallons of water per second. When the canal reaches west of Medicine Hat, Alberta, its capacity has been reduced to about 8.5 cubic metres per second, or about 2,000 gallons per second, so the canal significantly decreases in size over that 250-kilometre stretch of main canal.

The Municipal District of Taber spearheaded the drainage project and brought outside the counties of Lethbridge, Warner, Cardston, 40 Mile and Cypress, as well as the towns of Taber, Coaldale and Bow Island, the city of Medicine Hat, the St. Mary River Irrigation District and Taber Irrigation District, Alberta Environment and Parks, Alberta Transportation and Alberta Agriculture. This has been the makeup of our committee since 2013.

The committee was able to secure funding to do a regional drainage study for the area, which encompasses over two million acres of land. Over 500,000 acres of that land in the study area is very high-value, irrigated land, producing diverse crops such as potatoes, sugar beets, seed canola, alfalfa, timothy hay, vegetables and numerous other specialty crops that are the economic engine of southern Alberta.

The study was completed in 2014 and identified seven projects that would help reduce the flooding risks in the area. The total cost for all of the projects in 2014 dollars was about \$152 million. With inflation and so on, the estimated cost for all seven projects is now about \$169 million.

The Horsefly emergency spillway was identified as a top project to start with, at a point about 10 miles southeast of the town of Taber. The St. Mary River Irrigation District main canal is closest to the Oldman River, a place where the excess drainage water can be returned to a natural river basin.

Also at this point on the main canal is the first downsizing in the canal since leaving the Stafford Reservoir, south of Chin, Alberta. The capacity at this point is 110 cubic metres per second, and the plan is to divert about 47 cubic metres per second out of the main canal and into the diversion or spillway. This will leave the main canal able to pick up more drainage water as the canal continues eastward.

In reality, this project has two purposes. The first is to drain flood waters off private land, using the SMRID main canal as the delivery method. The second is to protect the St. Mary River Irrigation District main canal from a breach or a washout by diverting the excess water back to the river.

This main canal is the lifeblood of southern Alberta irrigated agriculture. Economic devastation would happen if the canal's ability to deliver water was lost for a growing season, or even part of a growing season.

Again, the two purposes of the project are to drain flood water off the land and to protect the main canal's ability to deliver irrigation water in an efficient and timely manner.

• (1115)

In the spring of 2018, we had another flooding event. There was a lot of snow over the winter and a quick melt. We almost lost the main canal. It was almost breached by the volume of flood waters entering that main canal. It was the worst overland flooding that the MD of Taber had ever experienced. We were in a state of local emergency for 50 days due to the flooding.

A call for tenders for phase 1 of this project has now been put out. That closes on October 13 of this year, and we still hope to get construction started this year. Phases 2 and 3 of the project are in the engineering design stages, and we hope to get those tendered and constructed starting next year.

I'm sure that I'm over my five minutes already, so I would take questions anywhere along the line.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Harris.

We'll now go to Mr. Eby from the Pelmorex Corporation.

Sir, you have five minutes.

Mr. Kurt Eby (Director, Regulatory Affairs and Government Relations, Pelmorex Corp): Thank you, Mr. Chair. As introduced, I'm Kurt Eby. I work at Pelmorex Corporation. I think most of you would know us more by our popular brand names The Weather Network and MétéoMédia in Quebec. These are our primary businesses.

What I'm here to talk about is another thing that we lead and do for the country. In 2010, as a condition of our broadcasting licence, we built what we call the National Alert Aggregation and Dissemination system, or the NAAD system, which is the technical component of the national public alerting system. Originally it processed alerts that were distributed on TV and radio, so we're talking about Amber Alerts and alerts for tornadoes, severe thunderstorms, flooding and forest fires. I'm sure everyone is probably familiar with these now, especially because in 2018 we launched the wireless alerting component of that system. That's increased its presence in people's hands and in people's homes.

We're effectively the technical vendor of the alerting system. We have two roles. One is the technology. We take direction from authorized government agencies—basically all the emergency management organizations in the provinces, as well as Environment and Climate Change Canada and Public Safety Canada—on technical upgrades to the system. We are also the system administrator, which means we have agreements and manage the accounts of every province and territory and Environment and Climate Change Canada right now. That's what we're here to talk about.

We manage those accounts based on who has the jurisdiction to issue an emergency alert. Environment Canada issues tornado alerts anywhere in the country. Most public safety jurisdiction falls to the provinces and the territories, which is why we have contracts and accounts with the provinces and territories, and they decide who can and cannot issue alerts within those jurisdictions, and for what. There is a mix of ways in which those are administered. Saskatchewan has many issuers. In Ontario, the OPP issues Amber Alerts and active shooter or dangerous person alerts on behalf of other police agencies, and then everything else is through the provincial EMO. It varies from province to province, for a number of reasons.

On a jurisdictional basis, we can't give an account to a police agency, because if you were an emergency management organization for a province and all of a sudden a police agency started issuing alerts and you didn't know, obviously they would be jumping over that jurisdiction.

What we are here to discuss today is something we have been discussing internally and with some of our colleagues and those we work with: It's the concept of Pelmorex taking on administration of accounts for first nations that want them, for which we would get direction from the federal or provincial governments or some combination of the two. This is where we're uncertain.

We understand that first nations do have an amount of sole jurisdiction. First nations and indigenous affairs fall largely under the federal government; right now public safety on first nations falls largely under the provincial government. That's something we wanted to start talking about to see how we could do that. We would be taking on greater responsibility for administering accounts and helping folks get up and running on the system.

The alert system is very customizable, so any issuer can have permissions set for them. Those might say that they could issue alerts for only, say, forest fires and floods and that police agencies would handle other types of alerts, or something like that. There is a lot of customization available. Definitely one thing to keep in mind is that there is no one-size-fits-all solution in any account across the country. We see a variety of approaches used and we help to facilitate those.

This is something I'm really looking forward to speaking with the committee members about.

Thank you.

• (1120)

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Eby.

We'll now go to the questions in the first round, starting with the Conservatives.

Mr. Shields, you have six minutes.

Mr. Martin Shields (Bow River, CPC): Thank you.

I appreciate all the witnesses being here today.

I think that final comment made by Mr. Eby—"no one size fits all"—is what we're really hearing in the variety of witnesses we have here today when we're talking about emergency management and communication.

It's great to have you witnesses here.

