

APPENDIX 3

SUMMARY OF WHITE HOUSE DOCUMENT REVIEW

These are examples of documents received by the White House (WH) Homeland Security Council (HSC) staff between August 27 and September 3. The items logged do not reflect the entire information flow to the White House, or all documents provided to the Select Committee. Rather, they are meant to illustrate the type and range of information known to the White House suggesting Katrina and the subsequent flooding of New Orleans (NO) was not a standard emergency event. Yet the enormity of Katrina seemed not to have been fully understood by the White House until at least Tuesday, August 30.

Facts Reported to White House Homeland Security Council Staff	Received	WHK Bates No. Begin
Red Cross notifies K. Nielsen at WH it expects Katrina to be a major hurricane. Red Cross stands ready to brief WH as requested.	8/27; 1:08 p.m.	5169
HSOC reports: New Orleans evacuation ordered. Superdome to open, Nagin to commandeer any property or vehicle necessary to provide shelter or transport.	8/28; 11:56 a.m.	12931
DHS infrastructure advisory sent to HSC. Advises likely flooding from Lake Pontchartrain due to surges from Cat 5 hurricane. If levee is breached, it is predicted to take 3 to 6 months to dewater New Orleans.	8/28; 11:59 a.m.	5217
DHS forwards to WH diagrams of NO levee system.	8/28; 12:14 p.m.	12922
DHS Advisory re transportation. Buses not in use should be moved to high ground. Surge is predicted to exceed 20 feet. Levees to be breached.	8/28; 12:32 p.m.	5222
WH receives overview re capabilities of National Guard units from LA, AL, MS and FL.	8/28; 1:07 p.m.	9678
DHS forwards NO evacuation plan.	8/28; 5:00 p.m.	12934
HSOC reports: Katrina now Cat 5. Landfall expected at 8:00 a.m. 8/29. Coastal flooding as high as 28'.	8/28; 6:26 p.m.	5958
DHS sends WH comprehensive report [41 pages] on potential infrastructure impacts of a Cat 5 hurricane on the Gulf coast. Damage estimates predicted as high as \$10 billion.	8/29; 1:47 a.m.	12072
HSOC reports: Katrina weakens to Cat 4. Coastal storm surge flooding of 18-22' above normal tide levels, locally as high as 28 feet. Some levees in New Orleans could be overtopped.	8/29; 6:10 a.m.	6509
DOD briefs WH re capabilities of DOD Civil Support.	8/29; 6:52 a.m.	9953
K. Nielsen advises federal agencies WH HSC will be available twenty-four hours a day through the duration of Hurricane Katrina. Bethany Nichols and Dan Kaniewski are identified as additional WH staff monitoring Katrina.	8/29; 10:58 a.m.	15770
DHS Watch Desk E-mails WH in re report from Maj Gen Landreneau. Extensive flooding along St. Claude and Claiborne avenues. Leak has developed in the Superdome. Five floors of windows at Charity Hospital have blown out and the first floor of the hospital is flooded. The 911 Centers in St. Bernard and Orleans parishes have been shut down.	8/29; 11:32 a.m.	14825
HSOC reports: Some LA Parishes have 8 to 10 feet of water. No levee failures reported. Approximately 15,000 evacuees in Superdome. It is estimated 300,000 LA residents will be without power. Unspecified numbers of LA and MS residents are stranded and awaiting evacuation in flooded areas.	8/29; 2:20 p.m.	16118
HSOC reports: Preliminary reports indicate the levees have not been breached. Assessment still pending. Army Corps estimates if NO experiences extensive flooding it could take months to dewater the city. Such flooding will preclude damage assessments and restoration.	8/29; 6:13 p.m.	6472

