have the order in council. So the question was around the reporting back to government. Why it's important is, of course, that that entity then has gone on to be alleged of some significant matters — significant conflicts of interests, allegations of waste of public money, and relationships with other companies as well that are contracting with government, continuing to this fiscal year.

So just trying to lay an understanding of the, I guess the genesis of the start-up of this company that this government started up, and just trying to follow it through to the current contracts that it and some of the companies that it has I believe a relationship with, a business relationship with, that are now still doing business with this ministry and I believe the PTRC [Petroleum Technology Research Centre]. And certainly it involves individuals that are involved in this minister's portfolio to this day.

The Acting Chair (Mr. Hutchinson): — If I understand the mandate correctly, we would need to show a direct connection between historical matters and elements of this particular budget. Do the investments that were made earlier have a direct connection with specific dollar amounts contained in this year's budget from the ministry?

Mr. Wotherspoon: — I would ask the question then, as it relates to Climate Ventures, the initial start-up of this government and partnership with others and the individuals who have been identified with conflicts of interest that were on Climate Ventures, what related companies can the minister identify that either have contracted or continue to contract with government proper, his ministry, or agencies under his purview such as the PTRC or the ITC [International Test Centre for CO_2 Capture] or certainly IPAC [International Performance Assessment Centre for geologic storage of CO_2] is the one's that's been of large discussion.

And one example would be a company called ClimbIT, I think is how you pronounce it, and I believe there's a direct relationship, similar individuals involved, one individual I know that's alleged of a significant conflict of interest who's continued to receive dollars from this government and as well from the PTRC, where there's actually newer order in councils that have been extended.

So my question would be, as it relates to these companies in question and as it relates to the individuals that have had conflicts of interest raised with their involvement, I guess if the minister could just clarify, what companies are receiving dollars, what conflicts of interest he's identifying throughout his ministry? Maybe it's a contract with ClimbIT that he could clarify or with various agencies or ministries or with the PTRC, or maybe it's individuals that have been identified with conflicts of interest.

Hon. Mr. McMillan: — I would say a bit in regards to the relationship of relevance of the company that the member opposite questions to this year's budget or to any year's budget. I would say there is none. We've funded the university on commercializationing of research. He's talking about an IT company. The two are not related and there would be no relation to that year's budget nor the current year's budget.

In regards to any contract with individuals, if the member would name ClimbIT, I will check if ClimbIT is currently contracted by any of the . . . of our ministry. If he has any other names in particular, we'd be pleased to do that work as well.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Well maybe specifically some of the individuals that were identified through the Meyers Norris Penny audit and investigation. Does he have concerns as it relates to some of those incorporators and proprietors and current . . . I would suspect that when you have, in the end . . . We know it's been raised that millions have been wasted. I would hope that government would be doing a full review of its partners and related companies and individuals with conflicts of interest.

So looking for some statements and, you know, on the current year as it relates to the minister's actions on this front and reviews that he might be doing into years past but also dollars that might be flowing this year. And as far as the government not, you know, I still . . . The minister I think is maybe trying to be too cute by a half on this one, where it's pretty clear . . .

The Acting Chair (Mr. Hutchinson): — The member will use appropriate language and refrain from remarks of that kind. I expect it to change immediately.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — The minister . . . Actually I wasn't trying to be certainly unparliamentary with my language at all. So the minister seems to not be . . . is trying to redirect or deflect where some responsibility lies. And there is a direct investment into CVI, and certainly by all the audits that have been done by the various organizations and audit companies like Meyers Norris Penny have identified clearly that this was a company that was started with monies of the taxpayers and through the provincial government, through this order in council.

So I think we can move on from that debate and now move on to, I guess, more current considerations as to what contracts might be at play, what dollars are flowing to individuals that have been identified with potential conflicts of interest and what sort of review this minister is leading.

Hon. Mr. McMillan: — In regards to the ClimbIT company that the member requested information on, we know of . . . the contract is not through my ministry but through ITO [Information Technology Office]. But it is engaged on the PRIME project, which is an Energy and Resources project redeveloping our processes and software around the Energy and Resources computer systems.

So through ITO, one person from ClimbIT was employed. The call-out, a competitive process through ITO, was engaged in. The call-out went out in December of 2009. The work commenced March 2011, and it's one person. It's ongoing at this point, and as I said earlier, it was a competitive process at that time. If the member has any questions of individuals or companies that we could provide information on, we'd be pleased to.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — It says one individual. Could the minister name that individual?

