



**DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**  
**U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS**  
**WASHINGTON, D.C. 20314-1000**

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20314-1000

FEB 25 2008

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF:

CECW-CE

MEMORANDUM FOR SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT: GAO Review – New Orleans Drainage Canal Pumps

1. Reference ASA (CW) letter to Ms. Anu K. Mittal, Director, Natural Resources and Environment (GAO), dated 20 February 2008, a copy is enclosed.
2. The Government Accountability Office (GAO) conducted a review of the procurement process for the temporary pumps installed at three New Orleans drainage canals as a result of Hurricane Katrina. GAO recommended (reference 1. enclosure) that the Secretary of Defense require the Corps, through issuing additional guidance or by other means, to reinforce the importance of adherence to sound acquisition practices even during expedited procurements. GAO determined that the contract documents for the pump testing requirements for the hydraulically driven pumps did not provide a clear understanding about the conditions or criteria that must be met for successful completion of the contract.
3. HQUSACE determined that additional guidance was not necessary but that this memo needed to be sent to all Corp offices to relate lessons learned. The lesson learned is that technical specifications, such as those required for equipment testing, need to provide a clear understanding to the contractor and the government about the conditions or criteria that must be met for successful completion of the contract.
4. The Hurricane Protection Office (HPO) applied this lesson learned to the procurement of the additional direct drive pumps that were installed to supplement the capacity of the hydraulically driven pumps. They were able to develop a very detailed pump testing procedure by incorporating experiences from the first procurement and by using the appropriate sections of the Corps guide specifications. HPO clearly defined and documented the pump testing and acceptance criteria in a way that was understandable and verifiable to all interested parties. As a result, all necessary testing requirements and required acceptance criteria were defined in the contract documents at the time of award.
5. Point of contact for this memo is Dan Casapulla, 202-761-4227

FOR THE COMMANDER:

Encl

JAMES C. DALTON, P.E.  
Chief, Engineering and Construction  
Directorate of Civil Works



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY  
CIVIL WORKS  
108 ARMY PENTAGON  
WASHINGTON DC 20310-0108

FEB 20 2008

Ms. Anu K. Mittal  
Director, Natural Resources  
And Environment  
Government Accountability Office  
441 G Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20548

Dear Ms. Mittal:

This is the Department of Defense (DoD) response to the GAO final report (GAO-08-288), "ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS: Known Performance Issues with New Orleans Drainage Canal Pumps Have Been Addressed, but Guidance on Future Contracts Is Needed," dated December 31, 2007, (GAO Code 360879)."

The Government Accountability Office (GAO) provided us a copy of the final audit report. The DoD official written comments on the draft report have been revised as enclosed.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Ms. Alicia Matias, 202-761-4573, [alicia.s.matias@usace.army.mil](mailto:alicia.s.matias@usace.army.mil).

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John Paul Woodley, Jr.".

John Paul Woodley, Jr.  
Assistant Secretary of the Army  
(Civil Works)

Enclosure  
As Stated

GAO REPORT 08-288, 'ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS:  
KNOWN PERFORMANCE ISSUES WITH NEW ORLEANS  
DRAINAGE CANAL PUMPS HAVE BEEN ADDRESSED, BUT  
GUIDANCE ON FUTURE CONTRACTS IS NEEDED,' DATED  
DECEMBER 31, 2007, (GAO CODE 360879)

DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE RESPONSE TO THE  
RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1: We recommend that the Secretary of Defense require the Chief of Engineers to:

Take steps, through additional guidance or otherwise, to reinforce the importance of adherence to sound acquisition practices even during expedited procurements, including ensuring that important contract provisions, such as any required testing, are clear and that the contractor and the government understand what conditions or criteria must be met for successful completion of the contract.

**DOD RESPONSE: CONCUR:** The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will send a memo to all Corps offices reinforcing the importance of adherence to sound engineering practices even during expedited procurements. The memo will relate lessons learned and emphasize the need for technical specifications, such as those required for equipment testing, to be clear so that the contractor and the government understand what conditions or criteria must be met for successful completion of the contract. The anticipated date to transmit the memo is 14 March 2008.

Recommendation 2:

Develop procedures to ensure that any contract related documentation, including that related to contract pricing, is completed and filed within a reasonable period of time.

**DOD RESPONSE: CONCUR:** The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will review and revise, as necessary, current policies and regulations to ensure that a reasonable period of time is identified for completing and filing contract documents. Estimated completion date is 30 May, 2008.