



# DEPARTMENT OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

## POLICY FRAMEWORK AND STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES FOR SYSTEMATIC NATIONAL SHUTDOWN AND REACTIVATION OF BARBADOS

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### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Department of Emergency Management has been mandated by the Government of Barbados to prepare the country to respond to and recover from natural or man-made hazards which threatens or occurs in Barbados.

This document therefore outlines the Policy and Standard Operating Procedures to be followed in the event that Barbados is under WARNING and ALL CLEAR conditions, particularly those influenced by the threat or passage of severe weather, tropical storm or hurricane. It will be annexed to the National Emergency Management Plan.

### 2.0 PURPOSE

The purpose is to ensure that a systematic and orderly shutdown and reactivation of the country is undertaken when there is a national WARNING or ALL CLEAR issued by the Director of Meteorological Services.

### 3.0 OVERALL POLICY

The Government of Barbados, will take appropriate action in the interest of public safety and security to ensure that the population of Barbados and critical personnel and national assets are protected from major impacts of severe weather, tropical storms and hurricanes.

#### 3.1.1 National Shutdown Policy

The Government of Barbados through the Director of the Department of Emergency Management will issue a National Shutdown Administrative Instruction after a Select Committee of the Emergency Management Council, (EMC), recommends and secures the approval of the Cabinet of Barbados that such an Instruction should be issued by the Department of Emergency Management in the interest of the Country.

### 3.1.2 National Reactivation Policy

The Government of Barbados, through the Director of the Department of Emergency Management, will issue a National Reactivation Instruction after the Director of Meteorological Services in consultation with the Director, DEM issues a Meteorological All Clear. This instruction will be issued to the Emergency Services, Security Forces and Frontline/First Responders who are part of the Emergency Telecommunications System.

A subsequent Operational All Clear/Reactivation Instruction will be issued by the Director of the Department of Emergency Management to the general public via the mass media or through the Emergency Broadcast System with the support and collaboration with the Government Information Service.

## 4.0 NATIONAL SHUTDOWN STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES

The Director of Meteorological Services in collaboration with the Director of the Department of Emergency Management will issue a severe weather/tropical storm or hurricane warning for Barbados.

Standard Operation Procedures for the determination of the meteorological warnings is attached at Appendix 1.

After the Warning has been issued, the following Standard Operating Procedures governing the National Shutdown Instruction will be followed.

## 5.0 SELECT COMMITTEE

The Director of the Department of Emergency Management will convene a Select Committee of the Emergency Management Council, to discuss the warning issued by the Director of Meteorological Services and recommend to the Cabinet of Barbados that a National Shutdown Administrative Instruction should be issued.

### 5.1 Composition

The Committee will comprise the following individuals and agencies:

- Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs
- Director of the Department of Emergency Management
- Director of Meteorological Services
- Chief Information Officer, Government Information Service
- Executive Director, Barbados Chamber of Commerce

- Director of Operations, GAIA Inc.
- Chief Executive Officer, Barbados Port Inc.
- The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Tourism
- Commissioner of Police, Royal Barbados Police Force
- Chief Fire Officer, Barbados Fire Service
- Chief of Staff, Barbados Defence Force
- Chief Technical Director, Ministry of Transport and Works
- Chief Education Officer, Ministry of Education
- Chief Medical Officer, Ministry of Health
- Cabinet Secretary/Head of the Civil Service
- Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Coordinator, CDERA

## 5.2 Terms of Reference of Select Committee

- 5.2.1 Review the warning issued by the Director of Meteorological Services.
- 5.2.2 Review impact scenarios and required actions.
- 5.2.3 Consider the recommended strategies and approaches to affect a systematic and orderly shutdown of Barbados
- 5.2.4 Make recommendations to the Cabinet of Barbados on the nature of the national shutdown.

## 6.0 GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR NATIONAL SHUTDOWN

In discussing the National Shutdown Procedure, the following should be considered:

- Time of Likely impact – determine daylight hours available.
  - Extent of likely damage - this will determine the urgency and priority issues.
  - Existing activity and general conditions in country (workday, weekend, public holiday etc.
  - Staggered Approach to Shutdown.
  - Segment of population, which will be prioritized in Shutdown.
  - Strategies and approaches for mass media dissemination.

## 7.0 GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR STAGGERED APPROACH TO NATIONAL SHUTDOWN

The approach to National Shutdown will be on a staggered basis, to ensure that key elements of national operations are allowed to maintain an effective level of operation for as long as possible, at the same time facilitating the systematic close out of non-essential operations.

The Select Committee of the Emergency Management Council, (EMC), may consider the following staggered approach to National Shutdown:

- Schools and Day Care Centers should be considered as priority sectors. The Ministry of Education and the Child Care Board should therefore be included in the early notification process.
- Non-essential operations of the public service should be considered as the second priority. The Ministry of the Civil Service will therefore determine which sections of the public service fall into this category. This sector will close after Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Department ensure that departments and ministries' plans for securing of public sector assets have been satisfactorily concluded.
- Non-essential operations of the Private Sector should be considered for closure along with the closure of the non-essential services. The Executive Director, Barbados Chamber of Commerce after consultation with relevant authorities, will request a closure of the private sector based on predetermined procedures.
- Ministries and Heads of Departments which are part of the Essential Services (see definition below) will shut down their operations in accordance with their Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs); for example:

The Ministry responsible for public transportation will issue a shutdown instruction for the public transport sector taking into consideration the needs of the traveling public, safety of drivers, security and safety of rolling stock.

