

This is in response to **Undertaking No. MWS-78** as outlined on Page No. 5291, Volume 22, of the transcript of the May 11, 2004 proceedings of the Manitoba Clean Environment Commission concerning the proposed Wuskwatim Generation and Transmission Project. The requested undertaking is outlined below:

“Advise position whether Manitoba Hydro is meeting requirements of Missi Falls licence regime on a regular basis”

The Interim Licence for Churchill River Diversion Project specifies that releases from the Missi falls control structure shall not be less than 500 cubic feet per second during the open water period and not less than 1500 cubic feet per second during the ice cover period. The Water Branch, Manitoba Water Stewardship, has reviewed the flow data for the Missi Falls control structure that was provided by Manitoba Hydro. The Water Branch has also reviewed the data from the Water Survey of Canada stream flow gauging station on the Churchill River below Fiddler Lake (some 50 miles downstream of Missi Falls) in order to estimate the ice covered and open water periods for each year.

Data for the period of record from September 1, 1976, when the Churchill River Diversion Project began full operation, to December 31, 2003 were analyzed. There are a total of 9,983 daily flow records available for analysis during this period, of which 4959 would be during the open water period and 5024 during the ice cover period. During the open water period there were 52 incidents of noncompliance, while there were 205 incidents of noncompliance during the ice cover period.

All of the open water incidents, except for one day in 1990, occurred during the summer and fall of 1985. These incidents involved small deviations (less than 10% below the required flow of 500 cubic feet per second). The ice cover incidents began to occur during mid March, normally involving small deviations for a day or two. The more extended ice cover incidents occurred during the transition from ice cover to open water conditions during the spring runoff period (the period of ice cover was determined from the Water Survey of Canada Fiddler Lake gauging station). Ice cover conditions, however, may have been different at Missi Falls.

From the analysis of this data, it would appear that Manitoba Hydro operates the Missi Falls control structure to meet the requirements of the Churchill River Interim Licence on a regular basis (in compliance 97.4% of the time). Most of the noncompliance incidents involve flows during the transition from ice cover to open water conditions (as determined from the Fiddler Lake gauging station). The interim licence does not give any criteria for determining when the ice cover has lifted. It is expected that such criteria would be established during the final licensing process for the Churchill River Diversion project.

The data used in the Water Branch analysis is attached.

