

## **POST HURRICANE PAULETTE PRESS BRIEFING**

The Hon. Renee Ming, JP, MP

*Minister of National Security*

September 14, 2020

Hello Bermuda.... we've managed to navigate through a very serious hurricane.

It was a difficult night for all of us, but we made it through. Thankfully there were no serious injuries that occurred during the height of the storm.

Currently, our essential services and emergency crews from the Royal Bermuda Regiment, BELCO, the Parks Department and Public Works continue the process of clearing our roads and assessing the storm damage to ensure that we are up and running as quickly as possible. I want to urge the public unless you are an essential worker, to please stay off the roads so that BELCO can do the restorations works needed to get the power back on.

There are unsafe conditions in some of the areas around the island such as downed poles and power lines, so we are urging you to use common sense so that our emergency workers can get their critical work done. The roads are still full of debris and the crews will need time to clear roads without being impeded. We urge employers to keep their staff at home until after the EMO meeting ends tomorrow.

That said, the EMO met earlier this afternoon, and here are some key updates for the public:

- The Causeway has been given the all clear and will reopen at 9p.m. tonight.
- Schools will remain closed tomorrow. The Ministry of Education will update parents and the public regarding the reopening of schools following a full assessment of all public school buildings.
- The L.F. Wade International Airport will reopen tomorrow at 12 noon.
- All Government buildings will be closed tomorrow. We are requesting where possible for Public Officers to continue working remotely tomorrow. This is all dependent on whether individuals have not been affected by the hurricane.
- Based on the clearance of the main roadways, a determination will be made on the resumption of the bus service. The public will be advised accordingly.
- All ferry service will resume on Wednesday.
- The Government Shelter at CedarBridge remains open and housed 50 people during the storm. It has also received additional persons who have suffered storm damage to their homes.
- Regarding trash, Marsh Folly will reopen tomorrow morning, as will Tyne's Bay Public and Commercial Drop off areas.

- As it relates to residential trash collection, Wednesday will be the next collection day for those residents who usually have their waste picked up that day. Regular trash collection will also take place Thursday and Friday. On Saturday and Sunday, trash will be collected for those who were not able to have their trash collected Monday or Tuesday.
- Advanced Polling will resume on Wednesday September 15.
- Regarding the COVID – 19 testing, the Department of Health continue to assess the testing centres and will provide an update to the public regarding the resumption of its services.
- And lastly, anyone who needs to report any storm related damages or who needs any storm related assistance can call 261-4366 or (261-4EMO).

**On a final note of good news, the Bermuda Hospitals Board reported two new births in the early hours of this morning. Two baby boys, and we extend congratulations to the parents.**

Before I close, I wish to just thank the entire community for their cooperation during the hurricane and for heeding the warnings and advisories issued by the EMO. I also wish to extend a special thanks to all the essential workers who worked during the storm, in particular, Dr. Mark Guishard and his team at the Bermuda Weather Service, the team at the EMO Operation Centre, the team manning the 100.1FM radio station and helping to keep us informed, and the Government Communications team for their hard work in issuing advisories to the public and on social media. Also a special thanks to the Police, Regiment, Fire, Public Works and Parks teams and all of those at the hospital who worked around the clock to keep us safe. Thank you all for your service and for your dedication to the people of Bermuda.

The EMO will meet again tomorrow and soon after its conclusion, we will provide another public update.

Thank you.