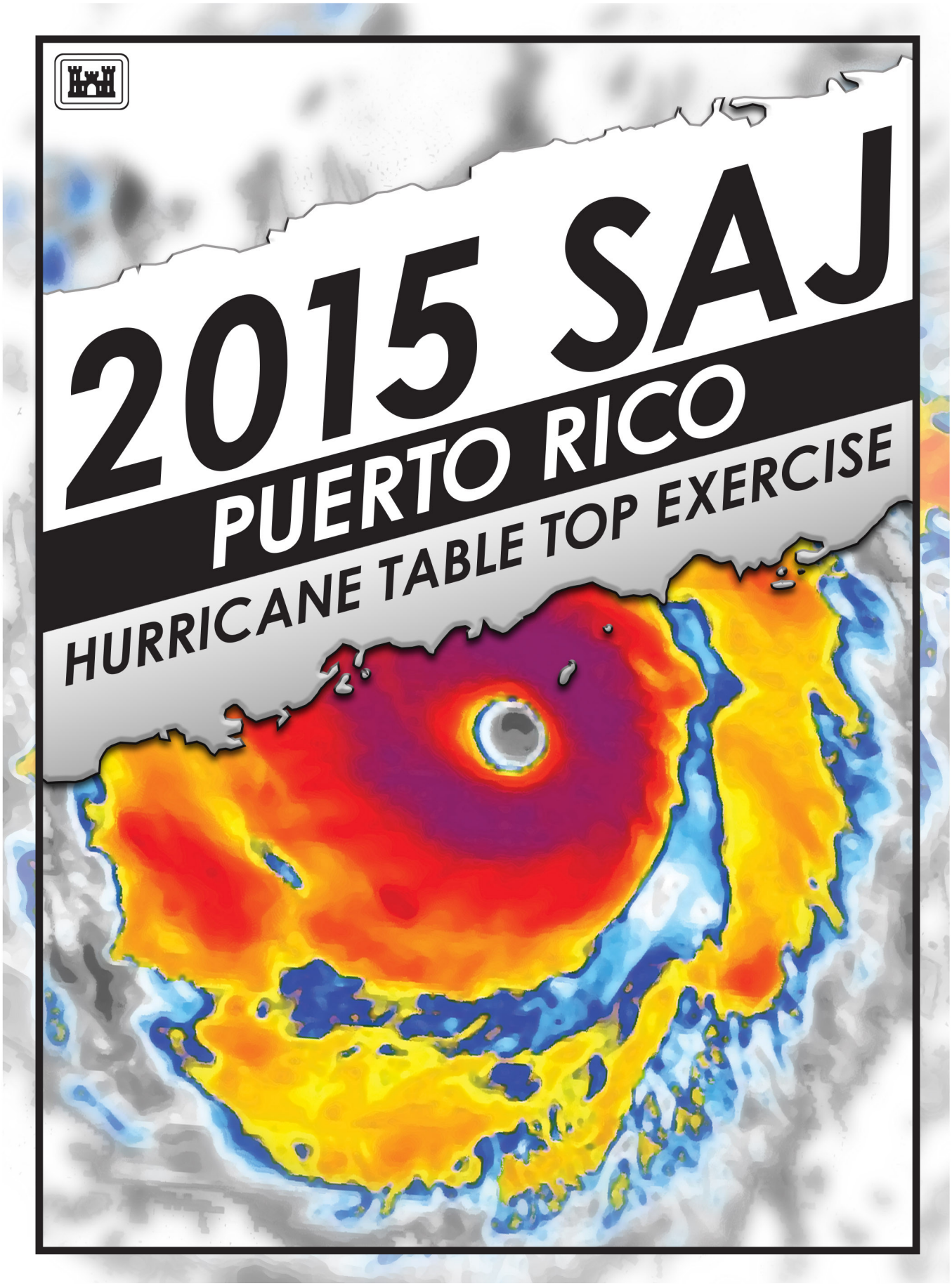
2015 SAJ
PUERTO RICO
HURRICANE TABLE TOP EXERCISE