Hon. Mr. McMillan: — He is a SharePoint administrator. As opposed to naming a citizen publicly, I could provide the name to the member. If he would still request me to name him publicly, I think that I would be willing to, but out of respect for people working for the Government of Saskatchewan, I'd be pleased to provide that name privately at this time.

[21:45]

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Sure. I'd appreciate that name and then any — and you don't need to put it onto the record right now as well — any individuals that have been employed during that time, throughout this contract through till now with ClimbIT. So anyone else that's been employed by ClimbIT. And respecting that I'll receive that, we're not placing it onto the record here right now, but not being bound by any confidentiality into the future.

So I have one name here. Is there any other individuals that have worked in ClimbIT in the fulfillment of this contract?

Hon. Mr. McMillan: — There is one other that at the commencement of the contract, again a name that I don't think the member would recognize, but I would provide him with that one as well. The contract has been ongoing with one position. The name I just provided him is the current. I can also provide you with the initial one as well.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — That's appreciated. I'd also appreciate if the minister can provide — and he may not be able to do it just here and now — but a copy of the contract entered into with ClimbIT at that point.

The Acting Chair (Mr. Hutchinson): — Before the minister continues, I have a question that I would like to get answered from either by himself or his officials. Are there any dollars in this year's budget for the ministry that we are considering this evening that relate directly to any of the companies or individuals that have been named so far?

Hon. Mr. McMillan: — The PRIME project which we're currently in discussion with is a current project. The contract that we're currently discussing is ongoing, so this one does fall within this year's budget.

In regards to the contract under discussion here on the PRIME project, as I stated earlier, it's a contract with the ITO and ClimbIT that they did through a competitive process. ITO then bills our ministry for that work and that's how the relationship is. So there's no direct, there is no contract between Ministry of Energy and Resources and the company in question. We can request of ITO whether they'd be willing to release that contract and, if so, we'd be pleased to provide it. The member may also wish to ask that question of that ministry as well but we will endeavour to do that work.

The member also asked if there were any contracts with ClimbIT in regards to other agencies in which we fund. The member will know that we are a funder of the PTRC. We're not their major funder; we're one of many funders. They're largely an industry-driven board, but we have one seat on that board. And my understanding is that they published a contract on their website about a month ago, possibly a little over a month ago, of a contract that they in fact had with ClimbIT. Again, we're a funder of the PTRC, but we are of the understanding that they made a contract public of this nature.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — No, and I've raised it because it's . . . certainly begs to question. Now could the minister state the current incorporators of ClimbIT or past directors of ClimbIT? One of the individuals with an alleged conflict of interest through the audits has been a gentlemen, Mr. Henry Jaffe. Is he still a proprietor of ClimbIT?

Hon. Mr. McMillan: — Mr. Chair, we don't know with certainty who the directors of this company is, or many companies specific to this company. We don't have a contract with them. We have one of their contractors on site through the ITO, but I would expect that you, through the corporate registry, anyone could find the proprietors of a company that's incorporated. But that's not the type of information that we would have for this or any company of this nature.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — The concern being that this Mr. Henry Jaffe has been highlighted through a lot of reports to government and to IPAC board, the board of directors, with a concern around conflicts of interest, but also the entities that he's been involved with have had allegations of unethical behaviour — this Climate Ventures, of course, that was started by your government — also, you know, fairly straightforward allegations of a waste of significant dollars, of taxpayers' dollars.

So I guess I look to the minister. What have you done to, I guess, review your comfort with your government continuing to extend dollars to operations that an individual that has had so many identified concerns raised? Why do you continue to flow dollars in the direction of his companies?

Hon. Mr. McMillan: — The contract that's currently in discussion, as we've stated earlier, we have a contractor on our site from ClimbIT. We have a major project redevelopment of the PRIME project moving forward. It's a multi-year redevelopment of our software and business processes around energy and resources, around oil and gas.

Through this project we utilize many consultants, many people with very technical skills. The ITO is the arm of our government that has expertise in this regard. They have a very prescribed procurement policy. It is a very competitive policy and very transparent, as it should be. And I believe that they put out a competitive bid process that's very transparent, and they reward the proponent of that bid that best meets the requirement and is most competitive. And I think the people of Saskatchewan expect any contract to have a very transparent and competitive process. And the one contract we have that has flowed through the ITO, I understand, went through this process.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — But reports to your government have, dating back many years have stated significant concerns as it relates to allegations of conflicts of interest and waste of taxpayers' money and this individual. In fact it's raised concerns basically with being involved with any entity that that individual that's been named is related to.

