



Corps Hurricane Response

Task Force Hope Status Report

June 4, 2006

June 1, 2006: An Important Day for New Orleans

June 1 was the beginning of the 2006 Hurricane Season. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers marked the day with a special press conference to update the public on the restoration progress of the hurricane protection system made to date, future construction plans, and the release of a new 6,615-page Interagency Performance Evaluation Task Force (IPET), headed by Dr. Lewis "Ed" Link.

Link discussed the release of the draft IPET report. The final report from the 150-member task force is due in September 2006. The IPET was formed to determine why elements of the hurricane protection failed.

Lt. Gen. Carl D. Strock, Commander and Chief of Engineers for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and Link had prepared statements. They also answered questions after their presentations. Other USACE senior leaders were present, but did not speak. Some were individually interviewed after the press conference.

The IPET report addresses five major questions:

- What were the characteristics of the hurricane protection system before Katrina and how did they compare to the system's original design?
- What were the storm forces — waves and storm surge — generated by Katrina?

- How and why did the floodwalls, levees, pumping stations and drainage canals, individually and acting as an integrated system, perform in response to Katrina?
- What have been the societal consequences of Katrina-related damage?
- What was the quantifiable risk to the New Orleans area before Katrina and what will it be after the repairs are completed?

The report pointed to shortcomings in out-dated levee design, and also cited the unprecedented extremely severe storm hurricane conditions and resulting levee failures. Weak soil, over-topping, and unarmored key locations on levees were contributors to their failure.

Strock said at the press conference that the Corps accepts ultimate responsibility for what he said was the first project failure in the Corps 230-year history.

"This has been sobering for us, because it is the first time the Corps has had to stand up and say we had a catastrophic failure at one of our projects," he said. That issue, Strock said, had "weighed heavily on our minds."

Strock also said the agency is focusing its best people and level of attention to rebuilding the hurricane protection system for New Orleans.

"We're not just wringing our hands; but we are rolling up our sleeves and going to work," he said.

Percent of Pre-Katrina Protection Restored

99%
completed

For information about the Corps'

Hurricane Katrina work:

www.mvd.usace.army.mil/hurricane

Strock Says Corps Accountable To American People

LTG Gen. Carl Strock, Commanding General and Chief of Engineers, had a strong message for reporters at his June 1 press conference in New Orleans. Strock explained to reporters that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is responsible for the projects they build and manage.

“We (the Corps) are accountable to the American people. We continually strive to improve, and to ensure that all projects are accomplished with the highest standards,” Gen. Strock said.

There is concern within the Corps that the organization’s reputation has been damaged by the failure of the Hurricane Protection System in New Orleans. He acknowledged that there are people questioning the capability of the U.S. Army Corps of

Engineers.

“For those who doubt us, words alone will not restore trust in the Corps. We are mindful that the public’s trust is gained when we follow through with our actions,” Strock said. “As we continue with our vitally important mission here, we will fully and continually inform the nation of our progress by sharing data and information in an open, transparent way.”

Gen. Strock also committed to engaging the media in an effort to keep the American people informed, and added that the Corps will reach out to the public through open meetings to explain its hurricane protection work.

He acknowledged that the Corps’ work in New Orleans and the Gulf



LTG Carl Strock, USACE Commander

Coast is both challenging and crucial. “We owe the people of the Gulf Coast and the nation our best effort,” Gen. Strock said, “and we are deeply committed to fulfilling our important responsibilities.”

Points of Contact for Information

Topic	Phone	Organization
Overall information about work being performed by the Corps of Engineers in the New Orleans District	504-862-2201	New Orleans District Public Affairs
Levee construction being performed to restore the hurricane and flood protection system to pre-Katrina condition by June 1, 2006	504-862-2076	Task Force Guardian Public Affairs
Debris Removal in Louisiana	225-218-9325	Louisiana Recovery Field Office
Debris Removal in Mississippi	601-631-5065	Mississippi Recovery Field Office
Overall Task Force Hope Information	504-862-1836	Task Force Hope Public Affairs

The **Status Report Newsletter** supports the information program for Task Force Hope and its stakeholders. It also serves as one of the Task Force Hope’s primary communication tools for accurately transmitting the work of Task Force Hope, Task Force Guardian and the Recovery Field Offices in Louisiana and Mississippi to the Gulf Coast community and its citizens. This is an online publication and open to public distribution. This issue and past issues can be found at: www.mvd.usace.army.mil/hurricane. Comments and questions may be sent to the Status Report Newsletter editor at: b2fwdpao@usace.army.mil.