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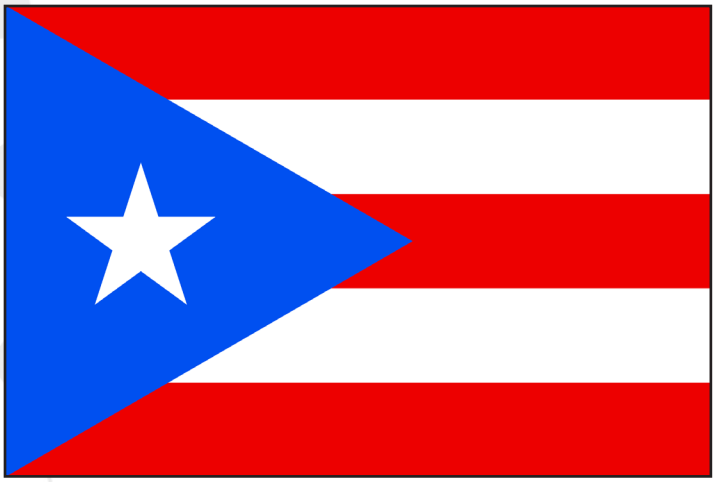
Overview

The 2015 SAJ Puerto Rico Hurricane Table Top Exercise (TTX) is a facilitator/moderator led event designed to present realistic problems arranged sequentially in a simulated environment. Time, place, and communications during the event are all simulated for the purpose of accelerating the activity to engage in problem solving in a high fidelity environment. This guide will serve as supporting material for the rehearsal participants.



The proponents of the TTX have determined the optimal performance of participants. For the after action review, this expectation will be compared with actual performance for the purpose of identifying performance improvement areas and weaknesses in existing plans, policies, and procedures.

The TTX will be guided through the use of various multimedia support products, including simulations, modeling outputs, and video updates. These multimedia products arrange the event information and activities in a visual/auditory interface. The TTX periods will be divided into sequential phases. Each simulated time period contains prompts for all participants. The implied and specified requests for information will be briefed by the participants at the end of each simulated time period's activities. At the end of each period, a debriefing to review activity up to that point will take place.

Background

The 2015 SAJ PR Hurricane TTX is based on the historic 1928 San Felipe Segundo Hurricane. The fourth tropical cyclone, third hurricane, and only major hurricane of the season, this system developed just offshore the west coast of Africa on September 6.

Initially a tropical depression, it strengthened into a tropical storm later that day, shortly before passing south of the Cape Verde Islands. Further intensification was slow and halted by late on September 7. However, about 48 hours later, the storm resumed strengthening and became a Category 1 hurricane on the modern-day Saffir–Simpson hurricane wind scale. Still moving westward, the system reached Category 4 intensity before striking Guadeloupe on September 12. There, the storm brought "great destruction" and 1,200 deaths. The islands of Martinique, Montserrat, and Nevis also reported damage and fatalities, but not nearly as severe as in Guadeloupe.

Around midday on September 13, the storm strengthened into a Category 5 hurricane and peaked with sustained winds of 160 mph (260 km/h). About six hours later, the system made landfall in Puerto Rico; it was the only recorded tropical cyclone to strike the island at Category 5 intensity.

Roles

The attendees in this exercise are divided into four groups.

Participants – This group is made up of the intended primary response group who will be expected to perform their tasks in an authentic manner during the simulated sequence of events. This group will also provide the appropriate debriefing information at the designated times. These briefs will be informal and designed to address the critical issues of the rehearsal. Task performed will include both implied and specified.

Observers – This group is made up of interested parties and stakeholders who have a vested interest in the activities prompted by the simulation. Observers will be both present in the exercise forum and remotely. They will also be invited to make comments and provide insights during the event.

Moderators – The moderators make up the exercise design group. They will provide technical guidance, debrief feedback, and assist with the facilitation of the event to achieve the design objectives.

Facilitators – The facilitators are the component of the moderation group responsible for guiding the event, keeping the simulation time clock, maintaining the exercise flow, and capturing key issues for remedial action.

Goal

To ensure Jacksonville District preparedness for the upcoming hurricane season; discuss and coordinate Corps activities and capabilities with Federal, State, and local partners during the response to and recovery from a hurricane impacting USVI; and to discuss expectations of our Federal, State, and local partners.

Objectives

1. Provide an environment to identify planning, response, and recovery needs for the Commonwealth of PR.
2. Identify through a simulated emergency the SAJ roles and responsibilities among key staff.
3. Provide leadership the opportunity to identify the essential tasks needed to strategically direct and deploy resources and assets under their command.
4. Synchronize all capabilities among Federal, State, and local partners.

Guidelines

A table top exercise, while simulating an emergency, is a discussion guided by the facilitator. There are no “real” actions carried out during the TTX. Participants explain and discuss among the group how they would react to the scenario, but do not actually execute those actions.

