



GOVERNMENT OF PUERTO RICO

Federal Affairs Administration

Fact Sheet: Status of Puerto Rico After Hurricanes Irma and Maria & Call to Action for Congress and the Federal Executive

October 4, 2017

The 3.4 million American citizens of Puerto Rico are experiencing utter devastation after the worst hurricanes in nearly 100 years unleashed unprecedented wind and flood damage in the U.S. territory.

Grave Crisis of Unthinkable Proportions: On September 6, 2017, Puerto Rico was hit by Hurricane Irma which made considerable damage, most notably to the island's energy infrastructure. Then, on September 20th, the island was struck again by catastrophic Hurricane Maria, resulting in:

- **Loss of Life:** 34 confirmed fatalities to date, a figure that may continue to increase
- **Hospitals:** 63 of 65 hospitals are open. 14 are connected to grid power and 51 functioning under generator power
- **Health Conditions:** Many ambulatory dialysis patients and other critical care patients are in dire need of hospital care. Medical supplies are running critically low
- **Food Security:** Conditions have severely strained access to food for a significant portion of the population.
- **Water:** 52% of population are without running water; structural failure at a dam with 11-billion-gallon water reservoir
- **Energy:** 1.58 million or 95% customers without electricity
- **Telecommunications:** 88% of the island is without cell phone service and other communication services are either not operating or severely limited
- **Destruction of Property:** According to Moody's initial estimates range from \$45 to \$95 billion
- **Transportation:** Severe damage to 18 bridges and 6 highways; 11 major roads closed and another 11 have been cleared of debris
- **Air & Maritime Ports:** The San Juan International Airport has lost 6 of its 7 radars, forcing use of visual flight rules (VFR), which commercial airlines refrain from flying under due to insurance liabilities. Resulting in significant reduction on the number of flights that are able to take off. 4 maritime ports are fully operational; 9 others are open but operating on restricted basis solely for military and hurricane relief; one private, non-federal port remains closed

Further Complicating PR's Pre-Existing Fiscal & Economic Challenges: This is a massive blow to the U.S. territory's citizens who were already reeling before this hurricane season started. Puerto Rico was facing massive fiscal, economic and demographic challenges, and absorbing the impact of complying with the requirements of the Oversight Board and the Fiscal Plan under PROMESA. The hurricanes have created an even more precarious fiscal and economic situation that could potentially turn catastrophic.

- **Economy:** Economic activity has been virtually paralyzed on the island
- **Fuel:** Massive lines for gasoline and limited access to diesel means most employees can't drive to work and companies are unable to move their products and services
- **Tax Revenue:** Loss of economic activity means an almost total drop in tax revenues at the territory and local levels that could last until December
- **Government Liquidity:** Cash transactions have replaced all electronic ones and its unlikely that taxes will be collected, the government could run out of cash in as little as two weeks
- **Pensions:** Government employees and pensioners are at risk of not receiving benefits as early as October



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Extraordinary Local Efforts and Federal Collaboration: The Government of Puerto Rico is doing everything within its power to protect the lives of everyone on the island, maintain public safety and address the multitude of urgent post-disaster response needs

- **Search and Rescue:** The Government has been working around the clock to find and rescue individuals, families and communities facing threats to their life and safety. To date, 2,647 structures have been searched and over 800 people have been rescued
- **Evacuations:** The Government preemptively called for the evacuation of hundreds of thousands of island residents in areas subject to flooding and other hazards
- **Shelters:** The Government established over 500 shelters island-wide which are currently housing over 11,000 people
- **Curfew:** A curfew has been issued from 12:00am to 5:00am until further notice, this exempts first responders, government officials, cases of emergencies and companies distributing aid such as food, water, and fuel
- **Government Operations:** The Government has relocated on a provisional basis to the Puerto Rico Convention Center co-locating with federal authorities
- **Federal Collaboration:** Local officials are working hand-in-hand 24/7 with our federal counterparts in the White House, FEMA, DOD, Coast Guard and countless federal agencies. There are 8,800 federal personnel on the island. A three-star Army general, Lt. General Jeff Buchanan, is coordinating federal response and operations. DOD will be sending thousands of troops in coming days.

Call to Action for Congress and the Federal Executive

From Disaster Response to Recovery & Reconstruction: While the disaster response is ongoing there is a significant need to ensure the conversations regarding recovery and reconstruction also get underway. Only an expansive “Marshall Plan” like approach to Puerto Rico’s recovery and reconstruction will allow the territory to stabilize its finances, prevent an even greater outmigration to the states and unleash Puerto Rico’s full economic potential and capacity in a sustainable way.

Urgent Need for Federal Emergency Disaster Relief: We urge Congress to support Puerto Rico’s leadership by quickly enacting a substantial federal supplementary funding package. This is necessary for us to meet the immediate emergency and long-term recovery needs of 3.4 million U.S. citizens. The expedient approval of these funds is essential so that the unique combination of crises facing Puerto Rico can be met and overcome.

Regional Stability and National Security: Federal authorities can make Puerto Rico America’s post-disaster regional recovery and reconstruction hub, helping secure America’s Caribbean border, protecting its national security interests, and benefitting both the island and the states economically through increased interstate commerce and regional trade. A renewed and thriving Puerto Rico will serve as America’s beacon of stability, security and prosperity in the Caribbean region.