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**Official Report
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(Hansard)**

Wednesday 11 December 2013

**Journal
des débats
(Hansard)**

Mercredi 11 décembre 2013

**Standing Committee on
Public Accounts**

Special report, Auditor General:
Ornge Air Ambulance and
Related Services

**Comité permanent des
comptes publics**

Rapport spécial, vérificateur
général : Services d'ambulance
aérienne et services connexes
d'Ornge

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ASSEMBLÉE LÉGISLATIVE DE L'ONTARIO

STANDING COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC ACCOUNTS

COMITÉ PERMANENT DES COMPTES PUBLICS

Wednesday 11 December 2013

Mercredi 11 décembre 2013

The committee met at 0901 in room 151.

SPECIAL REPORT, AUDITOR GENERAL: ORNGE AIR AMBULANCE AND RELATED SERVICES

MINISTRY OF HEALTH

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): I'd like to call the committee to order and welcome the Minister of Health back to the committee. Thank you for coming in this morning. You have a couple of minutes for an opening statement and then we'll go to questions from the parties.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Well, thank you very much. I'm delighted to be here this morning.

Members of this committee have made some accusations that are simply unfounded, and I'm very happy to be here to set the record straight.

First, regarding Dr. Chris Mazza's compensation: On December 21, 2011, I learned that Dr. Mazza had abused the trust placed in him by the taxpayers of this province. When I learned what he made in one year, that was enough for me to take immediate action. That's why I ordered a forensic audit into Ornge the very next day. They were on-site before Christmas. Shortly after Ornge's board of directors had resigned, a new board was in place and Dr. Mazza was no longer working at Ornge.

The second accusation relates to the findings of that forensic investigation. I reviewed the results—the interim findings of the forensic investigators in February 2012. I was shocked at what I read. Chris Mazza's deception and abuse of power clearly crossed the line. The issue was immediately referred to the Ontario Provincial Police.

The final report of the forensic investigation team was delivered to my deputy minister in July 2012. Based on advice from the ministry's internal audit team, this report was immediately returned, unread and still sealed, and forwarded to the Ontario Provincial Police. This step was taken to ensure that there was no risk of inadvertent impact on the ongoing criminal investigation. There is no question that this was the right thing to do, and even with the benefit of hindsight, I continue to stand behind that decision because Chris Mazza must be held to account.

Both Ornge and the Ministry of Health have taken their obligations seriously when providing the documents to this legislative committee examining this issue. Two

million pages of documents have been provided to this committee. The committee has had all information about Dr. Mazza's salary, compensation and expenses since it was provided to the committee Clerk in October 2012, as requested by MPP Liz Sandals.

What's important to me is that we have worked hard to turn things around at Ornge. Under Ornge's new leadership, a new culture has been established that has made patient safety, transparency and accountability for taxpayers' dollars their highest priority.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Thank you for that. We'll move to the opposition. You have about 25 minutes in total time for each party. Go ahead, Mr. Klees.

Mr. Frank Klees: Thank you. Minister, what specifically, in the briefing note that you read, was it that alerted you to concerns at Ornge? Specifically, you mentioned that all you needed to see was one year's income. How much was that one year's income that you saw in that briefing note?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Well, I think you're confusing two things. The briefing note came after the forensic audit team had been in, and it was contained in the interim report. When I saw Dr. Mazza's first year's salary, that was in response to a meeting that I had with the chair of Ornge, where I demanded to know what compensation was paid to Dr. Mazza. As you will recall, there was an issue around what was on the sunshine list and what was not. I demanded to know total compensation to Dr. Mazza. I received that shortly after that meeting in my office.

Mr. Frank Klees: Minister, that's not what you said. That's not what you've been saying for the last two weeks. For the last—

Hon. Deborah Matthews: That is exactly what I have been saying.

Mr. Frank Klees: No, it's not. The transcripts of the scrums will show that what you said was that all you needed to see was what he made in that one year, and you specifically referred to the interim report that you read.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I'm sorry, Mr. Klees; once again, you are inaccurate. What I have said from the beginning is that I demanded to know what compensation was paid to Dr. Mazza. I received that information. A forensic audit was ordered. Shortly after that, in February 2012, the audit reported back, and it was from that point that the police were called in.

Mr. Frank Klees: Which audit?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: The audit that was ordered after I learned what he had been paid in one year.

Mr. Frank Klees: Is that the one that you did not read?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I read the interim report. That was all I needed to read.

Mr. Frank Klees: And what did the interim report say about his income?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: The interim report did not address the compensation. What concerned me in the interim report that led me to say, “Game over. It’s time for the OPP to be involved,” was the reference to the payments made by AugustaWestland to the Ornge corporations, in response to what appeared to be an overpayment by Ornge for helicopters.

Mr. Frank Klees: We just need to get one thing clear here. You’re referring to an interim report. The only interim report, so-called, that was delivered to this committee and was referred to by your deputy initially as an interim report, who then subsequently clarified and referred to it as a briefing note, is this two-page document. Is that the one? Just so that we’re clear, when you say “interim report,” is it this two-page briefing note that you’re referring to?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Yes. That is the interim report from the forensic audit team that was called in after disclosure of one year’s salary.

Mr. Frank Klees: And you’re saying that this report made reference to the remuneration that you were concerned about.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Let me try this one more time. I got the information on remuneration in December 2011. It was that information—one year of Chris Mazza’s compensation—that prompted the audit that resulted in that interim report, that briefing note. Those two pages, I tell you, tell a very big story that resulted in immediate referral to the OPP.

If you’re telling me, Mr. Klees, that you think I should have waited until the final report to take action, I completely disagree with you.

Mr. Frank Klees: No. You should have taken action two years before that, Minister. The kind of backfilling that you’re doing is quite offensive.

The fact that you finally took action in December 2011, when this issue was brought to your attention in April 2011, warning you that things were going on at Ornge that, quite frankly, were highly questionable, and you, according to the Hansard, continued to defend what was going on at Ornge—for you to suggest that somehow you took a responsible step here by moving in December 2011 is quite hilarious, actually, but let’s leave that where it is.

0910

I’d like to ask you this. In July of this year, Ornge provided this committee with a document entitled “Budget: Fiscal Year 2013.” Did you receive a copy of Ornge’s fiscal year 2013 budget?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I certainly have been briefed on budget challenges at Ornge.

Mr. Frank Klees: So you did not receive a copy of Ornge’s budget?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I’ll tell you what I have received. I have received the interim report. I have read the final report. There have been significant changes at Ornge, as I hope you will acknowledge, changes for the better. What I’m hoping is that this committee will actually finish the report—

Mr. Frank Klees: Minister, wait a minute now.

Hon. Deborah Matthews:—so we will have perhaps more information on how to improve Ornge.

Mr. Frank Klees: Minister, you’re here to answer our questions. I’m asking you a simple question.

This is an organization that has serious financial struggles and complexities. As the minister, you’re actually telling us that you have not even asked for or seen a copy of Ornge’s budget for fiscal year 2013. That’s what I’m hearing. Is that correct?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: What I am telling you is that I am aware there are challenges. Those challenges are being managed.

Mr. Frank Klees: You didn’t read the budget.

What is the consolidated budget for Ornge for fiscal year 2013?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Mr. Klees, I think you understand—

Mr. Frank Klees: Just say you don’t know, if that’s the case.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: What I do know, Mr. Klees, is that Ornge is under very strong new leadership, new management. They are—

Mr. Frank Klees: Minister, you don’t even know the budget of Ornge for fiscal 2013 and you’re cutting the cheque?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: What I can tell you is that I know that Ornge is under strong new leadership. They are working their way—

Mr. Frank Klees: People who are watching this are going to be distraught. This is an organization that has wasted multimillions of health care dollars, and you don’t even know what their budget is for this year?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: With respect, Mr. Klees, I think your credibility on issues related to Ornge has been severely questioned.

Mr. Frank Klees: Oh, thank you.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: You have raised issues in the House that are simply untrue. Just as recently as last week, you said that I was in contempt of the Legislature for not having provided documents. Those documents have been provided to this committee not once, not twice, but three times. I actually think that you should think about your accusations before you make them.