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June 1 Open Houses Show Off Rebuilding Progress

Corps hosts public to three open houses



The star marks the spot for the Jourdan Avenue Open House site, at the intersection of N. Prieur St. Because of the importance of this site to the Lower 9th Ward, NBC Nightly News anchor Brian Williams broadcast live from this location June 1.

The Open House tent for the 17th Street Canal project offered visitors a good view.



The Orleans Avenue Canal Open House was at the intersection of Marconi Drive and Thrasher Street.

Hurricane projects, funding set through 2010

Projected funding for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers work on the New Orleans Hurricane Protection System will continue through 2010.

The Corps' Task Force Guardian completed its mission of bringing the protection system to pre-Katrina level protection by June 1, with a few exceptions. Cost of construction has topped \$800 million. This included the repair and restoration of 169 miles of levees and floodwalls.

The Corps is setting up a new organization to carry out future restoration, completion and improvement of the hurricane protection system.

Projects remaining to be completed include a 400-foot section of a levee being rebuilt in Plaquemines Parish. The weight of the levee, combined with low soil strength, caused it to sink three to four feet. Repairs should be complete in about three to six weeks.

Other projects still to be completed include installing interim gated closure structures and temporary pumps at the Lake Pontchartrain end of the 17th Street, Orleans Avenue and London Avenue outfall canals to prevent storm surge from entering the canals during a hurricane. Gates and pumps at 17th Street and London Avenue

should be completed in about a month. There is a backup plan to protect the canals from storm surge.

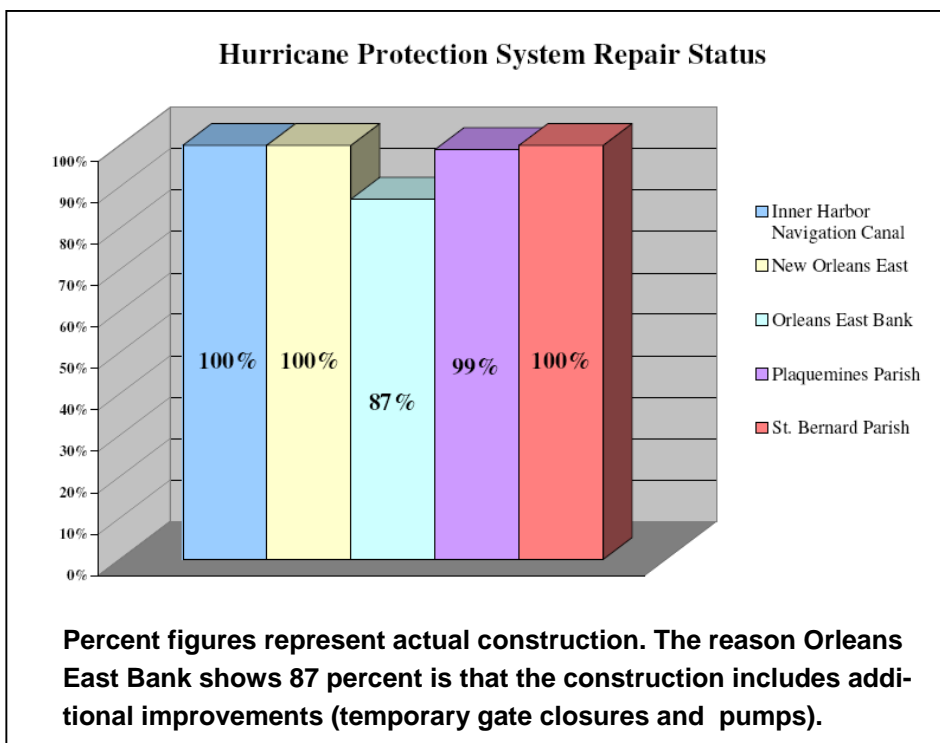
Because it prevents storm surge, this added canal closure feature of the storm protection system will provide a higher level of protection than what existed prior to Aug. 2005.

The next objective is to rebuild levees and structures by Sept. 2007. This work has been funded in the amount of \$1.3 billion.

The last objective is to engineer, construct and improve storm and flood protection infrastructure to a 100-year protection level by 2010.

This work will include:

- completing permanent-gated structures and pumping stations on the outfall canals;
- installation of two navigable floodgates on the Inner Harbor Navigation Canal;
- armoring key portions of the levees;
- restoring portions of the southeast Louisiana wetlands, marshes and natural ridges;



- storm proofing interior drainage pump stations in Jefferson and Orleans Parishes;
- raising levees to a height which provides the 100-year flood level;
- reinforcing or replacing more than 36 miles of floodwalls; and beginning a program to restore the area's lost wetlands.

This work is subject to funding by Congress. The projected cost of this work will be \$3.7 billion. The total projected cost of the Corps of Engineers' work since Hurricane Katrina is \$5.8 billion.