

Los datos que sí se mantienen allí son los de los trabajos que están llevando a cabo el gobierno.

Según FEMA, actualmente hay 14,000 empleados federales en Puerto Rico y las Islas Vírgenes, todos los aeropuertos y oficinas de correo federales están abiertos, han limpiado más de 30 millas de carretera. Además, el 65% de las tiendas de comestibles han reabierto y casi todos los hospitales y centros de diálisis, agregan.

El presidente Trump, que visitó la isla el martes, ha asegurado que el trabajo federal ha sido “increíble” y “exitoso”, mientras la alcaldesa de San Juan, Carmen Yulín Cruz, se ha convertido en el símbolo del enfado de Puerto Rico.

Ambos se enzarzaron en una disputa dialéctica después de que Cruz suplicara ayuda ante los problemas para distribuir la ayuda sobre el terreno y, después de diez días sin energía eléctrica, denunciara: “Estamos muriendo y nos están matando con su ineficiencia y burocracia”.

“Quieren que les resuelvan todo, cuando debería ser un esfuerzo de la comunidad. Los trabajadores federales presentes en la isla están haciendo un excelente trabajo”, contestó Trump, quien durante su visita dijo que Puerto Rico debería estar orgulloso de que solo murieran 16 personas, a diferencia de la “catástrofe real” de Katrina, que dejó un saldo de 1,800 muertos. Poco después de las palabras del mandatario, el gobernador Roselló anunciaba que el balance de muertos aumentaba a 34.

## **Gobierno De Puerto Rico Requisó 15 Contenedores De Alimentos Para Entregarlos A Los Damnificados Del Huracán María**

[Univision](#), October 6, 2017

Gobierno de Puerto Rico requisó 15 contenedores de alimentos para entregarlos a los damnificados del huracán María

Las autoridades examinan los manifiestos de las empresas marítimas que transportaron los contenedores y pagarán a sus dueños el valor declarado de las mismas.

El gobierno de Puerto Rico requisó 15 contenedores de alimentos no reclamados por sus dueños ubicados en los puertos de la isla y ya distribuyó su contenido entre las personas que más lo necesitan, dijo el secretario de asuntos públicos, Ramón Rosario Cortés.

El funcionario no reveló a cuánto asciende el costo de las provisiones requisadas pero aseguró que las autoridades examinan los manifiestos de las empresas marítimas Tote y Crowley, que transportaron los contenedores, y pagarán a sus dueños el valor declarado de las mismas.

“Se está trabajando con los manifiestos (...) estamos trabajando manualmente, los sistemas de (Departamento de Hacienda) no están registrados como usualmente se tienen, por el problema de comunicación. Pero lo que se le pidió a los navieros como Tote, que manejaban estos contenedores, sus respectivos manifiestos para ver el precio que se le puso en el manifiesto a ese artículo y poder reembolsarle a esos comerciantes la carga que trajeron y estaban inhabilitados de recoger”, detalló el funcionario.

Se desconoce a qué empresas se les requisó la mercancía.

Hace una semana el gobernador Ricardo Rosselló advirtió a los importadores que debían recoger su mercancía del puerto de San Juan y distribuirla, o el gobierno se incautaría de la misma y la distribuiría como parte de sus esfuerzos por aliviar el hambre en la isla tras el paso del huracán, que mantiene sin electricidad y comunicaciones a la mayor parte de la población, y numerosas comunidades aisladas a dos semanas del evento atmosférico.

Muchas de estas empresas que no reclamaban su mercancía estaban inoperantes y no tenían la capacidad para encargar a los transportistas a recogerla, almacenarla y distribuirla en las tiendas, igualmente inoperantes por la falta de energía eléctrica.

El gobernador tomó su decisión también para abrir espacio en los muelles para los productos de primera necesidad que están en camino.

## **Sin Luz Y Sin Agua: Así Es La Vida Cotidiana De Los Puertorriqueños Dos Semanas Después Del Huracán María**

By Patricia Clarembaux

[Univision](#), October 6, 2017

PUERTO RICO.- Las rutinas de los puertorriqueños están trastocadas desde que el huracán María devastó todo cuanto pudo en esta isla hace dos semanas. La falta de agua y luz –o de al menos de uno de ellos– les ha reducido las comidas, los ha llevado a bañarse en casas de familiares e incluso mantiene negocios cerrados. Y en algunos casos no tenerlos es el menor de los problemas: hay viviendas que quedaron destruidas.

Poco a poco Puerto Rico intenta volver a su ritmo. Ya muchos han regresado al trabajo, pero igual deben lidiar con lo esencial, buscan incansablemente agua, comida –la que haya– y diésel, para mantener las plantas encendidas y al menos librarse de los 90 grados de temperatura al prender el aire acondicionado.

Las kilométricas filas de las gasolineras han bajado, es cierto. Pero en las calles se mantienen las líneas de personas esperando a la entrada de manantiales naturales a la orilla de cualquier carretera para llenar una, dos, o cuantas botellas de agua puedan para hidratarse y bañarse.

Según la Autoridad Eléctrica de Luz, apenas 9% de la isla tiene electricidad en su casa. Y a 54,6% le llegó el agua, reportó Acueducto. Para el miércoles, las estadísticas de la agencia federal para el manejo de desastres (FEMA) mostraban que solo el 5% de los residentes tenía luz y la mitad de la población había recuperado el acceso a agua potable. Los datos habían sido retirados el jueves de la página web, pero este viernes luego de que medios informaran que las estadísticas ya no estaban, el portal de la agencia volvió a incluir la información.

Hicimos un recorrido por tres municipios del centro-norte de Puerto Rico y estas son las historias de sus habitantes:

Recuperando lo que quedó tras la inundación

Toda la planta baja de la casa de dos pisos de Margarita García, en Sabana Seca, municipio Toa Baja, quedó sumergida bajo el agua con el huracán María. La nevera y la cocina todavía llevan pintado el borde marrón de tierra que le dejó la inundación. Ella no sabe qué hará: “Hasta que no llegue la luz no puedo saber si prenden o si también tengo que botarlas”.

En la acera frente a su casa está todo lo que descartaron. Hay un sofá, dos sillones, colchones, un gavetero, un equipo de sonido, mucha madera arrumada y tan destruida que no tiene forma de nada. En su casa prácticamente no quedó nada. Y así está toda la cuadra en este barrio humilde, llena de los enseres que desecharon sus vecinos.

Ya lograron limpiar el piso de cerámica de la sala, en la planta baja, porque llegó el agua hace cinco días. Brilla como si no hubiese pasado nada y huele a Mistolín. Allí duermen en colchones inflables, con calor y al acecho de los mosquitos, ella, sus tres nietos, su hija y su yerno.

Pero arriba el desastre que dejó María está intacto. Las hojas secas y las ramas hacen una alfombra en el suelo. El techo de zinc de su cuarto se cayó parcialmente, huele a humedad. “No sé qué decirte, no sé si tendré que botarlo todo. Tengo que terminar primero abajo”, explica resignada. “Básicamente lo hemos perdido todo”.

La familia completa no desperdicia ni un momento del día para limpiar porque sin luz en la noche, cuentan que la zona se convierte en una “boca de lobo”. Sin nevera no tienen dónde guardar la comida que les donan, porque tampoco tienen a dónde comprarla: “Yo no he comido nada hoy (...) pero si no llega ninguna ayuda hay que basarse en lo que a uno le queda”.

Un enfermo en cama que espera paciente

Ramón Martínez, de 80 años, está postrado en una cama desde hace un año. Sufre de esclerosis y solo puede mover su cabeza. Su casa quedó sin agua ni luz tras el golpe del huracán María, pero al menos el miércoles habían podido mantener encendida la planta para prender el aire acondicionado,

para recargar la máquina que le permite respirar cómodamente al dormir, la silla para movilizarlo y para poder reclinar más la cama clínica.

Pero este jueves se les acabó el diesel y el distribuidor no había llegado cuando casi eran las siete de la noche. Lo esperan desde el domingo. “Lo más grave es que puedan salirle úlceras”, cuenta su hija Margie Martínez al mostrar que tanto las ventanas como la puerta principal están abiertas de par en par. “Ahora mismo tiene un hongo en el área genital y el no tener agua y aire acondicionado se lo puede empeorar”.

Desde la cama, el padre replica en una voz apenas audible: “No tengo televisor, no tengo nada, uno lo pasa incómodo. Pero hay que adaptarse y aceptar lo que hay”.

La familia tiene agua suficiente para bañarlo –pero a la velocidad de cada envase de mantequilla–, y para darle de tomar. Antes del huracán compraron botellones de agua potable y, además, llenaron varios recipientes plásticos de a galón hasta el tope. Para bajar los baños usan el agua de la piscina, que pasó de ser cristalina a verde tras la devastación que dejó María.

A pesar de todo, aseguran, continuarán bregando.

La salvación: un manantial de la familia

Eliana Rodríguez es una mujer ágil a pesar de sus 82 años. No tiene agua ni luz desde que el huracán Irma pasó por la isla, hace un mes. Aún así resuelve. Cada mañana a las 6:00 am se levanta y camina los 15 minutos que hay desde su casa en Santa Juanita, en el municipio Bayamón, hasta el manantial de la familia y se trae sus dos botellones de agua a cuestas. Esa es la que se bebe, ninguna otra. También es con la que prepara sus comidas y le hace café al vecino de al lado, en agradecimiento porque le da luz con una planta generadora.

“Ese manantial está allí desde que yo nací”, dice al reconocer su privilegio. Cuenta que otros habitantes de la zona han llegado hasta la reja que resguarda el riachuelo suplicando que les permitan tomar un poco de agua y ellos los dejan.

Para bañarse o para fregar los platos utiliza un agua que su yerno le trae de otro manantial. También aprovecha cuando comienza la lluvia y pone a llenar un tanque plástico que tiene en la parte trasera de su casa.

“Me baño todos los días. Las mujeres tenemos que bañarnos todos los días”, asegura y se ríe. Dice que se mete dentro del tobo para no desperdiciar ni una gota de agua y luego, con lo que resta, lava los baños.

La comida no le preocupa. Esta acostumbrada a su pan por la mañana y a su arroz con leche por la tarde. Y lavar su ropa tampoco le quita el sueño, pues dice que tiene mucha y que la sucia la va acumulando. Pero todo lo demás la tiene en un solo refunfuño. “Esto es una novela de horror”.

Parados en la casa, parados en el trabajo

Los Figueroa están todos en la tintorería de la familia, la Joe’s Cleaners, en el municipio Bayamón. El negocio está parado porque no tienen agua ni luz y sin eso tampoco hay clientes. Entre los padres y los hijos, los únicos que tienen agua son los primeros. Así que esa casa se ha convertido casi en un centro de operaciones. De allí sale el agua con la que intentan llenar los tanques de 500 galones de la tintorería para reabrir el lugar al menos por un día; con la que se bañan casi todos; con la que cocinan.

“Esto es agobiante”, dice Ángel Figueroa, de 51 años, al mostrar en la penumbra las pilas de ropa para lavar y planchar que se quedaron arrumadas desde antes de que María golpeará la isla caribeña y que, ahora, acomodan para tenerlas listas en caso de que llegue alguno de los servicios. “Sufrimos nosotros, pero también los empleados que todos los días nos preguntan si hay trabajo, si llegó la luz. Nuestra mayor pérdida es el negocio”.

Para comer los más afectados son los padres, Aída y José, de 72 y 76 años. No tienen luz en su residencia, así que desde inicios de septiembre han tenido que desayunar rebanadas de pan solas – porque no hay nevera para refrigerar los embutidos–; almorzar cualquier cosa en la calle,

hamburguesas, por ejemplo; cenar lo que se pueda y beber agua a temperatura ambiente, “Estamos pasando trabajo”, dice él. “No está fácil”, agrega y rompe en llanto.

José dice que para lavar su ropa volvieron a tiempos remotos: a mano. Pero solo con cosas pequeñas, ni los pantalones ni las camisas. “Estamos sobreviviendo”, agrega ella, aunque reconoce que hay gente que puede estar peor que ellos.

Una casa reducida a un cuarto

Carmen Ríos, de 64 años, quedó confinada prácticamente a su cuarto y a un minúsculo patio lateral. El huracán María voló casi todo el techo de la casa de madera en Maguayo, municipio Dorado. Se llevó el del baño, el de la cocina –incluso con los gabinetes–, el del cuarto de su nieto, el del pasillo central. Lo único que quedó sujeto a las vigas de madera del techo, fueron dos lámparas. A pesar del destrozo ella asegura que se queda en su casa. Cuando cae la noche cierra la puerta plástica corrediza de su cuarto y se encomienda a dios. Vive sola.

“Agarro una lamparita de batería que tengo y un faro como de gas. Con eso me alumbro en el cuarto y para bañarme. Me baño tardecito porque sí tengo agua”, cuenta. “Luego me acuesto, pero como a las 3:00 am estoy sentada aquí afuera, desvelada”.

La comida la está comprando al día. Y así mismo la prepara en una pequeña cocina que improvisó en un pasillo lateral de la casa. Convirtió la lavadora y un freezer en topes y sobre una mesa montó una pequeña estufa a gas. Este jueves comieron un bistec encebollado y arroz con habichuelas.

Carmen Ríos asegura que pasa el día llorando al ver el desastre en que quedó convertida su casa, que además acababa de remodelar. No sabe si podrá reconstruirla. Dice que todo depende de la ayuda que pueda recibir de la Agencia de Gestión de Desastres (FEMA). De lo que sí está segura es que allí se quedará, aunque sus hijos intenten convencerla de que se mude con ellos. “¿Tú crees que con 64 años me voy a estar yendo? No. Mejor me quedo aquí y que sea lo que dios quiera”.

## **Estados Unidos Militariza Esfuerzo De Asistencia En Puerto Rico Tras Problemas De Distribución**

By Tim Johnson

[McClatchy](#), October 9, 2017

Mientras soldados norteamericanos entregaban el domingo cajas de alimentos y agua en esta localidad costera, un funcionario federal dijo que está satisfecho con lo que se ha logrado hasta ahora.

“Parecen estar contentos en este momento. Creo que va muy bien”, dijo Patrick Hernández, administrador adjunto de operaciones de la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA).

A poca distancia, mirando hacia la operación de distribución a través de una cerca, Serafin Román ofreció una versión radicalmente diferente de la situación: “Es algo terrible. La gente está desesperada. No tienen agua. Algunos están pasando hambre”.

Las dos opiniones radicalmente opuestas no hacen sino señalar el abismo que hay entre el punto de vista oficial sobre los esfuerzos de recuperación tras el devastador paso del huracán María y lo que piensa el hombre de a pie. En algunas partes de Puerto Rico, al entrar en la tercera semana de los esfuerzos de recuperación, algunos puertorriqueños dicen sentirse olvidados y vulnerables. A menudo, los vecinos y los funcionarios locales cuentan versiones drásticamente diferentes sobre la frecuencia de distribución de los alimentos.

Como respuesta ante la grave crisis, los militares estadounidenses explicaron el domingo la forma en la que cambiará la distribución de alimentos, agua y gasolina en muchas de las 78 municipalidades de la isla: van a militarizar las labores de asistencia de una manera significativa después que algunos alcaldes no pudieron con el esfuerzo.

Antes de este fin de semana, se entregaban suministros en 10 áreas regionales de la isla, y entonces los alcaldes eran responsables de organizar la recogida y la distribución.

Pero el general José J. Reyes, jefe adjunto de la Guardia Nacional de Puerto Rico, dijo en una entrevista que se puso en marcha una nueva estrategia para situar entre 10 y 20 soldados en cada municipalidad, dándoles vehículos y apoyo logístico, con la tarea de entregar los suministros en cada barrio.

“Necesitamos entrar directamente a cada barrio para asegurar que todos reciben suministros”, dijo Reyes. “Tendrán vehículos, comunicaciones por radio y apoyo logístico... Van a vivir ahí. Van a operar 24/7”.

En las 10 ciudades más grandes de Puerto Rico, cada una con una población mayor de 150,000 habitantes, los ayuntamientos seguirán administrando la distribución, dijo Reyes, pero no en localidades más pequeñas.

El jefe de los servicios de asistencia, el teniente general del Ejército Jeffrey S. Buchanan, reconoció que la distribución de ayuda a nivel municipal no siempre se ha hecho de manera efectiva.

“Hemos trabajado duro para identificar cuellos de botella”, dijo Buchanan en un aeropuerto de San Juan antes de subir a un helicóptero con rumbo a Aguadilla, unas 80 millas al oeste de la capital.

“No debemos pretender que va a ser un proceso perfecto”, dijo, señalando que los alcaldes tienen retos a la hora de distribuir la ayuda, como carreteras dañadas, falta de vehículos, malas comunicaciones y áreas grandes con poca población.

El descontento era evidente el domingo en un centro de distribución de agua y alimentos en Aguadilla. Sin embargo, esa frustración no se ve en todas partes. Algunas municipalidades están organizando las labores de asistencia y recuperación mejor que otras. Entre las zonas más azotadas por la catastrófica tormenta del 20 de septiembre, algunas están tan alejadas que es necesario entregar la ayuda en helicóptero porque las carreteras están intransitables.

“Hay personas que viven en áreas montañosas en la región central y allí es más difícil llegar, pero estamos tratando de llegar a todos”, dijo Hernández. Los equipos de militares “están haciendo una labor fenomenal limpiando y despejando las vías de acceso”.

Hernández le restó importancia a la ira expresada por algunos vecinos, afirmando que los sobrevivientes de un desastre de esta magnitud quieren que la vida regrese a la normalidad.

“Todos los sobrevivientes de una catástrofe semejante se sienten así”, dijo.

Sheila Lenox, de 29 años, dijo que la caja de comida que recibió el domingo es la primera comida importante que ha visto desde el huracán.

“Esta es la primera vez que nos dan una caja llena de comida”, dijo Lenox, quien está desempleada. “Hemos estado comiendo lo que nos daban los vecinos”.

Cuando se le preguntó cómo habían sobrevivido, Jetson Samot, pareja de Lenox, respondió: “Con salchichas y galletas”. “No podemos comprar nada. Los supermercados han subido los precios de todo. Es muy difícil encontrar algo de comer. Tenemos un lugar donde vivir, pero nada para alimentarnos”, dijo Lenox.

Otra vecina, Carmen Santiago, retirada de 67 años, dijo que deseaba que hubiera más disciplina y lógica en la distribución para evitar que algunos vecinos reciban mucho y otros nada.

Cuando se le dijo que algunos vecinos se quejaron de que eran los primeros alimentos y agua que recibían, el alcalde Carlos Méndez puso en duda esa afirmación.

“Ya habían recibido alimentos antes. He venido aquí tres o cuatro veces y puedo atestiguarlo”, dijo Méndez.

Méndez dijo que las labores de asistencia “empezaron con lentitud pero ahora van bien”.

“Todo el mundo tiene sed, todo el mundo tiene hambre porque no reciben comida todos los días. Pero por lo menos reciben cada cuatro o cinco días”.

## **Aseguran Que Lluvias En Puerto Rico Dificultan Entrega De Ayuda Tras “María”**

[El Universal \(MEX\)](#), October 9, 2017

Las fuertes lluvias que se registran en Puerto Rico dificultan la entrega de suministros a los damnificados por el huracán María, que devastó las infraestructuras de electricidad y telecomunicaciones de la isla caribeña.

La Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (Fema) informó hoy a través de un comunicado de que debido a las lluvias torrenciales y la saturación del terreno puede que las aeronaves que llevan la ayuda a la población no puedan aterrizar, por lo que se advierte de que la carga podría lanzarse desde el aire.

El comunicado subraya que, una vez que el tiempo mejore, las aeronaves volverán a depositar los suministros, principalmente agua y comida, en tierra, tal y como se ha hecho durante los últimos días.

El Servicio Nacional de Meteorología en San Juan emitió una advertencia de inundaciones para más de 20 municipios ante las fuertes lluvias y tormentas que se esperan durante las próximas horas, en especial para áreas del interior, el este y la capital, San Juan.

La agencia federal ha emitido además una vigilancia de inundaciones repentinas para todo Puerto Rico hasta la tarde del miércoles por la presencia en la región de una onda tropical que se unirá a una vaguada ya estacionada al norte de la isla caribeña.

La previsión de fuertes lluvias durante los dos próximos días sigue a las inundaciones registradas el domingo, que afectaron con especial virulencia al área metropolitana de San Juan.

Durante el domingo en algunas partes de la capital se registraron hasta cuatro pulgadas de lluvia, lo que provocó la inundación de calles, en especial en el distrito sanjuanero de Santurce.

Corrimientos de tierras y cortes de carreteras se registraron en los municipios de San Juan, Carolina y Vega Baja, en la costa norte.

El riesgo para hoy es grande, ya que las lluvias se registrarán sobre los suelos ya saturados y en áreas donde permanecen gran cantidad de escombros acumulados tras el pase del huracán María por la isla hace casi tres semanas.

El gobernador de Puerto Rico, Ricardo Rosselló, denunció hoy que la alta acumulación de escombros en las calles de la capital facilitó las inundaciones en San Juan, que obligaron a la intervención de los Bomberos y otras agencias federales que ayudan en la labor de reconstrucción tras el paso del huracán María.

Rosselló sostuvo que a diferencia de lo que pasa en San Juan, en otros municipios de la isla sí se han retirado los escombros que obstruyen el paso del agua por los desagües.

## **Lo Que Discutirá Jenniffer González Con El Vicepresidente Mike Pence**

[El Nuevo Día \(PRI\)](#), October 6, 2017

El Second Air Force con el vicepresidente de Estados Unidos, Mike Pence, aterrizó esta tarde en Puerto Rico para constatar de primera mano la crítica situación de isla tras el catastrófico paso del huracán María por la isla.

Pence llegó al país acompañado de la comisionada residente en Washington, Jenniffer González, y su arribo se da a tres días de la visita del presidente de Estados Unidos, Donald Trump, junto a parte de su gabinete. Se da también luego de la visita que hicieron a Florida, donde constataron la ola migratoria de boricuas que se está dando a pasos agigantados hacia el estado y en la que en tan solo dos semanas ya se han contabilizado seis mil puertorriqueños que se han ido y 400 niños matriculados en las escuelas, 300 en Orlando y 100 en Kissimmee.

La comisionada residente dijo que se han establecido centros de ayuda de Fema y la Cruz Roja en varios de los aeropuertos de Florida y que en su visita ayer a Orlando vio la llegada de residentes de Trujillo Alto, Carolina, Cabo Rojo, Juncos, Arecibo, Ponce y Corozal.

“Es bien fuerte”, dijo González a El Nuevo Día, quien narró que inmediatamente llegaron ayer a Florida, dos familias de puertorriqueños, una de Guayama y otra de Corozal, los recibieron y les narraron cómo habían perdido sus casas y lo que habían levantado.

Hoy el trayecto de Pence comenzó en Islas Vírgenes y ya aterrizó en Puerto Rico, donde como Trump, le darán un resumen de la situación en Puerto Rico luego del paso de María, el pasado 20 de septiembre, y la devastación que dejó a su paso el ciclón en los 78 municipios de la isla.

La comisionada residente tiene en su agenda del día discutir con Pence varios asuntos relevantes, entre ellos la tardanza en la instalación de los toldos azules en las miles de casas que perdieron sus techos a lo largo y ancho del país.

“Mi agenda hoy con el vicepresidente va a incluir el que mucha de la gente nos dicen que todavía sus casas no tienen el toldo azul, que está lloviendo y que aún están a la intemperie. Eso es una prioridad para mí”, recaló González tras añadir que obviamente tocará los temas de los sistemas de energía eléctrica y agua.

Según González, hay dos tipos de toldos. Está el más débil, que lo entrega Fema y que no requiere de mayores protocolos y burocracia. Lo datos que le han dado a la comisionada residente es que se han repartido ya 11,000 a los alcaldes, que son los encargados de repartirlos a la gente, así como en Vivienda Pública. El otro tipo de toldo es el azul, que es más fuerte y es instalado por el Cuerpo de Ingenieros.

“Yo entiendo que a la gente no les está llegando”, admitió González.

¿Por qué?

-Esa será mi agenda hoy con el vicepresidente, pedirle que nos ayude en eso. Mi preocupación es que como la gente no tiene Internet, no hay teléfonos, no hay luz, la aplicación de ese toldo es electrónica. Lo que están haciendo los municipios es que están llevando las solicitudes en papel y con esa solicitud de papel, el Cuerpo de Ingenieros las tramita. Sin embargo, no tengo los números de cuántos toldos han instalado, porque es el Cuerpo de Ingenieros al que le toca eso.

-¿Cree que lo que han entregado no va a la par con la necesidad que hay?

-Entiendo que eso no va a la par con la necesidad que hay en la calle y como no va a la par, yo le voy a pedir al vicepresidente Pence hoy que asigne más personal para la instalación de estos toldos, que se flexibilice la manera en que se tramita la obtención de este toldo, que es vital para que a la gente no se le moje lo poco que le queda en la casa. También la cantidad de funciones que está haciendo el Cuerpo de Ingenieros, porque ellos están montando puentes, arreglando carreteras, limpiando escombros, instalando toldos azules y arreglando el sistema eléctrico. Aunque son tropas distintas, la realidad es que esa es una de las áreas (repartición de toldos azules) que yo quiero que se agilice, para lo que voy a buscar la indulgencia del vicepresidente.

¿Hay otras áreas que tocará en sus conversaciones hoy con Pence?

-Hay otra áreas también que creo que son importantes. Ellos están instalando los generadores. Que los generadores que faltan en los hospitales, en las égidas y las bombas de agua, que son acueductos, esas deben ser una prioridad y va a ser una de las cosas que voy a pedir: dónde están y qué nos falta. Si la gente tiene agua, por lo menos puede tener su necesidad básica. Pero sin agua es muy difícil mantener, sobrepasar la situación.

¿Es otro trabajo del Cuerpo de Ingenieros?

-Esos generadores los trajo y los tiene que instalar el Cuerpo de Ingenieros, así que son ellos los que nos tienen que dar esa actualización. Yo sé que el jefe del Cuerpo de Ingenieros está en Puerto Rico. Para eso le pediré al vicepresidente su ayuda, sobre cómo podemos hacer que esto sea más rápido.

¿Hablará sobre los paquetes de fondos que se necesitan?

-Sobre los fondos la Casa Blanca pidió de \$12.77 billones y de \$16 billones de fondo de inundaciones, que es importante porque en la isla hubo muchas inundaciones. Nosotros tenemos que someter el estimado de daños para que podamos acceder a esos fondos rápido. Ese paquete de ayudas debe estar bajando ya la semana que viene.

¿Habrán más?

-Ya el vicepresidente dijo que este no va a ser el único paquete de fondos federales, que vienen otros.

El recorrido en la Isla incluye Country Club y la Iglesia de Santa Bernardita, que es un ministerio amplio de ayuda para suplir las necesidades de los que no tienen y que está bien organizado. De hecho, es de las pocas iglesias que abre las 24 horas y la que González visita con frecuencia, especialmente en horas de la noche.

La comisionada residente en Washington tiene la intención de movilizar a la isla la mayor cantidad de congresistas a Puerto Rico para entiendan el nivel de devastación y de necesidad que hay. De hecho, mañana tiene en agenda otro viaje con un grupo de legisladores federales.

## **Ponceños No Quieren Quedar En El Olvido**

[El Nuevo Día \(PRI\)](#), October 9, 2017

Ponce – “Que se acuerden de nosotros, de la zona rural, que también existimos”.

Con estas palabras, Gerardo Albizu Torres, de 37 años, resumió el sentir de muchos residentes de la zona montañosa de este municipio que, según contaron, no han recibido “ningún tipo de ayuda” a casi tres semanas del paso del huracán María.

Señalaron, incluso, que la alcaldesa María “Mayita” Meléndez es “la gran ausente” en la ruralía ponceña, donde tampoco se observan los toldos azules de la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA, en inglés). Estos toldos son la única opción que ciudadanos como Albizu Torres tienen para proteger “lo poco que nos queda”.

Albizu Torres perdió la casa que compró en 2001 en el barrio Real Anón. La estructura de madera y zinc se quedó sin techo y todo lo que había en su interior se dañó por la lluvia, que ha seguido cayendo. Ahora, en el espacio de la sala y cocina, el agua empozada es un criadero de mosquitos.

“Sería bueno que vengan las ayudas, pero a los campos no llegan. Está lloviendo todas las tardes y, como todavía no tenemos los toldos de FEMA, todo se sigue mojando”, agregó.

Como el resto de los puertorriqueños, Albizu Torres pasa largas horas en filas para adquirir agua embotellada, alimentos, hielo y gasolina, entre otros bienes de primera necesidad. Mientras la ayuda para restaurar su hogar llega, pernocta en la casa de su padre, de cemento, también en el barrio Real Anón.

“No ha venido nadie para acá, nadie”, dijo, y justo después su hija Geraldine, de 6 años, soltó: “una crisis”.

“No se ha visto por aquí”

“¿Dónde está ‘Mayita’? ‘Mayita’ no se ha visto por aquí para nada”, comentó, por su parte, Michael Guzmán Marrero, de 45 años, mientras se bañaba en el río Inabón, en la colindancia de los barrios Real Anón y Coto Laurel.

Según contó, “en todo Ponce” hay necesidad, pero lo más que urge es agua embotellada. Dijo que recientemente fue hasta Cayey buscando agua y solo pudo comprar un galón, “porque los estaban racionando”.

Historias similares narraron los vecinos del barrio San Patricio, que viajan a Utuado, Jayuya o Adjuntas para buscar suministros. Estos tres pueblos les quedan más cerca que el casco ponceño.

Luis Vélez Bianchi, de 65 años y quien perdió parte del techo de la segunda planta de su casa, declaró que “nadie del gobierno (estatal) ha pasado por aquí y la alcaldesa se ha olvidado del barrio”.



Vélez Bianchi tiene servicio de agua potable, pero no de electricidad. Sobre este último, dijo – entre risas– que espera recobrarlo antes de las navidades del año 2019. En 1998, tras el paso del huracán Georges, estuvo tres meses sin luz, “pero este huracán (María) no tiene comparación”.

“Ustedes (El Nuevo Día) son los primeros que pasan por acá”, indicó, entretanto, Myrna Ríos Mejía, de 48 años, quien vive junto a su madre, de 78 años; hermana, de 50; y cuatro hijos. Los siete pasaron el huracán en los bajos de la residencia, que perdió el techo del baño y los cuartos quedaron “inundados” por la lluvia.

Relató que no ha podido comprar alimentos, ni agua embotellada. Como no tiene electricidad, no ha podido darse las terapias para su condición de asma. A su madre se le están agotando los medicamentos para el dolor.

“No tenemos con quien ir a ningún lado. Los carros que tenemos aquí no sirven. Estamos a fuerza de los guineos del mismo patio. Pero necesitamos ayuda. Los políticos, que siempre pasan buscando votos en época de elecciones, todavía no se han dado la vuelta por aquí”, aseveró Ríos Mejía.

Los esposos Charito Oliveras Collazo y Edwin Laboy Millán, de 31 y 48 años, respectivamente, también se sienten “olvidados” en el sector La Yuca del barrio Machuelo Arriba, donde ellos y otros residentes “abrimos camino” para no quedarse incomunicados.

“Es mentira que la ayuda está llegando. Acá arriba no ha venido nadie. Ni la basura están recogiendo y se están formando muchos vertederos clandestinos”, contó Oliveras Collazo, quien recoge agua en una pluma que los propios vecinos instalaron en una iglesia de la comunidad.

Ninguno de los entrevistados con daños en sus hogares había iniciado formalmente su reclamación ante FEMA.

## **Cuerpo De Ingenieros Da Primer Contrato Para Reparar Sistema Eléctrico**

[El Nuevo Día \(PRI\)](#), October 9, 2017

El Cuerpo de Ingenieros del Ejército de los Estados Unidos (USACE) concedió hoy, lunes, un contrato ascendente a \$35.1 millones a la empresa Weston Solutions para la restauración del sistema eléctrico de Puerto Rico.

Este es el primero de una serie de contratos que concederá el USACE como parte del proceso para restaurar el servicio energético que colapsó tras el azote del huracán María. El 80% del sistema de transmisión y distribución quedó en el piso y el gran reto de la Autoridad de Energía Eléctrica (AEE) -en coordinación con el USACE- es satisfacer la gran demanda de luz del norte de la Isla cuando la generación en su mayoría se produce en el sur.

Hoy, el gobernador Ricardo Rosselló informó que 15% de los abonados de la AEE ya cuenta con servicio. Además, recalcó que “paralelo” al restablecimiento de la luz se trabaja con dar paso en un futuro cercano a un nuevo sistema energético.

“Nuestro objetivo no es solamente levantar el mismo sistema que teníamos antes. Levantar el mismo sistema que teníamos antes nos pone en la misma posición de vulnerabilidad. Invertimos un montón de chavos para estar sujetos a que venga otra tormenta y que nos rebase nuevamente. Nuestro objetivo es -paralelo esto- investigar y ver cuál es el mejor sistema que podamos tener en Puerto Rico en términos de generación, que sea moderno y nos permita una real oportunidad para hacer cambios transformativos en el sistema eléctrico en Puerto Rico”, puntualizó Rosselló.

Weston Solutions, una empresa con sede en Pennsylvania, tendrá la misión de proveer generación eléctrica a la planta de generatriz de Palo Seco, en San Juan. Traerá un generador de 50 megavatios que llegará a “Puerto Rico muy pronto”, informó en comunicado de prensa Diana Holland, comandante de la División del Sur del Atlántico del USACE.

La idea es que al proporcionarle generación de emergencia a Palo Seco, más clientes de la AEE recibirán electricidad en lo que se completan las reparaciones a las líneas de transmisión que se conectan a Palo Seco.

“Este es un paso importante en nuestros esfuerzos para restaurar la electricidad a los ciudadanos de Puerto Rico”, dijo Holland.

La reparación del sistema eléctrico incluye cuatro pasos, de acuerdo con el USACE. La primera fase es proveer energía y generación temporera a lugares críticos. La segunda es asegurar una generación adecuada en las centrales eléctricas para luego reinstalar y reparar las líneas de transmisión. Por último, es preciso restaurar y reparar las líneas de distribución.

Tanto los directivos de la USACE como de la Agencia federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA, en inglés) han dicho que el restablecimiento total del servicio eléctrico demorará meses.

El director de Operaciones de Contingencia y Seguridad Nacional del USACE, José Sánchez, dijo en entrevista con este diario que la misión que le ha dado FEMA es solo reparar “de emergencia” el sistema eléctrico. Pero ha recalcado que es imperativo evolucionar a un sistema más fuerte.

Ha advertido que ve “difícil” que el restablecimiento de la luz en su totalidad se produzca al cabo de seis a siete meses, parámetro que se ha usado recientemente como referente pues fue el tiempo que tomó hacerlo tras el azote del huracán Georges en 1998. Sin embargo, Sánchez dijo que trabajan a toda capacidad y con contratistas para acelerar el proceso.

Sin embargo, la cantidad de brigadas que posee la AEE, unas 230 -cada una de tres a cuatro personas- no menos que las que había en el pasado. Por eso y ante la emergencia se hacen las contrataciones que la USACE estima serán más de 2,000.

## **En Espera Por Un Plan De Reconstrucción Para La Isla**

[El Nuevo Día \(PRI\)](#), October 9, 2017

WASHINGTON — El Senado estadounidense aguardaría por las recomendaciones de la Junta de Supervisión Fiscal a cargo de las finanzas públicas de Puerto Rico y del gobernador Ricardo Rosselló antes de diseñar un plan que encamine la reconstrucción de la isla.

Tras la devastación causada por el huracán María, ya no parece haber debate sobre la necesidad de algún tipo de rescate financiero del gobierno federal para revivir la economía de Puerto Rico, la cual el ciclón acabó de hundir.

Lo que aún no está claro es qué cosas formarán parte de ese plan, que los demócratas quieren se asemeje al concepto del Plan Marshall con el cual se impulsó la reconstrucción de Europa central después de la Segunda Guerra Mundial, por medio de medidas para modernizar su economía.

“Queremos que se rinda cuentas sobre hacia donde ese dinero va a ir”, advirtió ayer el senador republicano Ron Johnson (Wisconsin), presidente del Comité de Seguridad Interna y Asuntos de Gobierno, en una conferencia telefónica de los cinco senadores que estuvieron el sábado observando los daños causados por el huracán María en Puerto Rico.

Desde antes del huracán, economistas, grupos de estudio y sindicatos habían reclamado que aun después de autorizar la reestructuración de la deuda pública, por medio de un nuevo sistema judicial de bancarrota territorial, Puerto Rico necesitaría medidas que ayuden a la economía.

Ahora, demócratas del Senado dicen que eso es inevitable. “Se necesita un plan financiero inmediato”, dijo el senador demócrata Richard Blumenthal (Connecticut), quien dijo desde el punto de vista del Senado su contenido debe salir de conversaciones entre la Junta, el gobernador Rosselló y el Comité de Finanzas, que maneja los temas referentes al Tesoro, Medicaid, y temas contributivos.

El gobernador Rosselló –quien ha estado en conversaciones con el Tesoro–, dijo ayer que requiere una inyección inicial de \$4,600 millones y ha advertido que a finales de este mes el gobierno de Puerto Rico puede quedarse sin dinero en efectivo.

El senador Blumenthal dijo que entendía que la “tormenta financiera” ocurriría a finales de año.

El gobierno de Rosselló ha discutido en Washington, entre otras cosas, la posibilidad de que el Tesoro garantice un préstamo del gobierno de Puerto Rico o que la Reserva federal compre bonos de la isla.

En la conferencia telefónica, la demócrata Kirsten Gillibrand (Nueva York) dijo que “se necesita un plan tipo Plan Marshall no importa lo que tome”. “Se requiere un Plan Marshall no para reparar temporalmente, sino para la recuperación y resiliencia a largo plazo”, sostuvo Blumenthal.

Los republicanos han sido menos contundentes, pero reconocen que se requiere apoyo federal a un plan dirigido a revivir la economía. “Queremos trabajar con el Senado para presentar algo que atienda las necesidades a corto y largo plazo”, indicó el republicano Cory Gardner, presidente del subcomité de Energía de la Comisión de Energía y Recursos Naturales.

Los senadores coincidieron que todo el proceso de reestructuración comienza por restablecer la red eléctrica, para poder facilitar el funcionamiento de los pilares de la economía de Puerto Rico, como la manufactura y el turismo.

“(La red eléctrica) era débil antes de la tormenta, ahora está muy devastada”, sostuvo Johnson.

Esta semana, el Congreso debe aprobar la asignación de \$12,770 millones para volver a llenar las arcas del fondo para atender desastres de la Agencia federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA).

## **Llega Un Generador A Culebra Para Un Centro De Salud**

[El Nuevo Día \(PRI\)](#), October 9, 2017

El generador tenía escrito diversos mensajes con tiza en solidaridad con el pueblo de Culebra.

“Dios los bendiga y los mejores deseos (de la) Guardia Nacional de Puerto Rico”, leía uno de los mensajes.

Un generador de 30 kilovatios, y cuyo peso es de 1,927 libras, aguardaba ayer, domingo, en el interior de un helicóptero de carga Boeing CH-47 Chinook de Pennsylvania, aeronave necesaria para transportar un objeto de dicho tamaño y peso.

Precisamente esa fue una de las razones para que el generador, que debió llegar a la isla municipio antes del paso cercano del huracán María, aún aguardase en la base de Isla Grande. Su destino es el centro de salud HealthproMed 330 ubicado en Culebra.

El coronel de la Guardia Nacional de Puerto Rico, Jorge Galoff, dijo que se enteraron de la urgencia de llevar el generador a Culebra a través de la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA). Ivonne Rivera, administradora del centro de salud, se vio en la necesidad de abordar a funcionarios de la agencia luego de pedirle ayuda al secretario de Salud, Rafael Rodríguez Mercado, para llevar el generador a Culebra.

“Nunca recibí respuesta”, dijo la mujer que estaba feliz de poder recibir la asistencia de la Guardia Nacional.

“Desde el sábado después de María, todas las mañanas yo llegaba al Centro de Mando del Gobierno a buscar apoyo, para ver cómo podíamos transportar esta planta a Culebra. Y no recibía absolutamente ninguna contestación”, narró Rivera.

Tras varios intentos, no fue posible conseguir a Rodríguez Mercado.

Rivera, entretanto, destacó que el centro de salud no había podido dar servicios desde el azote de Culebra. El lugar, creado hace 14 años y que da servicio diariamente a aproximadamente 15 personas, es subvencionado con fondos federales. Además, ofrece servicios de dentista, pediatría, obstetricia y ginecología, médico de familia, internista, optómetra, trabajador social y nutricionista.

Rivera agradeció no solo al coronel Galoff sino también al coronel Ricardo Garratón, también de la Guardia Nacional, quien fue su primer contacto en la milicia para así llevar el generador a Culebra.

## **“La Isla Necesita Una Invasión Humanitaria”**

[El Nuevo Día \(PRI\)](#), October 8, 2017

Orlando, Florida – No pasan muchos días sin que Darren Soto, congresista boricua por el estado de la Florida, aparezca en noticiarios nacionales, periódicos y en las redes sociales dramatizando de forma intensa la tragedia de Puerto Rico a causa del huracán María.

En inglés, que es su idioma principal, y a veces en un español con barreras, clama con tono urgente por ayuda para el país donde nació su padre. Y ha sido puntual en levantar su dedo acusador hacia la Casa Blanca por la lentitud y poca prioridad que ha dado a la emergencia que atraviesa la isla luego que la mañana del 20 de septiembre, el poderoso ciclón lanzara a Borinquen en solo horas en un viaje al pasado, a la época en que la gente se alumbraba con velas, lavaba su ropa en los ríos y cocinaba al fogón.

¿Siente que han escuchado sus denuncias?

—Sí, me han escuchado en el Congreso, pero he tenido una respuesta lenta de la administración Trump. Mi mensaje ha sido simple: todas las historias de la tragedia en Puerto Rico son ciertas. No hay electricidad, no hay servicio de celulares; las filas para comprar comida son inmensas. El agua es aún difícil de hallar. Mi mensaje a la administración Trump es que necesitamos más ayuda aérea, helicópteros que lleguen a estas zonas aisladas llevando ayuda. Con el Congreso, la situación ha sido más positiva. Esperamos aprobar un paquete de \$29,000 millones que tendrá \$10,000 millones para Puerto Rico. Lo demás es para Texas, Florida e Islas Vírgenes que también fueron afectados.

En el reporte que usted preparó luego de su viaje a Puerto Rico documenta la lentitud de FEMA; de oficiales que llegaron a la isla de otros estados para ayudar, pero que estuvieron días sin hacer nada porque no recibían instrucciones; y señala los problemas de coordinación. ¿Cómo interpresa estas observaciones?

—Que no hay una voluntad del presidente Trump para que las cosas se hagan con la urgencia que amerita. Vi cientos de contenedores en el puerto y a oficiales federales diciendo que no podían entregar la ayuda porque las carreteras estaban averiadas. Sin embargo, el gobierno de Estados Unidos ha estado en otras instancias en las que ha despachado ayuda con gran rapidez, como cuando tuvimos una guerra en Yugoslavia y en Irak, hacia donde simplemente mandábamos brigadas para construir puentes rápidamente; enviamos suministros en helicópteros y teníamos militares cuidando esos suministros mientras se llevaban a su destino. La isla necesita una invasión humanitaria y yo solo veo esta lentitud que me da un mensaje claro de que los oficiales de FEMA están haciendo lo mejor que pueden, pero no han recibido motivación ni apoyo de la Casa Blanca para hacer lo necesario y llevar esos suministros a las áreas más necesitadas de la isla.

Lee más entrevistas

¿Y por qué cree que Casa Blanca no los está motivando a llevar esta ayuda con urgencia?

—¿Sabes? Es muy difícil saber qué hay en la mente del presidente Trump, pero creo que tanto él como muchos oficiales en la Casa Blanca han subestimado la magnitud de los daños que ha sufrido la isla. Su viaje se concentró en San Juan y áreas cercanas, pero si hubiera ido a Guajataba o a Utuado hubiera visto áreas que han sido golpeadas y devueltas al Siglo 19. Sin ATH, supermercados cerrados, carreteras cerradas...

Es difícil creer que Trump no supiera sobre los daños en Puerto Rico. Es difícil creer que el presidente se quedó en el área metropolitana porque no supiera.

—Y esa es la gran pregunta. Solo sé que he sido vocal sobre lo que he visto y por eso fui tan crítico en ese reporte. Por eso es que denuncié la lenta y desmotivada respuesta de la Casa Blanca. En contraste, el Congreso ha tomado seriamente esta devastación y por eso es que estamos hablando de una gran asignación para ayudar a reconstruir a Puerto Rico

¿Tener al Congreso motivado, como usted dice, y no a la Casa Blanca es suficiente para ayudar a la isla?

—No. No es suficiente. Y por esto temo que el número de muertos irá aumentando en los próximos meses en la medida que sigamos analizando esta crisis. No puedes tener ancianos dependiendo de equipo médico que prende y apaga porque se acaba el combustible de un generador,

y no puedes tener gente sin agua y comida por tanto tiempo sin que empieces a ver consecuencias terribles.

Ha dicho que lo ocurrido en Puerto Rico fue otro Katrina.

—Y no he sido el único que lo ha dicho. El congresista de Luisiana, Cedric Richmons, dijo que estaba preocupado al ver que la devastación en la isla se estaba convirtiendo en un segundo Katrina.

¿Podiera ser peor que Katrina por el hecho de que Puerto Rico una isla y literalmente estamos aislados?

—Tenemos que enfocarnos en llevar los suministros allí. No es si es peor o no que Katrina, es que hay que hacer el trabajo y eso no está ocurriendo.

En el reporte que preparó habla de un viaje en helicóptero, ¿qué imágenes le impactaron más?

—Cuando despegamos vimos en San Juan como en algunas comunidades ya el agua empezaba a bajar y era claro que mientras más pobre es la comunidad, peor fue el impacto. Cuando empezamos a viajar al área de los bosques, ya no había hojas en los árboles, y los árboles parecían palillos de fósforos todos doblados. En el centro de la isla, empecé a ver plantaciones destruidas, granjas de las que solo quedaba el esqueleto de estructuras. Pueblo tras pueblo, vi viviendas sin techo y no vi los toldos azules de FEMA, porque no han llegado y me preocupé que ocurriera una inundación. Luego fuimos a Utuado. Escogimos aterrizar allí pues es uno de los pueblos más grandes de Puerto Rico pero está aislado y pensé que si veíamos lo que pasaba ahí tendríamos una imagen clara de cómo es la situación en el resto de la zona montañosa. Allí todo estaba lleno de fango, arboles tirados, puentes y carreteras rotas. Allí, un anciano se me acercó y me preguntó si yo era de FEMA. Le expliqué que no, que era un congresista puertorriqueño que representaba a Florida. Me dijo que nadie de FEMA había llegado. En el pueblo, no había ninguna actividad, solo en un cafetín donde me tomé un café. Allí, me confirmaron que no había llegado ninguna ayuda. Que no podían comprar pues no había ATH. Escaseaba el agua. Por suerte, el hospital tenía un generador. Ahí constaté que en muchos lugares pasarán muchos meses antes que se pueda restablecer la electricidad. Y por eso mi trabajo es decirle la verdad al Congreso y eso fue lo que hice. Por eso preparé un informe formal y le agregué fotos para que vieran porque, aunque han visto los reportes noticiosos, ellos quieren tener un informe de primera mano. Es crítico que los miembros del Congreso tengan esta información. Y FEMA también vio ese reporte.

¿Y tuvo alguna reacción de FEMA?

—Me reuní con ellos al día siguiente que regresé de Puerto Rico. Le dije a los funcionarios de FEMA que necesitamos apoyo aéreo para llevar los suministros. Ese ha sido el gran punto ciego en esta operación de emergencia.

Esta situación ha llevado a la isla a no poder sostenerse económicamente y mucho menos podrá pensar en pagar su deuda con sus acreedores. ¿Cómo ve a Puerto Rico en ese aspecto?

—Soy parte del Comité de Recursos Naturales y del subcomité de Asuntos Indígenas, Insulares y Nativos de Alaska, así que estoy en un comité con jurisdicción directa con Puerto Rico. Me reuní esta semana con el presidente del comité como parte de la discusión del paquete para FEMA para atender la emergencia. Los fondos para la emergencia no se pueden usar para pagar a acreedores.

En la isla hay 3.4 millones de ciudadanos americanos y en ellos sí se han pensado cuando hay una guerra y se necesitan efectivos militares.

—Mi mensaje al Congreso ha sido que los puertorriqueños son americanos que han reafirmado su compromiso con la bandera americana que pagan impuestos, que han peleado en la milicia. Y el gobierno federal, con su respuesta lenta, le ha fallado en este momento de gran necesidad.

Hay quien dice que en futuras elecciones, los puertorriqueños en la diáspora recordaran quiénes ayudaron o no ayudaron a la isla en esta crisis y usarán su voto para castigar. ¿Qué cree?

—En la Florida Central recordaremos quién ayudó y quién olvidó a la isla. Lo recordaremos ahora y en el futuro. Y ya estamos usando nuestro poder político lo mejor que podemos. Yo represento un distrito que es mayoritariamente anglosajón, pero como votamos como un bloque

mayor en el que se unen anglos y negros, me siento aquí como una persona que representa también a los puertorriqueños.

## **Comprometida La Capacidad De Abasto Del País**

[El Nuevo Día \(PRI\)](#), October 8, 2017

Enormes cantidades de sedimentos se movieron hacia los embalses a consecuencia de las copiosas lluvias del huracán María, reduciendo potencialmente su capacidad de almacenamiento y amenazando, a su vez, con crear un problema de disponibilidad de agua en el país, advirtieron expertos.

La mayoría de los embalses ya están altamente sedimentados, y el panorama se complica aún más con el hecho de que María también causó una gran devastación forestal.

Sin vegetación en las montañas, se pierde la capacidad de amortiguamiento o retención de sedimentos, lo que facilita su entrada a los cuerpos de agua durante eventos de lluvia.

“En Puerto Rico, la capacidad de los embalses para recibir agua es cada vez menos, y ahora va a haber mucha más sedimentación entrado. Cuando a un embalse le queda el 20% de su capacidad, está anulado para todo efecto práctico”, sostuvo el exdirector de la Agencia Federal de Protección Ambiental (EPA, por sus siglas en inglés) en Puerto Rico y el Caribe, Carl Soderberg.

Mencionó, por ejemplo, que los embalses Carraízo, en Trujillo Alto, y Dos Bocas, en Utuado, están sedimentados en 40% y 63%, respectivamente, y “es posible que ahora pierdan otro por ciento adicional”.

Cuestionado al respecto, el presidente ejecutivo de la Autoridad de Acueductos y Alcantarillados (AAA), Elí Díaz Atienza, indicó que, una vez se “normalice” el servicio de agua potable, la corporación pública iniciará un “análisis de la sedimentación” en los embalses causada por el huracán, que tocó suelo boricua el pasado 20 de septiembre.

“Reconocemos los retos de las represas. Estos sistemas traen muchos sedimentos y nos pueden haber afectado las reservas de agua. Tan pronto resolvamos el asunto de suplir agua a las comunidades, haremos la evaluación”, dijo.

Contó que, desde antes que María azotara la isla, la AAA está “trabajando” con el experto en manejo de reservas de agua y consultor internacional en hidrología, Greg Morris, para “buscar opciones para bajar un poco los sedimentos” en los embalses.

Preliminarmente, Díaz Atienza señaló que algunas de esas opciones incluyen dragados continuos (equipo permanente en los embalses), dragados dirigidos (embalses particulares) y mover los sedimentos hacia el mar a través de la apertura controlada de compuertas.

“Estaremos mirando los efectos de cada opción y calculando cuál es la mejor. Reclamaremos a través de la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA, por sus siglas en inglés) los costos necesarios para remover los sedimentos que se recibieron con el huracán y posterior a eso por no tener la forestación necesaria”, dijo el funcionario.

Más costoso

Aparte de sedimentos, los ríos y embalses están recibiendo ahora más hojas y ramas, lo que aumentará el costo de tratamiento del agua para que su consumo sea seguro, expuso el doctor en ecología y catedrático asociado de la Universidad de Carolina del Norte en Chapell Hill, Javier Arce Nazario.

Advirtió, incluso, que la descomposición de este material resultará en mayor cantidad de carbono disuelto en el agua que, cuando se mezcla con cloro, crea compuestos carcinógenos.

“Estos compuestos orgánicos y el sinnúmero de otros contaminantes que deben estar llegando a los ríos, resultará en un aumento en costo en el tratamiento del agua por parte de la AAA”, dijo Arce Nazario.

“La AAA va a recibir agua con un nivel de turbiedad bien alto y tendrá que lavar más a menudo sus filtros. Producir agua potable va a ser más duro y, por ende, más costoso”, agregó Soderberg.

Para este año fiscal, la AAA cuenta con un presupuesto de \$594 millones para costear su programa de operación y mantenimiento de sistemas de acueductos y alcantarillados.

#### Infraestructura vieja

El huracán María sacó a relucir la situación de vulnerabilidad de algunas de represas. Ejemplo de ello es lo que en principio se reportó como una rotura de 24 pulgadas en la represa Guajataca, y luego se dijo que se trataba de erosión en la parte del vertedor de concreto. El gobierno mantuvo bajo riesgo inminente de inundación a comunidades de Quebradillas, Isabela y San Sebastián, y cientos de familias fueron desalojadas.

“Típicamente, las represas se diseñan para una vida útil de 50 a 60 años. En Puerto Rico, muchas represas ya pasaron su vida útil, y lo que requieren ahora es una reevaluación y reacondicionamiento de sus estructuras”, afirmó el presidente del Colegio de Ingenieros y Agrimensores de Puerto Rico, Pablo Vázquez Ruiz, quien recordó que la represa Guajataca se construyó entre 1919 y 1928.

Contó que, a excepción de las represas Cerrillos y Portugués, ambas en Ponce, las demás son “más vulnerables” a eventos como huracanes, porque no están diseñadas con la última tecnología.

“Las represas más modernas tienen mucha instrumentación que permite detectar cualquier indicio de falla. También cuentan con mecanismos de seguridad que no permiten que haya un desbordamiento. Pero en Puerto Rico, por el tiempo de construcción que tienen las represas, ya es necesario que haya una reevaluación y reacondicionamiento de todas estas estructuras. Necesitamos personal experto en el país que pueda realizar esto”, recalcó.

Sobre el aumento en sedimentación, Vázquez Ruiz dijo que es un problema que no supone un riesgo de seguridad para los embalses, pero hace que “vayan perdiendo su utilidad”.

Díaz Atienza, por su parte, descartó que la coyuntura actual se preste para impulsar la construcción de más represas. Aparte de que los “lugares idóneos” para nuevos embalses escasean en la isla, la AAA pretende “atacar la necesidad de más agua” con iniciativas para reducir las pérdidas en producción.

Al momento, la AAA pierde –física y comercialmente– el 60% del agua que produce.

#### Efecto en corales

Soderberg, entretanto, dijo que el flujo de sedimentos y la devastación forestal también tendrán “efecto directo” sobre los arrecifes de coral.

“Cuando les llegue esa sedimentación (a través de los ríos), los va a liquidar. Los sedimentos son veneno para los corales”, aseveró.

Datos del Centro para la Ecología Tropical Aplicada y Conservación (CATEC) de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, Recinto de Río Piedras, apuntan a que el 80% de los arrecifes de coral, a menos de 100 pies de profundidad, ya muestran señales de mortandad asociada al evento de blanqueamiento de 2005. Ese evento se relaciona, a su vez, al aumento en la temperatura del mar debido al cambio climático.

Arce Nazario añadió que, después de un huracán, los estuarios se tornan menos salados y la turbidez aumenta, lo que afecta a las especies que allí habitan.

No se descarta, por lo tanto, una merma en la actividad pesquera.

#### Más inundaciones

Mientras, la directora del CATEC, Elvira Cuevas, expuso que, a corto plazo, otro efecto de la devastación forestal causada por María serán más inundaciones.

“Las inundaciones serían mayores al no tener la cobertura vegetal necesaria para reducir la escorrentía”, dijo.

Con ella coincidió el ambientalista y urbanista Ramón Cruz, miembro de la Junta de Directores del Sierra Club en Estados Unidos, quien señaló que la pérdida de áreas de mangle también aumenta el riesgo de inundaciones.

Arce Nazario fue más comedido, al indicar que la incidencia de inundaciones dependerá de la condición del terreno antes y después del huracán.

“El huracán no destruye toda la vegetación y no crea una superficie impermeable. Nosotros, los humanos, talamos un bosque y hacemos estacionamientos por donde el agua no penetra. Dentro de los bosques destruidos por el huracán hay mucha vida que podrá tener funciones importantes como, por ejemplo, retener la lluvia y crear fricción para que el agua no llegue rápidamente al río”, expresó.

El análisis preliminar del impacto de María en las áreas custodiadas por el Departamento de Recursos Naturales y Ambientales (DRNA) arrojó que el 98% de los árboles adultos está “en el piso”, indicó en días recientes la secretaria Tania Vázquez. El 80% de los árboles juveniles sobrevivió el azote del huracán, lo que ayudaría a adelantar la reforestación de las áreas naturales.

## **En Precario La Salud Mental Tras El Paso Del Ciclón Por La Isla**

[El Nuevo Día \(PRI\)](#), October 10, 2017

JAYUYA. – Nilda Méndez Mercado se cuestiona a diario por qué sigue viva. Llegó hace poco más de un mes a Puerto Rico, desde el estado de Nueva Jersey, para estar “tranquila”. Pero el huracán María le cambió los planes.

El ciclón destruyó su casa en el sector Alturas Pisá del barrio Collores, en este municipio. Ni una pared quedó intacta. La vivienda se había construido con los ahorros “de toda una vida”.

Méndez Mercado quería regresar con su esposo, Francisco Soto Zamora, a quien dejó en las montañas jayuyanas mientras atendía su salud en Estados Unidos. Es paciente de cáncer, diabética y le dio un derrame cerebral que paralizó la mitad de su cuerpo.

“Pero ahora tengo depresión. Estoy mala de los nervios. Pasé el huracán aquí y fue terrible. Se llevó todo lo que me quedaba. Todo era nuevo y se lo llevó”, dijo llorosa la mujer de 70 años.

Desde el pasado 20 de septiembre, cuando María tocó suelo boricua, Méndez Mercado está “refugiada en un cuarto” en la casa de su suegra, de cemento. Sus problemas de movilidad le impiden salir a buscar ayuda. Tampoco ha llegado nadie a ofrecérsela.

“No he recibido ninguna ayuda, ni agua siquiera. Pasan y siguen. No nos han dado nada. No existimos en este lado. Todo se queda en el pueblo. Vienen los helicópteros con comida y agua, pero como yo no puedo ir... Necesito pañales, medicamentos y, cuanto antes, una vivienda, porque yo no puedo vivir así”, esbozó.

Méndez Mercado contó que pasa los días “llorando y llorando”, y que varias noches –en las últimas semanas– “me he acostado a dormir con hambre porque no nos han dado nada”.

Señaló que, debido a las irregularidades en el servicio postal, sus hijos no han podido enviarle ayuda desde los estados de Nueva Jersey, Illinois y Florida. “La correspondencia no llega”, dijo.

Dijo que, “tan pronto tenga unos dólares” y se normalice el tráfico aéreo, regresará a Estados Unidos.

“Nos viró la vida”

Wanda Sepúlveda Torres y Belinda Maldonado Medina, de 53 y 27 años, respectivamente, son vecinas de Méndez Mercado y también se expresaron deprimidas.

Denunciaron, además, que ninguna agencia municipal, estatal o federal ha visitado el sector Alturas Pisá para ofrecer servicios de salud mental.

“Porque los necesitamos. Este huracán nos viró la vida a todo el mundo”, dijo Sepúlveda Torres, quien perdió el techo de su casa y decenas de pertenencias, y ahora duerme en una caseta de campaña en el patio.

Lo menos que reclaman es un toldo de la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA, en inglés), “para que la lluvia no siga mojando lo poco que nos quedó”.

500 familias

El administrador municipal de Jayuya, Alexis Bennett, indicó que 500 familias perdieron sus casas parcial o totalmente debido al paso de María, incluyendo algunas de cemento.



El huracán, asimismo, cobró la vida de un hombre cuando un alud derrumbó su vivienda, en el sector Caricaboa.

“No tenemos agua embotellada, pero la que está saliendo por el grifo es potable y lo podemos garantizar. También necesitamos combustible, tanto para nuestra flota como para alguna infraestructura del gobierno estatal”, dijo Bennett, tras precisar que el 33% del municipio tiene el servicio de la Autoridad de Acueductos y Alcantarillados (AAA).

A casi tres semanas del paso de María, las brigadas siguen “abriendo camino”. Las carreteras, de hecho, aún exhiben grandes cantidades de lodo y algunos tramos están inundados por las lluvias que continúan. En el sector Hoyos Planes, unas 25 familias solo tienen acceso a pie, porque la carretera PR-531 colapsó.

Bennett reconoció que la falta de combustible ha limitado la repartición de agua y comida en los barrios jayuyanos.

## **Efluvios De La Donahue**

By Mayra Montero

[El Nuevo Día \(PRI\)](#), October 8, 2017

La noticia de que el gobernador no tiene “un Plan B” para atender el desastre causado por el huracán, siendo su única alternativa los fondos que le otorgue el Congreso y la administración del presidente Trump, no puede sorprender a nadie. Es más, ni siquiera es noticia.

¿Quién tiene un Plan B de cara a este desastre? A ver, ¿de dónde va a sacarse nada para comenzar siquiera a darle forma a esto?

La presencia del Ejército de los Estados Unidos va para largo, y oí decir que empezaban a ocuparse ellos mismos de la entrega de alimentos y otros artículos de primera necesidad, en vista de que habían surgido indicios de que en la ruta entre el centro de acopio y los municipios, se “esfumaban” paquetes de medicinas y otros productos.

También oí que había quejas de los militares, porque en algunos residenciales y otros sectores del interior de la Isla, los llamados “bichotes” obstaculizaban su trabajo.

Bienvenidos al club.

Eso lo sufren aquí, a diario, cientos de instituciones cívicas o religiosas, que deben pasarle la manita al capo y contar con su autorización para poder asomar la cara en las comunidades que viven bajo un cacicazgo de origen criminal, y en las que el trapicheo es cosa seria. Los del ejército, sin embargo, creo que no son propensos a pasarle la manita a nadie. El día que tengan que entrar en un residencial, un barrio remoto o lo que sea, y tengan órdenes concretas de no andarse con contemplaciones, se abrirán paso por donde tengan que abrirlo. Aunque no hayan venido en son de guerra, ese tipo de movilización es un inconveniente para el bajo mundo, algo que, unido a los problemas tácticos que dejó el huracán, arruina en parte lo que es la válvula de escape de mucha gente que depende de la economía informal. Puede haber “roces”, claro que sí.

Es sabido que los huracanes entorpecen el movimiento clandestino de los cargamentos. La mar está picada, los vuelos son escasos y las carreteras quedan intransitables. Si a eso se le añade una fuerza militar que llega a controlar las vías públicas y con la que es difícil establecer “alianzas” para que se hagan de la vista larga o custodien el trasiego, la situación puede tornarse tensa. Debe tenerse en cuenta, sin embargo, que el día en que le inflijan un rasguño a uno de esos militares, arderá Troya. Los que van a entrar a buscar a los culpables no serán agentes locales ni simples investigadores, sino oficiales del ejército, con sus métodos un poco más enérgicos.

El problema sigue siendo la falta de electricidad.

Cada vez que uno lee que han tenido que mandar a buscar especialistas mexicanos en tendido eléctrico, a los que FEMA pagará su sueldo, es imposible no acordarse de los millones que se dilapidaron en Lisa Donahue y su compañía. A la par que la gran estafa que resultó el trazado y construcción de la llamada Vía Verde, está este otro fiasco de la contratación de la reina madre —se

movía como una reina madre—, afectada y ladina, que cargó con cientos de millones, ella y sus compinches. Una mujer que nada adelantaba, que pedía prórrogas y más prórrogas a su contrato vergonzoso, y que no hizo otra cosa en Puerto Rico que no fuera lucrarse y marearnos con la “colonizadora” de que ella podía resolverlo todo.