Mr. Frank Klees: Well, let’s think about that together, okay? In a series of motions dating back to April 2012, this committee has requested any and all documents that relate to Ornge that may be in the possession of the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Finance or any other ministry. On February 15, 2012, you received the briefing note, which you refer to as the interim document

or the interim report. Why was that briefing note not made available to this committee?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: That briefing note was made available to this committee. You have had that in your documents not once, not twice—three times you have received that document.

Mr. Frank Klees: On July 25, 2012, you received a copy of the final forensic report, and you forwarded that to the OPP without reading it. Why was that report withheld from this committee?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: With respect, I did not receive that report. That report was presented to the ministry officials, who made the determination that we must not interfere or be perceived to be interfering with an OPP investigation. So I did not see that report. They made the right decision. I stand by that decision. I have a feeling that if I had read that report, then you'd be here accusing me of interfering with an investigation.

Mr. Frank Klees: No. In October 2012—

Hon. Deborah Matthews: What I am saying is that the forensic investigator lead appeared before this committee, answered questions, and every document that has been requested by this committee has been delivered to this committee, including the final report of the forensic investigation team. You've had that information. You clearly have not—

Mr. Frank Klees: The final report was delivered because we called for it last week.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: That's exactly right.

Mr. Frank Klees: In October 2012, Ornge requested that their external accounting firm and selected executives be permitted to access that forensic report, and in response, on October 9, 2012, the Ministry of Health asked the forensic investigation team for a copy of that report, which it received.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: That is correct.

Mr. Frank Klees: Your ministry received it. The OPP advised that this would not interfere with their investigation. Why was this committee not provided with the report at that time? That was in October 2012.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: This committee has asked for many, many, many documents—two million pages of documents—

Mr. Frank Klees: And this was not important enough to forward to this committee, knowing that there's a standing order to the Ministry of Health to provide any documentation of relevance related to Ornge to this committee? Why was it withheld?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: This committee has received over two million pages of documents. It's clear—

Mr. Frank Klees: We did not receive the forensic report.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: It's clear you have not been reading—

Mr. Frank Klees: Why was it withheld?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: —because even today, after I have said repeatedly that you had the interim report three times—

Mr. Frank Klees: I'm talking about the final report. Why was the final report not provided to this committee, knowing full well that there's a standing order from this committee to provide that documentation? Why was it withheld?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: When the committee requested the report, they got the report.

Mr. Frank Klees: No. We have standing orders here, standing motions by this committee to provide any documentation relating to Ornge between the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Finance. We want that information. We have standing motions—

Hon. Deborah Matthews: You have that information.

Mr. Frank Klees: And the minute that that report was tabled, it should have been delivered here. Why was it withheld?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Let me try one more time—

Mr. Frank Klees: You don't have to try one more time. The fact is, we didn't get it; it was withheld, and I'm simply asking you as minister to tell us why it was withheld, knowing that the OPP said it would not in any way interfere with their investigation.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: There was a decision made by the ministry that we did not want to interfere with an ongoing OPP investigation. As I say, that was the right decision. That was the decision that was made by the deputy minister in consultation with ministry audit staff. I concurred with that decision, and that decision stood until this committee requested the final report and this committee received the final report.

You have information you don't even know you have. That's clear, that you're asking for information—millions of pages have been delivered to you, and it's obvious that you have not read them because you have asked for the same information over again.

Mr. Frank Klees: Minister, I have read a lot more documentation, obviously, than you have. I can tell you that the documents we went through that provided information on Chris Mazza's income—and you admitted yourself that the interim report does not contain all of the information about Chris Mazza's income. The information we did receive regarding his income, including T4s, adds up to a maximum \$5.6 million. Where is the rest?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I'm afraid once again you're demonstrating that you have not read the documents.

Mr. Frank Klees: Well, then, I would ask you to table with this committee the information that you say was in that document that adds up to \$9.4 million. Will you do that?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Of course I will do that.

Mr. Frank Klees: Of course you will, and I want that tabled—

Hon. Deborah Matthews: But I want you to know you have that information.

Mr. Frank Klees: Well, if you have it, then table it with the—

Hon. Deborah Matthews: All of the information that you're asking for today you've had for months.

Mr. Frank Klees: Well, if you know that, Minister—

Hon. Deborah Matthews: For months, you have had compensation, you have had bonuses—

Mr. Frank Klees: Well, you're wrong.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: —you have had expenses. All of the information this committee has—

Mr. Frank Klees: And you're wrong.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: —and has had for a year—over a year. You have more comprehensive information than is contained in the forensic audit. All you have to do is read it.

Mr. Frank Klees: Okay, Minister, if you know that that's there, then before the end of this day I would ask you to table that information—because you obviously know where it is—that adds up to \$9.4 million in compensation for Chris Mazza with this committee. Will you do that?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: This committee has already asked for a summary of that information to be contained—

Mr. Frank Klees: No. You see, now you're admitting that you don't know, and we know—

Hon. Deborah Matthews: You are absolutely incorrect. This committee has been—

Mr. Frank Klees: Then you'll table it? Just say yes or no. Will you table it?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: You have the information. You will receive it again.

Mr. Frank Klees: Thank you.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: The committee has already asked for a summary chart to be prepared; that work is under way. You have the information, and if you need it again, we'll get it to you again.

Mr. Frank Klees: I want that information from the information that was tabled, according to you, with this committee prior to receiving the forensic report. So thank you for that. We'll look for that before the end of the day.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Will you undertake to read it this time?

Mr. Frank Klees: I have read it, Minister. You don't have to insult me.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Well, if you had read it, you would know it's there.

Mr. Frank Klees: I'm not the one who has failed in my oversight responsibilities. You're the one who has done that. The record is very clear on that. We'll look forward to getting that information that you say was in the records.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Let me just ask you one question. If, in fact, you are convinced—

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): We will move on to the NDP, then. Ms. Gélinas, you have up to 25 minutes.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Thank you. I will be splitting my time.

Thank you for coming this morning, Minister. I want to take you back to December 2011. We all read with horror the stories in the Toronto Star that told us the

salary that Mazza had been paid. I understand that you met with the board of Ornge shortly thereafter, and they were able to confirm to you that Mr. Mazza, for one year, had received close to \$1.4 million.

0920

Hon. Deborah Matthews: It was actually in reverse order, but yes.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Okay. Tell me the right order, then.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: The right order was that there were questions raised about compensation to Dr. Mazza. The Auditor General was having difficulty getting information from Ornge, so I called in the chair of the board. I called in Dr. Mazza; he did not come. I called in senior personnel at Ornge and demanded that they cooperate with the Auditor General, that they provide information, including compensation paid to Dr. Mazza. Shortly after that meeting, they provided that information: one year's compensation. That was all I needed, to know that there were very serious problems regarding responsibility at Ornge.

When I received that one-year compensation number, that is when the forensic audit was ordered. It was six or seven weeks later that the interim report was received, and it was following that that the OPP were called in to do a very thorough criminal investigation.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Okay. You talked to the board and demanded that information regarding Mazza's salary be shared with you, and it was shared with you. Is it still in the \$1.5-million range? Is this what was shared with you at the time?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: You have all of the information. What has been publicly reported is accurate—

M^{me} France Gélinas: —is what was shared with you.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: This committee has all of that information.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Yes, okay. That information came up to about \$1.4 million at the time. We now know that it is closer to \$2.5 million. But at the time, what was in the paper and what prompted you to act was really that \$1.4 million was completely inappropriate for the head of Ornge to be paid, and that triggered all of the actions.

This information being on the front page of the paper for such a long time—not only did it have an effect on you that you knew you needed to act, but it also had an effect on a lot of people who care about health care, who saw that and who wondered—like, this man needs to be held to account. Things need to happen. But then, as the investigation goes on, more and more questions surface about his pay. The effect that it had on you, Minister—it had the same effect on millions of Ontarians.