My question is, why your government has either continues to fund those dollars, with direct reports and concerns that have been raised directly to your government, or what review have you done of this individual that is still at the centre of the CVI questions and the alleged waste of millions of dollars?

Hon. Mr. McMillan: — If the report that the member is asserting that our government has received, if he's speaking of the Meyers Norris Penny report that was commissioned by IPAC-CO2, I believe that was commissioned in 2011. It was a report to their board that we had members on. We didn't have the majority of members, but it was not a government report. And my understanding was that the board didn't release that report publicly, and it never did get released until just months ago.

So in 2011, I believe, that report was delivered to their board, the IPAC-CO2. The call, the public process that was entered into by ITO, was 2009. So those two times, the process that the ITO went through was 2009. This report the member is asserting is a government report, which it wasn't, was 2011. I would ask him, would he clarify? Is there another report in which he is referencing?

Mr. Wotherspoon: — There'd be two reports. And of course the minister would know that government has three members of the board of IPAC right from the get-go, and so this went to those members. Now the responsibility of those members is to represent government and the public in their roles. So certainly when allegations of this kind are raised, it would be my full expectation that ministers and government would be briefed, fully aware of the issue, and responsive to the issue. We haven't seen that at all from your government.

The reports that I would identify would certainly be the Meyers Norris Penny report which has been accessible by your government for, as you say, many years, something that's really only been brought out through leaks and investigation that's been in place, but also a report that was brought forward to the board of IPAC. It's a document. We've talked about it. I've tabled it in the Assembly for you and the other ministers involved in this venture, and I'm sure he's . . . Have you reviewed, Mr. Minister, the report dated March 28th, 2011, that I tabled in the Assembly?

Hon. Mr. McMillan: — I would remind the member that the public process for the contractor was taken place in 2009. So I'm asking, is there a report that predates that to his previous question? In regards to this report that was tabled, yes I've reviewed the reports tabled in the Assembly.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — I'm glad you've reviewed them. Were you alarmed and concerned when you read the report that had gone to your government officials a couple of years ago?

The Acting Chair (Mr. Hutchinson): — I'm going to intervene here. We don't have a lot of time left, and we've strayed considerably from the mandate of considering this particular fiscal year's budget. I would consider any further questions along that particular line to be out of order, and I ask that the member change his lines of inquiry to be more specifically addressing this year's budget.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Well the contracted dollars continue to flow, so it's a valid question. Back to . . .

The Acting Chair (Mr. Hutchinson): — I will consider questions in order that relate specifically to the amounts of the budget and their purposes.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — So the minister's reviewed the individuals that have been alleged to have conflicts of interest specifically from the Meyers Norris Penny report and . . .

[22:00]

The Acting Chair (Mr. Hutchinson): — That doesn't relate to the specifics of this budget, and I've declared, I've declared it out of order.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Could I ask the question, Mr. Chair, so you can make that assessment after that? Can I ask the question, and then you could assess whether or not it has its place?

The Acting Chair (Mr. Hutchinson): — Certainly.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — So the minister has assessed the . . . read the report. I'm aware that he would know the individuals with conflicts of interest that have been identified clearly by independent investigations or by investigations. Is he concerned that one of those individuals continues to occupy a lead role at the PTRC, which is under his purview and out of this fiscal year?

Hon. Mr. McMillan: — As the members will know, the PTRC is an agency which has been funded by the Government of Saskatchewan since I believe 1998. It's a non-profit agency that was established as a partnership between the university, the SRC [Saskatchewan Research Council], and the Government of Saskatchewan, and I believe the federal government. The federal government has been the largest funder of the PTRC for many years. The Government of Saskatchewan has also been a funder. It is an industry-driven organization doing research into enhanced oil recovery with a substantial amount of expertise and knowledge around carbon sequestration, enhanced oil recovery at the Midale oil field. So with that context, we have funded the PTRC.

In this year's budget, we have allocated funding towards them again, to them again. We do have, as we do with all agencies in which we fund, whether they are direct government agencies or not, we have a very high expectation of fiscal responsibility, the type of fiscal responsibility that we think is acceptable for spending GRF money on. And we need to ensure that all our agencies that we fund also has that level of scrutiny that we think is appropriate.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — My question is . . .

The Acting Chair (Mr. Hutchinson): — The three hours that we have allocated for this part of the discussion have now elapsed, so I don't think we're able to entertain any further questions and we need to proceed with business.

Mr. Wotherspoon: — Unless the minister fields the question. Unless it's the will of the committee to go on with a few more