

# **U.S. Embassy Nassau**



## **Crisis and Hurricane Preparedness**



# Table of Contents

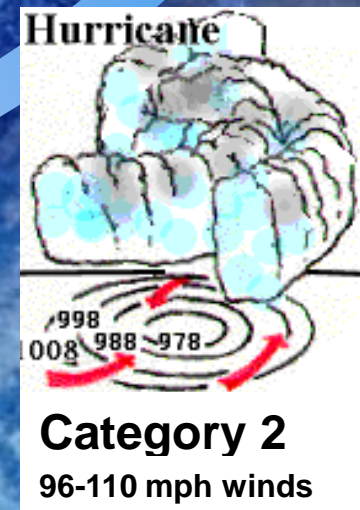
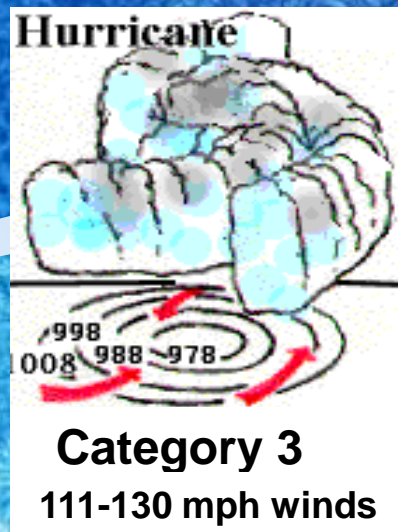
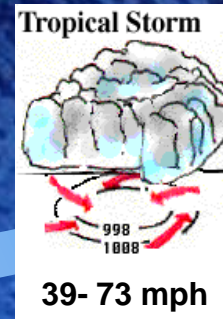
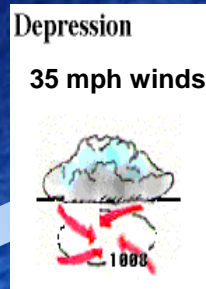
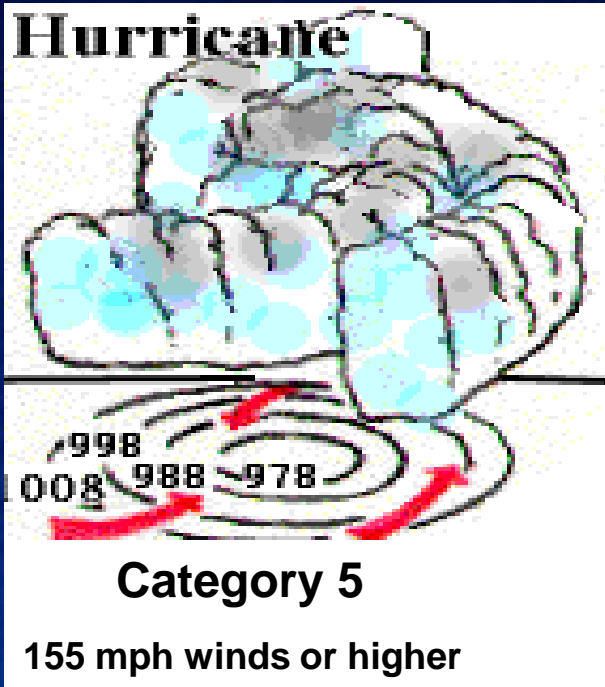
**1. Storm Cycles and Hurricane Categories**

