

All clear signal is given for the entire Bahamas

Hurricane Joaquin Continues to Move Rapidly From the Area

NASSAU, BAHAMAS, October 3, 2015 /EINPresswire.com/ -- An ALL CLEAR signal has been issued for the entire Bahamas as powerful Hurricane Joaquin moves away from the area. An all clear signal means that all hurricane and tropical storm warnings and watches are discontinued for the entire Bahamas.



As of 8 A.M. EST, the center of Hurricane Joaquin was located near Latitude 25.6 degrees North and Longitude 72.5 degrees West, or about 165 miles Northeast of San Salvador and 305 miles East of New Providence.

Hurricane Joaquin is moving toward the Northeast near 13 MPH, and this motion is expected to continue through tonight with an increase in forward speed. A turn toward the North-Northeast is forecast for Sunday. On the forecast track, the center of Joaquin will continue to move away from The Bahamas today and pass West of Bermuda on Sunday.

Maximum sustained winds are near 125 MPH with higher gusts. A slow weakening is forecast to begin later today, followed by a steadier weakening on Sunday and Sunday night. Hurricane force winds extend outward up to 50 miles from the center and tropical storm force winds extend outward up to 205 miles from the center. Extended feeder bands from Joaquin will continue to produce gusty winds and squally showers over parts of the Central and Southeast Bahamas throughout today and tonight.

Lynden Pindling International Airport (LPIA) is open and operating since this morning. Airport Security and U.S. Customs and Immigration opened at 5 am. Air Traffic control services resumed operations at 7 a.m.

Family Island Airport Openings

The Department of Civil Aviation advises the public that the following Family Island airports have been inspected and are now re-opened:

Exuma -- Moss Town, Black Point, Farmers Cay
Eleuthera -- North Eleuthera, Governors Harbour, Rock Sound
Abaco -- Marsh Harbour, Treasure Cay, Sandy Point, Moores Island
Andros -- San Andros, Fresh Creek, Clarence A. Bain, Congo Town
Cat Island -- Arthur's Town, New Bight
Berry Islands -- Great Harbour Cay
Bimini -- South Bimini
Mayaguana
Inagua

The Department of Civil Aviation will continue to inform the public on all developments relative to airports in The Bahamas as necessary.

Cruise updates include the following at the Port of Nassau, which has reopened:

- Majesty of the Seas: Diverted to Freeport for October 3.
- Disney Magic has been forced to skip its scheduled visits to Castaway Cay and Nassau. The ship's new itinerary is Key West on October 1, Cozumel on October 2 and a sea day on October today
- Disney Dream which is approaching the end of a weeklong Eastern Caribbean cruise will skip Castaway Cay on October 2 before returning to Port Canaveral on Saturday.
- Carnival Fascination - Arrived today, October 3
- Norwegian Sky - Arrives October 4
- Carnival Ecstasy – Arriving in Nassau later this morning and will overnight
- Enchantment of the Sea (RCL) - Routed to Freeport today.

Small craft operators throughout The Bahamas should remain in port as large swells and battering waves will continue to affect The Bahamas during the next few days.

The US Coast Guard says it has resumed its search for a cargo ship with 33 crew members that vanished in Bahamian waters during Hurricane Joaquin. The ship was travelling from Florida to Puerto Rico. The 224-metre (735ft) El Faro, with 28 Americans and five Poles on board, was last heard from on Thursday and was reported to be taking on water.

According to reports, the Coast Guard said it had already covered more than 850 square miles (2,200 sq km) in the search for the vessel. El Faro's owner, Florida-based TOTE Services, said it was working together with the Coast Guard to try to re-establish contact with the ship.

“We would like to extend our heartfelt thoughts and prayers to all the residents of The Bahamas who have been affected by the devastation of Hurricane Joaquin,” says Joy Jibrilu, Director General of Tourism for The Islands Of The Bahamas. “This of course extends to the crew of the El Faro and their families. We pray for their safe return.

The Bahamas Ministry Of Tourism’s crisis management team continues to liaise with the National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA), Bahamas Hotel and Tourism Association (BHTA), Nassau Airport Development Company, the Port Authority and other relevant authorities. It is also keeping track of all visitor counts by island and receiving frequent updates”.

That Bahamas Ministry of Tourism has issued a notice to industry partners advising them to allow NEMA, the appropriate Government agency, to conduct the initial damage and needs assessment in all the affected areas so that offers of assistance are appropriate. BMOT stressed that it is not recommended for private entities to travel to the affected areas at this time.

NEMA deployed a team of four persons from the Department of Civil Aviation, Ministry Of Works, the Royal Department Defence Force and the Department of Meteorology to ascertain the states of the airports on Acklins, Crooked Island, San Salvador and Long Island. Royal Navy ships will be departing from Jamaica to also assess the damage as well as take emergency supplies.

Once the reconnaissance has been done, a State of Emergency will be declared and that will then determine the next step in a well-established protocol on how to donate items and assess various concessions. Upon completion of the needs assessment, NEMA will advise aid distribution protocols, as well as manpower needs.

The Islands Of The Bahamas will be releasing updates on the status of each island in The Bahamas over the next few days.

Mia Weech-Lange
Bahamas Ministry of Tourism

+1-954-236-9292
email us here

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