My question really is, how come you didn't see fit to share those amounts publicly? People wanted to know. To find this out by dribble at the time, by investigative reporters, when those numbers were quite easy to read—I can read them off the report. It's in a nice, tiny little table for all to see here, that had been done in a report given to you. Why is it that we had to wait until it hit the front page of the paper, rather than coming from you?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: So, I think, two things: I completely agree that Dr. Mazza needs to be held to account. That's why it's very important to me that the criminal investigation be allowed to proceed without any suggestion of political interference. That's very important to me.

This committee has had information about compensation to Dr. Mazza; it was tabled over a year ago, in response to a question from Liz Sandals. This committee actually has had that information for over a year—

M^{me} France Gélinas: It doesn't add up. I can tell you that I did do my homework. I did read the documents. I looked at what has been submitted to us as to how much he was paid, how much his stipend was, how much he got paid through the back door, through the hospital, in all of this. It does not add up to what the forensic audit was able to unearth on this. It doesn't add up.

I can guarantee you that I have done my homework. I have read; I went through all of his OHIP billing sheets. I spent a lot of time looking at his salary, because salary was the trigger, but I'm not a forensic auditor. They were way better than us.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: What I can tell you is that the request from this committee was for all compensation, not just what you'd find on T4s. It included loans, it included stipends, it included expenses, so all of his credit card expenses—all of that information wrapped up. This committee has had all of that information. I can tell you, this committee has more information than the forensic auditor reports in his report.

What you've seen publicly reported I understand to be accurate. You have asked for a summary sheet to be prepared. That is being prepared for you now.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Minister, I just want to confirm a couple of things with you, and I'm sure you would agree. You agree that the salary was the trigger that made you realize there was something wrong at Ornge. You agree?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Yes.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: And you believe in transparency and accountability; that's something you believe in. Would you agree with that?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Absolutely.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: And you would agree that you would want Ontarians to know exactly what the figures are so that Ontarians can be able to look and see that this is the salary, this is the compensation, to hold Dr. Mazza to account but also to hold the government to account. Would you agree with that, that that's something that Ontarians deserve to see?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Yes.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: You know that the OPP gave you permission or said that there would be no problem with disclosing the information held in the report. They told you that, is that correct?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: No, that is not correct. They did not tell me that.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Who did they tell?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: This document was in the ministry, and when the ministry received the audit, the

final report in July 2012, the decision was made, on advice from the internal audit team at the Ministry of Health, that that should be returned and referred to the Ontario Provincial Police. I did not see that report. That was the understanding then and continued until this committee received the final report: that there would be no suggestion of political interference in a criminal investigation.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Sure. I can clarify that: I think the OPP contacted you in May 2013 and advised that it was okay to release the report.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Again, they did not contact me.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Just in general, you were aware that the OPP had indicated that there was no problem in releasing the report in May 2013. Do you agree with that statement?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: What I can tell you is that—

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Just with respect to that statement, though, that the OPP had—

Hon. Deborah Matthews: No. The OPP did not contact me.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Not you, but the OPP had made it clear that there was no problem with releasing the report in May 2013. Are you aware of that, though?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I'm aware—and you've got the transmittal letter, I believe, from Deputy Minister Rafi.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: That's right. I'm reading off that, and that's—

Hon. Deborah Matthews: He makes it very clear what the chain of events was. As far as I'm concerned—

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: So you would agree, though, that the OPP had made it clear that in May 2013, there was no problem in releasing the forensic report.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: As I say, I can speak only to what I know, and what I know—

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: No, no, but do you agree that you've read that statement and you are aware that the OPP said in May 2013 that it's okay to release the report?

M^{me} France Gélinas: It's at the bottom of page 4, just before the graph of all the dates, the letter from the deputy to the Clerk. It goes to say, "Mr. Tait confirmed to the" Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care "that the OPP advised him that at that time"—which is May 2013—"they did not believe that release of the report would have a negative impact on the investigation."

Hon. Deborah Matthews: What I can tell you is what I know, and what I know is that a decision was made that there ought not to be any perception of political interference. That was an understanding that stood until this committee requested that document. When you received it, I received it.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Except that it changed; it changed a year later. In May 2013, the OPP changed their position and said that releasing the report is not going to have an impact on their investigation, so from

May 2013 to now, things have changed, but things did not change for you.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: To make it clear, the OPP made it clear that they were okay with releasing it, and they advised Allen Tait, the director of the FIT, the forensic interim report, indicating that there was no problem in releasing it. If you did not know about that, you can indicate that, but it's pretty clear in this letter that we received that they contacted the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care and confirmed to the ministry that the OPP didn't have a problem with that. Were you aware of that confirmation or not?

0930

Hon. Deborah Matthews: No, I was not.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Okay.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I've been very clear that my highest priority was that Dr. Mazza be held to account for his actions. That meant there had to be an OPP investigation that was free from political interference or the perception of political interference. That is why I did not see the interim report, and I did not see it until this committee requested it and this committee received it. You had Mr. Tait here in front of you last May; I do not believe you requested that report. When you requested that report, you received that report.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Minister, we're not worried about what we as the public accounts—we're not looking to see if public accounts is held up to the standard of what the ministry is supposed to do. The questions we're asking are: Did the ministry do their job? Did you as the minister do your job in terms of oversight and accountability? Whether we asked the questions or not or did the work or not is not actually the subject of what we're here to do, just to let you know. I mean, that's not really our—

M^{me} France Gélinas: You have to realize how bad it looks. I mean, for two years, Ornge is trying to get rebuilt from the ashes that are left behind, trying to do some good, and then when bits of information trickle out like this, that truly you could have prevented all of that, then we see a pattern developing. Like, you could have prevented Ornge from being run into the ground in the first place had you done something with the red flags and the whistle-blowers; you could have prevented Ornge from running themselves into the ground had you looked into his salary when the NDP asked you to look into this. But you didn't, and then Ornge happened.

Now you see that this information becomes available. The OPP says it's now okay to share it. But because the public hears it through the media rather than through you, it again looks like the Ministry of Health is not doing its basic function of oversight of an important agency such as Ornge.

The optics are so bad, when you know that so many people are interested in this issue. The salary that had been put out there was \$1.4 million. You now have a document in front of you that says that in 2011 it was \$2,571,844.72 that he got paid; \$2.5 million is a whole lot more than \$1.4 million. You know, had you been upfront to show, "I am showing oversight. I am the one

who will release that information and share it," we wouldn't be here this morning.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: With respect, all of that information, and in fact far more than the information, if we're talking about compensation—this committee has had that for over a year.

M^{me} France Gélinas: It's not our job to oversee Ornge; it's yours.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Let's be clear: There is an ongoing criminal investigation. Ministry officials, with advice from our internal audit team, made the determination that there ought not be political interference. I concurred with that decision. That was the understanding: that the OPP would be permitted to do their work—

M^{me} France Gélinas: So when the OPP changed their stance and advised the ministry that it is now okay to release that documentation, how come you were not more forthcoming with that kind of information to show that the ministry is on top, to show that the ministry has learned, that it's doing oversight, and that the public, as my colleague says, is allowed to know that Mazza was paid \$2.57 million in 2011, not the \$1.4 million?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Once again, the ministry officials made that determination. So neither I nor my office was informed that the OPP made any statement at all. When this committee requested and received the report, that is when I received the report. But I think it's important to know that the forensic report was shared with a very small number of ministry officials. They went through the forensic audit report. They compared any findings in the forensic audit report with work that had already been done through the performance agreement and—

M^{me} France Gélinas: Just so that you don't lose your train of thought, you said that you were not aware that your ministry—the OPP did contact the government, who contacted your ministry and said, "It's okay now to share the report." Wouldn't you have been curious at this point to read it, and then take your responsibility of oversight and say, "Hey, the number that is out there—it's actually worse"? That would have bolstered your case that you want to hold Mazza to account. When the OPP contacted the government—we have Mr. Tait on record saying that he contacted the Ministry of Health and advised the Ministry of Health that the OPP was okay with sharing the report, the report that has a table in it that showed that \$7.6 million was paid to Mazza. We have the salary, the bonus, the fees, the loan, the OHIP—we have it all in a clear little box here.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Let me repeat: The ministry officials were as determined as I was to ensure that justice be done, that there be a clear OPP investigation, free from political interference. The ministry did receive that forensic audit report later in July. It was returned, unopened. It came back. The ministry officials reviewed the findings of the forensic audit report—

M^{me} France Gélinas: And nobody clued in—

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Let me, please. They compared the findings of the forensic audit with action

already taken at Ornge and determined that no further action needed to be taken as a result of the findings of the forensic audit. That was a valuable piece of information for the OPP.