There are no right or wrong responses during the exercise. There are no consequences for exploring alternative solutions as part of the discussion. The success of this exercise reflects the full and honest participation of the participants and the impact the lessons learned during the exercise have on the revision and enhancement of plans, policies and procedures.

It is not unusual during the course of a discussion to learn that important policies or procedures are not clearly defined, not familiar to all those involved, or simply less efficient than a procedure used by a different group. Events such as this provide an opportunity for all involved to learn from the strengths of others.

Operational Phases and Levels of Activation

USACE Operational Phase	USACE Levels of Activation	FEMA Operational Phase
Normal Operations	Level IV – Normal Operations	Phase 1a – Watch (>L-168)
Phase I – Activation (L-120 – L-72)	Level III – Monitoring	Phase 1b - Elevated Threat (L-168 – L-120)
Phase II – Deployment IIa (L-72 – L-24) IIb (L-24 – L)	Level II – Partial Activation Or possibly Level I – Full Activation	Phase 1c - Credible Threat (L-120 – L)
Phase III – Execution (L – L+12)	Level I – Full activation	Phase 2 - Incident Response (L – L+12)
Phase IV – Recovery (After L+12)	Level I – Full Activation Or possibly Level II – Partial Activation	Phase 3 - Post-Incident (After L+12)
Phase V - Closeout	Level III – Monitoring Or possibly Level IV – Normal Operations	Phase 3 - Post-Incident

Phase I – Activation

The activation phase is a heightened state of awareness in anticipation of a potential threat to the United States, its territories, and areas authorized assistance under provisions of the Stafford Act. In this phase, personnel, and materiel may be placed in an alert status.

Phase II – Deployment

The Deployment phase is designated by the USACE Task Force Commander (UTFC) and commences when FEMA NRCC issues ESF #3 response mission assignments (e.g. ice, water, and emergency power) supporting the deployment of USACE personnel and materiel. Additional personnel and materiel may be placed in an alert status.

Phase III – Execution

The Execution phase is synonymous with the FEMA/NRF term of Crisis Response phase. This phase commences when an event begins; for instance hurricane landfall (landfall is defined as the intersection of the surface center of a tropical cyclone with a coastline). The Supported Commander plans and executes assigned missions that may include critical life saving activities or protection of property.

SAD designates a Division Forward Commander (DFC) and finalizes a concept of operations. The DFC provides command and control for the supported division commander's assets on the ground.

SAD also establishes and maintains a Recovery Field Office (RFO) if the mission is assigned by FEMA. The RFO coordinates and executes NRF recovery missions (e.g. technical assistance, debris removal, temporary housing, infrastructure assessment, and temporary roofing). In addition, SAD will coordinate with the ESF #3 TL at the JFO to ensure Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO) authorization of reimbursement for RFO costs, and will establish working space for PRT members not deployed to FEMA locations.

Phase IV and V – Recovery and Closeout

These phases address the re-establishment of public utilities and services, the commencement of recovery missions (e.g., technical assistance, debris removal, temporary housing, infrastructure assessment, and temporary roofing) and the continuance of response missions (e.g., ice, water, and emergency power). Mission completion is accomplished when personnel and materiel are released to return to normal duties. This phase involves disengagement by SAD and concludes with the physical/fiscal completion of all mission assignments.