Aquí tenemos las consecuencias. La Donahue en capilla ardiente, sin que le falte ni una bombillita, y nosotros ahogados en la incertidumbre, con cientos de negocios cerrados, miles de empleados en la calle, sin trabajo y sin sueldo.

Ésa es otra. Hay una diferencia entre la gente que está en su casa, cobrando salarios del gobierno, y los que han recibido un portazo en las narices, porque los comercios y las pequeñas empresas ignoran cuándo podrán reanudar operaciones. Los verdaderos sacrificados son esos, los que están ahora mismo esperando que llegue la luz, alimentando la esperanza de que el patrono no cierre para siempre.

Por eso choca tanto que, cobrando su salario entero, algunos se dediquen a “filosofar” sobre el Plan B y el Plan C, y hasta el Plan Z que debería tener el gobernador.

Desengañense, no hay más ninguno: esperar un rescate económico y echar hacia adelante con lo que nos caiga, con espíritu de sacrificio y austeridad. Sí, austeridad, esa palabra que tanto mortifica a los patriotas de balcón.

En cuanto a la visita del vicepresidente Pence, que se puso en plan Miss Simpatía y aseguró que el coquí iba a “cantar más alto”, confieso que prefiero los gruñidos del otro. Los papeloallazos del otro. La descarnada brutalidad del otro. Lo prefiero incluso antes que la vocecita de la Donahue. ¿Recuerdan su voz? Dios sabe que nunca la creí.

## **OPINIÓN: “Lo Que Vi En Puerto Rico”**

[El Tiempo Latino](#), October 10, 2017

Ponce, PUERTO RICO – Esta semana pude ser testigo de la peor devastación que he presenciado en mi vida. He ido muchas veces a la Isla del Encanto, tengo familia allá. Sin embargo este viaje no fue como ningún otro.

Pasé la mayor parte del tiempo en Ponce, en la parte sur de la isla. Ponce es la segunda ciudad más poblada de Puerto Rico. Allí estuve junto al gobernador Ricardo Roselló, la alcaldesa María Meléndez y una delegación de demócratas de la Florida entregando insumos a quienes más lo necesitaban luego de sobrevivir la destrucción del huracán María. Vimos un colchón de tamaño matrimonial enredado en un poste de cableado telefónico. Las líneas de comunicación están tan afectadas que ni siquiera pudimos utilizar un teléfono satelital para comunicarnos con el mundo exterior.

La isla que conozco ya no existe, ha sido destruida por uno de los huracanes más feroces en la historia de Estados Unidos. Lo que no fue destruido y aún sigue intacto es la identidad estadounidense de Puerto Rico. De hecho, tan sólo a pasos de casas destruidas por la tormenta, aún estaba en pie una bandera estadounidense con sus estrellas y rayas ondeando en el viento.

Los 3.5 millones de personas en Puerto Rico son ciudadanos estadounidenses. Ellos merecen un trato justo e igualitario como cualquier otro ciudadano estadounidense. Desafortunadamente, tenemos un presidente que ha mostrado una perturbadora indiferencia por el bienestar de estos conciudadanos. El presidente Trump esperó más de una semana luego del huracán para levantar las restricciones del Jones Act, a pesar de haberlas levantado para Florida y Texas incluso antes de que el huracán Irma tocara tierra. No hay excusa para el retraso de Trump, que sólo ha causado más sufrimiento al impedir que las naves puedan entregar insumos de manera más rápida. Es más, la agencia FEMA aún no ha autorizado todas las herramientas de asistencia que tienen a su disposición.

Mientras millones esperaban recibir ayuda el fin de semana pasado, Trump decidió iniciar una pelea a través de Twitter con la alcaldesa de San Juan, Carmen Yulín Cruz, quien en ese momento iba puerta por puerta buscando salvar vidas mientras Trump estaba en su campo de golf y le dedicaba

sólo una hora a Puerto Rico. Representantes de su administración llamaron la devastación en la isla como una “historia de buenas noticias”.

Incluso cuando el presidente Trump visitó Puerto Rico el martes, dejó en claro que él considera que el esfuerzo de rescate de nuestro gobierno era una inconveniencia en vez de una responsabilidad nacional. “Ustedes descontrolaron nuestro presupuesto” le dijo al pueblo de Puerto Rico, un sentimiento que estuvo curiosamente ausente de sus respuestas a desastres en Texas y Florida.

Responder a un desastre natural es un problema complejo. Sin embargo, el problema aquí no es con las personas en el terreno o con los trabajadores de carrera que dedican sus vidas a situaciones como esta. El problema es con la persona a la cabeza de las decisiones.

Los puertos de Puerto Rico están abiertos. Los aeropuertos están abiertos. Con todo y esto, el general de tres estrellas nombrado por el Pentágono para liderar los esfuerzos de alivio dijo la semana pasada que no está ni cerca de tener la cantidad de tropas o equipos que necesita.

Trump encabeza el poder ejecutivo. ¿Por qué no actúa como tal? ¿Por qué no está canalizando la inmensa cantidad de recursos a su disposición para traer la ayuda que la gente necesita desesperadamente? ¿Y, por qué es que sigue felicitándose a sí mismo por un trabajo que está lejos de terminarse?

La situación en Puerto Rico no es una “historia de buenas noticias”. Es una emergencia y necesitamos manos a la obra. Las muertes han incrementado en un doble desde la visita de Trump. La gente necesita agua, comida, insumos básicos. Ellos necesitan que FEMA tenga una presencia en lugares como Ponce, donde más de un millón de personas están desesperadas por ayuda federal. Ellos necesitan la fuerza completa y todos los recursos del gobierno de los Estados Unidos.

Proveer al pueblo de Puerto Rico con la asistencia que necesitan no debería ser un tema partidista. No se puede fijar un precio para la vida, ya sea en Florida, Texas o Puerto Rico. No sólo resulta inhumano tratar a nuestros hermanos puertorriqueños como ciudadanos de segunda clase, es también algo profundamente anti-estadounidense.

No hay nada como ser testigo de primera mano, caminar por esas comunidades devastadas y hablar con las personas que lo han pedido todo, menos lo que llevan puesto y la esperanza de sus corazones. Ellos no se dan por vencidos, ellos saldrán adelante, pero no pueden hacerlo solos. Necesitamos estar allí para nuestros hermanos boricuas.

Es el momento de que el presidente Trump deje de actuar como que esto es una “misión cumplida”. Nuestra tarea apenas comienza.

Esta pieza fue publicada inicialmente en inglés en el U.S. News & World Report.

## **Supervisión Para Que La Ayuda Llegue Rápido A Los Necesitados**

[El Nuevo Día \(PRI\)](#), October 9, 2017

Aguadilla – No faltaban brazos para pasar de mano en mano las cajas con agua y las que contenían comida.

De esa forma, los militares -de la Guardia Nacional, de la Reserva del Ejército de los Estados Unidos y los State Guard (voluntarios activados por el gobernador)- hacían llegar a las manos de cientos de puertorriqueños afectados por el huracán María los suministros proporcionados por la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA, por sus siglas en inglés).

Alrededor de 500 familias de los residenciales Stanford y Agustín Stahl, en Aguadilla, hicieron una larga cola tan pronto vieron los tres camiones militares con su distintivo color crema. En menos de una hora, tiempo en que todos recibieron ayuda, no dudaron en tomarse fotos con los militares y decirles en inglés y español, gracias.

“Esto me ayuda con el nene y eso”, dijo Marilyn Valentín tras recibir una caja con tres galones de agua y otra con comida lista para consumo. Con la ayuda de los militares cargó los suministros en el coche donde llevaba a su niño de cuatro años.

Lo mismo hizo Raicha Guerra, quien llevaba a su hijo 2 años.

“Los que han venido son el Army y la Cruz Roja”, comentó la joven de 22 años cuando este diario le preguntó por la ayuda recibida.

A pasos de ella estaba el alcalde de Aguadilla, Carlos Méndez, quien previamente se había reunido en las instalaciones de la Guardia Nacional en Aguadilla con el teniente general Jeffrey S. Buchanan, encargado de las operaciones militares en Puerto Rico.

Buchanan, al igual que el comandante dual de tropas (Dual Status Commander), el general José Reyes, viajó desde San Juan hasta el pueblo costero de Aguadilla para ver de cerca la nueva logística implementada por el general de tres estrellas. En vez de que los alcaldes de los 78 municipios lleguen a los centros de distribución de alimento y agua, serán los militares los que lleguen a cada municipio.

Esa fue la logística que anunció la semana pasada el propio Buchanan para asegurarse de que la ayuda llegue a la gente afectada por el huracán María, luego de quejas por la tardanza en la entrega o por la poca cantidad que reciben.

Para ello, se crearon cuatro áreas de apoyo logístico (logistic support area) que deben llevar los suministros a 68 pueblos. Estas áreas consisten de casetas repletas de militares ubicadas en la antigua base Roosevelt Roads, en Ceiba; el Fuerte Buchanan, en Guaynabo; en la base Ramey, en Aguadilla; y en el Campamento Santiago, en Salinas. En cada una debe haber entre 2,000 a 3,000 militares.

“Esto nos ayuda a descentralizar”, explicó Buchanan, quien no dudó en descargar camiones y entregar suministros.

Cada una de estas áreas tiene un apoyo de ingeniería, otro de seguridad y uno de personal médico. Así que, en conjunto, cada área no solo se destina para la distribución de agua y alimentos sino que también brinda seguridad, limpia vías de acceso y provee servicios médicos donde sea necesario, dijo Reyes.

Estas cuatro áreas se unen a 10 municipios, para así cubrir los 78 municipios, que recibirán suministros de los militares y que también sus respectivos alcaldes pueden buscar la ayuda.

Se trata de municipios grandes que pueden hacer este tipo de tarea o que sufrieron gran devastación tras la embestida del huracán, dijo Reyes en referencia a Carolina, San Juan, Bayamón, Guaynabo, Arecibo, Ponce, Mayagüez, Humacao, Utuado y Guayama.

## **Urge La Necesidad De Contar Con Más Camiones Cisterna En Morovis**

[El Nuevo Día \(PRI\)](#), October 8, 2017

MOROVIS – La alcaldesa de Morovis, Carmen Maldonado, indicó que el municipio continúa esfuerzos diarios para llevar agua y alimentos a las comunidades afectadas, al tiempo que reconoció que si no fuera por organizaciones privadas y la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA), los suministros, especialmente el agua, no llegarían a donde se necesitan.

“El reto mayor, y lo que estoy enfrentando ahora mismo, son los camiones cisterna. Morovis no tiene agua. Tenemos muchísimas personas encamadas y en este municipio solo cuento con un camión cisterna. Le hice la petición a FEMA de que me enviaran cuatro camiones cisterna adicionales porque Acueductos solamente me envió uno de 2,000 galones”, dijo Maldonado.

La alcaldesa adelantó que coordinará un viaje a los Estados Unidos para gestionar dos camiones cisterna adicionales.

“Hay mucha necesidad de agua y alimentos, y para mí eso es primordial, antes que cualquier cosa material”, enfatizó la ejecutiva municipal.

Por su parte, el Comisionado de Seguridad del municipio, Francisco Rosado Correa, explicó que el ayuntamiento está en la etapa de recuperación y remoción de escombros. Del mismo modo, añadió que esperan identificar varias escuelas que puedan servir como centros de distribución.

“Estamos llevándole alimento y agua a la comunidad como prioridad. Una vez logremos estabilizar el problema del alimento y el agua, vamos a establecer unos centros de distribución, posiblemente vamos a utilizar escuelas en los distintos barrios para poder llevar la comida y el agua. Por ahora lo estaremos llevando directamente a las casas”, sostuvo Rosado Correa.

A más de 20 días del paso del temporal por Puerto Rico, las comunidades Vaga, Pasto y San Lorenzo permanecen incomunicadas debido al colapso del puente que daba paso a Morovis. El único acceso, actualmente, es a través del municipio vecino de Orocovis.

“Lo que nos tomaba 15 minutos, ahora nos está tomando casi hora y cuarto. A esos barrios estamos llevando doctores, transportación a pacientes que tienen algún tipo de condición como diálisis o personas que reciben algún tipo de tratamiento”, dijo Rosado.

La petición del ayuntamiento es que el gobierno central coordine la instalación de un puente provisional para restablecer el acceso a dichas comunidades.

## **Probado El Gran Valor Y Compromiso De La Policía**

[El Nuevo Día \(PRI\)](#), October 9, 2017

La valía y el compromiso de los miembros de la Policía de Puerto Rico ha quedado demostrado y con creces a raíz de la catástrofe causada por el huracán María, el evento ciclónico de mayor poder destructor en un siglo.

El estado paupérrimo en que han quedado decenas de cuarteles, así como los daños a la flota de patrullas y otros vehículos oficiales no ha desalentado a los agentes, quienes siguen dando el máximo por mantener el orden en el estado de emergencia en que nos encontramos.

La regulación del tránsito en las vías públicas, ahora carentes de iluminación y parcialmente obstruidas por escombros, representan un gran reto diario para los policías, sobre todo por el alterado flujo vehicular que en las noches es de altísimo riesgo para conductores, pasajeros o peatones y sobre todo para los agentes que incluso con poca luz tienen la encomienda de controlar el movimiento en calles o avenidas.

Desde el paso letal del temporal se ha registrado al menos una decena de muertes de tránsito, por lo que nuestro llamado es a ejercer máxima precaución y paciencia en las carreteras y cooperar con los agentes asignados a dirigir el flujo vehicular.

En este difícil periodo, las actuaciones heroicas de efectivos policiacos antes durante y después del golpe ciclónico son dignas de reconocimiento. Los ejemplos más dramáticos conocidos dan cuenta de la disposición del cumplimiento del deber, no importa las condiciones.

Está el caso de 19 agentes que quedaron atrapados en el cuartel de Corozal durante el criminal azote del temporal, debido a la crecida del río Cibuco, que arrasó las instalaciones policiacas y sus equipos, además de comercios y hasta el centro gubernamental municipal.

Los policías lucharon como mejor pudieron contra la corriente hasta subir al techo del segundo piso de la estructura, donde enfrentaron los fuertes vientos y lluvias. Resolvieron pasar el ciclón en el cuartel con miras a estar listos para salir a patrullar y atender situaciones de emergencia cuando amainaran las ráfagas. Sin embargo, estuvieron a punto de perecer ahogados. Y fueron sus buenas relaciones con la comunidad lo que llevó los vecinos de un residencial cercano a rescatarles con apoyo de los bomberos.

Tristemente en Aguadilla, los agentes estatales Héctor Luis Matías y Ángel Lorenzo González no corrieron igual suerte. Después de días trabajando, ambos se dirigían en sus vehículos privados de vuelta a sus hogares cuando el río Culebrinas, convertido en fiera, fuera de su cauce, los arrastró y los uniformados perecieron.

Al igual que miles de miembros de la Policía estos agentes cumplían con sus labores en el momento histórico de mayor riesgo que ha vivido Puerto Rico en décadas. Dieron y dan cátedra de lo que es una vocación inquebrantable al servicio público en momentos de extrema dificultad.

Muchos agentes también han perdido sus casas y otros bienes, pero, aun así, cumplen de sol a sol en complicadas tareas de seguridad.

Tal encomienda al presente incluye el respaldo a los esfuerzos del Ejército, la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA), así como las dependencias del gobierno estatal en esta

etapa del desastre, descrito por el curtido teniente general Jeffrey Buchanan, a cargo de las operaciones militares de emergencia, como “lo peor que he visto nunca”.

Ante la crisis, cooperar con los agentes adquiere un cariz de deber y necesidad ciudadana. Mientras, urge rehabilitar la infraestructura policiaca, con énfasis en su sistema de telecomunicaciones, para que puedan realizar con mayor efectividad sus importantes labores de vigilancia, prevención de robos y saqueos e investigar actos delictivos de desalmados maleantes que han aprovechado la crisis para realizar escalamientos y apropiaciones ilegales en comercios, casas u otros lugares.

El trabajo de los policías implica arriesgar sus vidas para salvar la de los demás y, como ocurre al presente, luchar por restablecer la seguridad del pueblo, que con su crucial apoyo trabaja con firmeza por la reconstrucción de Puerto Rico.

## **Más De La Mitad Del País Tiene Agua**

By Yaritza Rivera Clemente

[El Vocero de Puerto Rico](#), October 7, 2017

El gobernador Ricardo Rosselló informó que 695 mil clientes cuentan con el servicio de agua, lo que equivale al 55.5% de los abonados, mientras que solo un 10.7% de la población está conectado al sistema de energía eléctrica.

Según la Autoridad de Acueductos y Alcantarillados (AAA), el servicio por zonas se encuentra en 64% para el área metro, 69% para el oeste, 69% para el sur y 63% para el este. El norte cuenta con un 28% de servicio.

También se informó que los generadores eléctricos en la represa de Carraizo están en funcionamiento lo que permitió restablecer el servicio en la urbanización Fairview y el barrio Saint Just de Trujillo Alto, para añadir 12 mil nuevos clientes.

“Reconocemos que muchos clientes no están recibiendo los servicios de agua y luz por lo que he ordenado a las dos corporaciones públicas a detener el envío de facturas. A las personas que se les haya enviado facturas por periodos en los que no tuvo el servicio, no tendrán que pagarlo y no se le discontinuará el servicio. Una vez tengamos los servicios de medición operacionales solo se le cobrará la tarifa de consumo a los clientes que hayan recibido servicios”, dijo Rosselló.

Respecto a la situación en la represa Guajataca, Rosselló indicó que aún se encuentra en “estado crítico”, y mencionó que el Cuerpo de Ingenieros y el Departamento de Defensa de Estados Unidos laboran para establecer en el lugar barreras de concreto para mitigar cualquier emergencia. Recalcó que esa iniciativa busca prevenir el impacto que pudieran tener las lluvias que se esperan en la zona noroeste en los próximos días.

Por su parte, el director ejecutivo de la Autoridad de Energía Eléctrica (AEE), Ricardo Ramos, informó que se está trabajando para energizar la represa de La Plata. Señaló que los trabajos se interrumpieron el jueves por causa de los rayos que acompañaron la intensa lluvia que cayó en la tarde. Espera que la represa pueda entrar en funciones este fin de semana.

**Aumentan las muertes**

De otro lado, el primer ejecutivo confirmó que con dos muertes reportadas en los municipios de Patillas y San Germán aumentó a 36 el número de víctimas fatales relacionado al huracán.

En el caso de Patillas, se informó que se trata de una persona que fue encontrada entre escombros, y en San Germán, otra que presuntamente fue golpeada por un árbol.

Rosselló dijo que espera tener un cuadro más claro sobre las muertes vinculadas al potente ciclón y mencionó que el director del Departamento de Seguridad Pública, Héctor Pesquera, está a cargo de recabar la información a las agencias pertinentes.

Además, se comunicó que la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (Fema, por sus siglas en inglés) entregó ayer 160,259 litros de agua y 262,800 comidas de los Centros de Distribución.

De igual forma, se dijo que se le suplió combustible a once instalaciones médicas. Se esperaba que ayer se entregaran más camiones de combustible a otros municipios y se espera llegar con igual ayuda a Vieques y a Culebra.

De otro lado, la Junta Reglamentadora de Telecomunicaciones notificó que 42% de los clientes cuentan con servicio celular. Debido a un corte de fibra en Ponce, se afectaron 70,000 abonados.

Hay 14 Cell on Wings (COW) de AT&T instalados; cada uno tiene cobertura de servicios de un radio de 3 millas y permite hacer llamadas y enviar mensajes de texto desde los celulares. El COW de Arecibo tiene una cobertura de servicio de 4 millas.

Pagan horas extras a Policía

La Policía de Puerto Rico recibió por medio de FEMA \$950,000 para el pago de horas extras trabajadas durante el huracán Irma y ya se hizo la solicitud de las primeras dos semanas de María.

Además, se restableció el servicio de la red de radio central para Arecibo, Mayagüez y Aguadilla, además del servicio con el que ya cuenta San Juan, Bayamón, Carolina y Caguas. Las demás regiones tienen comunicaciones a nivel regional.

## **Bajo Lupa La Distribución De Agua Y Alimentos**

By Laura M. Quintero

[El Vocero de Puerto Rico](#), October 9, 2017

El gobernador Ricardo Rosselló informó ayer que ante las continuas querellas de que el agua y la comida no llegan a los sectores en necesidad, ha solicitado a la Fiscalía federal y al Departamento de Justicia realizar una investigación que permita identificar cuáles son los problemas de distribución.

“Hemos decidido tomar una serie de acciones para evitar el mal manejo de la comida... He ordenado a la Guardia Nacional que vaya a los municipios y esté observando y participando en la distribución de los alimentos que están llevando”, comentó en relación a las ayudas de la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA), la Oficina de la Primera Dama y de otras entidades a los damnificados del huracán María.

La determinación del gobernador surge luego de denuncias de que empleados gubernamentales se estaban apropiando de los suministros, según la vicepresidenta de la Asociación de Productos de Puerto Rico, Marilú Otero. Reclamos similares hizo el pastor Jorge Raschke, quien se topó con que habían robado en los muelles parte de la ayuda traída por Pentecostales Unidos por Puerto Rico.

Rosselló pidió que se investiguen las querellas “para ver si en efecto es una cuestión de mal manejo y si en efecto se ha hecho algo de manera equivocada, consideren todo el procesamiento de la ley”.

Algunos municipios como Cayey se movieron a crear estructuras de base comunitaria para identificar a encamados, niños o personas con necesidades de salud a ser atendidos con prioridad, de modo que la propia comunidad se apodere de la recuperación. El alcalde cayeyano, Rolando Ortiz, informó que se distribuirá el agua y los alimentos de acuerdo con ese censo comunitario y se organizarán también comedores comunitarios.

“Le planteé al gobernador que para nosotros enfrentar una crisis, necesitamos una estructura local con autoridad”, contó el también presidente de la Asociación de Alcaldes a EL VOCERO.

En la calle los auditores

Por otro lado, los agentes de auditoría fiscal del Departamento de Hacienda y auditores de la Oficina del Contralor estarán contabilizando y monitoreando “todo lo que se está entregando” en los municipios. El secretario de Hacienda, Raúl Maldonado, comentó a este diario que entre ambas entidades hay 500 agentes disponibles para esta tarea.

Abordado sobre por qué demoró tanto el gobierno en establecer este sistema, Maldonado mencionó que la distribución estaba en manos de los municipios. “Los alcaldes tenían un sistema

interno de finanzas, lo que pasa es que con la destrucción que hubo se les hizo bien difícil y queremos darles un apoyo adicional”, contestó.

El gobernador reconoció, además, que se han recibido querrelas de comercios que han estado cobrando el Impuesto sobre Ventas y Uso (IVU) y gasolineras que han desobedecido la orden de congelación del margen de ganancias del Departamento de Asuntos del Consumidor (DACO).

El secretario del DACO, Michael Pierluisi, confirmó a la prensa que recibirá empleados de otras agencias que se capacitarán para salir a la calle a inspeccionar el cumplimiento con las órdenes administrativas de congelación de precios. Las multas oscilarán entre \$5,000 a \$10,000 por cada transacción ilegal.

## **Alcalde De Caguas Reclama Que Lleguen Los Toldos**

[El Vocero de Puerto Rico](#), October 6, 2017

El alcalde de Caguas, William Miranda Torres, indicó que por más de doce días ha solicitado al gobierno central y la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA, por sus siglas en inglés) que canalice la entrega de toldos para las familias que perdieron total o parcialmente sus techos y aun no se ha producido respuesta alguna.

“Personalmente y asumiendo la responsabilidad que tengo de reclamar la ayuda para los ciudadanos de Caguas he asistido al Centro de Operaciones de Emergencias del Gobierno Central en el Centro de Convenciones, además de funcionarios de mi equipo de trabajo, para solicitar que se suplan necesidades apremiantes de mi pueblo. Una de esas peticiones ha sido que se entreguen los toldos para las familias que perdieron total o parcialmente los techos de sus casas”, expresó Miranda Torres.

El primer ejecutivo municipal informó que en Caguas 1,129 familias perdieron totalmente el techo de su casa y otras 1,501 lo perdieron de forma parcial.

“Inmediatamente después del paso del fenómeno atmosférico, mi equipo de trabajo compuesto por hombres y mujeres comprometidos, nos tiramos a la calle a abrir brecha para llegar a las comunidades y brindar la ayuda necesaria. Caguas tiene un alcalde y una administración municipal en pie de lucha en la calle”, agregó el alcalde.

## **Severamente Afectados Los Servicios De Salud En Adjuntas**

[El Vocero de Puerto Rico](#), October 6, 2017

El presidente de la Cámara de Representantes, Carlos ‘Johnny’ Méndez Núñez, se comprometió con el alcalde de Adjuntas, Jaime Barlucea Maldonado, en ayudar a mejorar los servicios que brinda la única sala de urgencia en el municipio, los cuales se vieron severamente afectados tras el impacto del huracán María.

Durante una visita realizada ayer a este pueblo de la montaña, en compañía del presidente del Senado, Thomas Rivera Schatz, el líder cameraleño encontró que el Centro de Diagnóstico y Tratamiento (CDT) no cuenta con el servicio de aire acondicionado desde el día que María azotó a Puerto Rico. Tampoco tiene servicio de un médico las 24 horas y escasean los medicamentos.

“Este CDT es la única línea de ayuda que tienen los residentes de Adjuntas en caso de una emergencia. Ahora mismo está operando con abanicos porque el aire acondicionado colapsó el día del huracán. Como se sabe, en esta área no hay energía eléctrica, así que dicha facilidad opera con un generador de energía que utiliza diésel cada cuatro días y se ha hecho toda una odisea conseguirlo, lo que agudiza la precaria situación. Definitivamente que esta será una de nuestras prioridades. Vamos a darle la mano al alcalde en este asunto”, señaló Méndez Núñez luego de un recorrido por la facilidad, la cual ubica en el casco urbano de Adjuntas.

“El asunto de contar con un médico las 24 horas del día es prioritario. De noche no hay nadie en turno y de ocurrir una emergencia, la persona o personas tendrían que ser trasladadas a Ponce por una carretera con serios derrumbes y sin ningún tipo de alumbrado eléctrico que permita la visibilidad. Es



una condición crítica que vamos a trabajarla, así como rehabilitar parte de la planta física del CDT. Hay plafones en el piso y áreas que necesitan mucha atención, pues sufrieron con el golpe de María”, agregó el líder legislativo.

Otro asunto que Méndez Núñez aseguró se trabajará es la falta de ambulancias. Actualmente solamente existe una ambulancia para atender a una población que ronda en los 19,500 habitantes. Cuando la misma está en uso, transportando algún paciente, cualquier otra emergencia que ocurra tiene que esperar horas en que regrese el mencionado vehículo, colocando en riesgo la salud del pueblo.

Durante la visita, Barlucea Maldonado también le recalcó al presidente de la Cámara la necesidad de que la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA, por sus siglas en inglés) agilice la entrega de toldos de resguardo ya que, según sus datos, unas 2,300 viviendas, de un inventario de sobre 12 mil, perdieron parcial o completamente sus techos, y no ha llegado esa ayuda.

En el recorrido estuvieron presentes los senadores por el Distrito de Ponce, Luis Berdiel Rivera y Nelson Cruz Santiago, así como personal de la Cámara y el Senado.

El pasado lunes, el presidente cameral llevó a Adjuntas ayuda humanitaria incluyendo alimentos, medicamentos y toldos para resguardar viviendas que pidieron el techo.

## **A Quince Días De María**

[El Vocero de Puerto Rico](#), October 6, 2017

Sin lugar a dudas el huracán María ha dejado una huella dolorosa en Puerto Rico. Su furia nos golpeó de una manera tan violenta que nos deja en ascuas de cara a nuestro futuro.

Definitivamente, ni nosotros, ni nadie, podía estar 100% preparado para un desastre de esta magnitud.

Las acciones del gobierno previas al paso del huracán fueron puntuales para evitar mayor cantidad de muertes.

Las autoridades locales movieron sus limitados recursos bastante rápido luego del paso del fenómeno atmosférico y lograron abrir accesos en una buena parte de la Isla.

Pero la respuesta de la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA) y de otras instituciones federales desafortunadamente no fue, ni es, tan rápida como se necesitaba.

Entendemos que ser una isla complica mucho el panorama, pero no justifica la dilación en las entregas de suministros, como agua y alimentos, y tampoco en la entrega de los famosos toldos azules para proteger las casas que perdieron sus techos.

No nos malinterpreten; agradecemos la ayuda de FEMA y otras agencias federales, pero debe acelerarse el proceso, sobre todo en la montaña.

Aunque vivimos una era digital, en que las comunicaciones son más rápidas y el Internet se convierte en un aliado para apoyar las soluciones, no nos sirve de nada cuando no hay energía eléctrica, y parte del proceso burocrático para coordinar las ayudas ha descansado en la herramienta digital, probablemente convirtiendo el proceso en uno más lento.

Ya han pasado dos semanas y al día de ayer teníamos muchos signos positivos.

El Aeropuerto Internacional Luis Muñoz Marín está abierto en un 100%, lo que facilitará el movimiento de pasajeros varados aquí, la llegada de más personal de apoyo y el reencuentro de familias.

Las estaciones de gasolina continúan operando con bastante normalidad y, al día de ayer, casi 900 de estos establecimientos estaban abiertos.

Hay 64 hospitales en funciones y ya 25 de ellos están operando con energía suplida por la Autoridad de Energía Eléctrica (AEE).

En cuanto a los bancos, las sucursales abiertas superaban las 175 y los cajeros automáticos o ATM están operando en un 79%.

El agua del sistema de la Autoridad de Acueductos y Alcantarillados (AAA) continúa fluyendo a buen ritmo desde hace días, alcanzando ya el 55% de la Isla.

Las señales celulares también reportan una mejoría significativa, alcanzando ya en la Isla un 45% de los clientes.

Desafortunadamente, la energía eléctrica todavía sigue siendo el talón de Aquiles del proceso de recuperación, pero debemos recordar que el sistema ya se encontraba frágil antes de María. Casi un 10% de los clientes de la AEE está recibiendo electricidad.

Todo esto lo vemos como señales positivas que deben empezar a generar más esperanza en la ruta hacia la nueva normalidad.

El presidente Donald Trump estuvo en visita oficial de cuatro horas en Puerto Rico y pudo comprobar que realmente somos una zona de desastre. Mientras él cumplía con sus compromisos, su equipo se reunió con el gobernador y tuvieron la oportunidad de discutir en profundidad la crisis energética.

La visita programada durante el día de hoy del vicepresidente de Estados Unidos, Mike Pence, puede ser quizás un indicio de que, aparte de los \$29,000 millones solicitados para los afectados por los huracanes Irma, María y Harvey en distintas jurisdicciones, puedan recibirse otras ayudas y más apoyo del gobierno federal.

Y realmente necesitamos que sea revisada la situación de Puerto Rico porque, de acuerdo con los estimados preliminares, entre los daños directos y el impacto en la actividad económica, de una forma u otra las pérdidas ascienden a más de \$95,000 millones.

La mejoría es lenta, pero constante, y por ello debemos mirar el futuro con esperanza.

Lo que sí tiene que cambiar radicalmente es el apoyo a las comunidades más impactadas, sobre todo las de la zona montañosa.

Hacemos un llamado a los directivos de FEMA para que agilicen la entrega de agua, provisiones y toldos a esta parte de la población.

A quince días del impacto de María podríamos estar mejor, sin lugar a dudas, si los recursos se asignan y manejan con mayor prontitud.

También ayudaría mucho a que estemos mejor si todos, como ciudadanos, ejercemos la paciencia y elevamos la vara de la tolerancia en medio de una de las crisis económicas y sociales más difíciles de nuestra historia.

## **Aumentan A 36 Los Boricuas Muertos Tras El Paso De “María”**

[La Opinión \(CA\)](#), October 6, 2017

El gobernador de Puerto Rico, Ricardo Rosselló, informó que el número de fallecidos a causa del paso del huracán “María” se elevó a 36.

“El número de muertes directas o indirectas adjudicadas a la tormenta sube de 34 a 36. Hubo dos muertes adicionales confirmadas, una en Patillas por caída de escombros, y una en San Germán, por caída de un árbol luego del evento a una persona”, indicó, según el periódico local El Nuevo Día, el primer ejecutivo durante la conferencia de prensa que ofrece diario para brindar reportes actualizados.

Hay actualmente 10 mil funcionarios del Departamento de Defensa trabajando sobre el terreno y más de 500 más de la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (Fema por sus siglas en inglés).

Además, alertó de que la situación en la represa de Guajacata, en el área oeste, es crítica, por lo que pidió a la población que esté atenta a desalojos.

Al respecto, mencionó que el Cuerpo de Ingenieros y el Departamento de Defensa de Estados Unidos laboran para montar barreras de concreto para mitigar cualquier emergencia.

Recalcó que esa iniciativa busca prevenir el impacto que pudieran tener las lluvias que se esperan en la zona noroeste los próximos días.

En cuanto a las ayudas inmediatas del Gobierno federal destinadas a daños, insistió que espera que las aporte en su totalidad Washington o que el Ejecutivo de la isla únicamente pague un 10 por ciento del total.

Está previsto que hoy se firme una orden ejecutiva para permitir que médicos de la Guardia Nacional y otros que actúan como voluntarios puedan ejercer su actividad de forma completamente legal, sin tener que pasar por los pasos administrativos que son requeridos por ley.

Rosselló resaltó que aprovechará la visita que realiza este viernes a la isla el vicepresidente de Estados Unidos, Michael Pence, para pedirle que la ayuda federal sea la que precisa Puerto Rico para su recuperación.

“Pence ha sido un campeón de Puerto Rico”, dijo Rosselló, que adelantó que solicitará al número dos de la Casa Blanca que “sea el líder en el Senado para que el paquete de ayudas se haga de igual forma que a los estados” de Estados Unidos.

Subrayó que otra de las peticiones a Pence es la de que favorezca que la isla disponga de flexibilidad desde el punto de vista financiero dada su situación actual.

“Quiero que (Pence) experimente la destrucción masiva y que comprenda que es el daño más grave que ha sufrido Puerto Rico en su historia”, expresó Rosselló, tras resaltar que se tiene que considerar que los boricuas son ciudadanos de EU, por lo que merecen un tratamiento sin discriminación.

Incluso, varios boricuas han dicho que el recorrido que debe hacer el vicepresidente es el siguiente:

No vaya a San Juan. Vaya al interior, donde yo vivo”, le dijo Evelinda Burgos a Pence, quien iba acompañado por su esposa Karen Pence.

A su llegada al aeropuerto de Orlando, el vicepresidente se reunió con un grupo de personas que acababan de arribar y estaban siendo atendidos por organismos de asistencia.

El vicepresidente fue de mesa en mesa y habló con los recién llegados, incluida Burgos, de la localidad de Naranjito.

Esta puertorriqueña afirmó que el presidente Donald Trump había visitado otra parte, no el centro” durante su viaje del martes a la isla devastada por el huracán.

Pence prometió ayudar y le aseguró a Burgos que podría volver a su casa.

“No hay nada como la casa de uno”, expresó.

“¿Te puedo abrazar?”, agregó el vicepresidente y los dos se abrazaron.

## **La Superintendente Evalúa Si Los Policías Van A Cobrar Horas Extra**

[El Nuevo Día \(PRI\)](#), October 9, 2017

La superintendente de la Policía, Michelle Hernández de Fraley, aseguró hoy, lunes, que todavía se encuentra evaluando si legalmente a los oficiales desde los rangos de teniente II a coronel le corresponde el pago de las horas extra trabajadas durante el paso de los huracanes Irma y María por la isla durante septiembre.

En caso de que se compruebe que los oficiales son elegibles para recibir ese pago, adelantó que tendrán que evidenciar que durante la emergencia estuvieron realizando labores operacionales relacionadas con los fenómenos atmosféricos como parte del proceso de evaluación de los horarios de las horas extra trabajadas.

Estos servidores públicos estuvieron laborando en turnos de 12 horas y sin días libres.

El jueves de la semana pasada, el presidente del Frente Unido de Policías, Diego Figueroa, le había solicitado al secretario del Departamento de Seguridad Pública (DSP), Héctor M. Pesquera, que clarificara si estos oficiales cobrarían las horas extras trabajadas o tendrían que donar su tiempo.

Recordó que durante las emergencias ocasionadas por los huracanes Hugo en el 1989 y Georges en el 1998, todos los oficiales recibieron el pago de las horas extra los cuales se les factura a la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA, en inglés).

De su lado, Hernández de Fraley repitió que se comenzó el proceso de pago de horas extra a los policías y sargentos que trabajaron durante la emergencia del huracán Irma, tras recibir una asignación de \$1.3 millones en partidas estatales y federales.

“Ya tenemos aprobada esa asignación adelantada de fondos y que estamos trabajando en ella lo más ágil posible para que nuestros policías puedan recibir sus pagos. Hemos trabajado intensamente y sin parar desde el primer evento atmosférico que nos impactó, el huracán Irma, y ahora continuamos durante la emergencia del huracán María. Los miembros de la Uniformada han tenido largas jornadas de 12 horas y es justo que puedan recibir la compensación monetaria que les corresponde”, expresó la superintendente.

Del total de \$1.3 millones, \$975,000 fueron asignados de fondos federales y los otros \$325,000 provienen del pareo de fondos del gobierno.

Sobre las horas extras trabajadas durante el huracán María, adelantó que ya se solicitaron los fondos de las primeras dos semanas para el pago a los agentes y sargentos.

## **FEMA Habilita En Florida Una Nueva Sucursal Para La Gestión De Asistencia Federal**

By Jorge Morales Almada

[Univision](#), October 9, 2017

Casi un mes después del paso del huracán Irma, muchos residentes de Florida que aún no han comenzado un proceso con la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias podrán ir al condado de Broward para darle inicio.

Muchos residentes de Florida aún no han podido gestionar la asistencia federal luego del paso del huracán Irma por la lejanía de los centros habilitados. Por eso, la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA, por sus siglas en inglés) abrió un centro de recuperación de desastres en el condado de Broward para todos los afectados del sur de la Florida.

La oficina, que operará todos los días de 8:00 am a 8:00 pm, está ubicada en el Atrium West, 7771 West Oakland Park Boulevard en Sunrise.

Por el momento, FEMA ha habilitado tres edificios para comenzar este tipo de procesos: Edificio K del campus Kendall del Miami Dade College, 225 NW 12th Ave en Boynton Beach y 81850 Overseas Hwy en Islamorada.

Los equipos de limpieza comenzaron a trabajar en Key Biscayne, Florida, el día después de que Irma pasó. Los contratistas de desechos están trabajando desde el amanecer hasta el atardecer, siete días a la semana para despejar las calles.

## **FEMA Abre Centro De Desastre En Broward**

By Johanna A. Álvarez

[El Nuevo Herald \(FL\)](#), October 9, 2017

Si todavía no ha podido tramitar la asistencia federal tras el huracán Irma, la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA, por sus siglas en inglés) le tiene una buena noticia.

La agencia federal abrió este lunes un nuevo centro de recuperación de desastres en el condado Broward para todos los afectados del sur de la Florida que quieran solicitar la ayuda o tengan alguna pregunta.

El centro está ubicado en el Atrium West, 7771 West Oakland Park Boulevard en Sunrise.

Esta oficina estará abierta todos los días de 8 de la mañana a 8 de la tarde hasta nuevo aviso.

Tras el paso del huracán Irma, el gobierno de la Florida y FEMA han abierto varios centros de recuperación de desastres en el sur del estado para darle asistencia personalizada y cara a cara a los afectados.

De acuerdo a su portal online, hay otros tres centros actualmente abiertos para el público: Edificio K del campus Kendall del Miami Dade College, 225 NW 12th Ave en Boynton Beach y 81850 Overseas Hwy en Islamorada.

Si va a ir a uno de los centros, se le recomienda que se registre previamente. Lo puede hacer a través de la página DisasterAssistance.gov, de la aplicación móvil de FEMA, o llamando de 7 a.m. a 11 p.m. al número de atención 1-800-621-3362.

Para registrar, necesitará información personal como sus pólizas de seguro, el número del Seguro Social, número de teléfono, dirección de correo y la dirección y el código postal de la propiedad dañada.

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**FEMA**

## ***Media Analysis Report*** **Puerto Rico - Hurricanes Irma/Maria** **DR-4336/4339-PR**

***Tuesday, October 10, 2017, Morning Edition***

### **News Clips Analysis / Trends:**

- The ongoing power shortages, and shortages of saline and drugs dominate much of this edition.
- National media continued to report on Brock Long's remarks yesterday about how Puerto Rico's internal politics have affected the disaster response, as well as coverage of governor's "hell to pay" threat in seeking investigation of distribution bottlenecks ]
- Continued coverage of yesterday's news on the Jones Act waiver expiring and governor's request to Congress for \$4 billion
- This report includes much of the weekend coverage of Puerto Rico taken from this morning's FEMA's National Clips (Bulletin Intelligence)

### **Survivor News and Quotes:**

- Alfred Kenneth Rosas, a big, hale man, said that he and his family were sleeping in a tent on the roof, and joked, "We have our baths both inside and outside now, water has become like our family." – *The New Yorker*, visiting *Sabana Seca*, a strip of houses on the scrubby western outskirts of San Juan.
- "We've all been affected. There is much suffering. There is much anguish," the priest said as he began his homily. "What do we do? We look to our faith, to the cross of Jesus and look around to see who needs help around us." This moment of suffering, he told his flock, can become a time of blessing. – *Washington Post*, visiting *Our Lady of Monte Carmelo Catholic Church of in Utuado*

### **News Clips Highlights/Summary:**

- Brock Long: FEMA suffering battle fatigue after grueling hurricane season's multiple hits
  - Long: Federal response to Hurricane Maria hampered by Puerto Rico's political culture and a lack of unity among leaders on the island
  - CBS story about PR governor's seeking investigation over aid bottlenecks to municipalities, with "hell to pay" quote
  - Jones Act waiver expired and won't be renewed-multiple stories, including reports about desire by some to repeal it altogether
  - The Department of Defense took over the distribution of hurricane relief from government officials in Puerto Rico this weekend
  - Much of the island still in the dark, three weeks later; downed lines a problem
- Compiled by Janell Cole, [Janell.Cole@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:Janell.Cole@fema.dhs.gov) and Rosyveth Rey, [Rosyveth.Ray@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:Rosyveth.Ray@fema.dhs.gov)

- Drug and saline shortages hamper medical treatment
- Mainland politicians with Puerto Rican backgrounds are pushing for more aid to the island
- Two features tell of neighbors helping each other recover, and the spiritual aid offered by an inland church that struggled to resume services
- Opinion piece: Trump tells executive branch not to worry about Puerto Rico
- (Spanish) Distribution problems, Pence visit, governor’s progress reports among the topics from weekend National FEMA Clips

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## FEMA

### FEMA chief: Employees suffering ‘battle fatigue’ after hurricanes ([Washington Times](#)) **Suggests a culture shift needed in Washington to plan ahead for disasters**

By Laura Kelly

Monday, October 9, 2017

[Washington Times](#)

The chief of the **Federal Emergency Management Agency** says its employees have “battle fatigue,” having worked 12-hour shifts five days a week for the past six weeks in response to three major hurricanes.

FEMA Administrator Brock Long on Monday held a roundtable discussion about his agency’s efforts, describing coordination between the administration and dozens of federal partners as “herculean.”

This hurricane season, which tracks from June 1 to Nov. 30, has been one of the busiest on record and ranks at least in the top eight since records started in 1933, according to Weather.com. A total of nine hurricanes and 15 named storms have occurred, including the Category 5 tempests Harvey, Irma and Maria that ravaged Southeast Texas, Florida, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Mr. Long has been on the job a little over three months. In that time, about 85 percent of the agency’s manpower has been deployed, he said, adding that anyone who’s left is tasked with “keeping the lights on” and continuing FEMA’s mission as the main grant provider of the Department of Homeland Security to support state emergency preparedness.

“FEMA is not a first responder. We’re not designed to be first responders,” he said. “We’re designed to support response and recovery operations. States and their governors are technically tasked with managing disaster response recovery and helping us set unified disaster objectives — and locals also have a major role in executing the plans.”

Mr. Long said he expects FEMA will be engaged in relief efforts in Texas, Florida and Puerto Rico for years to come, but he added that discussions need to be had about a culture shift in preparing for disasters, both natural and human-made.

“It’s got to be a whole community, unified response, and that’s what we’ve been preaching,” he said. “Everybody has a role when it comes to a successful response.”

Before that can happen, thousands of employees are engaged in recovery efforts in all affected areas. One of the most pressing needs facing the agency is restoring power to Puerto Rico, which has recovered only about 14 percent of its electricity-generation capacity since Hurricane Maria wiped out the entire power grid on Sept. 20.

“The most difficult aspect was total silence when it comes to communications capability, the telecom being completely out. You can’t disseminate a message,” Mr. Long said, adding that relief workers have used loudspeakers and dropped leaflets to relay information.

Maria also destroyed sea ports and airports in the Caribbean, forcing delays in the delivery of federal aid, said Mr. Long, noting that first responders also became disaster victims.

Lt. Gen. Todd T. Semonite of the Army Corps of Engineers is overseeing the recovery and rebuilding efforts on Puerto Rico. One of the biggest challenges is rebuilding the electrical grid, whose power plants were described by the chief engineer as “very, very old.”

“They’ve had a lot of backlogged maintenance, and they’re not overly reliable,” Gen. Semonite said.

A temporary power plant has to be shipped to the island on a barge, the general said, adding that it will take about a month and a half to get the power plant up and running.

Meanwhile, communities are running on petroleum-powered generators while Army engineers rewire the island and replace hundreds of miles of downed power lines.

“It could be up [to] as many as a million [utility] poles,” Gen. Semonite said. “We’re still assessing how many of those were damaged.”

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## FEMA administrator: Puerto Rico’s politics, lack of unity, hindering hurricane response (Washington Post)

By Joel Achenbach and Arelis R. Hernández October 9 at 4:53 PM

### Washington Post

The federal response to Hurricane Maria has been hampered by Puerto Rico’s political culture and a lack of unity among leaders on the island, **Federal Emergency Management Agency** administrator William “Brock” Long said Monday in a briefing with reporters at FEMA headquarters in Washington.

In the continental U.S., “politics between Republicans and Democrats is bad enough, but in Puerto Rico, politics is even worse in many cases,” Long said, adding that divisions on the island had undermined unity of purpose there.

His comments came at the end of an hour-long session in which he and two U.S. military generals defended the Trump administration’s response to the devastating hurricane. Long singled out the total collapse of communications across Puerto Rico as the greatest impediment to delivering food, water, fuel and other supplies to desperate survivors of the storm, which hit the island Sept. 20.

Reporters also were given a glimpse of the National Response Coordination Center, a war room that’s been operating around the clock since Hurricane Harvey hit Texas in late August.

“You definitely have battle fatigue,” Long said of the protracted tropical storm season in which four hurricanes have made U.S. landfall.

Long’s stated desire has been to be apolitical, he said Monday. But Long is a political appointee of the president — he was overwhelmingly confirmed by the Senate in June — and the administration’s response to Maria has been subject to abundant criticism.

Most prominently, San Juan’s mayor, Carmen Yulín Cruz, has expressed outrage at what she sees as a failure of the administration to deliver life-sustaining resources. She posted a series of tweets this weekend accusing FEMA of doing nothing when hospitals were in crisis.

President Trump has attacked Cruz on Twitter, claiming she has shown poor leadership, and he also has blamed Puerto Rico’s poor infrastructure for much of the humanitarian crisis since the storm hit.

Long, speaking Sunday on ABC’s “This Week,” said he’d long ago “filtered out” the mayor. On Monday he echoed that comment. A reporter asked him if he viewed criticism of FEMA as justified or as simply a political attack on the administration; that’s when he said the political divide in Puerto Rico is worse than it is in the mainland United States.

“What I’ve experienced firsthand is, a successful response relies on unity, okay,” Long said. “To give you an example, when you can’t get elected officials at the local level to come to a joint field office because they disagree with the politics of the governor that’s there, it makes things difficult and the information fragmented.”

Puerto Rico Gov. Richard Rosselló generally has expressed appreciation for the administration’s efforts.

Asked if there’s a lack of unity, Long said, “The unity is not where I want it to be when it comes to a unified effort.”

Reporters on the ground in Puerto Rico have heard repeatedly that there was little sign of the government, or none at all, in the days after the storm hit the island, especially in remote rural and mountainous areas that found themselves isolated. The ongoing recovery effort has been mired in bureaucracy and frustration, residents say. People often find themselves filling out paperwork in English and walking out from encounters with officials with no assurance that anything they have requested will materialize.

In the city of Yabucoa, for example, FEMA officials conducted assessments of needs and have been working him, but none of the necessary supplies have materialized for the city's residents, according to the mayor. There is an ongoing, desperate need for tarps, because many people lost their roofs. Heavy downpours hit the region over the weekend.

Lt. Gen. Todd Semonite, Commanding General of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, attended Monday's FEMA briefing and offered new metrics on the scale of the disaster. He said officials need to remove debris that could fill 350 Olympic-size swimming pools. An estimated 60,000 homes need some kind of help, he said.

As for the critical issue of electrical power, he said 14 percent of the grid is up and running. The island needs 2,700 megawatts of electricity to operate and at last count had 376 megawatts available. Four hundred 75-foot-tall transmission towers were "wiped out" by the storm, he said. Semonite said a dam in western Puerto Rico continues to erode and will need to be rebuilt.

On Monday, Brig. Gen. Jose Reyes, assistant adjutant general of the Puerto Rican National Guard, said the opening of the port of Ponce in the south will speed the delivery of life-sustaining resources to storm survivors. Asked why such efforts have taken so long, Reyes blamed the double-whammy of hurricanes Irma and Maria.

"You have to understand, this is a situation never seen before," Reyes said in an interview. "We were hit by two hurricanes, Cat 5, within less than 10 days. We were not even getting back on our feet after Irma, then suddenly we got hit by Maria. It's like getting all the leadership in a warehouse and you turn off the lights and the communications, and tell them, all right, get it fixed. When you go to Texas, or you go to Florida, help will come through the roads. And it may hit a portion of Texas, but not the whole state."

Puerto Rico's long-term rebuilding plan is beyond the responsibility of FEMA or the Army Corps, the federal officials said. They said that, under federal law, their job is to restore the island's infrastructure to the level of function it had before the hurricane, but that long-term resiliency will require an additional effort and funding from Congress.

Since before this extraordinary hurricane season began, Long has said in interviews that FEMA is not a first responder but a supporting agency answering requests from governors. He repeated that Monday.

"We're not designed to be first responders," Lond said. "We're designed to support response and recovery operations."

He later explained that the problem in Puerto Rico is diminished capacity: "A large portion of local workers as well as state workers were disaster victims. We had to play a greater first responder role than typically we would on the continental United States. We're not really designed to do that in many cases, speaking honestly."

Hernandez reported from San Juan, Puerto Rico.

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## RECOVERY

### [Puerto Rican governor says there will be "hell to pay" for mishandling supplies \(CBS\)](#)

Oct. 9, 2017

[CBS News](#)

Puerto Rico's governor says he's ordered an investigation into food and water distribution and promised there would be "hell to pay" for those mishandling supplies after Hurricane Maria devastated the U.S. territory.

Ricardo Rossello says an investigation is underway into reports that some areas in Puerto Rico are not collecting and delivering food and water, reports CBS News correspondent David Begnaud.

Rossello spoke with CNN on Monday, saying that 65 to 70 percent of drinking water has been restored to the island. He said there is "one area north" that has around 20 percent of its water restored.

"We're still, obviously, needing to do more. So, for example, we know we're delivering food to all of the municipalities, and water. There were some complaints that that water in some places was not getting to the people so I ordered an investigation," Rossello told the network. "If there is a place, a locality that is not delivering food to the people of Puerto Rico that need it, there's going to be some hell to pay."

Rossello also tweeted on Monday that he has ordered prosecutors to "investigate irregular indications in the handling of supplies."

Begnaud, who has reported extensively on the local and federal response in the wake of the deadly hurricane, reports that U.S. government and local officials say that water still needs to be boiled in Puerto Rico where there is water.

Begnaud says he received images from a man who was in Manatí with his family on Sunday. The pictures showed people standing in long lines waiting to get water on a side of the road where people were using PVC pipes to tap into a stream alongside a mountain.

In a letter to President Trump last weekend, Rossello requested federal funding for relief and recovery efforts. The letter says independent damage assessments in Puerto Rico are as high as \$95 billion -- about 150 percent of the island's gross national product.

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## **US Military Takes Over Hurricane Relief Delivery (Daily Caller)**

[Daily Caller](#), October 8, 2017

The Department of Defense took over the distribution of hurricane relief from government officials in Puerto Rico this weekend after local mayors failed to appropriately disperse the emergency items to the territory's 78 municipalities, The Miami Herald reported Sunday.

According to The Herald, food, water, and medical supplies were previously delivered to 10 regional staging sites in Puerto Rico, but the mayors did not coordinate properly to distribute the large containers of relief at the staging sites.

Instead, 10 to 20 soldiers will be posted in every municipality with vehicles and logistical support, where they will deliver relief to every neighborhood.

"We need to push it directly to the barrio to ensure that everyone's getting it," Brig. Gen. Jose J. Reyes, assistant adjutant general of the Puerto Rico National Guard said. "They will have some vehicles. They will have radio communications as well as logistics support.... They are going to be living there. They are going to be operating 24/7."

Florida Republican Sen. Marco Rubio reacted to the news of the hurricane relief being handled by the U.S. military saying in a tweet Sunday night, "[Twelve] days ago said @DeptofDefense must take over @PuertoRicoRelief appears they have finally reached same conclusion."

More political back and forth over the plight of the island continued when some residents in Puerto Rico's capital lost power Sunday during an attempt to restore electricity to the territory failed because a substation went down earlier in the day, NBC News reported.

The power outage prompted San Juan Mayor Carmen Yulin Cruz to tweet early Sunday morning, "Power collapses in San Juan hospital with 4 patients now being transferred out. Have requested support from FEMA. NOTHING! @DavidBegnaud"

FEMA Administrator Brock Long responded to the mayor on ABC's "This Week," stating: "We filtered out the mayor a long time ago. We don't have time for the political noise."

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## **Puerto Rico Wants \$4.6 Billion From Congress To Meet 'Immediate Emergency Needs'**

By Jessica Kwong

[Newsweek](#), October 9, 2017

Puerto Rico Governor Ricardo Rossello has requested that Congress allocate \$4.6 billion “to meet the immediate emergency needs” of the hurricane-ravaged island and to help soften the blow to its economy.

In letters to congressional leaders and President Donald Trump dated Saturday and shared on Twitter Monday, Rossello asked that Congress “strongly consider” offering funding beyond the Federal Emergency Management Agency Disaster Relief Fund.

Other requests include \$3.2 billion in community development block grants from the Department of Housing and Urban Development, \$500 million in community disaster loan program funding from the Department of Homeland Security and \$500 million in social services block grants from the Department of Health and Human Services.

Rossello also requested smaller amounts of money from the Department of Transportation, the Small Business Administration, the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Education.

“We are grateful for the federal emergency assistance that has been provided so far,” Rossello wrote. “However, absent extraordinary measures to address the halt in economic activity in Puerto Rico, the humanitarian crisis will deepen, and the unmet basic needs of the American citizens of Puerto Rico will become even greater.”

In his letter, Rossello said the “unprecedented island-wide devastation” from Hurricane Maria has led to an independent damage estimate of about \$95 billion—equal to about 150 percent of Puerto Rico’s gross national product.

“As a result, in addition to the immediate humanitarian crisis, Puerto Rico is on the brink of a massive liquidity crisis that will intensify in the immediate future,” Rossello wrote.

The Trump administration last week sent a \$29 billion disaster relief fund request to Congress to deal with the aftermath of hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria, but did not detail how much was intended for Puerto Rico. The House could take up the issue this week.

On Monday, meanwhile, Rossello ordered an investigation into water distribution on the island after complaints from people in some areas that authorities were not delivering supplies. Three weeks after Hurricane Maria made landfall, drinking water has been restored to almost 60 percent of the island, yet only to about 20 percent in some parts of the north, according to the governor.

“If there is a place, a locality that is not delivering food to the people of Puerto Rico that need it, there’s going to be some hell to pay,” Rossello told CNN.

Meanwhile, the federal government on Sunday night allowed its 10-day waiver of the Jones Act, under which only American vessels may make cargo shipments between U.S. ports, to expire, barring foreign boats from providing further aid.

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## [Lawmakers Seek Puerto Rico Exemption To Law That Slowed Aid \(AP\)](#)

By Matthew Daly

[Associated Press](#), October 9, 2017

WASHINGTON (AP) — Republicans and Democrats in Congress are pushing to exempt Puerto Rico from a federal law that prohibits foreign-flagged ships from shuttling goods between U.S. ports. President Donald Trump temporarily waived the Jones Act last month amid criticism that the once-obscure law hindered relief efforts to in Puerto Rico following Hurricane Maria.

The 10-day waiver expired on Sunday night and was not renewed. A spokesman for the Department of Homeland Security said an extension was not needed to support relief efforts on the island, adding that there’s “an ample supply” of U.S.-flagged vessels to ensure cargo reaches Puerto Rico.

Sen. John McCain, R-Ariz., said Monday that the expiration of the Jones Act waiver added renewed urgency to his push to permanently exempt Puerto Rico from what he called an “archaic and burdensome law.”

“Until we provide Puerto Rico with long-term relief, the Jones Act will continue to hinder much-needed efforts to help the people of Puerto Rico recover and rebuild from Hurricane Maria,” he said.

Rep. Nydia Velázquez, D-N.Y., said the temporary waiver should be extended for at least a year while Congress debates a permanent exemption for Puerto Rico.

“Significant numbers of Puerto Ricans remain displaced and still lack food, drinking water and electricity,” she wrote in a letter to Trump. “If the Jones Act is reinstated, building supplies will cost significantly more in Puerto Rico, compared to costs on the mainland. This will serve only to slow Puerto Rico’s long-term recovery.”

The Trump administration initially said a waiver was not needed because there were enough U.S.-flagged ships available to ferry goods to Puerto Rico. Delays in getting relief supplies to Puerto Rico occurred because of bottlenecks that resulted from the island’s damaged ports and blocked roads, not a lack of ships, officials said.

Even so, Trump waived Jones Act restrictions on Sept. 28, just as he had done to help ease fuel shortages in the Southeast following hurricanes Harvey and Irma.

Rep. Pramila Jayapal, D-Wash., called the Jones Act “incredibly important to our country’s economy and to the maritime industry,” which she said supports nearly 500,000 jobs and is responsible for more than \$92 billion in annual gross economic output.

In Washington state, the Jones Act supports more than 16,000, mostly unionized jobs, Jayapal said. “Without these jobs, our economy would suffer tremendously,” she said.

“To be clear, everywhere in the country where we have Jones Act jobs, they are better jobs, better wages and a better future for our Americans across the country,” Jayapal said last week in a speech on the House floor.

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## [The Jones Act Waiver For Puerto Rico Just Expired And Won’t Be Renewed \(Huffington Post\)](#)

**That means the U.S. island decimated by Hurricane Maria will go back to paying double the shipping costs for food and supplies.**

By Jennifer Bendery

[Huffington Post](#), October 9, 2017

WASHINGTON — The Jones Act waiver for Puerto Rico expired on Sunday night and “it is not being extended at this time,” Department of Homeland Security spokesman David Lapan told HuffPost on Monday.

DHS had temporarily waived the Jones Act — an arguably outdated law that imposes exorbitant shipping costs on the U.S. island — on Sept. 28. The waiver has meant that Puerto Rico has been able to import food, fuel and supplies more quickly, and for half the costs, in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria.

With the 1920 law back in effect, the island will go back to paying much higher shipping costs to import supplies. The Jones Act requires that all goods shipped between U.S. ports be carried by American-owned and operated ships, which are more expensive vessels than others in the global marketplace. That’s meant that Puerto Rico pays double the costs for goods from the U.S. mainland compared with neighboring islands — and that U.S. vessels are making bank.

The return to higher shipping costs won’t help Puerto Rico as it tries to climb out of economic devastation. Nearly half of the 3.4 million Americans on the island still don’t have drinking water since Maria hit nearly three weeks ago. Just 15 percent have electricity. Many people still haven’t heard from loved ones, and at least 39 deaths have been attributed to the storm.

Lapan said DHS is “always prepared to review requests on a case-by-case basis and respond quickly” to possible waivers of the Jones Act. But those decisions have to be related to national defense, he said, and are not driven by cost-related matters.

“We believe that extending the waiver is unnecessary to support the humanitarian relief efforts” on Puerto Rico, Lapan said. “There is an ample supply of Jones Act-qualified vessels to ensure that cargo is able to reach” the island.

President Donald Trump, who is spending Monday golfing, had originally hedged on waiving the Jones Act for Puerto Rico at all, saying “a lot of shippers” didn’t want him to do it. He eventually caved to pressure from lawmakers including Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.).

McCain has been pushing to get rid of the Jones Act altogether. It costs Puerto Rico hundreds of millions of dollars every year, and he recently introduced legislation to nix the law.

“Now that the temporary Jones Act waiver for Puerto Rico has expired, it is more important than ever for Congress to pass my bill to permanently exempt Puerto Rico from this archaic and burdensome law,” McCain said in a statement to HuffPost. “Until we provide Puerto Rico with long-term relief, the Jones Act will continue to hinder much-needed efforts to help the people of Puerto Rico recover and rebuild from Hurricane Maria.”

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## FROM THE WEEKEND NATIONAL CLIPS

### NBC: Puerto Rico-Hurricane Recovery

• [NBC Nightly News](#) (10/9, story 6, 1:55, Holt, 16.61M) reported, “Now to Puerto Rico where the death toll now stands at 39 in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria. The most critical need right now, rebuilding the shattered power grid on that devastated island. Now some big name billionaires from the tech world are stepping up to offer some help. NBC’s Gabe Gutierrez is there with more.” NBC (**Gutierrez**) added, “Tonight most of Puerto Rico is powerless.” **Unidentified Speaker**: “Water. We need water.” **Gutierrez**: “Nearly three weeks after Hurricane Maria, 85 percent of the island still has no electricity. That’s almost three million Americans. The three-star general spearheading military relief efforts says he’ll take whatever help he can get.” **Lt. Gen. Jeffrey Buchanan**, US Army North: “The power of America, my own belief, is not the federal government. It’s the local government. It’s private organizations all coming together as one team to help people in the time of need.” **Gutierrez**: “That help could be coming from big tech. Tesla founder Elon Musk saying he wants to help rebuild the island’s power grid using solar technology. How long before this project gets off the ground?” **Gov. Ricardo Rossello**, Puerto Rico: “We’re getting our teams together talking already.” **Gutierrez**: “The potential partnership with Governor Ricardo Rossello started last week over Twitter.” **Rossello**: “We can’t be thinking about just putting back up the old system. We need to take this opportunity to remake the system, to be innovative.” **Gutierrez**: “Other tech giants also want in. Google’s parent company is sending massive balloons to restore cell service. Facebook is launching what it calls a connectivity team to the island. But for so many here, recovery seems far off. Joselli says she waited in a gas line for 17 hours the other day. Now she waits for food and water at a grocery store, chugging along on a generator.” **Unidentified Speaker**: “We have to wake up very early to go to the supermarket to get anything.” **Gutierrez**: “She waits for the day she can tell her seven-year-old son they have power once more. Gabe Gutierrez, NBC News, Isabella, Puerto Rico.”

