

National Parks, Rivers and Beaches Authority



DISASTER PLAN

What to do in the event of a disaster

INTRODUCTION

A primary factor in the National Parks, Rivers and Beaches Authority (NPRBA) ability to coordinate response activities is its level of preparedness against all hazards both at the office and site level. Minimum disruption of operation will lead to an environment more conducive to response. Some disasters such as hurricanes can be anticipated, whereas others offer little or no advance warning. The occurrence of disasters may be beyond our control but the impact is not. Well-planned procedures and well-trained personnel can effectively minimize their effects. This plan outlines the procedures to be undertaken by the staff of the NPRBA at all levels in the event of a disaster impacting the SVG in order to ensure an orderly and efficient recovery to normal operations. Each staff member therefore has specific responsibilities to ensure that the Office's property is secured, to prevent their destruction, so that business can continue with minimum dislocation, disruption or loss of time.

AUTHORITY

This plan has been examined and adopted by Director of the NPRBA.

AIM

The aim of this contingency plan is to outline the details of the action to be taken to ensure the Office is prepared to response to emergencies.

SCOPE

This plan covers the general operation procedures, which are to be followed by the Staff to ensure that the responsibilities for an emergency response are fulfilled. It covers disaster types, which may affect the NPA and those emergencies to which the Office and its associated sites may be exposed.

GENERAL PREPAREDNESS

To ensure a constant state of readiness at all times the Office/Sites will ensure that the following are always in place - *where applicable*:

Availability of all necessary supplies and materials:

- Hand tools and supplies are available for minor works, and specialized tools for site work.
- Large heavy-duty garbage bags and heavy-duty plastic sheets are available in sufficient quantities;
- Paper/plastic masking tape available in sufficient quantities.
- Training of staff on emergency procedures

MONITORING

1. The Admin. Manager and other staff have the primary responsibility to monitor and inform the Director or in his/her absence the Deputy or Officer in charge, of the occurrence of a sudden disaster or of the development of potential disasters.
2. At all times it is the responsibility of the Director to assess the situation and determine the appropriate action and inform the staff.

Notification of Staff

1. All staff will be informed by the Director, Deputy or the Officer in charge of an impending hazard situation (e.g. Hurricane) and of the estimated time when effects will be felt.
2. The Director or his/her Deputy or the Officer in charge will request staff members to make themselves available to expedite physical arrangements within the premises of the Office.
3. Staff shall be released (24 hrs before hurricane) to attend to their domestic preparation and shall be required to report after the hazard impact (e.g. passage of a hurricane) based on the instructions given by the Director.
4. For security reasons all staff members are expected to be reachable/contactable at their permanent address as listed. Should staff members relocate then the staff member must inform the Director and/or the Deputy or Administrative Officer of their new location.

Physical Arrangements

1. General
 - a) Each staff member is responsible for the physical arrangements for the protection of the equipment and materials normally found in his/her office/work area.
 - b) In the absence of an Officer, it is the responsibility of the staff member belonging to the specific unit to undertake the physical arrangements.

HAZARDS

1. HURRICANE

Storms and hurricanes can cause both wind and water damage to both the physical buildings and their contents. A number of preparedness measures can be taken in advance of an approaching storm system to minimize destruction. They are:

Before the storm: on first notice of an approaching storm:

The building and grounds:

1. Inspect the building for structural deficiencies.
2. Make sure all windows and doors are closed and securely locked.
3. Check grounds and remove loose-lying objects.
4. Park vehicle in secure location on premises.

Inside:

1. Unplug all lights and electrical appliances and turn off electricity at main switch.
2. Close and lock windows and doors.
3. Set alarm.
4. Elevate, cover and secure electronic equipments and documents.

After the storm:

Once personal and family needs are taken care of, try to contact the Director/ Office for instructions. Staff is expected to show up for a duty within 24 hours after all clear is given.

For your own safety, do not venture out into the storm affected area unless absolutely necessary. If you must, then do so with caution while making your way to the Office premises.

1. Hurricane movement and early warnings are to be monitored at the National, Regional and International levels by listening to radio and television broadcasts and the internet.

Hurricane Warning

If the situation warrants it, the following procedures will be implemented before a hurricane is expected to impact the area. These procedures are applicable on regular working days, weekends or holidays.

Inside the Building Furniture, Equipment and Materials

ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBLE PERSON
All equipment and materials must be placed or wrapped in plastic bags and securely tied to ensure water does not penetrate.	(Admin. Manager)
Furniture and equipment too large for plastic bags must be covered with plastic sheeting.	(Admin. Manager)
Plastic sheeting must be rendered waterproof by securing the ends and edges with masking or waterproof tape.	(Admin. Manager)

Electrical Equipment

ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBLE PERSON
All electrical equipment must be disconnected, placed in large heavy duty garbage bags and tightly fastened to prevent water penetration.	(Admin. Manager)

Files, loose documents, books and other printed materials.

ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBLE PERSON
Files, loose documents, books and other printed materials must be placed in metal filing cabinets whenever possible.	(Admin. Manager)
If this is not possible then loose files and paper must be placed in large garbage bags fastened and labeled with a list of their origin and content.	Admin. Manager)
They should then be raised from the floor to prevent water penetration.	Admin. Manager)

Offices

ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBLE PERSON
The contents of any given office should not be moved to another location unless their removal will ensure their safety.	(Director)
Filing cabinets must be locked and turned so that their drawers are facing a wall.	(Admin. Manager)
Louvers windows must be closed tightly	(Admin. Manager)
All office doors must be kept closed and where possible locked to minimize the entry of water or wind within the building.	(Admin. Manager)
The keys for the doors leading to these offices will be kept by the Director.	(Director)

Outside the building

ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBLE PERSON
Hurricane shutters must be secured on the outside of the windows	(Lessor)
Tree limbs which may become dangerous to the building must be pruned.	(Lessor)
Debris and other materials which are potentially dangerous should be cleared away.	(Lessor)
Placement of sandbags at entrances	(Director)

Procurement of non perishable items

ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBLE PERSON
Non-perishable items such as batteries, sanitation products and non perishable food and drinks shall be purchased and then stored within the premises for use as necessary in the period following the aftermath	(Admin. Manager)

Electrical Power

ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBLE PERSON
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The office electrical supply must be disconnected to prevent possible short circuits and consequent fires. This is done prior to leaving the premises.	(Admin. Manager)
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Staff Personal Safety

Hurricanes provide sufficient warning for the evacuation of the office building. Staff members' main responsibility once they have returned home is to make the necessary preparedness arrangements to protect themselves and their property.

ACTIVITY	RESPONSIBLE PERSON
Personal effects including documents, clothes, valuables, which are not kept in cupboards, must be secured in plastic bags or other waterproof containers.	(name of person/family member)
A stock of drinking water, batteries, hurricane lanterns, flashlights, canned food and other non-perishables must be kept. This stock should have sufficient food and water to last for at least seven days.	(name of person/family member)
The Director, Deputy Director or the officer in charge must be provided with the address or location of all staff members, during and immediately after the hurricane strikes.	(Director)

2. FLOODING AND WATER DAMAGE

Serious water damage can occur from a variety of sources: burst pipes, clogged drains, broken windows, heavy rains. If flooding or a serious leak occurs:

1. Remain calm.
2. Try to identify the source of the water, and take corrective measures. Consistent with your own safety; proceed cautiously.
3. Use extreme caution if there are electrical appliances or outlets near the flooded area and switch off power supply. If there is any possible danger, evacuate the area.
4. If you cannot stop the water flow, notify the Director. Advise them of the exact source and severity of the water flow. Indicate whether any part of the business contents is involved or in imminent danger. They will notify the appropriate people and take charge of damage control operations.
5. Be prepared to protect important objects that are in jeopardy. Cover large objects with plastic sheeting. Move small or light objects out the emergency area.

3.FIRE

The following instructions if followed should help to prevent situation of panic.

Fire Alarm Procedures

1. In the case of a fire ravaging any particular area of the building an attempt should be made to extinguish the flames by using a certified ABC Fire Extinguisher. *Point the nose of the extinguisher to the base of the fire and not on the flames.*
2. The St. Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG) Fire and Rescue Services should be called immediately by a staff member.
3. Should evacuation of the building be necessary, each office and corridor should be closed, but not locked. This will help to slow down the propagation of the fire.
4. All staff members must stand in the designated area, away from possible debris, in the yard and a head count taken by the Director or most senior staff member present.

FIRE DRILL PROCEDURES

Fire drills are necessary features of the Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Planning Programs and should be practiced on a regular basis. These drills enable us to react quickly and sensibly when confronted with a real fire or other emergencies which may require the building to be evacuated immediately. Staff should gather in parking lot and/or green area north of parking lot until accounted for. Vehicles should be parked facing out and should be removed from compound as soon as possible during a fire. Practice drills are therefore necessary and all possible safe routes, which lead to open air safety, must be used.

Fire and evacuation drills should be done with the support and supervision of the SVG Fire and Rescue Services.

The sequence of a Fire drill is as follows:

1. Alarm sounded.
2. Building evacuated
3. Assembly at pre-determined point (**parking lot and green area north of the car park**)
4. Head count taken
5. Briefing takes place

- All staff waits until the all clear is given before re-entering the building.

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	LOCATION
Fire Alarm		
Fire Extinguisher	One unit	

4. EARTHQUAKE

Seismic events occur in the SVG. If a major event should occur:

During an earthquake:

If you are inside:

- Stay inside
- Watch for falling objects
- Crawl under a table or desk, or stand in a doorway
- Stay away from windows, mirrors, overhead fixtures, bookcases and electrical equipment.