**2. How to Plan and Prepare for a Crisis**

**3. What the Embassy can and cannot do  
for American Citizens during a crisis**

**4. Post Crisis – How the U.S. Embassy  
continues to assist post-crisis**

# Hurricane Cycle Diagram





# **CATEGORY 1:**

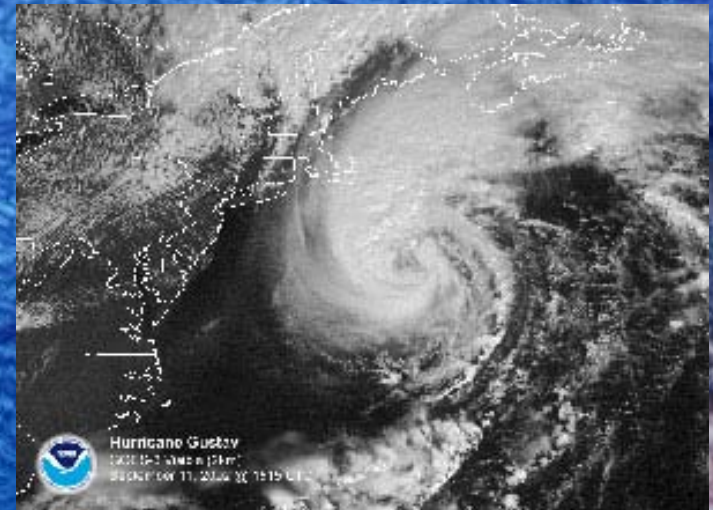
## **Hurricanes in The Bahamas**

**Hurricane Hanna – Inagua and Mayaguana (Sept 2008)**

**Hurricane Ike – Inagua (Sept 2008)**

**Hurricane Francis - Several Islands (Sept 2004)**

- Average wind speed for a cat. 1 is 74-95mph.
- Storm surge is generally 4-5 feet above normal.
- Damage is mostly to trees and shrubbery, with no real building damage.





# CATEGORY 2

## Hurricanes in The Bahamas:

**Hurricane Frances – Sept 2004 - several islands)**

**Hurricane Floyd – (Sept 1999 - Freeport)**

**Hurricane George (Sept 1998 - several islands)**

**Hurricane Lilli (Oct 1996 - several islands)**

- Winds are from 96- 110 mph.
- Storm surge is generally 6-8 feet above normal.
- Coastal and low lying escape routes may flood 2-4 hours before the arrival of the hurricane's center.
- Damage: Some roofing material, door and window damage to buildings. Considerable damage to trees and shrubbery with some trees blown down. Considerable damage to signs, mobile homes and poorly constructed piers.





# CATEGORY 3

## Hurricanes in The Bahamas:

Hurricane Wilma – 2004

Hurricane Jeanne – 2004

### MAJOR HURRICANE

- Winds from 111-130 mph.
- Can generate a storm surge of 9-12 feet above normal.
- Terrain lower than 5 feet above mean sea level may flood inland 8 miles or more.
- Evacuation of low lying areas may be required.
- Escape routes cut by rising water 3-5 hours before the hurricane' center arrives.

**DAMAGE:** Structural damage to residences. Large trees blown down. Mobile homes and poorly constructed signs are destroyed. Smaller structures at the coast destroyed and larger structures damaged by floating debris





# CATEGORY 4

## Hurricanes in The Bahamas

Hurricane Andrew (Cat 4-5)– August 1992

Hurricane Betsy – Sept 1965

### MAJOR HURRICANE

- Winds 131-155 mph
- Storm surge - 13-18 feet above normal.

### DAMAGE

- Extensive damage with complete roof structure failures on small residences.
- Most shrubs, signs and trees blown down.

- COMPLETE DESTRUCTION of mobile homes.
- Extensive damage to doors and windows.
- Low lying escape routes maybe cut by rising water 3-5 hours before the arrival of the hurricane's center.
- Major damage to lower floors of structures near the coast.
- Terrain lower than 10 feet above mean sea level may be flooded as far inland as 6 miles.