I think that the principle of allowing that investigation to continue, unimpeded by political interference, was the right principle. It was the right decision. And I think had I not taken that position, you would be asking me: “Why did you interfere with an OPP investigation? Isn’t it important to you that Dr. Chris Mazza be held to account?”

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: I’m just going to ask you a different line of questioning, just to bring us back into focus. Once Ornge hit the headlines in the Toronto Star and in other news agencies, you realized that this was a big deal, that it was something you should put your focus to and your intention to. Do you agree with that?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Yes.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: And knowing that this was something that was quite concerning to the public, to the people of Ontario—this has been labelled a scandal—it was your intention or your concern to make sure that you were as up to date as possible about anything that occurred in Ornge. That was something that you were concerned with. Do you agree?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: What was important to me was two things: First of all, that—

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: But just in general; we can get into the details in a moment. I’ll let you do that. My question, generally speaking, is that of course—

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Would you let me answer your question, please?

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Certainly, but I just want to direct you to what I’m looking for. Was there a concern in your mind, given the fact that this was of big concern to the public and this was in the newspapers and there were allegations that this was a scandal? In your mind as the minister, this was something that you took quite seriously. Do you agree with that general sense? We can get into details—

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Absolutely.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Of course, and I expect you would. Would you not agree then that any correspondences between whether it’s the OPP, whether it’s Ornge or whether it’s anyone—anything that has to do with Ornge—would be something that you would pay attention to, that you would be expected to have some knowledge about?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: No, I do not. What my job was—two issues. One: Get Ornge back on track. Patients are counting on Ornge to deliver high-quality emergency care. That’s why a new leadership team was put in place—a new CEO, a new board, an entirely new organization at Ornge that then got to work undoing the damage that was caused by earlier mismanagement, making the organization stronger. It was absolutely my responsibility to make sure that Ornge was under strong new leadership and to let them do their work.

In addition, referral to the forensic audit team—that was an important step. I wasn’t managing that. The for-

nsic audit team was managing that, as well they should. And then when it progressed from the forensic investigation to an OPP investigation, I absolutely let the OPP do their work. That’s the right and responsible thing for a minister to do.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: My question is not about letting certain people do their job. You have to delegate; that’s important. But throughout this, you would have been keenly aware or keenly interested in what was happening. You should be expected to know what’s going on—maybe not to be doing the forensic audit yourself; I’m not suggesting you should do that, nor am I suggesting that you should be doing the OPP investigation yourself. I’m suggesting, broadly speaking, that you should be expected to know what’s going on with respect to the Ornge investigations, who is investigating it and what the updates are. You would expect to know that as the minister. We would expect you to know that. Do you agree with that statement—to know what’s being investigated, who’s investigating it, to make sure that work is being delegated and to know what the correspondences are between the people about the investigation? Should the public expect the minister to know about that?

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Hon. Deborah Matthews: While the forensic—

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Just focus on the question, though. My question is, would the public expect the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care to know about those things?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: While the forensic audit was under way, I received regular updates on the forensic audit. The moment it was sent to the OPP was the moment I stopped getting updates, because it was in the hands of the police; there was a criminal investigation—

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: I’ll pause you there. Once you know that it’s in the hands of the police, wouldn’t it be very important to know what the police’s concerns are? If the police are no longer concerned, if the police are concerned, if the police are saying that it is sensitive material, or if the police say it’s no longer sensitive material, wouldn’t it make sense for the public to expect the minister to be aware of that, to be aware of the status of the investigation, to know whether or not it’s sensitive or whether it’s no longer sensitive—because if you know that as the minister, then you can make statements or not make statements. Wouldn’t it be fair, in the minds of the public, to expect the minister to know whether or not the information is sensitive or not? Wouldn’t that make sense—

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I think the public would expect the minister to let the OPP do their work—

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: No, that’s not my question, though. In fairness, I’m saying that—

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I did not look for updates from the OPP.

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: But if you care about the investigation and you don’t want to interfere with it, wouldn’t it naturally make sense, then, to know whether or not the

information is sensitive or not? Wouldn't that be something that would make sense to do? If you are concerned about the investigation, wouldn't it make sense to ask the OPP—or if the OPP contacts your ministry and tells you certain information is no longer sensitive, wouldn't it make sense that you should know that so that you can actually make statements or not; you can actually tailor your submissions or tailor what you want to say based on knowing the fact of whether or not the OPP is concerned about sensitivity? Wouldn't that make sense naturally?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I tell you—

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Does that make sense?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: What makes sense—

Mr. Jagmeet Singh: Not what makes sense—what I'm saying to you is, does that make sense? You can talk about anything else you want, and we can do that on another day, but I'm asking you a question: Does what I say to you—

Hon. Deborah Matthews: No, it does not.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I'll give you an example. We now know that the OPP feels that it is okay to share this information. One of the pieces of information that's in the report is that they cheated on the sunshine list. The last time that Mazza's salary was reported on the sunshine list—we now have the forensic audit team telling us that what they reported to the Ministry of Finance and what was published was not accurate; they cheated. For two years, they cheated. The last two years that his salary was on the sunshine list—the salary that we have, according to the forensic audit, is not what is on the public record. That has nothing to do with the rebuilding of Ornge. It has to do with you using the information you have, to say, "Oh, there's a red flag here. If they are cheating on the sunshine list, maybe others are cheating"—because when Ontarians read this in the paper, this is what they think.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I think it's really important to note that the \$2.5 million in compensation you referenced was not just compensation. It included loans, it included a lot of information; right?

M^{me} France Gélinas: Yes.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I think it's also important that some of that information that you—the committee has T4 slips. You can do what you want with that information. I am prohibited from revealing that information, but you have that information—

M^{me} France Gélinas: I'm not talking about 2011. I'm talking about his salary back in 2006 and 2007.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): You have one minute left.

M^{me} France Gélinas: What I'm saying is that, here again, there are opportunities to learn from what happened at Ornge. It has nothing to do with the way we run air ambulance. It now has to do with agencies that have to report on the sunshine list that have cheated. You have this information in the forensic—

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Just to be clear: You have the forensic audit report, so you know that the organiza-

tions that were captured under the sunshine list did report. I think it's also important that you know that now, under the new agreement, all compensation paid through any entities is reported.

M^{me} France Gélinas: What about the thousands of transfer payment agencies that you fund? How do you know that they're not cheating on the sunshine list? What have you learned from this to make sure that there aren't other cheaters and other Ornges out there?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: So I think you would agree, and you have agreed in the past that when I became aware of the issue, I acted swiftly, I acted decisively—

M^{me} France Gélinas: Are there other Ornges out there?

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): We'll move to the government now. Ms. Jaczek, you have 25 minutes.

Ms. Helena Jaczek: Thank you, Minister, for being here with us today. I'll start off, and I think my colleagues will have a few more questions. The reason that you are here today really stems from the fact that you made a decision not to read the final report. Instead of peppering you with leading questions as the opposition has done, I would like you to tell us in your own words, starting back from the beginning when you first heard that the Auditor General was having difficulty obtaining information related to Ornge, what you knew and when, in a chronological fashion. I know that it's difficult because so much has happened since, but if you could put yourself back into where you were at every step of the way leading up to the decision not to read the final report. If you could just recap that for us.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Thank you. I welcome the opportunity to do that.

I heard from the Auditor General that he was having difficulties getting information from Ornge. I had a very unusual conversation with the Auditor General, and he said that he was getting very legalistic responses and he was not getting access to the information that he needed to do his work. Of course, when you don't get information, you're concerned that there's a reason you're not getting information. When I had that conversation with the Auditor General, I called in the senior leadership at Ornge and I said, "You must co-operate with the Auditor General, and I need to know how much money you are paying in compensation to Dr. Mazza," because it was clear that he was no longer on the sunshine list, that there was more compensation being paid to him than was being reported.

