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## **IPET - Katrina Investigation Team Releases Its Final Volumes and Non-Technical Risk Paper**

**Vicksburg, Miss.** – The Interagency Performance Evaluation Task Force (IPET) is releasing the final versions of Volume I – “Executive Summary and Overview” and Volume VIII – “Engineering and Operational Risk and Reliability Analysis” on June 25. These are the last two finalized volumes of the IPET nine volume report, “Performance Evaluation of the New Orleans and Southeast Louisiana Hurricane Protection System.” The vast majority of the information in these final volumes has been previously provided in the draft versions of the IPET reports and through the Corps of Engineers and IPET Web sites. The final results of the uncertainty analysis documented in Volume VIII are new information.

IPET is also releasing a supplemental report that provides a non-technical overview of the risk assessment process, “A General Description of Vulnerability to Flooding and Risk for New Orleans and Vicinity: Past, Present and Future.” This simplified risk paper addresses a specific request made by the National Research Council in their final IPET review report released on April 24, 2009. This supplemental IPET report includes the pre-Katrina and 2007 systems that IPET studied, as well as the risk assessment of the 100-year Hurricane and Storm Damage Risk Reduction system scheduled for completion in 2011.

These final volumes and the risk paper, along with all of the other IPET Volumes, are available on the IPET public Web site, <https://IPET.wes.army.mil>.

The release of these final volumes completes the IPET’s mission and culminates the task force’s existence.

IPET upgraded the technical, engineering and scientific aspects of Volume VIII, which is basically the “textbook” version of the risk analysis. This final volume also includes an uncertainty analysis of the risk process. Map graphics for the New Orleans region showing the risk assessment results detailed in Volume VIII have previously been released.

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Volume I – “Executive Summary and Overview,” includes a summary of the detailed description of the risk analysis documented in Volume VIII.

“We hope the information included in the final risk volume will provide the groundwork for future risk studies,” said Dr. Ed Link, the director of IPET. “The ultimate goal of this work is to better inform both the public and public officials to help them make the best decisions, now, and in the future.”

All IPET findings were peer reviewed by two panels, the External Review Panel from the American Society of Civil Engineers and the Committee on New Orleans Hurricane Protection Projects from the National Academy of Engineering - National Research Council. These review panels included some of the nation’s top engineers and scientists. They helped guide and improve the IPET’s work by identifying effective approaches, and they helped validate the IPET findings and results.

“Throughout the IPET study, these peer review panels provided strategic comments that greatly enhanced the quality and future use of the IPET results and reports,” said Link. “We all owe these two organizations and their panels of experts a great debt of gratitude.”

IPET was established by the commander of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on Oct. 10, 2005, and included 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).

“I am extremely proud of the accomplishments and hard work of all members of the IPET team throughout our effort. We need to remember, though, that this analysis is in many ways just a good beginning; much more needs to be done.” said Link.

According to Link, many of the initial IPET lessons learned are “in the ground” as they were used in the repairs to levees and floodwalls around the New Orleans area following Katrina. Follow up IPET findings and improvements have aided in the decisions and designs for on-going and future risk reduction projects in southeast Louisiana.

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The National Research Council's final review report on IPET, released on April 24, 2009, cited many achievements that can be attributed to IPET, including: "...important advances in characterizing and understanding the nature of Gulf hurricanes, and the storm surge response along the northern Gulf coast and the greater New Orleans area hurricane protection system. IPET studies also have made significant contributions to simulating hurricane impacts....The modeling procedures developed by IPET to help visualize and manage risk in communities impacted by Hurricane Katrina have improved knowledge of regional vulnerability to hurricanes and storm surge."

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 forces did Katrina put on the system*),  
The Performance (*how did the system respond*),  
The Consequences (*flooding and losses – both economic and loss of life*), and  
The Risk (*risk and reliability of the system – pre-Katrina and current ((June 2007))*).

More than 4,300 documents, including IPET reports, data, and research information are available on the IPET public Web site, <https://IPET.wes.army.mil>.

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