Levels of Activation

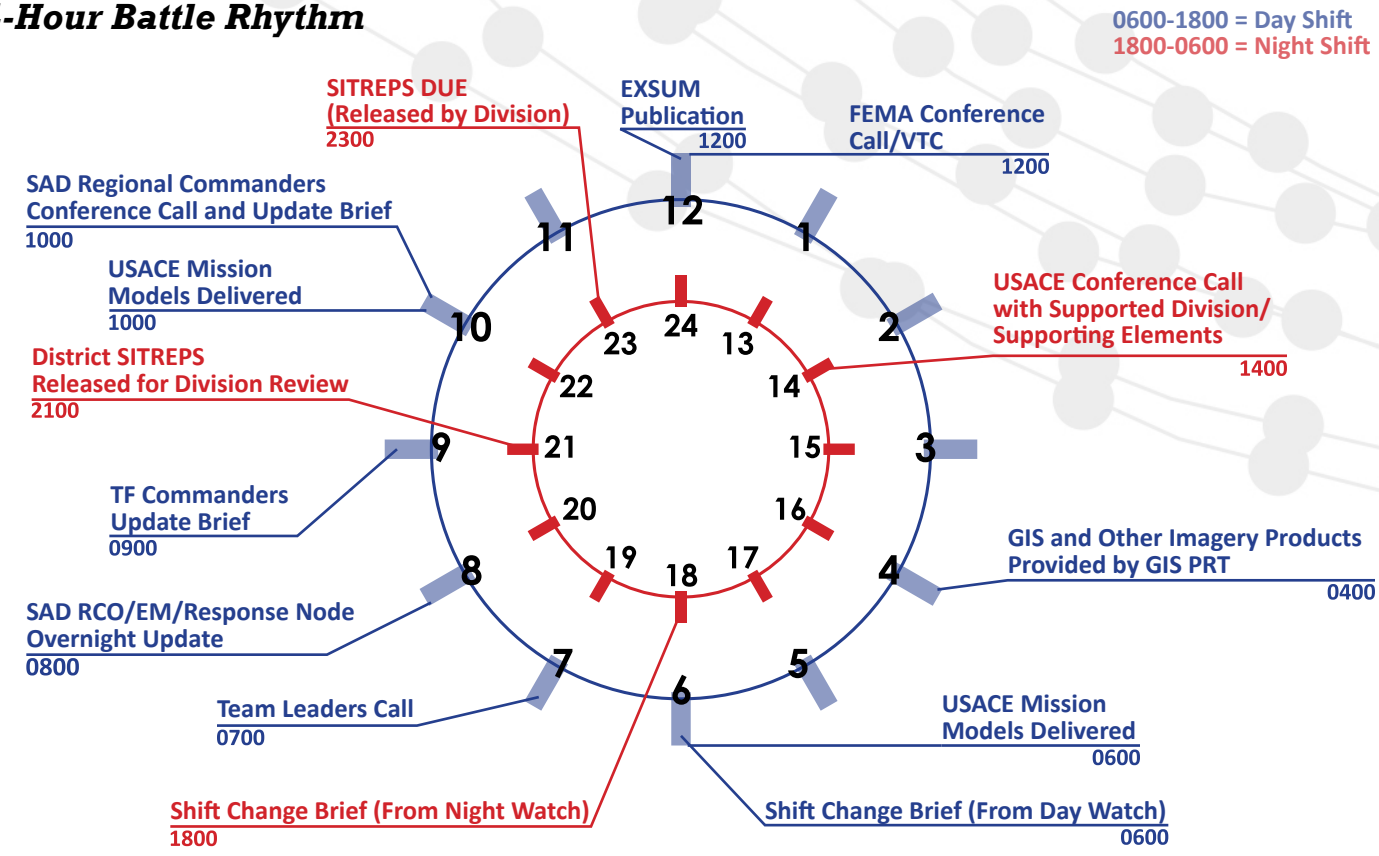
(1) Level IV – Normal Operations: Operational period is normal duty hours. During normal operations, the EOC maintains situational awareness and is prepared to move to level III immediately. During this level of operations, training, exercises, and preparedness activities are ongoing.

(2) Level III – Monitoring: Operational period is normal duty hours. Level III is typically a "monitoring" phase that begins June 1st each year in preparation of hurricane season. Notification will be made to those emergency response team members who would need to take action as part of their everyday responsibilities. Division and District EOCs are staffed with EM staff.