The Grantley Adams Airport, Inc. and the Barbados Port Inc. will order the closure of Ports of Entry based on pre-determined procedures.

The Royal Barbados Police Force will facilitate the smooth movement of traffic exiting the City of Bridgetown in accordance with the Bridgetown Traffic Management Plan

The Emergency Operation Center mechanism under the direction of the EOC Director, will monitor the shutdown and provide regular updates to the general public on the status of the national shutdown.

#### Definition of Essential Services in the Public Sector

Essential Services in the Public Sector will include the Emergency Services and any other department or ministry which has critical functions in times of national mobilization in response to an imminent emergency.

The Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs /Director of the Department of Emergency Management will convey the recommendation of the Select Committee to the Cabinet Secretary who will facilitate a Cabinet decision.

The Cabinet Secretary will subsequently inform the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Home Affairs/Director of the Department of Emergency Management of Cabinet's approval and the Director will issue the National Shutdown Instruction with technical support from the Chief Information Officer.

The Cabinet Secretary will inform the Head of the Public Service of the decision to issue the National Shutdown Instruction.

The National Shutdown Instruction will be issued not less than (6) six hours before the onset of a severe weather system.

#### Public Sector Shutdown Procedures

The Head of the Public Service will inform all Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Departments of the decision to shutdown the country and its implications for the closure of the public sector.

Permanent Secretaries and Heads of Departments will invoke their national emergency management plans and standing operating procedures which govern the orderly and systematic shutdown of their ministries and departments.

Critical agencies, including the emergency services, should determine the time of closure taking into consideration the following:

- a) The provision of their disaster plans.
- b) The security and operational procedures of their organization.

- c) The welfare of the employees and the need for them to take their domestic precautions, especially those living in remote and flood prone areas.
- d) The critical service which they provide to the population.

#### Private Sector Shutdown Procedures

On the issue of the National Shutdown Instruction, private sector entities/companies shall close their operation taking into account the following:

- e) The provision of their disaster plans.
- f) The security and operational procedures of the entity/company.  
The welfare of the employees and the need for them to take their domestic precautions, especially those living in remote and flood prone areas.
- g) The operators of public transportation will need to withdraw and secure their vehicles well before the impact. Consequently, staff not essential to the entity/company's disaster plans should be released early, unless private arrangements can be made for transporting staff home safely.

#### Definition of Essential Services

Within the context of the Private Sector, Essential Services are those companies /entities which provide essential emergency services to the general public in times of emergencies. These include, but are not limited to the following:

1. The Utility Companies
2. Supermarkets, mini-marts, shops
3. Pharmacies
4. General Stores, including hardware stores and lumberyards.

#### 6.0 ALL CLEAR NOTIFICATION

The Director of Meteorological Services, after determining that the weather system: Severe Weather/ Tropical Storm/Hurricane is no longer a threat to Barbados, will collaborate with the Director of the Department of Emergency Management on the issuance of an All Clear for Barbados. This will be done on a two-tier basis: firstly as A Meteorological All Clear to members of the National Emergency Operations Center and subsequently to the emergency services, security forces and key members of the frontline responders.

Security forces, emergency services and frontline responders will be deployed to further ensure that the environment is safe for residents and visitors. The NEOC will then issue An Operational All Clear which will be transmitted from the NEOC to the mass media for public dissemination.

This announcement from the NEOC will permit the public to move around freely, provided that there are no other restrictions imposed by the NEOC.

The public is not permitted to move out of their homes until the Operational All Clear is issued.

#### 7.0 PUBLIC INFORMATION

The Broadcast Media (radio and television) under the direction of the Chief Information Officer, will ensure that this information is relayed to the public.

The Government of Barbados, through the NEOC, will make national statements on the current situation following the emergency/disaster, with support from the Chief Information Officer, if necessary through the National Emergency Broadcast System.

Approved by the Cabinet of Barbados in June 2006 and amended on August 2008.

## Appendix 1

### POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR ISSUANCE OF METEOROLOGICAL WARNINGS

#### Recommended Prognostic Guidelines for National Shutdown

##### HURRICANE WARNING – 24 hours or less

1. If projected path takes center of Category 3 or higher hurricane within:
  - a) 125 miles south of Barbados or if the island falls within the area of projected hurricane force winds. (OR)
  - b) 80 miles north of Barbados or if the island falls within the area of projected hurricane force winds.
2. If projected path takes center of Category 1-2 hurricane within:
  - a) 60 miles south of Barbados or if the island falls within the area of projected hurricane force winds. (OR)
  - b) 30 miles north of Barbados or if the island falls within the area of projected hurricane force winds.

##### TROPICAL STORM WARNING – 24 hours or less

3. A tropical storm warning will be issued if projected path takes the center of tropical storm or hurricane within:
  - a) 40 miles south of Barbados or if the island falls within the area of projected tropical storm force winds. (OR)
  - b) 15 miles north of Barbados or if the island falls within the area of projected tropical storm force winds.

##### SEVERE WEATHER WARNING – 6 hours

4. A Severe Weather Warning will be issued if hazardous weather characterized by one or more of the following elements is expected to persist for more than 6 hours:
  - Strong gusty winds
  - Heavy rains
  - Moderate to strong thunderstorms
  - Widespread flooding
  - Other significant related events

Intermittent bouts of these and other phenomena, lasting for less than 2 hours per event would not necessitate the implementation of a National Shutdown Administrative Order.