As Reeve Harris mentioned in terms of his area just to the north of him, while people remember the flooding that happened in 2013 in Calgary, what they obviously don't know or remember is that the flood water went past Calgary and hugely affected the Siksika Nation and the Eastern Irrigation District. They got together afterwards and built an emergency dam to take care of flood water in that area, and that has now been completed.

Mr. Harris, you're an agriculture producer, right?

Mr. Merrill Harris: Yes, that's correct, Martin.

Mr. Martin Shields: You understand this in the sense of a producer as well as in the sense of a person in municipal government. As you organized, I know that you were involved in emergency management. There are two pieces to my question.

First, how did emergency management work and how did it resolve the issue at the time? Then, once you built the plan, in working with the other groups that weren't directly on the land, such as Kainai Nation to the west of the Blackfoot Confederacy, there was consultation that followed up with them as well.

Could you do those two parts?

Mr. Merrill Harris: As a result of the flooding in 2010 and 2011, the council—I wasn't on council at the time—brought together the Municipal District of Taber and the counties of Lethbridge, Warner, Forty Mile and Cypress, because we were all affected one way or the other by this overland flooding. As I said, this committee has worked tirelessly in the past eight to 10 years to get this project off the ground, and we're finally there.

As far as the indigenous part of it goes, we have consulted with numerous first nations to get their approval and their blessing on doing this project, and they've given their blessing to it. They are interested in being part of the construction part of it, if that's possible, probably in the subtrades. We have been keeping them in mind throughout this whole process.

• (1125)

Mr. Martin Shields: The process you're referring to, in a sense, is returning the water to its natural watercourse, which is the Oldman River. One of the things that people may not understand—and that you probably do, from living in that area—is that returning water or flood waters being in a river basin actually keeps the river environment healthier.

From your experience, is that something that you could relate to from what you know?

Mr. Merrill Harris: Yes. The St. Mary River main canal kind of acts as a dam through southern Alberta. It blocks somewhat the natural flows of water back to the river basin. By doing this project, in flood years we're returning water back to the natural river basin that is held up as a result of the St. Mary River main canal as it goes across the land. It kind of impedes the natural drainage flows, and most farmers don't like their land being flooded, especially when there's a crop on it, so the idea is to get that water off the land and fields as quickly as possible. This emergency spillway helps get the water back more quickly to where the water would naturally flow.

Mr. Martin Shields: You mentioned a bit about agriculture. From my understanding, 4% of the land in Alberta produces upwards of 20% of the agriculture GDP. This is a critical aspect when we're talking about food security in this country. This is a critical project.

Mr. Merrill Harris: Yes. As I mentioned earlier, there are lots of potatoes grown in this area, and sugar beets, seed canola, timothy and all those kinds of high-value crops. A potato crop or a sugar beet crop, for example, doesn't take long to die or to become unmarketable when it's under water.

We were doing a harvest the other day for potatoes. When the potatoes are on the side of those pivot track ruts, they're often very soft and goeey. One of the jobs of the graders is to pull those kinds of potatoes out of the line, because they're unmarketable. If your whole field is under water, your potato crop becomes unmarketable pretty quickly when it's under water like that.

Mr. Martin Shields: As the only area left in Canada that's actually growing sugar beets and has a sugar factory, this is the only place left where that sugar can actually be refined.

Mr. Merrill Harris: That's correct. Taber has the only beet sugar refining plant left in all of Canada. The other growing areas have all shut down over the years. We produce between 8% and 10% of the Canadian sugar market demands, and most of it is marketed here in western Canada. Some of it gets down into the U.S. in TRQs, but most of it is here for the market in western Canada, and it's the only place left in Canada that produces domestically grown sugar.

Mr. Martin Shields: Thank you for explaining your emergency management. I really appreciate that. Thank you, Reeve.

Mr. Merrill Harris: You bet. Thank you, MP Shields.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Shields.

We'll go to Mrs. Atwin for six minutes.

Mrs. Jenica Atwin (Fredericton, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to our witnesses today, and to our committee members for joining.

I have a few questions that might be a little all over the place, so I'll try to direct them to each of you individually. Maybe I'll start with Mr. Eby.

You mentioned that there are customization options for these kinds of alerts. Has there been a request at all to have indigenous languages incorporated to ensure that everyone is able to access these alerts?

Mr. Kurt Eby: I can't remember a request for it. The NAAD system has supported four indigenous languages since it was built in 2010, those being Cree, Dene, Inuinnaqtun and Inuktitut. I believe the Inuktitut feature has been used for some of the test alerts in Nunavut, but the others have not been used in a live alert.

Mrs. Jenica Atwin: Thank you very much.

Mr. Harris, you mentioned consultations with indigenous communities when you're preparing, developing and rolling out projects. I'm wondering if you could give us a little bit more of an explanation about what that looks like and if you have advice for other municipalities on how to have a successful engagement to include indigenous voices.

• (1130)

Mr. Merrill Harris: As I said earlier, the Impact Assessment Agency of Canada, which we have to work with, required.... We consulted with the following Treaty 6 nations: the Samson Cree Nation, the Louis Bull nation, Montana First Nation and the Ermineskin Cree Nation. We also consulted with, from Treaty 7, the Stoney-Nakoda Nations, the Tsuut'ina, the Siksika and the Piikani nations, the Foothills Ojibway First Nation and the Métis Nation of Alberta. They were all given the information on what we were doing and were invited to come down here. Three of them actually visited the site and gave their blessing to what was happening here.

As I said, some of the ones who were here who provided letters of response indicated they'd be interested in participating on the construction side of things if that was ever possible, so once the tender is awarded, they'll be notified of who got the general contract, and then they can see if they can work with the general contractor to provide labour, skills and resources in the construction process.

Mrs. Jenica Atwin: Excellent. Thank you.

Are you seeing the same level of preparation in neighbouring municipalities? How can the Government of Canada best support you in these efforts?

Mr. Merrill Harris: As I said, there were seven projects that were identified in the overall drainage study that was done, and they span across the region from Lethbridge all the way to Medicine Hat. This project is the one that's closest, as I said, to a natural river course, which is the Oldman River, but there are other projects. Three of them, as I can see in front of me, are actually in Cypress County, closer to Medicine Hat. One of those projects is already being done by the St. Mary River Irrigation District, and one of the other projects that's closer to Taber is being done by the St. Mary River Irrigation District, so that's three of the seven projects under way now.

I could see another benefit. Right now we see that the system is used on an inconsistent basis. There's never been a forest fire alert issued in Ontario, and there have obviously been forest fires. Enabling more users would lead ideally to more use of the system. We built the system to be used to save lives, so that's a major benefit, whether to first nations or to any community.