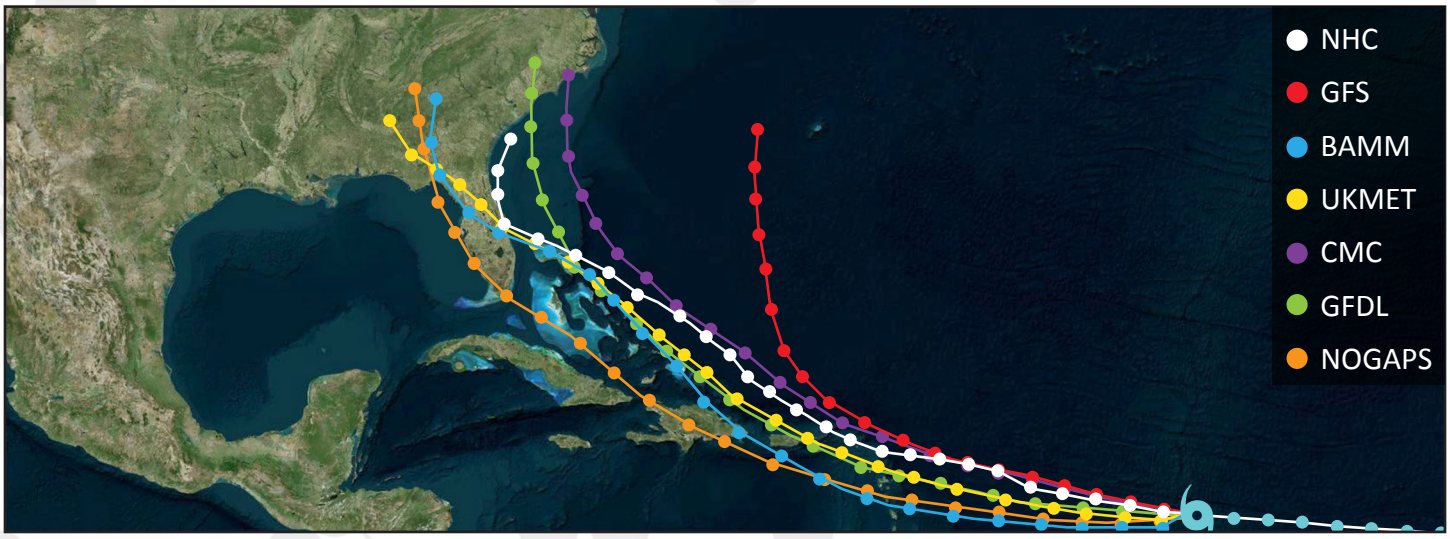
(3) Level II – Partial Activation of Regional and District Emergency Operations Center: Operational period is 12/7. This is a limited activation. All primary/lead emergency response team members are notified and placed on alert. Division and District EOCs are staffed by EM personnel and necessary support function personnel.

(4) Level I – Full Scale Activation of Regional and District Emergency Operations Center: Operational period if 24/7. In a full-scale activation, all primary and support teams are notified. Division and District EOCs are staffed by EM personnel and all support function personnel.