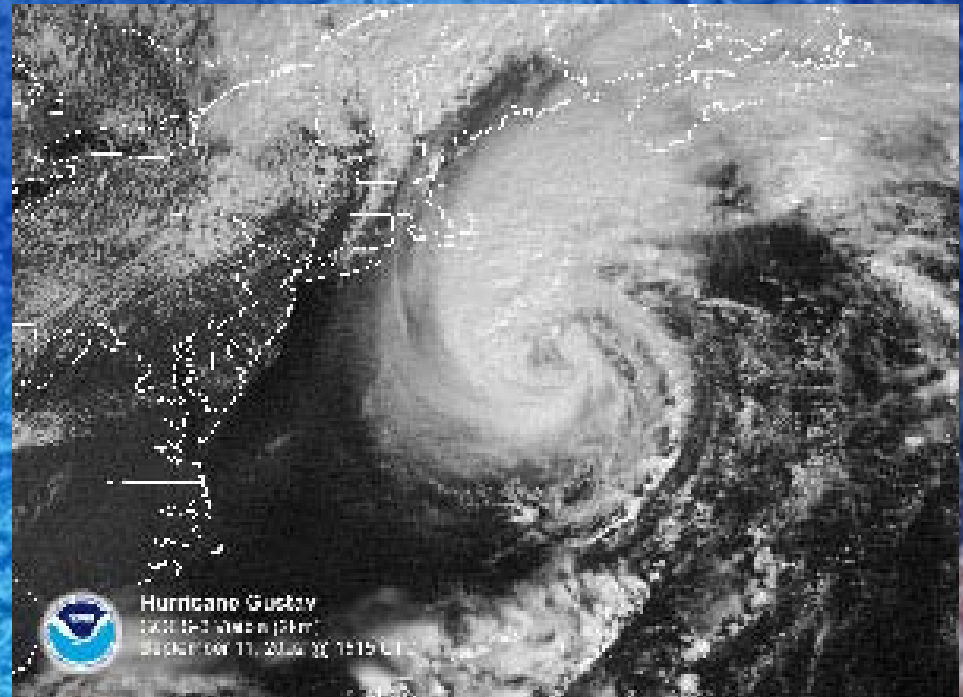
# CATEGORY 5

## Hurricanes in The Bahamas

### Hurricane Andrew – August 1992

#### MAJOR HURRICANE

- Winds greater than 155 mph.
- Storm surge greater than 18 feet above normal.
- Roofs destroyed on many residential and industrial buildings.
- Small utility buildings blown over or away.
- **COMPLETE DESTRUCTION** of some homes.
- Major damage to all lower floors of all structures located below 15 feet above sea level and within 500 yards of the shoreline.
- Massive evacuation of residential areas on low ground within 5-10 miles of the coastline required.





## Hurricane Table for The Bahamas

### Islands Impacted by Hurricanes

Hurricanes	Month - Year	Days	Category	Abaco	Acklins	Andros	Berry Is.	Bimini	Cat Is.	Crooked Is.	Eleuthera	Exuma	Grand Bahama	Inagua	Long Is.	Mayaguana	New Providence	Ragged Is.	Rum Cay	Salad
Donna	Sept. - 1960	7,8,9	4		*	*				*						*		*		
Flora	Oct. - 1963	8,9	1		*					*				*		*		*		
Cleo	Aug. - 1964	26,27	2			*		*					*							
Isbell	Oct. - 1964	14	3										*							
Betsy	Sept. - 1965	6,7,8	3 - 4	*													*			
Inez	Oct. - 1966	2,3,4	2	*																
David	Aug. / Sept. - 1969	31,1,2,3	2			*	*	*									*			
Kate	Nov. - 1985	17,18,19	2		*					*				*	*	*		*		
Emily	Sept. - 1987	22,23,24	2											*		*				
Floyd	Oct. - 1987	12,13	1	*			*	*					*							
Andrew	Aug. - 1992	23,24	4			*	*	*			*						*			
Erin	Jul. / Aug. - 1994	31 / 1	1 - 2	*					*		*		*							
Bertha	Jul. - 1996	9,10	2	*					*		*					*				
Lili	Oct. - 1996	18,19	1 - 2			*			*			*			*					
Georges	Sept. - 1998	23,24,25	1 - 2			*								*				*		
Dennis	Aug. - 1999	24,25,26,27,28	1	*																
Floyd	Sept. - 1999	13,14,15	2	*					*		*		*							
Michelle	Nov. - 2001	4,6	1			*					*						*			
Frances	Sept. - 2004	1,2,3	1 - 3	*					*		*		*						*	
Jeanne	Sept. - 2004	17,18,25	2	*									*							
Katrina	Aug - 2005	26	1				*	*												
Wilma	Oct - 2005	24	3	*		*	*	*					*				*			
Hanna	Sept. - 2008	1	1											*		*				
Ike	Sept. - 2008	1 - 5												*						
<b>Total: 24</b>				<b>10</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>	



# Hurricane Warning System in The Bahamas

- A HURRICANE/TROPICAL STORM ALERT implies that Hurricane/Tropical Storm conditions can be experienced within 60 hours (2½ days).
- A HURRICANE/TROPICAL STORM WATCH implies that Hurricane/Tropical Storm conditions can be experienced within 48 hours .
- A HURRICANE/TROPICAL STORM WARNING implies that Hurricane or Tropical Storm conditions can be experienced within 36 hours .
- An ALL CLEAR MESSAGE implies that Hurricane/Tropical Storm ALERTS, WATCHES or WARNINGS have been discontinued.



