



US Army Corps
of Engineers
Mississippi Valley Division

USACE Bulletin

THE CORPS OF ENGINEERS IS MONITORING 'GUSTAV'.
Please see page 2 to review the Corps' response plan.



Corps Hurricane Response

Task Force Hope Status Report

August 29, 2008

Hurricane Katrina: August 29, 2005

Much has been accomplished. Much more to do.

THREE YEARS AFTER KATRINA

**New Orleans has
the best flood protection
in its history.**

By Susan Spaht

As the Corps readies for Tropical Storm Gustav (see page 2), it is taking time to reflect on the third anniversary of Hurricane Katrina. In the past three years, the Corps of Engineers has accomplished an amazing amount of work on the Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System (HSDRRS). Yet the leaders and employees of the Corps and its partners are acutely aware that there is so much more that remains to be done.

Those who have witnessed the physical structures of the burgeoning HSDRRS – such as the levees and floodwalls, the interim pumps and gates, the new safe rooms and pump stations – notice the magnitude of accomplishment. What they don't see is the behind-the-scenes dedication and hard work that made those structures a reality: the team efforts

of the Corps family, its contractors, partners and stakeholders, as well as private industry.

More than 10,000 Corps employees, representing every stateside division in the organization, have contributed to this important mission over the past three years. (A few of those people are featured on the page 8 of this issue.)

Following is a list of some of the improvements, upgrades and accomplishments that have taken place over the past three years.

Much has been accomplished

- The federal portion of the HSDRRS is now fully funded at \$12.8 billion.
- The Corps is building a comprehensive "system" of levees, floodwalls and other structures to reduce risk from a storm surge and waves associated with an event that has a one per cent chance of occurring each year.



In addition to building the physical structures of the HSDRRS, the Corps of Engineers has applied and practiced new emergency and communications measures in order to be prepared for the next hurricane. Above, Capt. Steve Ogden takes his team through a virtual hurricane practice in the Corps' Emergency Operations Room at the New Orleans District.

Significant hurricane risk reduction measures completed include:

- Floodwalls reinforced at numerous locations.
- I-walls replaced by stronger T-walls at breach sites.
- Floodwalls armored and transition

Continued on page 3

Also in this issue:

- IHNC Floodwalls Strengthened.....Page 4
- 5 New Safe Rooms.....Page 6
- Corps Hosts Job Fair.....Page 7

Corps implements emergency response plans for Tropical Storm Gustav

Corps takes action... is ready

Public safety is the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' number one priority as it prepares for Tropical Storm Gustav. According to National Hurricane Center advisories, southeast Louisiana lies within the area of possible land-fall at this time.

The Corps is following its emergency response plan, alerting its emergency command posts, preparing to station liaisons in all 13 coastal parishes for redundant communications, and preparing to operate the outfall canals and Harvey gates. The Corps has also prepositioned supplies, rocks, sand, bastions and equipment. As a flood-fighting measure, the Corps has placed sand-filled HESCO baskets along an 1800-foot section of the IHNC west floodwall.

"We are prepared. We are monitoring the system and we are already engaged at the local, state, and federal levels," said Jerry Colletti, Assistant Chief of the Corps' Emergency Operations Division.

Teams are ready to be deployed to alternate work locations in Port Allen, La., and Vicksburg, Miss. Another team will remain in New Orleans to operate all Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System structures and navigation structures. The Corps re-



mains in constant contact with state, local and other federal agencies to coordinate all actions.

New Orleans has the best flood protection in its history and the system is stronger than pre-Katrina. Floodwalls have been reinforced in numerous locations, I-walls replaced by stronger T-walls at breach sites, floodwalls armored and transition points

strengthened between floodwalls and levees.

Gates and temporary pumping stations at the three outfall canals have been tested and are working. The pumps are capable of pumping 16,000 cubic feet per second of water out of the canals, and a new computerized system monitors the water level in each canal remotely.

Eighteen pump stations have been repaired and improved, with eight more in construction and four in the design phase. Additionally, six pump stations have been storm proofed.

While a great deal of work is on-going throughout the system, there are still areas that are more vulner-

able than others, such as Lower 9th Ward, Gentilly, St. Bernard, New Orleans East and the West Bank.

Residents should listen to their local government officials and be prepared to evacuate if instructed to do so.



For more information on the HSDRRS, please go to this web site:

www.mvn.usace.army.mil/hps/

Continued from page 1

points strengthened between flood walls and levees.

- Interior pump stations repaired and improved.
- Created Risk and Reliability maps and the first risk modeling for the entire HSDRRS.



Floodwall construction

- Completed Harvey Sector Gate will reduce risk of storm surges for Harvey Canal.
- Temporary pumps and flood gates at the three outfall canals have been completed and have a total pumping capacity of about 16,000 cubic feet per second. New remote monitors have been installed.

Construction Contracts

	Number	Est. Value
Total	350	\$7.3 B
Completed	128	\$723M
In Construction	45	\$1.5B

Pump Stations

- Of the 30 projects being repaired over the area, 18 are complete and 12 are in the design and construction phase.