### NBC: Puerto Rico-Hurricane Recovery.

NBC Nightly News (10/8, story 12, 2:15, Snow, 16.61M) reported, “Finally tonight, for all the hardship we’ve been reporting about in Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria, we want to tell you about a remarkable effort by one man that’s been having a big impact in recent days. He’s one of the most famous chefs in America, and Ron Mott caught up with him in Puerto Rico.” NBC (Mott) added, “Out of chaos, comfort. Offered slice by slice by steaming, heaping mounds. It’s a recipe for recovery, cooked up by famed Chef Jose Andres, who created the World Central Kitchen in the wake of the Haiti earthquake. The non-profit brought relief to hurricane victims in Houston.” Chef Jose Andres: “People of Houston, the best barbecue chicken.” Mott: “Now, to those in Puerto Rico.” Andres: “You create this bond between the giver and receiver. That’s what you want. The people feel like somebody’s really taking care of them.” Mott: “This massive volunteer force isn’t just a nod to his global humanitarian mission, but an ode to the transforming and healing power of food. Does it feel like work or a calling?” **Unidentified Speaker**: “We’re having fun. It’s all about having fun and helping others, so it’s more of

a calling.” Mott: “Chef Andres quickly assembled his team, infused with an energy to nourish the soul as much the body. She says giving back to the community has helped heal her own personal pain.” Unidentified Speaker: “No matter what, I was still living, and I get around because I don’t have my stuff. But it’s okay.” Mott: “This weekend, they came, they ate, smiled even. A quarter million servings so far. Super good, this woman said. And you got a nice couple of bowls of hot food. How good does that feel?” Unidentified Speaker: “Thanks to God.” Mott: “In a place where finding the next meal is a constant worry for many, a chance to relax, to savor a moment.” Andres: “It’s here and this will be forever the biggest step in my life.” Mott: “Fuel for the long road ahead. Ron Mott, NBC News, San Juan.”

## **NBC: Puerto Rico-Hurricane Recovery.**

### **NBC Nightly News**

(10/7, story 6, 1:50, Diaz-Balart, 6.31M) reported, “Two and a half weeks after Hurricane Maria struck Puerto Rico, the government of the island said today that while 56 percent of residents now have running water, the vast majority still do not have power. While many supermarkets have now reopened, people in more remote areas are still calling for help. We get more from NBC’s Mariana Atencio.” NBC (Atencio) added, “In the town of Comerio, people are pleading for water.” Unidentified Speaker: “From the bottom of my heart, please help us, because we’re dying here.” Atencio: “We’re with a group led by San Juan’s mayor and medical teams from as far away as New York and California. Susan Gillespie is a nurse practitioner from Oregon.” Unidentified Speaker: “It’s a war zone, they need help here.” Atencio: “Have you seen any sign of supplies coming this way?” Unidentified Speaker: “None, zero.” Atencio: “Medicine?” Unidentified Speaker: “Nothing.” Atencio: “The volunteer doctors and nurses climb this mountainous neighborhood called ‘Cielito,’ which means ‘Heaven,’ to deliver supplies and give medical care. There are around 20,000 people here in the city of Comerio. The mayor says 60 percent of the homes – totally damaged after Hurricane Maria. It’s especially tough on the elderly and sick to get the care they need. You have cancer? Across Puerto Rico, so many are struggling, roughly 90 percent of this island still has no power. Slightly more than half have running water. Today, a bipartisan congressional delegation surveyed the damage. For those in this countryside, help can’t come fast enough. How happy are you to see these doctors from the mainland? Are you happy? That’s a smile we wanted to see. After days of despair, today hope in this village called ‘Heaven.’ Mariana Atencio, NBC News, Puerto Rico.”

## **NBC: Puerto Rico-Hurricane Relief Song. NBC Nightly News**

(10/6, story 13, 2:05, Holt, 7.22M) reported, “Finally tonight, more than two weeks after Hurricane Maria slammed Puerto Rico, that US territory remains in dire need. That’s why Lin-Manuel Miranda, Tony and Grammy award-winning creator of the smash hit ‘Hamilton,’ got some of his fellow music superstars together for a song benefiting the relief effort. Tonight, our Gabe Gutierrez has an inside look.” NBC (Gutierrez) added, “If the song was only about a storm, it wouldn’t be so personal. But for Lin-Manuel Miranda, his new single ‘Almost Like Praying,’ inspired by the West Side Story song ‘Maria,’ cuts deeper. Featuring Jennifer Lopez, Gloria Stefan, and Marc Anthony. The music gives a voice to each of Puerto Rico’s 78 towns.” Lin-Manuel Miranda, actor and writer: “Like many people I have family on the island, and what we all experienced if we weren’t on the island was this terrible silence in the wake of the storm. And our social media feeds were full of the names of town.” Gutierrez: “It’s the latest private voice in the hurricane relief effort. Stephen Colbert raising more than one million dollars getting celebrities to post their awkward adolescent pictures. A group called Vieques Love rallying support for Puerto Rico’s hard-hit southeastern coast. From Houston, still recovering itself from Hurricane Harvey --” Bill Baldwin, Harvey Relief Hub volunteer: “And we give back to any in need, as the nation has done so for us.” Gutierrez: “-- to Asbury Park, New Jersey today, where supplies were rushed to the local food bank en route to San Juan.” Unidentified Speaker: “It is devastating.” Gutierrez: “Deedee Montenero grew up in Puerto Rico and didn’t hear from her 75-year-old mother on the island for days after the storm.” Unidentified Speaker: “The pain is so deep that you can’t even express it. I have cried so much in the past couple



of weeks.” Gutierrez: “But for Puerto Ricans, from that pain has come pride. Miranda’s tribute helping make sure 78 towns are not forgotten. Gabe Gutierrez, NBC News, New York.”

### **ABC: Puerto Rico-Hurricane Recovery. [ABC World News Tonight](#)**

(10/8, story 6, 0:30, Llamas, 14.63M) reported, “An update on the crisis in Puerto Rico. The mayor of San Juan slamming FEMA’s response again. Tweeting, ‘Power collapses in San Juan hospital with four patients now being transferred out. Have requested support from FEMA, nothing.’ And later, ‘Increasingly painful to understand the American people want to help, and the US government does not want to help.’ Today, FEMA Administrator Brock Long called the mayor’s criticism a political noise and said FEMA is making progress every day, working with the governor.”

### **ABC: Puerto Rico-Hurricane Recovery. [ABC World News Tonight](#)**

(10/6, story 7, 0:35, Muir, 7.27M) reported, “To Puerto Rico tonight and new numbers from FEMA. More than two weeks after the storm, just 10 percent of the island has electricity back; a little more than half now has drinkable water. President Trump marking Hispanic Heritage Month at the White House today, stressing the federal government’s commitment, and then pronouncing Puerto Rico this way.” President Trump: “We are also praying for the people of Puerto Rico. We love Puerto Rico. Puerto Rico.” Unidentified Speaker: “We love you.” Trump: “And we also love Puerto Rico.” Muir: “The President on Puerto Rico tonight.”

### **CBS: Puerto Rico-Hurricane Recovery. [The CBS Weekend News](#)**

(10/7, story 9, 2:00, Ninan) reported, “Shortly after President Trump praised Puerto Ricans this week for the relatively low death toll from Hurricane Maria, it more than doubled to 34. Dr. Jon LaPook took an aerial tour of the island and saw the overwhelming challenges that still remain.” Nick Prouty, Puerto Rico resident: “There is misery all over this island.” CBS (LaPook) added, “For two weeks, resident Nick Prouty has been flying almost daily runs to pick up the sick and drop off supplies.” Prouty: “The roads seem impassable up here.” LaPook: “Even now, it’s hard to measure the staggering toll of the hurricane.” Prouty: “Where do these people go? There’s absolutely nothing left. These houses are absolutely destroyed. They’re in splinters.” LaPook: “Many of the new deaths are from the island’s rural interior, where most people are still without water, without power, and aid is arriving very slowly. estimates are it will take months to restore electricity.” President Trump: “Flashlights, you don’t need ‘em anymore! You don’t need ‘em anymore!” LaPook: “That’s at odds with the President’s upbeat remark about power to a selected crowd in a church. Further inland, we landed near a community hospital in Utuado. With dwindling supplies, Dr. Jose Villafane is struggling to get help for his sickest patients.” Dr. Jose Villafane, Utuado: “As we stabilize them and try to transfer them to another hospital, they are dying in the other settings.” LaPook: “So they end up dying, either on the way to the hospital elsewhere or in San Juan?” Villafane: “That’s true.” Prouty: “There are people who we haven’t recovered yet that are dead in their houses.” LaPook: “As Prouty looks down, he knows there’s more suffering than he can see.” Prouty: “We don’t see it because we can’t get to those people. No one’s going out to them yet. Finding out who’s in there, who’s missing, it literally – it has to happen on a door-to-door basis.” LaPook: “Puerto Rico’s governor told me the rising toll includes drownings and deaths from mudslides that had not been reported previously. Three deaths were from loss of oxygen when the power went off. Dr. Jon LaPook, CBS News, New York.”

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## **POWER / INFRASTRUCTURE / PUBLIC SERVICES**

### **[Most Of Puerto Rico Remains Dark Nearly Three Weeks After Storm \(Bloomberg\)](#)**

By Mark Chediak

[Bloomberg News](#), October 9, 2017

It's been almost three weeks since Hurricane Maria slammed into Puerto Rico and most of the island is still without electricity.

The U.S. Department of Energy said Monday that 85 percent of customers lack power. Some portions of feeder lines have been restored and about 30 percent of the island's substations are back online, the agency said.

Crews are trickling in to help the Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority restore service, which could be out for months.

The slow pace of the recovery has prodded Puerto Rico Governor Ricardo Rossello to ask Tesla Inc.'s Elon Musk for help rebuilding the grid with solar and batteries. The U.S. solar industry is also airlifting gear to the island as part of a humanitarian effort and to show how its technology can help keep the lights on after a natural disaster.

### Minus Electrical Grid, Puerto Rico Becomes Generator Island (NY Times)

By Richard Fausset, Frances Robles And Deborah Acosta

[New York Times](#), October 7, 2017

SAN JUAN, P.R. — Like many other frivolous things on the island these days, the shiny motorcycles at the Planet Honda showroom have been pushed to the side.

In their place are dozens of folding chairs, and on Thursday morning, they were all filled with Puerto Ricans waiting to buy the most essential machines on the post-hurricane landscape: portable generators, to light their powerless homes.

María Aguilera, 57, a teacher, was waiting in the line that had formed outside the showroom Thursday morning. When the sun sets these days, she said, she relies on candles for light. And like everyone else in Puerto Rico — including Gov. Ricardo A. Rosselló — Ms. Aguilera said she had no idea when the power grid might be restored.

“From the things I’ve seen with the infrastructure,” she said, “it could be months.”

Hurricane Maria's near total destruction of the commonwealth's electric power grid has transformed Puerto Rico into Generator Island. Running on gas or diesel, and ranging from lawn mower to moving-truck size, the generators are the only option for the roughly 90 percent of the island that has no access to the decimated grid. Generators now power big-box stores, high-rise apartment buildings, auto shops, fast-food restaurants, wastewater treatment plants and little country homes. And their low, incessant groan is the new drone note in the discordant symphony of post-storm Puerto Rican life.

The generators are a temporary fix that is raising health and safety concerns and highlighting the stark divisions of class in a place with a 45 percent poverty rate. They are also the only option for most Puerto Ricans for now, as the island struggles with restoring its electrical system — by far the most important and complex challenge the storm has presented.

In a news conference on Friday, Mr. Rosselló could not say when the system, which was infamously fragile before the storm, would be fully restored.

“There is no estimated date right now,” he said. “We have established, right at the beginning of this week, we want to have 10 percent of the energy generation in Puerto Rico. Now we’re up to 10.6 percent. And our expectation is, within the next month, to have 25 percent.”

Many big-box stores and hardware stores are selling out of generators for home use. Julito Ramírez, the Planet Honda general manager, said that his company was having a hard time keeping up with demand, selling 250 to 300 units per day. After ordering all of the generators he could find in the United States, he has turned to a cache he found in Canada.

“We are in that cycle of finding and bringing, and finding and bringing,” Mr. Ramírez said. The generator everyone wants, he said, is a \$6,000 model that can run a home air-conditioning system. The biggest model he had in stock this week was a \$2,300 machine that can run a refrigerator, some lights, a washing machine — but not an air conditioner.

For one customer, Victor Negrón, it would have to do. He said his old generator had given out two days earlier. “I’ve had to go to hotels to charge my phones,” said Mr. Negrón, 50, a health care executive. “We’ve lost all of the food in our refrigerator.”

The storm destroyed 85 percent of the island’s energy transmission and distribution system, and the fix could cost \$5 billion, said Ricardo Ramos, chief executive of the beleaguered Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority, known as Prepa. The public utility is saddled with \$9 billion in debt and filed for bankruptcy in July. The Puerto Rican government also filed a form of bankruptcy in May.

The Trump administration has asked Congress to approve a \$29 billion aid package for Puerto Rico, as well as for hurricane-damaged Florida and Texas. But in the days after September 20, when Hurricane Maria strafed Puerto Rico, Prepa’s money troubles made it “almost impossible” to pay the large contracts required to bring in other states’ power companies to help restore the grid, said José E. Sánchez, a director with the United States Army Corps of Engineers and the head of the task force to restore power in Puerto Rico.

“It is not only personnel, but all the trucks and materials,” Mr. Sánchez said in an email. “That could cost millions of dollars.”

But Meena Dayak, a spokeswoman for the American Public Power Association, the trade group that coordinates the state-to-state mutual aid networks for public power utilities, said that Prepa never reached out to them for help.

“The way our mutual aid works is we can only go in if help has been requested,” she said over the phone on Friday.

Mr. Ramos, Prepa’s chief executive, said he did request help but when none came, he hired a Montana-based company, Whitefish Energy Holdings, to restore many of the power lines. Mr. Ramos said 200 subcontractors were already on the ground.

Andy Techmanski, chief executive of Whitefish, said that a shortage of housing for his crews meant that only 75 were on the island, and that clogged ports were making it a challenge to bring in heavy equipment.

He also said it would take six months or longer for all of Puerto Rico to have its power restored.

The rebuilding will be particularly difficult because many lines stretch across the island’s mountainous interior. There is also the question of whether Puerto Rico should modernize its rickety and outmoded system while it rebuilds. On Friday, the governor said that a modernization effort would “run parallel” with the effort to simply restore power. He said he has begun speaking with Elon Musk, the Tesla chief executive, about ways to increase green energy options for Puerto Rico, which received just 2 percent of its power from renewable sources before the storm. (Mr. Musk said on Twitter Thursday that rebuilding the island’s grid with independent solar and battery systems “could be done.”)

But Mr. Sánchez said that the assignment from the Federal Emergency Management Authority is to repair the system only. “We are there to repair-replace, but not to augment,” he said.

As he waited to buy his generator, Mr. Negrón sympathized with the governor. The island needed a better power system, he said. But people did not want to wait. His mother, he said, “wants her electric now.”

In the meantime, the generators rumble on, though not without problems. A few blocks from the Honda store, the Hospital San Francisco has had two generators fail since the storm, resulting in the evacuation of patients, according to El Nuevo Dia, a local newspaper. In a visit to the hospital Thursday, the lights were on, and a worker said a backup generator was powering them. But hospital officials declined a request for comment.

Across town at the Costco, Juan Torres, an assistant manager, showed off the massive, truck-size generator that the business, like many here, had installed before the storm. Mr. Torres said it was burning 1,000 gallons of diesel per day.

But Mr. Torres said that home generators normally offered at the store were sold out.

Across the island, the Army Corps of Engineers has set up 34 huge generators so far, running everything from police departments to water pumping facilities to a Prepa office, according to Lisa Hunter, a spokeswoman for the Corps. Corps officials said on Friday that 177 other generators arrived late in the week, with some of them headed to the United States Virgin Islands.

Camilla Feibelman, a founder of the Puerto Rico chapter of the Sierra Club who currently runs the Rio Grande chapter, said that Facebook was full of complaints about the generator noise on the island these days.

More seriously, she said, generators can lead to carbon monoxide poisoning when misused — a common concern among officials in post-storm environments. Last month, three people in Orange County, Fla., died from carbon monoxide poisoning after running a generator inside their homes.

Adriana González, a Sierra Club organizer in Puerto Rico, said the high cost of a generator “creates a disparity” between rich and poor. In her neighborhood, she said, “you have one house illuminated, and then total darkness for like a block.”

Mr. Ramírez, the Honda store manager, said that some generators were stolen from the showroom in the days just after the storm. So the store now makes the sale in the showroom, then has customers pick up their generators from a warehouse a day later.

If nothing else, it is a good time to be a generator repairman like José Miguel Márquez, 35. Mr. Márquez said he was so busy these days that the biggest problem is finding time to deposit his checks at the bank.

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## [Puerto Rico’s Power Restoration Slowed By Miles Of Downed Lines \(Wall Street Journal\)](#)

**Only 11% of customers have electricity more than two weeks after Hurricane Maria**

By Arian Campo-Flores

[Wall Street Journal](#), October 6, 2017

Full-text stories from the Wall Street Journal are available to Journal subscribers by clicking the link.

## [Alphabet Gets Approval For Giant Balloons To Restore Puerto Rico’s Wireless Service \(Wall Street Journal\)](#)

**Before it can initiate service, Project Loon has to find a wireless carrier to serve as its partner**

By John D. McKinnon And Drew Fitzgerald

[Wall Street Journal](#), October 7, 2017

Full-text stories from the Wall Street Journal are available to Journal subscribers by clicking the link.

## [Tesla To Send More Battery Installers To Puerto Rico To Restore Power \(Reuters\)](#)

By Scott DiSavino

[Reuters](#), October 6, 2017

Full-text stories from Reuters currently cannot be included in this document. You may, however, click the link above to access the story.

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## HEALTH / ENVIRONMENTAL

### [FDA: Drug Shortages Possible Due To Puerto Rico Power Outage \(AP\)](#)

By Linda A. Johnson

[Associated Press](#), October 6, 2017

The Food and Drug Administration on Friday warned that U.S. drug shortages are possible because power outages in Puerto Rico have stopped or limited production at many medicine factories there.

Nearly 10 percent of the medicines used by Americans, plus numerous medical devices, are made in Puerto Rico, which lost most electricity when it was hit hard by Hurricane Maria about two weeks ago.

FDA Commissioner Dr. Scott Gottlieb said in a statement that the agency is working to prevent shortages of about 40 crucial medicines. He has declined to identify those medicines but said Friday that the FDA would disclose any shortages if they occur; drug shortages are routinely listed on the FDA's website.

"We're keeping a close watch on the most critical medical products," Gottlieb said.

The FDA is working with drugmakers and device manufacturers, who are trying to restore partial operations with backup generators, according to the statement. In the most urgent cases, the FDA is helping companies get fuel to keep their generators running and ship finished products.

At a news conference Thursday, Puerto Rican Gov. Ricardo Rossello said power has been restored to 9 percent of customers. The government hopes to have the power back on for a quarter of the island within a month, and for the entire territory of 3.4 million people by March.

Gottlieb said the power disruptions could cause new medicine shortages and exacerbate shortages that existed before Hurricane Maria, and Irma before that, slammed the island.

At least for now, drugmakers say they should be able to prevent shortages by moving around inventory and, in some cases, increasing production at factories in other locations already making those products.

Medicines made in Puerto Rico include AstraZeneca's cholesterol drug Crestor, antibiotics and drugs for inflammation from Pfizer and Roche's Accu-Chek blood sugar test strips for diabetics. Eli Lilly makes the active ingredient for its diabetes medicines on the island. And Amgen, a huge biotech drugmaker, produces most of its medicines there, including widely used rheumatoid drug Enbrel, a number of cancer drugs, heart failure drug Corlanor and osteoporosis drugs Prolia and Xgeva.

Hurricane Maria didn't cause major damage to the roughly 80 medicine and device factories but many have needed cleanup and some repairs, according to several companies contacted by The Associated Press. The companies said operations were also hampered because workers couldn't get to factories and they were dealing with damage to their homes.

The medical products industry, which set up a large base in Puerto Rico decades ago to take advantage of since-expired tax advantages, is key to the financial health of the debt-laden territory. The FDA said medicines and medical devices account for about 30 percent of Puerto Rico's gross domestic product, and about 80 percent of those products are used by residents of Puerto Rico and the 50 states.

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## [Puerto Rico Pharmaceutical Manufacturing Slowed By Hurricane Maria \(Washington Times\)](#)

By Laura Kelly

[Washington Times](#), October 9, 2017

Hurricane damage to Puerto Rico's pharmaceutical industry could hamper the U.S. mainland's access to critical medications, including treatments for cancer, diabetes and heart disease, the commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration says.

Dr. Scott Gottlieb has said the devastation in Puerto Rico could have broad challenges and implications on the medical product manufacturing base on the island. He called it a "critical health issue for Americans" that could have "significant public health consequences."

On Friday, Dr. Gottlieb issued a statement saying the FDA is keeping a close watch on the most critical medical products and has stepped in to secure fuel to maintain production lines and logistical support.

Wendy Perry, vice president of the Pharmaceutical Industry Association of Puerto Rico, said Friday that about half of the island's manufacturing plants were operating, although some only partially.

"Within the next week, we expect the rest of the manufacturing plants to start operating again," Ms. Perry said by phone from Puerto Rico.

She said her organization is in direct communication with government heads about the priority and importance of bringing the plants back online.

“It’s important to understand we’re managing a situation that, even though we do have the plans, it is a catastrophic hurricane — something we have never seen before. Although we now are in control and we can execute all the plans for the short term, we have to continue to work together with the government in order to address the issues of electricity and telecommunications,” she said.

Puerto Rico’s pharmaceutical manufacturing business is vital to the economy, Ms. Perry said, because it represents 30 percent of the island’s total gross domestic product and provides salaries for employees at almost three times the typical rate for Puerto Ricans.

“That is why we have all the attention and resources from our local government, and I do have to stress the fact that they have been very open, we have communication channels open directly with each one of the heads of the local authorities with whom we have to deal with in order to ensure business continuing,” she said.

Puerto Rico’s drug manufacturing industry employs about 90,000 people and accounts for 72 percent of the island’s exports, representing about \$14.5 billion in revenue, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Hurricane Maria decimated Puerto Rico when it made landfall on Sept. 20 with sustained winds up to 155 mph, knocking out the power grid of the entire island.

Almost three weeks later, the island is running mostly on generator power, with limited cellphone service and debris blocking transportation routes.

About 50 pharmaceutical companies have manufacturing plants on the island. Although some companies reached for comment said they sustained only minimal or moderate damage, the challenge of operating on generator power is not meant to last more than a few weeks.

Employees are struggling to access their work locations and, along with other Puerto Ricans, are dealing with food, water and fuel shortages.

On the impact on the pharmaceutical supply chain, Dr. Gottlieb has said the FDA is worried about preserving medications, in part by shuttling them off the island, as well as providing relief to Puerto Ricans affected by the storm.

The FDA said it is worried about 40 high-priority drugs but has not named the exact medications that would be in short supply if power is not restored to plants and transportation routes are not cleared.

The FDA said it is working with at least five companies to prevent critical shortages of medical products in Puerto Rico.

Of the companies reached for comment — including Johnson & Johnson, Pfizer, Amgen and Eli Lilly — none reported major damage to its site. The companies said they were using generator power to keep the plants running. They also reported monitoring product inventory levels and supply routes while keeping manufacturing levels up at other international sites.

Among the products produced on the island are life-saving medications used to treat cancer, diabetes, cardiovascular diseases and HIV.

“Overall, our facilities fared very well given the magnitude of the storm, and we’ve begun to restart some operations under generator power,” Johnson & Johnson spokesman Ernie Knewitz said in an email. The company has about 3,600 employees and operates seven facilities on the island.

“We have a strong local team working through incredible logistical challenges, and we’re seeing progress each day. We are also closely monitoring our product inventory levels and will work to ensure all critical needs are met,” Mr. Knewitz said.

Pfizer said in a statement that it is working to repair damage and restore electricity to its facilities, relying on generator power and unsure how long it will be until power is restored.

“Overall, we have a healthy supply of finished goods available for patients and do not currently see a risk to patient supply,” the company said. “We are monitoring the supply situation closely and utilizing alternative manufacturing locations where possible. We remain in regular contact with the FDA and regulators from other countries.”

A spokesman for Eli Lilly, known for making diabetes medication as well as cancer and cardiovascular drugs, said its facilities were built to withstand hurricane conditions and that preparations before the storms included halting production, locking down facilities and instructing employees to stay home.

“Our inventory strategy for products is designed to protect against this type of event, and we see no product supply risk to global markets at this time. The affiliate sustained minimal damage as well,” the company said in a statement.

Nicolette Louissaint is executive director of Healthcare Ready, which helps coordinate with public and private entities to ensure a supply chain of medical equipment to disaster areas. She said Hurricane Maria’s devastating effects on the island and logistical challenges have slowed relief efforts.

“We still are learning about the overall impacts, especially the health impacts of Maria,” Ms. Louissaint said. “One of the things that we have to continue to think about is how we track and care for the patients that are still at risk. There have been reports that are coming out, and we’re starting to learn more about what the true medical needs are, but keeping our eye on that is going to be really important over the next few weeks, especially.”

Healthcare Ready has been working for six weeks straight to respond to the needs of people caught in the paths of Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria.

Ms. Louissaint said Puerto Rico is still about 94 percent without power with only 12 percent cell reception. While hospitals, and some people, are powering with generators, damage to roads has slowed access to diesel and gasoline.

“We’re starting to see that gasoline is becoming more available, and that really is important because it allows people to start to go to work,” she said.

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## [Hospitals Scramble To Avert Saline Shortage In Wake Of Puerto Rico Disaster](#) (Washington Post)

By Laurie McGinley

[Washington Post](#), October 9, 2017

The hurricane that wreaked havoc on Puerto Rico last month has disrupted production of widely used intravenous solutions. Several prominent hospitals across the country are scrambling to find alternative supplies, change the way they administer drugs and devise backup plans to make the fluids themselves.

The products affected are smaller-volume bags of sodium chloride, known as saline, and dextrose. These normally ubiquitous solutions are used to rehydrate patients and to dilute medications from antibiotics to painkillers to cancer drugs. Their manufacturer, Baxter International, has said that “multiple production days” were lost in the wake of Hurricane Maria, and it has set up an allocation system for hospitals based on past purchases.

The situation could be a harbinger of further shortages resulting from the extensive damage to Puerto Rico’s sprawling pharmaceutical-manufacturing sector. Scott Gottlieb, commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration, said in a statement Friday that the agency is working to help the island “recover its medical product manufacturing base...a key component of the island’s economic vigor.”

However, he warned, even facilities with only minor damage are working at just partial capacity. “New shortages could result from these disruptions, and shortages that existed before the storms could potentially be extended,” he said.

More than four dozen FDA-approved drugmaking facilities are in Puerto Rico, including ones owned by Pfizer Inc., Merck, Eli Lilly, Johnson & Johnson, Bristol-Myers Squibb and Amgen. The plants produce treatments for cancer and HIV, as well as immunosuppressants for patients with organ transplants. Among the top-selling medications manufactured there are the blood thinner Xarelto and the cholesterol drug Lipitor, according to a report by Healthcare & Life Sciences Review.

Several manufacturers said recently that they didn’t anticipate product shortages resulting from the hurricane, saying their facilities weren’t heavily affected. But people on the island say it has been a challenge for many to get to work and to get products in and out.

A Baxter spokesman said Friday that “limited production” of IV fluids is occurring at its Puerto Rico facilities. He said the company is “working to leverage our global manufacturing footprint to support alternative production of these products as we work to restore operations.”

Some hospitals on the U.S. mainland said late last week that they haven’t been impacted by Baxter’s problems, while others said they are having trouble getting the popular “mini-bags” that they use to deliver drugs to patients. While two other manufacturers make IV solutions, supplies are tight. Some medical centers are switching to other brands or to larger-volume IV bags that Baxter makes elsewhere.

But those and other changes can require a change in procedures on how drugs are administered — and new orders and training for the nursing staff — to ensure efficiency and patient safety, according to hospital officials.

Chicago’s Rush University Medical Center, like many other systems, uses a Baxter product called the “mini-bag plus” to administer IV solutions to patients. The bags allow a nurse to add a prescribed medication, mix it up and give it to the patient quickly.

Thomas Wheeler, corporate director of pharmacy at the medical center, said he no longer can get the Baxter bags and so has shifted to a product that works somewhat differently. Usually, he said, he would have made such a change slowly after extensive planning. But in this case, he added, he had to put it into place in 48 hours.

Kuldip Patel, associate chief pharmacy officer of Duke University Hospital in Durham, N.C., said he ran out of the mini-bags after getting only 25 percent of his normal order. Like other large hospitals, Duke has its own compounding service that can prepare IV solutions from raw ingredients if necessary, but the process is time-consuming, Patel said.

Jeff Thiel, assistant vice president for pharmacy services at NorthShore University HealthSystem, which is headquartered in Evanston, Ill., said he’s getting half his normal supply from Baxter. Switching to a different product “is not terrible,” he said, “but it does cause some disruption in the work flow.” And Erin Fox, director of the Drug Information Center at the University of Utah Health system, said it hasn’t been able to get the Baxter mini-bag plus since before the hurricane. “We are thinking,

how do we conserve the small bags that we have?” she said.

All the hospital officials said that patient care has not been impaired.

For years, hospital pharmacists have had to grapple with shortages of dozens of drugs. Experts blame several factors, including manufacturing glitches, quality-control problems and business mergers. The IV-solutions market has seen significant upheaval since last year. Pfizer bought Hospira, a pharmaceutical and device company, and spun off its IV products to the infusion company ICU Medical Inc. Another company, B. Braun Medical Inc., has a smaller share of the IV market. Baxter remains the dominant player.

“This year has been challenging for multiple manufacturers,” said Chris Snyder, drug information pharmacist for shortages and recalls at the Cleveland Clinic. “And the hurricane has definitely compounded it.”

Several doctors and pharmacists remain on edge about the possibility of additional problems. Peter Adamson, who is chairman of the Children’s Oncology Group, said that the clinical trials it conducts nationwide have not yet had participating hospitals hit by drug shortages related to Puerto Rico. But Adamson, a pediatric oncologist at Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia, said “there remains great concern that treatment for children with cancer may soon be affected.”

Several hospital officials are calling on the FDA and drugmakers operating in Puerto Rico to release more information about what other products might soon be in short supply, as well as to allow hospitals to purchase some supplies from overseas, if necessary.

An agency spokeswoman said it is working with some companies to speed up import of supplies from other manufacturing sites. It also is working to expedite approval of other dosage forms and generic versions, she said. In his statement, Gottlieb said he plans to provide more details on specific products as he learns more about the situation there.

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## In Puerto Rico, Lives Depend On Volunteer Doctors And Diesel Generators ([Reuters](#))

By Robin Respaut And Nick Brown

[Reuters](#), October 6, 2017

Full-text stories from Reuters currently cannot be included in this document. You may, however, click the link above to access the story.

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## CHARITY / HUMAN INTEREST / VOLUNTEER EFFORTS

### After Hurricane Maria—and Trump’s Visit—Neighbors Help Each Other in Puerto Rico ([New Yorker](#))

By Jon Lee Anderson

October 9, 2017

[New Yorker](#)

On Friday afternoon, more than two weeks after Hurricane Maria made landfall in Puerto Rico, and three days after President Trump’s breezy, condescending visit to the island, ominous black rainclouds appeared in the sky above the community of Sabana Seca, a strip of houses on the scrubby western outskirts of San Juan. As a damp wind kicked up, a horse galloped, inexplicably, down the neighborhood’s main road, a broken tether trailing behind it.

A huge percentage of the island’s population still lacked access to power or drinking water—people were rigging PVC pipes to distribute mountain spring water in some communities where the faucets were still useless—and officials continued to worry about how to get relief supplies to the places where they were needed. The residents of Sabana Seca, meanwhile, were trying to clean up the mess made by Maria as best they could. Along the road, like some kind of miserable yard sale, they had stacked the possessions they’d been able to extract from the mud: sofas, mattresses, refrigerators, chests of drawers, lamps, clothing, toys. Hard-earned objects, all ruined beyond repair.

Two neighbors, Mariano Rico and Alfred Kenneth Rosas, both in their fifties, were outside, eying the darkening skies. Both men’s homes had been hit hard by the hurricane. Rico, a white-haired man whose two-story house is painted hot pink, was up a ladder with a hammer and nails, attaching a length of corrugated zinc above his upper veranda. Other salvaged pieces of zinc had already served to repair some of the house’s roof panels, which Maria had sent flying. When the flooding came, Rico and his wife, Alicia Rivera, who is disabled, had lost most of the belongings that they had on the first floor. The water, they said, had risen to between four and five feet high. But they were stoic, getting on with the task of reassembling their lives. As Rico worked, Rivera leaned on their second-floor balcony, watching him.

In their front yard was a seventies-era Buick, brown and gleaming, which Rico clearly kept in good shape. During Maria, they’d driven the car to the local mayor’s office, to escape the water. It had the look of an American car from before the OPEC oil crisis, all supersized steel and chrome. Next to it was a red GMC pickup truck.

I asked Rico, who makes his living as a handyman, if he’d ever before experienced a storm like Maria. He stopped for a moment. No, he replied. In the forty-five years that he’d lived there, there hadn’t been another one like that. And he was betting that there wouldn’t be another like Maria, because Rivera, who had lived in Sabana Seca all her life, said she had never been in a storm like Maria, either. If a similar storm were to come, he said, they’d clean up and get on with their lives, just like they were doing now.

Rosas, who is Rico and Rivera’s next-door neighbor, had come out of his own house to say hello. “Viene otra agua, vecino,” he said to Rico, referring to the clouds—“More water’s coming, neighbor.” Rico smiled and nodded.

Rosas’s house, which is also two stories, was in worse shape than Rico’s. A piece of tin had been installed to replace an entire section of wall, and one of the upstairs rooms was still open to the elements. Rosas, a big,

hale man, said that he and his family were sleeping in a tent on the roof, and joked, “We have our baths both inside and outside now, water has become like our family.” He stood next to the remains of a great mango tree that the storm had felled—and which he and Rico had since cut into several large pieces—and a rusty yellow excavator. He works in construction. The storm had flooded the machine; it now needed some new parts, which he couldn’t afford. He pointed to a few other vehicles on the street—they’d all been flooded, as well, and would need repair. Like Rico, he’d lost everything that had been on the first floor of his home. His chickens and roosters had drowned, too.

And the mango tree? Rosas wore a sad, fond expression. “Ninety years,” he said. “It saw my family grow, and my grandfather and great-grandfather.” He laughed. “She gave sweet fruit, too.” He made a smacking noise with his mouth, and laughed again. “I thought she’d make it, but she didn’t. That tree had a lot of memories. She knew all the family secrets.”

Rosas said that he and Rico were friends, good neighbors who would help each other out. No one from FEMA had come by to assist them yet, but a group—the name of which Rosas couldn’t recall—had given him the tent his family was sleeping in. That was something, he said, gratefully. They’d do their best, in the meantime, and get on with their lives.

We said our goodbyes as the rainclouds finally burst forth. Rosas was a joker. As the drops started to hit the ground, he was reminded of the 1995 Kevin Costner film “Waterworld.” “It’s like that movie, ‘El Mundo Agua,’ ” he said. “Not all is lost. At least we’ll have water.” He guffawed.

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## A light amid the darkness, a Puerto Rico church stands up as its community struggles (Washington Post)

By Arelis R. Hernández October 7

### Washington Post

UTUADO, PUERTO RICO — Our Lady of Monte Carmelo Catholic Church tried to hold Mass right after Hurricane Maria passed, but a landslide had knocked out the east wall and filled the tiny sanctuary with thick mud.

The lakeside village of Caonillas had been savaged. The hillsides appeared as if bleeding, scarred by the streaks of dislodged earth and frond-less palm trees. Maria’s winds spirited away zinc and tin roofs. Her deluge sent blood-orange topsoil into homes, onto cars and across roads.

“It was hellish,” said Midge Battistini, a teacher who lost her home near the banks of Lake Caonillas. She said the winds changed direction, creating a funnel effect that sucked up every green thing around.

Tucked into the sparsely populated central mountainsides, the village had been cut off from the rest of the world. No services. No contact. The people of Caonillas had weathered storms before. Hurricane Hugo had been through here. So had Georges. But Maria showed no mercy. There was nothing holy about her.

Lake Caonillas, in the mountains of Puerto Rico, was hit hard by Hurricane Maria. For days friends and family were unable to reach each other because roads were impassable and there was no cell service. They found comfort in each other, and their faith. (Zoëann Murphy/The Washington Post)

Carmen Ortiz and her family live nearest to Our Lady of Monte Carmelo, and they worked for a week to dig it out from the mud and clean the pews. On the first Mass after the Sept. 20 storm, the church opened and the Ortiz family — the four of them — were the only ones who could make it. Ortiz sought solace in Father Rafael Rodriguez, sharing her worries, her fears and what her family experienced trapped inside their home as Maria lashed outside.

The church “is the only light I’ve seen in the midst of all this darkness,” she said.

At that first Mass, they prayed that more people would come.

More than two weeks after Hurricane Maria tore a devastating path through Puerto Rico, communities such as this one are still isolated and struggling to meet basic human needs. They are frustrated at what they see as the lack of local and federal attention to their plight. In Caonillas, the effort to re-energize the church has given people

a special kind of faith — a special kind of mission — while the world around them remains unsettled and unnerving.

‘There will be Mass’

Local officials estimate that nearly every state road in Coanillas and greater Utuado were impassable or collapsed after the hurricane. No homes were left completely untouched in this region of the Central mountain range once ruled by the indigenous caciques, or Taino chiefs, who dominated the high altitude interior until the 15th century, when Christopher Columbus arrived.

“There were roads I didn’t recognize and homes that I was used to seeing that were gone,” said Idhem Heredia, the parish secretary. “There were other homes that I hadn’t seen before because there was so much vegetation. Now they are clear to see.”

Heredia said the region simply wasn’t prepared for what Maria wrought.

When it became obvious that help wasn’t quickly on its way, local residents began fending for themselves as they assessed the ruin around them.

Hector Quiles got busy, using a bulldozer to clear the mud and dead trees from mountain roadways. The coffee grower said Maria wiped out his entire harvest.

Quiles, 40, had coffee, plantains and fruits and vegetables, but he estimated that “about 5 percent is left over, and that is for my family’s consumption.”

Another grower, Angel Gonzalez, vice president of Cafe Don Alonso, had similar laments: “There’s no coffee to process.”

As shock turned to despair, parishioners focused on Our Lady of Monte Carmelo. Roads began to clear and the church started to return to some semblance of its former self. Ortiz’s extended family arrived for a midweek mass, increasing the number of worshipers from four to eight.

Still, they believed, more would come. The parish posted a yellow sign on the front gate: “There will be Mass on Sunday at 11 a.m.”

‘Out of this world’

That Sunday was Oct. 1 — 11 days after Maria made landfall — and the parishioners began setting up. Plastic chairs were placed at the rear of the church instead of at the altar, away from where the mud had invaded the room. The sound of a tambourine and guitar strokes emanated from the darkened interior, where Ortiz and her daughter were practicing choruses for the service. A painting of La Virgen de la Divina Providencia, the patroness of Puerto Rico, watched over the elements for the Eucharist with the island’s flag — red and white stripes with a blue triangle emblazoned with a white star — draped behind her.

Then the people started arriving.

Jose Maldonado Jimenez, 71, sat outside waiting for the service with about a dozen others; they milled about and shared their stories and traded hugs and kisses. Children chased after a skinny black mutt in the church courtyard, and men with sun-kissed faces wanted to know what President Trump had said about the Puerto Rican recovery that had people so upset down in the town at the base of the mountain.

“This has been out of this world. No one has come around here” with food and water, Maldonado Jimenez said. “Here in the country, we can eat from the earth and we can draw water from the mountain for a while. We can live without electricity, but we planned for seven days, not two weeks. But we will figure out a way.”

The parish bell began to toll, signaling to the homes on the mountainside and the valley below that mass would soon commence.

Father Rodriguez put on his robes in a back room next to Quile’s eldest son, who struggled to find the slot for his head in his altar boy cassock. The doors all were open.

The bell rang again, and 20 people took their seats. It was steamy, uncomfortable. Whispered conversations broke into chuckles when one man clicked the switch of a fan. It didn’t spin. No power here, and not expected for a long time. He smiled goofily.

“We’ve all been affected. There is much suffering. There is much anguish,” the priest said as he began his homily. “What do we do? We look to our faith, to the cross of Jesus and look around to see who needs help around us.”

This moment of suffering, he told his flock, can become a time of blessing.

About halfway through the homily, Ines Lopez Serrano, 37, arrived with her three children, striding quickly toward a pew toward the back edge of the congregation. She smiled painfully. As the service continued, Lopez's face would tense up and she'd wince. Her young son noticed, and each time he saw her on the verge of tears, he wrapped his arms around her neck and pecked her cheek.

During the storm, Lopez's husband made the last-minute decision to move the family to his mother-in-law's house further down the mountain. But after nearly two weeks, the children were anxious to go back home.

Lopez didn't want them to see it.

The mountainside had fallen on their green-and-yellow home of seven years. The mud forced its way through the front door like a burly bandit and took out the kitchen and the children's bedrooms. Lopez said she resisted their pleas to see the house — she was worried what seeing the devastation might do them — but to get to the church, they needed to pass it.

The children got a glimpse of what was lost, just enough to know that the house their parents had scraped and sacrificed to own could no longer be their home.

"There was another family whose house slid off the mountain completely, and they were inside at the time," Lopez said. "They were able to escape, but they have it more difficult,"

It's the typical response in these mountains. No matter how bad one has it, there is always someone worse off and in need of an "Ay bendito" — a common refrain of compassion here in Puerto Rico.

Father Rodriguez prepared for communion to close the Mass. After the last person ate of the bread and drank of the wine, he invited everyone to pray. The congregation knelt together and closed their eyes.

The countryside is rarely silent these days, with generators buzzing in the distance and roosters crowing. But the church was soundless, still and stiff.

Then Lopez's daughter, Nahir Ortiz, sniffled, whimpered and began to cry. Her deepening sobs triggered a flood of tears across the congregation.

The 14-year-old, wearing a Superman shirt, flew into the arms of those around her.

Within minutes, the crying stopped. In its place was laughter.

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## POLITICS

### [Politicians With Puerto Rican Roots Challenge Trump in Push for Aid \(NY Times\)](#)

By RICK ROJASOCT. 9, 2017

[New York Times](#)

José E. Serrano has been elected again and again to represent a tiny, tightly packed congressional district in the South Bronx. But since the storm that ravaged Puerto Rico, the island where he lived until he was 8, another constituency far from New York City has commanded more of his attention. It is one that has never voted for him, but that he has nonetheless adopted as his own.

"I've often said that I represent two districts: one in the Bronx and one that's Puerto Rico," said Mr. Serrano, a Democrat and the longest-serving Puerto Rican in Congress. "This time, the effort is bigger than ever."

Puerto Rican politicians holding office on the mainland United States, especially those in New York, have long felt compelled to look after the territory, given its limited federal representation and chronic financial distress. But the catastrophic aftermath of Hurricane Maria, which has thrust Puerto Rico to the edge of a humanitarian crisis, has ignited a dire sense of urgency.

The elected officials were driven at first by seeing the pain inflicted by the storm, with lives upended, homes destroyed and food, water and electricity difficult to come by. For some, though, that anguish has morphed into fury, as they have grown incensed by a federal response that they say is woefully lacking and by President Trump's handling of the situation, which has struck them as dismissive of Puerto Rico's plight.

“There is this view that, somehow, we don’t merit that level of concern or attention or respect from this government,” said Melissa Mark-Viverito, the speaker of the New York City Council, comparing the response in Puerto Rico with areas struck by recent hurricanes in Florida and Texas. “Somehow, we’re a burden and we’re mooching. That’s the kind of language this president is throwing around.”

Continue reading the main story

A largely left-leaning cast of Puerto Rican politicians in New York, members of the diaspora or descendants of it, has emerged as a force pushing for aid and attention. They have used the bully pulpits of their offices, booking cable news appearances and writing letters to federal agencies. Representative Nydia M. Velázquez held a news conference in which she warned Mr. Trump that unless he stepped up his efforts for storm victims, “this will become his Katrina.”

The politicians have also sought to wield their influence behind the scenes, lobbying congressional leaders for immediate relief aid as well as longer-term support. Mr. Serrano believes his position on the powerful House Appropriations Committee could help secure the money Puerto Rico needed, calling it “my first priority.”

“It doesn’t matter how many years you spend in New York. It doesn’t matter that you’re a member of Congress,” Mr. Serrano said. “If you were born in Puerto Rico, that island is still in your heart. It’s something that’s very much a part of you and doesn’t leave you.”

Puerto Rico has long depended on those ties as people left for the mainland, where, especially in and around New York City, the community has become deeply entrenched and gained political influence over the course of several generations. “The greatest hope for Puerto Rico is its diaspora,” said José Calderón, the president of the Hispanic Federation, a national advocacy group. “If we’re going to get Congress to do the right thing,” he said, referring to aid, “it is going to be the diaspora that does it.”

Officials and nonprofit groups in Puerto Rico say the immediate need remains for essentials like food and water. But some are already taking stock of the far more enormous investment a full recovery will surely require: rebuilding a health care system and energy grid that had been fraying before the hurricane and are now a shambles, and relief from a debt crisis that had set off its own wave of devastating consequences, including forcing officials to declare a form of bankruptcy this year and spurring an exodus.

As residents of a territory of the United States, Puerto Ricans are American citizens, but they have little clout in Washington: They cannot vote for president in the general election and their delegate in Congress is a nonvoting member. “Is that a disadvantage? Absolutely,” said Edwin Meléndez, the director of the Center for Puerto Rican Studies at Hunter College, who noted that the island could be better served by having its own voting members in Congress. Still, he added, “you have this other network of elected officials that mitigates that lack of representation.”

That network has not always served as a unified force. (Five of the 43 Latino members of Congress are Puerto Rican and all are in the House.) The financial crisis, for instance, was an issue that sowed division. But the storm’s toll has brought many of these politicians together in championing a relief effort. In New York, such efforts have been encouraged by the city’s Puerto Rican community, a significant bloc of support for Puerto Ricans running for elected office.

“It’s not a monolith in terms of thinking,” Mr. Calderón said. “But the hurricane has taken things to a different plane,” he added. “It’s heartening to see the community functioning and thinking as one and committed to what’s important here, which is to get Puerto Rico back on its feet and running and having a resurgence.”

Some have been more critical than others of the federal response. Jenniffer González-Colón, the territory’s nonvoting congressional delegate, has argued that the federal government had been swift in deploying assistance and that Mr. Trump was “supporting Puerto Rico all the way.”

“This is going to be a long road to recovery,” Ms. González-Colón, a Republican, told reporters while traveling with Mr. Trump to Puerto Rico. “But we are not going to be alone.”

During the president’s visit, his fourth trip to a disaster area in two months, he greeted residents and, at one stop, tossed rolls of paper towels into a crowd. He has defended his handling of the storm, noting the logistical challenges and the promised support. In a television interview, Mr. Trump also raised the prospect of erasing or

reducing Puerto Rico's \$74 billion in debt, saying that "we're going to have to wipe that out." (His administration has since walked that back.)

But by that point, Mr. Trump had already infuriated many Puerto Ricans who have found his statements since the storm to be insulting and feeding into a long-simmering suspicion that they are regarded as second-class citizens. In one post on Twitter, Mr. Trump said, "They want everything to be done for them when it should be a community effort." And during his visit, he compared Maria's death toll with that of Hurricane Katrina, which he called "a real catastrophe."

Ms. Mark-Viverito, a Democrat, denounced his statements as "deplorable and not acceptable," adding, "Our dignity is being stripped from us."

Hurricane Maria made landfall on Sept. 20, and since then, the demands on Puerto Rican politicians have been an endurance test. Ms. Velázquez, a Democrat from New York City, has had days that, as she described them, would have been punishing even without the flu and a fever topping out at 101.4 degrees. It has been a whirl of meetings, including with congressional leaders, and then traveling with Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo of New York to the island.

"My God, my first reaction was Puerto Rico was taken back 50 years," Ms. Velázquez said in an interview a week later, her voice still croaky from being sick. "It was just heart-wrenching. I just broke down right there. But I didn't want to cry because I didn't want the people of Puerto Rico to see me crying."

The public drive for aid has been matched by an effort that resembles case work, as their offices have become way stations between the island and the Puerto Rican community in New York. Ms. Velázquez said she had been inundated with calls: people in Puerto Rico asking for food and supplies and New Yorkers needing help tracking down relatives as lines of communication were cut off.

In some ways, the storm had reminded her of Hurricane Sandy in 2012, which caused considerable damage in her district, which includes the Lower East Side of Manhattan and parts of Brooklyn and Queens. This time, the scale of the devastation and the personal toll — Ms. Velázquez also had relatives she struggled to reach — were different and in some ways more difficult to grapple with, but it also motivated her.

"I've never faced any crisis like this," she said.

A version of this article appears in print on October 10, 2017, on Page A14 of the New York edition with the headline: Anguish Turns to Fury For Leaders With Ties To Ailing Puerto Rico. Order Reprints| Today's  
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## OPINION

### **Trump To Executive Branch: Don't Worry About Puerto Rico (Bloomberg)**

By Jonathan Bernstein

[Bloomberg View](#), October 9, 2017

Almost three weeks since Hurricane Maria struck Puerto Rico, the island is in terrible shape. Most people do not have electricity. Almost half do not have access to safe water. Dozens of Americans have perished. By any measure, this is an extraordinary tragedy for the nation. And yet, Trump instead has constantly signaled business-as-usual.

Is it clear that the federal government is making a serious commitment to the relief effort? Absolutely. Do we know all of what Trump is doing behind the scenes? No, although early reports were not promising.

But what the president says in public is important as well.

The executive branch bureaucracy is large and unwieldy, and will not automatically shift to do anything a president might want it to do — there are thousands of routine tasks to be completed, and all sorts of competing priorities to attend to. If presidents want the government to turn to a single purpose, they need to send clear, consistent signals that what they want to happen is now the highest immediate priority. That is simply not happening:

The weekend after Maria was when Trump kicked off his war on the NFL; ever since, he's demonstrated much more public interest in taking on protesting football players than in helping recovery in Puerto Rico.

Golf. I'm normally very hesitant to attack presidents for "vacations" or indulging in some golf. The office follows presidents wherever they go, and everyone needs exercise and even a little down time. But for Trump to keep up his vigorous schedule of golf outings over the last three weekends (and again today) is a statement that everything is normal – a statement that everyone in the bureaucracy can hear.

He's consistently downplayed the damage to Puerto Rico, saying among other things that it wasn't a "real catastrophe like Katrina."

He's also blamed Puerto Ricans: feuding with the mayor of San Juan, repeating false rumors about local truck drivers, and generally treating the people as responsible for their troubles.

In fact he's even mocked the local accent.

After personally donating \$1 million to Hurricane Harvey relief, Trump hasn't made any public donation for Puerto Rico.

He also hasn't used his Twitter account, which he considers one of his most powerful tools, to publicize support for other relief funds; nor has he thanked the five former presidents who are spearheading charity efforts.

He's allowed the Jones Act waiver to expire without plans to extend it, according to Reuters.

He has, however, repeatedly bragged about his own role and whined about how unappreciated he is – not exactly a message likely to stir others to action.

Meanwhile, Trump still has not nominated anyone for the vacant Secretary of Homeland Security position, some 10 weeks after John Kelly moved to White House chief of staff.

It all combines to send a strong message to the executive branch that there's nothing particularly extraordinary about the effort in Puerto Rico.

Of course, people at FEMA, in the military, and with the other agencies involved are for the most part serious professionals, and they will try their best whatever the president says. And it's impossible to connect any specific failure of this type by the president with any specific failure on the ground.

Overall, however, it's the president's job to push the bureaucracy in the direction of pressing priorities, and Trump – at least publicly – just isn't doing his job, and that's beyond how he's mostly abdicated his head of state responsibilities of comforting those who need comforting.

If we look at it less as a question of specific links to specific actions and more as a question of tendencies, we can say that the more he focuses the government on solving a problem, the better job it will do – and at least from what we know so far, he's doing a terrible job of it. Everyone can hope that relief efforts will mostly succeed despite presidential failure, but that's a pretty tenuous way to run a government

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## SPANISH

### FROM FEMA NATIONAL CLIPS OCT 6-9, 2017

#### **FEMA Ha Desembolsado \$27.4 Millones A Los Damnificados**

[El Nuevo Día \(PRI\)](#), October 6, 2017

El director para Puerto Rico y el Caribe de la Agencia federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (Fema, por sus siglas en inglés), Alejandro de La Campa, dijo hoy que su agencia le da "un adelanto inicial" -que puede ser de \$500- a las personas afectadas por el huracán María que solicitan ayuda y son elegibles.

"Eso es parte del proceso nuestro de asistencia donde las personas solicitan y a base de lo catastrófico que ha sido este evento, estamos proveyendo ayuda. Pero tienen que ser personas que hayan sufrido daños en sus hogares", precisó el funcionario federal.

“Tenemos distintas cantidades que se van a estar dando a las familias dependiendo de los daños. Incluso, de las primeras ayudas que nosotros damos es para que puedan alquilar un lugar”, abundó.

Otra de las ayudas que proveen es la repartición de toldos livianos. De esos, Fema ha entregado más de 10,000. Estos toldos no son los que instala el Cuerpo de Ingenieros del Ejército de los Estados Unidos en residencias que hayan perdido sus techos. Ese proceso de instalación, comenzó ayer, según se informó.

Los \$500 que provee Fema solo es para familias elegibles que soliciten ayuda y que hayan tenido daños a consecuencia del huracán, reiteró De La Campa. Esa ayuda inicial es provista por Fema antes de que un inspector acuda a la residencia a revisar los daños.

Al momento, Fema ha recibido 203,111 solicitudes y ha desembolsado \$27.4 millones como parte del programa de asistencia pública (a los municipios).

## **Precisa FEMA La Forma De Inscribirse Para Solicitar Asistencia Por Desastre**

[El Vocero de Puerto Rico](#), October 7, 2017

La Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA) sugirió hoy los procedimientos que deben seguir los ciudadanos que han sufrido daños o pérdidas materiales causados directamente por el huracán María.

La entidad federal sugirió que se puede solicitar asistencia por desastre, incluso si tiene un seguro, pues es posible que haya ayuda disponible para los daños no asegurados o con seguro insuficiente y si las reclamaciones no se liquidan rápidamente.

Hasta la fecha, indicó FEMA, se han inscrito más de 280,000 sobrevivientes del desastre para solicitar asistencia.

La asistencia federal para dueños de viviendas e inquilinos puede incluir subvenciones para alquiler, vivienda temporal, reparaciones a la vivienda en residencias primarias, así como otras necesidades relacionadas con el desastre.

La ayuda que FEMA proporciona es para las necesidades básicas de los sobrevivientes y es el primer paso para la recuperación relacionada con el huracán María, que golpeó a Puerto Rico el pasado 20 de septiembre.

La Agencia Federal para el Desarrollo de la Pequeña Empresa (SBA, siglas en inglés) también ofrece préstamos con intereses bajos por las pérdidas para bienes personales, propiedades inmuebles y negocios.

Para comenzar el proceso de la solicitud se sugiere tener a su disposición:

- \* Su dirección con código postal
- \* Instrucciones de cómo llegar a su propiedad
- \* Condición de su casa dañada
- \* Información sobre seguros, si la tiene disponible
- \* Número del Seguro Social
- \* Número de teléfono al que se le pueda contactar
- \* Dirección donde puede recibir correo
- \* Depósito Directo:

Los fondos de asistencia en desastres se pueden enviar directamente a su cuenta bancaria, por lo que es importante que se proporcione el tipo de cuenta bancaria, número de cuenta y número de ruta bancaria

Manténgase en contacto con FEMA:

- \* Después de inscribirse, se le dará un número de inscripción de FEMA
- \* Asegúrese de escribir su número y guardarlo
- \* Necesitará el número siempre que se ponga en contacto con FEMA

Una vez completado el proceso de inscripción, recibirá una llamada de FEMA para dar seguimiento. Un inspector programará una cita para visitar su hogar. Los inspectores contratados por FEMA no requerirán información de la cuenta bancaria.

La misión de FEMA es apoyar a los ciudadanos y a las agencias de primera respuesta para garantizar que trabajen juntos para desarrollar, mantener y mejorar la capacidad de prepararse.

La asistencia de recuperación por desastre está disponible sin distinción de raza, color, religión, nacionalidad, sexo, edad, discapacidad, conocimiento de inglés o situación económica.



## **Tras Retirar Los Datos De Su Web, FEMA Vuelve A Dar Estadísticas Sobre El Acceso A Agua Potable Y Electricidad En Puerto Rico**

By Alejandra Vargas Morera

[Univision](#), October 6, 2017

Estos dos datos fundamentales desaparecieron de la página que documenta la respuesta de la agencia federal del manejo de emergencias en la isla. Sin explicación y tras el reporte que en principio publicó The Washington Post, este viernes volvieron a colocar esa información.

La falta de agua potable y electricidad en Puerto Rico tras el paso devastador del huracán María han puesto a la isla en una situación de crisis humanitaria. A las críticas de las autoridades locales sobre la lentitud en la ayuda, marcada la polémica entre la alcaldesa de San Juan y el presidente Donald Trump, podría sumarse otra más: la falta de transparencia.

El diario The Washington Post fue el primero en reportar que los datos de acceso a agua potable y electricidad fueron eliminados de la página web de la Agencia de Gestión para Emergencias (FEMA) que reúne los avances de la respuesta federal a la emergencia. Hasta el miércoles la mitad de los 3.6 millones de habitantes de Puerto Rico no tenía agua potable y tan sólo un 5% había recuperado la electricidad, más de dos semanas después del paso del huracán que dañó por completo la red eléctrica. Para el jueves, los datos ya no estaban allí. Luego del reporte, sin embargo, este viernes por la tarde el portal de la agencia volvió a tener los datos sobre agua y electricidad.

Un portavoz de FEMA, William Booher, indicó al periódico que esa información está recogida en otra página web oficial de la oficina del gobernador de Puerto Rico, Ricardo Rosselló, pero no explicó por qué habían dejado de incluirse en el reporte general de la ayuda federal.

“Nuestra misión es apoyar al gobernador y sus prioridades de respuesta a través de la estructura de mando unificada para ayudar a los puertorriqueños a recuperarse y volver a la rutina”, indicó al diario Booher, que defendió que en cualquier caso los datos están disponibles y abiertos al público en la otra web.

Los datos que sí se mantienen allí son los de los trabajos que están llevando a cabo el gobierno.

Según FEMA, actualmente hay 14,000 empleados federales en Puerto Rico y las Islas Vírgenes, todos los aeropuertos y oficinas de correo federales están abiertos, han limpiado más de 30 millas de carretera. Además, el 65% de las tiendas de comestibles han reabierto y casi todos los hospitales y centros de diálisis, agregan.

El presidente Trump, que visitó la isla el martes, ha asegurado que el trabajo federal ha sido “increíble” y “exitoso”, mientras la alcaldesa de San Juan, Carmen Yulín Cruz, se ha convertido en el símbolo del enfado de Puerto Rico.

Ambos se enzarzaron en una disputa dialéctica después de que Cruz suplicara ayuda ante los problemas para distribuir la ayuda sobre el terreno y, después de diez días sin energía eléctrica, denunciara: “Estamos muriendo y nos están matando con su ineficiencia y burocracia”.

“Quieren que les resuelvan todo, cuando debería ser un esfuerzo de la comunidad. Los trabajadores federales presentes en la isla están haciendo un excelente trabajo”, contestó Trump, quien durante su visita dijo que Puerto Rico debería estar orgulloso de que solo murieran 16 personas, a diferencia de la “catástrofe real” de Katrina, que dejó un saldo de 1,800 muertos. Poco después de las palabras del mandatario, el gobernador Roselló anunciaba que el balance de muertos aumentaba a 34.

## **Gobierno De Puerto Rico Requisó 15 Contenedores De Alimentos Para Entregarlos A Los Damnificados Del Huracán María**

[Univision](#), October 6, 2017

Gobierno de Puerto Rico requisó 15 contenedores de alimentos para entregarlos a los damnificados del huracán María

Las autoridades examinan los manifiestos de las empresas marítimas que transportaron los contenedores y pagarán a sus dueños el valor declarado de las mismas.

El gobierno de Puerto Rico requisó 15 contenedores de alimentos no reclamados por sus dueños ubicados en los puertos de la isla y ya distribuyó su contenido entre las personas que más lo necesitan, dijo el secretario de asuntos públicos, Ramón Rosario Cortés.

El funcionario no reveló a cuánto asciende el costo de las provisiones requisadas pero aseguró que las autoridades examinan los manifiestos de las empresas marítimas Tote y Crowley, que transportaron los contenedores, y pagarán a sus dueños el valor declarado de las mismas.

“Se está trabajando con los manifiestos (...) estamos trabajando manualmente, los sistemas de (Departamento de Hacienda) no están registrados como usualmente se tienen, por el problema de comunicación. Pero lo que se le pidió a los navieros como Tote, que manejaban estos contenedores, sus respectivos manifiestos para ver el precio que se le puso en el manifiesto a ese artículo y poder reembolsarle a esos comerciantes la carga que trajeron y estaban inhabilitados de recoger”, detalló el funcionario.

Se desconoce a qué empresas se les requisó la mercancía.

Hace una semana el gobernador Ricardo Rosselló advirtió a los importadores que debían recoger su mercancía del puerto de San Juan y distribuirla, o el gobierno se incautaría de la misma y la distribuiría como parte de sus esfuerzos por aliviar el hambre en la isla tras el paso del huracán, que mantiene sin electricidad y comunicaciones a la mayor parte de la población, y numerosas comunidades aisladas a dos semanas del evento atmosférico.

Muchas de estas empresas que no reclamaban su mercancía estaban inoperantes y no tenían la capacidad para encargar a los transportistas a recogerla, almacenarla y distribuirla en las tiendas, igualmente inoperantes por la falta de energía eléctrica.

El gobernador tomó su decisión también para abrir espacio en los muelles para los productos de primera necesidad que están en camino.

## **Sin Luz Y Sin Agua: Así Es La Vida Cotidiana De Los Puertorriqueños Dos Semanas Después Del Huracán María**

By Patricia Clarembaux

[Univision](#), October 6, 2017

PUERTO RICO.- Las rutinas de los puertorriqueños están trastocadas desde que el huracán María devastó todo cuanto pudo en esta isla hace dos semanas. La falta de agua y luz –o de al menos de uno de ellos– les ha reducido las comidas, los ha llevado a bañarse en casas de familiares e incluso mantiene negocios cerrados. Y en algunos casos no tenerlos es el menor de los problemas: hay viviendas que quedaron destruidas.

Poco a poco Puerto Rico intenta volver a su ritmo. Ya muchos han regresado al trabajo, pero igual deben lidiar con lo esencial, buscan incansablemente agua, comida –la que haya– y diésel, para mantener las plantas encendidas y al menos librarse de los 90 grados de temperatura al prender el aire acondicionado.

Las kilométricas filas de las gasolineras han bajado, es cierto. Pero en las calles se mantienen las líneas de personas esperando a la entrada de manantiales naturales a la orilla de cualquier carretera para llenar una, dos, o cuantas botellas de agua puedan para hidratarse y bañarse.

Según la Autoridad Eléctrica de Luz, apenas 9% de la isla tiene electricidad en su casa. Y a 54,6% le llegó el agua, reportó Acueducto. Para el miércoles, las estadísticas de la agencia federal para el manejo de desastres (FEMA) mostraban que solo el 5% de los residentes tenía luz y la mitad de la población había recuperado el acceso a agua potable. Los datos habían sido retirados el jueves de la página web, pero este viernes luego de que medios informaran que las estadísticas ya no estaban, el portal de la agencia volvió a incluir la información.