A remote community might benefit more. They know what's going on there, and it might be even more of a challenge to have an alert issued through a centralized agency. That wouldn't always be the case, but that could be the case.

Mr. Gary Vidal: How much time do I have?

The Chair: You still have 35 seconds.

Mr. Gary Vidal: Thank you. I have a quick follow-up, then.

A couple of my colleagues have already mentioned remoteness and connectivity and the availability of Wi-Fi. I assume those are going to be huge barriers on a localized level. Is that correct?

Mr. Kurt Eby: I could only speculate from what I hear about the level of connectivity in certain areas, but the alert system does also issue alerts over radio and TV, so it's a three-pronged approach. It helps, obviously, if your radio is on or your TV is on, so you'll still get alerts. That helps to cover more of the bases, regardless of the situation. However, you need an LTE connection to receive alerts otherwise.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Vidal.

We are going to Mr. Weiler for three minutes.

Mr. Patrick Weiler (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to the witnesses for joining us on our important study today.

I want to direct my questions, in my limited time, to Mr. Eby.

First, I want to confirm that the system you administer—I'm a B.C. MP—is one and the same as the Alert Ready system.

• (1150)

Mr. Kurt Eby: Correct. I did mention that the brand name of the system is Alert Ready.

Mr. Patrick Weiler: Great.

One of the topics brought up here was the challenge of a lack of cellphone reception in many remote communities, especially indigenous communities across the country.

In communities where there isn't cellphone reception, have there been policies and programs put in place so that the alert is shared with an area that does have those connections, so that it could be rebroadcast by other means to where individuals may not have that cellphone reception?

Mr. Kurt Eby: There's nothing like that.

As I said, it's on TV and on radio, and there are also a number of apps that take those alerts. The Weather Network app rebroadcasts alerts in local areas, so you have to be connected to Wi-Fi and not LTE. It's a multipronged approach. Right now it's TV, radio, wireless, and then some apps to rebroadcast the alerts as well.

Mr. Patrick Weiler: I'm curious about the province of British Columbia. You mentioned that Alberta had allowed some first nations to be on the system. Have you had any conversations with indigenous nations in B.C.—or rather, with the Province of British Columbia—about having that same type of ability?

Mr. Kurt Eby: We have not done that yet. It's something we want to pursue, but we started at the federal level. We've had some informal conversations with Public Safety Canada to say that this is something we would take on and facilitate if the challenge was having a different agency to administer the accounts.

If that's not the challenge, the provinces could do it. You would also find there are probably many first nations that like the current situation of having it issued on a provincial basis, but we're trying to put it out there as something to move forward on and help where we can.

Mr. Patrick Weiler: Absolutely.

As an MP in B.C., I am concerned about the operation of the app here. In fact, it wasn't even used at all until 2022. As you know, there was considerable controversy last year, when we had the heat dome, the wildfires and the atmospheric rivers. I know there was no notification sent at all to people. I know of people who were caught in landslides or were driving on unsafe roads that were destabilized because of the atmospheric rivers.

I would hope that would change. In B.C., what are the different weather events that can be circulated as a risk on the app?

Mr. Kurt Eby: To clarify, it's not an app. It's a cell broadcast system.

For weather events right now, Environment Canada issues alerts for tornadoes and severe thunderstorms. For other weather events—and I had this conversation with other colleagues of yours in British Columbia—such as flooding, even though flooding is caused by a weather event, the alerts are primarily for anticipated damage, road closures and evacuation orders. Those would come from the provincial EMO. I understand the situation in B.C. now is that it has asked the regional municipalities to request the alerts.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. Weiler.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Gill, if you like, you can have the floor for a minute and a half.

Mrs. Marilène Gill: Thank you, Mr. Chair, but I don't have any further questions.

Thank you to the witnesses.

The Chair: All right. Thank you.

Our second panel will consist of Chief Dwayne Thomas and Chief Sarah Sunday-Diabo from the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne. They are here in person today. We also have Chief April Martel from the K'atl'odeeche First Nation, if she manages to join us. She is not on yet.

Also joining us is Mr. Lucas King, director of the territorial planning unit of Grand Council Treaty #3.

To the panel witnesses, there is English, French and Inuktitut interpretation, if you choose to have it. Select a language on the button that's called "interpretation". It looks like a globe at the bottom of your screen. You can listen to the proceedings in either English or French. However, there will be questions in English, French and Inuktitut asked by the members of the committee.

That said, before we go to the question period, let me invite Chief Dwayne Thomas and Chief Sarah Sunday-Diabo to take the microphone for a combination of five minutes.

Thank you.

• (1205)

Chief Sarah Sunday-Diabo (Chief, Mohawk Council of Akwesasne): *She:kon.*

My name is Chief Sarah Sunday-Diabo. I represent the Tsi Snaihne district of the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne.

This is my first year on council. In my previous role, I was the emergency manager for the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribe, which is our counterpart on the southern portion of Akwesasne.

As you may know, Akwesasne is a multi-jurisdictional community. The international border runs straight through our community, so we have to deal with the American side as well as the Canadian side. There are two counties—St. Lawrence County and Franklin County on the New York state side—and the two provinces of Quebec and Ontario.

My role was to assist with.... I didn't see a border in my community, so whenever we would have any planning activities, we did Akwesasne joint emergency operations plans that consisted of all our hazards. I would do mitigation plans, continuity of operation plans and pandemic plans for my community.

I would always have external as well as internal stakeholders. Our stakeholders consisted of about 50 federal partners such as FEMA, which is the Federal Emergency Management Agency, as well as the New York State Office of Emergency Management and Emergency Management Ontario through Canada. In Quebec, because of the language difference, we didn't really participate with them. We don't speak French, so it was hard to work with them.

We do have two police departments, which are the Saint Regis Mohawk Tribal Police and the Akwesasne Mohawk police.

We have one fire department. The fire department has substations in Akwesasne, Ontario, and Akwesasne, Quebec, as well as the main headquarters, which is in New York state. We have one fire department that serves two countries and two provinces. They're all volunteer. I think there are probably about 240 active members. They do anything from haz-mat response to ice rescue.

They have a marine unit. They're very active in the community and sometimes they're employees of Mohawk council.

We do have one ambulance unit that's New York State-certified. It's housed in Quebec and responds to New York state, Ontario and Quebec. We have three paramedics, some advanced life support, basic EMTs and drivers. They're all New York State-certified.

