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IPET - Katrina Investigation Team Releases Two Additional Final Versions of Report Volumes

Vicksburg, Miss. – The Interagency Performance Evaluation Task Force (IPET) today released the final versions of Volume III – The Hurricane Protection System and Volume V – The Performance – Levees and Floodwalls from its June 1, 2006, draft report on how the hurricane protection structures around New Orleans performed during Hurricane Katrina.

Final versions of IPET Volumes II, IV, VI, VII and IX and an interim version of Volume I were previously released on Mar. 26. All of these final volumes are available on the IPET public Web site, <https://IPET.wes.army.mil>.

An interim version of Volume VIII – Engineering and Operational Risk and Reliability Analysis is scheduled for release soon.

All IPET findings are peer reviewed by an External Review Panel of national experts from the American Society of Civil Engineers and by the National Academies - National Research Council Committee on New Orleans Hurricane Protection Projects. The finalized volumes released today address comments and suggestions made by these two review panels on the IPET draft volumes released in June 2006.

There were no major revisions of IPET technical findings or lessons learned as a result of the review panel comments. The work accomplished in response to the comments from the review panels largely expanded or augmented the earlier analyses. This resulted in more comprehensive data and results, confirmation of initial findings and more effective presentation of results.

A short summary of additional information included in the two final volumes released today is below.

Volume III: The Hurricane Protection System - IPET added additional diagrams, maps and figures to more clearly show subsurface conditions and key design facets.

Volume V: The Performance – Levees and Floodwalls – IPET added additional data that included diagrams, maps and figures; additional soil shear strength and consolidation test data; additional transient seepage analyses that demonstrate that underseepage could not have been the cause of breaches on the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal; additional information on the geology of the New Orleans area and breach site geology and interpretation; and additional information on levee soil erosion. IPET not only re-examined and affirmed its own analyses, but also evaluated the assumptions, methods, and results of other independent studies to ensure that all available factual information was considered and incorporated into the IPET recommendations for future engineering practices.

Once the interim version of Volume VIII: Engineering and Operational Risk and Reliability Analysis is peer reviewed by the two review committees of experts and IPET addresses their comments, final versions of Volumes I (Executive Summary) and VIII will be released later this year to complete and finalize the entire IPET report.

IPET was established by the Chief of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and includes more than 150 nationally recognized experts from more than 50 different organizations (eight federal, state and local government agencies; 25 universities and 23 private sector firms).

IPET was specifically tasked with gathering and analyzing data to answer five basic questions:

The System (*what was the status of the protection system on August 29, 2005*),
The Storm (*what exact forces did Katrina put on the system*),
The Performance (*how did the system respond*),
The Consequences (*understanding the flooding and the losses – both economic and loss of life*), and
The Risk (*what is the risk and reliability of the protection system?*).

More than 4300 documents, including IPET reports, data, and research information are available on the public Web site, <https://IPET.wes.army.mil>.

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