Hicimos un recorrido por tres municipios del centro-norte de Puerto Rico y estas son las historias de sus habitantes:

Recuperando lo que quedó tras la inundación

Toda la planta baja de la casa de dos pisos de Margarita García, en Sabana Seca, municipio Toa Baja, quedó sumergida bajo el agua con el huracán María. La nevera y la cocina todavía llevan pintado el borde marrón de

tierra que le dejó la inundación. Ella no sabe qué hará: “Hasta que no llegue la luz no puedo saber si prenden o si también tengo que botarlas”.

En la acera frente a su casa está todo lo que descartaron. Hay un sofá, dos sillones, colchones, un gavetero, un equipo de sonido, mucha madera arrumada y tan destruida que no tiene forma de nada. En su casa prácticamente no quedó nada. Y así está toda la cuadra en este barrio humilde, llena de los enseres que desecharon sus vecinos.

Ya lograron limpiar el piso de cerámica de la sala, en la planta baja, porque llegó el agua hace cinco días. Brilla como si no hubiese pasado nada y huele a Mistolín. Allí duermen en colchones inflables, con calor y al acecho de los mosquitos, ella, sus tres nietos, su hija y su yerno.

Pero arriba el desastre que dejó María está intacto. Las hojas secas y las ramas hacen una alfombra en el suelo. El techo de zinc de su cuarto se cayó parcialmente, huele a humedad. “No sé qué decirte, no sé si tendré que botarlo todo. Tengo que terminar primero abajo”, explica resignada. “Básicamente lo hemos perdido todo”.

La familia completa no desperdicia ni un momento del día para limpiar porque sin luz en la noche, cuentan que la zona se convierte en una “boca de lobo”. Sin nevera no tienen dónde guardar la comida que les donan, porque tampoco tienen a dónde comprarla: “Yo no he comido nada hoy (...) pero si no llega ninguna ayuda hay que basarse en lo que a uno le queda”.

Un enfermo en cama que espera paciente

Ramón Martínez, de 80 años, está postrado en una cama desde hace un año. Sufre de esclerosis y solo puede mover su cabeza. Su casa quedó sin agua ni luz tras el golpe del huracán María, pero al menos el miércoles habían podido mantener encendida la planta para prender el aire acondicionado, para recargar la máquina que le permite respirar cómodamente al dormir, la silla para movilizarlo y para poder reclinar más la cama clínica.

Pero este jueves se les acabó el diesel y el distribuidor no había llegado cuando casi eran las siete de la noche. Lo esperan desde el domingo. “Lo más grave es que puedan salirle úlceras”, cuenta su hija Margie Martínez al mostrar que tanto las ventanas como la puerta principal están abiertas de par en par. “Ahora mismo tiene un hongo en el área genital y el no tener agua y aire acondicionado se lo puede empeorar”.

Desde la cama, el padre replica en una voz apenas audible: “No tengo televisor, no tengo nada, uno lo pasa incómodo. Pero hay que adaptarse y aceptar lo que hay”.

La familia tiene agua suficiente para bañarlo –pero a la velocidad de cada envase de mantequilla–, y para darle de tomar. Antes del huracán compraron botellones de agua potable y, además, llenaron varios recipientes plásticos de a galón hasta el tope. Para bajar los baños usan el agua de la piscina, que pasó de ser cristalina a verde tras la devastación que dejó María.

A pesar de todo, aseguran, continuarán bregando.

La salvación: un manantial de la familia

Eliana Rodríguez es una mujer ágil a pesar de sus 82 años. No tiene agua ni luz desde que el huracán Irma pasó por la isla, hace un mes. Aún así resuelve. Cada mañana a las 6:00 am se levanta y camina los 15 minutos que hay desde su casa en Santa Juanita, en el municipio Bayamón, hasta el manantial de la familia y se trae sus dos botellones de agua a cuestas. Esa es la que se bebe, ninguna otra. También es con la que prepara sus comidas y le hace café al vecino de al lado, en agradecimiento porque le da luz con una planta generadora.

“Ese manantial está allí desde que yo nací”, dice al reconocer su privilegio. Cuenta que otros habitantes de la zona han llegado hasta la reja que resguarda el riachuelo suplicando que les permitan tomar un poco de agua y ellos los dejan.

Para bañarse o para fregar los platos utiliza un agua que su yerno le trae de otro manantial. También aprovecha cuando comienza la lluvia y pone a llenar un tanque plástico que tiene en la parte trasera de su casa.

“Me baño todos los días. Las mujeres tenemos que bañarnos todos los días”, asegura y se ríe. Dice que se mete dentro del tobo para no desperdiciar ni una gota de agua y luego, con lo que resta, lava los baños.

La comida no le preocupa. Esta acostumbrada a su pan por la mañana y a su arroz con leche por la tarde. Y lavar su ropa tampoco le quita el sueño, pues dice que tiene mucha y que la sucia la va acumulando. Pero todo lo demás la tiene en un solo refunfuño. “Esto es una novela de horror”.

Parados en la casa, parados en el trabajo

Los Figueroa están todos en la tintorería de la familia, la Joe's Cleaners, en el municipio Bayamón. El negocio está parado porque no tienen agua ni luz y sin eso tampoco hay clientes. Entre los padres y los hijos, los únicos que tienen agua son los primeros. Así que esa casa se ha convertido casi en un centro de operaciones. De allí sale el agua con la que intentan llenar los tanques de 500 galones de la tintorería para reabrir el lugar al menos por un día; con la que se bañan casi todos; con la que cocinan.

“Esto es agobiante”, dice Ángel Figueroa, de 51 años, al mostrar en la penumbra las pilas de ropa para lavar y planchar que se quedaron arrumadas desde antes de que María golpeará la isla caribeña y que, ahora, acomodan para tenerlas listas en caso de que llegue alguno de los servicios. “Sufrimos nosotros, pero también los empleados que todos los días nos preguntan si hay trabajo, si llegó la luz. Nuestra mayor pérdida es el negocio”.

Para comer los más afectados son los padres, Aída y José, de 72 y 76 años. No tienen luz en su residencia, así que desde inicios de septiembre han tenido que desayunar rebanadas de pan solas –porque no hay nevera para refrigerar los embutidos–; almorzar cualquier cosa en la calle, hamburguesas, por ejemplo; cenar lo que se pueda y beber agua a temperatura ambiente. “Estamos pasando trabajo”, dice él. “No está fácil”, agrega y rompe en llanto.

José dice que para lavar su ropa volvieron a tiempos remotos: a mano. Pero solo con cosas pequeñas, ni los pantalones ni las camisas. “Estamos sobreviviendo”, agrega ella, aunque reconoce que hay gente que puede estar peor que ellos.

Una casa reducida a un cuarto

Carmen Ríos, de 64 años, quedó confinada prácticamente a su cuarto y a un minúsculo patio lateral. El huracán María voló casi todo el techo de la casa de madera en Maguayo, municipio Dorado. Se llevó el del baño, el de la cocina –incluso con los gabinetes–, el del cuarto de su nieto, el del pasillo central. Lo único que quedó sujeto a las vigas de madera del techo, fueron dos lámparas. A pesar del destrozo ella asegura que se queda en su casa. Cuando cae la noche cierra la puerta plástica corrediza de su cuarto y se encomienda a dios. Vive sola.

“Agarro una lamparita de batería que tengo y un faro como de gas. Con eso me alumbró en el cuarto y para bañarme. Me baño tardecito porque sí tengo agua”, cuenta. “Luego me acuesto, pero como a las 3:00 am estoy sentada aquí afuera, desvelada”.

La comida la está comprando al día. Y así mismo la prepara en una pequeña cocina que improvisó en un pasillo lateral de la casa. Convirtió la lavadora y un freezer en topes y sobre una mesa montó una pequeña estufa a gas. Este jueves comieron un bistec encebollado y arroz con habichuelas.

Carmen Ríos asegura que pasa el día llorando al ver el desastre en que quedó convertida su casa, que además acababa de remodelar. No sabe si podrá reconstruirla. Dice que todo depende de la ayuda que pueda recibir de la Agencia de Gestión de Desastres (FEMA). De lo que sí está segura es que allí se quedará, aunque sus hijos intenten convencerla de que se mude con ellos. “¿Tú crees que con 64 años me voy a estar yendo? No. Mejor me quedo aquí y que sea lo que dios quiera”.

## **Estados Unidos Militariza Esfuerzo De Asistencia En Puerto Rico Tras Problemas De Distribución**

By Tim Johnson

[McClatchy](#), October 9, 2017

Mientras soldados norteamericanos entregaban el domingo cajas de alimentos y agua en esta localidad costera, un funcionario federal dijo que está satisfecho con lo que se ha logrado hasta ahora.

“Parecen estar contentos en este momento. Creo que va muy bien”, dijo Patrick Hernández, administrador adjunto de operaciones de la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA).

A poca distancia, mirando hacia la operación de distribución a través de una cerca, Serafín Román ofreció una versión radicalmente diferente de la situación: “Es algo terrible. La gente está desesperada. No tienen agua. Algunos están pasando hambre”.

Las dos opiniones radicalmente opuestas no hacen sino señalar el abismo que hay entre el punto de vista oficial sobre los esfuerzos de recuperación tras el devastador paso del huracán María y lo que piensa el hombre

de a pie. En algunas partes de Puerto Rico, al entrar en la tercera semana de los esfuerzos de recuperación, algunos puertorriqueños dicen sentirse olvidados y vulnerables. A menudo, los vecinos y los funcionarios locales cuentan versiones drásticamente diferentes sobre la frecuencia de distribución de los alimentos.

Como respuesta ante la grave crisis, los militares estadounidenses explicaron el domingo la forma en la que cambiará la distribución de alimentos, agua y gasolina en muchas de las 78 municipalidades de la isla: van a militarizar las labores de asistencia de una manera significativa después que algunos alcaldes no pudieron con el esfuerzo.

Antes de este fin de semana, se entregaban suministros en 10 áreas regionales de la isla, y entonces los alcaldes eran responsables de organizar la recogida y la distribución.

Pero el general José J. Reyes, jefe adjunto de la Guardia Nacional de Puerto Rico, dijo en una entrevista que se puso en marcha una nueva estrategia para situar entre 10 y 20 soldados en cada municipalidad, dándoles vehículos y apoyo logístico, con la tarea de entregar los suministros en cada barrio.

“Necesitamos entrar directamente a cada barrio para asegurar que todos reciben suministros”, dijo Reyes. “Tendrán vehículos, comunicaciones por radio y apoyo logístico... Van a vivir ahí. Van a operar 24/7”.

En las 10 ciudades más grandes de Puerto Rico, cada una con una población mayor de 150,000 habitantes, los ayuntamientos seguirán administrando la distribución, dijo Reyes, pero no en localidades más pequeñas.

El jefe de los servicios de asistencia, el teniente general del Ejército Jeffrey S. Buchanan, reconoció que la distribución de ayuda a nivel municipal no siempre se ha hecho de manera efectiva.

“Hemos trabajado duro para identificar cuellos de botella”, dijo Buchanan en un aeropuerto de San Juan antes de subir a un helicóptero con rumbo a Aguadilla, unas 80 millas al oeste de la capital.

“No debemos pretender que va a ser un proceso perfecto”, dijo, señalando que los alcaldes tienen retos a la hora de distribuir la ayuda, como carreteras dañadas, falta de vehículos, malas comunicaciones y áreas grandes con poca población.

El descontento era evidente el domingo en un centro de distribución de agua y alimentos en Aguadilla. Sin embargo, esa frustración no se ve en todas partes. Algunas municipalidades están organizando las labores de asistencia y recuperación mejor que otras. Entre las zonas más azotadas por la catastrófica tormenta del 20 de septiembre, algunas están tan alejadas que es necesario entregar la ayuda en helicóptero porque las carreteras están intransitables.

“Hay personas que viven en áreas montañosas en la región central y allí es más difícil llegar, pero estamos tratando de llegar a todos”, dijo Hernández. Los equipos de militares “están haciendo una labor fenomenal limpiando y despejando las vías de acceso”.

Hernández le restó importancia a la ira expresada por algunos vecinos, afirmando que los sobrevivientes de un desastre de esta magnitud quieren que la vida regrese a la normalidad.

“Todos los sobrevivientes de una catástrofe semejante se sienten así”, dijo.

Sheila Lenox, de 29 años, dijo que la caja de comida que recibió el domingo es la primera comida importante que ha visto desde el huracán.

“Esta es la primera vez que nos dan una caja llena de comida”, dijo Lenox, quien está desempleada. “Hemos estado comiendo lo que nos daban los vecinos”.

Cuando se le preguntó cómo habían sobrevivido, Jetson Samot, pareja de Lenox, respondió: “Con salchichas y galletas”. “No podemos comprar nada. Los supermercados han subido los precios de todo. Es muy difícil encontrar algo de comer. Tenemos un lugar donde vivir, pero nada para alimentarnos”, dijo Lenox.

Otra vecina, Carmen Santiago, retirada de 67 años, dijo que deseaba que hubiera más disciplina y lógica en la distribución para evitar que algunos vecinos reciban mucho y otros nada.

Cuando se le dijo que algunos vecinos se quejaron de que eran los primeros alimentos y agua que recibían, el alcalde Carlos Méndez puso en duda esa afirmación.

“Ya habían recibido alimentos antes. He venido aquí tres o cuatro veces y puedo atestiguarlo”, dijo Méndez.

Méndez dijo que las labores de asistencia “empezaron con lentitud pero ahora van bien”.

“Todo el mundo tiene sed, todo el mundo tiene hambre porque no reciben comida todos los días. Pero por lo menos reciben cada cuatro o cinco días”.

## **Aseguran Que Lluvias En Puerto Rico Dificultan Entrega De Ayuda Tras “María”**

[El Universal \(MEX\)](#), October 9, 2017

Las fuertes lluvias que se registran en Puerto Rico dificultan la entrega de suministros a los damnificados por el huracán María, que devastó las infraestructuras de electricidad y telecomunicaciones de la isla caribeña.

La Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (Fema) informó hoy a través de un comunicado de que debido a las lluvias torrenciales y la saturación del terreno puede que las aeronaves que llevan la ayuda a la población no puedan aterrizar, por lo que se advierte de que la carga podría lanzarse desde el aire.

El comunicado subraya que, una vez que el tiempo mejore, las aeronaves volverán a depositar los suministros, principalmente agua y comida, en tierra, tal y como se ha hecho durante los últimos días.

El Servicio Nacional de Meteorología en San Juan emitió una advertencia de inundaciones para más de 20 municipios ante las fuertes lluvias y tormentas que se esperan durante las próximas horas, en especial para áreas del interior, el este y la capital, San Juan.

La agencia federal ha emitido además una vigilancia de inundaciones repentinas para todo Puerto Rico hasta la tarde del miércoles por la presencia en la región de una onda tropical que se unirá a una vaguada ya estacionada al norte de la isla caribeña.

La previsión de fuertes lluvias durante los dos próximos días sigue a las inundaciones registradas el domingo, que afectaron con especial virulencia al área metropolitana de San Juan.

Durante el domingo en algunas partes de la capital se registraron hasta cuatro pulgadas de lluvia, lo que provocó la inundación de calles, en especial en el distrito sanjuanero de Santurce.

Corrimientos de tierras y cortes de carreteras se registraron en los municipios de San Juan, Carolina y Vega Baja, en la costa norte.

El riesgo para hoy es grande, ya que las lluvias se registrarán sobre los suelos ya saturados y en áreas donde permanecen gran cantidad de escombros acumulados tras el pase del huracán María por la isla hace casi tres semanas.

El gobernador de Puerto Rico, Ricardo Rosselló, denunció hoy que la alta acumulación de escombros en las calles de la capital facilitó las inundaciones en San Juan, que obligaron a la intervención de los Bomberos y otras agencias federales que ayudan en la labor de reconstrucción tras el paso del huracán María.

Rosselló sostuvo que a diferencia de lo que pasa en San Juan, en otros municipios de la isla sí se han retirado los escombros que obstruyen el paso del agua por los desagües.

## **Lo Que Discutirá Jenniffer González Con El Vicepresidente Mike Pence**

[El Nuevo Día \(PRI\)](#), October 6, 2017

El Second Air Force con el vicepresidente de Estados Unidos, Mike Pence, aterrizó esta tarde en Puerto Rico para constatar de primera mano la crítica situación de isla tras el catastrófico paso del huracán María por la isla.

Pence llegó al país acompañado de la comisionada residente en Washington, Jenniffer González, y su arribo se da a tres días de la visita del presidente de Estados Unidos, Donald Trump, junto a parte de su gabinete. Se da también luego de la visita que hicieron a Florida, donde constataron la ola migratoria de boricuas que se está dando a pasos agigantados hacia el estado y en la que en tan solo dos semanas ya se han contabilizado seis mil puertorriqueños que se han ido y 400 niños matriculados en las escuelas, 300 en Orlando y 100 en Kissimmee.

La comisionada residente dijo que se han establecido centros de ayuda de Fema y la Cruz Roja en varios de los aeropuertos de Florida y que en su visita ayer a Orlando vio la llegada de residentes de Trujillo Alto, Carolina, Cabo Rojo, Juncos, Arecibo, Ponce y Corozal.

“Es bien fuerte”, dijo González a El Nuevo Día, quien narró que inmediatamente llegaron ayer a Florida, dos familias de puertorriqueños, una de Guayama y otra de Corozal, los recibieron y les narraron cómo habían perdido sus casas y lo que habían levantado.

Hoy el trayecto de Pence comenzó en Islas Vírgenes y ya aterrizó en Puerto Rico, donde como Trump, le darán un resumen de la situación en Puerto Rico luego del paso de María, el pasado 20 de septiembre, y la devastación que dejó a su paso el ciclón en los 78 municipios de la isla.

La comisionada residente tiene en su agenda del día discutir con Pence varios asuntos relevantes, entre ellos la tardanza en la instalación de los toldos azules en las miles de casas que perdieron sus techos a lo largo y ancho del país.

“Mi agenda hoy con el vicepresidente va a incluir el que mucha de la gente nos dicen que todavía sus casas no tienen el toldo azul, que está lloviendo y que aún están a la intemperie. Eso es una prioridad para mí”, recaló González tras añadir que obviamente tocará los temas de los sistemas de energía eléctrica y agua.

Según González, hay dos tipos de toldos. Está el más débil, que lo entrega Fema y que no requiere de mayores protocolos y burocracia. Los datos que le han dado a la comisionada residente es que se han repartido ya 11,000 a los alcaldes, que son los encargados de repartirlos a la gente, así como en Vivienda Pública. El otro tipo de toldo es el azul, que es más fuerte y es instalado por el Cuerpo de Ingenieros.

“Yo entiendo que a la gente no les está llegando”, admitió González.

¿Por qué?

-Esa será mi agenda hoy con el vicepresidente, pedirle que nos ayude en eso. Mi preocupación es que como la gente no tiene Internet, no hay teléfonos, no hay luz, la aplicación de ese toldo es electrónica. Lo que están haciendo los municipios es que están llevando las solicitudes en papel y con esa solicitud de papel, el Cuerpo de Ingenieros las tramita. Sin embargo, no tengo los números de cuántos toldos han instalado, porque es el Cuerpo de Ingenieros al que le toca eso.

-¿Cree que lo que han entregado no va a la par con la necesidad que hay?

-Entiendo que eso no va a la par con la necesidad que hay en la calle y como no va a la par, yo le voy a pedir al vicepresidente Pence hoy que asigne más personal para la instalación de estos toldos, que se flexibilice la manera en que se tramita la obtención de este toldo, que es vital para que a la gente no se le moje lo poco que le queda en la casa. También la cantidad de funciones que está haciendo el Cuerpo de Ingenieros, porque ellos están montando puentes, arreglando carreteras, limpiando escombros, instalando toldos azules y arreglando el sistema eléctrico. Aunque son tropas distintas, la realidad es que esa es una de las áreas (repartición de toldos azules) que yo quiero que se agilice, para lo que voy a buscar la indulgencia del vicepresidente.

¿Hay otras áreas que tocará en sus conversaciones hoy con Pence?

-Hay otras áreas también que creo que son importantes. Ellos están instalando los generadores. Que los generadores que faltan en los hospitales, en las égidas y las bombas de agua, que son acueductos, esas deben ser una prioridad y va a ser una de las cosas que voy a pedir: dónde están y qué nos falta. Si la gente tiene agua, por lo menos puede tener su necesidad básica. Pero sin agua es muy difícil mantener, sobrepasar la situación.

¿Es otro trabajo del Cuerpo de Ingenieros?

-Esos generadores los trajo y los tiene que instalar el Cuerpo de Ingenieros, así que son ellos los que nos tienen que dar esa actualización. Yo sé que el jefe del Cuerpo de Ingenieros está en Puerto Rico. Para eso le pediré al vicepresidente su ayuda, sobre cómo podemos hacer que esto sea más rápido.

¿Hablará sobre los paquetes de fondos que se necesitan?

-Sobre los fondos la Casa Blanca pidió de \$12.77 billones y de \$16 billones de fondo de inundaciones, que es importante porque en la isla hubo muchas inundaciones. Nosotros tenemos que someter el estimado de daños para que podamos acceder a esos fondos rápido. Ese paquete de ayudas debe estar bajando ya la semana que viene.

¿Habrán más?

-Ya el vicepresidente dijo que este no va a ser el único paquete de fondos federales, que vienen otros.

El recorrido en la Isla incluye Country Club y la Iglesia de Santa Bernardita, que es un ministerio amplio de ayuda para suplir las necesidades de los que no tienen y que está bien organizado. De hecho, es de las pocas iglesias que abre las 24 horas y la que González visita con frecuencia, especialmente en horas de la noche.

La comisionada residente en Washington tiene la intención de movilizar a la isla la mayor cantidad de congresistas a Puerto Rico para entiendan el nivel de devastación y de necesidad que hay. De hecho, mañana tiene en agenda otro viaje con un grupo de legisladores federales.

## **Ponceños No Quieren Quedar En El Olvido**

[El Nuevo Día \(PRI\)](#), October 9, 2017

Ponce – “Que se acuerden de nosotros, de la zona rural, que también existimos”.

Con estas palabras, Gerardo Albizu Torres, de 37 años, resumió el sentir de muchos residentes de la zona montañosa de este municipio que, según contaron, no han recibido “ningún tipo de ayuda” a casi tres semanas del paso del huracán María.

Señalaron, incluso, que la alcaldesa María “Mayita” Meléndez es “la gran ausente” en la ruralía ponceña, donde tampoco se observan los toldos azules de la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA, en inglés). Estos toldos son la única opción que ciudadanos como Albizu Torres tienen para proteger “lo poco que nos queda”.

Albizu Torres perdió la casa que compró en 2001 en el barrio Real Anón. La estructura de madera y zinc se quedó sin techo y todo lo que había en su interior se dañó por la lluvia, que ha seguido cayendo. Ahora, en el espacio de la sala y cocina, el agua empozada es un criadero de mosquitos.

“Sería bueno que vengan las ayudas, pero a los campos no llegan. Está lloviendo todas las tardes y, como todavía no tenemos los toldos de FEMA, todo se sigue mojando”, agregó.

Como el resto de los puertorriqueños, Albizu Torres pasa largas horas en filas para adquirir agua embotellada, alimentos, hielo y gasolina, entre otros bienes de primera necesidad. Mientras la ayuda para restaurar su hogar llega, pernocta en la casa de su padre, de cemento, también en el barrio Real Anón.

“No ha venido nadie para acá, nadie”, dijo, y justo después su hija Geraldine, de 6 años, soltó: “una crisis”.

“No se ha visto por aquí”

“¿Dónde está ‘Mayita’? ‘Mayita’ no se ha visto por aquí para nada”, comentó, por su parte, Michael Guzmán Marrero, de 45 años, mientras se bañaba en el río Inabón, en la colindancia de los barrios Real Anón y Coto Laurel.

Según contó, “en todo Ponce” hay necesidad, pero lo más que urge es agua embotellada. Dijo que recientemente fue hasta Cayey buscando agua y solo pudo comprar un galón, “porque los estaban racionando”.

Historias similares narraron los vecinos del barrio San Patricio, que viajan a Utuado, Jayuya o Adjuntas para buscar suministros. Estos tres pueblos les quedan más cerca que el casco ponceño.

Luis Vélez Bianchi, de 65 años y quien perdió parte del techo de la segunda planta de su casa, declaró que “nadie del gobierno (estatal) ha pasado por aquí y la alcaldesa se ha olvidado del barrio”.

Vélez Bianchi tiene servicio de agua potable, pero no de electricidad. Sobre este último, dijo –entre risas– que espera recobrarlo antes de las navidades del año 2019. En 1998, tras el paso del huracán Georges, estuvo tres meses sin luz, “pero este huracán (María) no tiene comparación”.

“Ustedes (El Nuevo Día) son los primeros que pasan por acá”, indicó, entretanto, Myrna Ríos Mejía, de 48 años, quien vive junto a su madre, de 78 años; hermana, de 50; y cuatro hijos. Los siete pasaron el huracán en los bajos de la residencia, que perdió el techo del baño y los cuartos quedaron “inundados” por la lluvia.

Relató que no ha podido comprar alimentos, ni agua embotellada. Como no tiene electricidad, no ha podido darse las terapias para su condición de asma. A su madre se le están agotando los medicamentos para el dolor.

“No tenemos con quien ir a ningún lado. Los carros que tenemos aquí no sirven. Estamos a fuerza de los guineos del mismo patio. Pero necesitamos ayuda. Los políticos, que siempre pasan buscando votos en época de elecciones, todavía no se han dado la vuelta por aquí”, aseveró Ríos Mejía.

Los esposos Charito Oliveras Collazo y Edwin Laboy Millán, de 31 y 48 años, respectivamente, también se sienten “olvidados” en el sector La Yuca del barrio Machuelo Arriba, donde ellos y otros residentes “abrimos camino” para no quedarse incomunicados.



“Es mentira que la ayuda está llegando. Acá arriba no ha venido nadie. Ni la basura están recogiendo y se están formando muchos vertederos clandestinos”, contó Oliveras Collazo, quien recoge agua en una pluma que los propios vecinos instalaron en una iglesia de la comunidad.

Ninguno de los entrevistados con daños en sus hogares había iniciado formalmente su reclamación ante FEMA.

## **Cuerpo De Ingenieros Da Primer Contrato Para Reparar Sistema Eléctrico**

[El Nuevo Día \(PRI\)](#), October 9, 2017

El Cuerpo de Ingenieros del Ejército de los Estados Unidos (USACE) concedió hoy, lunes, un contrato ascendente a \$35.1 millones a la empresa Weston Solutions para la restauración del sistema eléctrico de Puerto Rico.

Este es el primero de una serie de contratos que concederá el USACE como parte del proceso para restaurar el servicio energético que colapsó tras el azote del huracán María. El 80% del sistema de transmisión y distribución quedó en el piso y el gran reto de la Autoridad de Energía Eléctrica (AEE) -en coordinación con el USACE- es satisfacer la gran demanda de luz del norte de la Isla cuando la generación en su mayoría se produce en el sur.

Hoy, el gobernador Ricardo Rosselló informó que 15% de los abonados de la AEE ya cuenta con servicio. Además, recalcó que “paralelo” al restablecimiento de la luz se trabaja con dar paso en un futuro cercano a un nuevo sistema energético.

“Nuestro objetivo no es solamente levantar el mismo sistema que teníamos antes. Levantar el mismo sistema que teníamos antes nos pone en la misma posición de vulnerabilidad. Invertimos un montón de chavos para estar sujetos a que venga otra tormenta y que nos rebese nuevamente. Nuestro objetivo es -paralelo esto- investigar y ver cuál es el mejor sistema que podamos tener en Puerto Rico en términos de generación, que sea moderno y nos permita una real oportunidad para hacer cambios transformativos en el sistema eléctrico en Puerto Rico”, puntualizó Rosselló.

Weston Solutions, una empresa con sede en Pennsylvania, tendrá la misión de proveer generación eléctrica a la planta de generatriz de Palo Seco, en San Juan. Traerá un generador de 50 megavatios que llegará a “Puerto Rico muy pronto”, informó en comunicado de prensa Diana Holland, comandante de la División del Sur del Atlántico del USACE.

La idea es que al proporcionarle generación de emergencia a Palo Seco, más clientes de la AEE recibirán electricidad en lo que se completan las reparaciones a las líneas de transmisión que se conectan a Palo Seco.

“Este es un paso importante en nuestros esfuerzos para restaurar la electricidad a los ciudadanos de Puerto Rico”, dijo Holland.

La reparación del sistema eléctrico incluye cuatro pasos, de acuerdo con el USACE. La primera fase es proveer energía y generación temporera a lugares críticos. La segunda es asegurar una generación adecuada en las centrales eléctricas para luego reinstalar y reparar las líneas de transmisión. Por último, es preciso restaurar y reparar las líneas de distribución.

Tanto los directivos de la USACE como de la Agencia federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA, en inglés) han dicho que el restablecimiento total del servicio eléctrico demorará meses.

El director de Operaciones de Contingencia y Seguridad Nacional del USACE, José Sánchez, dijo en entrevista con este diario que la misión que le ha dado FEMA es solo reparar “de emergencia” el sistema eléctrico. Pero ha recalcado que es imperativo evolucionar a un sistema más fuerte.

Ha advertido que ve “difícil” que el restablecimiento de la luz en su totalidad se produzca al cabo de seis a siete meses, parámetro que se ha usado recientemente como referente pues fue el tiempo que tomó hacerlo tras el azote del huracán Georges en 1998. Sin embargo, Sánchez dijo que trabajan a toda capacidad y con contratistas para acelerar el proceso.

Sin embargo, la cantidad de brigadas que posee la AEE, unas 230 -cada una de tres a cuatro personas- no menos que las que había en el pasado. Por eso y ante la emergencia se hacen las contrataciones que la USACE estima serán más de 2,000.

## **En Espera Por Un Plan De Reconstrucción Para La Isla**

[El Nuevo Día \(PRI\)](#), October 9, 2017

WASHINGTON — El Senado estadounidense aguardaría por las recomendaciones de la Junta de Supervisión Fiscal a cargo de las finanzas públicas de Puerto Rico y del gobernador Ricardo Rosselló antes de diseñar un plan que encamine la reconstrucción de la isla.

Tras la devastación causada por el huracán María, ya no parece haber debate sobre la necesidad de algún tipo de rescate financiero del gobierno federal para revivir la economía de Puerto Rico, la cual el ciclón acabó de hundir.

Lo que aún no está claro es qué cosas formarán parte de ese plan, que los demócratas quieren se asemeje al concepto del Plan Marshall con el cual se impulsó la reconstrucción de Europa central después de la Segunda Guerra Mundial, por medio de medidas para modernizar su economía.

“Queremos que se rinda cuentas sobre hacia donde ese dinero va a ir”, advirtió ayer el senador republicano Ron Johnson (Wisconsin), presidente del Comité de Seguridad Interna y Asuntos de Gobierno, en una conferencia telefónica de los cinco senadores que estuvieron el sábado observando los daños causados por el huracán María en Puerto Rico.

Desde antes del huracán, economistas, grupos de estudio y sindicatos habían reclamado que aun después de autorizar la reestructuración de la deuda pública, por medio de un nuevo sistema judicial de bancarrota territorial, Puerto Rico necesitaría medidas que ayuden a la economía.

Ahora, demócratas del Senado dicen que eso es inevitable. “Se necesita un plan financiero inmediato”, dijo el senador demócrata Richard Blumenthal (Connecticut), quien dijo desde el punto de vista del Senado su contenido debe salir de conversaciones entre la Junta, el gobernador Rosselló y el Comité de Finanzas, que maneja los temas referentes al Tesoro, Medicaid, y temas contributivos.

El gobernador Rosselló —quien ha estado en conversaciones con el Tesoro—, dijo ayer que requiere una inyección inicial de \$4,600 millones y ha advertido que a finales de este mes el gobierno de Puerto Rico puede quedarse sin dinero en efectivo.

El senador Blumenthal dijo que entendía que la “tormenta financiera” ocurriría a finales de año.

El gobierno de Rosselló ha discutido en Washington, entre otras cosas, la posibilidad de que el Tesoro garantice un préstamo del gobierno de Puerto Rico o que la Reserva federal compre bonos de la isla.

En la conferencia telefónica, la demócrata Kirsten Gillibrand (Nueva York) dijo que “se necesita un plan tipo Plan Marshall no importa lo que tome”. “Se requiere un Plan Marshall no para reparar temporalmente, sino para la recuperación y resiliencia a largo plazo”, sostuvo Blumenthal.

Los republicanos han sido menos contundentes, pero reconocen que se requiere apoyo federal a un plan dirigido a revivir la economía. “Queremos trabajar con el Senado para presentar algo que atienda las necesidades a corto y largo plazo”, indicó el republicano Cory Gardner, presidente del subcomité de Energía de la Comisión de Energía y Recursos Naturales.

Los senadores coincidieron que todo el proceso de reestructuración comienza por restablecer la red eléctrica, para poder facilitar el funcionamiento de los pilares de la economía de Puerto Rico, como la manufactura y el turismo.

“(La red eléctrica) era débil antes de la tormenta, ahora está muy devastada”, sostuvo Johnson.

Esta semana, el Congreso debe aprobar la asignación de \$12,770 millones para volver a llenar las arcas del fondo para atender desastres de la Agencia federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA).

## **Llega Un Generador A Culebra Para Un Centro De Salud**

[El Nuevo Día \(PRI\)](#), October 9, 2017

El generador tenía escrito diversos mensajes con tiza en solidaridad con el pueblo de Culebra.

“Dios los bendiga y los mejores deseos (de la) Guardia Nacional de Puerto Rico”, leía uno de los mensajes.

Un generador de 30 kilovatios, y cuyo peso es de 1,927 libras, aguardaba ayer, domingo, en el interior de un helicóptero de carga Boeing CH-47 Chinook de Pennsylvania, aeronave necesaria para transportar un objeto de dicho tamaño y peso.

Precisamente esa fue una de las razones para que el generador, que debió llegar a la isla municipio antes del paso cercano del huracán María, aún aguardase en la base de Isla Grande. Su destino es el centro de salud HealthproMed 330 ubicado en Culebra.

El coronel de la Guardia Nacional de Puerto Rico, Jorge Galoff, dijo que se enteraron de la urgencia de llevar el generador a Culebra a través de la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA). Ivonne Rivera, administradora del centro de salud, se vio en la necesidad de abordar a funcionarios de la agencia luego de pedirle ayuda al secretario de Salud, Rafael Rodríguez Mercado, para llevar el generador a Culebra.

“Nunca recibí respuesta”, dijo la mujer que estaba feliz de poder recibir la asistencia de la Guardia Nacional.

“Desde el sábado después de María, todas las mañanas yo llegaba al Centro de Mando del Gobierno a buscar apoyo, para ver cómo podíamos transportar esta planta a Culebra. Y no recibía absolutamente ninguna contestación”, narró Rivera.

Tras varios intentos, no fue posible conseguir a Rodríguez Mercado.

Rivera, entretanto, destacó que el centro de salud no había podido dar servicios desde el azote de Culebra. El lugar, creado hace 14 años y que da servicio diariamente a aproximadamente 15 personas, es subvencionado con fondos federales. Además, ofrece servicios de dentista, pediatría, obstetricia y ginecología, médico de familia, internista, optómetra, trabajador social y nutricionista.

Rivera agradeció no solo al coronel Galoff sino también al coronel Ricardo Garratón, también de la Guardia Nacional, quien fue su primer contacto en la milicia para así llevar el generador a Culebra.

## **“La Isla Necesita Una Invasión Humanitaria”**

[El Nuevo Día \(PRI\)](#), October 8, 2017

Orlando, Florida – No pasan muchos días sin que Darren Soto, congresista boricua por el estado de la Florida, aparezca en noticiarios nacionales, periódicos y en las redes sociales dramatizando de forma intensa la tragedia de Puerto Rico a causa del huracán María.

En inglés, que es su idioma principal, y a veces en un español con barreras, clama con tono urgente por ayuda para el país donde nació su padre. Y ha sido puntual en levantar su dedo acusador hacia la Casa Blanca por la lentitud y poca prioridad que ha dado a la emergencia que atraviesa la isla luego que la mañana del 20 de septiembre, el poderoso ciclón lanzara a Borinquen en solo horas en un viaje al pasado, a la época en que la gente se alumbraba con velas, lavaba su ropa en los ríos y cocinaba al fogón.

¿Siente que han escuchado sus denuncias?

—Sí, me han escuchado en el Congreso, pero he tenido una respuesta lenta de la administración Trump. Mi mensaje ha sido simple: todas las historias de la tragedia en Puerto Rico son ciertas. No hay electricidad, no hay servicio de celulares; las filas para comprar comida son inmensas. El agua es aún difícil de hallar. Mi mensaje a la administración Trump es que necesitamos más ayuda aérea, helicópteros que lleguen a estas zonas aisladas llevando ayuda. Con el Congreso, la situación ha sido más positiva. Esperamos aprobar un paquete de \$29,000 millones que tendrá \$10,000 millones para Puerto Rico. Lo demás es para Texas, Florida e Islas Vírgenes que también fueron afectados.

En el reporte que usted preparó luego de su viaje a Puerto Rico documenta la lentitud de FEMA; de oficiales que llegaron a la isla de otros estados para ayudar, pero que estuvieron días sin hacer nada porque no recibían instrucciones; y señala los problemas de coordinación. ¿Cómo interpresa estas observaciones?

—Que no hay una voluntad del presidente Trump para que las cosas se hagan con la urgencia que amerita. Vi cientos de contenedores en el puerto y a oficiales federales diciendo que no podían entregar la ayuda porque las carreteras estaban averiadas. Sin embargo, el gobierno de Estados Unidos ha estado en otras instancias en las que ha despachado ayuda con gran rapidez, como cuando tuvimos una guerra en Yugoslavia y en Irak, hacia donde simplemente mandábamos brigadas para construir puentes rápidamente; enviamos suministros en helicópteros y teníamos militares cuidando esos suministros mientras se llevaban a su destino. La isla necesita

una invasión humanitaria y yo solo veo esta lentitud que me da un mensaje claro de que los oficiales de FEMA están haciendo lo mejor que pueden, pero no han recibido motivación ni apoyo de la Casa Blanca para hacer lo necesario y llevar esos suministros a las áreas más necesitadas de la isla.

Lee más entrevistas

¿Y por qué cree que Casa Blanca no los está motivando a llevar esta ayuda con urgencia?

—¿Sabes? Es muy difícil saber qué hay en la mente del presidente Trump, pero creo que tanto él como muchos oficiales en la Casa Blanca han subestimado la magnitud de los daños que ha sufrido la isla. Su viaje se concentró en San Juan y áreas cercanas, pero si hubiera ido a Guajataca o a Utuado hubiera visto áreas que han sido golpeadas y devueltas al Siglo 19. Sin ATH, supermercados cerrados, carreteras cerradas...

Es difícil creer que Trump no supiera sobre los daños en Puerto Rico. Es difícil creer que el presidente se quedó en el área metropolitana porque no supiera.

—Y esa es la gran pregunta. Solo sé que he sido vocal sobre lo que he visto y por eso fui tan crítico en ese reporte. Por eso es que denuncié la lenta y desmotivada respuesta de la Casa Blanca. En contraste, el Congreso ha tomado seriamente esta devastación y por eso es que estamos hablando de una gran asignación para ayudar a reconstruir a Puerto Rico

¿Tener al Congreso motivado, como usted dice, y no a la Casa Blanca es suficiente para ayudar a la isla?

—No. No es suficiente. Y por esto temo que el número de muertos irá aumentando en los próximos meses en la medida que sigamos analizando esta crisis. No puedes tener ancianos dependiendo de equipo médico que prende y apaga porque se acaba el combustible de un generador, y no puedes tener gente sin agua y comida por tanto tiempo sin que empieces a ver consecuencias terribles.

Ha dicho que lo ocurrido en Puerto Rico fue otro Katrina.

—Y no he sido el único que lo ha dicho. El congresista de Luisiana, Cedric Richmons, dijo que estaba preocupado al ver que la devastación en la isla se estaba convirtiendo en un segundo Katrina.

¿Podría ser peor que Katrina por el hecho de que Puerto Rico una isla y literalmente estamos aislados?

—Tenemos que enfocarnos en llevar los suministros allí. No es si es peor o no que Katrina, es que hay que hacer el trabajo y eso no está ocurriendo.

En el reporte que preparó habla de un viaje en helicóptero, ¿qué imágenes le impactaron más?

—Cuando despegamos vimos en San Juan como en algunas comunidades ya el agua empezaba a bajar y era claro que mientras más pobre es la comunidad, peor fue el impacto. Cuando empezamos a viajar al área de los bosques, ya no había hojas en los árboles, y los árboles parecían palillos de fósforos todos doblados. En el centro de la isla, empecé a ver plantaciones destruidas, granjas de las que solo quedaba el esqueleto de estructuras. Pueblo tras pueblo, vi viviendas sin techo y no vi los toldos azules de FEMA, porque no han llegado y me preocupé que ocurriera una inundación. Luego fuimos a Utuado. Escogimos aterrizar allí pues es uno de los pueblos más grandes de Puerto Rico pero está aislado y pensé que si veíamos lo que pasaba ahí tendríamos una imagen clara de cómo es la situación en el resto de la zona montañosa. Allí todo estaba lleno de fango, árboles tirados, puentes y carreteras rotas. Allí, un anciano se me acercó y me preguntó si yo era de FEMA. Le expliqué que no, que era un congresista puertorriqueño que representaba a Florida. Me dijo que nadie de FEMA había llegado. En el pueblo, no había ninguna actividad, solo en un cafetín donde me tomé un café. Allí, me confirmaron que no había llegado ninguna ayuda. Que no podían comprar pues no había ATH. Escaseaba el agua. Por suerte, el hospital tenía un generador. Ahí constaté que en muchos lugares pasarán muchos meses antes que se pueda restablecer la electricidad. Y por eso mi trabajo es decirle la verdad al Congreso y eso fue lo que hice. Por eso preparé un informe formal y le agregué fotos para que vieran porque, aunque han visto los reportes noticiosos, ellos quieren tener un informe de primera mano. Es crítico que los miembros del Congreso tengan esta información. Y FEMA también vio ese reporte.

¿Y tuvo alguna reacción de FEMA?

—Me reuní con ellos al día siguiente que regresé de Puerto Rico. Le dije a los funcionarios de FEMA que necesitamos apoyo aéreo para llevar los suministros. Ese ha sido el gran punto ciego en esta operación de emergencia.

Esta situación ha llevado a la isla a no poder sostenerse económicamente y mucho menos podrá pensar en pagar su deuda con sus acreedores. ¿Cómo ve a Puerto Rico en ese aspecto?

—Soy parte del Comité de Recursos Naturales y del subcomité de Asuntos Indígenas, Insulares y Nativos de Alaska, así que estoy en un comité con jurisdicción directa con Puerto Rico. Me reuní esta semana con el presidente del comité como parte de la discusión del paquete para FEMA para atender la emergencia. Los fondos para la emergencia no se pueden usar para pagar a acreedores.

En la isla hay 3.4 millones de ciudadanos americanos y en ellos sí se han pensado cuando hay una guerra y se necesitan efectivos militares.

—Mi mensaje al Congreso ha sido que los puertorriqueños son americanos que han reafirmado su compromiso con la bandera americana que pagan impuestos, que han peleado en la milicia. Y el gobierno federal, con su respuesta lenta, le ha fallado en este momento de gran necesidad.

Hay quien dice que en futuras elecciones, los puertorriqueños en la diáspora recordaran quiénes ayudaron o no ayudaron a la isla en esta crisis y usarán su voto para castigar. ¿Qué cree?

—En la Florida Central recordaremos quién ayudó y quién olvidó a la isla. Lo recordaremos ahora y en el futuro. Y ya estamos usando nuestro poder político lo mejor que podemos. Yo represento un distrito que es mayoritariamente anglosajón, pero como votamos como un bloque mayor en el que se unen anglos y negros, me siento aquí como una persona que representa también a los puertorriqueños.

## **Comprometida La Capacidad De Abasto Del País**

[El Nuevo Día \(PRI\)](#), October 8, 2017

Enormes cantidades de sedimentos se movieron hacia los embalses a consecuencia de las copiosas lluvias del huracán María, reduciendo potencialmente su capacidad de almacenamiento y amenazando, a su vez, con crear un problema de disponibilidad de agua en el país, advirtieron expertos.

La mayoría de los embalses ya están altamente sedimentados, y el panorama se complica aún más con el hecho de que María también causó una gran devastación forestal.

Sin vegetación en las montañas, se pierde la capacidad de amortiguamiento o retención de sedimentos, lo que facilita su entrada a los cuerpos de agua durante eventos de lluvia.

“En Puerto Rico, la capacidad de los embalses para recibir agua es cada vez menos, y ahora va a haber mucha más sedimentación entrado. Cuando a un embalse le queda el 20% de su capacidad, está anulado para todo efecto práctico”, sostuvo el exdirector de la Agencia Federal de Protección Ambiental (EPA, por sus siglas en inglés) en Puerto Rico y el Caribe, Carl Soderberg.

Mencionó, por ejemplo, que los embalses Carraízo, en Trujillo Alto, y Dos Bocas, en Utuado, están sedimentados en 40% y 63%, respectivamente, y “es posible que ahora pierdan otro por ciento adicional”.

Cuestionado al respecto, el presidente ejecutivo de la Autoridad de Acueductos y Alcantarillados (AAA), Elí Díaz Atienza, indicó que, una vez se “normalice” el servicio de agua potable, la corporación pública iniciará un “análisis de la sedimentación” en los embalses causada por el huracán, que tocó suelo boricua el pasado 20 de septiembre.

“Reconocemos los retos de las represas. Estos sistemas traen muchos sedimentos y nos pueden haber afectado las reservas de agua. Tan pronto resolvamos el asunto de suplir agua a las comunidades, haremos la evaluación”, dijo.

Contó que, desde antes que María azotara la isla, la AAA está “trabajando” con el experto en manejo de reservas de agua y consultor internacional en hidrología, Greg Morris, para “buscar opciones para bajar un poco los sedimentos” en los embalses.

Preliminarmente, Díaz Atienza señaló que algunas de esas opciones incluyen dragados continuos (equipo permanente en los embalses), dragados dirigidos (embalses particulares) y mover los sedimentos hacia el mar a través de la apertura controlada de compuertas.

“Estaremos mirando los efectos de cada opción y calculando cuál es la mejor. Reclamaremos a través de la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA, por sus siglas en inglés) los costos necesarios para

remover los sedimentos que se recibieron con el huracán y posterior a eso por no tener la forestación necesaria”, dijo el funcionario.

Más costoso

Aparte de sedimentos, los ríos y embalses están recibiendo ahora más hojas y ramas, lo que aumentará el costo de tratamiento del agua para que su consumo sea seguro, expuso el doctor en ecología y catedrático asociado de la Universidad de Carolina del Norte en Chapell Hill, Javier Arce Nazario.

Advirtió, incluso, que la descomposición de este material resultará en mayor cantidad de carbono disuelto en el agua que, cuando se mezcla con cloro, crea compuestos carcinógenos.

“Estos compuestos orgánicos y el sinnúmero de otros contaminantes que deben estar llegando a los ríos, resultará en un aumento en costo en el tratamiento del agua por parte de la AAA”, dijo Arce Nazario.

“La AAA va a recibir agua con un nivel de turbiedad bien alto y tendrá que lavar más a menudo sus filtros. Producir agua potable va a ser más duro y, por ende, más costoso”, agregó Soderberg.

Para este año fiscal, la AAA cuenta con un presupuesto de \$594 millones para costear su programa de operación y mantenimiento de sistemas de acueductos y alcantarillados.

Infraestructura vieja

El huracán María sacó a relucir la situación de vulnerabilidad de algunas de represas. Ejemplo de ello es lo que en principio se reportó como una rotura de 24 pulgadas en la represa Guajataca, y luego se dijo que se trataba de erosión en la parte del vertedor de concreto. El gobierno mantuvo bajo riesgo inminente de inundación a comunidades de Quebradillas, Isabela y San Sebastián, y cientos de familias fueron desalojadas.

“Típicamente, las represas se diseñan para una vida útil de 50 a 60 años. En Puerto Rico, muchas represas ya pasaron su vida útil, y lo que requieren ahora es una reevaluación y reacondicionamiento de sus estructuras”, afirmó el presidente del Colegio de Ingenieros y Agrimensores de Puerto Rico, Pablo Vázquez Ruiz, quien recordó que la represa Guajataca se construyó entre 1919 y 1928.

Contó que, a excepción de las represas Cerrillos y Portugués, ambas en Ponce, las demás son “más vulnerables” a eventos como huracanes, porque no están diseñadas con la última tecnología.

“Las represas más modernas tienen mucha instrumentación que permite detectar cualquier indicio de falla. También cuentan con mecanismos de seguridad que no permiten que haya un desbordamiento. Pero en Puerto Rico, por el tiempo de construcción que tienen las represas, ya es necesario que haya una reevaluación y reacondicionamiento de todas estas estructuras. Necesitamos personal experto en el país que pueda realizar esto”, recalcó.

Sobre el aumento en sedimentación, Vázquez Ruiz dijo que es un problema que no supone un riesgo de seguridad para los embalses, pero hace que “vayan perdiendo su utilidad”.

Díaz Atienza, por su parte, descartó que la coyuntura actual se preste para impulsar la construcción de más represas. Aparte de que los “lugares idóneos” para nuevos embalses escasean en la isla, la AAA pretende “atacar la necesidad de más agua” con iniciativas para reducir las pérdidas en producción.

Al momento, la AAA pierde –física y comercialmente– el 60% del agua que produce.

Efecto en corales

Soderberg, entretanto, dijo que el flujo de sedimentos y la devastación forestal también tendrán “efecto directo” sobre los arrecifes de coral.

“Cuando les llegue esa sedimentación (a través de los ríos), los va a liquidar. Los sedimentos son veneno para los corales”, aseveró.

Datos del Centro para la Ecología Tropical Aplicada y Conservación (CATEC) de la Universidad de Puerto Rico, Recinto de Río Piedras, apuntan a que el 80% de los arrecifes de coral, a menos de 100 pies de profundidad, ya muestran señales de mortandad asociada al evento de blanqueamiento de 2005. Ese evento se relaciona, a su vez, al aumento en la temperatura del mar debido al cambio climático.

Arce Nazario añadió que, después de un huracán, los estuarios se tornan menos salados y la turbidez aumenta, lo que afecta a las especies que allí habitan.

No se descarta, por lo tanto, una merma en la actividad pesquera.

Más inundaciones

Mientras, la directora del CATEC, Elvira Cuevas, expuso que, a corto plazo, otro efecto de la devastación forestal causada por María serán más inundaciones.

“Las inundaciones serían mayores al no tener la cobertura vegetal necesaria para reducir la escorrentía”, dijo.

Con ella coincidió el ambientalista y urbanista Ramón Cruz, miembro de la Junta de Directores del Sierra Club en Estados Unidos, quien señaló que la pérdida de áreas de mangle también aumenta el riesgo de inundaciones.

Arce Nazario fue más comedido, al indicar que la incidencia de inundaciones dependerá de la condición del terreno antes y después del huracán.

“El huracán no destruye toda la vegetación y no crea una superficie impermeable. Nosotros, los humanos, talamos un bosque y hacemos estacionamientos por donde el agua no penetra. Dentro de los bosques destruidos por el huracán hay mucha vida que podrá tener funciones importantes como, por ejemplo, retener la lluvia y crear fricción para que el agua no llegue rápidamente al río”, expresó.

El análisis preliminar del impacto de María en las áreas custodiadas por el Departamento de Recursos Naturales y Ambientales (DRNA) arrojó que el 98% de los árboles adultos está “en el piso”, indicó en días recientes la secretaria Tania Vázquez. El 80% de los árboles juveniles sobrevivió el azote del huracán, lo que ayudaría a adelantar la reforestación de las áreas naturales.

## **En Precario La Salud Mental Tras El Paso Del Ciclón Por La Isla**

[El Nuevo Día \(PRI\)](#), October 10, 2017

JAYUYA. – Nilda Méndez Mercado se cuestiona a diario por qué sigue viva. Llegó hace poco más de un mes a Puerto Rico, desde el estado de Nueva Jersey, para estar “tranquila”. Pero el huracán María le cambió los planes.

El ciclón destruyó su casa en el sector Alturas Pisá del barrio Collores, en este municipio. Ni una pared quedó intacta. La vivienda se había construido con los ahorros “de toda una vida”.

Méndez Mercado quería regresar con su esposo, Francisco Soto Zamora, a quien dejó en las montañas jayuyanas mientras atendía su salud en Estados Unidos. Es paciente de cáncer, diabética y le dio un derrame cerebral que paralizó la mitad de su cuerpo.

“Pero ahora tengo depresión. Estoy mala de los nervios. Pasé el huracán aquí y fue terrible. Se llevó todo lo que me quedaba. Todo era nuevo y se lo llevó”, dijo llorosa la mujer de 70 años.

Desde el pasado 20 de septiembre, cuando María tocó suelo boricua, Méndez Mercado está “refugiada en un cuarto” en la casa de su suegra, de cemento. Sus problemas de movilidad le impiden salir a buscar ayuda. Tampoco ha llegado nadie a ofrecérsela.

“No he recibido ninguna ayuda, ni agua siquiera. Pasan y siguen. No nos han dado nada. No existimos en este lado. Todo se queda en el pueblo. Vienen los helicópteros con comida y agua, pero como yo no puedo ir... Necesito pañales, medicamentos y, cuanto antes, una vivienda, porque yo no puedo vivir así”, esbozó.

Méndez Mercado contó que pasa los días “llorando y llorando”, y que varias noches –en las últimas semanas– “me he acostado a dormir con hambre porque no nos han dado nada”.

Señaló que, debido a las irregularidades en el servicio postal, sus hijos no han podido enviarle ayuda desde los estados de Nueva Jersey, Illinois y Florida. “La correspondencia no llega”, dijo.

Dijo que, “tan pronto tenga unos dólares” y se normalice el tráfico aéreo, regresará a Estados Unidos.

“Nos viró la vida”

Wanda Sepúlveda Torres y Belinda Maldonado Medina, de 53 y 27 años, respectivamente, son vecinas de Méndez Mercado y también se expresaron deprimidas.

Denunciaron, además, que ninguna agencia municipal, estatal o federal ha visitado el sector Alturas Pisá para ofrecer servicios de salud mental.

“Porque los necesitamos. Este huracán nos viró la vida a todo el mundo”, dijo Sepúlveda Torres, quien perdió el techo de su casa y decenas de pertenencias, y ahora duerme en una caseta de campaña en el patio.

Lo menos que reclaman es un toldo de la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA, en inglés), “para que la lluvia no siga mojando lo poco que nos quedó”.

500 familias

El administrador municipal de Jayuya, Alexis Bennett, indicó que 500 familias perdieron sus casas parcial o totalmente debido al paso de María, incluyendo algunas de cemento.

El huracán, asimismo, cobró la vida de un hombre cuando un alud derrumbó su vivienda, en el sector Caricaboa.

“No tenemos agua embotellada, pero la que está saliendo por el grifo es potable y lo podemos garantizar. También necesitamos combustible, tanto para nuestra flota como para alguna infraestructura del gobierno estatal”, dijo Bennett, tras precisar que el 33% del municipio tiene el servicio de la Autoridad de Acueductos y Alcantarillados (AAA).

A casi tres semanas del paso de María, las brigadas siguen “abriendo camino”. Las carreteras, de hecho, aún exhiben grandes cantidades de lodo y algunos tramos están inundados por las lluvias que continúan. En el sector Hoyos Planes, unas 25 familias solo tienen acceso a pie, porque la carretera PR-531 colapsó.

Bennett reconoció que la falta de combustible ha limitado la repartición de agua y comida en los barrios jayuyanos.

## **Efluvios De La Donahue**

By Mayra Montero

[El Nuevo Día \(PRI\)](#), October 8, 2017

La noticia de que el gobernador no tiene “un Plan B” para atender el desastre causado por el huracán, siendo su única alternativa los fondos que le otorgue el Congreso y la administración del presidente Trump, no puede sorprender a nadie. Es más, ni siquiera es noticia.

¿Quién tiene un Plan B de cara a este desastre? A ver, ¿de dónde va a sacarse nada para comenzar siquiera a darle forma a esto?

La presencia del Ejército de los Estados Unidos va para largo, y oí decir que empezaban a ocuparse ellos mismos de la entrega de alimentos y otros artículos de primera necesidad, en vista de que habían surgido indicios de que en la ruta entre el centro de acopio y los municipios, se “esfumaban” paquetes de medicinas y otros productos.

También oí que había quejas de los militares, porque en algunos residenciales y otros sectores del interior de la Isla, los llamados “bichotes” obstaculizaban su trabajo.

Bienvenidos al club.

Eso lo sufren aquí, a diario, cientos de instituciones cívicas o religiosas, que deben pasarle la manita al capo y contar con su autorización para poder asomar la cara en las comunidades que viven bajo un cacicazgo de origen criminal, y en las que el trapicheo es cosa seria. Los del ejército, sin embargo, creo que no son propensos a pasarle la manita a nadie. El día que tengan que entrar en un residencial, un barrio remoto o lo que sea, y tengan órdenes concretas de no andarse con contemplaciones, se abrirán paso por donde tengan que abrirlo. Aunque no hayan venido en son de guerra, ese tipo de movilización es un inconveniente para el bajo mundo, algo que, unido a los problemas tácticos que dejó el huracán, arruina en parte lo que es la válvula de escape de mucha gente que depende de la economía informal. Puede haber “roces”, claro que sí.

Es sabido que los huracanes entorpecen el movimiento clandestino de los cargamentos. La mar está picada, los vuelos son escasos y las carreteras quedan intransitables. Si a eso se le añade una fuerza militar que llega a controlar las vías públicas y con la que es difícil establecer “alianzas” para que se hagan de la vista larga o custodien el trasiego, la situación puede tornarse tensa. Debe tenerse en cuenta, sin embargo, que el día en que le inflijan un rasguño a uno de esos militares, arderá Troya. Los que van a entrar a buscar a los culpables no serán agentes locales ni simples investigadores, sino oficiales del ejército, con sus métodos un poco más enérgicos.

El problema sigue siendo la falta de electricidad.

Cada vez que uno lee que han tenido que mandar a buscar especialistas mexicanos en tendido eléctrico, a los que FEMA pagará su sueldo, es imposible no acordarse de los millones que se dilapidaron en Lisa Donahue



y su compañía. A la par que la gran estafa que resultó el trazado y construcción de la llamada Vía Verde, está este otro fiasco de la contratación de la reina madre —se movía como una reina madre—, afectada y ladina, que cargó con cientos de millones, ella y sus compinches. Una mujer que nada adelantaba, que pedía prórrogas y más prórrogas a su contrato vergonzoso, y que no hizo otra cosa en Puerto Rico que no fuera lucrarse y marearnos con la “colonizadora” de que ella podía resolverlo todo.

Aquí tenemos las consecuencias. La Donahue en capilla ardiente, sin que le falte ni una bombillita, y nosotros ahogados en la incertidumbre, con cientos de negocios cerrados, miles de empleados en la calle, sin trabajo y sin sueldo.

Ésa es otra. Hay una diferencia entre la gente que está en su casa, cobrando salarios del gobierno, y los que han recibido un portazo en las narices, porque los comercios y las pequeñas empresas ignoran cuándo podrán reanudar operaciones. Los verdaderos sacrificados son esos, los que están ahora mismo esperando que llegue la luz, alimentando la esperanza de que el patrono no cierre para siempre.

Por eso choca tanto que, cobrando su salario entero, algunos se dediquen a “filosofar” sobre el Plan B y el Plan C, y hasta el Plan Z que debería tener el gobernador.

Desengañense, no hay más ninguno: esperar un rescate económico y echar hacia adelante con lo que nos caiga, con espíritu de sacrificio y austeridad. Sí, austeridad, esa palabra que tanto mortifica a los patriotas de balcón.

En cuanto a la visita del vicepresidente Pence, que se puso en plan Miss Simpatía y aseguró que el coquí iba a “cantar más alto”, confieso que prefiero los gruñidos del otro. Los papeltoallazos del otro. La descarnada brutalidad del otro. Lo prefiero incluso antes que la vocecita de la Donahue. ¿Recuerdan su voz? Dios sabe que nunca la creí.

## **OPINIÓN: “Lo Que Vi En Puerto Rico”**

[El Tiempo Latino](#), October 10, 2017

Ponce, PUERTO RICO – Esta semana pude ser testigo de la peor devastación que he presenciado en mi vida. He ido muchas veces a la Isla del Encanto, tengo familia allá. Sin embargo este viaje no fue como ningún otro.

Pasé la mayor parte del tiempo en Ponce, en la parte sur de la isla. Ponce es la segunda ciudad más poblada de Puerto Rico. Allí estuve junto al gobernador Ricardo Roselló, la alcaldesa María Meléndez y una delegación de demócratas de la Florida entregando insumos a quienes más lo necesitaban luego de sobrevivir la destrucción del huracán María. Vimos un colchón de tamaño matrimonial enredado en un poste de cableado telefónico. Las líneas de comunicación están tan afectadas que ni siquiera pudimos utilizar un teléfono satelital para comunicarnos con el mundo exterior.

La isla que conozco ya no existe, ha sido destruida por uno de los huracanes más feroces en la historia de Estados Unidos. Lo que no fue destruido y aún sigue intacto es la identidad estadounidense de Puerto Rico. De hecho, tan sólo a pasos de casas destruidas por la tormenta, aún estaba en pie una bandera estadounidense con sus estrellas y rayas ondeando en el viento.

Los 3.5 millones de personas en Puerto Rico son ciudadanos estadounidenses. Ellos merecen un trato justo e igualitario como cualquier otro ciudadano estadounidense. Desafortunadamente, tenemos un presidente que ha mostrado una perturbadora indiferencia por el bienestar de estos conciudadanos. El presidente Trump esperó más de una semana luego del huracán para levantar las restricciones del Jones Act, a pesar de haberlas levantado para Florida y Texas incluso antes de que el huracán Irma tocara tierra. No hay excusa para el retraso de Trump, que sólo ha causado más sufrimiento al impedir que las naves puedan entregar insumos de manera más rápida. Es más, la agencia FEMA aún no ha autorizado todas las herramientas de asistencia que tienen a su disposición.

Mientras millones esperaban recibir ayuda el fin de semana pasado, Trump decidió iniciar una pelea a través de Twitter con la alcaldesa de San Juan, Carmen Yulín Cruz, quien en ese momento iba puerta por puerta buscando salvar vidas mientras Trump estaba en su campo de golf y le dedicaba sólo una hora a Puerto Rico. Representantes de su administración llamaron la devastación en la isla como una “historia de buenas noticias”.

Incluso cuando el presidente Trump visitó Puerto Rico el martes, dejó en claro que él considera que el esfuerzo de rescate de nuestro gobierno era una inconveniencia en vez de una responsabilidad nacional. “Ustedes descontrolaron nuestro presupuesto” le dijo al pueblo de Puerto Rico, un sentimiento que estuvo curiosamente ausente de sus respuestas a desastres en Texas y Florida.

Responder a un desastre natural es un problema complejo. Sin embargo, el problema aquí no es con las personas en el terreno o con los trabajadores de carrera que dedican sus vidas a situaciones como esta. El problema es con la persona a la cabeza de las decisiones.

Los puertos de Puerto Rico están abiertos. Los aeropuertos están abiertos. Con todo y esto, el general de tres estrellas nombrado por el Pentágono para liderar los esfuerzos de alivio dijo la semana pasada que no está ni cerca de tener la cantidad de tropas o equipos que necesita.

Trump encabeza el poder ejecutivo. ¿Por qué no actúa como tal? ¿Por qué no está canalizando la inmensa cantidad de recursos a su disposición para traer la ayuda que la gente necesita desesperadamente? ¿Y, por qué es que sigue felicitándose a sí mismo por un trabajo que está lejos de terminarse?

La situación en Puerto Rico no es una “historia de buenas noticias”. Es una emergencia y necesitamos manos a la obra. Las muertes han incrementado en un doble desde la visita de Trump. La gente necesita agua, comida, insumos básicos. Ellos necesitan que FEMA tenga una presencia en lugares como Ponce, donde más de un millón de personas están desesperadas por ayuda federal. Ellos necesitan la fuerza completa y todos los recursos del gobierno de los Estados Unidos.

