



## Federal, state and local agencies prepare for massive New Madrid earthquake and devastating Gulf Coast hurricane



Federal, state and local disaster response leaders met June 14-15 at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Vicksburg District, to conduct their New Madrid Earthquake Rehearsal of Concept (ROC) Drill and Interagency Hurricane Synchronization Exercise. (Photo by Alfred Dulaney)

By Bob Anderson, MVD Public Affairs

More than 130 federal, state and local disaster response leaders, specialists and technical experts gathered in Vicksburg on June 14 and 15 for two separate planning exercises that will better prepare everyone involved with recovering from a catastrophic New Madrid earthquake and major Gulf Coast hurricane striking Louisiana and Mississippi.

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To address the catastrophic possibility for both scenarios, the Mississippi Valley Division Readiness and Contingency Operations (RCO) staff, including Jamie Baker, Charles Carson, Cindy Constancio, Jared Gartman, Eric Halliburton, Annette Harris, Eddie Leblanc, Carl Pigott, Patrick Tucker and Linda Werdebaugh, held comprehensive interagency earthquake and hurricane planning rehearsal/exercises in Vicksburg,

[“Federal, state and local agencies prepare...” \(continued on page 4\)](#)



## Around the Bend



**Maj. Gen. Michael C. Wehr**  
Commander,  
Mississippi Valley Division

President,  
Mississippi River Commission

MVD Team,

We would like to thank Lt. Gen. Todd Semonite and his wife Connie for their leadership and passion, as the USACE family welcomed them both back with a very memorable Change of Command. We would also like to offer the MVD/MRC team’s tremendous gratitude to Lt. Gen. Thomas Bostick and his wife Renee for their service to the nation and to the Corps. We wish them a hearty “essayons” as they transition to civilian life.

In addition, we really appreciate the opportunity to provide Lt. Gen. Semonite feedback connecting our Civil Works Infrastructure with our nation’s readiness, and it is well nested in his upcoming visits within MVD:

- Brandon Road, uniquely synched with LRD: July 6
- Mississippi River Commission (MRC): Aug. 14-16
- New Orleans, Hurricane & Storm Damage Risk Reduction System (HSDRRS): Sep 7-8

MVD appreciates Lt. Gen. Semonite’s early engagement and we look forward to hosting him at Brandon Road, onboard the Motor Vessel Mississippi with the Mississippi River Commission, in New Orleans, as well as Fargo-Moorhead. These are all important venues that demonstrate

how USACE works towards solving water resource challenges and delivers tremendous value to the nation.

I wanted to highlight the Aug. 14-16 MRC engagement due to its strategic ability to connect multiple states and stakeholders on the issue of Civil Works and national readiness. The Caruthersville, Missouri, public meeting offers a unique opportunity to hear the testimony and concerns presented by a diverse group of partners from five states. We will follow up with a site visit led by multiple stakeholders to a local steel mill that is protected by the massive Mississippi River Levee and relies on the inland water transportation system to ship products. All three of these elements -- the manufacturing, the levees and the ports -- are representative of the ongoing “FOUR REVOLUTIONS” that the Commission believes will compel significant investment in our nation’s infrastructure. These MRC public meetings are instrumental in preparing for September engagements in D.C. with the Mississippi Valley Flood Control Association and again at the annual meeting in New Orleans this December.

Looking at the value of the Commission, the Executive Summary of the MRC’s 395th Session is now available on the MRC’s website. The summary contains hyperlinks to key testimony, MRC statements, and resolutions passed by our navigation and levee board partners. Taking action on the public concerns with Section 408 permissions (to alter USACE federally authorized civil works projects), the MRC gathered in Vicksburg the week of May 23 to address a handful of items, to include the Sny Island Levee and Drainage District’s (Sny) levee alterations and the Mississippi River and Tributaries (MR&T) flowline study. The facts surrounding the Sny levee alterations represent some of the most complex issues the MRC has experienced on the river, while the flowline study will shape river management practices for the next generation. We also took the opportunity to bid farewell to Capt. Zachary Rozar, Aide De Camp, as he relocates to Fort Stewart, Georgia.