As well, we have an environment crew that does haz-mat response. We have had multiple incidents of ships that run aground through the St. Lawrence River. We have to respond because it would affect our water treatment facilities. We've learned how to do boom deployment and cleanup and how to take care of our waters. In our culture, our water is sacred, so we all have to protect that because of the water intake and things like that.

Often times we do all this training with the U.S. Coast Guard, as well as with the Canadian Coast Guard, so we have a good relationship with both the United States' and Canada's coast guards so that they come in and train with us. We do a lot of mutual aid with them, as well as with U.S.-Canadian customs and Canadian border protection. We have various tabletop exercises and mock drills. Whatever we would need, they were a support to us. We have this local emergency planning committee of all these different agencies that come onto our territory, train with us, give us guidance and share their resources with us.

We do have our own health department on both sides. In Akwesasne, everything has to be duplicated, because we have about 14,000 members who are enrolled on both sides. Some live on the U.S. portion of Akwesasne and some live on the Canadian portion, so we have to have New York State Department of Health, as well as our own health department.

• (1210)

We have two long-term care facilities, one in Ontario and one in the Quebec part of Akwesasne. We have day care centres. We have recreation facilities and our own school system. We have an Akwesasne board of education on our territory up to grade 8. One is Mohawk immersion, teaching the Mohawk language, culture and ceremonies to our youth. We're trying to bring back the language and make them fluent speakers.

We have our own busing that transports these kids. On a daily basis, they have to go through the United States and report to customs, go back in and go into the Quebec portion of Akwesasne. That's probably about a 40-minute round trip for these children. On the way home, they have to go through Canadian customs as well.

The Chair: The five minutes are up, but we will have questions for you, Chief Diabo. Thank you.

I would now like to go to Mr. Lucas King, director, territorial planning unit, Grand Council Treaty #3, for five minutes, please.

Mr. Lucas King (Director, Territorial Planning Unit, Grand Council Treaty No. 3): Thank you.

Good morning, everyone. My name is Lucas King, and I'm the director of the territorial planning unit at Grand Council Treaty #3.

I certainly appreciate the invitation to be here today and to work together with the federal government on the critical issues of water regulation and emergency management in Treaty No. 3. I'd like to thank the committee members and other participants for having the Grand Council represented.

Several weeks ago, we were asked by one of our local MPs to share our experiences with and knowledge about water in Treaty No. 3. Over the past two years, to say the least, things have been extreme in Treaty No. 3. Last year, the territory experienced one of the lowest water levels on record. This resulted in well-known drought and fire emergencies across the territory. I wanted to share some photos, but due to time constraints and translation, we couldn't get them in front of you this morning. However, one photo we would have showcased is of the 10-foot difference between the water levels this past year and the year before.

Climate change is creating increasingly unpredictable water levels, making it very difficult for emergency management planning and damage mitigation in Treaty No. 3. This past year, in contrast to the year before, we had large amounts of snowfall and rain throughout the winter season. Then, in the spring, there was a lot of flooding that damaged land, water treatment plants, docks, bridges and homes, leaving communities in Treaty No. 3 with impeded access to food, medical appointments and work. Evacuations and loss of sacred sites to flooding also impacted Treaty No. 3 communities and directly impacted their inherent and treaty rights.

Through all of this, lingering impacts of the global pandemic weighed incredibly heavily, compounding the struggles people faced, including their ability to evacuate and be with family or in safe spaces through everything.

The second photo I wanted to share was on harmonizing governance structures. October 3 is a special day in Treaty No. 3. Today specifically marks 149 years since the signing of Treaty No. 3. We are coming up on 150 years in 2023, a year to celebrate that special and sacred relationship. It's our responsibility as treaty partners to work together in relation to shared lands in Canada, because that's the essence of treaty land. We have a responsibility to harmonize our governance and work together as brothers in that shared capacity.

Modelling provides a great tool for understanding a basin when we talk about water regulation and quantity. However, in the last two years, especially with the impacts of climate change, we've seen that our understanding certainly needs to be more holistic, and our decision-making structures need to reflect this. It's only through the harmonization of governments and decision-making protocols that we'll be better able to manage our own responsibilities for, and relationship to, water in Treaty No. 3.

That doesn't mean managing water; it means managing ourselves and understanding the protocols between both governments in terms of what water looks like in Treaty No. 3. We at the Grand Council are always going to be willing to co-operate with any level of government or any treaty partner because of that sacred relationship. We are willing to share our knowledge, experience and expertise in order to find solutions to the issues we face together.

Today, as we see it and as we move forward, we need to harmonize those governance structures, because, for the last two years, Treaty No. 3 communities have been the most affected by these water regulation impacts. The communities also have the least amount of say in terms of water regulation and protocols. It's all within that western structure. We really do need to take a hard look at how we manage ourselves, what our principles of decision-making are and what our governance structures are, moving forward, so we can take that more holistic look. As we found out through the global pandemic, we can only work on something like this together as a whole. Climate change and water regulation are the same, as they don't sit in just one jurisdiction. They connect everywhere.

• (1215)

With that, I really appreciate the opportunity to be here today and share our experiences from Grand Council with you. I'm looking forward to the rest of the session. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. King.

Unfortunately, our third witness, Chief Martel, is not yet with us, so we're going to proceed with questions, beginning with the Conservatives.

I have Mr. Vidal for six minutes.

Mr. Gary Vidal: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to our witnesses for taking the time to be here with us today.

We were chatting briefly about the fact that fall is in the air, and we're probably not going to avoid that as it transitions to winter. I want to thank you for coming and sharing your knowledge with us.

I have a couple of questions for Chief Thomas and Chief Diabo. The comments you made were quite amazing in the context of your managing multi-jurisdictional challenges. As a former mayor who dealt with different levels of government, I appreciated your perspective—a very positive perspective—and I'm sure it has its challenges.

Emergency management is a shared responsibility, obviously, and you're sharing it way more than most people have to. We heard testimony in the last hour from the people who issue the alerts—the alerting system—and they talked about wanting to engage individual nations on maybe being part of that at their own level.

I'm trying to flesh this out in the context of your having to deal with what I used to have to deal with as a mayor: multiple jurisdictions. Would it be beneficial for you to issue your own emergency alerts just for your nation and your communities, or do you do this already?

Chief Sarah Diabo: We don't have the reverse 911. It's only good for the Ontario portion of Akwesasne. I wanted to start something called CERT, community emergency response teams. They are almost like a neighbourhood watch, neighbourhood groups that we would create.