I got that information on December 21. The next day, the forensic audit team—not the Auditor General's team, the forensic audit team—was called in and went to work at Ornge. By the middle of February they came back with an interim report, their interim findings—very alarming findings, alarming enough for me to make the determination that this was a job for the OPP. The ministry connected—this matter was referred to the OPP. That was where it belonged, because it was very important to me that we send a very clear signal that this is not acceptable in any way, shape or form.

Prior to that February date when we received the interim report, the board had resigned. Chris Mazza was no longer working there. There was new leadership in place at Ornge. Then I got the interim report. It was referred to the OPP. At that point, the clear responsibility, from my point of view, was to let the OPP do their work. There were important changes that needed to be made at Ornge in order to assure the highest quality of care, responsibility and oversight at Ornge. There was a lot of work happening to get Ornge back on the right track. But in terms of the investigation into what had been going on at Ornge, that was in the hands of the OPP. I wanted that work to be done, free of political interference, and when the report came back, the final report from the forensic investigation team—it went from an audit to an investigation—when the investigation team had their final report, ministry officials made a very deliberate and, in my opinion, correct decision that that should not be read and that that be referred to the OPP. It was returned—unopened, uncopied, unread—to the OPP so that they could do their investigation.

A few months later, in October, Ornge wanted a copy of that report because they had to wrap up their auditing statements and so on. That information was requested. Ornge did get a briefing under high security. There were four copies of the final report sent to the ministry. It was very, very, very tightly controlled. The principle that there not be interference with the OPP investigation stood, so that that report was not shared with my office and it was not shared with me because we didn't want to taint a criminal investigation. Does that—

Ms. Helena Jaczek: Yes, that covers it. I guess just one piece: Were you informed that the final report had arrived in your office?

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Hon. Deborah Matthews: No, I was not.

Ms. Helena Jaczek: You were not even aware that it had?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: No.

Ms. Helena Jaczek: You have now read the final report.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Yes, I have.

Ms. Helena Jaczek: Is there anything, having now read the final report, that you would change, looking back at the actions that you took subsequent to this whole interest in Ornge? Is there anything that you would change, having now read the final report? Would you do anything differently from what you did?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: The final report confirmed that the right decision was made. This clearly was an issue that should have been investigated by the police. The decision to send it to the police was the right decision. I am convinced that the right decision was to send it to the police, based on the interim findings, and not to wait for the final report, because I think you would agree, having read both, that the issues raised in the interim report were fleshed out and expanded upon in the final report. But the core issues were clear in the interim report; that belonged with the OPP.

Ms. Helena Jaczek: Of course, we've concentrated on the OPP investigation and the forensic audit, but many other actions have occurred in relation to Ornge since then within the ministry. I'm thinking of the performance agreement, Bill 50 and Bill 11. Could you just, again, confirm the type of actions that you, as minister, took to ensure that Ornge got back on track?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Absolutely—as I have said, a completely new team, a very highly qualified board of directors, very highly qualified senior management and a clear focus on patient safety. They have taken a number of steps. They report on performance indicators. We have a much stronger performance agreement with them now so that we have a clear line of sight into operations at Ornge.

We have legislation before the House, Bill 11, that I would dearly love to see passed because it takes us to the next level. It would allow us, for example, to appoint a supervisor, like a right that we have with hospitals—not one that I like to exercise very often. But if there is something happening in a hospital that is cause for concern, I can send in a supervisor.

I would like the minister to have that power when it comes to Ornge as well. That is contained in Bill 11 and that is before the House now. It's important to me that that legislation get passed.

We have a patient advocate in place now. The patient advocate's job is to make sure that patients get answers to any questions they might have around the care that they received while with Ornge.

So there is a lot of work under way at Ornge. It is a new chapter; there is no question about it. I think this committee has heard from front-line staff that they see a big difference in the way that Ornge is being managed now.

Ms. Helena Jaczek: Would you personally have contact with board chair Delaney and Dr. McCallum? You've talked about strong oversight. Can you sort of explain to us the various levels that that oversight occurs at?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Yes. I do have regular meetings. My ministry officials have even more contact, but I do meet with Mr. Delaney, I do meet with Dr. McCallum. We do make sure that Ornge is doing what it ought to be doing.

Ms. Helena Jaczek: We know that there's a new oversight branch. In terms of the reporting from that oversight branch, are you confident that that information is passed up the line to the relevant ADM, deputy minister and so on?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Absolutely, and if there are issues that need to be addressed, then I am informed of that.

Ms. Helena Jaczek: You mentioned the change in culture, and we certainly did hear from many individuals that they see a difference in terms of what's happening at Ornge now. Do you have any particular message in terms of what you would like to say to the current staff at Ornge after all these troubles?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I have such respect and admiration for the people at Ornge. They have shared stories with me about how they've been treated in their Ornge uniform. I think it's just very sad and very disappointing that there are people who still want to run Ornge down and run the front-line staff down. I have nothing but the deepest respect and admiration for people who have devoted their lives to saving the lives of others. The front-line staff at Ornge have done only their very, very best under admittedly difficult circumstances under the former leadership. Some people have chosen to taint the reputation of this organization. That is unconscionable to me.

So my message to front-line staff is, on behalf of Ontarians, we are very, very proud of you and we are grateful to you for the work you do because every single day a life is saved, thanks to the work of the people at Ornge.

Ms. Helena Jaczek: We'll reserve our time, Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Very well. We'll move to the opposition then. Mr. Klees, you have 10 minutes.

Mr. Frank Klees: Thank you. So just to reconfirm, Minister, you do not know what the budget is for Ornge for the fiscal year 2013?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I would be more than happy to get you that number to the penny.

Mr. Frank Klees: I find it quite disturbing that you wouldn't know that.

Minister, the briefing note that you read in February referred to a \$275-million bond offering, that we're all familiar with, that was issued in June 2009, and your briefing note showed that that was one of the key issues. Do you recall how much in interest alone had been paid on that bond in just 32 months?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: That number is in my materials. I will get that number for you. I suspect you have it.

Mr. Frank Klees: I have it. I thought you might remember what that is, at least a ballpark. Have you got a ballpark sense of what it was?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I will certainly get you the accurate number.

Mr. Frank Klees: It's \$47-million-plus. Do you recall what the note said about where those funds came from to pay the interest? That was just interest alone over about a three-year period of time. Do you recall what the note said about the source of the funds to pay that interest?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: The vast majority of funding for Ornge came from the Ministry of Health.

Mr. Frank Klees: So it was 100% actually of that interest payment. Do you recall what the annual payments on that bond are?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Let me just get that information for you.

Mr. Frank Klees: But, Minister, you don't have to get it for me. I have it here. I want to know if you know.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Well, if this is a quiz, and you've got the cheat sheet—

Mr. Frank Klees: No, no. No, it's not a quiz. This is—

Hon. Deborah Matthews: —then let me get the cheat sheet too.

Mr. Frank Klees: It's a \$22-million annual payment out of the budget of Ornge. This is not a quiz, Minister. You knew about the \$1 million of salary that was paid to Mazza, but you don't know about a \$22-million annual payment on a bond offering that is part of the budget—

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I actually have that information—

Mr. Frank Klees: Well, no, you obviously—

Hon. Deborah Matthews: You have that information—

Mr. Frank Klees: —didn't have it—

Hon. Deborah Matthews: You know, Mr. Klees, you are—

Mr. Frank Klees: Do you recall the number of years that those payments have to be made under that budget?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: You know what I do recall—

Mr. Frank Klees: No, you don't recall. I'll tell you—

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I do recall that you have made several accusations—

Mr. Frank Klees: —it's 21 years. It's 21 years, and—

Hon. Deborah Matthews: —that impugn the integrity of the people at Ornge—

Mr. Frank Klees: —it amounts to more than a half a billion dollars.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): If we could have one person talking at once, that would be great, please.