# **What does Crisis Preparedness Look Like?**












# How To Prepare?

Recent global events such as evacuations from Egypt, Libya and Japan all demonstrate the importance of being prepared. Preparing ahead is invaluable should a crisis or emergency occur.

## What the U.S. Embassy in Nassau is Doing to Prepare:

- Revising Hurricane Action Plan – a continual process
  - Keeping contact information up to date
  - Seeking new, fast means of communications
  - Maintaining accurate lists of shelters
  - Strengthening our Warden System
- 





# Preparation Diagram

## Phase 1 Hurricane Season

- Register with US Embassy (SMART Enrollment)
- Maintain valid passports
- Keep important docs -- birth and marriage records, vaccination, insurance and bank records in one readily accessible location;
- Plan if – and where – you would evacuate? Does anyone in your family need a visa?
- Organize emergency supplies.

## Phase 2 Hurricane Watch

- Decide if you evacuate or move to a shelter – Purchase airline tickets if needed.
- Maintain communications with family – let them know your plans.
- Finalize your preparations. Secure your home; top off your water and gas tanks.
- Gather your emergency supplies for a shelter, or pack for a flight to the mainland.

## Phase 3 Hurricane Warning

- Move to your shelter or evacuate to the mainland well before the storm hits.
- Provide a detailed itinerary and your contact information with a friend or family member .



# What the U.S. Embassy Can and Can't Do in a Crisis

Can

Can

Not  
likely

Can't

- Provide information on conditions in the country
- Recommend U.S. citizens take certain actions
- Assist in identifying available transportation for evacuation.

Assist with departure from a devastated region if commercial travel is unavailable. Please note that US law expects you to pay for such transportation.