Col. Rick Hansen’s New Orleans District team recently participated with other federal, state and local leaders,



## Around the Bend *(continued from page 2)*

including myself and Louisiana Governor John Bel Edwards, who gathered at the Port of New Orleans to promote understanding of the capabilities of the Greater New Orleans HSDRRS. We also discussed hurricane preparedness and public safety, as well as coordination among state and local organizations and government agencies.

We've enjoyed continued collaboration with Brig. Gen. Rick Kaiser's LRD (Great Lakes and Ohio River Division, USACE) Team, most recently in Fort Wayne, Indiana, where MVD and LRD joined in for the quarterly GLMRIS (Great Lakes and Mississippi River Interbasin Study) Executive Steering Group meeting.

In addition, the GLMRIS Brandon Road Study & Planning team co-hosted an interagency sound deterrent workshop on May 17-18 in LaCrosse, Wisconsin, at the Upper Midwest Environmental Sciences Center with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), Kentucky Fish & Wildlife and the Minnesota Department Natural Resources (DNR). Research scientists from several universities and the USGS presented the results of lab experiments on Asian carp sound deterrents using complex noise. The group participated in an exercise to identify how a sound deterrent could be installed at an Upper Mississippi River or Ohio River Lock and Dam, permanently.

We appreciated the opportunity to host the Honorable Jo-Ellen Darcy, Assistant Secretary of the Army (Civil Works) and Maj. Gen. Donald E. (Ed) Jackson in New Orleans recently, as well as the Headquarters and Interagency team that participated in our Earthquake and Hurricane exercises. We also look forward to the meaningful engagement with the HQ team in the upcoming Command Strategic Review, June 22-23.

In closing, I would like to reiterate a message from our new USACE commander, Lt. Gen. Semonite: "I am convinced that the VALUE and POWER of the CORPS is NOT in the FACILITIES and WATERWAYS we build and maintain; it is not measured in CONCRETE and STEEL... or MILES of COMBAT ROUTES CLEARED, but measured by the PASSION in the HEARTS of our ENGINEER FORCE. Our commitment, is to be ready to SOLVE the NATION'S most COMPLEX ENGINEERING CHALLENGES...to IMPROVE our READINESS to be ARMY STRONG, and to EXPAND our technical capability to be BUILDING STRONG!! We have the brightest and most capable minds doing extraordinary work—MISSION SUCCESS IS NOT POSSIBLE WITHOUT OUR PEOPLE."

Essayons Along the River...Building Strong...Army Strong!

MG Mike Wehr



MVD Commander Maj. Gen. Michael Wehr presented departing Aide-de-Camp Capt. Zachary Rozar with a Mississippi River Commission pin May 23. Also pictured are Commissioners Dr. Norma Jean Mattei, Rear Admiral Gerd Glang, Mr. Sam Angel and Mr. R.D. James. *(Photo by Pamela Harrion)*



## Federal, state and local agencies prepare...(continued from page 1)

Attendees included USACE representatives from multiple districts, divisions and headquarters, including the head of USACE Readiness and Contingency Operations Office, Karen Durham-Aguilera, several FEMA regions, the U.S. Coast Guard, as well state representatives from Arkansas, Illinois, Louisiana, Mississippi and Tennessee.

The overall USACE Mission following a major earthquake or hurricane is to quickly surge its engineering and technical support forces into the affected areas to assess and repair critical civil works infrastructure such as levees, floodwalls, pumping stations and navigation structures. The Corps will also execute missions in support of the Department of Homeland Security and FEMA under the National Response Framework, including providing emergency power, infrastructure assessment and temporary housing. USACE experts will also manage the removal of dangerous debris from roads and repair public infrastructure. An additional Corps mission is supporting the U.S. Coast Guard in the restoration of the region's naviga-

ble waterways and ports.