Mr. Frank Klees: You don't know, and that's disturbing. What's disturbing is that after two and a half years of hearings over this issue, and after we had the Auditor General's report that wrote scathingly about the lack of oversight on your part and on the part of your ministry over this organization, you are still at arm's length from this. You still don't know some of the most fundamental aspects of this operation. That is what's disturbing to us. You haven't learned anything.

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Hon. Deborah Matthews: Let me tell you what's disturbing to me. When you make allegations in the House—

Mr. Frank Klees: It doesn't matter what's disturbing to you.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: —about the tail rotors of helicopters coming off—

Mr. Frank Klees: You are here to answer questions, and would you please—

Hon. Deborah Matthews: —and then we discovered that your accusations do not apply to the kind of helicopters Ornge flies. Your credibility is shrinking daily, I have to say.

Mr. Frank Klees: Well, I'm happy to let the public determine whose credibility is—

Hon. Deborah Matthews: You talked about a crash—

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): If we could have one person talk at once.

Mr. Frank Klees: Chair, if you would remind the minister that she's here not to pontificate but she's here to answer questions, and the fact that she refuses to answer questions indicates she doesn't know the answers.

If you knew the answers, Minister, you would just simply, straightforwardly answer them. Now, I'm asking something that's very critical to the budget of Ornge, and that is that the payment on that bond offering will amount to more than half a billion dollars, and most of that half billion dollars is to pay for those 10 helicopters, which is about three times what it should cost.

Now, here's my question to you: Who, at the end of the day, is responsible for the bond offering repayment to the bondholders?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I believe that Secretary Wallace has appeared before this committee and answered that question.

Mr. Frank Klees: He did, and so did you. Five months after reading that in fact 100% of the payments for that interest on that bond offering came from the Ministry of Health and knowing full well that the benefits of that bond offering went to pay for the helicopters to deliver Ministry of Health services, you testified here that there is no liability on the part of the government on that bond. Yes, Mr. Wallace testified the same.

I would like to ask our auditor—based on what she knows about that bond offering, about the fact that 100% of the payments have come from the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Health services are delivered—whether or not the Ministry of Health and the government are in fact liable for that bond offering. I'd ask the Auditor General.

Ms. Bonnie Lysyk: I think it goes back to 2007-08. The statements for Ornge ambulance have been consolidated into the province's summary financial statement, so back in 2007-08, there was a look to see who controlled Ornge, and the decision that was made by the Ministry of Finance in consultation with, I think, this office, as well as an external consultant, indicated that Ornge's statements would be consolidated. So, from an accounting perspective, the debt is recorded on the books of the province today.

Mr. Frank Klees: And the fact that the debt is recorded on the books of the province today, is it fair to say that the province ultimately is responsible for repayment of that debt?

Ms. Bonnie Lysyk: I think it goes back to the point of funding. Over 90-some-odd per cent of the funds from the province flowed into Ornge, and the province was responsible for the interest and debt repayment, and as a result of that, from an accounting perspective, the province takes ownership of the debt.

Mr. Frank Klees: Thank you, Auditor.

Minister, the reason I wanted to have that clarified on the record is because even after two and a half years of testimony, we hear from you—and on a straightforward question about whether or not your ministry is respon-

sible for that more than half-a-billion-dollar debt, you even deflect that, and you refer us back to testimony that was inaccurate. I don't know why people are lining up within our civil service to somehow protect or cause a deflection of responsibility. I just don't understand that.

One would have expected that when we find out what this rogue agency has been up to, rather than defend what's going on, rather than continue to deflect—and you, as minister, rather than continue to have to stand up and say, "I don't know," "I don't know what the budget is," "I don't know what our obligations are under the bond issue," rather than simply say, "Look, I'm going to inform myself. That's my responsibility, and the one lesson I've learned as minister over the last two and a half years is that, yes, we have to delegate responsibility to people to do the job, but it's my responsibility as minister to ensure they're doing their job and to hold them accountable"—when I asked the question as to how many times you have met with the chair and how many times you have met with the CEO of Ornge, your new people appointed, you couldn't answer that. I don't understand why you wouldn't have monthly meetings with these people.

I'm going to ask you another question. There was a time when there were monthly reports to cabinet. We tabled the document here. It was entitled Confidential report to cabinet and it laid out all of the incident reports of Ornge. Does cabinet continue to get those monthly reports?

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): You have one minute left.

Mr. Frank Klees: You don't know. Obviously, if cabinet got those reports—

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Let the minister answer.

Mr. Frank Klees: —you would be able to say yes. You don't even know that.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Minister, go ahead.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Ornge reports critical incidents to the ministry. Incidents are also reported, if they involve a death, to the coroner. That work is ongoing.

Mr. Frank Klees: When was the last time you saw that report?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I see a number of reports and I am kept very much up to date on issues related to Ornge, as I am on other parts of the Ministry of Health.

I do have to take exception to a statement you made that impugned the integrity of the entire Ontario public service—

Mr. Frank Klees: I'm happy to make that statement because the evidence is very clear that they were not forthright with this committee when a very straightforward question was asked. The Auditor General has just contradicted their testimony, your testimony, the testimony of Mr. Wallace, the testimony of your deputy. Something is not right here. What you should be doing is exercising oversight responsibilities, not defending the indefensible. That's why we continue to have concerns about what's going on.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: What I can tell you is that I exercised oversight when I replaced the board—

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): We're out of time, so Minister, you can answer—we'll move to the government now. You have 13 minutes, so go ahead.

Mr. Bill Mauro: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Minister, would you like to try to use your time here to answer that before I ask a question?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Thank you. I have exercised strong oversight. As I understand it, you are suggesting that I ought not to have reported to the OPP when I saw the interim report. You think I should have waited for the final report. I will not apologize for referring that interim report to the Ontario Provincial Police. It was the right action to take. It was the right action then, and it would be the right action if I were to take it now.

Mr. Bill Mauro: Minister, as a government member, I just have a bit of an opening comment and then a couple of questions. I think we have about 12 minutes left, Mr. Chair, give or take?

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): That's correct.

Mr. Bill Mauro: I think the issue of agencies is in play here generally. All of us, as government members and opposition members, feel challenged from time to time, especially on the government side. I don't think the public understands that there are somewhere north of 600 agencies in the province of Ontario, and the issue relative to oversight of all of these agencies from multiple ministries and the fact that we don't necessarily operate them on a day-to-day basis is something that the public probably does not understand. But as government members who are held to be responsible for the actions of hundreds of these agencies, it's a challenge for all of us.

I don't think there's any disagreement from anybody that what was going on at Ornge was reprehensible, hence your decision to call in the OPP. The fact that Dr. Mazza is being held to account for what appears to be years of reprehensible activities is fine by all of us, I think it's fair to say. One of the things that I'm amazed by is that the notoriety that has come to Dr. Mazza, while it's justified—he has become the lightning rod for all of it. It would seem to me—and perhaps you could make a comment on this—that his notoriety is justified. But for this web of companies and deceit and activity to have continued for this period of time, it would seem to me that there have got to be a few more people involved than just Dr. Mazza. It would seem to me that there's either profound incompetence, blissful ignorance or just turning the other way when it came to what was going on at Ornge.

Maybe I'll just ask if you want to make a comment on that so we can perhaps provide a bit of scope to what's gone on here.

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Hon. Deborah Matthews: You're absolutely right. There are hundreds of agencies. In addition, we have over 150 hospitals. A lot of organizations do their work, and we have in place oversight.

I can tell you that this issue around Ornge is enormously troubling. As you read in the forensic audit report, the web of companies—the forensic audit team discovered even two more entities as they were doing their audit. Clearly that was a serious problem. We rely heavily on our boards, whether it's our hospital boards or our agency boards, to provide that kind of oversight. In addition, within each ministry there are report-backs, but when a board goes rogue, deliberately creates entities, it appears, so that salaries could be hidden, deliberately creates entities that are there not for the benefit of the public but for the benefit of the people there, that is a very serious problem.

I am very pleased with the new leadership at Ornge. I have absolute confidence. The new board are all there on a volunteer basis. They have nothing to gain from the actions at Ornge, other than the sense of satisfaction that comes with providing an excellent service to the people of Ontario.

