



Hurricane Fiona | Situation Report #1

Latin America & The Caribbean Regional Response Plan

23 September, 2022, 12:00 PM ET

OUR RESPONSE

On 18 September, Hurricane Fiona made landfall on southeastern Puerto Rico, before moving northeast towards the Dominican Republic and Turks and Caicos. Airlink has activated its Latin America & the Caribbean Regional Response Plan following the devastating impact across the region. We are currently connecting with humanitarian, logistics, and airline partners in the region to assess main needs and response capabilities. Airlink will continue to monitor the response and provide support to responding partners. Please reach out to ops@airlinkflight.org if your organization is planning to respond and/or has a request for transportation assistance.

THE SITUATION

Puerto Rico

Hurricane Fiona struck Puerto Rico as a category 1 hurricane on Sunday, September 18th. The storm caused heavy rainfall of up to 25 inches, leading to life-threatening landslides. The rainfall and hurricane-force winds damaged the island's fragile electrical grid, causing an island-wide blackout. As of Friday morning, 62% of the island lacked electric power and 33% lacked water service, as the island experiences a heat wave and extreme humidity. The storm killed at least 4 people and more than 1,000 people have been rescued by authorities. Hospitals on the island are currently operating on generators.

The Puerto Rico VOAD is strongly encouraging all humanitarian actors report their deployments, response activities, and needs assessments on their [Situation Report form](#) to improve service coordination and to prevent the duplication of efforts.

Dominican Republic

Hurricane Fiona is the first hurricane to directly hit the Dominican Republic since 2004. As a result of the damage, 13,760 people are displaced, and more than 1,000 are in shelters. The hurricane destroyed more than 2,200 homes. Over 725,000 people are without access to running water as many of the country's aqueducts are out of service or partially functioning. Search and rescue operations are ongoing, with 800 people having already been rescued. Power outages are impacting 210,000 homes, and immediate response activities are focused on the recovery of power lines and emergency communications. The President of the Dominican Republic has said that "the damage is considerable," however, at this time, a request for international assistance has not been issued, and damage assessments are still underway.

Turks and Caicos

Hurricane Fiona hit Grand Turk on Tuesday morning as a Category 3 hurricane with sustained winds of 125 mph. As of Tuesday evening, the islands are experiencing heavy rains and life-threatening flooding. Grand Turk, South Caicos, Salt Cay, North Caicos, and Middle Caicos are experiencing power outages. Telecommunications across the islands have been severely affected.

SERVICE DELIVERY

Cargo Support

Airlink is supporting the humanitarian community through in-kind and discounted flights into Puerto Rico (SJU), the Dominican Republic (SQD), and Turks and Caicos (PLS). Airlink continues to monitor the trajectory of Hurricane Fiona and is standing by to support cargo movements into Bermuda (BDA).

Personnel Flights

Airlink is supporting flights for emergency medical teams and other specialized responders. Round-trip passenger flights are available to Puerto Rico (SJU/BQN/PSE), the Dominican Republic (SQD/PUJ/STI), and Turks and Caicos (PLS). Airlink is monitoring potential personnel needs into Bermuda (BDA) and Canada (YHZ/YQM/YYG/YSJ).

Monitoring: Bermuda and Canada

Airlink is monitoring as Hurricane Fiona passes Bermuda after hitting the island with tropical-storm winds and heavy rain on Thursday night and Friday morning. Over 29,000 customers, 80% of the island, is currently without power. Fiona is expected to hit the eastern coast of Canada as a category 4 storm. A hurricane warning is in effect for parts of Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, and Newfoundland. Flooding and widespread power outages are expected in the region.

Needs: First aid kits, hygiene kits, solar lights, water filters, and water purification tablets, have been confirmed as needs in Puerto Rico. Needs assessments are ongoing in the Dominican Republic, Turks and Caicos, and Bermuda.

Cargo Movement:

Puerto Rico: Since Puerto Rico is a U.S. territory, there are no customs duties on imported goods from the mainland U.S., however, an 11.5% excise tax is applied to imported cargo. Taxes on air shipments need to be submitted after delivery. Nonprofits can request tax exemption to the Departamento de Hacienda de Puerto Rico by submitting a donation letter. Coordinate with the local consignee on tax processes.

Puerto Rico and Turks and Caicos: No duty exemptions have been announced at this time.

Personnel Movement:

Puerto Rico: All travelers entering Puerto Rico must complete a travel declaration form prior to entering the island. International travelers that are not U.S. citizens or permanent residents must present proof of vaccination or a negative COVID-19 test prior to arriving.

Dominican Republic: No entry requirements are in place.

Turks and Caicos: All travelers must be fully vaccinated against COVID-19.

Road Movement:

Puerto Rico: Road access is constrained across Puerto Rico due to significant flooding, infrastructure damage, and fallen trees. Damaged and destroyed roadways and bridges on the island may also cause additional logistics challenges for land transport to the southern portion of the island.

RESPONDING PARTNER AGENCIES

If you don't see your organization listed and you are responding, please email ops@airlinkflight.org.

Active NGO Partners:

- Convoy of Hope
- Crisis Cleanup
- Footprint Project
- Global Empowerment Mission
- Heart to Heart International
- Inspiritus
- International Medical Corps
- Information Technology Disaster Resource Center (ITDRC)
- Mercy Chefs
- Mobile Medics International
- Off-The-Grid Missions
- Project C.U.R.E
- Project HOPE
- SBP USA
- SOS International
- Team Rubicon USA
- The Salvation Army
- ToolBank USA
- World Hope International

Active Airlines & Logistics Partners:

- Alaska Airlines
- American Airlines
- American Logistics Aid Network
- Avianca
- JetBlue Airways
- Sol Relief Aviation
- United Airlines
- UPS