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ASSOCIATION

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## **HURRICANE IRMA – UPDATE 2**

BRIDGETOWN, Barbados (9 Sept, 2017) – Assessments are still coming in from the impact of Hurricane Irma on a number of Caribbean countries in the northern Leeward Islands and the northern Caribbean with warnings and watches still in place for a few countries in Irma's track.

Additionally, the projected path of Hurricane Jose, a category 4 storm, has caused tropical storm and hurricane alerts and watches to be posted throughout the northern Leeward Islands.

Following is an update regarding Irma's impact as well as steps being taken by countries still in Irma's path. Reports from CHTA-member hotels have been included where available and details regarding Jose's projected track are listed.

### **Antigua and Barbuda**

Antigua was not impacted by Hurricane Irma with electricity being resorted to the Capital St. Johns and most parts of the island. The V.C. Bird International Airport opened for all flights on Thursday, Sept. 7.

On the other hand, Barbuda and its 1,600 residents were severely impacted by the hurricane which passed directly over the small island, resulting in one fatality. Ninety-five percent of buildings including private properties and Government facilities were destroyed or extensively damaged. Barbuda's hotel infrastructure was also damaged, but with less than 100 hotel rooms the overall effect on tourism as a whole is minimal.

To speed-up the relief and rebuilding efforts, the Government declared a State of Emergency for Barbuda only and evacuated some residents on a voluntary basis. At the same time, emergency supplies of bottled water, cots, medicines have been purchased by the Government and planes were chartered to fly them in the country. Relief efforts, coordinated by the National office of

Disaster Services along with the Red Cross, have started in earnest with multiple relief flights and vessels landing on Barbuda.

The Government of Venezuela has also made two aircraft available to transport goods for Barbuda as well as a medical team of 20 doctors and nurses experienced in disasters.

Updates from individual hotels on Antigua are as follows:

- **Curtain Bluff:** Property emerged from the tail of the storm without any damage. Most importantly, all our staff and their families are unharmed. We have already begun to clean up the property and communications will soon be restored.
- **Cocos Hotel:** No long term damages
- **Galley Bay:** We wish to inform everyone that the guests are doing just fine and are safe. We thank everyone for their concern and will provide operational updates in the coming days
- **Hermitage Bay:** Little water logged from the swells which came up but other than that we are fine.
- **Jumby Bay Island:** Members of the Jumby Bay Island team have assessed the island and at present there is no structural damage to any of the resort or homes that we can identify. A landscaping clean-up will need to be done however this is the extent that can be seen. Jumby Bay Island is currently closed as part of its annual maintenance program and therefore no guests were on the island when Hurricane Irma passed. Jumby Bay Island did have a skeleton team of facility and security staff present throughout the storm. The reopening remains scheduled as planned for 9th October 2017.
- **Keyonna Beach Resort:** Happy to share we have no long term damages.
- **Pineapple Beach Club:** We wish to inform everyone that the guests are doing just fine and are safe. We thank everyone for their concern and will provide operational updates in the coming days.
- **St. James Club:** We wish to inform everyone that the guests are doing just fine and are safe. We thank everyone for their concern and will provide operational updates in the coming days.
- **Verandah:** We wish to inform everyone that the guests are doing just fine and are safe. We thank everyone for their concern and will provide operational updates in the coming days

Hurricane Jose has passed Antigua and Barbuda and warnings have been downgraded to a tropical storm watch.

## **Anguilla**

The Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency is reporting the airport runway and most roads leading to the airport have been cleared of debris. The agency is also reporting that 90% of government buildings and business structures were damaged as well as 90% of the electricity infrastructure. There is also significant damage to the main water supply.

The British government has deployed three humanitarian aid experts from the UK to assist with needs assessments and coordination.

The British naval ship Royal Fleet Auxiliary Mounts Bay has arrived on island, with 40 Royal Marines and Army engineers on board. The ship carries a range of equipment to support humanitarian responses including vehicles, tents and facilities to purify water. hundreds of troops and the Royal Navy flagship HMS Ocean to its overseas islands.

Quintessence hotel had been expected to reopen Nov. 1 however it suffered damage during Hurricane Irma so those plans are delayed.

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## **The Islands of The Bahamas**

The Bahamas Department of Meteorology has issued an “All Clear” for the Southeast Bahamas, including Inagua, Mayaguana, Crooked Island, Acklins, Long Cay and Samana Cay. However, Hurricane Warnings remain in effect for the Northwest and Central Bahamas. These include Grand Bahama, Abaco, Bimini, The Berry Islands, Andros, New Providence, Eleuthera, Exuma, Long Island, Cat Island, Rum Cay, San Salvador and Ragged Island.