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<p>HSOC reports: Marty Bahamonde reports the following after a helicopter over flight: Access to the city is impeded due to flooding to the north and east.</p> <p>I-10 Twin Span bridges to the east of Slidell are compromised in both directions. Portions of this bridge are buckled, askew and in some cases gone.</p> <p>No ability to enter NO from the east.</p> <p>West I-10 and I-610 junction connecting Jefferson and Orleans Parish is under water.</p> <p>Entrance from the north is not possible because roads are under water.</p> <p>Quarter mile breach in the levee near the 17th St. Canal about 200 yards from Lake Pontchartrain allowing free water to flow into the city.</p> <p>Levee in Meterie is in tact.</p> <p>Only one of the main pumps is reported to be operable but its longevity is doubtful.</p> <p>Flooding is greatest in the north and east in New Orleans.</p> <p>Homes are completely underwater.</p> <p>Hundreds of people were observed on roofs and balconies.</p> <p>A few bodies were seen floating in the water.</p>	8/30; 12:02 a.m.	7158
<p>LA reports: No power; 911 system out; roof damage to Superdome; entire city flooded.</p> <p>St. Bernard & 9th Ward levee breached.</p>	8/30; 6:00 a.m.	4057
<p>HSOC reports: Levee breach, 17th St. at Canal Blvd – exceeds 100 meters in length. Much of downtown and east NO is underwater, the depth of which is unknown. Flooding to a depth of 8-10 feet in Meterie and 6 feet in 9th Ward.</p>	8/30; 6:33 a.m.	11281
<p>DHS Watch Officer E-mails WH and others that a 200 foot levee breach is being assessed.</p>	8/30; 8:13 a.m.	6324
<p>FEMA chart listing all task and ESF assignments.</p>	8/30; 9:24 a.m.	6345
<p>DHS Watch Officer E-mails WH with maps identifying locations of breached levees, highlighting two areas of concern, the levee at Tennessee St. and the levee at 17th St.</p>	8/30; 10:23 a.m.	13330
<p>K. Nielsen at WH e-mails Red Cross and acknowledges several federal partners have expressed a lack of situational awareness and are having problems getting logistics issues resolved.</p>	8/30; 11:18 a.m.	16135
<p>FEMA requests evacuation of 15-25K from Superdome.</p>	8/30; 11:50 a.m.	12712
<p>DHS Watch Officers advises WH – Martial Law reportedly declared in Jefferson and Orleans Parishes. National Guard to assume responsibility.</p>	8/30; 11:51 a.m.	6325
<p>DHS Watch Officers advises WH of distinction between the term “Martial Law” and “Law Enforcement Emergency” and further advises the latter term should be used.</p>	8/30; 2:08 p.m.	14853
<p>HSOC reports: Army Corps reports 300 foot levee breach 100 meters south of Hammond St. bridge; Water from Lake Pontchartrain is pouring into NO through this breach; additional multiple levee breaches in NO to include Tennessee St. breach.</p>	8/30; 2:19 p.m.	4088
<p>HSOC reports: Spot Report detailing levee breaches (maps included) south of Hammond St. bridge and near Tennessee St. bridge.</p>	8/30; 3:07 p.m.	6850
<p>New Orleans: No power in NO, no 911, entire city flooded except French Quarter and Business district; Superdome has roof damage; the following levee breaches are reported: St. Bernard & 9th, Haynes Blvd Pump Station, and 17th St. Canal.</p> <p>Jefferson Parish: People searching for food; gas and chemical leaks; toxic, deep flood waters.</p>	8/30; 4:00 p.m.	4092

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HSOC reports: Army Corps indicates 300 foot breach approximately 100 meters south of Hammond Street Bridge. Three hundred feet of the east flood wall is missing and water from Lake Pontchartrain is pouring into NO. Vehicles cannot access this breach location. The plan is for helicopters to dump sand into the breach site. Additional levee breaches in NO exist, including Tennessee Street.	8/30; 7:26 p.m.	6545
Memo from Sec. Chertoff distributed to Cabinet announcing Michael Brown as PFO.	8/30; 9:00 p.m.	6695
HSOC reports: Superdome needs to be evacuated; population is 12-15,000 people.	8/31; 2:00 a.m.	13833
HSOC reports: Waters continue to rise due to the breach of the 17th St. levee. 300 foot breach at present. Expectations are, without fixing the breach, flooding will not stop until it reaches lake level.	8/31; 5:47 a.m.	12484
FEMA reports: Total cumulative shelter population is 54,378.	8/31; 7:21 a.m.	12503
DHS Watch Desk advise re a recent report from Bob Patrick, FTA's NO Administrator: 200 to 250 Regional Transportation District employees were stranded at their Canal St. facility due to flooding. All were self evacuated via air mattresses whereby they were able to paddle to shallow water. From there they waded in shallow water to the Convention Center. Bob Patrick estimates the entire city of NO will be flooded by day's end.	8/31; 11:09 a.m.	14858
HSOC reports: Rising water at Superdome is threatening to flood the generator which will cause power failure. The State of LA has requested assistance in evacuating Superdome.	8/31; 12:54 p.m.	7080
HSOC reports: Astrodome site recommended as alternative shelter location for Superdome evacuees.	8/31; 6:25 p.m.	4177
HSOC reports: Significant flooding continues throughout NO. 17th St. levee breach in NO is ongoing and is currently two feet above flood stage. Southern region of MS is devastated and is currently out of fuel and water. Both Harrison and Hancock Counties experienced total destruction. 23,000 from the Superdome are being evacuated. 350,000 homes are estimated to have taken severe damage. Housing needs are estimated at 500,000 to 1 million. Widespread damage to utility systems and environmental impact will likely prevent habitation of the area for six month to one year. Pictures are included at bates nos. WHK7404 and 7405.	8/31; 6:31 p.m.	7388
HSOC reports: 11 hospitals in varying stages of damage. Most have no power.	9/1; 12:15 a.m.	7584
Commodity Status – listing locations and commodity supplies.	9/1; 1:00 a.m.	6692
HSOC reports: NOPD has suspended search and rescue efforts and are focusing on securing the city from lawlessness. Pipeline from Plaquemines Parish is leaking an estimated 240 barrels of oil a day. A fatality collection site is being established in Baton Rouge. Levee breaches have not been repaired or blocked. Army Corps projects it could take months to dewater NO once the flooding ceases.	9/1; 5:50 a.m.	6756
Aerial maps of flooded areas distributed by HSOC.	9/1; 5:52 a.m.	6775
K. Nielsen seeks update from DHS HSOC on news story re National Guardsman shot at the Superdome.	9/1; 10:06 a.m.	15834
FEMA chart listing all task and ESF assignments.	9/1; 11:05 a.m.	6580
K. Nielsen complains information arriving at WH HSC is stale, i.e., already updated by HSOC.	9/1; 11:24 a.m.	14760
K. Nielsen at WH requests DHS Watch Desk to follow up with a confirmation of the cause of the downed helicopter.	9/1; 12:41 p.m.	14903