Mr. Bill Mauro: You—

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Mr. Mauro, sorry to interrupt. The auditor would like to make a comment, if it's fine.

Mr. Bill Mauro: Using our time?

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): No, I'll pause your time.

Mr. Bill Mauro: All right.

Ms. Bonnie Lysyk: I just wanted to clarify something based on what Mr. Klees had said. I was saying from an accounting perspective what the issue was. So from an accounting perspective, the debt is recorded on the province's statements. I'm not a lawyer, so from a legal perspective, I can't give legal comment on this. The only thing I could say on that front is that if the province didn't want the assets and the assets went back, that could likely happen under that type of debt arrangement. If the province wanted the assets, then they would continue the payment.

My comments were strictly on an accounting basis, and I'm not a lawyer to comment on the legal basis. I don't necessarily think I've contradicted the minister. I'm just adding clarity to the discussion here by making these comments.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Could I just ask, then, are you—Peter Wallace made a statement here in 2012. He said, "From a government of Ontario perspective, with respect, we were assured—we understand factually—that there is adequate insulation from the province's credit." Secretary of cabinet Wallace made that statement. The member from Newmarket–Aurora has claimed that you have contradicted that statement. Have you in fact contradicted that statement?

Ms. Bonnie Lysyk: I have not contradicted. I'm just supplementing it by saying that it would depend on whether the province, I think, wanted to keep the assets or not, but I think it requires a legal opinion as to how the debt was structured because I am speaking to an issue that I was not involved in a few years ago. From an accounting perspective, I'm pretty clear. From a legal

perspective, I would say who wants the assets—if the province wants the assets, they continue paying, but from a legal interpretation of how those assets were sheltered, in the way that the debt was structured, there's a legal opinion that's required there.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Okay. We'll move back to the government: Mr. Mauro.

Mr. Bill Mauro: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Minister, you called in the OPP and you did that—the \$1.3-million number I think it's fair to say was the trigger. Somewhere in that chronology that was the trigger or one of the triggers that prompted you to call in—

Hon. Deborah Matthews: So when I learned how much he made?

Mr. Bill Mauro: Yes.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: As I say, I'm not at liberty to disclose that number, but I think media reports have been accurate.

Mr. Bill Mauro: The reason I just mention it is because today, in their questions, the opposition members on committee spent a fair bit of time—of their 25 minutes each—questioning the difference between the \$1.3 million and whatever it actually is and this \$2.5-million number that's out there now, and the fact that somewhere in this chain of events the OPP communicated back to the ministry that disclosure of that number, according to the OPP, or other information in the report, according to the OPP, was fine if the ministry or the minister would have disclosed that. They spent a fair bit of time on that point. I'm left to guess that they clearly feel that's important, and I think the implication was that somehow the ministry was holding back information.

The reason I opened by saying that at \$1.3 million you'd already called in the OPP, or whatever that number is that you can't disclose—if there's a higher number why in anyone's name would you, as the implication seems to be, want to prevent disclosure of that? The principle that you were standing on, it seems, is that on ministry advice and on your own personal take, I would guess, the OPP are involved; it is now hands off. That's generally a principle that all of us, as government members, are advised: Once there are legal ongoing, you stay hands off. If someone's a crook at \$1.3 million, they're going to be a crook at \$2.5 million, so, quite frankly, I didn't necessarily understand why the opposition was spending so much of their time on that. I'm just asking you—and I have, I think, time for one more question—if you could provide your comments on that. At \$1.3 million, or somewhere in that range, you had already called in the OPP—good move. Of course, at \$2.5 million, the same thing would have happened. It would have just disclosed even further egregious behaviour. So I wonder if you'd want to—

Hon. Deborah Matthews: The chain of events: I learned what the compensation was; I ordered a forensic audit; that forensic audit reported back, and then—but they reported back not on the compensation issue; they

reported back on other goings-on within Ornge. That's what I thought deserved the attention of the OPP.

So you're absolutely right. Is there anything different I would have done, any different actions? No, absolutely not.

In fact, when the ministry officials reviewed the findings of the forensic investigation, they lined it up with what steps had already been taken, and they found there were no more actions that needed to be taken as a result of the forensic investigation. Had there been further actions, they would have briefed me on what those further actions ought to be.

Mr. Bill Mauro: My last question—and I don't know if we'll have time for one more, but in my last one I want to go to—we're spending a lot of time on the financial side. All of us agree there were issues there, and the OPP are dealing with that. I want to talk a bit about the operational side of Ornge and where we are today.

Ornge and air ambulance services are obviously provided throughout the province, but I think as a northerner, many of us certainly feel like we rely on these services perhaps to a greater degree than other areas of the province. So I want you to have a minute to respond to issues related to safety and staffing and where we are today relative to where we may have been three and five years or six years ago, because that's still not even really clear to me. As a northern member, I am very much interested in where we are today, from your perspective, in terms of the safety of the operation of Ornge, in terms of their ability to respond to emergencies, either with fixed-wing or with rotary today or over the course of the last couple of years since the changes have begun at Ornge.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Ornge's budget is \$152 million. That number has been frozen since 2011. I do meet with the chair and the CEO regularly. I think I meet with them next Monday for an update on what's happening at Ornge. I can tell you they are absolutely committed to measuring how well they are doing on metrics that matter to patients.

You're absolutely right when you say that the people in the north look at Ornge as their lifeline. Because of geography in particular, people in the north rely on Ornge. They are very proud of the work that Ornge does. I've spent time with people in the north who have first-hand experience with Ornge, and they have nothing but enormous gratitude for the services that are provided at Ornge.

The senior leadership at Ornge is ensuring that there's appropriate staffing. As you know, there's been an expansion at Thunder Bay so that there's more service available for the people in the northwest. They report on response times. They report on system issues. I have to say that Ornge is now really taking a lead in developing a more integrated critical care response system for the people of Ontario to make it even faster for people who have been critically injured to get to the care they need.

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I think it's important that—most people think of Ornge as responding on-scene, but, in fact, over 90% of Ornge's flights are transfer of patients from one facility to another facility. But those critical incidents, where you need a response quickly, you need to get the patient to the right place as quickly as possible, Ornge is really driving some system change to make that even better for patients.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Ms. Jaczek?

Ms. Helena Jaczek: Thank you, Chair. Mr. Klees, in his opening remarks, referred to some sort of standing orders that this committee has in terms of document release. I'm only aware of a succession of motions to us, the ministry, to release various documents at various times. Would you agree that that's the way you perceive how this committee—

Hon. Deborah Matthews: That has been my understanding, that this committee has made a number of motions—as I say, requested two million documents and received two million documents. Ornge and the ministry take requests from committee very seriously. If you lined up all of the documents, you'd get from here to Montreal with documents supplied to this committee. I think the ministry and Ornge have been very responsive to the requests from this committee.

Ms. Helena Jaczek: So, further to that, you have agreed to table any further information related to Chris Mazza's earnings in a comprehensive format. You alluded earlier that you would be happy to do that—

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Absolutely.

Ms. Helena Jaczek: —so can we again hear that assurance, that in the spirit of openness and transparency, that whatever information you have that is requested by this committee, that the ministry and Ornge will obviously do their very best to provide all that we require?

Hon. Deborah Matthews: I think it's important that there be clarity around that issue, because I think there's—and I understand, when you get as many documents as you've received, it can be onerous to go through them and organize them. So that, I believe, is the request from committee, that there be a summary document that wraps up information requested by this committee with regard to compensation. As you will recall, it was MPP Sandals who actually asked for all the compensation, because, as you were hearing about compensation, it became clear that there were different sources. So the request was for all information—salaries, stipends, expenses, bonuses, loans—everything be provided to committee that has been provided to committee. The work is under way now to consolidate that into one summary.

Ms. Helena Jaczek: Do we have any time left?

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Yes, you have a minute left.

