



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ANTIGUA AVOIDS MAJOR DAMAGE WITH HURRICANE IRMA

*VC Bird International Airport
Re-Opens by 2:00 p.m. EST*

St. John's, Antigua, WI (September 6, 2017). Antigua has successfully coped with Hurricane Irma, defying the worst predictions of disaster. There was no loss of life. The local population and all visitors to the island are safe. Most residential, business and Hotel properties in Antigua remain largely unscathed and already the main roads have been cleared of the debris of fallen trees.

The V C Bird International Airport will be open by 2pm (Eastern Standard Time) today to accommodate arriving and departing aircraft and passengers. Visitors are encouraged to contact the relevant airlines and tour operators if their flights were affected.

Prime Minister Gaston Browne, in a statement earlier today, said that “the work that the Government initiated in advance of the storm paid remarkable dividends. The drains, gutters and reservoirs that were cleared in advance, ensured that the island experienced no flooding, hence eliminating the possibility of water-borne disease.

“The essential point is that our main infrastructure has stood-up and our country can resume normal life within hours”. Asot Michael, the country's Minister of Tourism, Economic Development, Investment and Energy said. “All our visitors remained safe during Hurricane Irma. The island's Hotels suffered only minimal damage and have already commenced clean-up operations”.

Conditions on Barbuda are not fully clear as yet, but preliminary reports indicate no loss of life and only some damage to private property and one Government facility. Minister Michael indicated that he would be travelling to Barbuda today to assess damage that will be addressed immediately.

“The important take away from all this is that Antigua and Barbuda remains open for business and is already resuming normal life including welcoming visitors to enjoy our little bit of paradise which God continues to protect”, the Minister concluded.

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ABOUT ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA

Antigua (pronounced An-tee'ga) and Barbuda (Bar-byew'da) is located in the heart of the Caribbean Sea. The largest of the Leeward Islands, Antigua & Barbuda comprises 108-square miles. The 365 white and

pink sand beaches, one for every day of the year, are just the beginning of the treasures that await visitors. Antigua's rich history and spectacular topography provide a variety of popular sightseeing opportunities. Nelson's Dockyard, the only remaining example of a Georgian fort commissioned by the British in 1755, is perhaps the most renowned landmark. Betty's Hope, built in 1674, is the site of one of the first full-scale sugar plantations on Antigua, and offers a chance to step back into time by visiting the restored mills. Another unique attraction is Devil's Bridge, located at the eastern tip of the island in Indian Town National Park, where Atlantic breakers have carved out a natural limestone arch. Antigua boasts a varied tourism calendar including events such as the World Class Antigua Sailing Week, Classic Yacht Regatta, Antigua Sports Fishing and also the annual Carnival; known as the Caribbean's Greatest Summer Festival. Island accommodation ranges from luxury, boutique resorts and all-inclusive hotels to smaller more intimate boutique guesthouses and cottages. For information about **Antigua & Barbuda** visit www.visitantiguabarbuda.us and follow us on **Twitter**. <http://twitter.com/antiguabarbuda> **Facebook** www.facebook.com/antiguabarbuda; **Instagram**: www.instagram.com/AntiguaandBarbuda