There are no visitors on Inagua, Acklins, Crooked Island, Mayaguana, Long Cay, Samana Cay and Ragged Island. There are a total of 2,184 visitors throughout The Islands of The Bahamas. There are 181 visitors on the Family Islands, 3 on Grand Bahama and approximately 2,000 in Nassau/Paradise Island.

All hotels and resorts throughout The Islands of The Bahamas have activated their hurricane programs and are taking all necessary precautions to protect visitors and residents where necessary.

## **British Virgin Islands**

The destruction caused by Hurricane Irma in the British Virgin Islands has been devastating according to a statement from Sharon Flax-Brutus, Director of Tourism for the British Virgin Islands. With cell phone towers down and power outages, it has been difficult to receive communication from within the territory, and to fully assess the damage. The destination has lost entire structures and many homes are without roofs, or have been diminished to merely foundations.

The Government has begun to coordinate humanitarian relief efforts and an initial clean-up operation. We received word that the UK government is sending Royal Navy flagship HMS Ocean to offer relief and support.

Updates from individual hotels in the British Virgin Islands are as follows:

- Bitter End Yacht Club: Hotel was closed due to annual closure. We are grateful to report that our crew on the ground is safe.
- Peter Island Resort & Spa: all of our guests and on-island staff are safe and sound.
- Rosewood Little Dix Bay: Rosewood Little Dix Bay is currently closed for renovation and therefore no guests were present at the resort and the management team was relocated to the safest possible place prior to the storm.
- Scrub Island: all guests and associates who are on island are safe. If you are a family member of someone who is at the resort, please message us your name, email address and the name of the person/family about whom you are inquiring. Our operations team will then be able to give you updates on our evacuation plans.

A tropical storm watch is currently in place for the country.

### **Cuba**

Hurricane Irma is passing along the northern coast of Cuba, where thousands of tourists were evacuated from low-lying keys off the coast. Hurricane watches and warnings remain in effect.

### **Dominican Republic**

Punta Cana International Airport has resumed normal operations following the passage of Hurricane Irma after the storm passed through off Punta Cana's coast. The area's hotel sector is reporting no major damages. Damaged homes and flooded streets in Cabarete and Sosua have been reported.

### **Haiti**

Reports indicate that damage and flooding is minor in Haiti but warnings for possible flooding are still in effect.

### **Puerto Rico**

Updated reports indicate that Puerto Rico's electrical grid seemed to take the brunt of the storm as overgrown trees and debris downed power lines. As of late Thursday (Sept. 7), 63 percent of the island's 1.5 million power clients were still without electricity.

While the assessment of impact across the island continues, the Puerto Rico Tourism Company's preliminary report shows that major tourism infrastructure and attractions are operational and the island can continue to welcome new visitors. While power outages are present throughout the island, many hotels, as well as essential services on the island such as hospitals, are operational due to generators and the majority of hotels throughout mainland Puerto Rico are ready to

welcome new guests. Attractions such as parks and beaches are currently being assessed to ensure a committed focus on quick clean up in the coming days.

Flights to and from Luis Muñoz Marin International Airport have resumed. Puerto Rico's port is operational and should be receiving cruises by September 9.

Updates from individual hotels in Puerto Rico are as follows:

- Condado Plaza Hilton: Minor damages
- El Conquistador Resort: operational and working on getting all amenities back to normal. The clean-up of the areas is under way and we are attending to some minor damages. We are operational on our own power plant. Las Casitas Village will reopen when electricity is restored.
- El San Juan Hotel: grateful and fortunate that our team and property are safe. The hotel has received minimal damage and we are strongly working to re-open as soon as the power is restored.
- Hotel El Convento: all our guests, associates and clients are all safe. Fortunately, hurricane Irma didn't cause any significant damages to Hotel El Convento. We are re-establishing operations today including Patio del Níspero & Alegría Patio Bar.
- InterContinental San Juan: we are glad to announce that for the InterContinental San Juan it is business as usual.
- Rincon Beach: Open for business
- San Juan Water Beach Club Hotel: We sustained no damage, have full power, and are open for business.

### **St. Kitts and Nevis**

St. Kitts & Nevis sustained minimal damage overall and both St. Kitts' Robert L. Bradshaw International Airport and Nevis' Vance W. Amory International Airport reopened.