- Of 26 pump stations being storm-proofed over a 3-parish area, 3 are complete and 24 are in the design or construction phase.

Southeast Louisiana Project (SELA) drainage projects

SELA includes interior drainage improvements in Orleans and Jefferson

Parishes that support the parishes' master drainage plans and generally provide rainfall flood protection.

- The Dwyer Road intake culvert project is the first major SELA project advanced in Orleans Parish since Hurricane Katrina.
- Nine SELA construction contracts have been awarded since Hurricane Katrina, all in Jefferson Parish.
- Two contracts in Orleans Parish are scheduled for award during the next four months.

Borrow (clay for levees)

100+ million cubic yards needed to build the 100-year level of protection for the HSDRRS.

- 50 million cubic yards of material have been tested and approved.
- Approximately 7 million cubic yards of material have been placed.

Pumps and gates at the Orleans Ave. Outfall Canal perform during a recent test.



Much more to do

The magnitude of upcoming construction work on the (HSDRRS) is monumental. The Corps has 45 ongoing construction contracts worth almost \$1.2 billion, and will award another 23 contracts in the next six months worth more than \$600 million.

- Floodwall construction work continues at the Harvey Canal on the West Bank and throughout the HSDRRS.
- Construction on the IHNC surge barrier, the largest design-build project in Corps history, will begin in Fall 2008.
- The Corps has begun the NEPA process on the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway Closure Complex. This enormous project will reduce risk to the Harvey-Algiers area.
- The Seabrook Bridge closure structure is in the conceptual stage. This project will reduce the risk of possible storm surges entering the IHNC from Lake Pontchartrain.



For more Facts & Figures on the HSDRRS, go to this web site: www.mvn.usace.army.mil/

Levees and floodwalls strengthened in the IHNC area



By Randy Cephus

The Corps of Engineers conducts regular investigations of the Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction System structures checking and reevaluating for any irregularities. During a recent investigation, the Corps, in collaboration with the Southeast Louisiana Flood Protection Authority-East, determined the need to do further investigation in two areas along the IHNC. Both areas are located within a half-mile of the Seabrook bridge, where the IHNC meets Lake Pontchartrain.

The first area (1 on map) the Corps has identified is a stretch of floodwall that needs strengthening along the west side of the IHNC. This 1,800-foot stretch of floodwall is seven tenths of a mile north of Inter-

state 10 adjacent to the Gentilly Woods neighborhood.

According to Rick Kendrick, Chief for Program Execution in the Hurricane Protection Office, "In the reevalu-



Workmen unload and assemble HESCO baskets to be placed at the IHNC.

ation of this area, we saw an issue, decided it needed work, determined the best solution, and we are taking care of it."

The initial plan was to drive sheet

piles to provide increased stability. However, Corps officials determined they could not complete that plan during the present hurricane season. Therefore, they initiated an interim measure that will increase the level of safety during this hurricane season.

The interim measure involves placing sand-filled HESCO baskets along the unprotected side of the floodwall along France Road to alleviate pressure on the wall should the area experience a high water event.

The Corps currently has all required HESCO baskets on site and a hired labor team from the Corps' Memphis District has begun installing the baskets.

The work should be completed within the next week.

As part of a longer-term solution for

Continued on page 5

Continued from page 4

this section, the Corps plans to drive sheet piles on the protected side of the floodwall.

“We have already finalized the Plans and Specifications for the sheet piles and put a contract out for bid on August 18,” said Ron Elmer, IHNC Branch Chief.

“The work should begin in about 45 days and should take around 60 days to complete.”

The second area (2 on map) of concern is on the east side of the IHNC. Initial analysis on this stretch of floodwall indicated a potential seepage issue might be present. After further investigation and visual inspections, no actual seepage was observed. Additional testing and analysis confirmed that no corrective work was needed.

However, as an extra safety measure, the Corps will extend the line of relief wells that were placed near

that area during emergency repairs immediately after Hurricane Katrina. Relief wells serve to stabilize the ground by draining excess water from the subsurface sand strata. The Corps will continue to monitor this area.



Assembled HESCO baskets to be used at the IHNC are filled with sand.

The Inner Harbor Navigation Canal (IHNC) Surge Barrier project when complete, will provide 100-year level of protection to communities in the IHNC area as well

as provide a critical piece of the overall HSDRRS. Advanced measures are scheduled for completion in 2009, with permanent protection in place in 2011.

The IHNC surge reduction barrier will be located at the confluence of the Gulf Intra-coastal Waterway (GIWW) and the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet (MRGO). (see IER 11 on map)



Workers place HESCO baskets at the IHNC floodwall. The Corps will con-

tinue to investigate and reevaluate the IHNC area and the system in its entirety using new, more stringent design standards, as well as lessons learned from Hurricane Katrina.

Corps releases IHNC environmental document for public review

(See map on page 4)

The Corps of Engineers has released an environmental document that evaluates the potential impacts of constructing a storm surge barrier between the Industrial Canal and Lake Borgne. The Corps is accepting written comments on the document, called Individual Environmental Report 11 Tier 2 Borgne, through Sept. 18, 2008.