Proveer al pueblo de Puerto Rico con la asistencia que necesitan no debería ser un tema partidista. No se puede fijar un precio para la vida, ya sea en Florida, Texas o Puerto Rico. No sólo resulta inhumano tratar a nuestros hermanos puertorriqueños como ciudadanos de segunda clase, es también algo profundamente antiestadounidense.

No hay nada como ser testigo de primera mano, caminar por esas comunidades devastadas y hablar con las personas que lo han pedido todo, menos lo que llevan puesto y la esperanza de sus corazones. Ellos no se dan por vencidos, ellos saldrán adelante, pero no pueden hacerlo solos. Necesitamos estar allí para nuestros hermanos boricuas.

Es el momento de que el presidente Trump deje de actuar como que esto es una “misión cumplida”. Nuestra tarea apenas comienza.

Esta pieza fue publicada inicialmente en inglés en el U.S. News & World Report.

## **Supervisión Para Que La Ayuda Llegue Rápido A Los Necesitados**

[El Nuevo Día \(PRI\)](#), October 9, 2017

Aguadilla – No faltaban brazos para pasar de mano en mano las cajas con agua y las que contenían comida.

De esa forma, los militares -de la Guardia Nacional, de la Reserva del Ejército de los Estados Unidos y los State Guard (voluntarios activados por el gobernador)- hacían llegar a las manos de cientos de puertorriqueños afectados por el huracán María los suministros proporcionados por la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA, por sus siglas en inglés).

Alrededor de 500 familias de los residenciales Stanford y Agustín Stahl, en Aguadilla, hicieron una larga cola tan pronto vieron los tres camiones militares con su distintivo color crema. En menos de una hora, tiempo en que todos recibieron ayuda, no dudaron en tomarse fotos con los militares y decirles en inglés y español, gracias.

“Esto me ayuda con el nene y eso”, dijo Marilyn Valentín tras recibir una caja con tres galones de agua y otra con comida lista para consumo. Con la ayuda de los militares cargó los suministros en el coche donde llevaba a su niño de cuatro años.

Lo mismo hizo Raicha Guerra, quien llevaba a su hijo 2 años.

“Los que han venido son el Army y la Cruz Roja”, comentó la joven de 22 años cuando este diario le preguntó por la ayuda recibida.

A pasos de ella estaba el alcalde de Aguadilla, Carlos Méndez, quien previamente se había reunido en las instalaciones de la Guardia Nacional en Aguadilla con el teniente general Jeffrey S. Buchanan, encargado de las operaciones militares en Puerto Rico.

Buchanan, al igual que el comandante dual de tropas (Dual Status Commander), el general José Reyes, viajó desde San Juan hasta el pueblo costero de Aguadilla para ver de cerca la nueva logística implementada por el general de tres estrellas. En vez de que los alcaldes de los 78 municipios lleguen a los centros de distribución de alimento y agua, serán los militares los que lleguen a cada municipio.

Esa fue la logística que anunció la semana pasada el propio Buchanan para asegurarse de que la ayuda llegue a la gente afectada por el huracán María, luego de quejas por la tardanza en la entrega o por la poca cantidad que reciben.

Para ello, se crearon cuatro áreas de apoyo logístico (logistic support area) que deben llevar los suministros a 68 pueblos. Estas áreas consisten de casetas repletas de militares ubicadas en la antigua base Roosevelt Roads, en Ceiba; el Fuerte Buchanan, en Guaynabo; en la base Ramey, en Aguadilla; y en el Campamento Santiago, en Salinas. En cada una debe haber entre 2,000 a 3,000 militares.

“Esto nos ayuda a descentralizar”, explicó Buchanan, quien no dudó en descargar camiones y entregar suministros.

Cada una de estas áreas tiene un apoyo de ingeniería, otro de seguridad y uno de personal médico. Así que, en conjunto, cada área no solo se destina para la distribución de agua y alimentos sino que también brinda seguridad, limpia vías de acceso y provee servicios médicos donde sea necesario, dijo Reyes.

Estas cuatro áreas se unen a 10 municipios, para así cubrir los 78 municipios, que recibirán suministros de los militares y que también sus respectivos alcaldes pueden buscar la ayuda.

Se trata de municipios grandes que pueden hacer este tipo de tarea o que sufrieron gran devastación tras la embestida del huracán, dijo Reyes en referencia a Carolina, San Juan, Bayamón, Guaynabo, Arecibo, Ponce, Mayagüez, Humacao, Utuado y Guayama.

## **Urge La Necesidad De Contar Con Más Camiones Cisterna En Morovis**

[El Nuevo Día \(PRI\)](#), October 8, 2017

MOROVIS – La alcaldesa de Morovis, Carmen Maldonado, indicó que el municipio continúa esfuerzos diarios para llevar agua y alimentos a las comunidades afectadas, al tiempo que reconoció que si no fuera por organizaciones privadas y la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA), los suministros, especialmente el agua, no llegarían a donde se necesitan.

“El reto mayor, y lo que estoy enfrentando ahora mismo, son los camiones cisterna. Morovis no tiene agua. Tenemos muchísimas personas encamadas y en este municipio solo cuento con un camión cisterna. Le hice la petición a FEMA de que me enviaran cuatro camiones cisterna adicionales porque Acueductos solamente me envió uno de 2,000 galones”, dijo Maldonado.

La alcaldesa adelantó que coordinará un viaje a los Estados Unidos para gestionar dos camiones cisterna adicionales.

“Hay mucha necesidad de agua y alimentos, y para mí eso es primordial, antes que cualquier cosa material”, enfatizó la ejecutiva municipal.

Por su parte, el Comisionado de Seguridad del municipio, Francisco Rosado Correa, explicó que el ayuntamiento está en la etapa de recuperación y remoción de escombros. Del mismo modo, añadió que esperan identificar varias escuelas que puedan servir como centros de distribución.

“Estamos llevándole alimento y agua a la comunidad como prioridad. Una vez logremos estabilizar el problema del alimento y el agua, vamos a establecer unos centros de distribución, posiblemente vamos a utilizar escuelas en los distintos barrios para poder llevar la comida y el agua. Por ahora lo estaremos llevando directamente a las casas”, sostuvo Rosado Correa.

A más de 20 días del paso del temporal por Puerto Rico, las comunidades Vaga, Pasto y San Lorenzo permanecen incomunicadas debido al colapso del puente que daba paso a Morovis. El único acceso, actualmente, es a través del municipio vecino de Orocovis.

“Lo que nos tomaba 15 minutos, ahora nos está tomando casi hora y cuarto. A esos barrios estamos llevando doctores, transportación a pacientes que tienen algún tipo de condición como diálisis o personas que reciben algún tipo de tratamiento”, dijo Rosado.

La petición del ayuntamiento es que el gobierno central coordine la instalación de un puente provisional para restablecer el acceso a dichas comunidades.

## **Probado El Gran Valor Y Compromiso De La Policía**

[El Nuevo Día \(PRI\)](#), October 9, 2017

La valía y el compromiso de los miembros de la Policía de Puerto Rico ha quedado demostrado y con creces a raíz de la catástrofe causada por el huracán María, el evento ciclónico de mayor poder destructor en un siglo.

El estado paupérrimo en que han quedado decenas de cuarteles, así como los daños a la flota de patrullas y otros vehículos oficiales no ha desalentado a los agentes, quienes siguen dando el máximo por mantener el orden en el estado de emergencia en que nos encontramos.

La regulación del tránsito en las vías públicas, ahora carentes de iluminación y parcialmente obstruidas por escombros, representan un gran reto diario para los policías, sobre todo por el alterado flujo vehicular que en las noches es de altísimo riesgo para conductores, pasajeros o peatones y sobre todo para los agentes que incluso con poca luz tienen la encomienda de controlar el movimiento en calles o avenidas.

Desde el paso letal del temporal se ha registrado al menos una decena de muertes de tránsito, por lo que nuestro llamado es a ejercer máxima precaución y paciencia en las carreteras y cooperar con los agentes asignados a dirigir el flujo vehicular.

En este difícil periodo, las actuaciones heroicas de efectivos policíacos antes durante y después del golpe ciclónico son dignas de reconocimiento. Los ejemplos más dramáticos conocidos dan cuenta de la disposición del cumplimiento del deber, no importa las condiciones.

Está el caso de 19 agentes que quedaron atrapados en el cuartel de Corozal durante el criminal azote del temporal, debido a la crecida del río Cíbucó, que arrasó las instalaciones policíacas y sus equipos, además de comercios y hasta el centro gubernamental municipal.

Los policías lucharon como mejor pudieron contra la corriente hasta subir al techo del segundo piso de la estructura, donde enfrentaron los fuertes vientos y lluvias. Resolvieron pasar el ciclón en el cuartel con miras a estar listos para salir a patrullar y atender situaciones de emergencia cuando amainaran las ráfagas. Sin embargo, estuvieron a punto de perecer ahogados. Y fueron sus buenas relaciones con la comunidad lo que llevó a los vecinos de un residencial cercano a rescatarlos con apoyo de los bomberos.

Tristemente en Aguadilla, los agentes estatales Héctor Luis Matías y Ángel Lorenzo González no corrieron igual suerte. Después de días trabajando, ambos se dirigían en sus vehículos privados de vuelta a sus hogares cuando el río Culebrinas, convertido en fiera, fuera de su cauce, los arrastró y los uniformados perecieron.

Al igual que miles de miembros de la Policía estos agentes cumplían con sus labores en el momento histórico de mayor riesgo que ha vivido Puerto Rico en décadas. Dieron y dan cátedra de lo que es una vocación inquebrantable al servicio público en momentos de extrema dificultad.

Muchos agentes también han perdido sus casas y otros bienes, pero, aun así, cumplen de sol a sol en complicadas tareas de seguridad.

Tal encomienda al presente incluye el respaldo a los esfuerzos del Ejército, la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA), así como las dependencias del gobierno estatal en esta etapa del desastre, descrito por el curtido teniente general Jeffrey Buchanan, a cargo de las operaciones militares de emergencia, como “lo peor que he visto nunca”.

Ante la crisis, cooperar con los agentes adquiere un cariz de deber y necesidad ciudadana. Mientras, urge rehabilitar la infraestructura policíaca, con énfasis en su sistema de telecomunicaciones, para que puedan realizar con mayor efectividad sus importantes labores de vigilancia, prevención de robos y saqueos e investigar actos delictivos de desalmados maleantes que han aprovechado la crisis para realizar escalamientos y apropiaciones ilegales en comercios, casas u otros lugares.

El trabajo de los policías implica arriesgar sus vidas para salvar la de los demás y, como ocurre al presente, luchar por restablecer la seguridad del pueblo, que con su crucial apoyo trabaja con firmeza por la reconstrucción de Puerto Rico.

## **Más De La Mitad Del País Tiene Agua**

By Yaritza Rivera Clemente

[El Vocero de Puerto Rico](#), October 7, 2017

El gobernador Ricardo Rosselló informó que 695 mil clientes cuentan con el servicio de agua, lo que equivale al 55.5% de los abonados, mientras que solo un 10.7% de la población está conectado al sistema de energía eléctrica.

Según la Autoridad de Acueductos y Alcantarillados (AAA), el servicio por zonas se encuentra en 64% para el área metro, 69% para el oeste, 69% para el sur y 63% para el este. El norte cuenta con un 28% de servicio.

También se informó que los generadores eléctricos en la represa de Carraízo están en funcionamiento lo que permitió restablecer el servicio en la urbanización Fairview y el barrio Saint Just de Trujillo Alto, para añadir 12 mil nuevos clientes.

“Reconocemos que muchos clientes no están recibiendo los servicios de agua y luz por lo que he ordenado a las dos corporaciones públicas a detener el envío de facturas. A las personas que se les haya enviado facturas por periodos en los que no tuvo el servicio, no tendrán que pagarlo y no se le discontinuará el servicio. Una vez tengamos los servicios de medición operacionales solo se le cobrará la tarifa de consumo a los clientes que hayan recibido servicios”, dijo Rosselló.

Respecto a la situación en la represa Guajataca, Rosselló indicó que aún se encuentra en “estado crítico”, y mencionó que el Cuerpo de Ingenieros y el Departamento de Defensa de Estados Unidos laboran para establecer en el lugar barreras de concreto para mitigar cualquier emergencia. Recalcó que esa iniciativa busca prevenir el impacto que pudieran tener las lluvias que se esperan en la zona noroeste en los próximos días.

Por su parte, el director ejecutivo de la Autoridad de Energía Eléctrica (AEE), Ricardo Ramos, informó que se está trabajando para energizar la represa de La Plata. Señaló que los trabajos se interrumpieron el jueves por causa de los rayos que acompañaron la intensa lluvia que cayó en la tarde. Espera que la represa pueda entrar en funciones este fin de semana.

### **Aumentan las muertes**

De otro lado, el primer ejecutivo confirmó que con dos muertes reportadas en los municipios de Patillas y San Germán aumentó a 36 el número de víctimas fatales relacionado al huracán.

En el caso de Patillas, se informó que se trata de una persona que fue encontrada entre escombros, y en San Germán, otra que presuntamente fue golpeada por un árbol.

Rosselló dijo que espera tener un cuadro más claro sobre las muertes vinculadas al potente ciclón y mencionó que el director del Departamento de Seguridad Pública, Héctor Pesquera, está a cargo de recabar la información a las agencias pertinentes.

Además, se comunicó que la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (Fema, por sus siglas en inglés) entregó ayer 160,259 litros de agua y 262,800 comidas de los Centros de Distribución.

De igual forma, se dijo que se le suplió combustible a once instalaciones médicas. Se esperaba que ayer se entregaran más camiones de combustible a otros municipios y se espera llegar con igual ayuda a Vieques y a Culebra.

De otro lado, la Junta Reglamentadora de Telecomunicaciones notificó que 42% de los clientes cuentan con servicio celular. Debido a un corte de fibra en Ponce, se afectaron 70,000 abonados.

Hay 14 Cell on Wings (COW) de AT&T instalados; cada uno tiene cobertura de servicios de un radio de 3 millas y permite hacer llamadas y enviar mensajes de texto desde los celulares. El COW de Arecibo tiene una cobertura de servicio de 4 millas.

### **Pagan horas extras a Policía**

La Policía de Puerto Rico recibió por medio de FEMA \$950,000 para el pago de horas extras trabajadas durante el huracán Irma y ya se hizo la solicitud de las primeras dos semanas de María.

Además, se restableció el servicio de la red de radio central para Arecibo, Mayagüez y Aguadilla, además del servicio con el que ya cuenta San Juan, Bayamón, Carolina y Caguas. Las demás regiones tienen comunicaciones a nivel regional.

## **Bajo Lupa La Distribución De Agua Y Alimentos**

By Laura M. Quintero

[El Vocero de Puerto Rico](#), October 9, 2017

El gobernador Ricardo Rosselló informó ayer que ante las continuas querellas de que el agua y la comida no llegan a los sectores en necesidad, ha solicitado a la Fiscalía federal y al Departamento de Justicia realizar una investigación que permita identificar cuáles son los problemas de distribución.

“Hemos decidido tomar una serie de acciones para evitar el mal manejo de la comida... He ordenado a la Guardia Nacional que vaya a los municipios y esté observando y participando en la distribución de los alimentos que están llevando”, comentó en relación a las ayudas de la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA), la Oficina de la Primera Dama y de otras entidades a los damnificados del huracán María.

La determinación del gobernador surge luego de denuncias de que empleados gubernamentales se estaban apropiando de los suministros, según la vicepresidenta de la Asociación de Productos de Puerto Rico, Marilú Otero. Reclamos similares hizo el pastor Jorge Raschke, quien se topó con que habían robado en los muelles parte de la ayuda traída por Pentecostales Unidos por Puerto Rico.

Rosselló pidió que se investiguen las querellas “para ver si en efecto es una cuestión de mal manejo y si en efecto se ha hecho algo de manera equivocada, consideren todo el procesamiento de la ley”.

Algunos municipios como Cayey se movieron a crear estructuras de base comunitaria para identificar a encamados, niños o personas con necesidades de salud a ser atendidos con prioridad, de modo que la propia comunidad se apodere de la recuperación. El alcalde cayeyano, Rolando Ortiz, informó que se distribuirá el agua y los alimentos de acuerdo con ese censo comunitario y se organizarán también comedores comunitarios.

“Le planteé al gobernador que para nosotros enfrentar una crisis, necesitamos una estructura local con autoridad”, contó el también presidente de la Asociación de Alcaldes a EL VOCERO.

En la calle los auditores

Por otro lado, los agentes de auditoría fiscal del Departamento de Hacienda y auditores de la Oficina del Contralor estarán contabilizando y monitoreando “todo lo que se está entregando” en los municipios. El secretario de Hacienda, Raúl Maldonado, comentó a este diario que entre ambas entidades hay 500 agentes disponibles para esta tarea.

Abordado sobre por qué demoró tanto el gobierno en establecer este sistema, Maldonado mencionó que la distribución estaba en manos de los municipios. “Los alcaldes tenían un sistema interno de finanzas, lo que pasa es que con la destrucción que hubo se les hizo bien difícil y queremos darles un apoyo adicional”, contestó.

El gobernador reconoció, además, que se han recibido querellas de comercios que han estado cobrando el Impuesto sobre Ventas y Uso (IVU) y gasolineras que han desobedecido la orden de congelación del margen de ganancias del Departamento de Asuntos del Consumidor (DACO).

El secretario del DACO, Michael Pierluisi, confirmó a la prensa que recibirá empleados de otras agencias que se capacitarán para salir a la calle a inspeccionar el cumplimiento con las órdenes administrativas de congelación de precios. Las multas oscilarán entre \$5,000 a \$10,000 por cada transacción ilegal.

## **Alcalde De Caguas Reclama Que Lleguen Los Toldos**

[El Vocero de Puerto Rico](#), October 6, 2017

El alcalde de Caguas, William Miranda Torres, indicó que por más de doce días ha solicitado al gobierno central y la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA, por sus siglas en inglés) que canalice la entrega de toldos para las familias que perdieron total o parcialmente sus techos y aun no se ha producido respuesta alguna.

“Personalmente y asumiendo la responsabilidad que tengo de reclamar la ayuda para los ciudadanos de Caguas he asistido al Centro de Operaciones de Emergencias del Gobierno Central en el Centro de Convenciones,

además de funcionarios de mi equipo de trabajo, para solicitar que se suplan necesidades apremiantes de mi pueblo. Una de esas peticiones ha sido que se entreguen los toldos para las familias que perdieron total o parcialmente los techos de sus casas”, expresó Miranda Torres.

El primer ejecutivo municipal informó que en Caguas 1,129 familias perdieron totalmente el techo de su casa y otras 1,501 lo perdieron de forma parcial.

“Inmediatamente después del paso del fenómeno atmosférico, mi equipo de trabajo compuesto por hombres y mujeres comprometidos, nos tiramos a la calle a abrir brecha para llegar a las comunidades y brindar la ayuda necesaria. Caguas tiene un alcalde y una administración municipal en pie de lucha en la calle”, agregó el alcalde.

## **Severamente Afectados Los Servicios De Salud En Adjuntas**

[El Vocero de Puerto Rico](#), October 6, 2017

El presidente de la Cámara de Representantes, Carlos ‘Johnny’ Méndez Núñez, se comprometió con el alcalde de Adjuntas, Jaime Barlucea Maldonado, en ayudar a mejorar los servicios que brinda la única sala de urgencia en el municipio, los cuales se vieron severamente afectados tras el impacto del huracán María.

Durante una visita realizada ayer a este pueblo de la montaña, en compañía del presidente del Senado, Thomas Rivera Schatz, el líder cameral encontró que el Centro de Diagnóstico y Tratamiento (CDT) no cuenta con el servicio de aire acondicionado desde el día que María azotó a Puerto Rico. Tampoco tiene servicio de un médico las 24 horas y escasean los medicamentos.

“Este CDT es la única línea de ayuda que tienen los residentes de Adjuntas en caso de una emergencia. Ahora mismo está operando con abanicos porque el aire acondicionado colapsó el día del huracán. Como se sabe, en esta área no hay energía eléctrica, así que dicha facilidad opera con un generador de energía que utiliza diésel cada cuatro días y se ha hecho toda una odisea conseguirlo, lo que agudiza la precaria situación. Definitivamente que esta será una de nuestras prioridades. Vamos a darle la mano al alcalde en este asunto”, señaló Méndez Núñez luego de un recorrido por la facilidad, la cual ubica en el casco urbano de Adjuntas.

“El asunto de contar con un médico las 24 horas del día es prioritario. De noche no hay nadie en turno y de ocurrir una emergencia, la persona o personas tendrían que ser trasladadas a Ponce por una carretera con serios derrumbes y sin ningún tipo de alumbrado eléctrico que permita la visibilidad. Es una condición crítica que vamos a trabajarla, así como rehabilitar parte de la planta física del CDT. Hay plafones en el piso y áreas que necesitan mucha atención, pues sufrieron con el golpe de María”, agregó el líder legislativo.

Otro asunto que Méndez Núñez aseguró se trabajará es la falta de ambulancias. Actualmente solamente existe una ambulancia para atender a una población que ronda en los 19,500 habitantes. Cuando la misma está en uso, transportando algún paciente, cualquier otra emergencia que ocurra tiene que esperar horas en que regrese el mencionado vehículo, colocando en riesgo la salud del pueblo.

Durante la visita, Barlucea Maldonado también le recaló al presidente de la Cámara la necesidad de que la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA, por sus siglas en inglés) agilice la entrega de toldos de resguardo ya que, según sus datos, unas 2,300 viviendas, de un inventario de sobre 12 mil, perdieron parcial o completamente sus techos, y no ha llegado esa ayuda.

En el recorrido estuvieron presentes los senadores por el Distrito de Ponce, Luis Berdiel Rivera y Nelson Cruz Santiago, así como personal de la Cámara y el Senado.

El pasado lunes, el presidente cameral llevó a Adjuntas ayuda humanitaria incluyendo alimentos, medicamentos y toldos para resguardar viviendas que pidieron el techo.

## **A Quince Días De María**

[El Vocero de Puerto Rico](#), October 6, 2017

Sin lugar a dudas el huracán María ha dejado una huella dolorosa en Puerto Rico. Su furia nos golpeó de una manera tan violenta que nos deja en ascuas de cara a nuestro futuro.

Definitivamente, ni nosotros, ni nadie, podía estar 100% preparado para un desastre de esta magnitud.

Las acciones del gobierno previas al paso del huracán fueron puntuales para evitar mayor cantidad de muertes.

Las autoridades locales movieron sus limitados recursos bastante rápido luego del paso del fenómeno atmosférico y lograron abrir accesos en una buena parte de la Isla.

Pero la respuesta de la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA) y de otras instituciones federales desafortunadamente no fue, ni es, tan rápida como se necesitaba.

Entendemos que ser una isla complica mucho el panorama, pero no justifica la dilación en las entregas de suministros, como agua y alimentos, y tampoco en la entrega de los famosos toldos azules para proteger las casas que perdieron sus techos.

No nos malinterpreten; agradecemos la ayuda de FEMA y otras agencias federales, pero debe acelerarse el proceso, sobre todo en la montaña.

Aunque vivimos una era digital, en que las comunicaciones son más rápidas y el Internet se convierte en un aliado para apoyar las soluciones, no nos sirve de nada cuando no hay energía eléctrica, y parte del proceso burocrático para coordinar las ayudas ha descansado en la herramienta digital, probablemente convirtiendo el proceso en uno más lento.

Ya han pasado dos semanas y al día de ayer teníamos muchos signos positivos.

El Aeropuerto Internacional Luis Muñoz Marín está abierto en un 100%, lo que facilitará el movimiento de pasajeros varados aquí, la llegada de más personal de apoyo y el reencuentro de familias.

Las estaciones de gasolina continúan operando con bastante normalidad y, al día de ayer, casi 900 de estos establecimientos estaban abiertos.

Hay 64 hospitales en funciones y ya 25 de ellos están operando con energía suplida por la Autoridad de Energía Eléctrica (AEE).

En cuanto a los bancos, las sucursales abiertas superaban las 175 y los cajeros automáticos o ATM están operando en un 79%.

El agua del sistema de la Autoridad de Acueductos y Alcantarillados (AAA) continúa fluyendo a buen ritmo desde hace días, alcanzando ya el 55% de la Isla.

Las señales celulares también reportan una mejoría significativa, alcanzando ya en la Isla un 45% de los clientes.

Desafortunadamente, la energía eléctrica todavía sigue siendo el talón de Aquiles del proceso de recuperación, pero debemos recordar que el sistema ya se encontraba frágil antes de María. Casi un 10% de los clientes de la AEE está recibiendo electricidad.

Todo esto lo vemos como señales positivas que deben empezar a generar más esperanza en la ruta hacia la nueva normalidad.

El presidente Donald Trump estuvo en visita oficial de cuatro horas en Puerto Rico y pudo comprobar que realmente somos una zona de desastre. Mientras él cumplía con sus compromisos, su equipo se reunió con el gobernador y tuvieron la oportunidad de discutir en profundidad la crisis energética.

La visita programada durante el día de hoy del vicepresidente de Estados Unidos, Mike Pence, puede ser quizás un indicio de que, aparte de los \$29,000 millones solicitados para los afectados por los huracanes Irma, María y Harvey en distintas jurisdicciones, puedan recibirse otras ayudas y más apoyo del gobierno federal.

Y realmente necesitamos que sea revisada la situación de Puerto Rico porque, de acuerdo con los estimados preliminares, entre los daños directos y el impacto en la actividad económica, de una forma u otra las pérdidas ascienden a más de \$95,000 millones.

La mejoría es lenta, pero constante, y por ello debemos mirar el futuro con esperanza.

Lo que sí tiene que cambiar radicalmente es el apoyo a las comunidades más impactadas, sobre todo las de la zona montañosa.

Hacemos un llamado a los directivos de FEMA para que agilicen la entrega de agua, provisiones y toldos a esta parte de la población.

A quince días del impacto de María podríamos estar mejor, sin lugar a dudas, si los recursos se asignan y manejan con mayor prontitud.



También ayudaría mucho a que estemos mejor si todos, como ciudadanos, ejercemos la paciencia y elevamos la vara de la tolerancia en medio de una de las crisis económicas y sociales más difíciles de nuestra historia.

## **Aumentan A 36 Los Boricuas Muertos Tras El Paso De “María”**

[La Opinión \(CA\)](#), October 6, 2017

El gobernador de Puerto Rico, Ricardo Rosselló, informó que el número de fallecidos a causa del paso del huracán “María” se elevó a 36.

“El número de muertes directas o indirectas adjudicadas a la tormenta sube de 34 a 36. Hubo dos muertes adicionales confirmadas, una en Patillas por caída de escombros, y una en San Germán, por caída de un árbol luego del evento a una persona”, indicó, según el periódico local El Nuevo Día, el primer ejecutivo durante la conferencia de prensa que ofrece diario para brindar reportes actualizados.

Hay actualmente 10 mil funcionarios del Departamento de Defensa trabajando sobre el terreno y más de 500 más de la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (Fema por sus siglas en inglés).

Además, alertó de que la situación en la represa de Guajacata, en el área oeste, es crítica, por lo que pidió a la población que esté atenta a desalojos.

Al respecto, mencionó que el Cuerpo de Ingenieros y el Departamento de Defensa de Estados Unidos laboran para montar barreras de concreto para mitigar cualquier emergencia.

Recalcó que esa iniciativa busca prevenir el impacto que pudieran tener las lluvias que se esperan en la zona noroeste los próximos días.

En cuanto a las ayudas inmediatas del Gobierno federal destinadas a daños, insistió que espera que las aporte en su totalidad Washington o que el Ejecutivo de la isla únicamente pague un 10 por ciento del total.

Está previsto que hoy se firme una orden ejecutiva para permitir que médicos de la Guardia Nacional y otros que actúan como voluntarios puedan ejercer su actividad de forma completamente legal, sin tener que pasar por los pasos administrativos que son requeridos por ley.

Rosselló resaltó que aprovechará la visita que realiza este viernes a la isla el vicepresidente de Estados Unidos, Michael Pence, para pedirle que la ayuda federal sea la que precisa Puerto Rico para su recuperación.

“Pence ha sido un campeón de Puerto Rico”, dijo Rosselló, que adelantó que solicitará al número dos de la Casa Blanca que “sea el líder en el Senado para que el paquete de ayudas se haga de igual forma que a los estados” de Estados Unidos.

Subrayó que otra de las peticiones a Pence es la de que favorezca que la isla disponga de flexibilidad desde el punto de vista financiero dada su situación actual.

“Quiero que (Pence) experimente la destrucción masiva y que comprenda que es el daño más grave que ha sufrido Puerto Rico en su historia”, expresó Rosselló, tras resaltar que se tiene que considerar que los boricuas son ciudadanos de EU, por lo que merecen un tratamiento sin discriminación.

Incluso, varios boricuas han dicho que el recorrido que debe hacer el vicepresidente es el siguiente:

No vaya a San Juan. Vaya al interior, donde yo vivo”, le dijo Evelinda Burgos a Pence, quien iba acompañado por su esposa Karen Pence.

A su llegada al aeropuerto de Orlando, el vicepresidente se reunió con un grupo de personas que acababan de arribar y estaban siendo atendidos por organismos de asistencia.

El vicepresidente fue de mesa en mesa y habló con los recién llegados, incluida Burgos, de la localidad de Naranjito.

Esta puertorriqueña afirmó que el presidente Donald Trump había visitado otra parte, no el centro” durante su viaje del martes a la isla devastada por el huracán.

Pence prometió ayudar y le aseguró a Burgos que podría volver a su casa.

“No hay nada como la casa de uno”, expresó.

“¿Te puedo abrazar?”, agregó el vicepresidente y los dos se abrazaron.

## **La Superintendente Evalúa Si Los Policías Van A Cobrar Horas Extra**

[El Nuevo Día \(PRI\)](#), October 9, 2017

La superintendente de la Policía, Michelle Hernández de Fraley, aseguró hoy, lunes, que todavía se encuentra evaluando si legalmente a los oficiales desde los rangos de teniente II a coronel le corresponde el pago de las horas extra trabajadas durante el paso de los huracanes Irma y María por la isla durante septiembre.

En caso de que se compruebe que los oficiales son elegibles para recibir ese pago, adelantó que tendrán que evidenciar que durante la emergencia estuvieron realizando labores operacionales relacionadas con los fenómenos atmosféricos como parte del proceso de evaluación de los horarios de las horas extra trabajadas.

Estos servidores públicos estuvieron laborando en turnos de 12 horas y sin días libres.

El jueves de la semana pasada, el presidente del Frente Unido de Policías, Diego Figueroa, le había solicitado al secretario del Departamento de Seguridad Pública (DSP), Héctor M. Pesquera, que clarificara si estos oficiales cobrarían las horas extras trabajadas o tendrían que donar su tiempo.

Recordó que durante las emergencias ocasionadas por los huracanes Hugo en el 1989 y Georges en el 1998, todos los oficiales recibieron el pago de las horas extra los cuales se les factura a la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA, en inglés).

De su lado, Hernández de Fraley repitió que se comenzó el proceso de pago de horas extra a los policías y sargentos que trabajaron durante la emergencia del huracán Irma, tras recibir una asignación de \$1.3 millones en partidas estatales y federales.

“Ya tenemos aprobada esa asignación adelantada de fondos y que estamos trabajando en ella lo más ágil posible para que nuestros policías puedan recibir sus pagos. Hemos trabajado intensamente y sin parar desde el primer evento atmosférico que nos impactó, el huracán Irma, y ahora continuamos durante la emergencia del huracán María. Los miembros de la Uniformada han tenido largas jornadas de 12 horas y es justo que puedan recibir la compensación monetaria que les corresponde”, expresó la superintendente.

Del total de \$1.3 millones, \$975,000 fueron asignados de fondos federales y los otros \$325,000 provienen del pareo de fondos del gobierno.

Sobre las horas extras trabajadas durante el huracán María, adelantó que ya se solicitaron los fondos de las primeras dos semanas para el pago a los agentes y sargentos.

## **FEMA Habilita En Florida Una Nueva Sucursal Para La Gestión De Asistencia Federal**

By Jorge Morales Almada

[Univision](#), October 9, 2017

Casi un mes después del paso del huracán Irma, muchos residentes de Florida que aún no han comenzado un proceso con la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias podrán ir al condado de Broward para darle inicio.

Muchos residentes de Florida aún no han podido gestionar la asistencia federal luego del paso del huracán Irma por la lejanía de los centros habilitados. Por eso, la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA, por sus siglas en inglés) abrió un centro de recuperación de desastres en el condado de Broward para todos los afectados del sur de la Florida.

La oficina, que operará todos los días de 8:00 am a 8:00 pm, está ubicada en el Atrium West, 7771 West Oakland Park Boulevard en Sunrise.

Por el momento, FEMA ha habilitado tres edificios para comenzar este tipo de procesos: Edificio K del campus Kendall del Miami Dade College, 225 NW 12th Ave en Boynton Beach y 81850 Overseas Hwy en Islamorada.

Los equipos de limpieza comenzaron a trabajar en Key Biscayne, Florida, el día después de que Irma pasó. Los contratistas de desechos están trabajando desde el amanecer hasta el atardecer, siete días a la semana para despejar las calles.

## **FEMA Abre Centro De Desastre En Broward**

By Johanna A. Álvarez

[El Nuevo Herald \(FL\)](#), October 9, 2017

Si todavía no ha podido tramitar la asistencia federal tras el huracán Irma, la Agencia Federal para el Manejo de Emergencias (FEMA, por sus siglas en inglés) le tiene una buena noticia.

La agencia federal abrió este lunes un nuevo centro de recuperación de desastres en el condado Broward para todos los afectados del sur de la Florida que quieran solicitar la ayuda o tengan alguna pregunta.

El centro está ubicado en el Atrium West, 7771 West Oakland Park Boulevard en Sunrise.

Esta oficina estará abierta todos los días de 8 de la mañana a 8 de la tarde hasta nuevo aviso.

Tras el paso del huracán Irma, el gobierno de la Florida y FEMA han abierto varios centros de recuperación de desastres en el sur del estado para darle asistencia personalizada y cara a cara a los afectados.

De acuerdo a su portal online, hay otros tres centros actualmente abiertos para el público: Edificio K del campus Kendall del Miami Dade College, 225 NW 12th Ave en Boynton Beach y 81850 Overseas Hwy en Islamorada.

Si va a ir a uno de los centros, se le recomienda que se registre previamente. Lo puede hacer a través de la página [DisasterAssistance.gov](http://DisasterAssistance.gov), de la aplicación móvil de FEMA, o llamando de 7 a.m. a 11 p.m. al número de atención 1-800-621-3362.

Para registrar, necesitará información personal como sus pólizas de seguro, el número del Seguro Social, número de teléfono, dirección de correo y la dirección y el código postal de la propiedad dañada.

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# FEMA

## Media Monitoring Report

### October 8, 2017

#### FEMA Region 2

*This report is a compilation of news media stories pertinent to Region 2 and the Sandy recovery efforts in New York and New Jersey for FEMA employees and a small number of government officials working on FEMA's issues. To be added or removed from this distribution, please e-mail [gina.callaghan@fema.dhs.gov](mailto:gina.callaghan@fema.dhs.gov)*

**Holiday Message.** *In observance of the Columbus Day holiday, we will not publish on Monday, October 9, 2017. Service will resume on Tuesday, October 10, 2017. We wish our readers a safe holiday.*

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### **HURRICANE MARIA PUERTO RICO**

#### **Weeks Later, 90% Of Puerto Ricans Still Without Power**

Gulf Times, October 8, 2017

About 90% of Puerto Rico was still without power on Friday, more than two weeks after Hurricane Maria raked across the island, according to the US Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

The hobbled power grid on the US territory has meant many businesses, hospitals and public facilities are resorting to generators, including 27 installed by FEMA personnel, to create electricity for their operations.

About 40% of the island has access to wired or wireless communication services, and about half the 3.4mn residents have drinking water, FEMA said.

The agency said it has about 800 personnel on the ground in Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands working on hurricane recovery operations.

The US territories were among the Caribbean islands badly affected by Hurricanes Maria and Irma.

The agency provided the update on recovery efforts as Puerto Rico Governor Ricardo Rossello announced that the number of deaths caused by the hurricane had risen by two to 36 and as US Vice-President Mike Pence headed to Puerto Rico and the island of St Croix in the US Virgin Islands to assess hurricane damage.

Pence met Governor Kenneth Mapp of the US Virgin Islands after arriving at St Croix. He was to visit churches and take a tour of the Virgin Islands by helicopter.

Pence also met Lieutenant General Buchanan, who is heading the US recovery efforts. The briefing was mostly behind closed doors.

They spoke to reporters seated at a table with about a dozen other officials.

In Puerto Rico the vice-president spoke individually to several people, including at least one who told him he was angry with the response.

Asked about that interaction, Pence said: “The devastation here in Puerto Rico has been historic. We understand the frustration when you think of the magnitude of the loss, the impact on the families, the loss of life.”

He said his message was the same one President Donald Trump delivered earlier this week, which is the US is “here for the long haul”.

The Department of Defence said on Friday that more than 11,000 department personnel are working to restore resources to Puerto Rico.

The FEMA and military personnel are part of 15,000 US federal employees on the island to work on the recovery effort.

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## **Residents Losing Hope In Puerto Rico (VIDEO)**

By Nick Valencia  
CNN, October 7, 2017

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## **Senators Pledge to Support Long-Term Rebuilding of Puerto Rico**

By Ezra Fieser  
Bloomberg, October 7, 2017

U.S. lawmakers pledged on Saturday to back Puerto Rico’s recovery as Governor Ricardo Rossello prepares to request a multibillion dollar Congressional aid package to help rebuild from the devastation caused by Hurricane Maria.

Rossello said his government would make a request to Congress by January for long-term assistance. The U.S. territory continues to dig out after the Category 5 storm left much of the island in tatters and caused an estimated \$80 billion to \$100 billion in damages. He made his case to a bipartisan delegation of U.S. Senators on Saturday, as they flew over some of the island's hardest hit areas.

"We need the resources so that Puerto Rico can get out of the emergency stage, stabilize, and then start rebuilding," Rossello told reporters in San Juan, flanked by lawmakers. "This is the most devastating event in the modern history of Puerto Rico."

Puerto Rico has said it needs as much as \$8 billion in emergency funding to keep the government running and respond to the disaster while it prepares a separate request for long-term assistance.

The territory's government was struggling long before the storm, having entered into a bankruptcy-like process in May to restructure \$74 billion in debt. The White House is requesting \$29 billion in disaster aid for a series of storms that hit parts of the U.S. this season, including Hurricane Maria. Lawmakers plan to take up the measure as early as this week.

'Moral Obligation'

"We have a moral obligation as Americans and my fear, quite simply, is that America will fail Puerto Rico," said Senator Richard Blumenthal, Democrat of Connecticut. "We are going to have a fight. And we are going to need bipartisan cooperation."

Republicans Cory Gardner of Colorado and Ron Johnson of Wisconsin were among the lawmakers' delegation, along with Democrats Blumenthal, Tim Kaine of Virginia, and Kirsten Gillibrand of New York.

More than two weeks after Hurricane Maria, nearly 90 percent of households and businesses on the island remain without power, the majority of phone lines and cell towers are still down, small towns are isolated by destroyed roads and bridges, and many communities are without running water.

Rossello said it was unclear what form the funding package would take, whether it be appropriations, loans or other federal programs. His government plans to submit a detailed request to Congress in coming weeks.

"We are fully aware of your plight, your suffering. And we are fully committed to make sure that you are not ignored, you're not forgotten," said Johnson, who added that re-establishing the electrical grid is the top priority.

The Congressional delegation visit follows trips to the island from President Donald Trump and Vice President Mike Pence this week. Food and Drug Administration Commissioner Scott Gottlieb also visited, in part to investigate damage to Puerto Rico's large pharmaceutical manufacturing plants that threaten shortages of drugs on the mainland.

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## **Minus Electrical Grid, Puerto Rico Becomes Generator Island**

By Richard Fausset, Frances Robles and Deborah Acosta

The New York Times, October 7, 2017

SAN JUAN, P.R. — Like many other frivolous things on the island these days, the shiny motorcycles at the Planet Honda showroom have been pushed to the side.

In their place are dozens of folding chairs, and on Thursday morning, they were all filled with Puerto Ricans waiting to buy the most essential machines on the post-hurricane landscape: portable generators, to light their powerless homes.

María Aguilera, 57, a teacher, was waiting in the line that had formed outside the showroom Thursday morning. When the sun sets these days, she said, she relies on candles for light. And like everyone else in Puerto Rico — including Gov. Ricardo A. Rosselló — Ms. Aguilera said she had no idea when the power grid might be restored.

“From the things I’ve seen with the infrastructure,” she said, “it could be months.”

Hurricane Maria’s near total destruction of the commonwealth’s electric power grid has transformed Puerto Rico into Generator Island. Running on gas or diesel, and ranging from lawn mower to moving-truck size, the generators are the only option for the roughly 90 percent of the island that has no access to the decimated grid. Generators now power big-box stores, high-rise apartment buildings, auto shops, fast-food restaurants, wastewater treatment plants and little country homes. And their low, incessant groan is the new drone note in the discordant symphony of post-storm Puerto Rican life.

The generators are a temporary fix that is raising health and safety concerns and highlighting the stark divisions of class in a place with a 45 percent poverty rate. They are also the only option for most Puerto Ricans for now, as the island struggles with restoring its electrical system — by far the most important and complex challenge the storm has presented.

In a news conference on Friday, Mr. Rosselló could not say when the system, which was infamously fragile before the storm, would be fully restored.

“There is no estimated date right now,” he said. “We have established, right at the beginning of this week, we want to have 10 percent of the energy generation in Puerto Rico. Now we’re up to 10.6 percent. And our expectation is, within the next month, to have 25 percent.”

Many big-box stores and hardware stores are selling out of generators for home use. Julito Ramírez, the Planet Honda general manager, said that his company was having a hard time keeping up with demand, selling 250 to 300 units per day. After ordering all of the generators he could find in the United States, he has turned to a cache he found in Canada.

“We are in that cycle of finding and bringing, and finding and bringing,” Mr. Ramírez said. The generator everyone wants, he said, is a \$6,000 model that can run a home air-conditioning

system. The biggest model he had in stock this week was a \$2,300 machine that can run a refrigerator, some lights, a washing machine — but not an air conditioner.

For one customer, Victor Negrón, it would have to do. He said his old generator had given out two days earlier. “I’ve had to go to hotels to charge my phones,” said Mr. Negrón, 50, a health care executive. “We’ve lost all of the food in our refrigerator.”

The storm destroyed 85 percent of the island’s energy transmission and distribution system, and the fix could cost \$5 billion, said Ricardo Ramos, chief executive of the beleaguered Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority, known as Prepa. The public utility is saddled with \$9 billion in debt and filed for bankruptcy in July. The Puerto Rican government also filed a form of bankruptcy in May.

The Trump administration has asked Congress to approve a \$29 billion aid package for Puerto Rico, as well as for hurricane-damaged Florida and Texas. But in the days after September 20, when Hurricane Maria strafed Puerto Rico, Prepa’s money troubles made it “almost impossible” to pay the large contracts required to bring in other states’ power companies to help restore the grid, said José E. Sánchez, a director with the United States Army Corps of Engineers and the head of the task force to restore power in Puerto Rico.

“It is not only personnel, but all the trucks and materials,” Mr. Sánchez said in an email. “That could cost millions of dollars.”

But Meena Dayak, a spokeswoman for the American Public Power Association, the trade group that coordinates the state-to-state mutual aid networks for public power utilities, said that Prepa never reached out to them for help.

“The way our mutual aid works is we can only go in if help has been requested,” she said over the phone on Friday.

Mr. Ramos, Prepa’s chief executive, said he did request help but when none came, he hired a Montana-based company, Whitefish Energy Holdings, to restore many of the power lines. Mr. Ramos said 200 subcontractors were already on the ground.

Andy Techmanski, chief executive of Whitefish, said that a shortage of housing for his crews meant that only 75 were on the island, and that clogged ports were making it a challenge to bring in heavy equipment.

He also said it would take six months or longer for all of Puerto Rico to have its power restored.

The rebuilding will be particularly difficult because many lines stretch across the island’s mountainous interior. There is also the question of whether Puerto Rico should modernize its rickety and outmoded system while it rebuilds. On Friday, the governor said that a modernization effort would “run parallel” with the effort to simply restore power. He said he has begun speaking with Elon Musk, the Tesla chief executive, about ways to increase green energy options for Puerto Rico, which received just 2 percent of its power from renewable sources before the

storm. (Mr. Musk said on Twitter Thursday that rebuilding the island's grid with independent solar and battery systems "could be done.")

But Mr. Sánchez said that the assignment from the Federal Emergency Management Authority is to repair the system only. "We are there to repair-replace, but not to augment," he said.

As he waited to buy his generator, Mr. Negrón sympathized with the governor. The island needed a better power system, he said. But people did not want to wait. His mother, he said, "wants her electric now."

In the meantime, the generators rumble on, though not without problems. A few blocks from the Honda store, the Hospital San Francisco has had two generators fail since the storm, resulting in the evacuation of patients, according to El Nuevo Día, a local newspaper. In a visit to the hospital Thursday, the lights were on, and a worker said a backup generator was powering them. But hospital officials declined a request for comment.

Across town at the Costco, Juan Torres, an assistant manager, showed off the massive, truck-size generator that the business, like many here, had installed before the storm. Mr. Torres said it was burning 1,000 gallons of diesel per day.

But Mr. Torres said that home generators normally offered at the store were sold out.

Across the island, the Army Corps of Engineers has set up 34 huge generators so far, running everything from police departments to water pumping facilities to a Prepa office, according to Lisa Hunter, a spokeswoman for the Corps. Corps officials said on Friday that 177 other generators arrived late in the week, with some of them headed to the United States Virgin Islands.

Camilla Feibelman, a founder of the Puerto Rico chapter of the Sierra Club who currently runs the Rio Grande chapter, said that Facebook was full of complaints about the generator noise on the island these days.

More seriously, she said, generators can lead to carbon monoxide poisoning when misused — a common concern among officials in post-storm environments. Last month, three people in Orange County, Fla., died from carbon monoxide poisoning after running a generator inside their homes.

Adriana González, a Sierra Club organizer in Puerto Rico, said the high cost of a generator "creates a disparity" between rich and poor. In her neighborhood, she said, "you have one house illuminated, and then total darkness for like a block."

Mr. Ramírez, the Honda store manager, said that some generators were stolen from the showroom in the days just after the storm. So the store now makes the sale in the showroom, then has customers pick up their generators from a warehouse a day later.

If nothing else, it is a good time to be a generator repairman like José Miguel Márquez, 35. Mr. Márquez said he was so busy these days that the biggest problem is finding time to deposit his checks at the bank.

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### **‘We’ll Give You Whatever We Have:’ How Organizations Are Fighting to Bring Relief to Puerto Rico**

By Jen Kirby

New York Magazine, October 7, 2017

The sixth-floor windows wouldn’t hold in the winds, they knew. So the doctors and staff at the University Pediatric Hospital in San Juan moved the entire neonatal intensive-care unit, the NICU, down three floors as Hurricane Maria closed in. The predicted damage came. Windows cracked, water poured in. The air-conditioning units blew away.

The entire hospital is now relying on one cooling tower. There was no running water for the first week; the dialysis machines had to be lugged to the adult hospital next door. All 12 elevators went out. The hospital relied on generators until electricity came back, last Wednesday. Only two elevators work now. The NICU, and its tiny, vulnerable patients, remain on the third floor, divided up among 20 rooms on the general pediatric ward.

“We’re in San Juan. We’re the medical center in Puerto Rico,” Marta Suarez, a pediatric nephrologist told Daily Intelligencer, of the University Pediatric Hospital. “So you wonder how are other hospitals are being helped.”

Suarez’s facility is the only public pediatric hospital on the island. It has the largest NICU, and handles the most complicated medical cases. The most vulnerable are referred here. But now Suarez and her co-workers are dealing with the dual challenge of providing care to patients, while supporting other medical centers across the island. Many of those facilities are even more cut off, even more desperate for basic items, from insulin to IV fluids to gauze. “I think for people to understand what is going on is to imagine being thrown back 100 years,” she said. “All the progress we’ve had in medical care, you’ve been thrown back 100 years.”

Those crisis conditions are made worse by what is essentially a logistical nightmare. About 90 percent of the island is still without electricity, and only about a quarter of cell-phone towers are back online. Gas is flowing again to 74 percent of gas stations, according to FEMA, but roads are still badly damaged, complicating travel and aid delivery. And the University Pediatric Hospital is just one of dozens of organizations, large and small, battling these enormous obstacles.

“Our speciality is working on really tough challenges globally, we’re in 40-plus countries. We’re in South Sudan, Syria, places that are a little bit more well known for being logistical challenges,” Christy Delafield, senior global communications manager with Mercy Corps, which made the rare decision of getting involved in Puerto Rico a week ago. “But the scale of this disaster is monumental. Three million plus people in Puerto Rico, and everybody was impacted in some way.”

It was “the great equalizer,” said Michael Fernández, who works for a local community organization Caras, describing Maria. “I’m quoting a friend of mine,” he said, “‘but ‘it doesn’t matter if you’re rich or poor ... everybody has been affected.’” Even big companies and businesses that would normally donate resources, and spearhead efforts, he said, were knocked down. “There wasn’t one corner of Puerto Rico that wasn’t hit hard.”

Fernández said communication has been the biggest challenge to any aid efforts. He and his colleagues have a platform, Connect Relief, which tracks which communities need what — clean water, for example — so organizations or individuals can donate directly. But coordination is intensely difficult without good cell or internet service. There’s the worry that organizations will duplicate efforts — delivering, say, two truckloads of food but no batteries. Fernández said it represents a broader lack of coordination among the government of Puerto Rico, local municipalities, and bigger aid groups. Smaller organizations like Caras know their communities, they know who lives where, and who needs what, but their expertise hasn’t been utilized as much as he’d hoped. “There would be less people hungry and thirsty,” he said.

Mercy Corps’ small team on the ground is cooperating with local groups for that exact reason. “These challenges exist on such a massive scale that it just slows everything down,” Delafield said. “Even with the best of intentions, even with people working around clock.” The frustration is justifiable, she added. You can’t just pick up the phone and call someone. Radios are broadcasting notices to visit this website, or download this app for assistance — something that’s impossible without internet or phone service. Her team is equipped with satellite phones, but they do little good when the people they need to reach do not. “You don’t have any way to call the truck that’s on the road,” she said.

Spotty service and dead phone lines mean sometimes the only way to survey the crisis is getting in the car — especially now that the immediate gas crisis has eased. Suarez said one of her pediatric residents drove around to doctors and clinics asking what they need. “Doctors are saying, ‘I need this, I need that,’” Suarez said. “So you’re trying to help as many people as you can. It’s a little bit overwhelming.” Suarez said they’re trying to deliver everything from sterile gloves to ointments to antibiotics. Many pharmacies can’t process insurance payments, and people lack cash, so Puerto Ricans are flocking to hospitals to get their daily treatments. Suarez said they distributed vials of insulin to endocrinology clinics; people have no way to refrigerate supplies. “‘We’ll give you whatever we have,’” Suarez said they told doctors. “And that’s what we did.”

But what Suarez and her hospital can give is barely enough. There had been shortages before Maria, too, because of the debt crisis. “We have always been very low on supplies, so we knew coming in that it was going to be a huge crisis,” Suarez said. “We knew we were going to run out of everything that we needed.” Shipments have come in: on Monday after the storm, 100 doses of tetanus vaccine from AmeriCares, needed as people waded through sewage water, cleaning up debris. Another shipment of supplies came in Wednesday from Texas, and were waiting at the airport.

Such shipments of medicine, or food, or fuel, have trickled out faster after days of being stuck at the ports or in airports because of the lack of diesel and truck drivers, and damaged

infrastructure. The situation has improved, but Steve Dooley, director of partnerships at the Center for Popular Democracy, said it's still a struggle to get aid down to Puerto Rico, and there's a backlog of deliveries once it arrives, especially because of the unreliable roads. "There's people who have storage units full in Boston, church-fulls and storefronts-full in New York," he said. "People who have two warehouses full of donated things in Miami."

After weighing the options, Dooley said his organization decided to hop on the commercial flights — still operating on a reduced schedule — down to Puerto Rico and deliver the supplies directly. Dooley and six others took a Delta flight from JFK to San Juan on Wednesday, stuffing three bags each full of saltines, cans of tuna fish, mosquito spray, and baby sunscreen. They also carried thousands in cash, with plans to distribute it all through a grassroots relief effort they've been working with in San Juan. Their departure date is still unknown — it will depend if they can charter out a flight.

Roadways are still blocked off, or destroyed down to a single lane. The radio is still the best way to get the news. But aid efforts are visibly paying off, if slowly. More people have generators, the gas lines have shortened. "We adapt and go forward, adapt and go forward, adapt and go forward," Fernández said.

Yet against the backdrop of this aid, the question of the United States' government response hangs over the whole crisis. There are more than 13,000 federal staff and 800 FEMA workers on the ground in Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands, though the administration has received criticism for what has been perceived as a slow response to an overwhelming crisis. Like Mercy Corps, Oxfam International also made the unusual move to intervene in a U.S. natural disaster, something it hasn't done since Katrina, though the organization already had a presence in rural parts of Mississippi and Alabama at that time, said Scott Paul, the humanitarian policy lead with Oxfam International. "Oxfam is an international organization that tends to respond when systems are overwhelmed," Paul said. "In the United States, we don't ordinarily have to do that," he said. Despite this, as the crisis unfolded in Puerto Rico and the federal government's response didn't appear to match the overwhelming need, "it became clear the added capacity was needed."

Suarez said FEMA workers visited the hospital for the first time Wednesday, though the Navy had visited and assessed the hospital in the initial days after the hurricane hit. "They [FEMA] brought satellite phones," Suarez said. "We're like, 'we don't really need that. We have phones. Give that to the rest of the island.'"

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## **HURRICANE MARIA USVI**

### **Paperwork Hassles Frustrate Some Trying to Bring Generators into USVI**

By Marina Leonard and Bill Kossler

St. Thomas Source, October 7, 2017

With power restored to only 22 percent of St. Thomas and 12 percent of St. Croix, private generators are in high demand, but paperwork hassles are frustrating some who are spending good money to bring more into the territory.

Asked about the delays, Gov. Kenneth Mapp said at his Friday evening news conference that officials should only ask for extra documentation if a person wanted an exemption from excise taxes or customs duties.

Reader Jeff Saplis of Sea Glass Properties told the Source he started sourcing and shipping in generators after Hurricane Irma and got in a dozen without difficulty a week ago. But Saplis said this week he found himself struggling all week to get another 10 generators cleared through the ports.

Asked what he was doing with the generators, Saplis said he was donating many of them and selling others at cost, depending on the level of need and ability to pay.

He sent representatives to St. Thomas Cargo three times to try to pick up the generators.

“The second time they went, they called me from there and said I needed a letter with the names and contact information for everyone that would be receiving one of the generators. And that it needed to be notarized,” Saplis said Friday.

He spent a day getting that information, found a notary and had it notarized. But that did not resolve the issue right away.

“So we went back Thursday and according to St. Thomas Cargo, the woman at Excise said they need to get their in-house counsel to see if it was acceptable,” Saplis said.

According to Saplis, he went back a final time on Friday, and was told he had to pay excise taxes of \$700 on the 10 generators, then another \$600 in customs duties, before he could take them.

Because of his frustration with the difficulty, lack of clarity and slow process, he canceled a subsequent order for more generators Saplis said.

But at his news conference, Mapp said the extra paperwork is necessary only if you are seeking an exemption from the excise tax and Customs duties, and if you pay the tax, no extra paperwork should be requested by V.I. officials, Mapp said.

“When you bring merchandise into the territory, we don’t ask who’s going to be buy your merchandise,” Mapp said.

However, merchandise that is donated is treated differently than merchandise which is to be given away for free. Only those generators that are to be donated require a notarized document verifying where those generators will be going before they can be released by customs, according to Mapp.

He said the reason for this documentation is because any items that are to be donated have specific exemptions when it comes to excise tax and customs fees and there needs to be an attested document in order to avoid fraud as to these exemptions.

However, those generators and other merchandise which are to be sold do not require any such documentation but do require excise tax and customs fees to be paid.

Mapp said if anyone is importing generators for sale and is asked for additional documentation as to where the generators are to be going after they have cleared customs, that individual should contact Internal Revenue Bureau Director Marvin Pickering, as this practice of requiring those selling merchandise to attest as to where the merchandise is going is not a legal practice.

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## **Bureau Of Motor Vehicles Officers Suffer Severe Damage**

Virgin Islands Consortium, October 7, 2017

ST. THOMAS — The St. Thomas and St. Croix offices of the Bureau of Motor Vehicles (BMV) suffered severe storm damage as a result of last month's hurricanes, BMV Director Lawrence Olive has reported, according to a Government House release issued Saturday. He noted that the office on St. John is in much better shape, but currently lacks the infrastructure necessary to provide services.

Mr. Olive, who has been working to keep the public informed via regular radio reports, said BMV is unable to process driver's licenses at this time and that the Bureau of Information Technology was working to restore the bureau's computer system.

"I have advised the American Association of Motor Vehicles Administrators about the severity of the damage to our offices here and I have requested that they assist Virgin Islanders who may be relocating to other states with a recently expired license," Mr. Olive said. "Our local law enforcement is also obviously aware of the problems we are experiencing."

The St. Croix office at the Patrick Sweeney Complex will be open from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. beginning Tuesday, October 10, with the goal of processing 40 registrations per day. Vehicle registrations and transfers can be processed without the online system, Mr. Olive said. Only cash payments can be taken until internet service is restored. The St. Thomas facilities in Sub Base suffered the worst damage.

"We are working to clean up and repair a section of the building that we can operate from temporarily," the director said. "We expect to make an announcement next week."

Phone service is currently down at all three BMV offices.

"I thank the public for their understanding and my staff for their efforts under these difficult conditions," Mr. Olive concluded.

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## **RTPark is Damaged, But Still Committed to Economic Development**

By Marina Leonard

St. Thomas Source, October 7, 2017



The Research and Technology Park building on St. Croix was the multimillion dollar jewel of the University of the Virgin Islands St. Croix campus. It won the “LEED Silver Certification” from the Green Building Certification Institute for being energy efficient and environmentally friendly. But even that distinction did not protect the building from the wrath of Hurricane Maria on Sept. 20,

The building suffered interior and exterior damage, including damage to the winged roof, and it looks very different today from the innovative building that all visitors are used to viewing on UVI’s campus.

The building was designed to have sustainable site development, water savings and energy efficiency. The goal was to be as efficient as possible in areas of human and environmental health. The “green” certification the building received from the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design overseen by the U.S. Green Building Council, however, did not protect it from high utility bills, which was only one of the issues with the innovative construction.

Thursday, the staff of the RTPark issued a press release saying that it would conduct a structural and safety assessment to determine the impact of Hurricane Maria on the building.

In the meantime, RTPark staff will continue to promote their economic development program. Many of their tenants and clients are telecommunication companies that do not physically reside in the building but remain paying tenants and clients, and they receive tax breaks based on the economic development program.

Spokesperson Felicia Persaud said the clients are “not dependent on a brick and mortar building.”

According to Persaud, not one client of RTPark plans to leave due to the damage done to the building, and even more prospective clients are proceeding with their applications.

RTPark will soon launch RTPark Rebuilding the USVI, a campaign to support the Fund for the Virgin Islands.

In addition, the UVI College of Science and Mathematics used the building for science and math classes, and the RTPark will determine when those classes can resume.

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## **Duncan Distributing Food Sunday in Frederiksted**

St. Thomas Source, October 7, 2017

NBA superstar and St Croix native Tim Duncan will return to his roots Sunday, distributing food in Frederiksted.

According to a texted news release from Rashidi Clenace, Duncan will be distributing 130,000 pounds of food from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Sunday.

The distribution will take place at the Midre Cummings Park in Frederiksted.

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### **Schools in Both Districts to Open on October 10, 12 or 16**

St. Thomas Source, October 7, 2017

St. Thomas-St. John District

The Virgin Islands Department of Education (VIDOE) St. Thomas – St. John District will open its 2017-18 school year on Tuesday, Oct. 10. Due to some facilities requiring extensive repair work, only 10 schools will be ready to receive students on Tuesday; however, by Oct. 16, all schools declared operational in the district will be open for instruction.

While all schools have sustained hurricane-related damage, the DOE has condemned two: Addelita Cancryn Junior High and Emanuel Benjamin Oliver Elementary Schools. The Gladys Abraham Elementary School, although not condemned, will not be operational this school year; therefore, schools in the district will assume regular and split session schedules.

The district's Curriculum Center and receiving warehouse were severely damaged during the hurricane, and the industrial freezer that housed frozen foods for the school lunch program was also destroyed. DOE has secured refrigerated containers that will store frozen foods as a replenishment supply arrives in the district. Abbreviated meals will be served during the first week of school.

For breakfast, students can expect tuna or peanut butter and jelly sandwiches. Meals Ready to Eat (MREs) from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) will be provided for lunch. Students are welcome to bring their own lunch. Emergency drinking water will also be provided. Hot meals will begin on Oct. 16.

Results of a test drive conducted by the Water and Power Authority (WAPA), the Department of Public Works, School Bus Inc., and the district's Pupil Transportation Division determined that the normal school bus routes can and will remain the same. Buses will begin traveling on their scheduled routes for morning and regular session schools at 6:15 a.m. Those schools include Bertha C. Boschulte Middle, Ivanna Eudora Kean High, Ulla F. Muller Elementary, Leonard Dober Elementary, Lockhart Elementary, Yvonne Milliner-Bowsky Elementary and Addelita Cancryn Junior High.

Buses will begin pick-up of students attending afternoon session schools at 10:15 a.m. These schools are Gladys Abraham Elementary, E. Benjamin Oliver Elementary and Charlotte Amalie High. Additional buses will be added to pick up students at Kirwan Terrace, Estate Tutu and Hidden Valley.

Education officials have been working with FEMA, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and other local and federal partners to get school facilities up and running in the territory following Hurricanes Irma and Maria. School restoration efforts include ensuring each operational school

facility has electricity from WAPA and/or generators, running water, debris removal, room sanitation and temporary roof repairs.

#### St. Croix District

The St. Croix District has set a tentative start date for Oct. 16. Similar to the St. Thomas-St. John District, some schools will resume instruction before others. The 2017-18 school year began in the district on Tuesday, Sept. 12 prior to Hurricane Maria's landfall in the territory. Arthur A. Richards Junior High School has since been condemned, and significant damages have been reported at many of the schools.

#### St. Thomas – St. John District 2017-2018 School Year Opening Dates

##### Location – Start Time/ End Time

##### October 10

Leonard Dober Elementary — 7:45 a.m./ 2:45 p.m.

Jane E. Tuitt Primary School — 7:50 a.m./ 2:35 p.m.

Joseph Sibilly Elementary — 7:50 a.m./ 2:30 p.m.

Joseph Gomez Elementary — 7:45 a.m./ 2:40 p.m.

Addelita Cancryn Jr. High School — 7:30 a.m./ 11:30 a.m.

Charlotte Amalie H.S. — Noon/4 p.m.

Bertha C. Boschulte Middle School — 7:25 a.m./ 2:25 p.m.

Edith Williams AA — 8 a.m./ 3:10 p.m.

Raphael O. Wheatley Skills Center — 8 a.m./ 3 p.m.

Day Adult Education — 8 a.m./ 3 p.m.

##### October 12

Ivanna Eudora Kean HS — 7:30 a.m./ 2:50 p.m.

##### October 16

Julius E. Sprauve School (Grades K – 5) — 8 a.m./ Noon

Julius E. Sprauve School (Grades 6 – 8) — 11 a.m./ 4 p.m.