Akwesasne is kind of one big family, so everybody knows everybody. Everybody knows who's the elder and who lives alone. We would create these little teams and have them do door-to-door checks if we needed to evacuate or things like that, but we don't have any reverse 911 or alert system, because our phone numbers are both American and Canadian, so you can't do that. It would just have to be the old-school way, door to door. You knock on the door to see if they're okay.

We also use social media. As well, we have our own local radio station, which is our lifeline to Akwesasne. If there is a power outage or evacuation or winter storms, everybody tunes in to CKON. In the past we have given these kits that have three to five days' worth of food, water, a little radio, a flashlight and batteries. We would deliver them door to door and give them to our community so they could at least turn on the radio and have some way to be in touch with first responders.

Mr. Gary Vidal: I appreciate that very much, and the effort you make in doing that. That approach makes a lot of sense. A witness in the last hour talked about TV and radio; it's not just an alert on your phone. It's a multipronged thing.

If you could have an alerting system that worked, so that you could issue very specific local alerts without having to rely on going door to door, would that be a benefit to you?

I'm looking for a pretty quick answer because I want to get on to something else before my time runs out.

• (1220)

Chief Sarah Diabo: A cellphone service would be beneficial for us as a first response type of capability, yes.

Mr. Gary Vidal: Most people have access to cell coverage, don't they, in your...?

Chief Sarah Diabo: Yes.

Mr. Gary Vidal: Okay. That's good.

Chief Dwayne Thomas (Chief, Mohawk Council of Akwesasne): We do have pockets in our community, though, where we don't have cell service just because of the geography of our community. Sarah and I represent the same district. We live about a quarter of a mile from one another, and there are times when we don't get cell service at our homes. I have my chief's phone on the Canadian side, but it's Verizon on the American side, only because I get better service with Verizon where we're located.

Mr. Gary Vidal: I appreciate that. Where I come from, there are many in communities in my riding who don't have cell coverage at all, so I can appreciate that very much.

My time is running out. I want to switch gears a little bit and ask you one further question. This is maybe a little bit more of a curiosity question.

There has been a lot of talk in the last few weeks around policing on first nations, and this is all driven out of an incident that hap-

pened in my northern Saskatchewan area. You have your own police force already. I would love to chat with you in more detail some day about that.

In the context of having your own police force, I want you to tie that back specifically to emergencies. Could you talk about the benefit of having your own police force when it comes to an emergency situation in your communities?

Chief Dwayne Thomas: I will speak to that.

In our community, for the last close to 50 years, on the northern portion we've had the Akwesasne Mohawk Police. It has only been in the last couple of years that we have let people come in and map our streets. Currently we don't have a 911 system, because some of our community members don't feel comfortable giving out their information to the outside world.

With a local community force, for years it was only people from our community. We were lucky that people were stepping up and filling those roles. However, in the last five years, we have had a lot more people from outside the territory apply because we had no other applicants who got in.

With my house, for example, when I was a dispatcher for the Mohawk police and I said go to Dwayne Thomas's house, the guy on the other end said "Okay". I didn't have to say "318 Wade Lafrance".

In our community, that knowledge of who we are and where everyone lives, and the families and the closeness, really helps when you get into that situation. All of a sudden, you can be in a panic mode and something's happening. There's a house on fire. There was the ice storm of 1998. It can be any of those things.

You say to go to somewhere, and the person on the other end says, "Who's that? Which district is that?" They want a physical address, because that's what they know, but our local community, as I said, was being serviced for probably the first 45 years by people who were all from Akwesasne, so they knew where to go. In that respect, it was a positive thing.

The other thing with being in a small community is that everybody knows your business, so when somebody is sick or something, our first responders are aware of that. Sarah's husband is an EMT. He has a great memory and he remembers a lot of things. He knows things that someone from the outside might not know. I think those are great things.

In my case, I went to school off the reservation. I had a lot of friends in our neighbouring town of Massena, New York, because that's where I went to high school. In the early nineties, going up to visit them, when I'd get pulled over and asked why I was in Massena, I would always say, "Is it illegal to be in Massena?" I knew what they were getting at, because I was coming from the local first nations community and I was into trouble or something. I don't know why that assumption was. However, to get pulled over on your territory and recognize a person and see a friendly face and stuff like that definitely helps in our community.

• (1225)

The Chair: Thank you, Chief.

We will now go to Mr. Powlowski for six minutes, if I have that right.

Mr. Marcus Powlowski (Thunder Bay—Rainy River, Lib.): Yes, it's me.

Thanks, Chief. That was a very interesting and good response.

I'm going to concentrate on Lucas.

Lucas, welcome to INAN. I'm glad you're here. The committee won't know it, but the western part of my riding is all Treaty No. 3.

During the flooding this spring, I was up there. I certainly saw in Seine River that there were cars floating in the river. The community centre was basically an island surrounded by sandbags, and water around that. In Couchiching, which is close to Fort Frances, there were a lot of houses flooded as well.

Lucas, maybe you could tell me more about the extent of the damage in the spring, and in which communities. As I recall, the communities further upriver, like Lac La Croix, had the flooding first, and then as the water levels rose downstream, there was flooding in other areas.

Could you maybe tell us more about the damage this spring?

Mr. Lucas King: Sure, and I think the first thing I'd touch on there is that it wasn't just the spring, and that was the issue in Treaty No. 3 this year. Normally when we have a flood event, it starts at the headwaters and we have that flood, and then by July and August it has flowed through the system. There was so much water this year. The eastern portion of Treaty No. 3—Couchiching, Seine River, Lac la Croix—all experienced housing loss, damage to infrastructure on the water, to water treatment plants. All of that then flowed through the Rainy River to Lake of the Woods, and that's where we then saw the level of Lake of the Woods rise, impacting our communities on the lake to the same extent with regard to access to community centres, education, roads in and out of the communities and evacuations. The sandbagging efforts were out of control, and this went on into July and August.

It wasn't actually until about two weeks ago that water was off a lot of the physical infrastructure on the lake, but that same situation is then still being experienced on the Winnipeg River flowing into the Lake Winnipeg system.

That high water was also unprecedented in terms of the longevity within the territory. We just tried to keep getting as much water out as possible, but the infrastructure wasn't in place to get enough out

soon enough. White Dog First Nation, for example, instead of sandbagging, actually dumped a pile of sand in front of their water treatment plant to try to stop water from coming in, because there just wasn't time.

Each community now has had costs for roadways and other infrastructure associated with rising water. It was up about six to seven feet in some places.

Mr. Marcus Powlowski: Lucas, you and I have talked about this before.