Ms. Helena Jaczek: Okay. So, Minister, I think we were all really horrified to learn of the crash up in Moosonee. Four crew members died. I just wondered if you could talk to us a little bit about your personal reac-

tion when you heard about that, and actions that you took.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: Well, it's obviously, devastating, devastating news. I was able to attend three of the four funerals and the memorial service. I spoke to parents, wives, children of people who had been killed. Any safety issue is taken extremely seriously. The Transportation Safety Board is undertaking an investigation. The people at Ornge were as devastated—I mean, this is a terrible tragedy for that Ornge family. Any steps that need to be taken to further enhance safety are being taken.

Ms. Helena Jaczek: Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Yes. The Clerk will clarify that it's standing order 110(b) that the committee operates under.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. William Short): Yes, so it's not the committee standing orders. We operate under the standing orders of the House, so when there's a document request, or a motion presented in the committee to ask a ministry or an agency to provide documents, it's under standing order 110(b), which states that "Except when the House otherwise orders, each committee shall have power to send for persons, papers and things."

Ms. Helena Jaczek: And that has been complied with.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. William Short): Correct.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: So just to be clear, Mr. Klees was wrong when he said there was a standing order?

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. William Short): No, I think it's just a misinterpretation of two different words. The standing order was used by the House, by the committee, in order to put forward the motion to the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Thank you very much for coming before the committee this morning, Minister, again.

Hon. Deborah Matthews: My pleasure.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Hopefully it's the last time. Thank you very much.

We're recessed until 12:30 this afternoon.

The committee recessed from 1025 to 1236.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Okay. We're in open session to begin with, here. I believe Mr. Klees has a motion he wants to move. Go ahead, Mr. Klees.

Mr. Frank Klees: Yes, I do, Chair. Thank you. This is in follow-up to this morning's appearance before the committee by the Minister of Health, in which I asked her to table the information that she insisted was provided to the committee through the request of information pursuant to MPP Sandals's motion. I would like to make that a formal motion of the committee, just to have it on the record. If I could, I'd like to read that motion into the record.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Please do.

Mr. Frank Klees: I move that the Ministry of Health table the documentation with the committee, before the

end of this day, that the minister has claimed relates to Chris Mazza's income totalling \$9.4 million; and

That evidence be provided that this information was contained in the documents provided to the committee in response to MPP Sandals's motion.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Very well. Any discussion? Mr. Mauro.

Mr. Bill Mauro: Did the minister say anything in terms of the timeliness of the motion? Did she say that she could get the material by the end of the day?

Mr. Frank Klees: She did. She undertook to do that.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Ms. Jaczek.

Ms. Helena Jaczek: I'd just like to say that certainly the minister seemed very confident that this information was readily available and appeared to me to be totally open to providing that information, so from our side, I don't see that we would have any objection.

Mr. Bill Mauro: She said she had already provided it, I thought.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Ms. Gélinas.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I would just add that I'm very much looking forward to seeing how we can get to \$9.4 million. The amounts are inexcusable. From what we have in the forensic audit, at \$7.6 million, it is already inexcusable. If there is more, then I am certainly interested in finding out.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Okay. Any further discussion?

Mr. Bill Mauro: Yes. I'm not familiar with the scope of the OPP investigation. I don't know if maybe anybody is. The \$1.3 million or the \$2.5 million or the \$8 million or the \$9.3 million: Would that be information we'd be likely to see as a result of the OPP investigation that was ordered at the \$1.3-million threshold?

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): I'm not sure that's relevant to the question we're about to vote on. So any further discussion? All in favour? Carried.

So we go in camera to work on—

M^{me} France Gélinas: Just one minute before we go in camera.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Yes, Ms. Gélinas?

M^{me} France Gélinas: I don't think mine will be too controversial. I am absolutely delighted that, for the first time ever, the Legislative Assembly has a woman as an auditor. Unfortunately, the French report still refers to her as a man. I don't know who we tell, but "Bureau du vérificateur général de l'Ontario" is right on the front page. It means that you are a man, and I know for a fact that I'm really proud that you are a woman.

Mr. Frank Klees: Perhaps we need clarification.

Interjections.

M^{me} France Gélinas: I don't think this needs any clarification, so I would please ask that attention be given to this momentous occasion that we finally do have a woman as the Auditor General.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Thank you for raising that point. Now we will go into closed session to do our report writing.

Mr. Klees has one more question.

Mr. Frank Klees: So my question to the Clerk would be, if for some reason the request of this motion has not been complied with by the end of today, what recourse does the committee have to contact the minister and to ensure that this motion is complied with, seeing as we may only have one more day of sitting?

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): And, so far, we have no days—after today, unless the House leaders agree to give us a day to sit, we don't have any time to sit.

We'll pass it on to our Clerk.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. William Short): So two parts to your question. The first answer would be that in the past, this committee has undertaken a number of requests from Ornge, from the ministry, from whoever the case may be, and if the deadline has not been reached, sometimes the person has gotten in touch with you and said, "We'd like an extension because we required more information or more time," and then the committee has made a determination as a whole whether or not this is acceptable to the committee. So that would be up to you as a full committee to decide. If the ministry does not get back to you by the end of the day today and gives a reason or doesn't give a reason, then the committee has to make a decision as to what to do at that point.

To the second part, you would be able to make that decision at your next scheduled meeting, which will be—presuming the House comes back following Family Day, the Wednesday following Family Day would be the next day that this committee would be meeting, because your request that you put in to the House leaders was quite specific, that it would be for report writing, and report writing only, on your interim report number 2.

Mr. Frank Klees: I'm hoping this is just technical, but we're really talking about an important principle here of the minister having claimed that information was delivered, and we're asking for evidence of that. So the possibility is that if the ministry doesn't comply by the end of today, then this committee won't know and won't have available to it any of that information until February 18. Is that correct?

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. William Short): I don't want to try to predict the future, but if the ministry didn't have it at the end of today, maybe they would have it at the end of tomorrow, at which point I would still send it out to the members of the committee. I would do what my office always does. We follow up with someone when there's a document request that's been out there. We get information on when they're going to get it back to us. As soon as we receive the information, it gets distributed to the members of the committee.

I don't want to presume what's going to happen at the other end. If you've asked for it at the end of the day today, at the end of the day today I'll let you know what my office has received.

Mr. Frank Klees: Okay. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Okay. Very good.

M^{me} France Gélinas: Sorry, Chair.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Yes, Ms. Gélinas?

M^{me} France G elinas: I'm not even sure if we deal with this, so you can tell me. But I'm pretty sure I'm supposed to deal with this in open session. I would like the redacted version of the documents that we have received to be made public, so the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care emergency health services branch final report of Investigation of Ornge and Related Entities, dated June 2012. Are those public or do I have to make a motion to make them public?

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): That is something the committee needs to decide, and it was going to be part of our discussion in camera.

M^{me} France G elinas: It was going to be part of our discussion. I will hold and discuss it in camera.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Yes, Mr. Mauro?

Mr. Bill Mauro: Thank you, Chair. So on the motion, though, on the timeline, the reason I asked when we were debating the motion, before we all voted and passed it unanimously—I'm wondering if the Clerk recalls if the minister, in fact, agreed to being able to have the documents by the end of the day today? I know she unequivocally stated that she'd be happy to supply the information. I think she might have said the information was already supplied. I don't remember that part for certain, but I'm just trying to determine if you recall if, in fact, she did say that the information would be here at the end of the day today.

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. William Short): If you want an exact answer on that, we would have to get Hansard, and if you need the answer right now, we would have to recess until—

Mr. Bill Mauro: So you're not sure?

The Clerk of the Committee (Mr. William Short): Not off the top of my head. I don't remember exactly—

Mr. Bill Mauro: Fair enough. No, that's fine. Thank you.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Very good.

Mr. Frank Klees: Can I just ask why we wouldn't be able to have the discussion about this in open session?

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): We normally would have it in closed session because the documents are both confidential at this time—so that we don't inadvertently release something that is confidential that we may not wish to release.

Mr. Frank Klees: Okay.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): And you can do whatever you want in open session after we've had that discussion.

Mr. Frank Klees: Okay.

The Chair (Mr. Norm Miller): Okay. So we're going to go into closed session now.

The committee continued in closed session at 1248.

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