Ulla F. Muller Elementary — 7:30 a.m./ Noon

Gladys Abraham Elementary — 11:15 a.m./ 4:30 p.m.

Lockhart Elementary — 8 a.m./ 2:45 p.m.

\*\*\*\*\*

\*\*The opening of Yvonne Milliner-Bowsky Elementary, merging with the E. Benjamin Oliver Elementary, will be announced.

Schools listed in bold will assume a split session schedule.

Addelita Cancryn Junior High School will conduct student orientations on Tuesday, Oct. 10; grade 7 will report at 8 a.m.; grade 8 will report at 10 a.m. The school will be in full session on Wednesday, Oct. 11.

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## **INSURANCE and LEGAL**

### **Some Still Waiting For Sandy Insurance Claim Repayment As Deadline Approaches**

By Kristin F. Dalton

Staten Island Advance, October 7, 2017

STATEN ISLAND, N.Y. -- As the Oct. 25 deadline for reopened Hurricane Sandy insurance claims quickly approaches, some Staten Islanders are still waiting for payment.

Sandy insurance claims were reopened in 2015 after a CBS "60 Minutes" report exposed engineers working for flood insurance companies under the FEMA-run National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) had altered damage reports to show little or no damage to homes.

With falsified documents underreporting damage, payouts to people trying to repair their homes were artificially low or rejected altogether.

About 1,200 lawsuits had been filed in U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of New York, with homeowners saying their claims were unfairly denied.

Executives from NFIP promised homeowners fraud-free reexamination of claims and rapid resolution in 90 days.

Former Republican Congressman Michael Grimm, who recently announced his plan to challenge Rep. Daniel Donovan (R-Staten Island/Brooklyn) for his former congressional seat, is calling for a deadline extension.

"The Sandy Claims Review deadline must be pushed to at least Dec. 15 to assure all victims of the storm get hearings they were promised and the money they deserve," Grimm said.

Grimm said the NFIP is "turning their back" on homeowners who have been patiently waiting to be properly paid.

Donovan, however, says that he's working with NFIP toward resolution of all of the outstanding claims.

"As chair of the subcommittee that oversees disaster response, I have been following this issue closely and working with FEMA to ensure the very small group of people affected by this deadline are working toward a resolution," Donovan responded.

A total of 19,449 review requests received results out of the total 19,461 received in the region, according to a spokesman for Donovan's office.

"The opportunity for damage inspection fraud was a major issue with FEMA, which is why it was the focus of one of the first bills I introduced and passed," he said.

In April 2016, Donovan sponsored the Flood Insurance Mitigation and Policyholder Protection Act, his first bill in office.

Donovan's bill passes more than a year after FEMA announced changes to its flood insurance program after fraud allegations.

Donovan's bill requires engineers to provide copies of their reports to homeowners so they can see whether a later version has been altered.

The bill also extends the suit window so that homeowners would have either two years from the date of loss or 90 days after the FEMA appeal concludes, whichever is later.

## PETITION LAUNCHED

Grimm also set up an online petition for those who are in support of extending the deadline.

"I remember the suffering like it was yesterday. It disturbs me to no end to know so little work has been done in Washington to help the victims of Sandy who, on the five year anniversary of the storm this month, are still suffering," he said.

But Donovan called Grimm's effort to draw attention to the issue unnecessary.

"Shame on Mr. Grimm for unnecessarily alarming people. It's not a coincidence he's trying to create a distraction while people are getting notices for flood insurance increases as a result of bad legislation. It's hard to imagine the bar for shame could go any lower," Donovan said.

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## **Flood Insurance Reform Front Unusually Quiet Despite Major Storms**

The New York Times, October 7, 2017

Weeks after Hurricanes Harvey, Irma and Maria brought devastating floodwaters, it appeared problems with the federally run flood insurance program would be thrust into the spotlight.

After all, Floridian activists have pressed Congress for years to stop a program that would dramatically raise flood insurance rates for residents in older, flood-prone areas that previously got lower, subsidized rates.

Yet, following the hurricanes, that previously vocal front for flood insurance reform is relatively quiet.

That's because the goal posts have changed slightly — again. What was once a Sept. 30 deadline for Congress to renew the National Flood Insurance Program is now pushed back to early December.

“We're in a holding pattern,” said Patty Latshaw, vice president of compliance for Wright National Flood insurance.

The government-run program has long been the dominant way to buy flood insurance. Florida accounts for about 40 percent of its policies. Wright has the highest number of National Flood Insurance Program policy holders of any insurance company in the country, and Pinellas County has the largest amount of properties with subsidized rates in the country.

President Donald Trump signed legislation on Sept. 8 that moved the program's renewal deadline back to Dec. 8, giving more time to local communities that are particularly sensitive to whether flood insurance rates are escalated dramatically or the NFIP doesn't get renewed in time.

One such area is Shore Acres, a low-lying St. Petersburg waterfront community on the east side of Pinellas County. In 2016, Pinellas County Property Appraiser Pam Dubov saw nearly double-digit increases in sales prices for homes in the area. Between 65 and 92 percent of the homes then qualified for subsidized flood insurance rates.

Robin Sollie, head of the Tampa Bay Beaches Chamber of Commerce, said that despite the area flooding even in heavy summer storms, the community did not flood during Hurricane Irma.

And two weeks after the storm, conversation about flood insurance was fairly absent.

“Everyone is focused on mitigating their level of stress and trying to clean up their yard,” Sollie said.

The issue was brought back into the spotlight last year when there was widespread concern over rate hikes after a financial blow — a \$23 billion deficit — the federal program took after Hurricanes Katrina and Sandy.

What will sharpen the conversation is upcoming legislation that will potentially reshape the federal flood insurance program.

While it's too early to tell what the final version of the bill will be, Latshaw hopes it will include a few specific elements.

"Long-term reauthorization is really what's needed in the bill," she said. That means something that will last around five years.

Simplification of the program is also necessary to help consumers have an easier time acquiring policies.

"Sometimes it can be very daunting purchasing (a flood policy)," Latshaw said.

One current bill attempting to reform the program is HR 2875, which was introduced by Rep. Nydia M. Velázquez, D-N.Y. It outlines a revised appeals process for those with policies through the program who challenge a denied claim, penalizes companies that underpay program claims and expands some of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's duties under the program.

"After Sandy, we heard from homeowners in New York City and up and down the East Coast who saw their claims denied, delayed or underpaid due to problems in the flood insurance program," Velázquez said in a statement. "This bipartisan legislation would address these shortcomings and protect policyholders from fraud and abuse."

The bill also establishes an advisory council that would examine and make recommendations on rates.

A Senate bill introduced in July, SB 1571, would extend the program through Sept. 30, 2023. It requires modernized flood mapping for communities covered by the program, pushes flood-prone communities to create mitigation plans and calls for FEMA to factor in replacement cost value into premiums.

On Thursday, the House passed a bill proposed by Reps. Dennis Ross, R-Lakeland, and Kathy Castor, D-Tampa, that seeks to pave the way for more consumers to take out flood insurance policies from private insurers. Flood coverage is currently a very small segment of private insurers' business. HR 3823, the Flood Insurance Market Development Act, calls for the development of a private flood insurance market to lower costs to consumers.

"The recent major flood events across the country have provided a much-needed sense of urgency to our efforts to provide consumers with private sector flood insurance options," Ross said in a statement.

The proposed bills will be addressed in the upcoming Congress.

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## **PREPAREDNESS**

### **Oyster Creek Passes Latest FEMA Emergency Drill**

By Patricia A. Miller

Patch.com, October 7, 2017

LACEY TOWNSHIP - The Oyster Creek Nuclear Generating Station and a number of county and municipal responders passed a recent emergency drill to test the ability to shut down during a radiological release, according to a report in The Sandpaper.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency reviewed the three-day drill held from Sept. 25 to Sept. 27 and approved the results, said Susan O'Neil of the FEMA Regional Assistance Committee.

Ocean County Office of Emergency Management officials along with 17 municipal offices of emergency management tested their ability to respond to a mock emergency at the Oyster Creek Nuclear Generating Station on Route 9 in Lacey Township.

The simulated drills are held twice a year to evaluate the response of nuclear plant workers and municipal, county and state agencies.

"The Ocean County Office of Emergency Management participates annually in drills that focus on the nuclear power plant," Ocean County Sheriff Michael G. Mastronardy said. "This year's exercise will be monitored and reviewed by FEMA. The federal agency will look at the actions taken by the participants and will review it for both efficiencies and any deficiencies they may find."

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Exelon, the plant's owner, recently asked the federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission to significantly revise the plant's emergency plan a year after it closes in late 2019.

Exelon says the fuel in the plant's spent fuel pool will have cooled enough to "significantly" reduce the risk of a fire in the pool that could release radioactivity into the environment, NRC spokesman Neil R. Sheehan said.

The changes Exelon is asking the NRC for include:

- Ending the 10-mile emergency planning zone around Oyster Creek.
- Eliminating emergency sirens in the emergency planning zone.
- Eliminating the need for full-scale emergency exercises, which are currently conducted every two years.
- A large reduction in emergency response staff
- Ending the dissemination of emergency plan information to the public
- Ending the need for multiple emergency response facilities



If the NRC approves the request, the changes would take place in January of 2021, 12 months after the plant closes, according to an earlier Patch report.

“We will need to thoroughly review the analysis and determine if the company’s assessment of the risks is accurate,” Sheehan said.

Each nuclear plant has a different lifespan, providing distinctive quantities of fuel in the pool, he said.

Oyster Creek is the oldest nuclear plant in the United States. It went online on Dec. 23, 1969.

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## **OTHER NEW YORK NEWS**

### **De Blasio, Black Eyed Peas Urge New Yorkers to Help Puerto Rico, U.S. Virgin Islands in Wake of Devastating Hurricane**

By Wale Aliyu

NBCNewYork.com, October 7, 2017

Even though Hurricane Maria hit the Caribbean weeks ago, islands there continue to struggle in a crisis left by the powerful storm.

Mayor Bill de Blasio and members of the music group Black Eyed Peas were at FDNY EMS Station 26 in the Bronx Saturday urging New Yorkers to get involved in the relief response by donating essentials like batteries, baby food and first aid supplies.

“These are the products that people in Puerto Rico need and they’re not going to get enough of them if we don’t do this,” de Blasio said.

“Especially being a Mexican American, Latino, myself, it’s important for me to use my voice and my platform to be of service to our people,” Gomez said. “I always say that the power of the people is much stronger than the people in power.”

While the donation drive is shipping goods to Puerto Rico, other are collecting to help the surrounding areas affected.

“It gives me pleasure to see how many people actually showed up here this morning, said Roy Abraham. “People have been working since 6 o’clock this morning. And if we can continue that effort, I think we can get Dominica, at least Dominica, back on the road to recovery.”

City Council member Andy King was collecting goods to make sure the victims on the Virgin Islands don’t get overlooked in the desperate recovery efforts. He said the majority of islands are not getting coverage.

“We are not seeing the pictures of devastation on some of these island and they are living with turmoil each and every day, so I’m asking us all, do all that you can,” King said. “Small as they might be, they are still our brothers, our sisters, our family members who are living there.”

As of Friday, power had only been restored for 10.7 percent of Puerto Rico and 55.5 percent of people have drinking water, according to status.PR, a Spanish-language website maintained by the governor's office.

Among the other signs of progress Friday, according to Puerto Rico's government: 78 percent of gas stations up and running, 73 percent of supermarkets open, and more than half of bank branches open.

Still, a communications blackout remains a major problem for many. About 42 percent of the island has access to wired or wireless service, according to the governor's office. Overall, 84.6 percent of cell sites are still out, the Federal Communications Commission said.

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## **OTHER NEW JERSEY NEWS**

### **Bergen Sheriff: How You Can Help Hurricane Maria Victims In Puerto Rico**

By Jerry DeMarco

Hackensack Voice, October 7, 2017

HACKENSACK, N.J. -- You can help a united effort coordinated by law enforcement in Bergen County to provide disaster relief to Hurricane Maria victims in Puerto Rico.

Dozens of types of items will be collected at a drive this Wednesday, Oct. 11, from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. at the Bergen County Administration parking lot at East Kansas and South River streets.

Joining forces for the drive are the Bergen County Sheriff's Office, Bergen County Sheriff's PBA Local 134, National Coalition of Latino Officers and the Port Authority Police Hispanic Society.

"Help us to help those in need," Bergen County Sheriff Michael Saudino said.

Among the sealed items needed:

- Gatorade;
- Pedialyte;
- Water;
- Baby formula;
- Personal care kits: toothpaste, brushes, soap, shampoo, deodorant, feminine products;
- Diapers;
- First-aid kits;
- Gloves;
- Trash bags;
- Hand sanitizer;
- Water purification tablets;

- Battery-operated flashlights;
- Battery-operated radios;
- Batteries (all sizes);
- Towels;
- Sleeping bags;
- Small tents;
- Blankets;
- Mosquito repellent and bug spray;
- Canned non-perishable food.

INFO: (201) 336-3540

Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico as a Category 4 storm -- the strongest there in 80 years and more powerful than Hurricane Irma -- with winds of 155 mph and a combined 20 inches of rainfall.

It will likely take months before power is restored throughout the island.

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## **Construction Firm Owner Charged With Pocketing \$75K Meant For Sandy Repairs**

By Lauren Carroll

The Press of Atlantic City, October 6, 2017

The owner of a construction company has been charged with theft after taking about \$75,000 of clients' money for personal use, Ocean County Prosecutor Joseph D. Coronato announced.

Darin Smith, 45, of Whiting in Manchester Township, was arrested Wednesday after being indicted Sept. 27. The indictment alleged Smith's contracting company, Heritage Construction Enterprises Corp., entered into contracts with four separate homeowners to repair houses damaged by Hurricane Sandy.

Coronato said the homes are located in Long Branch, Ship Bottom, Tuckerton and Toms River. Smith allegedly took the homeowners' money for personal use and failed to make payments toward the renovation projects, according to the indictment.

Anyone with further information about Smith or Heritage Construction can call the Prosecutor's Office at 732-929-2027.

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## **HURRICANE SEASON**

### **Hurricane Nate Makes Landfall At Mouth Of Mississippi River**

The Associated Press, October 7, 2017

Hurricane Nate came ashore at the mouth of the Mississippi River on Saturday and pelted the central Gulf Coast with wind and rain as the fast-moving storm steamed toward the Mississippi coast, where it was expected to make another landfall and threatened to inundate homes and businesses in vulnerable low-lying areas.

Nate was expected to pass to the east of New Orleans, sparing the city its most ferocious winds and storm surge. And its quick speed decreased the likelihood of prolonged rain that would tax the city's weakened drainage pump system.

Still, the city famous for all-night partying was placed under a curfew, effective at 7 p.m., and the streets were not nearly as crowded as they typically are on a Saturday night.

Cities along the Mississippi coast such as Gulfport and Biloxi were on high alert. Some beachfront hotels and casinos were evacuated. Rain began falling on the region Saturday, and forecasters called for 3 to 6 inches with as much as 10 inches in places.

Nate weakened slightly and was a Category 1 storm with maximum winds of 85 mph when it made landfall in a sparsely populated area of Plaquemines Parish. Forecasters had said it was possible that it could strengthen to a Category 2, but that seemed less likely as the night wore on.

Storm surges threatened low-lying communities in southeast Louisiana, eastward to the Alabama fishing village of Bayou la Batre.

"If it floods again, this will be it. I can't live on promises," said Larry Bertron as he and his wife prepared to leave their home in the Braithwaite community of vulnerable Plaquemines Parish. The hurricane veterans lost a home to Hurricane Katrina in 2005 and were leaving the house they rebuilt after Hurricane Isaac in 2012.

Governors in Louisiana, Mississippi and Alabama declared states of emergency. The three states have been mostly spared during this hectic hurricane season.

"This is the worst hurricane that has impacted Mississippi since Hurricane Katrina," Mississippi Emergency Management Director Lee Smithson said Saturday. "Everyone needs to understand that — that this is a significantly dangerous situation."

Louisiana Gov. John Bel Edwards urged residents to make final preparations quickly and stressed that Nate would bring the possibility of storm surge reaching up to 11 feet in some coastal areas.

"It's going to hit and move through our area at a relatively fast rate, limiting the amount of time it's going to drop rain," the Democratic governor said. "But this is a very dangerous storm nonetheless."

Streets in low-lying areas of Louisiana were already flooded. Places outside levee protections were under mandatory evacuation orders and shelters had opened.

Some people worried about New Orleans' pumping system, which had problems during a heavy thunderstorm Aug. 5. The deluge exposed system weaknesses — including the failure of some pumps and power-generating turbines — and caused homes and businesses to flood. Repairs have been made but the system remained below maximum pumping capacity.

On Alabama's Dauphin Island, water washed over the road Saturday on the island's low-lying west end, said Mayor Jeff Collier. Nate was projected to bring storm surges from 7 to 11 feet near the Alabama-Mississippi state line. Some of the biggest effects might be seen at the top of funnel-shaped Mobile Bay.

The window for preparing "is quickly closing," Alabama Emergency Management Agency Director Brian Hastings said.

Florida Gov. Rick Scott warned residents of the Panhandle to prepare for Nate's impact.

"Hurricane Nate is expected to bring life-threatening storm surges, strong winds and tornadoes that could reach across the Panhandle," the Republican governor said. The evacuations affect roughly 100,000 residents in the western Panhandle.

Pensacola International Airport announced it was closing at 6 p.m. Saturday and would remain closed Sunday. However, Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport was open Saturday.

"We are urging customers to check with their specific airlines to see whether their flights have been canceled, because there have been some of those," spokeswoman Michelle Wilcut said.

Nate is expected to quickly weaken as it cuts a path through the Southeast on its way to the Mid-Atlantic and Northeastern U.S., which could see its effects early next week.

The storm killed at least 21 people as it strafed Central America.

Waterside sections of New Orleans, outside the city's levee system, were under an evacuation order. About 2,000 people were affected. But not everyone was complying.

Gabriel Black stayed behind because an 81-year-old neighbor refused to leave.

"I know it sounds insane, but he has bad legs and he doesn't have anybody who can get to him," Black said.

Ahead of Saturday night's curfew, some bars were closed in the French Quarter, but music blasted from others.

"We're down here from Philly and we're not going to just stay in our hotel room," said Kelly Howell, who was with friends at the Bourbon Street Drinker.

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## **OPINION**

### **In Puerto Rico, Realities Clash As Locals Piece New Lives Together**

By Bianca Padró Ocasío

Orlando Sentinel, October 7, 2017

People at the airport in Puerto Rico — not long ago the scene of stranded and desperate travelers — now gather for heartbreaking send-offs in front of the TSA checkpoint.

It's bittersweet.

The only sweet part is knowing your family will be safe, your elders will get the medical attention they need, children can keep going to school, college semesters won't be deferred.

That is, for those who can and want to make the “brinquito,” or the tiny jump across the ocean. It's the promise of normalcy.

But on the island, where I grew up, remains the familiar bitter taste of struggle.

Puerto Ricans know struggle — they take pride in it — but this struggle feels out of their own hands.

Everywhere photojournalist Ricardo Ramirez Buxeda and I went this week, we saw signs of the painful process of gathering the pieces of a life before Hurricane Maria.

On Tuesday, when President Donald Trump came to assess the damage on the U.S. territory, we headed to Maunabo and Yabucoa, in the southeast part of the island. The satellite GPS rerouted us a few times, because some roads led to private properties, and others were blocked off as municipal workers picked up debris.

We arrived at the home of Ada Rivera in Barrio Talante, whose son Miguel Carmona lives in Orlando. Carmona hadn't heard from her or his own son in Maunabo, so we went to make sure they were fine.

Maunabo is right next to Yabucoa, where the storm first made landfall. Neighbors have been able to clear up their streets, but the area is pitch black and most neighbors are still without water. Cell phone towers are still down.

Rivera, who doesn't have water or power, offered us a cup of coffee.

“I have plenty of water saved up, so don't be shy if you need to use the bathroom,” she said.

We, of course, refused, wanting to let them save their resources.

Rivera said that back in Orlando, we knew more about what was happening on Sept. 20 when the hurricane howled through the island than those who were living it.

And when Central Florida's 320,000 Puerto Ricans were yearning for word from the island, family and friends here were just as desperate to let them know they were OK.

On Wednesday, driving into Loíza from the northeast side of the island, Ricardo and I saw people stopping on the side of a bridge, where the iconic Rio Grande de Loíza flowed below just a couple of miles from the beach.

A sewer line under a road that runs along the river had burst, releasing wastewater over the road and into the river.

The stench was unbearable. A man who said he worked in federal security called authorities to respond to it. But it struck me that the lack of communication, of telling the world of what is happening, remains one of the toughest challenges. It still took us two hours to get back into San Juan, at which point I was able to tweet images and get the news of the incident out into the world.

Through all of our reporting, we never called ahead, set up a meeting, asked what time was convenient. We showed up unannounced and in one case, we even had a picture: Do you know this woman? Where does she live?

Everyone invited us in. Like in most tragedies, everyone felt the need to report on their own story: where they were when the hurricane rolled through, who they haven't heard from and what the government isn't doing.

When we went to a cooperative building in Trujillo Alto, south of San Juan, residents found a dozen ways to tell us what Maria's winds sounded like on the day of the hurricane: "...like a chainsaw," "... like a hand slapping for hours against the glass doors," "... like a car alarm that wouldn't go off."

We returned to the metro area at the end of every day to send in our work. Here, another reality emerged. The damage was obvious, but at least there was power and a cell signal and that made a huge difference.

I left the Convention Center in San Juan close to 9 p.m. on Wednesday, the night the governor extended curfew to midnight.

I walked to the nearby Sheraton hotel — where some press members, FEMA, electric, military and essential government workers are staying. Some smoked cigars, sipped on whiskey and finished steak dinners at the hotel's restaurant.

Ricardo and I had to pass through three checkpoints every day to access the press area at the Convention Center. The heavily armed military presence isn't normal. But everyone seemed to act as if it was.

I ran into a friend, another reporter. “Even if everything is upside down, at least if people see the metro area is coming back to life, there is hope that help for everyone else will arrive soon,” she said.

On my last night, I went into Río Piedras to see a friend I promised I’d meet before leaving. The bar El Boricua — El Bori, for short — and the streets around it were so packed it was hard to move through the crowd. This is how it usually looks on a Thursday night.

Bargoers talked politics: “Where are the blue tarps! Why do they keep arresting people who violate curfew! I haven’t showered in a few days!”

The beer was cold and live salsa played for hours. I ran into more friends who said it was the first time they had left their homes in two weeks.

The next day, I was back in Orlando, reassured that my family and friends will find ways to cope. There are so many more stories to tell.

For me, it’s definitely more bitter.

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<b>From:</b>	Simoneau, Grace </O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=873767E987FA4990A831E0DA884AF0D3-SIMONEAU, G>
<b>Subject:</b>	FW: DR-4339-PR DCS 10112017_FINAL
<b>Date:</b>	2017/10/17 07:31:02
<b>Priority:</b>	Normal
<b>Type:</b>	Note

**Emergency Support Function #15 – External Affairs**  
**DR-4339-PR Daily Communications Summary**  
**10/16/2017**

**Topline Messages**

- The entire federal effort is working to meet the mission critical priorities of the Governor of Puerto Rico that include power and water restoration, and medical operations.
- Individuals should be cautious about the health risks surrounding them as they clean debris and drink water that may not be potable, and be aware of growing mold in home environments.
- Assistance from FEMA is available to help individuals and families affected by Hurricanes Irma and Maria take care of necessary expenses and serious needs that are not covered by insurance or other forms of assistance.
- The first step is to apply for assistance online at [www.disasterassistance.gov](http://www.disasterassistance.gov), by calling 1-800-621-3362, or directly with a FEMA representative.
- Although it will be many months, and in some cases years, before communities rebuild and create a new normal, more services and resources are becoming available that allow residents to begin resuming daily routines.

**KEY EFFORTS**

***Other Programs***

**US Small Business Administration**

- Applications Received: **831 (as of Oct. 15)**
- Dollars Approved: **\$908,300 (as of Oct. 15)**

**Assistance to Individuals**

- Assistance from FEMA is available to help individuals and families affected by Hurricanes Irma and Maria take care of necessary expenses and serious needs that are not covered by insurance or other forms of assistance.

- The first step is to apply for assistance online at [www.disasterassistance.gov](http://www.disasterassistance.gov), by calling 1-800-621-3362, or directly with a FEMA representative.
- Assistance can include grants for critical needs for costs such as water, food, first aid, prescriptions, infant formula, diapers, consumable medical supplies, durable medical equipment, personal hygiene items, and fuel for transportation.

### *Commodities and Fuel*

#### **Commodity Delivery and Distribution**

- At the direction of the government of Puerto Rico, FEMA and its partners deliver commodities to Regional Staging Areas across the island, where mayors and local officials from municipalities can pick up food, water, and other commodities for their residents.
- Salvation Army, Feeding America, the American Red Cross, and other voluntary agencies continue to deliver food and water, and distribute meals across the island through shelters and senior centers.

#### **Fuel Delivery**

- No Report

### *Power, Communications, and Water*

#### **Water**

- Individuals and households who do not have access to potable water may go to “oasis” locations to receive water from bulk water tanker trucks. Remember to bring a clean container and reuse containers. For “oasis” locations, please go to <http://www.acueductospr.com/comunicados/default?docid=FD37BFEE10D12986042581960065CE74>.
- According to status.pr, **69 percent** of PRASA customers have running water. For those who do not have access to clean, usable water, a multipronged approach is in place to ensure potable water is available to all residents.
- This plan uses
  - Water purification tablets for home water purification
  - Bottled water to municipalities through regional staging areas
  - Bulk water tankers to “oasis” locations and locations near Guajataca dam
  - Continuous assessment and testing of drinking water
  - Getting wastewater treatment systems up and running
- All **78** municipalities are supported by some form of water distribution such as bulk potable and bottled water through Regional Staging Areas (RSAs). FEMA provides water to the RSAs, where municipal mayors have scheduled times to come and pick up on a daily basis and then deliver to their residents.

#### **Power**

- Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority (PREPA) is working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Department of Energy, and FEMA to finalize the power restoration strategy.

### Communications

- More and more cell towers are being revitalized around the periphery of the island, increasing communications between government municipalities, Puerto Ricans, and disaster responders.
- According to status.pr, **58 percent** of Puerto Rico has access to telecommunications.

### Medical Needs

- Currently, **11** Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) medical teams are stationed across Puerto Rico to support local medical facilities, medical shelters, and field medical stations. **64 out of 67 hospitals** (including Vieques and Culebra) **are currently** open and accepting patients.
- Puerto Rico Department of Health, supported by U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, has identified a strategy for hospital patients in case a hospital loses power. A top priority is to establish communication capabilities for all identified hospitals. The plan encompasses Centro Medico, regional hospitals, and **29** CDTs, or Urgent Care centers.
- People identified with critical medical needs by local doctors in isolated communities are being flown to nearby medical facilities.

### Volunteers and Donations

- Over **60** Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) and government partners are on the ground and coordinating to assist disaster survivors.
- Financial support to established relief organizations is always the most immediate, useful and versatile way to give. To make a cash donation directly to the Government of Puerto Rico, visit [www.unitedforpuertorico.com](http://www.unitedforpuertorico.com).
- For those who want to help but don't know how, the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD) offers ways to help at [www.nvoad.org](http://www.nvoad.org).
- If you plan to volunteer, please sign up with a voluntary agency and make travel arrangements with your affiliated organization.

### Reunification

- The American Red Cross Safe and Well website, available in Spanish, is a free public reunification tool that allows individuals to reunite with family by registering as "SAFE" or post to the website. Enrollments and searches can be done by visiting <https://safeandwell.es.communityos.org/zf/safe/add>. (For English, please visit [www.redcross.org/safeandwell](http://www.redcross.org/safeandwell)).
- Enrollments can also be completed by texting the word **SEGURO** to **78876**. (Survivors may text the English word **SAFE**). Survivors can use one phone to enroll multiple people.
- To speak with someone at the American Red Cross concerning a missing friend or relative, please contact **1-800 Red Cross** or **1-800-733-2767**.

## **Debris**

- Individuals are reminded not to wait for a FEMA inspector to begin cleaning out their home. Before you clean, make sure to take pictures of the damage prior to cleaning and save all repair receipts. When salvaging cleaning out, safety should be the first priority.
- Report hurricane-related damages to your insurance company and as soon as possible.

## **Fraud**

- Survivors are urged to watch for fraudulent claims to register survivors for FEMA assistance. Individuals can protect themselves by:
  - Asking to see official identification badges
  - Never providing financial information over the phone
  - Getting a written contract for work performed
  - Take pictures contractor's business card and his driver's license

## **USACE's**

USACE's 25 Mission Assignments from FEMA for Puerto Rico include: Temporary Power, Power Repair, Temporary Roofing, Debris Removal/Technical Assistance, and Infrastructure Assessment.

The federal disaster relief mission in Puerto Rico continues to operate in a challenging environment. Hurricane Maria's damage to Puerto Rico's ports, airfields, roads, bridges, electric grid and communications has slowed initial assistance efforts but conditions and the pace of recovery continues improving.

### *Temporary Power*

- USACE Temporary Emergency Power Planning and Response Teams are assisting with assessments and generator installations in Puerto Rico. Assessments are underway in Puerto Rico at critical facilities (hospitals, water treatment facilities, airports, a shelter, etc.).
  - In Puerto Rico the team has requests for [more than 460 assessments](#), have completed [more than 359 inspections completed](#), [106 generators installed with another 38 installations in progress](#). [An additional 254 generators are en route to Puerto Rico](#), with [175 generators on-hand](#).
  - Soldiers from the 249<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion (Prime Power) operating at 24 hour operations to increase the generator installation rate.
  - The next priorities for installation of emergency power are Relevo Barrionuevo, Verde Water Well, Lequijam Potable Water Pump Station and Antonia Rivera Airport.
  - There have been 16 instances in which teams were rerouted during a mission due to an emergency generator repair request, which vary from simple refuel missions to large muscle movements requiring coordination of ground and air assets.

- USACE deployed members of the 249<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion (Prime Power) to assist with the power mission. USACE Temporary Emergency Power Planning and Response Teams are assisting with assessments and generator installations in Puerto Rico. Installations are underway in Puerto Rico at critical facilities.
  - To date there have been 488 requests for generator assessments with 328 completed and 106 installed.

*PREPA Update - Power Repair*

- Current load is 474 MW; 17.3% of the average pre-storm load.
- In the last 72 hours 3 sub-transmission lines and 9 substations were re-energized (20.6% of transmission lines energized and 42.1% of substations operable).
- Victoria and San Sebastian transmission centers were energized, as well as the following substations: Nutrimix Feed, Lomas Verdes, John Dewey Collega and Federacion Asociacion Pecuria.

*Temporary Roofing*

- USACE deployed Temporary Roofing Management Cells to Puerto Rico.
  - USACE is performing critical assessments as requested by FEMA. USACE estimates that 60,000 roofs are damaged, 2 ROE Centers have collected more than 3,750 Rights of Entry.

*Debris*

- USACE Debris SMEs are assisting FEMA with debris management strategies in Puerto Rico.
  - Puerto Rico: the total debris estimated for removal is 6.2 million cubic yards.
  - FEMA approved debris removal for 22 municipalities.
  - 7,367 CY removed.

*Dam / Levee – Flood Risk Management*

- There has been placement of 501 concrete barriers and riprap to stabilize the spillway. The barriers and riprap will slow the erosion on the spillway to prevent further damage. Approximately 496 super sacks have been placed in the dam's spillway.

*FEMA Program Operations*

- **IA Undated Numbers COB: 10/15/2017**

Total Registrations	<b>609,287</b>
Total IHP\$	<b>\$69.4 Million</b>
Shelters	<b>105</b>
Shelters	<b>5,037</b>

## **By the Numbers**

- **Number of Federal Employees**
  - FEMA: **1,588**
  - Department of Defense: **14,971**
  - Surge Capacity Force: **277**
- **Individual and Households Program**
  - Irma - Total registrations: **10,533**; Total IHP: **\$1.1 million**
  - Maria - Total registrations: **609,287** Total IHP: **\$69.4 million**
- **The Small Business Administration (SBA)**
  - Applications Received: **831(as of Oct. 15)**
  - Dollars Approved: **\$908,300(as of Oct. 15)**
- **Generators**
  - Generators Installed: **107**
  - Number of Generators Assessments Completed: **359**
  - Generator Installations in Progress: **30**
- **Tarps Distributed: 38,518**
- **Blue Roof Mission**
  - Rights of Entry Signed: **3,799**
  - Blue Roofs Installed: **439**
- **Potable Water: 3.5 million gallons**
- **Bottled Water: 9.4 million liters**
- **Meals: 9.0 million meals**
- **Fuel Dispensed (as of Oct 14):**
  - Diesel: **2,246,644 Gallons**
  - Gasoline: **91,811 Gallons**
- **Public Assistance**
  - Irma – Total Dollars Approved (Cat A-B): **More than \$12.2 million**
  - Maria - Total Dollars Approved (Cat A-B): **More than \$336.2 million**

## ***FEMA External Affairs Operations***

### **Planning and Products**

- Distributed NR-019 “*Photo Roll Up Meals and Water*” (English/Spanish)
- Distributed NR-20 “*How FEMA Can Help You.*” (English/Spanish)
- Distributed Fact Sheet 007 “*Water Safety Do’s and Don’ts*” (English/Spanish)

## **Speakers Bureau**

### **Nothing to report**

## **Joint Information Center**

- Distributed NR-018 *“Faith Based Community Volunteer and Private Nonprofit Group to all media outlets”*.
- Distributed NR-019 *“Meals and Water Top List of Unified Efforts Toward Recovery in Puerto Rico”*.
- Distributed NR-020 *“How FEMA Can Help You.”*
- Distributed MA-08 **“PRESS CONFERENCE TO UPDATE RESPONSE EFFORTS IN PUERTO RICO (For USACE) MEDIA OPPORTUNITY TO CAPTURE VIDEO AND INTERVIEWS ON PRIMARY POWER DISTRIBUTION LINE INSTALLATION”**

## **Congressional Affairs**

- Responded to inquiries from Congress regarding missing loved ones, donation offers, recovery updates for communities affected, and available resources. Also respond to questions regarding the status of medical facilities, roads, oxygen for medical purposes, airport operations, port operations, movement of commodities, budgetary issues, and the number of emergency responders.
- • Sending Congressional Advisories to PR Delegation.
- Reunification/Congressional Requests Update Meeting.
- Hosting Congressional Conference call on Hurricane Maria Response Operation for Congressional members and their staff.

## **Intergovernmental Affairs**

- Met with Vega Baja Mayor and EPA representative to discuss recovery issues.
- Visited the Municipality of Salinas; a Congressional Inquiry and conducted a wellness check.
- Conducted a weekly meeting at the JFO with the municipalities of Aboinito, Naranjito, Bayamon, Guaynabo, Salina, Yabucoa, Cayey and Corozal mayors and municipality representatives; purpose of the meeting is to listen to the municipalities concerns, provide a quick overview of FEMA programs and processes, and request IGA specialists visit their municipalities.
- Observed that the Carril Expresso near Toa Baja is accessing tolls to motorists; there is moratorium on paying tolls in Puerto Rico.
- Met with Vice Mayor of Caguas who was providing constituent services; Mayor reported, felt the meeting with General Buchanan went nowhere; he was of the understanding he would be in the meeting at the JFO. IGA specialist explained that General Buchanan’s visit to Zone 10 to reengineer the tactical approach in the field.

- Met with Humacao Mayor and General Buchanan; Mayor requested a DRC for Humacao and suggested a location at Centro de Belle Blvd del Rio Nicanor Vazquez. Discussion included shelters open, including two (2) located at schools; schools to open Oct 23; food & water situation; supply of local groceries (slow & only partial). General visited POD location with a truck load of MRE's & water.
- Met with EO Manager of the Municipality of Carolina; identified needs of the following: Food and water for an additional 1,200 per week; currently receiving commodities but they do not meet the needs of all the people; short 340 tarps; wants a follow-up on five (5) generators requested.

**Private Sector**

- Puerto Rico Business Emergency Operation Center (BEOC) and FEMA; working on a plan to stabilize the retail food industry and to jumpstart economic recovery. PR BEOC, FEMA, and the State of Puerto Rico are meeting with the three major shipping companies to identify and address any bottlenecks in the retail food supply and distribution system. Areas of concern include shipping volume/capacity; ease of financial transactions at PR ports; transportation from ports to market; and issues facing grocery stores and supermarkets.
- Addressing the needs of the retail food industry is part of a larger effort to stabilize the PR economy, get people back to work, and to get food on the shelves of grocery stores and supermarkets. FEMA has also been meeting internally to coordinate efforts to assist in economic recovery in concert with the private sector.
- SBA (Small Business Association) opening their fourth Business Recovery center today at the Home depot in Ponce (private sector facilitated the space).
- Facilitated sheltering offer from Curtis Instruments, Inc. to the Puerto Rico Housing Authority for 20,000 square foot of space located at their Carolina manufacturing plant.

<b>Daily Event Schedule</b>		
<b>Monday</b>		
7:15 a.m.	Command and General Staff Meeting	FCO, Deputy FCO, All Senior Leadership, EA: Marty B
7:00 a.m.	Central Island Coordination Task Force	EA Liaison: Jocelyn N



7:00 a.m.	Mass Care Task Force Meeting (2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor, Sheraton Hotel Salon Laguna Room)	Mass Care Team, EA Liaison: Yolanda P.
7:30 a.m.	IGA Morning Touch Base (15 Minutes)	IGA Staff at IOF
7:30 a.m.	Ops Stand Up (JFO)	Operations, EA: Caitlin O.
8:00 a.m.	IA Leadership Meeting	IA, EA Liaison: Yolanda B-H
8:30 a.m.	HQ FEMA Daily Ops Brief (b)(6) PIN: (b)(6)	FEMA ALL
9:00 a.m.	Communication Tactile TF Meeting (209C)	
9:00 a.m. (M,W,F)	PR Press Brief (English)	JIC
9:30 a.m. (M,W,F)	PR Press Brief (Spanish)	JIC
9:30 a.m.	Task Force Leader Meeting (2 <sup>nd</sup> floor, 208 C)	Task Force Leaders, EA: Marty B./Caitlin O.
9:30 a.m.	Senior Leadership Brief Input Due Please submit your input in bullets	IGA staff in the field
9:30 a.m.	Messaging Coordination Meeting with Government of Puerto Rico (JFO, 2 <sup>nd</sup> floor)	Caitlin O., Dan S., Ali T., Delyris A., Digital Comms Rep
10:00 a.m. (alternating days beginning 10/12/17)	Sheltering/Feeding Task Force Call (Sheraton Hotel, (b)(6) (b)(6), PIN: (b)(6)	HQ-PR-VI Sheltering and Feeding Task Force, EA Liaison: Yolanda P.
10:00 a.m.	Housing Task Force Meeting (Housing Area)	Housing Task Force EA Liaison: Yolanda P.

10:30 a.m.	Logistics Sync Meeting	EA Liaison: Rita A.
11:00 a.m.	215 Inputs Due to: <a href="mailto:Benita.Worthy@fema.dhs.gov">Benita.Worthy@fema.dhs.gov</a>	EA Leadership
11:00 a.m.	12:30 VTC Bullets due to: <a href="mailto:FEMA-ESF 15-Coordination@fema.dhs.gov">FEMA-ESF 15-Coordination@fema.dhs.gov</a>	
11:00 a.m.	NICCL Call (b)(6) PIN: (b)(6)	EA HQ Directors, FEMA Regions II and IV, Federal Interagency Partners
12:00 p.m.	DCS Input due to: <a href="mailto:Debra.Bauer@fema.dhs.gov">Debra.Bauer@fema.dhs.gov</a>	EA Leadership
12:00 p.m.	IGA Daily Communication Log (submission #1)-HQ Please submit your input in excel	IGA staff in the field collects input; IGA IOF submits log to HQ
12:00 p.m.	PR BEOC: Private Sector Stabilization (La Luna Room Sheraton)	PR BEOC Stakeholders, EA Liaison: Rob G
12:30 p.m.	Senior Leadership VTC (b)(6), PIN: (b)(6)	FEMA Senior Leadership, ESFs
1:00 p.m.	Central Region Task Force Meeting (208C)	EA Liaison: Jocelyn N.
1:00 p.m. (M,W,F)	ESC Effects Cell Working Group	EA Liaison: Rita A.
1:00 p.m.	Debris, Roads and Bridges Task Force Coordination Meeting (209A)	EA Liaison: Jeffrey H.
1:30 p.m.	Bridge and Road Task Force Meeting (209A)	EA Liaison: Robert B.

2:00 p.m.	IGA Daily Communication Summary Please submit you input for bullets	IGA staff in the field
2:00 p.m.	IA HQ Coordination Call (b)(6) Pin: (b)(6)	IA, Program Liaisons, EA Liaison Yolanda B-H
2:00 p.m.	PR BEOC Fluids Manufacturing (Chrysler Room)	PR BEOC Stakeholders, EA Liaison: Rob G.
2:30 p.m.	DRC Meeting (CC Red Room	EA Liaison: Yolanda B-H
3:00 p.m.	Operations Tactics Meeting (209A, (b)(6) Pin: (b)(6))	Ops, ESFs, DSA
3:00 p.m.	NBEOC Coordination Call (b)(6) PIN: (b)(6)	Private Sector Division, PSS Partners
3:00 p.m.	Disability Partners and Stakeholders Call (b)(6) Pin: (b)(6)	Disability Integration Stakeholders EA Liaison: Louis S.
3:00 p.m.	Central Island Coordinated Efforts Update Meeting	EA Liaison: Jocelyn N.
3:00 p.m.	Water/Waste Water Task Force Meeting (Red Room)	EA Liaison: Rita A.
4:00 p.m.	End of Day Report Inputs due to: <a href="mailto:Benita.worthy@fema.dhs.gov">Benita.worthy@fema.dhs.gov</a>	EA Leadership
4:00 p.m.	EA Touch Base – Maria (b)(6) PIN: (b)(6)	EA HQ Directors, Region II (USVI, PR)
4:00 p.m. (M,W,F)	PR Business Emergency Operations Center Meeting (CC, Room 209A)	
4:00 p.m.	PR Food Industry Marketing and Distribution Chamber (MIDA) CC, Room 209A)	PR BEOC Stakeholders, EA Liaison: Rob G.

5:00 p.m.	IA Leadership Meeting	Strategic Planning, IABD, Group Supervisors, EA Liaisons: Yolanda B-H
5:00 p.m.	Combined Task Force Meeting	EA Liaison: Rita A.
5:00 p.m.	IGA Daily Communication Log (submission #2) – HQ Please submit input in excel	IGA staff in the field collects input and submits from IOF to HQ
6:00 p.m.	Mass Care Task Nightly Recap (Sheraton Hotel, 2 <sup>nd</sup> floor Laguna Room)	Mass Care Team, EA Liaison: Yolanda P.
6:00 p.m.	Planning Meeting ( (b)(6) , Pin: (b)(6) )	UCG, C&G, SITL, EA: Caitlin O., Lauren B.
6:30 p.m.	ESF 15 Leads Touch Base	PR ESF15 Leadership
6:30/7:00 p.m.	End of Day IGA debrief (15 Minutes)	IGA staff at the IOF
7:00 p.m.	Guajataca Dam Task Force Meeting (Repair and Contingency for Water) (Room 209A)	Guajataca Dam Task Force, EA Liaison: Robert B.
7:00 p.m.	Central Island Coordinated Efforts Task Force Meeting (Room 208C)	EA Liaison: Jocelyn N.
7:00 p.m.	Air Ops/Transportation TF Meeting	
8:00 pm	Messaging Strategy Call	WH, DHS, Marty B. Caitlin O.
9:00 p.m.	Interagency Sync Call	WH, DHS, Marty B., Caitlin O.
9:00 p.m.	FEMA RSS Call (b)(6) , Pin: (b)(6)	Resource Support Section

**Daily Event Schedule**

Tuesday		
7:15 a.m.	Command and General Staff Meeting	FCO, Deputy FCO, All Sr. Leadership EA: Marty B.
7:00 a.m.	Central Island Coordination Efforts	EA Liaison – Jocelyn N.
7:00 a.m.	Mass Care Task Force Meeting (2 <sup>nd</sup> floor, Sheraton Hotel Salon Laguna)	Mass Care Team, EA Liaison: Yolanda P.
7:30 a.m.	IGA Morning Touch Base (15 Minutes)	IGA staff at the IOF
7:30 a.m.	Ops Stand Up Meeting (JFO)	Operations, EA: Caitlin O.
8:00 a.m.	IA Leadership Meeting	IA, EA Liaison: Yolanda B-H
8:30 a.m.	HQ FEMA Daily Ops Brief (b)(6) PIN: (b)(6)	FEMA ALL
9:00 a.m.	Communication Tactical TF Meeting (209C)	
9:00 a.m. (M,W,F)	PR Press Brief (English)	JIC
9:30 a.m. (M,W,F)	PR Press Brief (Spanish)	JIC
9:30 a.m.	Task Force Leader Meeting (2nd Floor 208C)	Task For Task Force Leaders, EA: Marty B./Caitlin O.
9:30 a.m.	Senior Leadership Brief Input Due Please submit your input in bullets	IGA staff in the field
9:30 a.m.	Messaging Coordination Meeting with Government of Puerto Rico (JFO, 2 <sup>nd</sup> floor)	Caitlin O., Dan S., Ali T., Delyris A., Digital Comms Rep.

10:00 a.m. (alternating days beginning 10/12/17)	Sheltering and Feeding Task Force Call (Sheraton Hotel)	HQ-PR-VI Sheltering and Feeding Task Force, EA Liaison: Yolanda P.
10:00 a.m.	Housing Task Force Meeting	Housing Task Force EA Liaison: Yolanda P.
10:30 a.m.	Logistics Sync Meeting	EA Liaison: Rita A.
11:00 a.m.	215 Input Due to: <a href="mailto:Benita.Worthy@fema.dhs.gov">Benita.Worthy@fema.dhs.gov</a>	EA Leadership
11:00 a.m.	12:30 VTC Bullets due to: <a href="mailto:FEMA-ESF 15-Coordination@fema.dhs.gov">FEMA-ESF 15-Coordination@fema.dhs.gov</a>	
11:00 a.m.	NICCL Call (b)(6), PIN: (b)(6)	EA HQ Directors, FEMA Regions II and IV, Federal Interagency Partners
12:00 p.m.	DCS Input due to: <a href="mailto:Debra.Bauer@fema.dhs.gov">Debra.Bauer@fema.dhs.gov</a>	EA Leadership
12:00 p.m.	IGA Daily Communications Log (submission #1)-HQ Please submit your input in excel	IGA staff in the field collects input; IGA IOF submits log to HQ
12:00 p.m.	PR BEOC: Private Sector Stabilization (La Luna Room Sheraton)	PR BEOC Stakeholders, EA Liaison: Rob G.
12:30 p.m.	Senior Leadership VTC (b)(6), PIN: (b)(6)	FEMA Senior Leadership, ESFs
1:00 p.m.	Central Regional Task Force Meeting (208C)	EA Liaison: Jocelyn N.
1:00 p.m. (M,W,F)	ESC Effects Cell Working Group	EA Liaison: Rita A.
1:00 p.m.	Debris, Roads and Bridges Task Force Coordination Meeting (209A)	Debris Task Force, EA Liaison: Jeffrey H.

1:30 p.m.	Bridge and Road Task Force Meeting (209A)	EA Liaison: Robert B.
2:00 p.m.	Congressional Call (b)(6) Conf. ID: (b)(6)	FCO or Designee, Congressional Affairs
2:00 p.m.	IGA Daily Communication Summary Please submit you input bullets	IGA staff in the field
2:00 p.m.	IA HQ Coordination Call (b)(6), Pin: (b)(6)	IA, Program Liaisons, EA Liaison: Yolanda B-H
2:00 p.m.	PR BEOC: Fluids Manufacturing (Chrysler Room)	PR BEOC Stakeholders, EA Liaison Rob G.
2:30 p.m.	DRC Meeting (CC Red Room)	EA Liaison: Yolanda B-H.
3:00 p.m.	Operations Tactics Meeting (b)(6), Pin: (b)(6)	Ops, ESFs, DSA
3:00 p.m.	NBEOC Coordination Call (b)(6) PIN: (b)(6)	Private Sector Division, PSS Partners
3:00 p.m.	Disability Partners and Stakeholders Call (b)(6), Pin: (b)(6)	Disability Integration Stakeholders EA Liaison: Louis S.
3:00 p.m.	Central Island Coordinated Efforts Update Meeting	EA Liaison: Jocelyn N.
3:00 p.m.	Water/Waste Water Task Force Meeting (Red Room)	EA Liaison: Rita A.
4:00 p.m.	End of Day Report Input due to: <a href="mailto:Benita.Worthy@fema.dhs.gov">Benita.Worthy@fema.dhs.gov</a>	EA Leadership
4:00 p.m.	EA Touch Base – Maria (b)(6), PIN: (b)(6)	EA HQ Directors, Region II (USVI, PR)

4:00pm (M,W,F)	PR Business Emergency Operations Center Meeting (CC, Room 209A)	
4:00pm	PR Food Industry Marketing and Distribution Chamber (MIDA) (CC, Room 209A)	Rob Glenn and PR BEOC Stakeholders
5:00 p.m.	IA Leadership Meeting	Strategic Planning, IABD, Group Supervisors, EA Liaison: Yolanda B-H.
5:00 p.m.	Combined Task Force Meeting	EA Liaison: Rita A.
5:00 p.m.	IGA Daily Communications Log (submission #2)-HQ Please submit your input in excel	IGA staff in the field collects input; IGA IOF submits log to HQ
6:00 p.m.	Mass Care Nightly Recap (Sheraton Hotel, 2 <sup>nd</sup> floor Laguna Room)	Mass Care Team, EA Liaison: Yolanda P.
6:00 p.m.	Planning Meeting (Room 209A, (b)(6) Pin (b)(6))	UCG, C&G, SITL, EA: Caitlin O., Lauren B.
6:30 p.m.	ESF 15 Leads Touch Base	PR ESF15 Leadership
6:30/7:00p.m.	End of the day IGA debrief (15 minutes)	IGA staff at the IOF
7:00 p.m.	Guajataca Dam Task Force Meeting – Room 209A (Repair and Contingency for Water)	Guajataca Dam Task Force, EA Liaison: Robert B.
7:00 p.m.	Central Island Coordination Efforts Task Force Meeting (Room 208C)	EA Liaison: Jocelyn N.
7:00 p.m.	Air Ops/Transportation TF Meeting	
8:00 p.m.	Messaging Strategy Call	WH, DHS, Marty B. Caitlin O.



9:00 a.m.	Interagency Sync Call	WH, DHS, Marty B., Caitlin O.
9:00 a.m.	FEMA RSS Call (b)(6), Pin: (b)(6)	Resource Support Section

## WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING

- “I never thought that our special moment would happen here on this ship,” Sara’s father, Francisco Llull Vera, said in a statement Sunday. “Everyone has been so helpful and gentle while caring for our baby. I hope this opens the door for those who still need help to seek out the Comfort.” - *ABC News*

### **Puerto Ricans In Need Of Basic Materials, Medications, Says Volunteer Doctor**

(Washington Times)

By Laura Kelly

[Washington Times](#), October 13, 2017

As the death toll from Hurricane Maria has climbed to 48 in Puerto Rico, residents still struggle with limited access to food, water, shelter and communications, with electricity restored to about 14 percent of the island three weeks after the deadly storm.

The death toll is expected to increase as relief workers reach more remote areas of the island and discover those who have died.

Dr. Lissette Gutierrez, an obstetrician from Long Island, New York, traveled to Puerto Rico to bring relief aid shortly after the hurricane hit. She’s traveled back and forth twice and is preparing for a third trip, waiting on approval to transport cargo pallets filled with medications and other lifesaving and sustaining materials.

“Besides medicine, it’s a lot of basic needs,” Dr. Gutierrez told The Washington Times. “We need tarps, maybe FEMA’s working on it, but they’re not getting to every place.”

Brock Long, administrator of the **Federal Emergency Management Agency**, said that relief workers faced unique challenges in responding to the storm since the air and sea ports had to be rebuilt and communication was nonexistent.

Since the storm hit, however, **FEMA**, in coordination with 22 other federal agencies and dozens of volunteer organizations, has been on the island providing relief.

Dr. Gutierrez, a Puerto Rican native, had responded to emergency medical situations in Haiti and Cambodia before — so she thought nothing of getting on a plane and traveling to Puerto Rico once the coast was clear. She arrived there the Saturday after the storm hit with the island devastated and the entire power grid wiped out.

“I was on a relief flight with Jet Blue,” she said. “There was no power or electricity or communication at the airport when I landed. There was no satellite to the plane to even land, so we were up in the air for quite a while.”

From the airport she rented a car and started taking some of the supplies — about 55 boxes, each weighing 100 pounds — to isolated areas she was familiar with from her time living in Puerto Rico. She brought medicine, water, food, even Depends diapers.

“I went last week, and people thought in these remote areas that I was **FEMA** because I was just knocking on houses and checking on how they were doing there,” Dr. Gutierrez said. ““Are you **FEMA**?” ‘No I’m just me.’ ... They need tarps, they need water, they need food.

“I went to this town called Utuado [where] nobody has been to, and the roads are really bad. Three sisters died in a mudslide when the hurricane happened in that area, so the roads there are really bad.”

She’s in New York at the moment and is waiting for the go-ahead for a third trip with even more supplies that she’s sourced from friends in the medical community around the Northeast.

On top of physical needs, many Puerto Ricans are dealing with the stress and trauma following the disaster. Dr. Gutierrez said she has heard about a number of suicide attempts on the island because people have lost their homes.

“There’s a lot of suicidal attempts,” she said. “I’m seeing my own friends, who are fine over there, getting depressed, like no hope anymore. This wasn’t a Third World country. These are people who had things and all of a sudden ‘poof,’ and how do you start all over?”

## **Media Monitoring and Analysis**

### **Analysis:**

- Most stories in this edition about **FEMA** are from Spanish-language press. They range from positive – power plant grants and tarp distribution – to neutral, to negative, which includes one about “we need **FEMA** to respond”
- With the one-month mark approaching, There’s a renewed uptick in what could be called the “misery index” stories, including the CNN water piece, a feature on renowned San Juan bar struggling to stay open without power and the National Catholic Reporter scolding that things are getting worse, not better
- Heavy focus continues on medical and health issues, with one bright spot being stories of a baby born on the USNS Comfort
- CBS interview with FCO Mike Byrne last week at the JFO is included in this morning’s National Clips broadcast summaries from the weekend
- As the weekend closed, many media were still picking up story of the governor pledging 95 percent restoration of electric power by Christmas and the original CNN story about people drinking water from a toxic waste site; the latter included Government Executive, which published a Quartz story about the water

## **HOT ISSUES:**

- *CNN again this morning broadcast a story about Puerto Ricans resorting to drinking water that may be unsafe.*

**Noteworthy Issues: Nothing to report**

**Media Monitoring Trends: None**

**Summary:**

- “We need **FEMA** to respond,” Loiza family pleads in Univision story
- **FEMA** has distributed 36,000 tarps, is expected to reach 6,300 more in the next three days and has ordered 475,000 that will be available in the coming weeks.
- In new CNN report this morning, EPA’s Gary Lipson, Incident Commander working in Puerto Rico in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria, says nearby residents at Dorado have been drinking potentially contaminated water from a well.
- Jayuya among the municipalities struggling to recover.
- Several stories on “still a disaster,” the lack of progress restoring power and bringing aid, including general updates from broadcast news over the weekend
- ABC News reports on baby born on USNS Comfort
- Kaiser Health and MD Magazine looks at the post-storm public health dangers: including leptospirosis, commonly associated with flooding events in warm climates, has now been diagnosed in 10 Puerto Rico patients, and is responsible for 4 deaths
- NBC News also reported on medical evacuees Miami, such as dialysis patients
- Dr. Lissette Gutierrez, New York, traveled to Puerto Rico to bring relief aid shortly after the hurricane hit and has been mistaken for **FEMA**. She’s preparing for a third trip, waiting on approval to transport cargo pallets filled with medications and other lifesaving and sustaining materials.
- Tesla has brought in some of its power packs
- Even with solar being discussed, conventional fossil fuel-derived power restoration continues
- Lawsuit against PREPA is dropped in light of the hurricane disaster
- Charitable events and campaigns include Accuweather adopting a stricken town and Lin-Manuel Miranda rallying celebrities to help
- Hurricane Ophelia makes it to Ireland, Britain, [the 10th hurricane of the Atlantic season](#)
- Bloomberg opinion: Making Puerto Rico pay more for imports from the mainland would be wrong under any circumstances, but at a time like this it’s disgraceful. Congress should scrap Jones Act altogether, “for decency’s sake... puts an end to this nonsense once and for all.

- Opinion: The depth of the social catastrophe unfolding in Puerto Rico is a direct result of the island's colonial subjugation to U.S. imperialism

## **POWER / INFRASTRUCTURE / COMMUNICATIONS**

### **As Puerto Rico Talks Solar, More Fossil-Fuel Power's Starting Up (Bloomberg)**

By Naureen S Malik

October 14, 2017, 8:12 PM GMT-4

[Bloomberg](#)

- Two diesel-fired turbines arrived at plant on island Saturday
- Governor says most of Puerto Rico will have power by Christmas



*Diesel-fueled power generator unloaded in Puerto Rico on Oct. 13.*

*Source: APR Energy*

While Puerto Rico's governor [talks](#) about using solar panels and batteries to rebuild a grid destroyed by Hurricane Maria, the island's importing more fossil fuel-powered generators to get the lights back on.

This week, a ship carrying two diesel-fired turbines docked in San Juan. They were delivered on Saturday to the Palo Seco power plant, one of the few complexes still connected to working transmission lines capable of getting power to homes and businesses in the capital. By Oct. 25, they'll be burning about 85,000 gallons of diesel a day to generate electricity, said John Campion, chief executive officer of [APR Energy](#). The Jacksonville, Florida-based company delivered the turbine rentals as part of a \$35.1 million [contract](#) with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

More than three weeks after Hurricane Maria struck Puerto Rico and laid waste to its power grid, 85 percent of the U.S. territory [remains](#) without power. And while solar installers are [airlifting](#) panels to the island, the diesel turbines highlight how debt-laden Puerto Rico is taking whatever it can get to bring the lights back on. Governor Ricardo Rossello has stressed the importance of federal aid in restoration efforts after President Donald Trump warned on Twitter Thursday that U.S. agencies [can't](#) stay on the island "forever."

"It's a difficult situation" for Puerto Rico, Campion said by phone Saturday. After a big storm in Houston or Florida, he said, "the generation survives, and the transmission survives, and typically you have 500 linemen come in bucket trucks to fix the last mile. The problem in Puerto Rico is the hurricane affected the generation, the transmission and the distribution."

The APR rentals will more than double generation at Palo Seco, where most units had already been decommissioned, to about 90 megawatts. That compares with the roughly 1,200 megawatts that San Juan uses on a typical day. They're expected to help with the constant transmission-line trips that Rossello has blamed for continual power failures triggering blackouts in San Juan seemingly daily.

The new units will be capable of burning diesel to deliver power at 18.15 cents a kilowatt-hour -- and could do it for even less burning liquefied natural gas or liquefied petroleum gas,

according to Champion. He said Rossello was there when the turbines arrived at Palo Seco Saturday. In a briefing shortly after, Rossello laid out a plan to restore 95 percent of the island's power by Dec. 25, the most aggressive timeline the government has given yet.

Previous estimates for restoration of the island's power ranged from six months to a year.  
— With assistance by Hani Shawwa

### [Tesla starts shipping Power packs to Puerto Rico](#) (Electrek)

[Fred Lambert](#)

Oct. 15th 2017 12:25 pm ET

#### [Electrek](#)

Elon Musk said last week that [Tesla would accelerate its effort to help bring power back to Puerto Rico](#) after sending a few hundred Powerwall battery packs to the island where the electric grid was destroyed by hurricanes last month.

Now we learn that Tesla is indeed stepping it up with now a new shipment of Powerpacks.

A single Power pack 2 battery pack has the same energy capacity (210 kWh) as almost 16 Powerwall 2 battery packs combined (each 13.5 kWh).

Tesla's Powerwall is useful to bring individual rooftop solar installations back online for homes and small businesses, but Tesla's Power pack has the potential to bring larger parts of the grid online by working with the electric utilities and combining the energy storage systems with solar farms or other renewable energy sources.

Now several Tesla Power packs were spotted at the San Juan airport in Puerto Rico over the weekend (pictures via José Valiente):

The new shipment arrived not long after [Musk spoke with Puerto Rico Governor Ricardo Rossello](#) last week to talk about ways for Tesla Energy to help rebuild the power grid destroyed by the two hurricanes that recently hit the Caribbean.

Days after their talk, Cal Lankton, Tesla's vice president of global infrastructure operations who recently [took over leadership of Tesla Energy's sales and operations after Lyndon Rive left](#), met with Governor Rossello at the government's command center:

Musk wrote on Twitter last week that they will first focus on helping hospitals and medical centers get stable power as less than 20% of the island currently has power and some regions are still looking at months without power.

But Tesla is looking to work with Puerto Rico beyond short-term solutions and actually try to rebuild the grid to be more resilient with solar power and energy storage.

Here are our previous reports on the effort for more details:

[Elon Musk says Tesla could rebuild Puerto Rico's power grid with batteries and solar](#)  
[Elon Musk and Puerto Rico Governor to talk today about ways for Tesla Energy to rebuild destroyed grid](#)

## **FUEL**

Nothing to report

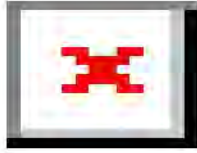
## **HEALTH / DEATHS / ENVIRONMENTAL**

### **Woman gives birth aboard Navy's floating hospital in Puerto Rico (ABC)**

By Karma Allen

Oct 16, 2017, 6:15 AM ET

[ABC News](#)



*Tania Rodriguez Ramos holds her newborn baby, shortly after giving birth aboard the USNS Comfort on Saturday; Gov Rossello is on the right.*

Baby Sara Victoria Llull Rodriguez was born aboard the USNS Comfort, off the shore of Puerto Rico, on Saturday.

The sound of two bells rang through the loud speakers of the U.S. Navy's floating hospital on Saturday to celebrate the arrival of a newborn baby girl.

The Navy's USNS Comfort was sailing in the vicinity of San Juan, Puerto Rico -- providing medical assistance throughout a region devastated by Hurricane Maria -- when baby Sara Victoria Llull Rodriguez made her arrival on board.

"I never thought that our special moment would happen here on this ship," Sara's father, Francisco Llull Vera, said in a statement Sunday. "Everyone has been so helpful and gentle while caring for our baby. I hope this opens the door for those who still need help to seek out the Comfort."

Vera said Sara's 6-year-old brother Alonzo and 4-year-old sister Sofia, currently staying with family ashore in Puerto Rico, are anxiously waiting to meet her.

"They are so excited to meet her," Sara's mother, Tania Rodriguez Ramos said in a statement Sunday. "It's a huge blessing for Sara to be here. I owe everything to the doctors and nurses and everyone onboard."

Puerto Rico Gov. Ricardo Rossello went to visit baby Sara on Sunday. He shared pictures of him cradling the baby in his arms, with her doctor and parents standing nearby. Rossello said Sara was "the first Puerto Rican girl born" on the USNS Comfort.

Puerto Rico Gov. Ricardo Rossello (far right) holds Sara Victoria Llull Rodriguez, the first child born aboard the USNS Comfort in more than seven years, more +

The USNS Comfort, which currently has 21 people on board, has treated more than 100 patients since Maria made landfall last month, killing at least 48 people and knocking out power for most of the island.

Nearly 4 weeks after the storm hit, about 85 percent of power customers are still without electricity and about 31 percent of customers lack access to potable water, officials said Sunday. The death toll was raised by three over the weekend and about 111 people missing due to the storm.

