

Annex A

Southeastern Louisiana Catastrophic Hurricane Plan

1. Catastrophic Planning in Louisiana

Louisiana is highly susceptible to hurricanes because the topography is generally low-lying river delta and some of the most densely populated areas are actually below sea level. Land subsidence and channels in the Mississippi River contribute to the loss of several square miles of wetlands and barrier islands each year, causing severe storm surges and flooding every hurricane season. One mile of wetlands can reduce storm surges by one foot, as well as reducing wind energy but at the current rate of loss, the wetlands buffer is estimated to be depleted within forty years.

Approximately 1,733,000 people live in the thirteen southeastern parishes of Louisiana that would be most threatened by a hurricane. This includes the City of New Orleans. The affected parishes and their populations are:

Ascension	77,000	St. Charles	48,000
Assumption	23,000	St. James	21,000
Jefferson	455,000	St. John	43,000
Lafourche	90,000	St. Tammany	191,000
Orleans	485,000	Tangipahoa	101,000
Plaquemines	27,000	Terrebonne	105,000
St. Bernard	67,000		

The most dangerous hurricane would be a slow-moving Category 3, 4, or 5 hurricane that makes landfall at the mouth of the Mississippi River, moves northwest of and parallel to the river, and then crosses New Orleans and Lake Pontchartrain. Various hurricane studies suggest that a slow-moving Category 3 or almost any Category 4 or 5 hurricane approaching Southeast Louisiana from the south could severely damage the heavily populated Southeast portion of the state creating a catastrophe with which the State would not be able to cope without massive help from neighboring states and the Federal Government.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the Louisiana Office of Emergency Preparedness (LOEP) believe that the gravity of the situation calls for an extraordinary level of advance planning to improve government readiness to respond effectively to such an event. The few highways leading out of the New Orleans area would be blocked early by tides, wind, and surge in Lake Pontchartrain. Such a catastrophic hurricane could result in significant numbers of deaths and injuries, trap hundreds of thousands of people in flooded areas, and leave up to one million people homeless. The geographic situation of Southern Louisiana and the densely populated New Orleans area would complicate response problems and quickly overwhelm the State's resources. Some anticipated problems are listed below.

- Over one million people would evacuate from New Orleans. Evacuees would crowd shelters throughout Louisiana and adjacent states.

- Hurricane surge would block highways and trap 300,000 to 350,000 persons in flooded areas. Storm surge of over 18 feet would overflow flood-protection levees on the Lake Pontchartrain side of New Orleans. Storm surge combined with heavy rain could leave much of New Orleans under 14 to 17 feet of water. More than 200 square miles of urban areas would be flooded.
- It could take weeks to "de-water" (drain) New Orleans: Inundated pumping stations and damaged pump motors would be inoperable. Flood-protection levees would prevent drainage of floodwater. Breaching the levees would be a complicated and politically sensitive problem: The Corps of Engineers may have to use barges or helicopters to haul earthmoving equipment to open several hundred feet of levee. To further complicate the situation, the flood would probably disable the New Orleans District of the Corps of Engineers.
- Rescue operations would be difficult because much of the area would be reachable only by helicopters and boats.
- Hospitals would be overcrowded with special-needs patients. Backup generators would run out of fuel or fail before patients could be moved elsewhere.
- The New Orleans area would be without electric power, food, potable water, medicine, or transportation for an extended time period
- Damaged chemical plants and industries could spill hazardous materials.
- Standing water and disease could threaten public health.
- There would be severe economic repercussions for the state and region.
- Outside responders and resources, including the Federal response personnel and materials, would have difficulty entering and working in the affected area.

2. Tasks

Work Plan

The Contractor shall provide support for at least one but no more than three meetings in Louisiana for two to three days each to present and discuss the plan with Federal, regional, state, and local officials and emergency managers. The Contractor can expect to attend meetings in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area to discuss the Federal portions of the plan; these may be averaged to one a week.

The Contractor shall develop a catastrophic plan using the FRP/NRP as a guide and produce 1) a Basic Plan, 2) Emergency Support Function Annexes, and 3) Support Annexes. A Recovery Function Annex supplied by the FEMA Recovery Division will be included in the final plan. The plan shall integrate and not conflict with plans and structures developed by the State of Louisiana and individual cities and parishes.

The basis plan and all of the annexes shall be titled the "Southeast Louisiana Catastrophic Hurricane Plan", and shall be designed so that parts of the plan can be revised, updated, and distributed periodically without requiring revision or re-distribution of the entire plan. It shall be designed to serve as the framework for future catastrophic plans in the same jurisdictions for other catastrophic risks such as terrorism involving the use of weapons of mass destruction. Each part of the plan shall identify the organization or agency responsible for future maintenance of that part of the plan.