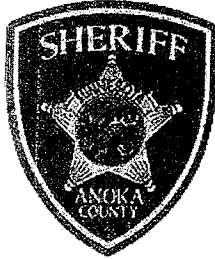




News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Minnesota Sheriffs discuss mutual aid, deployment to North Dakota

November 1, 2016 (MINNEAPOLIS) – Three Minnesota Sheriffs discussed the benefits of Mutual Aid Agreements to local law enforcement in the context of their agencies' recent deployment of personnel and equipment to Morton County, North Dakota under an Emergency Management Assistance Compact between Minnesota and North Dakota.

Hennepin County Sheriff Rich Stanek, Anoka County Sheriff James Stuart and Washington County Sheriff William Hutton were joined by Executive Director of the Minnesota Sheriffs' Association Jim Franklin and Hennepin County Commissioner Randy Johnson during a media availability conducted on Tuesday afternoon at Stanek's office.

"Law enforcement is not taking sides on this issue," Stanek said. "Our decision to help Morton County was operational, not political. We were there to assist maintaining public safety, preserving the peace and protecting the constitutional rights of all parties involved."

The deployment to Morton County, an area of 30,000 residents with only about 20 full-time sworn deputies, was in response to a request for mutual aid by the State of North Dakota to the State of Minnesota through the Emergency Management Assistance Compact. The governor of North Dakota declared an emergency on Aug. 15 as Morton County's emergency services were stretched thin by ongoing protests of up to 10,000 people over the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline. The State of North Dakota submitted an "urgent" request for 50 sworn peace officers on Oct. 18.

"At any point in time, we may all have a need for multi-jurisdictional response," Stuart said. "Local jurisdictions might not have the resources for large scale responses. It is our duty to help where the help is needed."

"We did the right thing here," Hutton added. "When it comes to public safety, we received a call for help, and we responded to it."

The EMAC authorizing the Minnesota Sheriffs to send personnel and equipment to assist Morton County was signed on Oct. 21 by Minnesota Homeland Security Emergency Management Director Joe Kelly, with the Anoka, Hennepin and Washington County deputies leaving for North Dakota on Oct. 23.

All of the panelists spoke at length about how MAAs are an operational reality for law enforcement agencies small and large. No city or county alone can afford to maintain all the personnel and resources needed to respond to all hazards, all emergencies, and all public safety events that might occur 365 days a year. To date, deputies from six states, including Minnesota, took part in law enforcement actions while assisting Morton County.

"This sets the stage for future resources either entering or exiting Minnesota," Franklin said. "This is a critical time to honor the system that is set up. We don't know what the future may hold for MN."

"I was the President of National Association of Counties when EMAC was ratified by Congress," Johnson said. "Local governments cannot possibly afford to fund Police or Sheriff activities when needed at surge capacity for extended periods of time. This system creates the process for assisting with that and ensuring public safety during these critical times."

The sheriffs also spoke about how they have heard and respect the views of the members of their communities, and of elected officials. Stanek has personally met with or spoken to leaders from the Little Earth community, the HCSO Community Engagement Team Native-American resident Advisory Council, Governor Dayton, and state legislators to affirm that the mutual aid rendered to North Dakota was done on the basis of public safety.

"We all did the right things for all the right reasons," Stanek said, "to ensure no sheriff, no deputy, and no state stands alone during a state of emergency"

- HCSO -

Look for more news on the Hennepin County Sheriff's website at <http://www.hennepinsheriff.org>