Mario Tama/Getty Images

Francisco Zamoro, 69, poses in his former living room, reflected in a mirror still hanging on the wall, three weeks after Hurricane Maria hit the island, Oct. 12, 2017 in Jayuya, Puerto Rico.[more](#) +

Comfort Capt. Kevin Robinson said Sara, who weighed in at 6 pounds and 8 ounces, brought a sense of joy to the crew.

"I think the birth of that little girl has reinvigorated the crew," Robinson said in a statement.

Lucas Jackson/Reuters

Aluminum roofing is seen twisted and thrown off buildings as recovery efforts continue following Hurricane Maria near San Jose, Puerto Rico, Oct. 7, 2017.[more +](#)

The last birth aboard Comfort occurred on Jan. 21, 2010, while the ship was providing humanitarian relief in support of Operation Unified Response following a 7.0 magnitude [earthquake](#) that caused severe damage in [Haiti](#), according to the Navy.

The ship's crew commemorated the occasion by ceremoniously renaming one of its two small boat tenders the "Sara Victoria."

"We wanted to do something special, the crew has taken to the baby as one of our own," Comfort Ship's Master Roger Gwinn. Gwinn said in a statement. "As she goes forward in life, we hope she carries Comfort with her."

## **RESPONSE and RECOVERY**

### **Nothing to Report**

## **CHARITY / HUMAN INTEREST / VOLUNTEER EFFORTS**

**Lin-Manuel Miranda Rallies Celebrities to Send Aid to Puerto Rico (Study Breaks)  
Creator of "Hamilton," Lin-Manuel Miranda has put together a massive effort to rally Puerto Rican celebrities and send aid to the devastated island.**

By [Marissa Cortes, Stony Brook University](#)

### **[Stony Brook University Study Breaks](#)**

It has been nearly a month since [Hurricane Maria](#) devastated [Puerto Rico](#), creating a humanitarian crisis, the likes of which the island [hasn't seen in decades](#). For almost a month, many Puerto Ricans have not had power, water or food. It is hot and almost impossible to communicate with victims stranded by the freak act of nature. Many members of my own family live in Puerto Rico, and the first contact we had with any of them only happened this week despite the fact that Hurricane Maria made landfall in mid-September. Several [Facebook pages](#) emerged in the early aftermath of the storm, posting updates and pictures of safe citizens who are unable to communicate with their families living outside of Puerto Rico. Power is not expected to be restored to the island of 3.4 million for six to eight months. **FEMA [published \(and then deleted\)](#)** a statement declaring less than 11 percent of Puerto Ricans have power.

It has been nearly a month and the United States government continues to ignore Puerto Rico. The Mayor of San Juan, [Carmen Yulin Cruz](#), has powerfully asserted herself in the face of growing governmental isolation, receiving only [Presidential scorn](#) and a spot on the [FEMA blacklist](#) in return.

Many people forget (or simply never knew) that Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens thanks to the [Jones-Shafroth Act of 1917](#). The bill was passed by President Woodrow Wilson and allowed Puerto Ricans to travel to and from the U.S. without a passport. Puerto Rico's status as a U.S. commonwealth rather than a state is the source of a rocky relationship between the two. A history of corruption and abuse has not aided in smoothing over relations. However, the island's residents are protected by the same Bill of Rights as everyone else on the mainland USA, and deserve the same disaster relief response received by Houston and Florida.

Creator of "Hamilton," [Lin-Manuel Miranda](#), has taken relief efforts into his own hands. This is not the first time the artist has been vocal about issues concerning Puerto Rico; in April, 2016, he appeared on [an episode](#) of "Last Week Tonight with John Oliver" to call attention to the

island's massive debt crisis. On Twitter, he lambasted Donald Trump after the Trump's (unfortunately frequent) disparaging remarks and neglectful behaviors concerning the relief efforts for Puerto Rico. Miranda himself is of Puerto Rican descent and he frequently features his heritage and culture in his work (most notably his Tony award-winning musical "[In the Heights](#)").

Six days after Hurricane Maria ran its course full strength over the island, Miranda penned a [heartfelt essay](#) in "The Hollywood Reporter." The essay begins with a personal anecdote, a story about Miranda's cousin's family seeking refuge in the cement home beside his late grandfather's wooden dream house. The storm's winds, which reached Category 5, destroyed the house completely, but Miranda's family remained thankfully unharmed. Unfortunately, surviving Hurricane Maria is only the first in a very long line of obstacles the island now faces.

Miranda has teamed up with the [Hispanic Federation](#), an organization dedicated to supporting Hispanic families and strengthening Latino institutions in several fields. In conjunction with several community leaders in New York, Florida and Washington D.C., the Hispanic Federation created the [UNIDOS Disaster Relief and Recovery Program](#). Every single penny raised goes towards meeting hurricane-related needs and long-time recovery of children, families and communities in Puerto Rico.

On October 7, Miranda dropped a star-studded tribute song titled "[Almost Like Praying](#)," a modern day "We Are the World." All money raised by the song will be donated to UNIDOS Disaster Relief. The track samples its title lyric from the Broadway musical "West Side Story," a Puerto Rican-centric star-crossed love story. The lyrics name every single one of the island's seventy-eight principalities, sung by predominantly Puerto Rican artists. [In an interview](#) with NPR, Miranda says "I thought, well the only lyric that really unites us and that makes the most sense for a fundraising song is if I can somehow write a lyric that includes all 78 towns in Puerto Rico so that no one feels left out and no one's town feels forgotten."

There are [eleven artists](#) featured in "Almost Like Praying," including Miranda himself. The singers are multi-generational, and the song itself crosses genre lines between pop, rap and salsa to croon patriotic "I love you's." The coquí, a tree frog native to Puerto Rico, chirps in symphony with the island's signature steel drums and the beat created by cow bells. Miranda says on recruiting the group, "Everybody said 'yes' having not heard the song. They just they felt as helpless as I did and they were trying to do as much good as I'm trying to do and make as much noise as I'm trying to make." Celebrities wield more and more influences every day, and it's incredibly vital that they use their fame for good when it can mean the difference between life or death.

Miranda is not the only Latino artist to give back to the island he calls home. Rapper [Pitbull](#) has chartered planes to bring in supplies that the U.S. government can't seem to find themselves able to send the Puerto Ricans in a timely manner. [Jennifer Lopez](#) donated \$1 million dollars to hurricane relief, as did reggaeton icon [Daddy Yankee](#). New York State Governor [Andrew Cuomo](#), in conjunction with rapper [Fat Joe](#), led a donation drive in the city, chartering two planes to send the supplies to the island.

Recovery efforts in Puerto Rico are slow-going. Poor infrastructure and lack of aid from the U.S. government impedes the ability of those on the ground to do their best and reach the largest number of citizens. Puerto Rican residents deserve to be treated like the United States citizens they are, and nothing less. Lin-Manuel Miranda expresses both frustration and hope in the outpouring of public support, saying "I have to say, despite the humanitarian crisis going on on



the island, despite the difficulties, despite the slowness of the U.S. government's response, I've never had more faith in people and American people and people all over the world."

And for you, if you are interested in helping in any way, learn more about donating to Puerto Rican hurricane relief on the Hispanic Federation's [website](#) and make a difference in the lives of millions.

## **BUSINESS**

### **Misery in Puerto Rico: No power, no job, 'enormous' lines (CNN Money)**

#### **Unemployment soars after Hurricane Maria**

By PATRICK GILLESPIE

Posted: 5:14 AM, October 16, 2017

Updated: 5:44 AM, October 16, 2017

#### **CNN Money**

NEW YORK (CNNMoney) - Leslie Cofresi started to cry when he saw his staff the day after Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico.

With no electricity or running water in their own homes, all 25 employees came to help clean up the bar, La Factoria, which was recently named one of the world's 50 best bars.

A bartender greets patrons with a lone solar lamp, in a bar without electricity, in the touristic Old San Juan neighborhood, on Oct. 13 in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Puerto Rico is suffering shortages of food and water in many areas and only 9... Puerto Rico governor plans to restore 95% of power by December

Located in Old San Juan, La Factoria is also where the music video for the mega hit song "Despacito" was filmed.

But nearly a month after Hurricane Maria, Puerto Rico's most famous bar is hanging on by a thread. It was closed for two weeks and crowds have been extremely thin since it recently reopened.

If Cofresi, the co-owner, can't get electricity back on soon, he knows he can't keep all his employees or even convince them to stay on the island.

"I don't know how far we can keep going like this...Our operations are not sustainable under these conditions here," says Cofresi, 35. "Educated people, young people: These are people that, their first reaction has to be, 'Well, I won't have a job.' They're leaving the island right now in droves."

Cofresi highlights two factors that are crippling Puerto Rico's recovery: Many people are facing dim job prospects, and some are simply leaving the island.

This for an island that, before Hurricane Maria hit, had a 10% unemployment rate -- more than double the national rate -- and was suffering from an ongoing exodus of young workers.

Rising unemployment adds to Puerto Ricans' misery. Over 80% of the island still doesn't have electricity. About 40% of residents don't get a cell phone signal. About a third of Puerto Ricans lack running water.

And for some, losing their job felt like salt in the wound.

Christopher Canales says he worked 13 years as a waiter at the Melia Hotel, one of Puerto Rico's most luxurious.

But three weeks after Hurricane Maria hit, the Melia fired Canales and "most" of its 300 employees, a hotel spokesperson confirmed after CNNMoney obtained a letter sent to employees.

Canales suddenly had no job along with no electricity or running water. He and two of his four kids -- ages 4 and 14 -- went to Atlanta to stay with his brother-in-law. His other two children, teenagers, stayed with their mother in Puerto Rico.

He registered his youngest kids in Atlanta schools, but he suspects they may be moving to Florida at some point during the school year to reunite the entire family. A return home isn't in the cards.

"Right now, I can't say that I'm going back," says Canales, 37. "If you don't have a job in Puerto Rico, the situation is really hard."

Melia International, the luxury hotel's parent company, which had 375 hotels and \$3.3 billion in revenue last year, said it had no choice but to let go its employees in Puerto Rico.

A spokesperson said the property was destroyed by Hurricane Maria. The company hopes to rehire its former workers if they can reopen in the next six months. But that depends greatly on when the hotel gets electricity back.

"We are aware and very concerned about how this situation has personally affected our staff," a Melia spokesperson wrote in an email, adding that it says it's not the only hotel laying off workers.

Aixa Montes, a waitress at the Melia hotel restaurant for 10 years, still has no electricity in her home in Luquillo, a 40-minute drive from the capital, San Juan.

And now she has no job. Montes is one of many workers waiting on lone lines to receive jobless benefits.

"The lines are enormous in the unemployment insurance office. It's horrible," says Montes, 37.

It's hard to get reliable statistics on the problem because the continuing dysfunction on the island is affecting data collection.

Cofresi, the owner of La Factoria, says he hasn't fired any workers at his bar. He considers them like family. But everyone's hours have been cut back.

La Factoria is operating on a generator, and Cofresi is frustrated that **FEMA** and the Puerto Rican government haven't given him any idea when he can expect power to come back.

He worries that electricity will come back slowly, building by building. He's concerned that would create unfair competition.

"It's going to be this thing where your life's work is going to be up to luck," says Cofresi. "If you get electricity first, you'll survive. If you have to hold on three, four months without electricity while some other businesses next door has electricity ... you're not going to survive."

Some customers are coming back for La Factoria's signature drink: a lavender mule, a twist on the traditional Moscow mule.

Other bar regulars come to reconnect with friends and clear their minds, Cofresi says. Some just need to charge their cell phones so they can communicate with family.

"We have to start giving people a sense of normality," Cofresi says.

## **WATER**

### **Flirting with another disaster: Puerto Ricans tap into potentially unsafe water (CNN)**

By Ed Lavandera and John Sutter, CNN

Updated 8:13 AM ET, Mon October 16, 2017

[Source: CNN](#)

Puerto Rico struggles to find drinking water 03:10

Dorado, Puerto Rico (CNN) — A tall chain link fence, shrouded in vines, surrounds an aging water well tucked away in this small town just west of San Juan. A metal sign carries a warning in Spanish to anyone who approaches: "Danger. Do Not Enter."

That doesn't stop Juan Carlos Oquendo, 39, from peeling away a corner of the fence and jumping inside. He's brought a van load of containers to fill.

But what he doesn't fully understand is that water from the faucet is potentially contaminated with industrial chemicals that can cause serious health issues.

"I'm going to drink it. I've drunk it before. It tastes fine," Oquendo told CNN as he filled his jugs. "If I don't drink water I'm going to die. So I might as well drink this water."

Oquendo stresses that he's willing to take this chance because access to clean water in his neighborhood has been extremely difficult for much of the last month since Hurricane Maria wiped out the water system on the island.

Just before CNN spotted Oquendo at the water well site, a team of scientists from the US Environmental Protection Agency was collecting water samples from the well.

The EPA is focused on this site because the well sits on what's called the Dorado Groundwater Contamination Site, which was listed in 2016 as a Superfund site in Puerto Rico. The area is polluted with industrial chemicals, including tetrachloroethylene and trichloroethylene, "can have serious health impacts including damage to the liver and increasing the risk of cancer," the EPA said when it designated the site as contaminated.

## **PUBLIC PERCEPTION**

### **AFL-CIO Says Repealing Jones Act Would Cost Jobs (The Hill)**

By Max Greenwood

[The Hill](#), October 13, 2017

The nation's largest federation of labor unions on Friday warned against repealing a century-old shipping law, saying that doing so would decimate the domestic shipping industry and cost jobs.

In a letter to senators, the AFL-CIO said that repealing the Jones Act would open up the U.S. maritime industry to low-wage foreign workers and weaken the country's ability to respond independently to crises and disasters.

"Since the Jones Act ensures that our labor laws protect maritime employees, repealing the Act would pave the way for foreign companies to replace domestic crews with lower paid workers lacking basic labor protections," William Samuel, the AFL-CIO's government affairs director, wrote in the letter.

"Repealing the Jones Act would not result in additional supplies getting to the Island, but it would jeopardize the survival of the U.S. maritime sector and along with it thousands of jobs that would be outsourced to foreign carriers," he added.

The debate over whether to repeal the Jones Act, a 1920 law requiring that passengers and cargo going between domestic ports be transported by U.S.-flagged ships, reignited last month as the federal government responded to Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico.

The Trump administration announced on Sept. 28 that it would temporarily waive the shipping law, which officials in Puerto Rico said was hindering much-needed aid and supplies from reaching the island. The waiver came as the Trump administration faced mounting pressure to step up its relief efforts on the island.

The waiver, which stayed in effect for 10 days, expired on Sunday. The Department of Homeland Security has said that it will not renew the exemption.

Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) and some other members of Congress have called for repealing the Jones Act since the storm.

The AFL-CIO, however, said that it was not the Jones Act that was preventing aid from reaching Puerto Rico. Jones Act ships carrying supplies began arriving at Puerto Rico's main port in San Juan as soon as it reopened, Samuel wrote. He argued the larger issue was a lack of truck drivers and badly damaged infrastructure.

Puerto Rico has become the site of a staggering humanitarian crisis that resulted from twin hurricanes pummeling the island within a matter of weeks. Hurricane Maria, the most recent storm to strike the U.S. territory, wiped out electrical power, destroyed buildings and infrastructure and left much of the island without access to drinking water.

As of Friday morning, only 9 percent of the island's residents had electricity, and about 63 percent had access to drinking water, according to a website maintained by Puerto Rico's government.

President Trump has taken heat for his administration's response to Hurricane Maria, with critics accusing him of handling the situation less aggressively than he handled hurricane-related emergencies in Texas and Florida.

The president has defended the efforts in Puerto Rico, though he has also suggested that the island has relied too heavily on federal assistance and has not done enough to help itself. On Thursday, he warned in a tweet that he would not keep emergency workers there "forever."

"What is needed now is for the U.S. military and **FEMA** to deploy all of their available resources to address the escalating humanitarian crisis," Samuel wrote, referring to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, which has been directing the U.S. government's response to the crisis. "Our fellow citizens on Puerto Rico deserve no less."

### ***Rumors/Misinformation***

- Nothing to Report

### **FEMA: Hurricane Maria – Social Listening Report – 10/14/17 1405 ET**

**Summary:** People continue to use social media to locate loved ones, learn about utility restoration – many doubt validity of media and public official reports. In FEMA-related conversation, the public is pleased with information about supplies being distributed and help available, but they are not sure what the \$500 they've received is for, and there is criticism for the types of food some have received from FEMA. People are especially interested in the USNS Comfort – they're happy about the newborn delivered yesterday, and want to know how to obtain medical services. Efforts are underway to get students back to school and the reactions are mixed. Coast Guard and National Guard recovery efforts are especially appreciated.

### ***Report sections***

- [FEMA Conversation](#)
- [Operations](#)
- [Public Perception](#)
- [Rumors/Misinformation](#)

### ***FEMA Conversation***

- Individuals who have applied for assistance are [asking questions](#) on what the next steps are, and how they are able to get in contact with officials for a status update on their application.
- Heavy discussion surrounds [a picture](#) of the food FEMA is passing out to survivors continues to circulate and generate conversation.
  - The survivor states (10/13) FEMA is only giving out candy and snacks in their food boxes.
  - There are conflicting comments because some agree that this is what FEMA is really giving out and other survivors are stating they received MREs and canned foods.
  - The Digital Engagement Team is working on content to show what food FEMA is distributing.
- Many are trying to figure out the specifics of the \$500 Critical Needs Assistance money survivors could get from FEMA.
  - The conversation surrounds someone trying to [explain](#) the details of receiving the money based on an interview he had with a FEMA employee.

### ***FEMA Content:***

- Nothing to Report

### ***Public Sentiment:***

- People are grateful for the military's help toward Puerto Rico's recovery.
  - Both the content from the National Guard and local media is well-received. ([example 1](#), [example 2](#), [example 3](#))
  - Some are [reacting positively](#) to photos of soldiers passing out water.
- Most are [grateful for their help](#) toward Puerto Rico's recovery. ([example 2](#))
- There are [mixed reviews](#) after Florida Senator Bill Nelson's press conference yesterday.
  - Mostly comments were supportive of the senator and his plans for recovery.
  - Most survivors are ready to see change in their community after the storm.
- The help and visits from local government officials giving back to survivors is receiving a lot of attention through different social media channels.
  - The Governor of Puerto Rico, Ricardo Rosselló, visited the emergency Stop & Go of Roosevelt Avenue to check on staff and equipment for disaster assistance registration with [FEMA](#) and passed out food to survivors. ([example 1](#) [example 2](#) [example 3](#))
  - The Mayor of San Juan, Carmen Yulín Cruz, [visited and talked with survivors](#).

- The USNS Comfort is of great interest to the public. The baby born there yesterday is especially welcome news. ([example 1](#), [example 2](#), [example 3](#)) Many want to know how to get on the ship, and share phone numbers and a graphic with how to get there. ([example 1](#), [example 2](#), [example 3](#)) The Digital Engagement Team is working on a graphic to explain how services on the USNS Comfort can be accessed.
- In a comment posted to David Begnaud's update yesterday on the response, [there's a petition to investigate local corruption at AEE and PREPA](#), though in response others say this has been an issue since before the storm.
- Heavy discussion surrounds [a picture](#) of the food FEMA is passing out to survivors.
- Many people are sharing their gratitude for the celebrities who are raising/donating money to Puerto Rico to assist in the recovery efforts. ([example 1](#), [example 2](#))
- A small amount of individuals are asking how they are able to get their identification cards to travel or what solutions are available for those who want to go to the mainland but have [lost their ID cards](#).
- Individuals who are continuing to look for loved ones in the affected area are being told a resource that has been successful is the Crowdsourc Rescue Group. One person has shared a [screenshot of the texts](#) that they received after Crowdsourc was able to locate their loved one, and another shares how people are able to get in touch with group and [the information needed](#) for them to be effective.
- News is welcome from the Ponce mayor that [goods are arriving at the port](#) and hot meals are being served.
- Many individuals from outside the affected areas are continuing to share their [frustration](#) about the Federal Government's response to Puerto Rico in [comparison](#) to the [response](#) in Florida and Texas.

#### **Critical Infrastructure:**

- As of 0700 ET yesterday Whitefish Energy is performing many critical infrastructural updates throughout Puerto Rico.
  - Rebuilding buildings, bridges, power, etc. ([example 1](#), [example 2](#), [example 3](#))
  - Those inside and outside the impacted area are glad to see progress happening in Puerto Rico.

#### **Operations**

#### **Recovery:**

- Nothing to report

#### **Public Health:**

- Nothing to report

#### **Private Sector:**

- There's a phone number to call [to request Loads of Love from Tide](#) come to the Island.
- Reports of the maximum individuals should pay for gas continue to circulate. ([example 1](#), [example 2](#))

**Mass Care:**

- Nothing to report

**Energy:**

- As of 1100 ET, 15 October, Power Source and Whitefish was contracted to help bring power and restore the city. ([example 1](#) , [example 2](#))

**Communication**

- There have been reports from loved ones outside of the affected area that communications are [coming back on](#) in Aguadilla.
- An individual is sharing information on how survivors may be able to [acquire satellite phones](#) in order to communicate with their families while cell service remains scarce.

**School:**

- Classes are set to resume at the University of Puerto Rico, possibly as soon as in the next week. ([example 1](#), [example 2](#)) Some are skeptical at the news as water and electricity may still not be then.

**Life Safety**

- Family members are continuing their search for loved ones who have been missing since the Hurricane.
  - San Juan- [Example](#), [Example 2](#)
  - Cayey- [Example](#)
  - Toa Baja- [Example](#)
  - Cain- [Example](#)
  - Boqueron- [Example](#)
  - Ponce: A person's relative was at the Damas hospital, and they are not able to get more information about him. - [Example](#)

**Transportation:**

- Nothing to report

**Public Safety:**

- As of 1300 EST 10/15: San Juan has been slow to [remove debris](#) from the affected areas, and individuals are expressing their anger towards the mayor for the delay.
- As of 1300 EST 10/15: El Vocero is on the [second phase](#) of debris removal but people are unaware of when the first phase took place.
- As of 2100 EST 10/15: A facility in Isabela that was caring for sick children and adults was [lacking the necessary essentials](#) to keep them alive such as fuel, and air conditioning. As a result, the patients were able to be transferred to a proper medical facility where they were able to receive life-saving care.
- While La Fortaleza de Puerto Rico reports that [water is potable in Tao Alto and Naranjito](#), people are reporting they still don't have access, and others are [skeptical of the report](#).

*Rumors/Misinformation*  
*Nothing to report*

<b>Sender:</b>	Simoneau, Grace </O=EXCHANGELABS/OU=EXCHANGE ADMINISTRATIVE GROUP (FYDIBOHF23SPDLT)/CN=RECIPIENTS/CN=873767E987FA4990A831E0DA884AF0D3-SIMONEAU, G>
<b>Sent Date:</b>	2017/10/17 07:30:30
<b>Delivered Date:</b>	2017/10/17 07:31:02



**Emergency Support Function #15 – External Affairs**  
**DR-4339-PR Daily Communications Summary**  
**10/16/2017**

**KEY MESSAGES**

**Topline Messages**

- The entire federal effort is working to meet the mission critical priorities of the Governor of Puerto Rico that include power and water restoration, and medical operations.
- Individuals should be cautious about the health risks surrounding them as they clean debris and drink water that may not be potable, and be aware of growing mold in home environments.
- Assistance from FEMA is available to help individuals and families affected by Hurricanes Irma and Maria take care of necessary expenses and serious needs that are not covered by insurance or other forms of assistance.
- The first step is to apply for assistance online at [www.disasterassistance.gov](http://www.disasterassistance.gov), by calling 1-800-621-3362, or directly with a FEMA representative.
- Although it will be many months, and in some cases years, before communities rebuild and create a new normal, more services and resources are becoming available that allow residents to begin resuming daily routines.

**KEY EFFORTS**

***Other Programs***

**US Small Business Administration**

- Applications Received: **831 (as of Oct. 15)**
- Dollars Approved: **\$908,300 (as of Oct. 15)**

**Assistance to Individuals**

- Assistance from FEMA is available to help individuals and families affected by Hurricanes Irma and Maria take care of necessary expenses and serious needs that are not covered by insurance or other forms of assistance.
- The first step is to apply for assistance online at [www.disasterassistance.gov](http://www.disasterassistance.gov), by calling 1-800-621-3362, or directly with a FEMA representative.
- Assistance can include grants for critical needs for costs such as water, food, first aid, prescriptions, infant formula, diapers, consumable medical supplies, durable medical equipment, personal hygiene items, and fuel for transportation.

***Commodities and Fuel***

**Commodity Delivery and Distribution**

- At the direction of the government of Puerto Rico, FEMA and its partners deliver commodities to Regional Staging Areas across the island, where mayors and local officials from municipalities can pick up food, water, and other commodities for their residents.
- Salvation Army, Feeding America, the American Red Cross, and other voluntary agencies continue to deliver food and water, and distribute meals across the island through shelters and senior centers.

**Fuel Delivery**

- No Report

## *Power, Communications, and Water*

### **Water**

- Individuals and households who do not have access to potable water may go to “oasis” locations to receive water from bulk water tanker trucks. Remember to bring a clean container and reuse containers. For “oasis” locations, please go to <http://www.acueductospr.com/comunicados/default?docid=FD37BFEE10D12986042581960065CE74>.
- According to status.pr, **69 percent** of PRASA customers have running water. For those who do not have access to clean, usable water, a multipronged approach is in place to ensure potable water is available to all residents.
- This plan uses
  - Water purification tablets for home water purification
  - Bottled water to municipalities through regional staging areas
  - Bulk water tankers to “oasis” locations and locations near Guajataca dam
  - Continuous assessment and testing of drinking water
  - Getting wastewater treatment systems up and running
- All **78** municipalities are supported by some form of water distribution such as bulk potable and bottled water through Regional Staging Areas (RSAs). FEMA provides water to the RSAs, where municipal mayors have scheduled times to come and pick up on a daily basis and then deliver to their residents.

### **Power**

- Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority (PREPA) is working with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Department of Energy, and FEMA to finalize the power restoration strategy.

### **Communications**

- More and more cell towers are being revitalized around the periphery of the island, increasing communications between government municipalities, Puerto Ricans, and disaster responders.
- According to status.pr, **58 percent** of Puerto Rico has access to telecommunications.

### **Medical Needs**

- Currently, **11** Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) medical teams are stationed across Puerto Rico to support local medical facilities, medical shelters, and field medical stations. **64 out of 67 hospitals** (including Vieques and Culebra) **are currently** open and accepting patients.
- Puerto Rico Department of Health, supported by U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, has identified a strategy for hospital patients in case a hospital loses power. A top priority is to establish communication capabilities for all identified hospitals. The plan encompasses Centro Medico, regional hospitals, and **29** CDTs, or Urgent Care centers.
- People identified with critical medical needs by local doctors in isolated communities are being flown to nearby medical facilities.

### **Volunteers and Donations**

- Over **60** Non-Government Organizations (NGOs) and government partners are on the ground and coordinating to assist disaster survivors.
- Financial support to established relief organizations is always the most immediate, useful and versatile way to give. To make a cash donation directly to the Government of Puerto Rico, visit [www.unitedforpuertorico.com](http://www.unitedforpuertorico.com).
- For those who want to help but don't know how, the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD) offers ways to help at [www.nvoad.org](http://www.nvoad.org).
- If you plan to volunteer, please sign up with a voluntary agency and make travel arrangements with your affiliated organization.

### **Reunification**

- The American Red Cross Safe and Well website, available in Spanish, is a free public reunification tool that allows individuals to reunite with family by registering as "SAFE" or post to the website. Enrollments and searches can be done by visiting <https://safeandwell.es.communityos.org/zf/safe/add>. (For English, please visit [www.redcross.org/safeandwell](http://www.redcross.org/safeandwell)).
- Enrollments can also be completed by texting the word **SEGURO** to **78876**. (Survivors may text the English word **SAFE**). Survivors can use one phone to enroll multiple people.
- To speak with someone at the American Red Cross concerning a missing friend or relative, please contact **1-800 Red Cross** or **1-800-733-2767**.

### **Debris**

- Individuals are reminded not to wait for a FEMA inspector to begin cleaning out their home. Before you clean, make sure to take pictures of the damage prior to cleaning and save all repair receipts. When salvaging cleaning out, safety should be the first priority.
- Report hurricane-related damages to your insurance company and as soon as possible.

### **Fraud**

- Survivors are urged to watch for fraudulent claims to register survivors for FEMA assistance. Individuals can protect themselves by:
  - Asking to see official identification badges
  - Never providing financial information over the phone
  - Getting a written contract for work performed
  - Take pictures contractor's business card and his driver's license

### **USACE's**

USACE's 25 Mission Assignments from FEMA for Puerto Rico include: Temporary Power, Power Repair, Temporary Roofing, Debris Removal/Technical Assistance, and Infrastructure Assessment.

The federal disaster relief mission in Puerto Rico continues to operate in a challenging environment. Hurricane Maria's damage to Puerto Rico's ports, airfields, roads, bridges, electric grid and communications has slowed initial assistance efforts but conditions and the pace of recovery continues improving.

### *Temporary Power*

- USACE Temporary Emergency Power Planning and Response Teams are assisting with assessments and generator installations in Puerto Rico. Assessments are underway in Puerto Rico at critical facilities (hospitals, water treatment facilities, airports, a shelter, etc.).
  - In Puerto Rico the team has requests for more than 460 assessments, have completed more than 359 inspections completed, 106 generators installed with another 38 installations in progress. An additional 254 generators are en route to Puerto Rico, with 175 generators on-hand.
  - Soldiers from the 249<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion (Prime Power) operating at 24 hour operations to increase the generator installation rate.
  - The next priorities for installation of emergency power are Relevo Barrionuevo, Verde Water Well, Lequijam Potable Water Pump Station and Antonia Rivera Airport.
  - There have been 16 instances in which teams were rerouted during a mission due to an emergency generator repair request, which vary from simple refuel missions to large muscle movements requiring coordination of ground and air assets.
- USACE deployed members of the 249<sup>th</sup> Engineer Battalion (Prime Power) to assist with the power mission. USACE Temporary Emergency Power Planning and Response Teams are assisting with assessments and generator installations in Puerto Rico. Installations are underway in Puerto Rico at critical facilities.
  - To date there have been 488 requests for generator assessments with 328 completed and 106 installed.

### *PREPA Update - Power Repair*

- Current load is 474 MW; 17.3% of the average pre-storm load.
- In the last 72 hours 3 sub-transmission lines and 9 substations were re-energized (20.6% of transmission lines energized and 42.1% of substations operable).
- Victoria and San Sebastian transmission centers were energized, as well as the following substations: Nutrimix Feed, Lomas Verdes, John Dewey Collega and Federacion Asociacion Pecuria.

### *Temporary Roofing*

- USACE deployed Temporary Roofing Management Cells to Puerto Rico.
  - USACE is performing critical assessments as requested by FEMA. USACE estimates that 60,000 roofs are damaged, 2 ROE Centers have collected more than 3,750 Rights of Entry.

### *Debris*

- USACE Debris SMEs are assisting FEMA with debris management strategies in Puerto Rico.
  - Puerto Rico: the total debris estimated for removal is 6.2 million cubic yards.
  - FEMA approved debris removal for 22 municipalities.
  - 7,367 CY removed.

### *Dam / Levee – Flood Risk Management*

- There has been placement of 501 concrete barriers and riprap to stabilize the spillway. The barriers and riprap will slow the erosion on the spillway to prevent further damage. Approximately 496 super sacks have been placed in the dam's spillway.

### ***FEMA Program Operations***

- **IA Undated Numbers COB: 10/15/2017**

Total Registrations	<b>609,287</b>
Total IHP\$	<b>\$69.4 Million</b>
Shelters	<b>105</b>
Shelters	<b>5,037</b>

### **By the Numbers**

- **Number of Federal Employees**
  - FEMA: **1,588**
  - Department of Defense: **14,971**
  - Surge Capacity Force: **277**
- **Individual and Households Program**
  - Irma - Total registrations: **10,533**; Total IHP: **\$1.1 million**
  - Maria - Total registrations: **609,287** Total IHP: **\$69.4 million**
- **The Small Business Administration (SBA)**
  - Applications Received: **831(as of Oct. 15)**
  - Dollars Approved: **\$908,300(as of Oct. 15)**
- **Generators**
  - Generators Installed: **107**
  - Number of Generators Assessments Completed: **359**
  - Generator Installations in Progress: **30**
- **Tarps Distributed: 38,518**
- **Blue Roof Mission**
  - Rights of Entry Signed: **3,799**
  - Blue Roofs Installed: **439**
- **Potable Water: 3.5 million gallons**
- **Bottled Water: 9.4 million liters**
- **Meals: 9.0 million meals**
- **Fuel Dispensed (as of Oct 14):**
  - Diesel: **2,246,644 Gallons**
  - Gasoline: **91,811 Gallons**
- **Public Assistance**
  - Irma – Total Dollars Approved (Cat A-B): **More than \$12.2 million**
  - Maria - Total Dollars Approved (Cat A-B): **More than \$336.2 million**

### ***FEMA External Affairs Operations***

#### **Planning and Products**

- Distributed NR-019 “*Photo Roll Up Meals and Water*” (English/Spanish)
- Distributed NR-20 “*How FEMA Can Help You.*” (English/Spanish)
- Distributed Fact Sheet 007 “*Water Safety Do’s and Don’ts*” (English/Spanish)

## **Speakers Bureau**

### **Nothing to report**

## **Joint Information Center**

- Distributed NR-018 “*Faith Based Community Volunteer and Private Nonprofit Group to all media outlets*”.
- Distributed NR-019 “*Meals and Water Top List of Unified Efforts Toward Recovery in Puerto Rico*”.
- Distributed NR-020 “*How FEMA Can Help You.*”
- Distributed MA-08 “**PRESS CONFERENCE TO UPDATE RESPONSE EFFORTS IN PUERTO RICO (For USACE) MEDIA OPPORTUNITY TO CAPTURE VIDEO AND INTERVIEWS ON PRIMARY POWER DISTRIBUTION LINE INSTALLATION**”

## **Congressional Affairs**

- Responded to inquiries from Congress regarding missing loved ones, donation offers, recovery updates for communities affected, and available resources. Also respond to questions regarding the status of medical facilities, roads, oxygen for medical purposes, airport operations, port operations, movement of commodities, budgetary issues, and the number of emergency responders.
- Sending Congressional Advisories to PR Delegation.
- Reunification/Congressional Requests Update Meeting.
- Hosting Congressional Conference call on Hurricane Maria Response Operation for Congressional members and their staff.

## **Intergovernmental Affairs**

- Met with Vega Baja Mayor and EPA representative to discuss recovery issues.
- Visited the Municipality of Salinas; a Congressional Inquiry and conducted a wellness check.
- Conducted a weekly meeting at the JFO with the municipalities of Aboinito, Naranjito, Bayamon, Guaynabo, Salina, Yabucoa, Cayey and Corozal mayors and municipality representatives; purpose of the meeting is to listen to the municipalities concerns, provide a quick overview of FEMA programs and processes, and request IGA specialists visit their municipalities.
- Observed that the Carril Expresso near Toa Baja is accessing tolls to motorists; there is moratorium on paying tolls in Puerto Rico.
- Met with Vice Mayor of Caguas who was providing constituent services; Mayor reported, felt the meeting with General Buchanan went nowhere; he was of the understanding he would be in the meeting at the JFO. IGA specialist explained that General Buchanan’s visit to Zone 10 to reengineer the tactical approach in the field.
- Met with Humacao Mayor and General Buchanan; Mayor requested a DRC for Humacao and suggested a location at Centro de Belle Blvd del Rio Nicanor Vazquez. Discussion included shelters open, including two (2) located at schools; schools to open Oct 23; food & water situation; supply of local groceries (slow & only partial). General visited POD location with a truck load of MRE's & water.
- Met with EO Manager of the Municipality of Carolina; identified needs of the following: Food and water for an additional 1,200 per week; currently receiving

commodities but they do not meet the needs of all the people; short 340 tarps; wants a follow-up on five (5) generators requested.

**Private Sector**

- Puerto Rico Business Emergency Operation Center (BEOC) and FEMA; working on a plan to stabilize the retail food industry and to jumpstart economic recovery. PR BEOC, FEMA, and the State of Puerto Rico are meeting with the three major shipping companies to identify and address any bottlenecks in the retail food supply and distribution system. Areas of concern include shipping volume/capacity; ease of financial transactions at PR ports; transportation from ports to market; and issues facing grocery stores and supermarkets.
- Addressing the needs of the retail food industry is part of a larger effort to stabilize the PR economy, get people back to work, and to get food on the shelves of grocery stores and supermarkets. FEMA has also been meeting internally to coordinate efforts to assist in economic recovery in concert with the private sector.
- SBA (Small Business Association) opening their fourth Business Recovery center today at the Home depot in Ponce (private sector facilitated the space).
- Facilitated sheltering offer from Curtis Instruments, Inc. to the Puerto Rico Housing Authority for 20,000 square foot of space located at their Carolina manufacturing plant.

<b>Daily Event Schedule</b>		
<b>Monday</b>		
7:15 a.m.	Command and General Staff Meeting	FCO, Deputy FCO, All Senior Leadership, EA: <b>Marty B</b>
7:00 a.m.	Central Island Coordination Task Force	EA Liaison: <b>Jocelyn N</b>
7:00 a.m.	Mass Care Task Force Meeting (2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor, Sheraton Hotel Salon Laguna Room)	Mass Care Team, EA Liaison: <b>Yolanda P.</b>
7:30 a.m.	IGA Morning Touch Base (15 Minutes)	IGA Staff at IOF
7:30 a.m.	Ops Stand Up (JFO)	Operations, EA: <b>Caitlin O.</b>
8:00 a.m.	IA Leadership Meeting	IA, EA Liaison: <b>Yolanda B-H</b>
8:30 a.m.	HQ FEMA Daily Ops Brief (b)(6), PIN: (b)(6)	FEMA ALL

9:00 a.m.	Communication Tactile TF Meeting (209C)	
9:00 a.m. (M,W,F)	PR Press Brief (English)	JIC
9:30 a.m. (M,W,F)	PR Press Brief (Spanish)	JIC
9:30 a.m.	Task Force Leader Meeting (2 <sup>nd</sup> floor, 208 C)	Task Force Leaders, EA: Marty B./Caitlin O.
9:30 a.m.	Senior Leadership Brief Input Due Please submit your input in bullets	IGA staff in the field
9:30 a.m.	Messaging Coordination Meeting with Government of Puerto Rico (JFO, 2 <sup>nd</sup> floor)	Caitlin O., Dan S., Ali T., Delyris A., Digital Comms Rep
10:00 a.m. (alternating days beginning 10/12/17)	Sheltering/Feeding Task Force Call (Sheraton Hotel, (b)(6), PIN: (b)(6))	HQ-PR-VI Sheltering and Feeding Task Force, EA Liaison: Yolanda P.
10:00 a.m.	Housing Task Force Meeting (Housing Area)	Housing Task Force EA Liaison: Yolanda P.
10:30 a.m.	Logistics Sync Meeting	EA Liaison: Rita A.
11:00 a.m.	215 Inputs Due to: <a href="mailto:Benita.Worthy@fema.dhs.gov">Benita.Worthy@fema.dhs.gov</a>	EA Leadership
11:00 a.m.	12:30 VTC Bullets due to: <a href="mailto:FEMA-ESF 15-Coordination@fema.dhs.gov">FEMA-ESF 15-Coordination@fema.dhs.gov</a>	
11:00 a.m.	NICCL Call ((b)(6), PIN: (b)(6))	EA HQ Directors, FEMA Regions II and IV, Federal Interagency Partners
12:00 p.m.	DCS Input due to: <a href="mailto:Debra.Bauer@fema.dhs.gov">Debra.Bauer@fema.dhs.gov</a>	EA Leadership
12:00 p.m.	IGA Daily Communication Log (submission #1)-HQ Please submit your input in excel	IGA staff in the field collects input; IGA IOF submits log to HQ



12:00 p.m.	PR BEOC: Private Sector Stabilization (La Luna Room)	PR BEOC Stakeholders, EA Liaison: Rob G
12:30 p.m.	Senior Leadership VTC (b)(6) PIN: (b)(6)	FEMA Senior Leadership, ESFs
1:00 p.m.	Central Region Task Force Meeting (208C)	EA Liaison: Jocelyn N.
1:00 p.m. (M,W,F)	ESC Effects Cell Working Group	EA Liaison: Rita A.
1:00 p.m.	Debris, Roads and Bridges Task Force Coordination Meeting (209A)	EA Liaison: Jeffrey H.
1:30 p.m.	Bridge and Road Task Force Meeting (209A)	EA Liaison: Robert B.
2:00 p.m.	IGA Daily Communication Summary Please submit you input for bullets	IGA staff in the field
2:00 p.m.	IA HQ Coordination Call (b)(6) Pin: (b)(6)	IA, Program Liaisons, EA Liaison Yolanda B-H
2:00 p.m.	PR BEOC Fluids Manufacturing (Chrysler Room)	PR BEOC Stakeholders, EA Liaison: Rob G.
2:30 p.m.	DRC Meeting (CC Red Room)	EA Liaison: Yolanda B-H
3:00 p.m.	Operations Tactics Meeting (209A, (b)(6) Pin: (b)(6)	Ops, ESFs, DSA
3:00 p.m.	NBEOC Coordination Call (b)(6) PIN: (b)(6)	Private Sector Division, PSS Partners
3:00 p.m.	Disability Partners and Stakeholders Call (b)(6) Pin: (b)(6)	Disability Integration Stakeholders EA Liaison: Louis S.
3:00 p.m.	Central Island Coordinated Efforts Update Meeting	EA Liaison: Jocelyn N.
3:00 p.m.	Water/Waste Water Task Force Meeting (Red Room)	EA Liaison: Rita A.

4:00 p.m.	<b>End of Day Report Inputs due to:</b> <a href="mailto:Benita.worthy@fema.dhs.gov">Benita.worthy@fema.dhs.gov</a>	EA Leadership
4:00 p.m.	EA Touch Base – Maria (b)(6), PIN: (b)(6)	EA HQ Directors, Region II (USVI, PR)
4:00 p.m. <b>(M,W,F)</b>	PR Business Emergency Operations Center Meeting (CC, Room 209A)	
4:00 p.m.	PR Food Industry Marketing and Distribution Chamber (MIDA) CC, Room 209A)	PR BEOC Stakeholders, <b>EA Liaison: Rob G.</b>
5:00 p.m.	IA Leadership Meeting	Strategic Planning, IABD, Group Supervisors, <b>EA Liaisons: Yolanda B-H</b>
5:00 p.m.	Combined Task Force Meeting	<b>EA Liaison: Rita A.</b>
5:00 p.m.	IGA Daily Communication Log (submission #2) – HQ Please submit input in excel	IGA staff in the field collects input and submits from IOF to HQ
6:00 p.m.	Mass Care Task Nightly Recap (Sheraton Hotel, 2 <sup>nd</sup> floor Laguna Room)	Mass Care Team, <b>EA Liaison: Yolanda P.</b>
6:00 p.m.	Planning Meeting (b)(6), Pin: (b)(6)	UCG, C&G, SITL, <b>EA: Caitlin O., Lauren B.</b>
6:30 p.m.	ESF 15 Leads Touch Base	PR ESF15 Leadership
6:30/7:00 p.m.	End of Day IGA debrief (15 Minutes)	IGA staff at the IOF
7:00 p.m.	Guajataca Dam Task Force Meeting (Repair and Contingency for Water) (Room 209A)	Guajataca Dam Task Force, <b>EA Liaison: Robert B.</b>
7:00 p.m.	Central Island Coordinated Efforts Task Force Meeting (Room 208C)	<b>EA Liaison: Jocelyn N.</b>
7:00 p.m.	Air Ops/Transportation TF Meeting	
8:00 pm	Messaging Strategy Call	WH, DHS, <b>Marty B. Caitlin O.</b>

9:00 p.m.	Interagency Sync Call	WH, DHS, <b>Marty B., Caitlin O.</b>
9:00 p.m.	FEMA RSS Call (b)(6), Pin: (b)(6)	Resource Support Section

<b>Daily Event Schedule</b>		
<b>Tuesday</b>		
7:15 a.m.	Command and General Staff Meeting	FCO, Deputy FCO, All Sr. Leadership <b>EA: Marty B.</b>
7:00 a.m.	Central Island Coordination Efforts	<b>EA Liaison – Jocelyn N.</b>
7:00 a.m.	Mass Care Task Force Meeting (2 <sup>nd</sup> floor, Sheraton Hotel Salon Laguna)	Mass Care Team, <b>EA Liaison: Yolanda P.</b>
7:30 a.m.	IGA Morning Touch Base (15 Minutes)	IGA staff at the IOF
7:30 a.m.	Ops Stand Up Meeting (JFO)	Operations, <b>EA: Caitlin O.</b>
8:00 a.m.	IA Leadership Meeting	IA, EA Liaison: Yolanda B-H
8:30 a.m.	HQ FEMA Daily Ops Brief (b)(6), PIN: (b)(6)	FEMA ALL
9:00 a.m.	Communication Tactical TF Meeting (209C)	
9:00 a.m. <b>(M,W,F)</b>	PR Press Brief (English)	JIC
9:30 a.m. <b>(M,W,F)</b>	PR Press Brief (Spanish)	JIC
9:30 a.m.	Task Force Leader Meeting (2nd Floor 208C)	Task For Task Force Leaders, <b>EA: Marty B./Caitlin O.</b>
9:30 a.m.	Senior Leadership Brief Input Due Please submit your input in bullets	IGA staff in the field

9:30 a.m.	Messaging Coordination Meeting with Government of Puerto Rico (JFO, 2 <sup>nd</sup> floor)	Caitlin O., Dan S., Ali T., Delyris A., Digital Comms Rep.
10:00 a.m. (alternating days beginning 10/12/17)	Sheltering and Feeding Task Force Call (Sheraton Hotel)	HQ-PR-VI Sheltering and Feeding Task Force, EA Liaison: Yolanda P.
10:00 a.m.	Housing Task Force Meeting	Housing Task Force EA Liaison: Yolanda P.
10:30 a.m.	Logistics Sync Meeting	EA Liaison: Rita A.
11:00 a.m.	215 Input Due to: <a href="mailto:Benita.Worthy@fema.dhs.gov">Benita.Worthy@fema.dhs.gov</a>	EA Leadership
11:00 a.m.	12:30 VTC Bullets due to: FEMA-ESF 15- <a href="mailto:Coordination@fema.dhs.gov">Coordination@fema.dhs.gov</a>	
11:00 a.m.	NICCL Call (b)(6) PIN: (b)(6)	EA HQ Directors, FEMA Regions II and IV, Federal Interagency Partners
12:00 p.m.	DCS Input due to: <a href="mailto:Debra.Bauer@fema.dhs.gov">Debra.Bauer@fema.dhs.gov</a>	EA Leadership
12:00 p.m.	IGA Daily Communications Log (submission #1)-HQ Please submit your input in excel	IGA staff in the field collects input; IGA IOF submits log to HQ
12:00 p.m.	PR BEOC: Private Sector Stabilization (La Luna Room Sheraton)	PR BEOC Stakeholders, EA Liaison: Rob G.
12:30 p.m.	Senior Leadership VTC (b)(6) PIN: (b)(6)	FEMA Senior Leadership, ESFs
1:00 p.m.	Central Regional Task Force Meeting (208C)	EA Liaison: Jocelyn N.
1:00 p.m. (M,W,F)	ESC Effects Cell Working Group	EA Liaison: Rita A.
1:00 p.m.	Debris, Roads and Bridges Task Force Coordination Meeting (209A)	Debris Task Force, EA Liaison: Jeffrey H.

1:30 p.m.	Bridge and Road Task Force Meeting (209A)	EA Liaison: Robert B.
2:00 p.m.	Congressional Call (b)(6) Conf. ID: (b)(6)	FCO or Designee, Congressional Affairs
2:00 p.m.	IGA Daily Communication Summary Please submit you input bullets	IGA staff in the field
2:00 p.m.	IA HQ Coordination Call (b)(6), Pin: (b)(6)	IA, Program Liaisons, EA Liaison: Yolanda B-H
2:00 p.m.	PR BEOC: Fluids Manufacturing (Chrysler Room)	PR BEOC Stakeholders, EA Liaison Rob G.
2:30 p.m.	DRC Meeting (CC Red Room)	EA Liaison: Yolanda B-H.
3:00 p.m.	Operations Tactics Meeting (b)(6), Pin: (b)(6)	Ops, ESFs, DSA
3:00 p.m.	NBEOC Coordination Call (b)(6) PIN: (b)(6)	Private Sector Division, PSS Partners
3:00 p.m.	Disability Partners and Stakeholders Call (b)(6) Pin: (b)(6)	Disability Integration Stakeholders EA Liaison: Louis S.
3:00 p.m.	Central Island Coordinated Efforts Update Meeting	EA Liaison: Jocelyn N.
3:00 p.m.	Water/Waste Water Task Force Meeting (Red Room)	EA Liaison: Rita A.
4:00 p.m.	End of Day Report Input due to: <a href="mailto:Benita.Worthy@fema.dhs.gov">Benita.Worthy@fema.dhs.gov</a>	EA Leadership
4:00 p.m.	EA Touch Base – Maria (b)(6), PIN: (b)(6)	EA HQ Directors, Region II (USVI, PR)
4:00pm (M,W,F)	PR Business Emergency Operations Center Meeting (CC, Room 209A)	

4:00pm	PR Food Industry Marketing and Distribution Chamber (MIDA) (CC, Room 209A)	Rob Glenn and PR BEOC Stakeholders
5:00 p.m.	IA Leadership Meeting	Strategic Planning, IABD, Group Supervisors, EA Liaison: Yolanda B-H.
5:00 p.m.	Combined Task Force Meeting	EA Liaison: Rita A.
5:00 p.m.	IGA Daily Communications Log (submission #2)-HQ Please submit your input in excel	IGA staff in the field collects input; IGA IOF submits log to HQ
6:00 p.m.	Mass Care Nightly Recap (Sheraton Hotel, 2 <sup>nd</sup> floor Laguna Room)	Mass Care Team, EA Liaison: Yolanda P.
6:00 p.m.	Planning Meeting (Room 209A, (b)(6), Pin: (b)(6))	UCG, C&G, SITL, EA: Caitlin O., Lauren B.
6:30 p.m.	ESF 15 Leads Touch Base	PR ESF15 Leadership
6:30/7:00p.m.	End of the day IGA debrief (15 minutes)	IGA staff at the IOF
7:00 p.m.	Guajataca Dam Task Force Meeting – Room 209A (Repair and Contingency for Water)	Guajataca Dam Task Force, EA Liaison: Robert B.
7:00 p.m.	Central Island Coordination Efforts Task Force Meeting (Room 208C)	EA Liaison: Jocelyn N.
7:00 p.m.	Air Ops/Transportation TF Meeting	
8:00 p.m.	Messaging Strategy Call	WH, DHS, Marty B. Caitlin O.
9:00 a.m.	Interagency Sync Call	WH, DHS, Marty B., Caitlin O.
9:00 a.m.	FEMA RSS Call (b)(6), Pin: (b)(6)	Resource Support Section

**WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING**

- “I never thought that our special moment would happen here on this ship,” Sara’s father, Francisco Llull Vera, said in a statement Sunday. “Everyone has been so helpful and gentle while caring for our baby. I hope this opens the door for those who still need help to seek out the Comfort.” - *ABC News*

### **Puerto Ricans In Need Of Basic Materials, Medications, Says Volunteer Doctor**

(Washington Times)

By Laura Kelly

[Washington Times](#), October 13, 2017

As the death toll from Hurricane Maria has climbed to 48 in Puerto Rico, residents still struggle with limited access to food, water, shelter and communications, with electricity restored to about 14 percent of the island three weeks after the deadly storm.

The death toll is expected to increase as relief workers reach more remote areas of the island and discover those who have died.

Dr. Lissette Gutierrez, an obstetrician from Long Island, New York, traveled to Puerto Rico to bring relief aid shortly after the hurricane hit. She’s traveled back and forth twice and is preparing for a third trip, waiting on approval to transport cargo pallets filled with medications and other lifesaving and sustaining materials.

“Besides medicine, it’s a lot of basic needs,” Dr. Gutierrez told The Washington Times. “We need tarps, maybe **FEMA**’s working on it, but they’re not getting to every place.”

Brock Long, administrator of the **Federal Emergency Management Agency**, said that relief workers faced unique challenges in responding to the storm since the air and sea ports had to be rebuilt and communication was nonexistent.

Since the storm hit, however, **FEMA**, in coordination with 22 other federal agencies and dozens of volunteer organizations, has been on the island providing relief.

Dr. Gutierrez, a Puerto Rican native, had responded to emergency medical situations in Haiti and Cambodia before — so she thought nothing of getting on a plane and traveling to Puerto Rico once the coast was clear. She arrived there the Saturday after the storm hit with the island devastated and the entire power grid wiped out.

“I was on a relief flight with Jet Blue,” she said. “There was no power or electricity or communication at the airport when I landed. There was no satellite to the plane to even land, so we were up in the air for quite a while.”

From the airport she rented a car and started taking some of the supplies — about 55 boxes, each weighing 100 pounds — to isolated areas she was familiar with from her time living in Puerto Rico. She brought medicine, water, food, even Depends diapers.

“I went last week, and people thought in these remote areas that I was **FEMA** because I was just knocking on houses and checking on how they were doing there,” Dr. Gutierrez said. “‘Are you **FEMA**?’ ‘No I’m just me.’ ... They need tarps, they need water, they need food.

“I went to this town called Utuado [where] nobody has been to, and the roads are really bad. Three sisters died in a mudslide when the hurricane happened in that area, so the roads there are really bad.”

She’s in New York at the moment and is waiting for the go-ahead for a third trip with even more supplies that she’s sourced from friends in the medical community around the Northeast.

On top of physical needs, many Puerto Ricans are dealing with the stress and trauma following the disaster. Dr. Gutierrez said she has heard about a number of suicide attempts on the island because people have lost their homes.

“There’s a lot of suicidal attempts,” she said. “I’m seeing my own friends, who are fine over there, getting depressed, like no hope anymore. This wasn’t a Third World country. These are people who had things and all of a sudden ‘poof,’ and how do you start all over?”

## **Media Monitoring and Analysis**

### **Analysis:**

- Most stories in this edition about **FEMA** are from Spanish-language press. They range from positive – power plant grants and tarp distribution – to neutral, to negative, which includes one about “we need **FEMA** to respond”
- With the one-month mark approaching, There’s a renewed uptick in what could be called the “misery index” stories, including the CNN water piece, a feature on renowned San Juan bar struggling to stay open without power and the National Catholic Reporter scolding that things are getting worse, not better
- Heavy focus continues on medical and health issues, with one bright spot being stories of a baby born on the USNS Comfort
- CBS interview with FCO Mike Byrne last week at the JFO is included in this morning’s National Clips broadcast summaries from the weekend
- As the weekend closed, many media were still picking up story of the governor pledging 95 percent restoration of electric power by Christmas and the original CNN story about people drinking water from a toxic waste site; the latter included Government Executive, which published a Quartz story about the water

### **HOT ISSUES:**

- *CNN again this morning broadcast a story about Puerto Ricans resorting to drinking water that may be unsafe.*

### **Noteworthy Issues: Nothing to report**

### **Media Monitoring Trends: None**

### **Summary:**

- “We need **FEMA** to respond,” Loiza family pleads in Univision story
- **FEMA** has distributed 36,000 tarps, is expected to reach 6,300 more in the next three days and has ordered 475,000 that will be available in the coming weeks.
- In new CNN report this morning, EPA’s Gary Lipson, Incident Commander working in Puerto Rico in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria, says nearby residents at Dorado have been drinking potentially contaminated water from a well.
- Jayuya among the municipalities struggling to recover.
- Several stories on “still a disaster,” the lack of progress restoring power and bringing aid, including general updates from broadcast news over the weekend
- ABC News reports on baby born on USNS Comfort
- Kaiser Health and MD Magazine looks at the post-storm public health dangers: including leptospirosis, commonly associated with flooding events in warm climates, has now been diagnosed in 10 Puerto Rico patients, and is responsible for 4 deaths
- NBC News also reported on medical evacuees Miami, such as dialysis patients



- Dr. Lissette Gutierrez, New York, traveled to Puerto Rico to bring relief aid shortly after the hurricane hit and has been mistaken for **FEMA**. She's preparing for a third trip, waiting on approval to transport cargo pallets filled with medications and other lifesaving and sustaining materials.
- Tesla has brought in some of its power packs
- Even with solar being discussed, conventional fossil fuel-derived power restoration continues
- Lawsuit against PREPA is dropped in light of the hurricane disaster
- Charitable events and campaigns include Accuweather adopting a stricken town and Lin-Manuel Miranda rallying celebrities to help
- Hurricane Ophelia makes it to Ireland, Britain, [the 10th hurricane of the Atlantic season](#)
- Bloomberg opinion: Making Puerto Rico pay more for imports from the mainland would be wrong under any circumstances, but at a time like this it's disgraceful. Congress should scrap Jones Act altogether, "for decency's sake... puts an end to this nonsense once and for all.
- Opinion: The depth of the social catastrophe unfolding in Puerto Rico is a direct result of the island's colonial subjugation to U.S. imperialism

## **POWER / INFRASTRUCTURE / COMMUNICATIONS**

### **As Puerto Rico Talks Solar, More Fossil-Fuel Power's Starting Up (Bloomberg)**

By Naureen S Malik

October 14, 2017, 8:12 PM GMT-4

#### [Bloomberg](#)

- Two diesel-fired turbines arrived at plant on island Saturday
- Governor says most of Puerto Rico will have power by Christmas



*Diesel-fueled power generator unloaded in Puerto Rico on Oct. 13.*

*Source: APR Energy*

While Puerto Rico's governor [talks](#) about using solar panels and batteries to rebuild a grid destroyed by Hurricane Maria, the island's importing more fossil fuel-powered generators to get the lights back on.

This week, a ship carrying two diesel-fired turbines docked in San Juan. They were delivered on Saturday to the Palo Seco power plant, one of the few complexes still connected to working transmission lines capable of getting power to homes and businesses in the capital. By Oct. 25, they'll be burning about 85,000 gallons of diesel a day to generate electricity, said John Campion, chief executive officer of [APR Energy](#). The Jacksonville, Florida-based company delivered the turbine rentals as part of a \$35.1 million [contract](#) with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers.

More than three weeks after Hurricane Maria struck Puerto Rico and laid waste to its power grid, 85 percent of the U.S. territory [remains](#) without power. And while solar installers are [airlifting](#) panels to the island, the diesel turbines highlight how debt-laden Puerto Rico is taking whatever it can get to bring the lights back on. Governor Ricardo Rossello has stressed the importance of

federal aid in restoration efforts after President Donald Trump warned on Twitter Thursday that U.S. agencies [can't](#) stay on the island "forever."

"It's a difficult situation" for Puerto Rico, Campion said by phone Saturday. After a big storm in Houston or Florida, he said, "the generation survives, and the transmission survives, and typically you have 500 linemen come in bucket trucks to fix the last mile. The problem in Puerto Rico is the hurricane affected the generation, the transmission and the distribution."

The APR rentals will more than double generation at Palo Seco, where most units had already been decommissioned, to about 90 megawatts. That compares with the roughly 1,200 megawatts that San Juan uses on a typical day. They're expected to help with the constant transmission-line trips that Rossello has blamed for continual power failures triggering blackouts in San Juan seemingly daily.

The new units will be capable of burning diesel to deliver power at 18.15 cents a kilowatt-hour -- and could do it for even less burning liquefied natural gas or liquefied petroleum gas, according to Campion. He said Rossello was there when the turbines arrived at Palo Seco Saturday. In a briefing shortly after, Rossello laid out a plan to restore 95 percent of the island's power by Dec. 25, the most aggressive timeline the government has given yet.

Previous estimates for restoration of the island's power ranged from six months to a year.

— With assistance by Hani Shawwa

### [Tesla starts shipping Power packs to Puerto Rico](#) (Electrek)

[Fred Lambert](#)

Oct. 15th 2017 12:25 pm ET

#### [Electrek](#)

Elon Musk said last week that [Tesla would accelerate its effort to help bring power back to Puerto Rico](#) after sending a few hundred Powerwall battery packs to the island where the electric grid was destroyed by hurricanes last month.

Now we learn that Tesla is indeed stepping it up with now a new shipment of Powerpacks.

A single Power pack 2 battery pack has the same energy capacity (210 kWh) as almost 16 Powerwall 2 battery packs combined (each 13.5 kWh).

Tesla's Powerwall is useful to bring individual rooftop solar installations back online for homes and small businesses, but Tesla's Power pack has the potential to bring larger parts of the grid online by working with the electric utilities and combining the energy storage systems with solar farms or other renewable energy sources.

Now several Tesla Power packs were spotted at the San Juan airport in Puerto Rico over the weekend (pictures via José Valiente):

The new shipment arrived not long after [Musk spoke with Puerto Rico Governor Ricardo Rossello](#) last week to talk about ways for Tesla Energy to help rebuild the power grid destroyed by the two hurricanes that recently hit the Caribbean.

Days after their talk, Cal Lankton, Tesla's vice president of global infrastructure operations who recently [took over leadership of Tesla Energy's sales and operations after Lyndon Rive left](#), met with Governor Rossello at the government's command center:

Musk wrote on Twitter last week that they will first focus on helping hospitals and medical centers get stable power as less than 20% of the island currently has power and some regions are still looking at months without power.

But Tesla is looking to work with Puerto Rico beyond short-term solutions and actually try to rebuild the grid to be more resilient with solar power and energy storage.

Here are our previous reports on the effort for more details:

[Elon Musk says Tesla could rebuild Puerto Rico's power grid with batteries and solar](#)

[Elon Musk and Puerto Rico Governor to talk today about ways for Tesla Energy to rebuild destroyed grid](#)

## FUEL

Nothing to report

## HEALTH / DEATHS / ENVIRONMENTAL

### Woman gives birth aboard Navy's floating hospital in Puerto Rico (ABC)

By Karma Allen

Oct 16, 2017, 6:15 AM ET

[ABC News](#)



*Tania Rodriguez Ramos holds her newborn baby, shortly after giving birth aboard the USNS Comfort on Saturday; Gov Rossello is on the right.*

Baby Sara Victoria Llull Rodriguez was born aboard the USNS Comfort, off the shore of Puerto Rico, on Saturday.

The sound of two bells rang through the loud speakers of the U.S. Navy's floating hospital on Saturday to celebrate the arrival of a newborn baby girl.

The Navy's USNS Comfort was sailing in the vicinity of San Juan, Puerto Rico -- providing medical assistance throughout a region devastated by Hurricane Maria -- when baby Sara Victoria Llull Rodriguez made her arrival on board.

"I never thought that our special moment would happen here on this ship," Sara's father, Francisco Llull Vera, said in a statement Sunday. "Everyone has been so helpful and gentle while caring for our baby. I hope this opens the door for those who still need help to seek out the Comfort."

Vera said Sara's 6-year-old brother Alonzo and 4-year-old sister Sofia, currently staying with family ashore in Puerto Rico, are anxiously waiting to meet her.

"They are so excited to meet her," Sara's mother, Tania Rodriguez Ramos said in a statement Sunday. "It's a huge blessing for Sara to be here. I owe everything to the doctors and nurses and everyone onboard."

Puerto Rico Gov. Ricardo Rossello went to visit baby Sara on Sunday. He shared pictures of him cradling the baby in his arms, with her doctor and parents standing nearby. Rossello said Sara was "the first Puerto Rican girl born" on the USNS Comfort.

Puerto Rico Gov. Ricardo Rossello (far right) holds Sara Victoria Llull Rodriguez, the first child born aboard the USNS Comfort in more than seven years, more +

The USNS Comfort, which currently has 21 people on board, has treated more than 100 patients since Maria made landfall last month, killing at least 48 people and knocking out power for most of the island.

