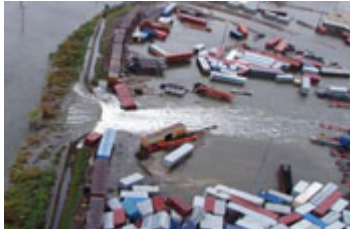




Levee Breaches during Hurricane Katrina

Sept. 18, 2006



Statement regarding Katrina and levees:

The entire U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was deeply saddened and enormously troubled by the suffering of so many after the catastrophic Hurricane Katrina. The Corps of Engineers is accountable for its work and we use our best engineering solutions in our repair and reconstruction efforts to create a stronger, better flood and storm reduction system. Hurricane Katrina was an extremely large and powerful storm, which overwhelmed the design criteria at several points of the flood and storm damage reduction system. There were 46 instances of overtopping and four instances attributed to forces exceeding design criteria.

Question: What percentage of New Orleans experienced flooding from Hurricane Katrina and Rita?

Answer: 80 percent according to the Interagency Performance Evaluation Taskforce.

Question: What caused the breaches at 17 th Street and London Avenue Canals?

Answer: According to the Interagency Performance Evaluation Taskforce (IPET), comprising 150 subject matter experts from government, academia and industry, the breaches at the 17 th Street and London Avenue outfall canals occurred when the I-wall sheet pile deflected, splitting the levees/floodwalls into two parts.

Question: What caused the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal (IHNC) to fail?

Answer: The IPET found that foundation failure caused the northern floodwall breach on the east side of the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal. Overtopping and subsequent scour and erosion solely caused the larger IHNC breach. The American Society of Civil Engineers independently evaluated IPET and the National Research Council provided independent oversight.