In the Winnipeg River system, there are several dams. There are several natural choke points, and the water builds up behind those points. Let's say you're looking at how to alleviate the problem in, for example, Rainy Lake. If you were to make a bigger passage going into Rainy River, then you would create more of a problem potentially in Rainy River. Similarly, out at Lake of the Woods, there's a dam there, but I don't think that's the choke point; it's further downstream. However, if you were to open it up there, then you could potentially have more flooding in the Winnipeg River.

Could you explain some of that?

Mr. Lucas King: For sure. We've had this conversation around the infrastructure that's currently in the Rainy Lake-Lake of the Woods system.

A lot of that has been around for decades now. There are natural choke points along the way, and that's where you can't get enough water through the Rainy River in this situation to bring down Rainy Lake and Namakan Lake, and you experience that high-water level. Similarly, for water going out the Winnipeg River to bring down the Lake of the Woods, which is the big storage reservoir, and then Lac Seul, you can't get enough water out fast enough to then alleviate that pressure. You'll actually see gravesites being eroded in Lac Seul. There are physical bones showing in shorelines.

That being said, that's why we're sitting here now again. It's to start to redo or manipulate those choke points, but is doing more manipulation to Mother Earth really the right answer? The conversation at grand council is about how we can do a better job of getting more information so that our predictions are actually more accurate.

My point of concern is that the rule curves in the Rainy-Namakan system actually went 0 for 2 in the last two years in terms of predicting either that drought or that flood, and we're supposed to be the experts. Those models and those engineers are supposed to be the experts. However, we're just human and we need as much information as possible.

That's where we get into starting to look at this as treaty partners. It's a problem for everyone, and we need to start bringing a more holistic approach to how we talk about water regulations, because it's not going to be just widening dams and choke points that's going to get us out of this; it's managing our relationship to that water and bringing in more knowledge and harmonizing those governance systems to really do a better job.

• (1230)

Mr. Marcus Powlowski: Do I have any extra time?

The Chair: There are only about eight seconds, Mr. Powlowski, so I think we'll call it there.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Gill, you have six minutes.

Mrs. Marilène Gill: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I'd like to thank all the witnesses for being with us today.

My next questions will be for Chief Thomas and Chief Diabo from the Mohawk Council of Akwesasne.

As a member of Parliament from Quebec, I have met a few times with members of the Akwesasne community regarding, among other things, the Jay Treaty, which they are very familiar with.

Our study discusses emergency and crisis situations, in addition to the issue of the Canada—U.S. border and the many different difficulties that this causes for the Akwesasne community.

Chief Thomas and Chief Diabo, in a crisis situation that the community may be experiencing or has experienced, what additional challenges should be raised to enable you to better meet the needs of the community on both sides of the border? For you, this is really a unique case.

[*English*]

The Chair: We can start with Mr. King.

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Marilène Gill: Actually, Mr. Chair, my question is for Chief Diabo and Chief Thomas about the Jay Treaty.

The Chair: My apologies.

[*English*]

Sorry. We'll start with Chief Diabo.

Chief Sarah Diabo: During the pandemic, for example, because of the ArriveCAN app, it was difficult for our physicians to come to the homes for the elderly. They were coming from Canada, but they would have to go through the United States, so it was difficult for them to go back through. Even though it was for just 8-10 hours a day, they weren't able, so that hindered our health care sector. We had very few doctors and very few nurses, and the same applied to the American Red Cross. It was difficult for the American Red Cross employees to come and assist us because of the international border. They weren't members of Akwesasne, so there was no right to entry. They would have to go through the whole process of ArriveCAN.

All of our nurses, the PSWs and the community health nurses were becoming fatigued, so we needed some support to come in. The American Red Cross was not able to come in during COVID.

In our district, it could be something as minor as my washer and dryer needing repair. Nobody would come over from Ontario to service our appliances in Quebec. We would have to load up our appliances and take them over the border.

A lot of our goods...We couldn't get lumber; we couldn't get any deliveries. It's difficult in the Quebec districts, because you have to go through New York state. From New York state you couldn't come over to Quebec, because of the border. There's no manned border, but individuals would still have to report to U.S. customs at Massena.

• (1235)

Chief Dwayne Thomas: There's the geography of the whole thing. Our district of Tsi Snaihne and the district of Kana:takon have water on the northern portion and then land on the southern portion. The only way to get there is through the United States, with all the border restrictions during COVID. Prior to COVID there wasn't a problem, because we didn't have the border restrictions, but we really were exposed to a lot of that.

Thankfully, we have a great community. Everybody steps up and volunteers. If you want to talk about supplementary things we did to navigate COVID or anything that came up, I can tell you that our people really step up.

Right now, we're really suffering from COVID fatigue, because we couldn't get that outside support. Many people just don't understand how Akwesasne is built until they come down, tour Akwesasne, see the border and see all the difficulties we face. Our people are waiting for answers, trying to figure out how to do it.

We've been accustomed over the years to saying, "Okay, we'll pick you up by boat on Cornwall Island, bring you by boat to Tsi, let you do your thing, and then take you back." American customs and people in Washington, and sometimes people here in Ottawa, don't understand what we're faced with until they come and see what's happening in Akwesasne. Often we're forced to do things ourselves—

[*Translation*]

Mrs. Marilène Gill: I'm sorry, Chief Thomas, but I don't have much time left.

I'll ask you one last question, which could sum up a lot of the topic.

Would an agreement between Canada and the United States regarding the border, as you are requesting, under the Jay Treaty, for example, be a solution or at least an improvement in the security of your people?

I would like to hear from you and Chief Diabo on this.

I would just like the port authority to be moved by the U.S. customs or have something in place like that, because in order to go from one district to the other, I still have to go from Quebec to Ontario and I still have to go report, even though I'm still in Akwesasne.

It's the same thing with the children. You still have to go to Cornwall, come back and go to the island. Putting it next to the U.S. customs is one solution.

Chief Dwayne Thomas: I think there's another thing we have to look at. Prior to becoming chief, I spent 16 years as the transportation supervisor for our school board, and our geography, again, is a big issue, because there's only one way on and off Cornwall Island. We have an international bridge going south and the low-level bridge going north, but if either one of those bridges gets taken out, we're stuck.

It's the same for the district of Kana:takon: There's one road in and out, and that's it. It's the same with Tsi Snaihne. There are two roads in and out, and that's it. We don't get enough funding to help maintain those roads, number one, but we need to have alternative roads outside of the ones we have now so we can be better prepared.