Hotels in St. Kitts reported no structural damage while Nevis' hotel updates include:

- Four Seasons Resort Nevis reporting the resort is in fine shape and all areas are generally dry
- Hermitage Inn reporting general debris and no structural damage
- The Great House and cottages at Nisbet Plantation Beach Club are in excellent condition however there was damage to the Sea Breeze Beach Bar, the decking and the beach.

### **St. Barthelemy**

It has been reported that St. Barth's was heavily impacted by Hurricane Irma which destroyed government buildings and badly damaged private homes and resorts including The Eden Rock Hotel. There is flooding throughout the destination. The French government is sending people and supplies to the country to assist with recovery efforts.

### **St. Maarten (Dutch) / St. Martin (French)**

It has been reported that much of the dual-island nation has suffered significant damage, with hotels, government offices, homes and smaller buildings badly damaged on both the Dutch and French sides of the island.

Updates from St. Maarten / St. Martin hotels are as follows:

- Beach Plaza: Badly damaged with water cascading through its atrium amid 185 mph winds
- Hotel Mercure: Damaged
- Oyster Bay Beach Resort: Significant damage
- Riu Palace St. Martin: The infrastructures have been severely affected, but thankfully the management team at the Hotel Riu Palace St. Martin has confirmed that all the guests and employees are fine. The hotel has enough provisions of water and food for all guests and employees.
- Sonesta: All guests and staff of Sonesta Maho Beach Resort Casino & Spa, Sonesta Ocean Point Resort and Sonesta Great Bay Beach Resort & Casino are safe and unharmed. Resort damage is severe. Guests are currently in on-property 'safe areas' at the resorts. All further reservations from now through the end of 2017 will be cancelled. Guests are in comfortable conditions and are provided with security, food, and water. We have diesel fuel for generators to cook food and provide some electricity. Any reports of guests being looted under our care are simply not true. Sonesta Sint Maarten resorts can confirm that Jonathan Falwell, who was an in-house guest of Sonesta Ocean Point Resort contacted Samaritan's Purse, a nondenominational evangelical United States-based Christian organization providing spiritual and physical aid to hurting people around the world, to provide a DC-8 with supplies and a Disaster Assistance Response Team (DART) on Friday, 8 September 2017. There were 27 guests of Sonesta Sint Maarten Resorts also on that aircraft evacuated which consisted of the elderly, anyone with a medical condition, women and children first. We would like to thank Samaritans Purse President Franklin Graham and Jonathan Falwell for their efforts. We can also confirm that 25 United States citizens who were guests of Sonesta Great Bay Beach Resort were evacuated on a United States C130 military aircraft on Friday, 8 September at sundown. We have been advised that another evacuation is imminent but do not have any further confirmation. Today, Saturday, 9 September 2017, we have organized a commercial aircraft to further the evacuation of the remaining guests at Sonesta Great Bay and more guests from Sonesta Maho Beach Resort. This plane will depart for Punta Cana,

Dominican Republic. The Dutch Marines have been able to dock a ship and get flights in from Curacao so more troops and supplies are on the ground in Sint Maarten.

- Westin Dawn Beach: Suffered significant damage

Both the French and Dutch governments are sending people to the country along with supplies and vital aid.

A hurricane warning is in effect for the island based on projected track of Hurricane Jose.

### **Turks and Caicos Islands**

Director of Tourism Ramon Andrews reported that Turks and Caicos Islands experienced flooding, some structural damage, roofs that have been blown off, downed trees, no loss of life and all visitors are safe.

It has separately been reported that the Islands' emergency management agency issued an "all-clear" shortly before 1 p.m. EST on Sept. 8, but warned that "many roads have been flooded and power lines and transformers are down." Providenciales International Airport (PLS) is currently closed.

Updates from individual properties in the Turks & Caicos Islands are as follows:

- Alexandra Resort, Blue Haven Resort and Beach House: All guests and staff of our three resorts are reported safe and unharmed. Given the damage sustained on island, all guests are remaining on property pending further instructions from the authorities on the conditions of roads, electrical service and the status of the airport. The resorts have sufficient supplies, food and water to care for all guests in the interim. The resorts sustained some wind and water damage due to the storm so, as we further assess the situation, we will be closed for arrivals for 30 days through Oct 8 at all three resorts.
- Beaches Turks & Caicos Resort Villages & Spa: All guests are safe - no power or water yet
- Gansevoort Turks & Caicos, A Wymara Resort: All guests are safe, power off and water is temporarily off, phones are out but cell and internet are working
- La Vista Azul: All guests are safe - no power or water yet
- Ocean Club Resorts: All guests are safe - no power or water yet
- Ports of Call Resort: All guests are safe - no power or water yet
- The Regent Grand: All good for staff and guests
- Sands at Grace Bay: All are good

