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Homeland Security & Cybersecurity

Hurricane Katrina

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Lesson 3
Failure of Initiative

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Gathering Storm

- The wars fought in Afghanistan and Iraq underscored President Bush's War on Terrorism.
- Terrorism was also the focus of the Department of Homeland Security.
- Then came Hurricane Katrina.



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Tropical Depression

- The tropical depression that became Hurricane Katrina formed over the Bahamas on August 23rd, 2005.
- By August 26th, after crossing Florida into the Gulf, it had become a Category 5 storm.



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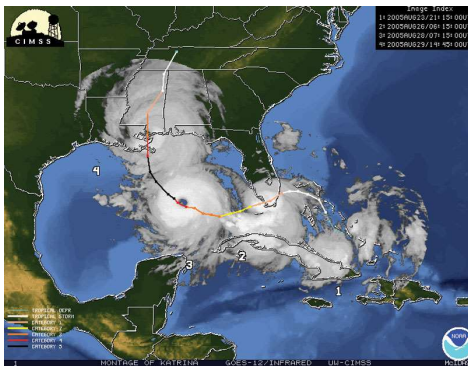


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Hurricane Hits Gulf Coast

- Katrina's high winds and floods severely damaged the Gulf coast from Florida to Texas.
- Florida was hit twice when Katrina crossed the tip on August 25th, and grazed the panhandle on August 29th.



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Large Scale Destruction

- Alabama and Mississippi also sustained heavy damage; 238 were killed, and 900,000 lost power.
- They might have become the center of national attention except for what happened in New Orleans.



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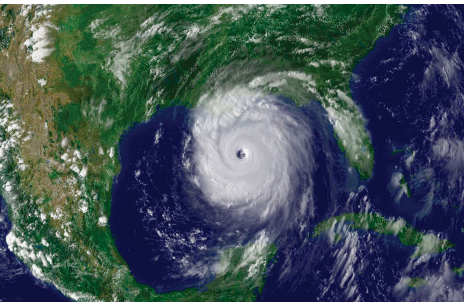


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Second Landfall

- On August 29th, Hurricane Katrina made second landfall near Buras-Triumph Louisiana.
- Katrina continued inland towards New Orleans packing 125 mph winds, a 14-foot storm surge, and 8-10 inches of rain.



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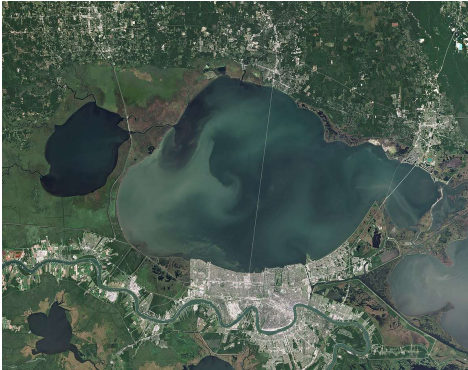


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Downpour

- The rain overflowed Lake Pontchartrain, causing flooding along its shores.
- Several bridges were destroyed, including the I-10 Twin Span Bridge, and most roads in and out of the city were damaged.



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City Spared

- Power went out.
- High rise windows were shattered.
- The Superdome roof was peeled.
- However, by mid-day as the eye passed to the east, it seemed the city had been spared the worst.



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Levees Break

- But then the levees began to break.
- Katrina's storm surge overwhelmed the city's levees and drainage canals.
- The Mississippi River Gulf Outlet breached its levees in 20 places.
- The federally built levee system protecting downtown New Orleans breached in 53 places.



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City Flooded

- New Orleans began to flood.
- By August 31st, 80% of the city was flooded, some parts 15-feet deep.



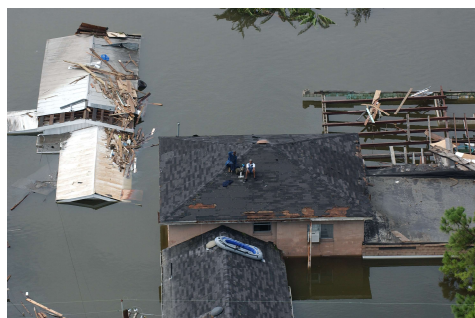
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Trapped

- The extensive flooding stranded many residents in their homes.
- Many chopped their way onto their roofs.
- Some were trapped inside their attics.
- Without food, power, or water, they waited for rescue.

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Initial Casualties

- The first deaths were reported shortly after midnight on August 28th.
- Three nursing home patients died during an evacuation to Baton Rouge.

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Significant Casualties

By 11:00 pm on the 29th, Mayor Nagin described the loss of life as “significant”, noting reports of bodies floating on the water throughout the city.



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Civil Order

- Reports of rioting and looting prompted the Mayor to impose a curfew August 31st.
- Governor Blanco ordered in 6500 National Guard to help maintain order.



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Shelters Suffer

- The situation at the Superdome was dire.
- A designated storm shelter, it had insufficient food, water, and facilities for all the people who flocked to its doors.
- The same was true at the Convention Center.
- People stranded at home and in shelters suffered and waited for help that was slow to arrive.



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Emergency Services Overwhelmed

- New Orleans Fire Departments didn't have the busses or boats needed for the massive rescue operation.
- New Orleans Police were short-handed due to desertions within the ranks.



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Defective Emergency Management

- Coordination among rescuers was poor due to incompatible radios and inadequate direction.
- Few were knowledgeable on the City's emergency management procedures.



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Rescue

- As the National Guard began to arrive in force, more people were rescued and evacuated to safety.
- By September 3rd, the Superdome and Convention Center were emptied.



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City Sweep

- On September 4th, 16,000 National Guard troops swept the city searching for remaining victims.
- About 2,000 people with serious medical conditions were treated at Louis Armstrong Airport.
- FEMA officials arranged for additional rescue units and helped supply food, shelter, and medicine.



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Largest US Military Deployment


- Later, active duty military forces arrived and lent their support to the National Guard.
- Hurricane Katrina constituted the largest deployment of military forces within the US since the Civil War.



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Mass Casualties

Sadly, 1,464 Louisiana citizens lost their lives to Hurricane Katrina.



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Preventable Deaths & Suffering

- Investigations following the hurricane decried many of the deaths as “preventable”.
- Furthermore, they determined that the suffering in the days and weeks after the storm were unnecessarily prolonged.



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Failure of Initiative

- Government at ALL levels had failed to plan, prepare, and respond aggressively to the storm.
- Primary blame fell on the Department of Homeland Security.
- Its focus on terrorism had detracted from emergency management.
- **As a result, the Department broadened its focus to "All Hazards".**



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Conclusion

Questions?



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