The customs are a hindrance, absolutely, but the fact that we only have one way in and out to our districts is, I think, a bigger hindrance.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

We have an opportunity for a shortened second round if members wish to avail themselves of it. It will be three minutes for Conservatives and Liberals, and one and a half minutes for the Bloc and the NDP.

I'm going to turn to Mr. Shields for three minutes.

• (1245)

Mr. Martin Shields: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I appreciate the witnesses today.

In terms of the coordination you do and what you're talking about, I could ask the political question: Of the two countries, the two provinces, the two counties, which is the easiest one to deal with? However, I know you're not going to answer that. You've developed a partnership and you know how to make it work, which is incredible.

I'm going to go to Mr. King about something you brought up in your testimony, because I think it relates to you as well.

Mr. King, we were talking about water. In my riding, I had two examples. In a previous one, we were working with indigenous people and we had to adapt in dealing with the flooding situations occurring in my riding from the two major rivers. In yours, what I want to get to—and you didn't talk about it much, but you did mention it—is the mental challenge of constantly moving people from their territory to an isolated setting in an urban area. What does that create, and how can we resolve it? What's your recommendation?

Mr. Lucas King: It's huge. The mental, emotional and spiritual impacts of evacuation from your home are absolutely massive.

One of the biggest issues is because of the different jurisdictions that Akwesasne is dealing with. In Treaty No. 3, we're in Manitoba and Ontario, and then water flows in from Minnesota as well, and there are relations in Minnesota and Manitoba.

Actually, the choice of many of our communities is to head west towards a larger Anishinabe nation, to Winnipeg and Manitoba, and that's more like home base. What happens right now is that those emotional, spiritual and mental impacts are actually increased, because we can only do evacuation funding in Ontario and we have to move folks further away instead of making a close drive to, say, Winnipeg, where many people have relationships and family members.

The evacuation piece speaks to our preparedness and better regulating water and being better prepared so that we don't need to evacuate, but in the instance of evacuation, we need to have protocols in place that allow for that to happen to somewhere where that space is as comfortable as possible for those who are being evacuated and everything is being done for them to return home as soon as possible as well.

Mr. Martin Shields: What you're saying in terms of adapting is that we need to do something that's different from evacuation.

Mr. Lucas King: Yes. We need to be more prepared for evacuation. We need to build up and have better access in terms of roadways, right? If you have only one access spot to a community and that gets flooded out, your access to food and medical help is taken away. We need to have better access roadways, better communication in flooding events and better resources prepared prior to flooding events.

That comes to those strategies of water regulation, early notices and making sure that we have food, water and accessibility to everything in a community so that we don't have to evacuate. Then, in the instance of an evacuation, we have to make sure that it's the safest and most comfortable space as possible in that area.

Mr. Martin Shields: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you.

We'll now go to you, Mr. McLeod, for three minutes.

Mr. Michael McLeod (Northwest Territories, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Thank you to everyone who has presented today.

There have been very interesting presentations. It points to some of the challenges in the indigenous communities when it comes to emergencies.

My question is for Treaty 3.

I listened with real interest. I come from the Northwest Territories. We have two reserves, but most of our communities are indigenous communities, and we have a number of different local governments. We have the Indian bands and the Métis councils. Some communities have the Inuit councils. Then we have the municipal government and the Government of the Northwest Territories, and then, when it comes to emergencies, the federal government has a role to play.

It takes a lot of co-operation. In some cases, there are alliances, and in other cases there are co-operation agreements that have been signed so that everybody knows their role. If there's a mix-up, lives could be lost, and if you're not sure who's handling what, it becomes very concerning when it comes to infrastructure and other properties, and there could be loss of life.

I'm aware that some provinces, such as B.C., have moved to trilateral agreements to ensure coordination between first nations and the federal and provincial levels of government. I'd like to ask if the representative for Treaty 3 thinks that having a trilateral agreement and arrangement in Ontario would also be beneficial.

• (1250)

Mr. Lucas King: Yes, I think that would be hugely beneficial.

I think the other side of it is that it may not even be trilateral. We could even talk quadrilateral because of the portion of Treaty 3 that is in Manitoba as well. We could make sure that all of those jurisdictions are at the table when we talk about emergency management and the resources and planning that need to go into it. An agreement between the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty 3, Manitoba, Ontario and the feds would definitely be a milestone in terms of working together that way.

Mr. Michael McLeod: My next question is for the Mohawks of Akwesasne.

I really had to try to sort it out in my head to follow the number of different jurisdictions in your community. It's a split community that's in two countries, two counties and two provinces.

I'm wondering, when it comes to a national emergency, who declares a state of emergency. Is it the chief who does that?

The Chair: Could we have a quick response, please? We're running out of time.

Chief Sarah Diabo: It depends on where the emergency is. It could be the emergency management office at the tribe or it could be the emergency measures office at the Mohawk council.

Mr. Michael McLeod: Okay. Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much.

[Translation]

Mrs. Gill, you have a minute and a half.

Mrs. Marilène Gill: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

I would like to quickly address Chief Thomas and Chief Diabo.

First, I want to tell you that we know how complex and unique the Akwesasne situation is. I would echo Chief Diabo's comments that perhaps the committee could go there and get a better understanding of what's going on.

If you wish, you can conclude by specifying what would be most important to you with respect to emergency situations. You can also send us any additional comments or ideas that you would like to see highlighted in our report that our committee could make recommendations about.

Thank you.

[English]

Chief Sarah Diabo: My wish list would be to have continuing funding so that we can provide more equipment and training of our people to be better responders, as well a large unified public safety building and one central dispatch unit.

It's just funding for the public safety building, training, equipment and PPE.

[Translation]

The Chair: Thank you, Mrs. Gill.

[English]

Ms. Idlout, you have 90 seconds.

Ms. Lori Idlout: I want to ask my question to Lucas King.

First of all, congratulations on the anniversary of the signing of Treaty 3.

I'm interested in the PowerPoint slide that you sent us, which is called "Reconciling Sovereignties in Treaty #3". I wonder if you could quickly explain how child protection, just as an example, could be explained by the slide you sent us.

Oujannamiik.

Mr. Lucas King: Totally, and I will do my best to do it as quickly as possible as well.

What you see in the slides are two parallels of governance. One is the Anishinaabe Nation in Treaty 3 and the other is western governance systems, in that instance harmonized through the signing of Treaty 3.

What most often happens when we talk about, say, child protection or emergency management working "in partnership" with Crown entities is that they say they'll fund this work to do it this way and this is the way they expect it to be done. They provide the protocols by which it will be done, and it needs to be worked within that western track.