This is the largest design-build civil works project in Corps history.

“The new structure will reduce risk to communities in New Orleans East, Lower Ninth Ward and St. Bernard,” said Maj. Jeremy Chapman, senior project manager of the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal Surge Barrier Protection Project.

The proposed action is to construct approximately two miles of a new floodwall/gated system that extends from the Michoud floodwall north of the GIWW to the levee on the west side of the MRGO. The height of the structure would be approximately 24 ft. to 26 ft. and would include a flood control sector gate (approximately 150 ft. by 16 ft.), a bypass barge gate (approximately 150 ft. by 16 ft.), and a sector gate on Bayou Bienvenue (approximately 56 ft. x 8 ft.).

Details of the proposed action are available by request or can be downloaded at:

www.nolaenvironmental.gov.



Collaboration, Cooperation and Teamwork

Corps turns over 5 new Safe Rooms for Jefferson Parish

On July 31, the Corps of Engineers and its partner, Jefferson Parish, hosted a press conference and open house to mark the completion of five Safe Rooms for Jefferson Parish. The ceremony took place at the Hero Pump Station and Safe Room on Peters Road in Harvey, La.

Participating in the event were Karen Durham-Aguilera, Director of the Corps' Task Force Hope; Col. Jeff Bedey, Commander of the Corps' Hurricane Protection Office; and Aaron Broussard, President of Jefferson Parish, as well as other public officials.

"We are pleased to turn over these new Safe Rooms to the citizens of Jefferson Parish," said Karen Durham-Aguilera. "This event highlights the ongoing partnership of the federal, state and local governments working in collaboration to improve safety for the public."

Jefferson Parish previously had eight Safe Rooms, and now has a total of 13. The five new Safe Rooms for Jefferson Parish were 100% federally-funded at a cost of \$18.2 million.

Adjacent to a pump station, a Safe Room is an operational structure to which pump station operators can take refuge when storm winds surpass 74 mph. Pump station operators can remotely control the required functions of the pumps from their Safe Rooms. All Safe Rooms

are capable of withstanding 250 mph winds.

Safe Rooms are, on average, 25 feet above the ground with support pilings that extend nearly 70 feet below the ground. Each new Safe Room can accommodate up to 12 people with food, water, AC, beds, life rafts, medical equipment, communications equipment and back-up electrical generators with six to eight days of fuel supply.

"In addition to protecting lives and property and improving drainage," said Col. Bedey, "these new Safe Rooms and pump stations can potentially increase property values in this area."

Citing the constant communication and cooperation with parish officials, the state and the community, Col. Bedey added, "These new Safe Rooms are a testament to what can be accomplished when we work together as a team."

In addition to the Hero Pump Station, the new Safe Rooms are located at Estelle, Planters, Westwego and Lake Cataouatche Pump Stations.



Hero Safe Room



Planters Pump Station and Safe Room



Westwego Safe Room



900 people attend Corps' Job Fair

"They want to be part of this great team..."



Cheryl Weber, right, Chief of Personnel, helps a job-seeker fill out an application.

On August 9, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in New Orleans hosted a Job Fair.

The purpose of the event was to advertise and explain a wide variety of employment opportunities with the Corps. Over 900 job seekers, resumes in hand, showed up for the affair.

The applicants came from New Orleans and neighboring parishes, and from as far away as Birmingham, Ala.

"We were very pleased with the turnout for our Job Fair," said Maj. Mark Jerigan, Deputy District Commander of the New Orleans District. "It shows that people are not only interested in the work we are doing, but that they also want to be part of this great team."

Corps staff members set up seven different stations, representing differ-

ent occupational areas, that applicants could visit. The stations represented the areas of: environmental/biological, engineering, technician, construction inspector, clerical/administrative support, budget/program analyst, accountant, realty specialist/appraiser, and contract specialist. Corps managers manned

each station and fielded questions about their discipline from the job seekers.

The New Orleans District is presently the

only Corps district with Direct Hire Authority for engineers. During the Job Fair, five offers were extended to engineers, two of whom are in the geotechnical field.

Other departments also received applications and many job vacancies are expected to be filled in the near future.



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The *Status Report Newsletter* supports the information program for Task Force Hope and its stakeholders.

It also serves as the primary tool for accurately transmitting the Corps' hurricane recovery work to stakeholders.

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<http://www.mvn.usace.army.mil/hps>

Comments and questions may be sent to the Status Report Newsletter editor at:
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Status Report Newsletter

Task Force Hope
Strategic Communications
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Faces of Hope

Three years of recovery, three years of service



Since Aug. 29, 2005, more than 10,000 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers employees from 41 districts have served the recovery and reconstruction missions in Louisiana and Mississippi alongside their colleagues from the New Orleans District. They have been joined by hundreds of contractors, rehired annuitants and foreign nationals as the Corps, together with its federal, state and local partners, drives on to provide 100-year protection to the greater New Orleans area in 2011.



By Nancy Allen