



Corps of Engineers releases its "12 Actions for Change"

Washington (August 24, 2006) – The commander of the United States Army Corps of Engineers has signed and released the "12 Actions for Change," a set of actions that the Corps will focus on to transform its priorities, processes and planning.

"Hurricane Katrina's disastrous impact upon the Gulf Coast and the New Orleans region served as a very sobering wakeup call for the Corps and the nation in how we have prepared for natural disasters and where we have accepted risk," said Lt. Gen. Carl A. Strock, commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

"Exhaustive analysis by the Corps and other investigative teams into the performance of the Greater New Orleans Hurricane Protection System during hurricanes Katrina and Rita pointed to the need to transform the way the Corps serves the nation and its Armed Forces across all our mission areas.

"These 12 actions were developed from that analysis and from other internal and external examinations of the Corps in the recent past. We will use the 12 Actions to guide our ongoing and future work, and to ensure we have an organization that is adaptable, flexible and responsive to the needs of the nation," said Strock.

The "12 Actions for Change" fall within three overarching themes: Effectively implement a comprehensive systems approach; communication; and reliable public service professionalism. The actions are grouped as follows:



"National and global missions, and the Corps' response following hurricanes Katrina and Rita, have demonstrated the need to be prepared and ready broadly integrate our many mission capabilities..."
- LTG Carl A. Strock

USACE photo by Lane Lefort

Effectively Implement a Comprehensive Systems Approach:

Comprehensively design, construct, maintain and update engineered systems to be more robust, with full stakeholder participation.

1. Employ integrated, comprehensive and systems-based approach

2. Employ risk-based concepts in planning, design, construction, operations and major maintenance
 3. Continuously reassess and update policy for program development, planning guidance, design and construction standards
 4. Employ dynamic independent review
 5. Employ adaptive planning and engineering systems
 6. Focus on sustainability
 7. Review and inspect completed works
 8. Assess and modify organizational behavior
- Communication:** Effective and transparent communication with the public, and within the Corps, about risk and reliability.
9. Effectively communicate risk
 10. Establish public involvement risk reduction strategies

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Pump Capacity Report:

17th Street Canal.....1,260 cfs
 London Ave. Canal....1,400 cfs
 Orleans Ave. Canal....testing of pumps is underway

As of August 31, 2006

Note: The Status Report Newsletter will give weekly reports on the pump capacity of the three outfall canals under construction. For more details, please visit this website:

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

12 Points, continued from page 1

Reliable Public Service Professionalism: Improve the state of the art and the Corps' dedication to a competent, capable workforce on a continuing basis. Make the commitment to being a "learning organization" a reality.

11. Manage and enhance technical expertise and professionalism

12. Invest in research

Among the investigative teams that contributed to the development of the "12 Actions for Change" through their analysis in the aftermath of hurricanes Katrina and Rita are the Corps-commissioned Interagency Performance Evaluation Task Force, the American Society of Engineers, the National Science Foundation-sponsored team led by UC-Berkeley and Louisiana State University.

"National and global missions, and the Corps' response following hurricanes Katrina and Rita, have demonstrated the need to be prepared and ready to broadly integrate our many mission capabilities. The "12 Actions for Change" provide a common organizational framework to help us meet that objective," said Stroock.

For additional information about the United States Army Corps of Engineers, please visit www.usace.army.mil.

Corps of Engineers' Media Center now open



The New Orleans Corps of Engineers Media Center was officially opened with a ribbon-cutting ceremony on August 28. Doing the honors are, from left, Rick Kendrick, Deputy Director of Hurricane Protection Office; BG Robert Crear, Commander of the Mississippi Valley Division Corps of Engineers; LTC Murray Starkel, Deputy Commander of the New Orleans District Corps of Engineers; and Greg Breerwood, Deputy for Planning, Programs and Project Management. The new Media Center is located in the Embassy Suites Lofts on So. Peters Street between Julia and Girod streets. (USACE photo by Rene Poche)

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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 hurricane recovery work to stakeholders. This is an online publication and open to public distribution. This issue and past issues can be found at: www.mvn.usace.army.mil/hps

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Faces of Hope

By Susan Spaht

What would bring a Corps of Engineers employee from the coldest post to one of the hottest posts in the U.S.? "I love to travel," said Maryam Pinette.

Pinette is an Administrative Assistant with Task Force Hope at the New Orleans District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. She is a young woman barely out of her 20s, but she has already traveled more than most people do in a lifetime.

"I've lived in Washington, Oregon, Arizona, Hawaii, Alaska, Germany and now Louisiana," she said flashing her winning smile. "I have this adventurous spirit; I want to see the world and experience life."

Her U.S. Army employment started with her marriage to a military man. Her new husband was stationed at Fort Lewis, outside Seattle, when he got orders for Hanau, Germany. "I got a job on the base at Hanau as a supply technician," Pinette said, "that's how I got my foot in the door working for the Army."

A few years later the young couple was transferred to Arizona and Pinette continued working for the Army, this time as an Acquisition Clerk. Their divorce may have been the impetus for her next move.

