REGULATIONS, REQUIREMENTS AND THE PRESENT STATUS OF FLOOD EMBANKMENTS IN POLAND

Key words: flood control, flood embankments, survey of technical status

SUMMARY

Detailed requirements for flood embankments are discussed in the first part of this paper. They are included in legal acts: "Water Act", "Building Act", in directives of the Minister of Environment, in recommendations and other publications. Flood embankments, according to the building regulations, should undergo periodical inspections of their technical status ordered by their owner or administrator. In practise, this rule is not obeyed. The frequency and scope of such inspections are described in the second part of this paper.

This paper brings also detailed information on the number and technical status of flood embankments in Poland. Presented data pertain to the length, age and location of potentially dangerous sections, needs for repair, modernisation and maintenance of flood embankments in the country and regional scale. The total length of flood embankments in Poland is nearly 8.5 thousand km. The embankments protect c. 1.1 million ha of lands in river valleys and on polders. They have been exploited for many years. Only 20% of flood embankments have been exploited for less than 20 years while 60% of them are older than 40 years. Long exploitation, a lack of sufficient conservation and recent floods contributed much to worsening of the technical status of flood embankments and increased the needs for their modernisation. Thirty eight percent of the total length of flood embankments require modernisation and the needs rise systematically by several hundred kilometres a year.

Address: doc. dr hab. M. Borys, Instytut Melioracji i Użytków Zielonych, Zakład Inżynierii Wodno-Melioracyjnych, al. Hrabska 3, 05-090 Raszyn; tel. +48 (22) 720-05-31, w. 232, e-mail: m.borys@imuz.edu.pl