“Our immediate goal is to quickly get into the impacted areas, save lives and begin the long, and extremely complex recovery process,” said MVD Commander, Maj. Gen. Michael Wehr, who attended both days. “These planning exercises will help us to master the routine, and prepare the integrated team to respond faster and more effectively.”

MVD RCO Chief, Jared Gartman, also said one of the key goals for both exercises was to build relationships and “make a friend before you need a friend.”

“If we get to know who our counterparts are within other agencies and learn more about how they operate, that will be a great benefit to the entire response operation,” Gartman added.

## Class of 2016 USACE Planning Associates



MVD recently hosted the USACE Planning Associates, Class of 2016. Pictured with MVD Commander Maj. Gen. Michael C. Wehr, Fay Lachney (MVD) and Matt Mallard (MVD) are (l. to rt.) Keith Keeney (Louisville District), Andrew MacInnes (New Orleans District), Patrick O'Donnell (South Atlantic Division), Quana Higgins (Los Angeles District), Tatton L. Suter (Alaska District) and Mike F. Malsom (Mobile District).



## **Knowledge Management tackles physical records**

*By Gerry Hardin, Knowledge Management*

Most districts have an overabundance of historic physical records (paper, photographs, disks, videotapes, etc.) that have never been cataloged or even tracked very well. As we move toward the digital work environment, it is imperative that we capture these valuable knowledge assets into digital format so we can continue to support the Army and the nation, and even do that better. To address the overwhelming volume of physical records, the St. Louis District adopted a unique strategy--they brought back rehired annuitants and hired two archives technicians to address the backlog.



The rehired annuitants (Subject Matter Experts or SMEs) have the knowledge necessary to review older historic materials and sort it into three categories--trash, records to be retained and unknown. We have seen a 60-70 percent reduction in overall volume after this controlled purge. Trash and recycling goes away, the records to be kept are labeled with a post it note, and the unknown materials are discussed with current district personnel to determine their disposition. The archives technicians then take the boxes that have been finalized for retention and, following an established district knowledge process, inventory the records so they may be scanned or sent to off-site records storage.

Scanning priorities are established by current personnel based upon current and anticipated workload. Scanning may happen on-site by district personnel or off-site by a vendor. Once returned, physical materials are sent to off-site records storage at the Federal Records Center. Electronic files are moved to appropriate locations--either the division drives, ProjectWise, or the virtual library, depending upon what the records are. Not all materials are scanned and those that are not are sent directly to the Federal Records Center for storage. Coordination with the district records manager is a must--they are the liaison between the districts and the Federal Records Center and can also provide assistance with the Army Records Information Management System, or ARIMS, and other records management issues.

Because everything is inventoried prior to being sent to its final location, the district has compiled a records catalog that enables easy searching and retrieval of all materials sent to off-site storage. Other tools, such as the virtual library catalog, are currently under development. St. Louis District's approach ensures that we will have better access to these knowledge assets--whether in physical or digital formats, making our work more efficient and faster.



Welcome Aboard! **snapshot**



Annette Harris  
Temporary Administrative Assistant  
Readiness and Contingency Operations (RCO)



Lt. Col. Gary Holt  
Operations Officer  
RCO



Peggy McCord  
Secretary  
Executive Office



Charles Stokes, Jr.  
MR&T Program Manager  
Operations Division



## Around the Division



MVD Commander Maj. Gen. Michael Wehr (right) recently thanked 1st Lt. Robert Horey (center) for his service as Aide-de-Camp during a MVD staff meeting. Maj. Gen. Wehr also welcomed Capt. Daniel Strasser, who transitioned as the new Aide-de-Camp. Hooah!



The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, St. Louis District, recently celebrated the 75th Anniversary of Wappapello Lake with the help of the Clydesdale Horses that paraded across the Wappapello Dam as boating visitors watched.

## Open Channels

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers  
Mississippi Valley Division



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