

## The Bahamas, Hurricane Dorian

### Global ETS Teleconference

**Date: 11/09/19**

**TIME: 1430 UTC**

#### Attendance

Chair	Jalal Shah	(Global ETC), Italy
Amazon Web Services	Cayce Pack	USA
	Grace Kitzmiller	USA
	Don Sarver	USA
CISCO TacOps	Matt Wood	USA
	Sue-Lynn Hinson	USA
	Dustin Li	USA
Emergency.lu	Luc Hastir	Luxembourg
	Gilles Hoffman	Luxembourg
	Philippe Hein	Bahamas
	Tom de Waha	Barbados
Ericsson Response	Lars Ruediger	Germany
Facebook	Chris Weasler	USA
IntelSat	Colleen Parent	USA
InterNews	Stijn Aelbers	UK
ITU	Sylvester Cadette	Bahamas
	Marizta Delgado	Switzerland
NetHope	Rami Shakra	Bahamas
	Brent Carbno	Canada
Tesla	Maggie Crosby	USA
TSF	Clement Bruguera	France
UNHCR	Alexander Thomas	Copenhagen
UNICEF	Antonio Gomes	USA
US Department of State	Joe Burton	USA
WFP	Angel Buitrago	Bahamas
	Caroline Teyssier	Bahamas
	Maguette Wade	Italy
	Omar Namaoui	Italy
	Gabriela Alvarado	Italy
	Emma Gilson	Italy
	Carlotta Negri	Italy
	Carlos Hilarion	Panama

Debora Natareno	Panama
Alain Gougeon	Panama
Prakash Muniandy	UAE
Elizabeth Millership	UAE

Teleconference started at 14:34 UTC

## Agenda

1. **Situation overview**
2. **WFP updates**
3. **Emergency Telecommunications Sector (ETS) response**
4. **ETS partner updates**
5. **AOB**

## Minutes

### 1. Emergency Telecommunications Sector (ETS) Update - Nassau

- Caroline Teyssier continues to coordinate the emergency telecommunications response from Nassau as ETS Coordinator. The ETS is supporting the government response under its National Emergency Management Agency (NEMA). WFP is the appointed international lead to support humanitarian organizations operating in Emergency Support Function (ESF) 2 on Communications which is led by the Police Force of the Bahamas with the support of the two Mobile Network Operators (MNOs), BTC and Aliv. ESF 2 is one of 14 ESFs under the leadership of NEMA.
- Cross-sectoral coordination in Nassau has become more established with an increased presence of international responders on the ground who operate from the NEMA training centre in Nassau or in the affected areas. An NGO Coordination group has been organized and daily coordination meetings are taking place. The response community is also receiving support from the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA).
- Planning and implementation of recovery activities are increasing alongside response activities as the situation on the ground evolves quickly.
- Evacuation of the affected population from Abaco Islands to Nassau continues. Although determining the number of affected populations remains a challenge, estimates state that over 2,000 displaced people are residing in seven shelters in Nassau. The remainder of the evacuated population has found accommodation elsewhere.

- Telecommunications services: a number of local ETS partners from Ericsson Response, Télécoms Sans Frontières (TSF), NetHope, CISCO TacOps and Vodafone Foundation are on the ground in Abaco establishing critical connectivity services for responders and affected population. In addition, NetHope has been supporting the engagement with NGOs and operators to support response coordination and to ensure no duplication of efforts. Teams from the Government of Luxembourg and the Information Technology Disaster Resource Centre (ITDRC) have also now arrived in Nassau to support the response and MNOs.
- The focus of humanitarian assistance is based in the most affected area of Marsh Harbour, Abaco Islands. Connectivity services have been deployed by partners Ericsson Response, NetHope, TSF and Vodafone Foundation at five priority locations:
  - Marsh Harbour port;
  - Marsh Harbour international airport;
  - The Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) at the Government building;
  - Maxwell Supermarket - military EOC;
  - Marsh Harbour hospital.
- There has been no request for security telecommunications support. Telecommunications are primarily used by the Police Force of the Bahamas which has its own system.
- Partners TSF and NetHope are supporting the affected population with critical connectivity services. NetHope may support the shelters in Nassau with additional connectivity services such as WiFi.
- The ETS is primarily supporting the MNOs to restore services and address any gaps as international assistance continues to arrive in the Bahamas. These support needs will be re-evaluated in the coming days as MNOs BTC and Aliv make good progress on re-establishing their services. TSF and Vodafone Foundation have carried out an assessment in Abaco and found that 3G networks are back up and running in some areas of Abaco, including in some remote locations.
- The situation in Grand Bahama is still unclear. Reports have been received of a complete blackout in connectivity on the east side of the island. The need for emergency communications services remains unconfirmed. BTC and Aliv are working to restore services. If ETS services are requested in Grand Bahama, the coordination structure set up in Abaco will be replicated. The need for connectivity services will be confirmed in the coming days once assessments are completed.
- The ETS Coordinator will conduct a short mission to Abaco Islands on 12 September to assess existing services and identify additional needs.