If you are outside:

- Move to an open area away from buildings, trees and power lines
- If forced to stand near building, watch for falling objects

After an earthquake -

- Stay calm
- Be prepared for aftershocks
- Move to designated evacuation area
- Do not move seriously injured persons, unless they are in obvious, immediate danger (of fire, building collapse, etc.)
- Open doors carefully. Watch for falling objects.

- Earthquakes give little or no warning before they strike. If located indoors do not attempt to go outside. Find refuge under a desk or table or under a strong beam or a strong masonry corner of the building.
 - Remain in this location until the tremors have stopped.
 - Evacuate the building as quickly as possible following the first tremor.

- All staff members must keep together in the designated area of the yard away from falling objects or collapsing masonry, and a head count taken.

POST DISASTER ACTIVITIES

A. Staff Welfare

For all disaster events the Administrative Manager is required to ascertain the well-being of the staff. Consequently he/she will:

1. Account for all staff members present in the office when the disaster occurs.
2. Know the location of staff not located in the office and ascertain their well-being.
3. Staff members must report to the office as soon as possible after a disaster.
4. The Admin. Manager will provide the Director with a report on the well-being of the staff.
5. Where a staff member becomes ill or injured during an emergency the Director will arrange for such staff members to receive medical attention.

B. Assessment of Damage

1. Preliminary report

- The SSS in collaboration with the Director will compile a preliminary assessment of damage.
- The Director will determine the habitability of the premises based on the assessment.
- A report will be prepared and sent by the Director to the Board and the Lessor.

2. Consolidated report

Within **48 hours** after the preliminary report has been prepared, the Director will prepare a consolidated report based on the preliminary report, inventory and records.

EVACUATION

Should the premises become unsuitable for the continuation of the agency's activities, the Director shall:

- Relocate to the alternate Office - ***(Botanic Gardens temporarily)***
- Instruct the Superintendent of Rivers, Beaches and Recreation Sites to proceed with the salvaging and transfer of the agency's property to the new location.

Repairs to the Building

Should emergency repairs to the Office be required, the Director shall:-

- Inform lessor of damage done to building.

Adjustments to operations of office:

- The normal work schedule and responsibilities within the Office may be adjusted following the occurrence of a disaster and will be devised as necessary.
- Cleaning of Premises
- Under the supervision of the Secretary, the Cleaner will be mainly responsible for the cleaning of the premises in general.
- Individual staff members will be responsible for the cleaning and rehabilitation of their own offices.
- In the case where staff members are absent, their offices will be rehabilitated after the main premises have been made usable.
- If necessary, additional assistance will be sought.

Responsibilities

- There shall be two levels of functioning: Operational and Support. The operations will deal with all matters relating to relief while, support will deal with those matters which will enhance and facilitate the actions of the staff.
- The needs and developments of the situation will determine the magnitude of the functions. Changes will occur as the operations improve.
- All staff must attend daily briefing sessions at the designated hour indicated on the daily schedule.

POST EMERGENCY ACTIVITIES

1. An evaluation of the performance of the agency will be undertaken within the month following the end of the emergency phase. The evaluation will be based on the Contingency Plan.

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2. The Contingency Plan will be revised and distributed within a month after the evaluation has been completed. I.e. two months after the emergency phase has been declared.

Medical Emergency

There are First Aid Kits for minor emergencies. For more serious problems:

1. Immediately contact the Director who will make the necessary calls for assistance.
2. If unable to make contact, call **4561185 (MCMH)** for emergency medical assistance. Other numbers to call are 911 (Fire Dept.) or 911 (Police).
3. Unless it is a life-threatening situation, do not give any first aid yourself.
4. Do not attempt to move a person who has fallen and appears in pain.
5. Avoid unnecessary conversation with, or about, the ill or injured person. It might increase the person's distress or fears, and thereby contribute to medical shock. Limit communication to calm reassurances.
6. Stay with the victim until help arrives.
7. If ambulance was called, if possible, send someone to the main road to direct crew.
8. Do not discuss the possible cause of an accident or any conditions that may have contributed to the cause, without authorization from the Director.
9. Under no circumstance should an employee or volunteer discuss any insurance information with members of the public.
10. After the person's needs have been taken care of, assist Director with pertinent information for the medical report.

EXPLOSION

Chemical accidents, leaking gas, bombs, or even falling aircraft could be the cause of life-endangering explosions. If an explosion should occur:

1. Remain calm
2. Be prepared for possible further explosion
3. Crawl under a table, desk or other protective shelter
4. Stay away from windows, mirrors, overhead fixtures, filing cabinets, bookcases and electrical equipment.
5. If excavation is ordered, proceed to one of the designated area (Medical Imaging Centre Parking Lot).
6. Do not move seriously injured persons, unless they are in obvious immediate danger.
7. Open doors carefully. Watch for falling objects.
8. Do not use matches or lighters.
9. Avoid using telephones.
10. Do not spread rumors.