

December 15, 2011

Attention: Mayors/Reeves, Councils, Chief Administrative Officers and Emergency Coordinators

As you know, *The Emergency Measures Act* allows “local authorities” the power to declare a State of Local Emergency (SOLE). During the 2011 Flood, many SOLEs were declared across Manitoba to aid local authorities in their flood fighting efforts.

The powers granted under the SOLE are designed to assist local authorities to rapidly respond to disasters or emergencies and to prevent or limit the loss of life and damage to property or the environment. Typically, a SOLE is in place for only 14 days, but may be extended with the approval of the Minister responsible for Emergency Measures for a further 14 days. A SOLE is not designed to be used as a long term solution, despite some current SOLEs continuing to be extended over many repeated months.

During the 2011 flood, SOLEs served a valuable purpose, allowing local authorities to carry out necessary actions, including maintaining evacuation orders to keep residents from entering areas that would otherwise be hazardous during a potential storm or a high wind event.

However, in the specific case of high levels on Lake Manitoba, Manitoba Emergency Measures Organization (EMO) considers the hazards to be mitigated as the lake freezes. Once the specific powers granted by a SOLE are no longer needed, there is no cause to maintain it. If local authorities do request further extensions after Lake Manitoba freezes, they will be asked to identify the specific hazards, areas of concern and powers required.

All existing funding programs, including the recovery programs in place from Manitoba Agricultural Services Corporation (MASC) and Disaster Financial Assistance (DFA), will be maintained and do not require a SOLE to continue.

Any local authorities that still have security hired to monitor evacuated areas are strongly advised to contact Manitoba EMO and DFA staff to determine the extent of assistance available for these ongoing security costs going forward, based on the DFA program eligibility guidelines at 204-945-3050 or 1-888-267-8298.

On behalf of the Government of Manitoba, I want to thank you for your attention to this matter, and for your admirable efforts throughout this unprecedented year of flooding.

Sincerely,



Chuck Sanderson
Executive Director