## **2. Abaco island**

- As an increasing number of the affected population on Abaco Island have been evacuated, the current population is now extensively diminished. According to reports from the police force, this trend will continue until the end of the week when the evacuation operation will be complete.
- There are also increasingly fewer humanitarian actors on the ground in Abaco.
- Today, wireless equipment is being used to link up all the five priority locations and set up a monitoring system to activate the link in case one of the sites goes down. There are two sites remaining that need to be linked.
- Using three VSATs that were deployed, connectivity at all five priority sites in Marsh Harbour are now operational.
- The team are monitoring the situation for additional requirements. Several requests have been received from outside the Marsh Harbour area, mainly from the northern areas of the island, Treasure Cay and Cooper's Town. These requests need further verification on needs and number of users as well as the recovery status of BTC and Aliv.
- There has been a considerable improvement in the GSM network of provider BTC today, which had been down since the Hurricane hit at the beginning of September. The WFP IT Emergency Preparedness Officer and partners' team in Abaco will meet with representatives from BTC and Aliv today to determine specifics of their recovery.

### **3. ETS PARTNER UPDATES**

#### ***NetHope***

- NetHope has been asked to install connectivity across more than 40x sites across Nassau, Abaco and Grand Bahama, mainly shelters and clinics run by NEMA. These sites need to be verified and the status of MNO capabilities clarified before proceeding.
- The focus area is the seven shelters in Nassau. There has been a delay in receiving equipment requested from the UN Humanitarian Response Depot (UNHRD) in Panama. NetHope is hoping to receive this equipment on 11 September to supplement equipment gathered from Puerto Rico to begin rolling out connectivity services starting with the shelters.
- A Humanitarian Coordination Centre is being set up at the NEMA Training Centre in Nassau where two newly arrived members of NetHope partner CISCO TacOps are setting up connectivity services.
- NetHope has requested staff support (including technical, information management and logistics support) from operational partners Google and AWS who are expected to arrive this week. NetHope has also reached out to one of its partners who will deploy two satellite terminal staff to help the team while they focus on coordination and deployment of services.



---

## Contacts

### [Bahamas.ETS@wfp.org](mailto:Bahamas.ETS@wfp.org)

Caroline Teyssier, ETS Coordinator for Bahamas

[caroline.teyssier@wfp.org](mailto:caroline.teyssier@wfp.org)

Angel Buitrago, WFP IT Preparedness Officer

[angel.buitrago@wfp.org](mailto:angel.buitrago@wfp.org)

Teleconference / Meeting ended at 13:01 UTC

**Next Global ETS Teleconference on the Bahamas will be scheduled on 17 September at 1800 Dubai time.**

## Acronyms

AWS	Amazon Web Services
CDEMA	Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency
EOC	Emergency Operations Centre
ESF	Emergency Support Functions
ETC	Emergency Telecommunications Cluster
ETS	Emergency Telecommunications Sector
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IT	Information Technology
ITDRC	Information Technology Disaster Resource Centre
MNO	Mobile Network Operator
NEMA	National Emergency Management Agency
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
TSF	Télécoms Sans Frontières
UN	United Nations
UNDAC	Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination
UNHRD	United Nations Humanitarian Response Depot
UNICEF	UN International Children's Emergency Fund
VSAT	Very Small Aperture Terminal
WFP	World Food Programme



---

All information related to the ETS operation in the Bahamas can be found on the website:

<https://www.etcluster.org/emergency/bahamas-natural-disaster>

For more information, or to be added or deleted from the mailing list, please contact:

[Bahamas.ETS@wfp.org](mailto:Bahamas.ETS@wfp.org)

**Minutes:** Elizabeth Millership, WFP