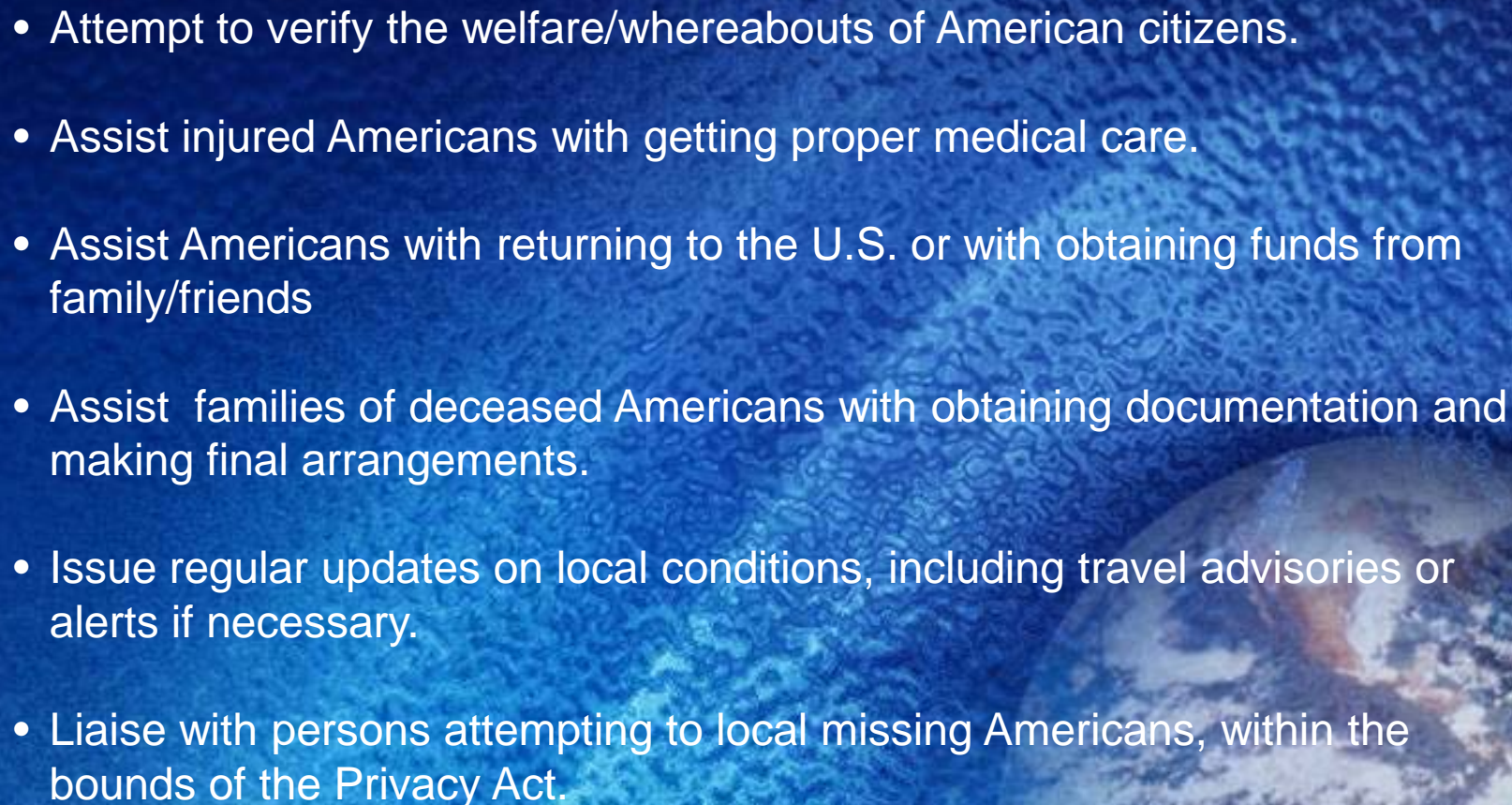
- Provide transportation in advance of a storm.
- Provide transportation or directly assistance during a storm.
- Provide financial assistance to repair homes or businesses.

- Protect your property while away
- Provide legal advice or represent you in court
- Pay legal, medical, hotel, or other fees for you





# Post Crisis

- Attempt to verify the welfare/whereabouts of American citizens.
  - Assist injured Americans with getting proper medical care.
  - Assist Americans with returning to the U.S. or with obtaining funds from family/friends
  - Assist families of deceased Americans with obtaining documentation and making final arrangements.
  - Issue regular updates on local conditions, including travel advisories or alerts if necessary.
  - Liaise with persons attempting to locate missing Americans, within the bounds of the Privacy Act.
- 



# Useful Links for Crisis Preparedness

General Information: Travel.State.gov -- <http://travel.state.gov>

Hurricane Season: Know Before You Go  
[http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis\\_pa\\_tw/cis\\_pa\\_tw\\_2915.html](http://travel.state.gov/travel/cis_pa_tw/cis_pa_tw_2915.html)

Hurricane Preparedness:  
[http://nassau.usembassy.gov/hurricane\\_preparedness2.html](http://nassau.usembassy.gov/hurricane_preparedness2.html)

National Hurricane Center: Be Prepared  
<http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/>  
[http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/outreach/prepared\\_week.shtml](http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/outreach/prepared_week.shtml)

NOAA Have a Plan Checklist:  
[http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/HAW2/english/prepare/family\\_plan.shtml](http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/HAW2/english/prepare/family_plan.shtml)

General Info: Natural Disasters:  
[http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/tips/emergencies/emergencies\\_1207.html](http://www.travel.state.gov/travel/tips/emergencies/emergencies_1207.html)

Disaster Help: [Disaster Help.GOV](#)  
[CDC Natural Disasters](#)  
[NASA Natural Disaster Reference Database](#)  
[FEMA Hazards](#)



# Any Questions?

U.S. Embassy Website

<http://nassau.usembassy.gov>

Contact us at:

[ACSN@state.gov](mailto:ACSN@state.gov)