"I always wanted to go to Alaska," she said, "and I applied for a job with the Corps of Engineers in Anchorage." No one was more surprised, or pleased, than Pinette when she got the job.

"I packed up everything I owned and drove 4,000 miles from Arizona to Alaska." Winter was setting in when she reached Prince Rupert, Canada.

"I caught the last ferry across the Gulf of Alaska before they closed for winter,"

Corps employee enjoys work and travel that Army life offers



Maryam Pinette prepares for a meeting in the board room of the Task Force Hope offices. (USACE photo by Susan Spaht)

she said. "I think it was a godsend because everything worked out so perfectly.

"I fell in love with Alaska," Pinette said, "and I love my job with the Corps. The people I work with are amazing, and so nice to me." Alaska held many new surprises for her too.

"I saw the Northern Lights, and I saw a wolf, and a black bear, and I almost backed up into a pair of moose in my driveway!" Everything about Alaska delighted her....even the snow.

But wanderlust was about to take over again. "I noticed that people in the Corps were volunteering to go to Florida after Hurricane Ivan hit. I thought it would be another adventure, but I also had this desire to help," she said.

The next big hurricane to hit the U.S. was Katrina, quickly followed by Rita. Pinette volunteered to join the Corps of Engineers' relief effort on the Gulf Coast and was sent to Beaumont, Texas.

"I was assigned to the debris mission


and I was put in charge of monitoring safety regulations," she said, "and I loved it." Pinette returned to Alaska and asked for another hurricane assignment. This time she was sent to Biloxi, Mississippi.

"I couldn't believe the devastation there," she remembered, "everything was gone." After her 30-day mission, she returned to Alaska and, yes, volunteered again.

"I fully meant to stay in Alaska, but I saw this administrative job was being offered in New Orleans. I thought it would be such a wonderful opportunity to help with the Corps efforts there - and to learn something new," she explained.

"And my job here is much better than I ever expected; I have more responsibility, and I feel like I am really contributing something."

Pinette's 120-day tour in Louisiana is half over; so what is her next move?

"It's really hot here in New Orleans," she said, "but I am enjoying my job and the people I work with so much that I don't even have time to think about moving on." 

Media Event at London Ave. Canal demonstrates gate closure



COL Jeffrey Bedey, Commander of the Hurricane Protection Office, explains the work that is on-going at the London Ave. Canal.



LTC Murray Starkel (right) explains the gate closure procedure to a member of the foreign press at the London Ave. Canal gate closure demonstration.



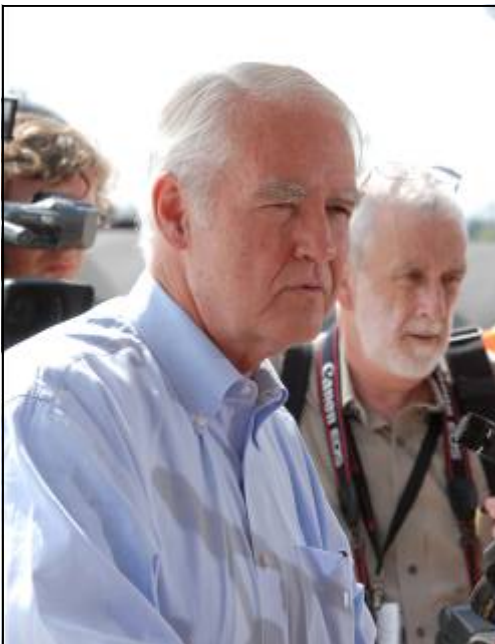
USACE photos by Lane Lefort

Gov. Kathleen Blanco addresses the crowd at the London Ave. Canal gate closure demonstration.

Media Event at London Ave. Canal demonstrates gate closure



Dan Hitchings, Director of Task Force Hope, addresses VIPs and members of the press on the Corps of Engineers' plans for the London Ave. Canal gates and pumps, and the status of the Hurricane Protection System.



Chairman Donald Powell, President Bush's Coordinator of Gulf Coast Rebuilding, takes the podium at the demonstration.

Corps technicians use a crane to lower one of the closure gates at the London Ave. Canal demonstration. Lowering nine of the 11-gate system took less than 10 minutes, as each gate smoothly slipped into its place.



USACE photos by Lane Lefort

New Orleans District Corps of Engineers employees mark First Anniversary of Hurricane Katrina with Commemoration Ceremony on August 25.



On Friday, August 25, New Orleans District Corps of Engineers employees attended a remembrance service at the main entrance of district headquarters.

(USACE Photo by Rene Poche)



Abner Phillips (left), motor vehicle operator, shares a moment after the ceremonies with COL Richard Wagenaar (center), Commander, New Orleans District, and LTG Carl Strock (right), Commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

(USACE photo by Rene Poche)



COL Sherrill Munn, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Chaplain, gave the benediction. His remarks were especially meaningful for Corps employees who lost loved ones and homes to Hurricane Katrina.

(USACE photo by Lane Lefort)



The U.S. Navy Band performed the National Anthem and the Army Song for the Commemoration Ceremony. The crowd of some 200 Corps employees was invited to sing along. (USACE photo by Lane Lefort)