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DHS Watch Desk reports a downed helicopter.	9/1; 12:56 p.m.	14900
DHS Watch Officer advises WH: NOPD reports Guardsman shot in Superdome bathroom following an altercation with an evacuee.	9/1; 1:48 p.m.	12748
Flyover pictures sent to WH showing magnitude of damage.	9/1; 2:37 p.m.	10674
Hostage situation at Tulane Hospital reported.	9/1; 2:47 p.m.	12750
LA reports: Jefferson Parish has people on street searching for food. There are contaminated flood waters and the streets are impassable. Orleans Parish's 911 system is inoperable. Entire City of NO is flooded except the French Quarter.	9/1; 4:00 p.m.	5654
Availability of generators and MREs are insufficient due to overwhelming demand.	9/1; 6:00 p.m.	11653
National Guard deployed to assist with law and order. Significant flooding continues in Jefferson, Orleans, and St. Bernard Parish. 17th Street Canal levee breach is being repaired. Food and water airdrops are taking place through affected area.	9/1; 6:14 p.m.	14138
E-mail trail beginning with Richard Davis at WH-HSC asking for specific operational response plans for attending to hospitals in danger.	9/1; 7:24 p.m.	11831
Rajeev Venkayya of WH HSC e-mails officials at DHS re standing water hazards and resources available via CDC.	9/1; 8:43 p.m.	15373
TSA personnel report trouble at MSY with maintaining order.	9/1; 10:19 p.m.	5588
Dan Ostergaard at DHS advises Richard Davis at WH that Katrina is a national disgrace.	9/1; 10:50 p.m.	15786
1,700 patients need to be evacuated from LA hospitals.	9/2; 4:21 a.m.	5183
DHS Briefing Points report FPS officers have walked the perimeter of the Convention Center and there are approximately 1,000 people there. "New Orleans Officers on scene and tactically prepared."	9/2; 5:44 a.m.	10919
Red Cross is operating no feeding kitchens in NO due to security concerns. Red Cross will not ask its volunteers to risk their personal safety.	9/2; 6:00 a.m.	11756
WH advised of the willingness of states such as AK, AL and GA to receive evacuees.	9/2; 11:33 a.m.	15364
DHS notifies WH, NO Convention Center population is 25,000 according to FEMA Region 6 RRCC. Limited food and water is available.	9/2; 12:44 p.m.	5602
Red Cross estimates shelter population of 94,000.	9/2; 2:02 p.m.	16179
LA reports: Jefferson: Downed power lines, downed telephone and light poles, downed trees and limbs/debris and house debris. Lower water pressure or no water, gas/chemical leaks in air. Live wires, no commercial power in drainage pumps stations, toxic water, still some deep water in some neighborhoods, animal/reptile issues. West Bank business/apartment building burning to the ground, creeping water from the 17th St. Canal. Orleans: No power, 911 system down, EOC on emergency power and cell phones, Bayou Bienvenue reporting 20 foot storm surge. Lost contact with 4 pump stations. Entire city flooded, except French Quarter/West. Bank/Business district. Superdome is structurally okay, some roof damage. St. Bernard: No power; 911 center down, structure damage, glass breakage at shelters, roof torn off on high school gym shelter.	9/3; 12:00 p.m.	4522