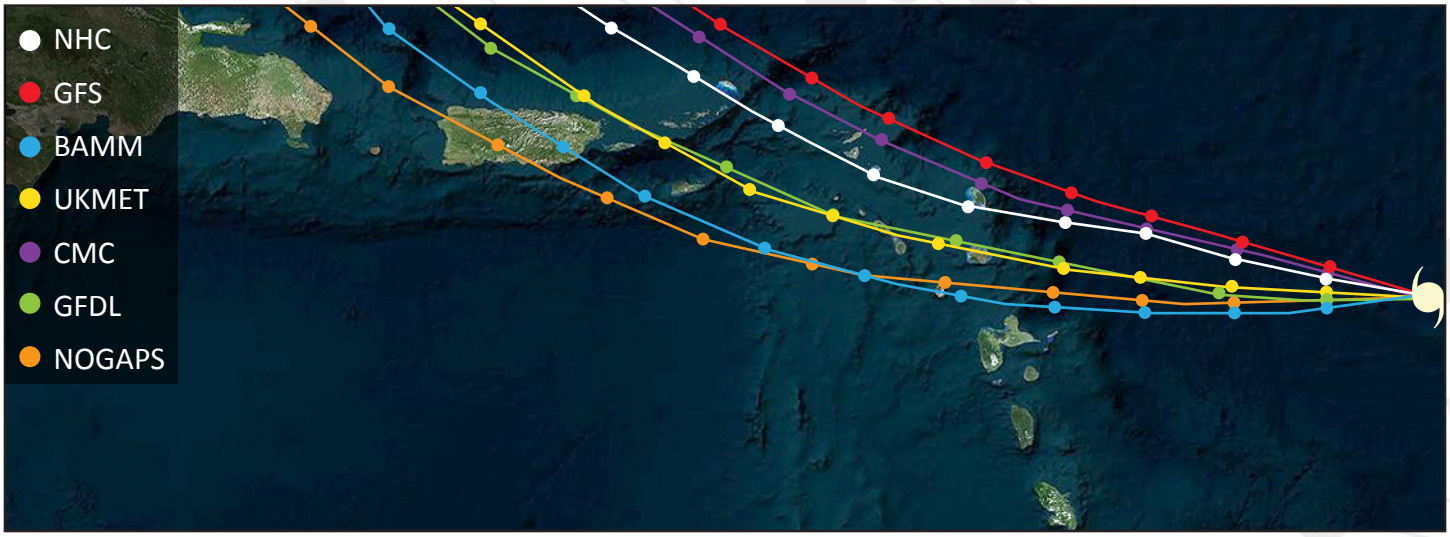
24-Hour Battle Rhythm



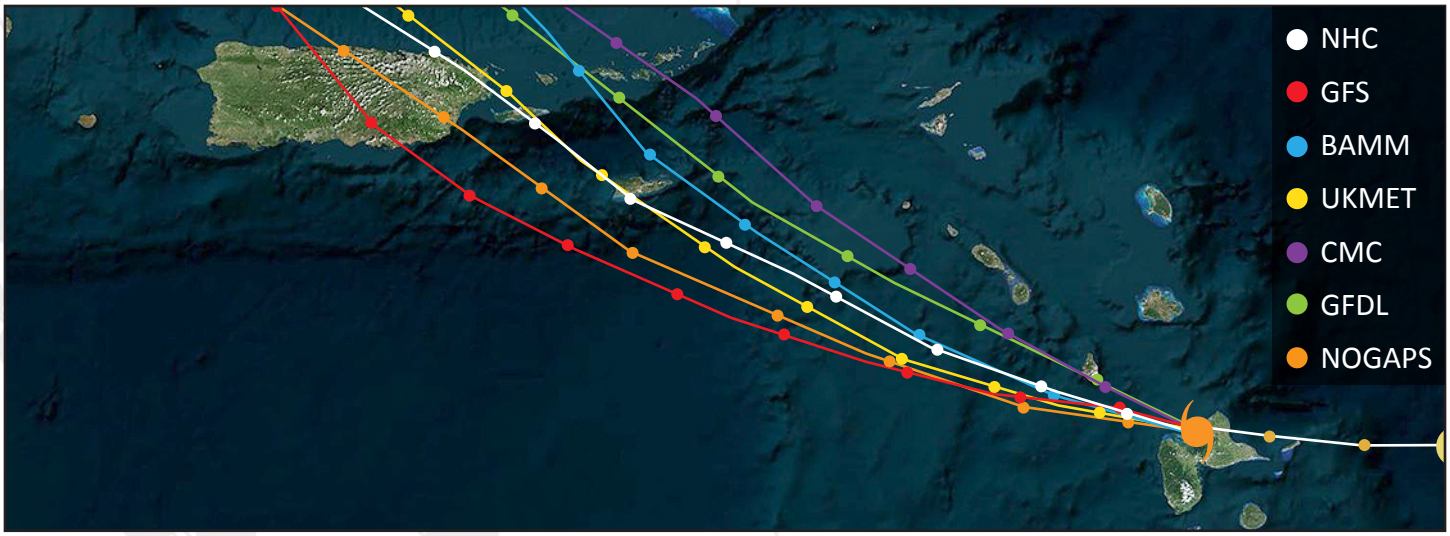
Scenario



Thursday, September 10: Meteorologists have been monitoring a broad area of low pressure located a several hundred miles off the Cape Verde islands for three days. This morning, the National Hurricane Center has officially classified the system as Tropical Storm Grace tracking westward at about 15 mph. Weather officials are watching this system closely, as they predict the Cape-Verde type storm to significantly strengthen over the next several days as it moves through the open Atlantic and toward the Caribbean.



Friday, September 11: As forecast, Hurricane Grace intensified overnight into a Category 1 storm as it continues its westward march toward the Caribbean. The NHC has stated that conditions are favorable for this system to rapidly intensify into a major hurricane as it approaches warmer waters. The storm's cone of uncertainty engulfs almost the entire Caribbean region, and officials and residents on all islands are on high alert for a possible landfall. Elsewhere, interests along the Gulf of Mexico and the Eastern Coast of the United States are also monitoring the storm, as the track is still uncertain.



Saturday, September 12: Hurricane Grace rapidly strengthened over the past 24 hours, growing into a catastrophic Category 4 storm with 140 mph winds. The storm is currently positioned over the Lesser Antilles and is headed straight for the US Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, and the island of Hispaniola. Authorities throughout the Greater Antilles are scrambling to prepare their citizens for an impending and devastating landfall, as meteorologists warn that Grace could spin into a Category 5 storm overnight. Grace has caused major damage in Guadeloupe, Montserrat, and St. Kitts before making a north turn. Forty-one people have been killed and 23,000 are now homeless. Approximately 85 percent of all structures in Guadeloupe, Montserrat, and St. Kitts and Nevis were destroyed. Phone lines, power lines, hospitals, banks, and the airports were severely damaged or destroyed. Widespread looting is occurring.