- Seven Stars Resort: All guests are safe - no power or water yet
- The Shore Club: All good for staff and guests
- Villa Del Mar: All guests are safe, power & water off

### **United States Virgin Islands (St. Croix, St. John and St. Thomas)**

The U.S. Virgin Islands Department of Tourism has advised that full assessment on the impact of Hurricane Irma is underway and while St. Croix is getting back to business, visitors are being encouraged not to visit the district of St. Thomas and St. John.

According to Commissioner of Tourism Beverly Nicholson-Doty, “The island of St. Croix did not receive the full brunt of the storm, and St. Croix’s Henry E. Rohlsen Airport received its first commercial flight (JetBlue Airways from San Juan) on Sept. 8.”

She reported that communications are still limited, there is significant damage to infrastructure in St. Thomas and St. John, and the Cyril E. King Airport on St. Thomas will not be open for commercial traffic before the next weather system passes the area this weekend. To ensure everyone's safety, we are requesting the postponement of all scheduled visits to St. Thomas and St. John.

The storm has resulted in four casualties to date on the island of St. Thomas.

The following updates have been shared by individual properties in the U.S. Virgin Islands:

- The Buccaneer (St. Croix): Open for business. Facilities are in good shape, but there may be some limitation of services over the next few days.
- Caneel Bay (St. John): Complete power outage at the resort.
- Westin St. John Resort Villas (St. John): All associates, owners and guests are safe. The resort and the surrounding areas experienced some damage and overall impact is being assessed.
- Bluebeard’s Castle Resort (St. Thomas): Everyone who was onsite is safe. The property has sustained major damage, which is currently being assessed.
- Point Pleasant Resort (St. Thomas): Everyone at the resort is safe, but without power and cell phone service. The team is currently assessing damage, and will share new information when available.
- Secret Harbour Beach Resort (St. Thomas): All guests and staff are safe. There is no major structural damage to the buildings. The generator is still working.
- Sugar Bay Resort & Spa (St. Thomas): All guests and team members are safe. The damage is being assessed and will provide updated information when available.



- Windward Passage (St. Thomas): Will close for six months.

A tropical storm watch is in effect for St. Thomas and St. John based on the projected track of Hurricane Jose.

The CTO and CHTA are actively monitoring the hurricane and will continue to share updates from member countries in the CTO Storm Watch Centre on <http://www.onecaribbean.org/cto-storm-watch-centre/> as well as on CHTA's website <http://www.caribbeanhotelandtourism.com/knowledge-center/hurricane-center/>.

CTO has activated its CTO Relief Fund through GoFundMe to help families and countries rebuild after hurricanes, with monies raised being sent directly to CTO-member destinations affected by the catastrophic storm. For more information on CTO's Relief Fund or to make a donation, visit [www.gofundme.com/hurricane-relief-fund-cto](http://www.gofundme.com/hurricane-relief-fund-cto).

Donations through CHTA's Caribbean Tourism Recovery Fund can be made via <http://www.tourismcares.org/caribbean>.

### **About the Caribbean Tourism Organization**

The Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO), with headquarters in Barbados and offices in New York and London, is the Caribbean's tourism development agency comprising membership of the region's finest countries and territories including Dutch, English, French and Spanish, as well as a myriad of private sector allied members. The CTO's vision is to position the Caribbean as the most desirable, year round, warm weather destination, and its purpose is Leading Sustainable Tourism - One Sea, One Voice, One Caribbean.

Among the benefits to its members the organization provides specialized support and technical assistance in sustainable tourism development, marketing, communications, advocacy, human resource development, event planning & execution and research & information technology.

In addition the CTO, in partnership with the Caribbean Hotel & Tourism Association, jointly and equally owns the Caribbean Tourism Development Company, a marketing and business development entity dedicated to promoting the Caribbean brand worldwide.

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For more information on the Caribbean Tourism Organization, please visit [www.OneCaribbean.org](http://www.OneCaribbean.org). Get the latest updates and connect with CTO via [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#) and [LinkedIn](#).

For further information about the Caribbean Hotel and Tourism Association visit  
[www.caribbeanhotelandtourism.com](http://www.caribbeanhotelandtourism.com).