That is the issue. For child care, for example, it is the federal and provincial governments that are dictating how Anishnaabe children are being cared for. Really what we need to be looking at is how to harmonize those governance approaches so that it's actually the Anishnaabe Nation in Treaty 3 protocols and processes that are guiding child care, so that they are being cared for in a way that is culturally appropriate and safe and doesn't go back to policies around integration into a western parallel.

At the end of the day, when we talk about participation and inclusion of traditional knowledge and nations, we need to look at harmonization and operating in that treaty space, as opposed to just participating or trying to move one governance structure into another governance structure.

• (1255)

The Chair: Thank you very much. This brings our second panel to a close.

Thank you, Mr. King, for appearing before us today. Thank you to Chief Diabo and Chief Thomas for coming here from Akwesasne to answer our wide-ranging questions. We very much appreciate it.

With that, I will end panel number two.

I see that Mr. Badawey has his hand up.

Mr. Vance Badawey (Niagara Centre, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, before you adjourn the meeting, I have two questions, if I may.

One is with respect to the study we are discussing today. When are we expecting to discuss drafting instructions?

The Chair: On that question, given the fact that last week we agreed among ourselves, with a couple of amendments, to focus priority on Bill C-29, that will take us to October 28 for the last session. Then, of course, we have to follow that up by doing clause-by-clause consideration in an expeditious manner, so we're into early November.

I would just add that I mentioned two other things that we need to revisit. One is the updated NIHB report, which the analysts are going to update, given the amendments, new resolutions and new recommendations that we proposed. Also, at some point—this Thursday, for example—we were going to look at future studies. The drafting instructions for this study are important as well.

In the coming days and weeks we should decide what should come right after Bill C-29. Should it be how quickly we want to do one of the three? Which of the three should we do, and in which order? Should it be the drafting instructions, the NIHB report or deciding on future studies, and in what order?

Mr. Schmale, go ahead.

Mr. Jamie Schmale (Haliburton—Kawartha Lakes—Brock, CPC): Chair, given the fact that we on this side could potentially have one more week left in our time here, could we use time later this week to talk about drafting instructions? I don't want to leave navigating this to the new group, who will have no idea of what has been said in the past.

Mr. Vance Badawey: Are you leaving us?

Mr. Jamie Schmale: I don't know. We don't know. If you could message Pierre, that would be awesome. Maybe later in Question Period, you could throw a note that way. I will miss you too, Vance.

If we could get this part out of the way—I mean that in a nice way—before we leave, that would be great.

The Chair: I have a suggestion.

We said we wanted to start off with Bill C-29 this Thursday. That would probably be with the ministers coming. It's up to the committee to decide whether we might want to reserve 20 minutes at the end of that meeting to look at drafting instructions, so that the old gang from the Conservative Party—

Mr. Vance Badawey: The former gang.

• (1300)

The Chair: —the former gang can have an opportunity to speak up.

Is that something that would be acceptable?

Mr. Jamie Schmale: Did you say to take 20 minutes with the ministers?

The Chair: The ministers will be asked to be here on Thursday in connection with Bill C-29. It's the normal thing to invite the sponsoring ministers.

Mr. Jamie Schmale: Will they be here for two hours?

The Chair: That I don't know at this point. The committee hasn't made a decision on that. Normally they come for an hour, but that would leave us some time.

Do we have agreement on that, or is this another connected—

Mr. Vance Badawey: I want to put it forward that we set some time aside on Thursday afternoon.

The Chair: Do you mean out of the two hours?

Mr. Vance Badawey: Yes, that would be out of the two hours. Maybe for 20 minutes we could discuss some drafting instructions for—

The Chair: I'm sorry. We're talking about internal stuff here—

Mr. Vance Badawey: The second question I would have, Mr. Chair, is with respect to Bill C-29. I'm assuming that the names of witnesses are to be submitted by October 5, which is this Wednesday.

The Chair: That's what we agreed to.

Mr. Vance Badawey: That's great. Thank you.

Finally, Mr. Chair, through you to the clerk, if we could have the amended and adopted Bill C-29 forwarded to the members so that we can be prepared, that would be wonderful.

The Clerk of the Committee (Ms. Vanessa Davies): The minutes will be posted later today for the meeting.

The Chair: Right, but he's also confirming that we will get the proposed changes to Bill C-29 that may be coming up to the members—

The Clerk: No. Not the motions.

Mr. Vance Badawey: [*Inaudible—Editor*] on Bill C-29. We can have that forwarded.

The Chair: Yes. As you know, any proposed changes will go through the legislative clerks, to see what shape they're in and if they're allowable. They'll then go to the clerk, who will distribute them.

Mr. Vance Badawey: That will hopefully be before Thursday.

The Chair: I don't think we're going to get them before Thursday. Remember that they have to be bilingual, and the inputs will come over the course of the next few weeks. If you're talking about potential changes to Bill C-29, we didn't decide when those had to come.

The Clerk: I circulated the email.

The Chair: I read the email from the clerk. There's an email from the clerk. It has a very good little three-minute video that I encourage everybody to go through, because it spells out how a committee deals with legislation at committee stage. It gives very good advice on the process by which we get to the point where we go through clause-by-clause study of the proposed changes. I'm sure you're very familiar with that.

Mr. Vance Badawey: I want to be clear, Mr. Chairman. All I'm looking for is the amended version of Bill C-29. That's all I'm looking for.

The Chair: That may not come. At the moment, there is no specific....

The Clerk: Mr. Chair, the only thing that I circulated was the order of reference that came from Journals. That's all I have.

The Chair: It doesn't spell it out. I encourage people who know what changes they may wish to make to Bill C-29 to go through that process that's described in the email as quickly as possible, so that they can be looked at, we can find out if they're allowable and in which form they will be, and then they can be translated and distributed.

That's the process. Is that okay?

The Clerk: Thank you.

The Chair: Very good.

Are you happy, Mr. Badawey? Very good.

Everything has to happen yesterday. I know, I know.

With that, thank you very much to everybody on the panel—

Go ahead, sir.

Chief Dwayne Thomas: Mr. Chairman, I just want to extend an invitation to anybody who would like to come and visit our reservation. Chief Diabo and I are willing hosts and tour guides.

The Chair: That's a very kind invitation. Thank you very much, Chief Thomas and Chief Diabo.

It sounds like a full day, because we will have to go to a lot of countries and a lot of places.

Thank you.

The meeting is adjourned.

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