Nearly 4 weeks after the storm hit, about 85 percent of power customers are still without electricity and about 31 percent of customers lack access to potable water, officials said Sunday. The death toll was raised by three over the weekend and about 111 people missing due to the storm.

Mario Tama/Getty Images

Francisco Zamoro, 69, poses in his former living room, reflected in a mirror still hanging on the wall, three weeks after Hurricane Maria hit the island, Oct. 12, 2017 in Jayuya, Puerto Rico.[more +](#)

Comfort Capt. Kevin Robinson said Sara, who weighed in at 6 pounds and 8 ounces, brought a sense of joy to the crew.

“I think the birth of that little girl has reinvigorated the crew,” Robinson said in a statement.

Lucas Jackson/Reuters

Aluminum roofing is seen twisted and thrown off buildings as recovery efforts continue following Hurricane Maria near San Jose, Puerto Rico, Oct. 7, 2017.[more +](#)

The last birth aboard Comfort occurred on Jan. 21, 2010, while the ship was providing humanitarian relief in support of Operation Unified Response following a 7.0 magnitude [earthquake](#) that caused severe damage in [Haiti](#), according to the Navy.

The ship’s crew commemorated the occasion by ceremoniously renaming one of its two small boat tenders the “Sara Victoria.”

“We wanted to do something special, the crew has taken to the baby as one of our own,” Comfort Ship’s Master Roger Gwinn. Gwinn said in a statement. “As she goes forward in life, we hope she carries Comfort with her.”

## **RESPONSE and RECOVERY**

### **Nothing to Report**

## **CHARITY / HUMAN INTEREST / VOLUNTEER EFFORTS**

**Lin-Manuel Miranda Rallies Celebrities to Send Aid to Puerto Rico** (Study Breaks)

**Creator of “Hamilton,” Lin-Manuel Miranda has put together a massive effort to rally Puerto Rican celebrities and send aid to the devastated island.**

By [Marissa Cortes, Stony Brook University](#)

### **[Stony Brook University Study Breaks](#)**

It has been nearly a month since [Hurricane Maria](#) devastated [Puerto Rico](#), creating a humanitarian crisis, the likes of which the island [hasn’t seen in decades](#). For almost a month, many Puerto Ricans have not had power, water or food. It is hot and almost impossible to communicate with victims stranded by the freak act of nature. Many members of my own family live in Puerto Rico, and the first contact we had with any of them only happened this week despite the fact that Hurricane Maria made landfall in mid-September. Several [Facebook pages](#) emerged in the early aftermath of the storm, posting updates and pictures of safe citizens who are unable to communicate with their families living outside of Puerto Rico. Power is not expected to be restored to the island of 3.4 million for six to eight months. **FEMA [published \(and then deleted\)](#)** a statement declaring less than 11 percent of Puerto Ricans have power.

It has been nearly a month and the United States government continues to ignore Puerto Rico. The Mayor of San Juan, [Carmen Yulín Cruz](#), has powerfully asserted herself in the face of growing governmental isolation, receiving only [Presidential scorn](#) and a spot on the [FEMA blacklist](#) in return.

Many people forget (or simply never knew) that Puerto Ricans are U.S. citizens thanks to the [Jones-Shafroth Act of 1917](#). The bill was passed by President Woodrow Wilson and allowed Puerto Ricans to travel to and from the U.S. without a passport. Puerto Rico’s status as a U.S. commonwealth rather than a state is the source of a rocky relationship between the two. A history of corruption and abuse has not aided in smoothing over relations. However, the island’s residents

are protected by the same Bill of Rights as everyone else on the mainland USA, and deserve the same disaster relief response received by Houston and Florida.

Creator of “Hamilton,” [Lin-Manuel Miranda](#), has taken relief efforts into his own hands. This is not the first time the artist has been vocal about issues concerning Puerto Rico; in April, 2016, he appeared on [an episode](#) of “Last Week Tonight with John Oliver” to call attention to the island’s massive debt crisis. On Twitter, he lambasted Donald Trump after the Trump’s (unfortunately frequent) disparaging remarks and neglectful behaviors concerning the relief efforts for Puerto Rico. Miranda himself is of Puerto Rican descent and he frequently features his heritage and culture in his work (most notably his Tony award-winning musical [“In the Heights”](#)).

Six days after Hurricane Maria ran its course full strength over the island, Miranda penned a [heartfelt essay](#) in “The Hollywood Reporter.” The essay begins with a personal anecdote, a story about Miranda’s cousin’s family seeking refuge in the cement home beside his late grandfather’s wooden dream house. The storm’s winds, which reached Category 5, destroyed the house completely, but Miranda’s family remained thankfully unharmed. Unfortunately, surviving Hurricane Maria is only the first in a very long line of obstacles the island now faces.

Miranda has teamed up with the [Hispanic Federation](#), an organization dedicated to supporting Hispanic families and strengthening Latino institutions in several fields. In conjunction with several community leaders in New York, Florida and Washington D.C., the Hispanic Federation created the [UNIDOS Disaster Relief and Recovery Program](#). Every single penny raised goes towards meeting hurricane-related needs and long-time recovery of children, families and communities in Puerto Rico.

On October 7, Miranda dropped a star-studded tribute song titled [“Almost Like Praying.”](#) a modern day “We Are the World.” All money raised by the song will be donated to UNIDOS Disaster Relief. The track samples its title lyric from the Broadway musical “West Side Story,” a Puerto Rican-centric star-crossed love story. The lyrics name every single one of the island’s seventy-eight principalities, sung by predominantly Puerto Rican artists. [In an interview](#) with NPR, Miranda says “I thought, well the only lyric that really unites us and that makes the most sense for a fundraising song is if I can somehow write a lyric that includes all 78 towns in Puerto Rico so that no one feels left out and no one’s town feels forgotten.”

There are [eleven artists](#) featured in “Almost Like Praying,” including Miranda himself. The singers are multi-generational, and the song itself crosses genre lines between pop, rap and salsa to croon patriotic “I love you’s.” The coquí, a tree frog native to Puerto Rico, chirps in symphony with the island’s signature steel drums and the beat created by cow bells. Miranda says on recruiting the group, “Everybody said ‘yes’ having not heard the song. They just they felt as helpless as I did and they were trying to do as much good as I’m trying to do and make as much noise as I’m trying to make.” Celebrities wield more and more influences every day, and it’s incredibly vital that they use their fame for good when it can mean the difference between life or death.

Miranda is not the only Latino artist to give back to the island he calls home. Rapper [Pitbull](#) has chartered planes to bring in supplies that the U.S. government can’t seem to find themselves able to send the Puerto Ricans in a timely manner. [Jennifer Lopez](#) donated \$1 million dollars to hurricane relief, as did reggaeton icon [Daddy Yankee](#). New York State Governor [Andrew Cuomo](#), in conjunction with rapper [Fat Joe](#), led a donation drive in the city, chartering two planes to send the supplies to the island.

Recovery efforts in Puerto Rico are slow-going. Poor infrastructure and lack of aid from the U.S. government impedes the ability of those on the ground to do their best and reach the largest number of citizens. Puerto Rican residents deserve to be treated like the United States citizens they are, and nothing less. Lin-Manuel Miranda expresses both frustration and hope in the outpouring of public support, saying “I have to say, despite the humanitarian crisis going on on the island,

despite the difficulties, despite the slowness of the U.S. government's response, I've never had more faith in people and American people and people all over the world."

And for you, if you are interested in helping in any way, learn more about donating to Puerto Rican hurricane relief on the Hispanic Federation's [website](#) and make a difference in the lives of millions.

## **BUSINESS**

### **Misery in Puerto Rico: No power, no job, 'enormous' lines (CNN Money)**

#### **Unemployment soars after Hurricane Maria**

By PATRICK GILLESPIE

Posted: 5:14 AM, October 16, 2017

Updated: 5:44 AM, October 16, 2017

#### **CNN Money**

NEW YORK (CNMoney) - Leslie Cofresi started to cry when he saw his staff the day after Hurricane Maria hit Puerto Rico.

With no electricity or running water in their own homes, all 25 employees came to help clean up the bar, La Factoria, which was recently named one of the world's 50 best bars.

A bartender greets patrons with a lone solar lamp, in a bar without electricity, in the touristic Old San Juan neighborhood, on Oct. 13 in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Puerto Rico is suffering shortages of food and water in many areas and only 9... Puerto Rico governor plans to restore 95% of power by December

Located in Old San Juan, La Factoria is also where the music video for the mega hit song "Despacito" was filmed.

But nearly a month after Hurricane Maria, Puerto Rico's most famous bar is hanging on by a thread. It was closed for two weeks and crowds have been extremely thin since it recently reopened.

If Cofresi, the co-owner, can't get electricity back on soon, he knows he can't keep all his employees or even convince them to stay on the island.

"I don't know how far we can keep going like this...Our operations are not sustainable under these conditions here," says Cofresi, 35. "Educated people, young people: These are people that, their first reaction has to be, 'Well, I won't have a job.' They're leaving the island right now in droves."

Cofresi highlights two factors that are crippling Puerto Rico's recovery: Many people are facing dim job prospects, and some are simply leaving the island.

This for an island that, before Hurricane Maria hit, had a 10% unemployment rate -- more than double the national rate -- and was suffering from an ongoing exodus of young workers.

Rising unemployment adds to Puerto Ricans' misery. Over 80% of the island still doesn't have electricity. About 40% of residents don't get a cell phone signal. About a third of Puerto Ricans lack running water.

And for some, losing their job felt like salt in the wound.

Christopher Canales says he worked 13 years as a waiter at the Melia Hotel, one of Puerto Rico's most luxurious.

But three weeks after Hurricane Maria hit, the Melia fired Canales and "most" of its 300 employees, a hotel spokesperson confirmed after CNMoney obtained a letter sent to employees.

Canales suddenly had no job along with no electricity or running water. He and two of his four kids -- ages 4 and 14 -- went to Atlanta to stay with his brother-in-law. His other two children, teenagers, stayed with their mother in Puerto Rico.

He registered his youngest kids in Atlanta schools, but he suspects they may be moving to Florida at some point during the school year to reunite the entire family. A return home isn't in the cards.

"Right now, I can't say that I'm going back," says Canales, 37. "If you don't have a job in Puerto Rico, the situation is really hard."

Melia International, the luxury hotel's parent company, which had 375 hotels and \$3.3 billion in revenue last year, said it had no choice but to let go its employees in Puerto Rico.

A spokesperson said the property was destroyed by Hurricane Maria. The company hopes to rehire its former workers if they can reopen in the next six months. But that depends greatly on when the hotel gets electricity back.

"We are aware and very concerned about how this situation has personally affected our staff," a Melia spokesperson wrote in an email, adding that it says it's not the only hotel laying off workers.

Aixa Montes, a waitress at the Melia hotel restaurant for 10 years, still has no electricity in her home in Luquillo, a 40-minute drive from the capital, San Juan.

And now she has no job. Montes is one of many workers waiting on lone lines to receive jobless benefits.

"The lines are enormous in the unemployment insurance office. It's horrible," says Montes, 37.

It's hard to get reliable statistics on the problem because the continuing dysfunction on the island is affecting data collection.

Cofresi, the owner of La Factoria, says he hasn't fired any workers at his bar. He considers them like family. But everyone's hours have been cut back.

La Factoria is operating on a generator, and Cofresi is frustrated that **FEMA** and the Puerto Rican government haven't given him any idea when he can expect power to come back.

He worries that electricity will come back slowly, building by building. He's concerned that would create unfair competition.

"It's going to be this thing where your life's work is going to be up to luck," says Cofresi. "If you get electricity first, you'll survive. If you have to hold on three, four months without electricity while some other businesses next door has electricity ... you're not going to survive."

Some customers are coming back for La Factoria's signature drink: a lavender mule, a twist on the traditional Moscow mule.

Other bar regulars come to reconnect with friends and clear their minds, Cofresi says. Some just need to charge their cell phones so they can communicate with family.

"We have to start giving people a sense of normality," Cofresi says.

## **WATER**

### **Flirting with another disaster: Puerto Ricans tap into potentially unsafe water (CNN)**

By Ed Lavandera and John Sutter, CNN

Updated 8:13 AM ET, Mon October 16, 2017

[Source: CNN](#)

Puerto Rico struggles to find drinking water 03:10

Dorado, Puerto Rico (CNN) — A tall chain link fence, shrouded in vines, surrounds an aging water well tucked away in this small town just west of San Juan. A metal sign carries a warning in Spanish to anyone who approaches: "Danger. Do Not Enter."

That doesn't stop Juan Carlos Oquendo, 39, from peeling away a corner of the fence and jumping inside. He's brought a van load of containers to fill.

But what he doesn't fully understand is that water from the faucet is potentially contaminated with industrial chemicals that can cause serious health issues.

"I'm going to drink it. I've drank it before. It tastes fine," Oquendo told CNN as he filled his jugs. "If I don't drink water I'm going to die. So I might as well drink this water."

Oquendo stresses that he's willing to take this chance because access to clean water in his neighborhood has been extremely difficult for much of the last month since Hurricane Maria wiped out the water system on the island.

Just before CNN spotted Oquendo at the water well site, a team of scientists from the US Environmental Protection Agency was collecting water samples from the well.

The EPA is focused on this site because the well sits on what's called the Dorado Groundwater Contamination Site, which was listed in 2016 as a Superfund site in Puerto Rico. The area is polluted with industrial chemicals, including tetrachloroethylene and trichloroethylene, "can have serious health impacts including damage to the liver and increasing the risk of cancer," the EPA said when it designated the site as contaminated.

## **PUBLIC PERCEPTION**

### **AFL-CIO Says Repealing Jones Act Would Cost Jobs (The Hill)**

By Max Greenwood

[The Hill](#), October 13, 2017

The nation's largest federation of labor unions on Friday warned against repealing a century-old shipping law, saying that doing so would decimate the domestic shipping industry and cost jobs.

In a letter to senators, the AFL-CIO said that repealing the Jones Act would open up the U.S. maritime industry to low-wage foreign workers and weaken the country's ability to respond independently to crises and disasters.

"Since the Jones Act ensures that our labor laws protect maritime employees, repealing the Act would pave the way for foreign companies to replace domestic crews with lower paid workers lacking basic labor protections," William Samuel, the AFL-CIO's government affairs director, wrote in the letter.

"Repealing the Jones Act would not result in additional supplies getting to the Island, but it would jeopardize the survival of the U.S. maritime sector and along with it thousands of jobs that would be outsourced to foreign carriers," he added.

The debate over whether to repeal the Jones Act, a 1920 law requiring that passengers and cargo going between domestic ports be transported by U.S.-flagged ships, reignited last month as the federal government responded to Hurricane Maria in Puerto Rico.

The Trump administration announced on Sept. 28 that it would temporarily waive the shipping law, which officials in Puerto Rico said was hindering much-needed aid and supplies from reaching the island. The waiver came as the Trump administration faced mounting pressure to step up its relief efforts on the island.

The waiver, which stayed in effect for 10 days, expired on Sunday. The Department of Homeland Security has said that it will not renew the exemption.

Sen. John McCain (R-Ariz.) and some other members of Congress have called for repealing the Jones Act since the storm.

The AFL-CIO, however, said that it was not the Jones Act that was preventing aid from reaching Puerto Rico. Jones Act ships carrying supplies began arriving at Puerto Rico's main port in San Juan as soon as it reopened, Samuel wrote. He argued the larger issue was a lack of truck drivers and badly damaged infrastructure.

Puerto Rico has become the site of a staggering humanitarian crisis that resulted from twin hurricanes pummeling the island within a matter of weeks. Hurricane Maria, the most recent storm to strike the U.S. territory, wiped out electrical power, destroyed buildings and infrastructure and left much of the island without access to drinking water.



As of Friday morning, only 9 percent of the island's residents had electricity, and about 63 percent had access to drinking water, according to a website maintained by Puerto Rico's government.

President Trump has taken heat for his administration's response to Hurricane Maria, with critics accusing him of handling the situation less aggressively than he handled hurricane-related emergencies in Texas and Florida.

The president has defended the efforts in Puerto Rico, though he has also suggested that the island has relied too heavily on federal assistance and has not done enough to help itself. On Thursday, he warned in a tweet that he would not keep emergency workers there "forever."

"What is needed now is for the U.S. military and FEMA to deploy all of their available resources to address the escalating humanitarian crisis," Samuel wrote, referring to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, which has been directing the U.S. government's response to the crisis. "Our fellow citizens on Puerto Rico deserve no less."

### ***Rumors/Misinformation***

- Nothing to Report

### **FEMA: Hurricane Maria – Social Listening Report – 10/14/17 1405 ET**

**Summary:** People continue to use social media to locate loved ones, learn about utility restoration – many doubt validity of media and public official reports. In FEMA-related conversation, the public is pleased with information about supplies being distributed and help available, but they are not sure what the \$500 they've received is for, and there is criticism for the types of food some have received from FEMA. People are especially interested in the USNS Comfort – they're happy about the newborn delivered yesterday, and want to know how to obtain medical services. Efforts are underway to get students back to school and the reactions are mixed. Coast Guard and National Guard recovery efforts are especially appreciated.

### ***Report sections***

- [FEMA Conversation](#)
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- [Public Perception](#)
- [Rumors/Misinformation](#)

### ***FEMA Conversation***

- Individuals who have applied for assistance are [asking questions](#) on what the next steps are, and how they are able to get in contact with officials for a status update on their application.
- Heavy discussion surrounds [a picture](#) of the food FEMA is passing out to survivors continues to circulate and generate conversation.
  - The survivor states (10/13) FEMA is only giving out candy and snacks in their food boxes.
  - There are conflicting comments because some agree that this is what FEMA is really giving out and other survivors are stating they received MREs and canned foods.
  - The Digital Engagement Team is working on content to show what food FEMA is distributing.

- Many are trying to figure out the specifics of the \$500 Critical Needs Assistance money survivors could get from FEMA.
  - The conversation surrounds someone trying to [explain](#) the details of receiving the money based of an interview he had with a FEMA employee.

**FEMA Content:**

- Nothing to Report

**Public Sentiment:**

- People are grateful for the military's help toward Puerto Rico's recovery.
  - Both the content from the National Guard and local media is well-received. ([example 1](#), [example 2](#), [example 3](#))
  - Some are [reacting positively](#) to photos of soldiers passing out water.
- Most are [grateful for their help](#) toward Puerto Rico's recovery. ([example 2](#))
- There are [mixed reviews](#) after Florida Senator Bill Nelson's press conference yesterday.
  - Mostly comments were supportive of the senator and his plans for recovery.
  - Most survivors are ready to see change in their community after the storm.
- The help and visits from local government officials giving back to survivors is receiving a lot of attention through different social media channels.
  - The Governor of Puerto Rico, Ricardo Rosselló, visited the emergency Stop & Go of Roosevelt Avenue to check on staff and equipment for disaster assistance registration with [FEMA](#) and passed out food to survivors. ([example 1](#) [example 2](#) [example 3](#))
  - The Mayor of San Juan, Carmen Yulín Cruz, [visited and talked with survivors](#).
- The USNS Comfort is of great interest to the public. The baby born there yesterday is especially welcome news. ([example 1](#), [example 2](#), [example 3](#)) Many want to know how to get on the ship, and share phone numbers and a graphic with how to get there. ([example 1](#), [example 2](#), [example 3](#)) The Digital Engagement Team is working on a graphic to explain how services on the USNS Comfort can be accessed.
- In a comment posted to David Begnaud's update yesterday on the response, [there's a petition to investigate local corruption at AEE and PREPA](#), though in response others say this has been an issue since before the storm.
- Heavy discussion surrounds [a picture](#) of the food FEMA is passing out to survivors.
- Many people are sharing their gratitude for the celebrities who are raising/donating money to Puerto Rico to assist in the recovery efforts. ([example 1](#), [example 2](#))
- A small amount of individuals are asking how they are able to get their identification cards to travel or what solutions are available for those who want to go to the mainland but have [lost their ID cards](#).
- Individuals who are continuing to look for loved ones in the affected area are being told a resource that has been successful is the Crowdsorce Rescue Group. One person has shared a [screenshot of the texts](#) that they received after Crowdsorce was able to locate their loved one, and another shares how people are able to get in touch with group and [the information needed](#) for them to be effective.
- News is welcome from the Ponce mayor that [goods are arriving at the port](#) and hot meals are being served.
- Many individuals from outside the affected areas are continuing to share their [frustration](#) about the Federal Government's response to Puerto Rico in [comparison](#) to the [response](#) in Florida and Texas.

**Critical Infrastructure:**

- As of 0700 ET yesterday Whitefish Energy is performing many critical infrastructural updates throughout Puerto Rico.
  - Rebuilding buildings, bridges, power, etc. ([example 1](#) , [example 2](#) , [example 3](#))
  - Those inside and outside the impacted area are glad to see progress happening in Puerto Rico.

**Operations****Recovery:**

- Nothing to report

**Public Health:**

- Nothing to report

**Private Sector:**

- There's a phone number to call [to request Loads of Love from Tide](#) come to the Island.
- Reports of the maximum individuals should pay for gas continue to circulate. ([example 1](#), [example 2](#))

**Mass Care:**

- Nothing to report

**Energy:**

- As of 1100 ET, 15 October, Power Source and Whitefish was contracted to help bring power and restore the city. ([example 1](#) , [example 2](#))

**Communication**

- There have been reports from loved ones outside of the affected area that communications are [coming back on](#) in Aguadilla.
- An individual is sharing information on how survivors may be able to [acquire satellite phones](#) in order to communicate with their families while cell service remains scarce.

**School:**

- Classes are set to resume at the University of Puerto Rico, possibly as soon as in the next week. ([example 1](#), [example 2](#)) Some are skeptical at the news as water and electricity may still not be there.

**Life Safety**

- Family members are continuing their search for loved ones who have been missing since the Hurricane.
  - San Juan- [Example](#), [Example 2](#)
  - Cayey- [Example](#)
  - Toa Baja- [Example](#)
  - Cain- [Example](#)
  - Boqueron- [Example](#)

- Ponce: A person's relative was at the Damas hospital, and they are not able to get more information about him. - [Example](#)

**Transportation:**

- Nothing to report

**Public Safety:**

- As of 1300 EST 10/15: San Juan has been slow to [remove debris](#) from the affected areas, and individuals are expressing their anger towards the mayor for the delay.
- As of 1300 EST 10/15: El Vocero is on the [second phase](#) of debris removal but people are unaware of when the first phase took place.
- As of 2100 EST 10/15: A facility in Isabela that was caring for sick children and adults was [lacking the necessary essentials](#) to keep them alive such as fuel, and air conditioning. As a result, the patients were able to be transferred to a proper medical facility where they were able to receive life-saving care.
- While La Fortaleza de Puerto Rico reports that [water is potable in Tao Alto and Naranjito](#), people are reporting they still don't have access, and others are [skeptical of the report](#).

***Rumors/Misinformation***

***Nothing to report***

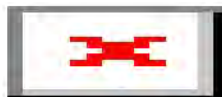
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Good evening,

Attached and below is the DR-4339-PR Evening Media Analysis report for Monday, October 16, 2017.

Maria: Please distribute all hands.

Thank you



# *Media Analysis Report*

## **Puerto Rico - Hurricanes Irma/Maria**

### **DR-4336/4339-PR**

*Monday, October 16, 2017, Evening Edition*

#### **Hot Issues:**

- *Following morning report by CNN, AP and Washington Post also report on potentially dangerous water at Dorado and other pollution hazards*
- *Related, president said today military “shouldn’t have to be’ distributing water, food*

#### **News Clips Analysis / Trends:**

- Safe and unsafe drinking water or “environmental crisis” is the overwhelming news trend today, starting with CNN report this morning on residents drinking from polluted source (see AM clips edition), and followed by AP and Washington Post similar stories during the day. The stories heavily reference EPA, and don’t mention **FEMA**
- News coverage blew up this afternoon after the president’s remarks about how the military “shouldn’t have to be” distributing food and water because he believes the local officials should be in charge of it

#### **Survivor News and Quotes:**

- “So I would love to stay, and I wanna stay, at least for...I feel like this: I need to help, and I need to be part of this rebuilding. But at the same time, like professionally, it's going to be like devastating like for my career staying here. It's gonna be terrible because it's gonna be one, two years of doing absolutely nothing with my career. So I would have to rethink myself and do something else. I have no problem with it, but, you know, it's a decision I have to make.”— Gabriel Rodriguez, production and creative director at an advertising agency, San Juan resident -- *on Public Radio International*

#### **News Clips Highlights/Summary:**

- AP and Washington Post have stories today similar to the CNN report this morning about Puerto Ricans drinking potentially dangerous water. “Residents unwittingly drawing water from a Superfund site is merely one example of Puerto Rico’s dire lack of clean, reliable water,” the Post reports.
- Spanish – Police monitor access to contaminated well
- President Trump said in the Rose Garden today that local officials should be in charge of distributing food and water, not the military
- Spanish - Today’s rains caused multiple bridges to be washed out and there have been landslides reported; families cut off
- Public Radio International talks to a handful of Puerto Ricans about their intent to stay and rebuild their lives and communities
- Spanish - Over 5.000 people who lost their homes and now live in temporary shelters throughout the island.

- More coverage of the solar industry's possible role in restoring electrical power to Puerto Rico
- Bacterial infections are a danger and basic medical supplies such as insulin are lacking, Healthline reports
- Spanish - Doctors and employees of the San Juan Municipal Hospital asked the s mayor to reopen the emergency room
- Spanish - Officials again publish the names of 113 missing persons last seen as Maria struck
- Half of PR banks are open
- Hurricane refugees from Puerto Rico and other locations who have fled to New York City will have a central office to get help
- Students from Puerto Rico are now being schooled in many locations on the mainland
- Spanish - University Of Puerto Rico reports the institution's damage over \$100 million but that the students will be able to complete their academic courses.
- **Social Media Summary:** People continue to use social media to locate loved ones, learn about utility restoration – many doubt validity of media and public official reports. In **FEMA**-related conversation, the public is pleased with information about supplies being distributed and help available, but they are not sure what the \$500 they've received is for, and there is criticism for the types of food some have received from **FEMA**. People are especially interested in the USNS Comfort – they're happy about the newborn delivered yesterday, and want to know how to obtain medical services. Efforts are underway to get students back to school and the reactions are mixed. Coast Guard and National Guard recovery efforts are especially appreciated.

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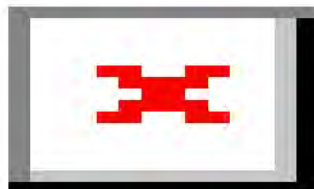
## **WATER / POLLUTION**

### **Puerto Rico struggles with massive environmental crisis (AP)**

Michael Melia

Updated 10:25 am, Monday, October 16, 2017

[Associated Press](#)



*In this Saturday, Oct. 14 2017 photo, people affected by Hurricane Maria collect water and while others bathe in water piped from a mountain creek, in Utuado, Puerto Rico. AP*

CAGUAS, Puerto Rico (AP) — Raw sewage is pouring into the rivers and reservoirs of Puerto Rico in the aftermath of Hurricane Maria. People without running water bathe and wash their clothes in contaminated streams, and some islanders have been drinking water from condemned wells.

Nearly a month after the hurricane made landfall, Puerto Rico is only beginning to come to grips with a massive environmental emergency that has no clear end in sight.



"I think this will be the most challenging environmental response after a hurricane that our country has ever seen," said Judith Enck, who served as administrator of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency region that includes Puerto Rico under President Barack Obama.

With hundreds of thousands of people still without running water, and 20 of the island's 51 sewage treatment plants out of service, there are growing concerns about contamination and disease.

"People in the U.S. can't comprehend the scale and scope of what's needed," said Drew Koslow, an ecologist with the nonprofit Ridge to Reefs who recently spent a week in Puerto Rico working with a portable water treatment system.

EPA officials said that of last week they still had not been unable to inspect five of the island's 18 Superfund sites — highly contaminated toxic sites targeted for cleanup because of risks to human health and the environment — including the former U.S. Navy bombing range on the island of Vieques.

"I just wish we had more resources to deal with it," said Catherine McCabe, the EPA deputy regional administrator.

Puerto Rico has a long history of industrial pollution, and environmental problems have worsened due to neglect during a decade-long economic crisis. A dozen over-packed landfills remain open despite EPA orders to close them because local governments say they don't have the money.

With homes damaged or destroyed, power lines obliterated and traffic chaotic, many of the EPA's own island-based personnel were unable to report for work immediately after the hurricane tore across the island on Sept. 20.

Twelve days after Maria made landfall, the EPA said it had 45 people in Puerto Rico. By Sunday that number stood at 85 — a force that Enck said was still insufficient.

Less than 20 percent of the island's power grid was back online, and while hundreds of large generators have been brought in, the U.S. territory's out-of-service sewage treatments plants include several that sit upstream of drinking water supplies.

One of Puerto Rico's biggest treatment plants discharges into a river that feeds Lake Carraizo, a reservoir that provides drinking water for half of the metropolitan San Juan area. Several of the plant's pumping stations remain out of service due to lack of diesel for generators, leaving sewage running into the lake.

"We're not going anywhere near it," resident Edwin Felix, 46, said, nodding toward the greenish brown river coursing past his hillside home.

That puts an extra strain on the filtration plants that give a final treatment to the water reaching the capital.

Officials say running water has been restored to 72 percent of the island's people. The water authority says it's safe to drink, though the health department still recommends boiling or disinfecting it.

In the town of Juncos on Thursday, EPA personnel warned people who were swimming in a river by an overflowing manhole that it was contaminated by sewage because a pumping station had failed, said Jaime Geliga, chief of the agency's local municipal water program branch.

"That's the only water they get," he said. "That's the difficult part."

Even the island's own water authority has distributed water from some wells at the Dorado Superfund site, according to Gov. Ricardo Rossello, who said that water has been tested and complies with all federal health standards.

But the EPA said Sunday that some people have ignored fences and warning signs and have taken water for drinking from wells on other, more dangerous parts of Dorado, which was brought into the Superfund program due to dangerous levels of industrial chemicals in groundwater.

The agency put up new fences over the weekend and said it had taken samples from those wells, though the results of tests were not yet available.

Islanders also have been urged to avoid drinking or touching surface waters such as lakes or rivers, particularly after a deadly outbreak of suspected leptospirosis, a bacterial disease spread by animals' urine.

The EPA said it plans to dedicate more staff this week to inspect the roughly 250 small water utilities that serve remote, isolated communities and are typically in poor repair.

Many Puerto Ricans fear other existing threats could have grown worse.

In the southern coastal city of Guayama, residents long have protested the dumping of a several-story-high mountain of coal ash on the grounds of nearby power plant. The pile looks intact after the hurricane, but many fear the winds and flooding could have sent coal ash laced with heavy metals into adjacent neighborhoods.

Benjamin Planes Lugo, 70, lost the roof of the house he built with savings from running a gas station in New York, but he said he's more concerned about the ash, which he already blamed for his respiratory problems. The EPA said Sunday that it had visited the site and was awaiting test results.

"We're real worried about it," Planes Lugo said.

Enck, the former EPA administrator who also oversaw the cleanup after Superstorm Sandy in New York and New Jersey, said her successors should pull in staff from all over the country to address Puerto Rico's problems.

"They have to inspect every single landfill," she said. "EPA needs to go and look at how much material has moved offsite because, inevitably, it did."

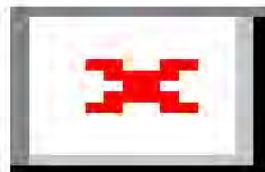
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## Desperate Puerto Ricans line up for water — at a hazardous waste site (Washington Post)

By [Arelis R. Hernández](#) and [Brady Dennis](#)

October 16 at 2:13 PM

[Washington Post](#)



<https://img.washingtonpost.com/news/energy-environment/wp-content/uploads/sites/43/2017/10/Puerto-Rico-2-300x169.jpg>

*A man draws water from a well in Puerto Rico that is part of a Superfund site. The area was not secured when federal officials arrived over the weekend to test the water quality of several wells there. Right, workers reattach the fallen "Peligro" sign, for danger, at the Maguayo well in Dorado, where locals who still lack water service after Hurricane Maria were filling containers with potentially contaminated water. (Arelis R. Hernandez/The Washington Post)*

DORADO, Puerto Rico — Every 10 minutes or so, a truck or a van pulled up to the exposed spigot of an overgrown well, known as Maguayo #4, that sits not far from a bustling expressway and around the corner from a Krispy Kreme doughnut shop.

Fencing around the area had been torn open, and a red and white "Peligro" sign, warning of danger, lay hidden beneath debris and dense vegetation. One after another, people attached a hose to

draw water for bathing, washing dishes and, in some cases, drinking. They filled buckets, jugs, soda bottles.

What many didn't realize is that the well is one of nearly a dozen that are part of the Dorado Groundwater Contamination Superfund site — designated last year by the Environmental Protection Agency as among the nation's most toxic sites.

Past testing here has shown the presence of tetrachloroethylene and trichloroethylene, solvents commonly used in industrial processes, which can cause health problems including liver damage and increased risk of cancer. The EPA has yet to identify the cause of groundwater contamination in the wells, and local water systems no longer draw from them.

But the aftermath of Hurricane Maria has brought desperation in many forms. In this corner of the island, many residents still have no reliable source of water and search for access wherever they can.

It's difficult to know just how many people have sought water from the Superfund site in the weeks since the Category 4 hurricane walloped Puerto Rico and crippled its infrastructure. The central water authority continues to depend on generators and some limited electricity-grid power to keep pumps working at plants across the island. As of Sunday, the government announced it had restored service to nearly 70 percent of customers.

But for the families who live in Dorado, nothing is yet flowing in their homes. In a single hour on Saturday, more than four families arrived at the unsecured Maguayo well to draw water. None was aware of the potential dangers. Several assumed the well was part of the "Supertubo" that carries water to greater San Juan, roughly 20 miles to the east.

In the late morning, EPA officials arrived on the scene just as a man and two children were topping off a 50-gallon container on the back of his pickup. Andres, who declined to give his last name, said he had been using the water for bathing and had no idea it might be contaminated.

The dozen officials, armed with kits, gloves and other materials to conduct tests, hastily reassembled the broken chain-link fence near the spigot and restored the "Danger" sign.

Recent local testing showed that contamination levels were below legal thresholds, but EPA spokesman Elias Rodriguez said the agency remains concerned about any residents drinking from wells that are part of the site. Officials said Sunday that data gathered in 2015 showed some wells were contaminated — exceeding standards for volatile organic chemicals — while others met drinking-water standards. The entire area was included in the Superfund site boundaries as a "precautionary measure" because groundwater contamination can move over time, the EPA said.

An agency statement said that the results of the bacteria portion of its testing should be available by midweek and that its chemical analysis should be completed by the end of next week.

Residents unwittingly drawing water from a Superfund site is merely one example of Puerto Rico's dire lack of clean, reliable water. Government officials have said it could be months before power is fully restored across the island, which means that it could take nearly as long to get water flowing to all residents in need. National Guard troops and aid workers only recently began reaching the most far-flung communities with bottled water and water trucks.

The massive disruptions have forced residents to forgo the basics of modern plumbing and resort to any means available to fill containers. Along Highway 10, which cuts a jagged north-south route through the center of Puerto Rico, vehicles frequently line the road shoulders as drivers search for spring water flowing from craggy mountainsides.

In the mountainous municipality of Comerio, flooding from the hurricane left residents cut off from the central government and outside aid. So locals used plastic pipes to install a crude system to reroute spring water to a clearing where, one by one, people could shower. Elsewhere, residents have slogged regularly to creeks to fetch water and to bathe.

EPA officials prepare to test water from a well located on the Dorado Superfund site. Locals have been drawing water from a well there for weeks, not knowing it could be contaminated. (Arelis R. Hernandez/The Washington Post)

With the lack of reliable water has come increasing fear of disease.

Already, the island government has identified four suspected deaths as a result of leptospirosis, a bacterial infection spread by animal urine in the soil or groundwater. The deaths won't be certified as "hurricane-related" unless the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention confirms lab samples indicating the victims became infected by drinking or having contact with contaminated water.

The health risks posed by water from the Maguayo well probably depend on the person, Rodriguez said. Any hazards might be more risky for vulnerable populations, such as elderly people or pregnant women.

[['If there is no water, disease will come': Many in Puerto Rico still lack water service](#)]

Another EPA spokesman, Rusty Harris-Bishop, said government officials only recently learned that people were trying to get water at Superfund sites. In one case, a local resident contacted the agency to request access to a well.

Harris-Bishop said the EPA began sending assessment teams late last week to evaluate hazardous waste sites in Dorado, Hormigas and San German. After surveying those locations and two others, the agency says it believes residents were able to access wells only at the Dorado site, although officials acknowledge they have no way of knowing how many people carted away water before the site was again secured Saturday.

The EPA is working with the Federal Emergency Management Administration and the Army Corps of Engineers to ensure water trucks are reaching nearby neighborhoods. "We are sensitive to the suffering and needs of these communities," Harris-Bishop said.

*Dennis reported from Washington.*

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## **Policía dará vigilancia a supuesto pozo contaminado en Dorado | Hospital (Metro PR)**

[Cybernews](#)

lunes 16 de octubre del 2017, a las 13:38

**Police will monitor well number 4 of the Aqueducts and Sewers Authority (AAA) in Macoolo, Dorado, which is supposedly contaminated.**

La Policía le dará vigilancia al pozo número 4 de la Autoridad de Acueductos y Alcantarillados (AAA) en Maguayo, Dorado, el cual supuestamente está contaminado.

Según el reporte, una persona abrió la llave y varios ciudadanos se llevaron a sus casas el agua supuestamente contaminada.

El pozo en cuestión ubica en la carretera PR-694 kilómetro 2.3 del barrio Maguayo en Dorado.

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## **Trump says military should not have to help with food, water distribution in Puerto Rico (CNBC)**

- The military is helping distribute water and food in Puerto Rico, but President Trump says that's "something that really they shouldn't have to be doing."
- The U.S. territory has been reeling in the wake of Hurricane Maria, which left most of the island without power or access to clean drinking water.
- Trump has faced criticism for an apparent lack of empathy amid the disaster response.

By [Christine Wang](#)

3:52 p.m. Oct. 16, 2017

[CNBC](#)

President [Donald Trump](#) said the military shouldn't have to distribute the "massive amounts" of food and water that have been delivered to storm-battered Puerto Rico.

When a reporter asked Trump about disaster relief on the island, the president said that food and water had been brought to Puerto Rico, but it wasn't being distributed by local people.

"They have to distribute the food to the people of the island. So, what we've done is, we now actually have military distributing food, something that really they shouldn't have to be doing," he said in a [wide-ranging, hastily scheduled press conference](#) on Monday.

The remark follows comments Trump made last week, where he partly blamed the island for the devastation and said emergency responders can't stay in Puerto Rico "forever."

Puerto Rico has been reeling in the wake of Hurricane Maria, which left most of the U.S. territory without power or access to clean drinking water. Over the weekend, local authorities raised the death toll to 48 after reviewing medical records.

A local economist projected that the wreckage may have set back Puerto Rico's economy so much that it will now take [more than a decade to recover](#).

Trump said Monday that aid operations in Puerto Rico are "very tough" because the island "was in very poor shape before the hurricanes ever hit." The island had more than \$70 million in debt before Maria landed.

The president has faced criticism for an apparent lack of empathy for Puerto Rico amid the disaster response.

During a trip to the island earlier this month, Trump said the hurricane destruction had thrown his administration's budget "[a little out of whack](#)." Later that day, he tossed packages of paper towels to hurricane victims.

While Trump has said his administration has done a great job responding to the crisis on the island, a [recent poll found that most voters disagreed](#). Fifty-five percent of American voters say the Trump administration has not done enough to help the U.S. territory after Hurricane Maria struck, [according to a Quinnipiac poll released last week](#).

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## **Trump blames difficulty accessing water in Puerto Rico on local distribution (CNN)**

### **US has brought 'tremendous amounts of water'**

By Eli Watkins , CNN

Posted: 2:23 PM, October 16, 2017 Updated: 2:35 PM, October 16, 2017

[CNN](#)

Puerto Rico is suffering shortages of water in many areas and only 15 percent of grid electricity has been restored.

WASHINGTON (CNN) - President Donald Trump defended the federal government's response to the disaster in Puerto Rico, and contended difficulty accessing food and water was due to shortcomings on local distribution.

"We have delivered tremendous amounts of water, and then what you have to do is you have to have distribution of the water by the people on the island," Trump said at a news conference on Monday from the White House.

Trump noted the military is on the ground helping with distribution efforts -- which he argued shouldn't be their job.

"What we've done is we now actually have military distributing food, something that really they shouldn't have to be doing," Trump said.

He said there are plenty of supplies in Puerto Rico, but the local distribution chains need to work to get them where they are needed.

"We have massive amounts of water," Trump said. "We have massive amounts of food, but they have to distribute the food, and they have to do this. They have to distribute the food to the people of the island."

Trump said the situation was "very tough" because Puerto Rico is an island and had a poor electrical grid prior to being hit by back-to-back hurricanes.

"It was in really bad shape before," Trump said.

The entire island of Puerto Rico was walloped by hurricanes last month, and the population of more than 3 million U.S. citizens continues to struggle with the fallout. The House passed a package of relief funding last week, but much of the island remains without power -- and access to clean water continues to be lacking.

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## **Trump: Military 'shouldn't have to be' distributing food in Puerto Rico** (Politico)

By [Cristiano Lima](#)

10/16/2017 03:39 PM EDT

[Politico](#)

**More on this:**

- **Transcript of president's statements on various topics, including Puerto Rico at [TIME.com](#)**
- **Key Moments from President's Wide Ranging News Conference, [ABC.com](#)**
- **Also no [FOX News](#) and [PBS](#)**

President Donald Trump said military personnel assisting in Hurricane Maria recovery efforts "shouldn't have to be" distributing food in Puerto Rico, again casting the U.S. territory's challenges as partially self-inflicted during a Monday press conference.

The president said that while federal agencies have provided "massive" amounts of food and water to Puerto Rico — where access to resources and power remains severely hampered by last month's storm — they should not also be expected to distribute them. Trump has [previously said](#) Puerto Ricans relied too much on federal government resources instead of a "community effort" to rebuild.

"We have massive amounts of water. We have massive amounts of food," Trump said at the White House, where he spoke alongside Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell. "But they have to distribute the food."

Trump added: "We now actually have military distributing food — something that, really, they shouldn't have to be doing."

The president has singled out issues with infrastructure and other challenges in Puerto Rico that he said pre-dated the storm as hurdles in the path to recovery. He has also warned that he won't leave federal employees in Puerto Rico indefinitely.

"We cannot keep **FEMA**, the Military & the First Responders, who have been amazing (under the most difficult circumstances) in P.R. forever!" he [tweeted](#).

The House of Representatives on Thursday [overwhelmingly approved](#) a \$36.5 billion relief package for Puerto Rico and other impacted regions. It is headed to the Senate, where it is expected to be approved.

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## WEATHER

### **Piden abrir la Sala de Emergencias del Hospital Municipal de San Juan**

(Primera Hora)

[Primerahora.com](http://Primerahora.com)

10/16/2017 |09:14 a.m.

#### **Due the weather conditions, a bridge in Cidra collapsed this morning. Ten families were left incommunicado, the police added**

Un puente localizado en la carretera PR-734 del sector Campo Bello en Cidra colapsó durante la mañana de hoy, lunes, informó la Policía.

Según datos preliminares, los hechos ocurrieron a las 8:00 a.m. cuando el puente se derrumbó debido a las inclemencias del tiempo.

Diez familias quedaron incomunicadas, agrega la querrela del Centro de Operaciones de Radio Control.

No se reportaron heridos

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### **Todo Puerto Rico bajo vigilancia de inundaciones ( Primera Hora )**

10/16/2017 |09:19 a.m.

[Primerahora.com](http://Primerahora.com)

The National Meteorology Service (SNM) maintains a flood watch for all of Puerto Rico until midnight today, due to the rains that continue to whip the island. Downpours will be impacting mostly the eastern region of the island and during the afternoon will be extended to other portions of the island. Due to the saturation of the soils, it is warned that any rain can cause flooding in several municipalities

El Servicio Nacional de Meteorología (SNM) mantiene una vigilancia de inundaciones para todo Puerto Rico hasta la medianoche de hoy, debido a las lluvias que continúan azotando la isla.

Según el meteorólogo Jesús Figueroa, del SNM, aunque la onda tropical que afectó ayer parte de la isla se encuentra bastante lejos detrás de este fenómeno atmosférico hay áreas extensas de humedad que están propiciando el desarrollo de aguaceros y tormentas eléctricas en varios sectores de la isla.

Estos aguaceros estarán impactando hoy la región este de la isla y durante la tarde se extenderán a otras porciones del país.

Como los suelos continúan saturados, Figueroa advirtió que cualquier lluvia adicional podrá ocasionar inundaciones en varios pueblos.

"Va a seguir lloviendo y cualquier lluvia adicional se convierte en escorrentías, lo que causa problemas de inundaciones", expuso el meteorólogo.

De hecho, debido al paso de la onda tropical ayer se registraron de dos a cuatro pulgadas de lluvia, mayormente en la mitad este y sureste del país. En el municipio de San Lorenzo, por ejemplo, se registraron 4.32 pulgadas de agua.

Figueroa indicó que el SNM también mantiene un aviso de inundaciones para el municipio Yabucoa hasta las 9:30 a.m. de hoy, ya que el río Guayanés se encuentra en un nivel bastante alto.

"Aunque el río está bajando sigue sobre el nivel de inundaciones. Se espera que en las próximas horas el nivel baje", manifestó el meteorólogo.

Ante estas condiciones del tiempo, el mar está bastante picado con olas de hasta ocho pies, por lo que hay una advertencia para los operadores de pequeñas embarcaciones.

Además, hay un potencial moderado de corrientes submarinas para la costa norte y sur de Puerto Rico.

Figueroa sostuvo que esta actividad de lluvias y tronadas continuará, al menos, hasta este jueves, ya que para el fin de semana se espera que un patrón de aire seco entre a nuestra región, mejorando las condiciones del tiempo.

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## **Colapsan dos puentes en Bayamón y Cidra ospital Municipal de San Juan ( El Nuevo Día )**

lunes, 16 de octubre de 2017 - 1:45 PM

[El Nuevo Dia](#)

### **Two bridges collapsed today, one in the municipality of Bayamón and another in the municipality of Cidra due to the heavy rains that continue to affect the island.**

Dos puentes colapsaron hoy, uno en el municipio de Bayamón y otro en el municipio de Cidra debido a las fuertes lluvias que continúan afectando la isla.

Según la Oficina de Prensa de la Policía, uno de los derrumbes ocurrió en la carretera PR-830 del barrio Cerro Gordo en Bayamón, impidiendo el paso de los conductores.

El tránsito se interrumpió a la altura del kilómetro 23, agregó la Uniformada.

Asimismo, un puente ubicado en la carretera PR-734 del sector Campo Bello en Cidra colapsó durante la mañana de hoy.

Según datos preliminares, los hechos ocurrieron a las 8:00 a.m. cuando el puente se derrumbó debido a las inclemencias del tiempo.

Diez familias quedaron incomunicadas, agrega la querrela del Centro de Operaciones de Radio Control.

No se reportaron heridos.

Piden abrir la Sala de Emergencias del Hospital Municipal de San Juan

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## **Se registran deslizamientos de tierra en Caguas y Aguas Buenas (Primera Hora )**

10/16/2017 |01:31 p.m.

[Primera Hora](#)

### **The authorities reported on two landslides that obstruct the roads of Caguas and Aguas Buenas. Emergency management personnel from both municipalities attend to the situation.**

Las autoridades informaron sobre dos deslizamientos de terreno que obstruyen carreteras de Caguas y Aguas Buenas.

Según la Policía a media mañana de hoy, lunes, ocurrió un deslizamiento de tierra en la carretera PR-798 a la altura del kilómetro 1.7 en el barrio Río Cañas de Caguas.

El segundo deslizamiento se reportó en la carretera PR-173 en jurisdicción del sector La Mula en el barrio Jagüeyes de Aguas Buenas un tramo quedó intransitable.

Personal de Manejo de Emergencias de ambos municipios atienden la situación.

De otro lado, la Policía indicó que hay un río fuera de su cauce en el sector Los Reyes en Caguas, por lo que se recomendó a los conductores a tomar vías alternas.

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## **Investigan al Municipio de Patillas por manejo de suministros (Primera Hora)**

Gloria Ruiz Kuilan 10/16/2017 |02:29 p.m.

### **Primera Hora**

**The authorities reported on two landslides that obstruct the roads of Caguas and Aguas Buenas. Emergency management personnel from both municipalities attend to the situation.**

El Departamento de Justicia comenzó hoy una investigación contra el Municipio de Patillas luego de que en una inspección realizada hoy se encontraran, supuestamente, alimentos y agua provista por la Agencia federal de Manejo de Emergencias (**FEMA**, por sus siglas en inglés) tirada en un contenedor destinado para la basura, informó hoy lunes la secretaria de Justicia, Wanda Vázquez.

“Encontramos suministros tirados en una carpa que cuando empezó a llover no se guardaron. Aquí se asignó un fiscal y un agente de la policía para que hagan un inventario porque el problema es que hay personas que dicen que vieron ratas allí. Por lo tanto, muy probablemente toda esa mercancía haya que decomisarla”, dijo la secretaria.

Dijo que visitaron el centro de acopio del Municipio de Patillas tras recibir esta mañana una querrela alertando sobre el supuesto mal manejo de la ayuda de **FEMA**.

“Esto lo que amerita es que el Departamento de Justicia verifique todos los centros de acopio”, afirmó Vázquez.

La secretaria recordó que el gobernador Ricardo Rosselló dio la directriz la semana pasada de investigar cómo se estaban manejando los suministros ante las incesantes quejas de alcaldes y personas afectadas por el huracán de que la ayuda les llegaba tarde o era escasa.

“Hay funcionarios que no están entregando los suministros tan pronto los reciben”, abundó la secretaria de Justicia.

Dijo que al dejarle saber al alcalde de Patillas, Norberto Soto Figueroa, que se comenzaría una investigación, este dijo que “como llovió pues...”.

No fue posible conseguir al alcalde a través de su celular.

Vázquez indicó que todo funcionario que se halle incurso en mal manejo de estos suministros o los retenga se expone a negligencia en el cumplimiento del deber.

“De igual manera, siendo propiedad federal se va a referir para investigación del FBI y se puede exponer a una pena de hasta 20 años”, sostuvo Vázquez.

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## **POWER / INFRASTRUCTURE / COMMUNICATIONS**

### **Solar Industry Sees the Opportunity to Build Puerto Rico's Grid of the Future (Bloomberg)**

**The island is focused on restoring power as quickly as possible, but it can't ignore the chance to rethink its entire energy grid.**

By Naureen S Malik and Brian Eckhouse

October 16, 2017, 2:38 PM GMT-4

#### **Bloomberg**

It began with a question posed by Richard Birt, a Las Vegas Fire & Rescue captain: What do you need?

The answer for the San Juan fire house was simple enough: electricity. It's what much of Puerto Rico has needed since Hurricane Maria tore through the commonwealth more than three weeks ago,

laying waste to an already weak grid. Without power, basic logistics such as coordinating and transporting equipment had proven insurmountable.

At the station in Barrio Obrero—Spanish for “workers’ neighborhood”—the situation was dire. A single diesel generator failed at times thanks to contaminated fuel. Firefighters were mostly working in darkness, relying on word-of-mouth to serve the mounting needs of a low-income community. “There are more incidents because people are using hibachis, generators and candles,” said Francisco Cruz, a lieutenant with the San Juan fire department. Nearby, a large tree covered in electrical wires blocked a main road to the station, which helps serve the city’s airport.

Sunrun brought over smaller solar panels with batteries to power water desalination tanks, left. Firefighters and Sunrun employees install panels on the roof of the Barrio Obrero fire station in San Juan to set up a microgrid to keep the lights and communications equipment running.

Birt suggested a micro-grid featuring solar and battery storage and began mobilizing a team to help put it all together. Funding for the project was provided by Empowered by Light (a group backed by Leonardo DiCaprio), rooftop company Sunrun Inc. (which also donated the solar panels), and GivePower, a nonprofit that specializes in solar installation in conflict regions.

The solar industry has [taken particular interest](#) in San Juan in the aftermath of the hurricane. It’s primarily a humanitarian effort for these companies, but it’s also a chance to showcase an energy source capable of enduring natural disasters. Tesla Inc. is [sending](#) its Powerwall battery systems, Sunrun has pledged more than 8,000 pounds of solar products and rooftop company Vivint Solar Inc. is helping with shipments. The Solar Energy Industries Association has received [pledges](#) for more than \$1.2 million in product and monetary contributions from its network.

A week and a half after Birt’s initial outreach, a plane arrived in San Juan carrying enough solar panels and batteries to install 18.4 kilowatts worth of systems. The installations in Barrio Obrero were completed two days later, about 13 hours after President Donald Trump, who has noted the commonwealth’s [long-standing financial and electrical woes](#), [tweeted](#): “We cannot keep **FEMA**, the Military & the First Responders, who have been amazing (under the most difficult circumstances) in P.R. forever!”

Some hope the crisis will spur greater energy self-reliance. “We should be more flexible, to allow regions to have their own systems,” said Marco Antonio Rigau, president of San Juan’s city council, in an interview. “We are not using solar energy completely.”

“We put solar on the roof because the sun comes up every day,” Birt said, who himself has lived off the grid using solar and batteries for more than a dozen years. “It’s not going to run out of diesel like a generator or have a problem. The sun comes up, it charges the battery and the batteries are full every day waiting for the power to go down.”

Sunrun is using these charitable installations, that will allow the firehouses to produce their own power for lights and communications equipment, as a test for setting up more microgrids around the island, said Chris Rauscher, director of public policy for the company.

Providing storage is crucial at this point; solar panels alone can’t provide round-the-clock power. With the grid down, existing panels atop Puerto Rico homes and Wal-Mart Stores Inc. stores that are affiliated with utility Puerto Rico Electric Power Authority, or Prepa, have failed to operate.

Houston-based Sunnova Energy Corp., which has 10,000 residential customers in Puerto Rico who depend on Prepa, is asking battery providers to send shipments to the island on the expectation that restrictions preventing their use will be eliminated. Chief Executive Officer John Berger said he met last week with Governor Ricardo Rossello for assistance “to cut the red tape to allow those batteries to come in and allow our customers to have power.”

But for now, logistics remain a problem. Because of limited cargo space, some goods are being sent to a Miami warehouse. “We are going to continue to solicit donations and try to arrange transportation,” said SEIA spokesman Dan Whitten in an email.

Getting the power back on is [the current priority](#), Governor Ricardo Rosello told a Bloomberg News reporter in San Juan on Friday, but more thought must be given to the future of the energy grid. (He has already held an “initial conversation” with Elon Musk on the subject, he recently [tweeted](#).) The island must “give ourselves an opportunity to not just rebuild the old system but rather to establish a platform so that we can consider microgrids” and other uses of renewable sources, he said.

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## HEALTH / DEATHS / ENVIRONMENTAL

### Bacterial Infections the Latest Health Issue to Hit Puerto Rico (Healthline)

Written by Gigen Mammoser

October 16, 2017

[Fact Checked](#)

[Healthline](#)

The hurricane-ravaged island is struggling with a variety of health problems caused by contaminated water, power outages, and a lack of medical supplies.

Hurricane Maria is long gone.

But Puerto Rico is still struggling to overcome a growing healthcare crisis.

So far, 48 deaths have [been attributed to the hurricane](#) since it made landfall on Sept. 20.

And that number appears to be growing almost by the day.

More than 100 people are still missing.

Plus, a bacterial infection caused by contaminated water is starting to spread across the island territory.

Damage to major infrastructure, including roads and electrical facilities, has also created new challenges as well.

#### **Basic medical supplies are sorely needed.**

“The initial and the ongoing need right now that has come up over and over again is the medications needed to manage chronic diseases like diabetes and hypertension,” said Danielle Butin, founder of the [Afya Foundation](#), a New York-based organization that distributes surplus medical supplies and humanitarian provisions for healthcare crises around the world.

Afya has so far delivered more than 3,000 vials of insulin as part of 10 airlifts of medication and supplies to Puerto Rico valued at more than \$1.7 million in the past weeks.

#### **Access and supplies**

Outside the capital and metropolitan center of San Juan, access to healthcare and the ability to deliver supplies has become increasingly difficult.

“There has been really, really poor coordination and distribution of medical supplies and medical care in the rural areas,” Butin told Healthline.

She said their next focus will be to help supply nursing homes with basic supplies, including diapers for elderly and frail patients.

Elderly patients and those with chronic illnesses that require ongoing treatment, such as dialysis, are particularly at risk because of the hurricane’s damage to Puerto Rico’s electrical grid.

In Florida, [14 elderly nursing home patients died](#) after their care center lost power when Hurricane Irma hit the state in early September.

No power, no water

In Puerto Rico, there’s an urgency to get adequate generators supplied with fuel to keep hospitals up and running.

“There are people who require generators for life-sustaining measures,” said Butin. “They require electricity to run medical machinery and there aren't enough generators operating. There aren't enough generators to distribute for what's needed at this point.”

An estimated 84 percent of Puerto Rico is still [without power](#).

Reuters [reported](#) that in some instances, fuel for hospital generators has been delivered by armed guards to protect against looting.

Fresh water is also an ongoing problem that has led to an increase in bacterial infections. Forty percent of the population is believed to still be [without running water](#).

[Leptospirosis](#), a disease that can be spread by animal urine and flood waters is being investigated as the cause of [four deaths so far](#).

The disease can cause kidney damage, meningitis, and respiratory disorders.

“People are drinking out of creeks that are incredibly problematic. Water access and treated waters is a huge issue,” said Butin.

Drinking from a stream is believed to have caused at least one of the cases of leptospirosis.

The spread of contaminated water either through flooding or from drinking from a polluted source also increases the risk of other serious diseases, including [cholera](#) and [hepatitis](#).

[Conjunctivitis](#) (pink eye), caused by fecal matter, has seen an uptick on the island.

“Conjunctivitis is everywhere, so now they are in need of medicated eye drops,” said Butin.

A worried population

Beyond the acute and immediate medical needs on the island, there's also a specter of despair brought on by the near constant back and forth between the island's leadership and President Trump.

The president's [public comments](#) have done little to calm the fears of those in Puerto Rico.

His [statement last Thursday](#) that federal workers may leave the island soon added to those worries.

“They are really scared there,” said Butin. “People are worried about where they are going to get their medication. People are worried about getting sick.”

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## **Piden abrir la Sala de Emergencias del Hospital Municipal de San Juan (El Nuevo Día)**

lunes, 16 de octubre de 2017 - 5:00 AM

[El Nuevo Día](#)

**A group of doctors and employees of the San Juan Municipal Hospital asked the capital's mayor, Carmen Yulín Cruz, to reopen the emergency room of that health center, which was closed after the passage of Hurricane Irma by Puerto Rico. The San Juan Mayor stated that hospital facilities will remain close up to the rest of the Hurricane Season**

Un grupo de médicos y empleados del Hospital Municipal de San Juan le solicitaron a la alcaldesa de la capital, Carmen Yulín Cruz, que reabra la Sala de Emergencias de ese centro de salud, la que fue cerrada luego del paso del huracán Irma por Puerto Rico.

"Durante el paso del Huracán Irma una de las plantas eléctricas destinada a la Sala de Emergencias se dañó y la Alcaldesa mando a cerrar la Sala de Emergencias de Adultos y Pediatría y aún no ha querido abrirla por mero capricho", dijo anoche a endi.com un médico que pidió que no se le identificara.

El Hospital Municipal de San Juan, que ubica en el Centro Médico de Río Piedras, es a donde los médicos de las Salas de Emergencias de los Centros de Diagnóstico y Tratamiento de la capital refieren a los pacientes que necesitan cuidado clínico de nivel terciario.

Además, ese hospital atiende a pacientes que llegan a la Sala de Emergencias. El médico que habló con endi.com dijo que tanto la Sala de Emergencias para adultos como la pediátrica están cerradas y que solo se mantiene abierta la de OBGYN o partos.

"(Cruz) le prestó una planta eléctrica a la Alcaldesa de Loíza, teniendo nuestro hospital la necesidad. Este reclamo ya le costó el puesto al director médico. Es por eso que hablamos a condición de que no se nos identifique", dijo la fuente.

"Nos hemos comunicado con la Alcaldesa por diferentes vías y su posición es que no va a abrir hasta que culmine la temporada de huracanes", afirmó el galeno.

"Esto pone en riesgo la vida de cientos de pacientes que necesitan de nuestro cuidado. Así que hacemos un llamado al Secretario de Salud y la Procuradora de Paciente y del Envejeciente para que intervengan" con la Cruz.

Por su parte, un médico residente alertó sobre las consecuencias de tener la Sala de Emergencias cerrada. "Vamos a perder la acreditación de la Comisión Conjunta de Hospitales que nos permite atender pacientes de Medicare. También perderemos la acreditación de los programa de residencia médicas", expresó.

La Sala de Emergencias municipal tiene 50 camillas y el hospital tiene licencia para 300 camas. La plantilla de empleados es de más de 700 personas.

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## **113 personas continúan desaparecidas tras el paso del huracán María (El Nuevo Día)**

lunes, 16 de octubre de 2017 - 12:35 PM

[El Nuevo Día](#)

### **A list of 113 people lost are offered by state police from 13 Municipalities. Family reported last see them on September 20, after Maria hurricane**

Son hijos, hijas, hermanas, primos, nietas, padres, madres, abuelos... 113 puertorriqueños, 113 seres queridos, que fueron vistos por última vez el 20 de septiembre de 2017, durante el azote el huracán María.

A continuación, la lista de nombres por zona policiaca, suministrada por el Departamento de Seguridad Pública. El listado fue actualizado por última vez el domingo 15 de octubre.

Área policiaca: Aguadilla

1. Rodolfo Agrelot Segui
2. Yarilin Vélez González
3. Edwin Santos Méndez
4. Alberto Aldarondo Segui
5. Wandalina Fonseca
6. Celestino González Cruz
7. Antonio L. García Berrios
8. Glorimar Crespo Mejías
9. María Isabel López Ramírez
10. Ramón Nieves Matos
11. Dayan Gerena Matías
12. Jenifer Román
13. Nakia Román
14. Dayanara Ortiz
15. Marcos Cortés Rivera
16. Nericelena Caro Echevarrias
17. Joel Omar Rivera Beniquez

18. Wilfeedo Sánchez Valentín
19. Rodolfo Angueira Segui

Área policiaca: Aibonito

20. José Rivera Rodríguez
21. José A. Mendoza Pérez
22. Emmanuel Rodríguez Robles

Área policiaca: Arecibo

23. Luis Ortiz González
24. Daniel Onil Acevedo
25. Sheila García Rodríguez
26. Juan Olmo Cortés
27. Jessinette Rosa Hernández
28. Manuel Cruz Rodríguez

Área policiaca: Bayamón

29. Elina S. León Meléndez
30. Sheila Jaime Lugo Lirazno
31. Ivelisse Claudio
32. Benny Flores Cruz
33. Yadiriz Vázquez Nater
34. José A. Mercado Martínez
35. Orlando Rivera Camacho
36. Luis R. Matos González
37. Emmanuel Ortiz Rodríguez
38. Lester Rivera Martínez

Área policiaca: Caguas

39. Kenneth Jiménez Tayson
40. Martha Carrasquillo Ferrer
41. Álex J. Medina Vega
42. José L. Pabón del Valle
43. María Montes Hernández
44. Stephania Robles Rodríguez
45. Jean P. Velázquez Rosario
46. Miguel González Sánchez
47. Nelly Alicea Guzmán
48. Janelisse Castro Cruz
49. Joeluis A. Pabón del Valle
50. Luis Medina Díaz
51. Vidal A. Amrao Alicea
52. José M. Jiménez Hernández
53. Adam David Torres Félix
54. Yampier González Félix
55. Nilda Ferrer Díaz
56. Ángel L. Jiménez
57. Miriam I. Santos Escribano
58. José Osorio Suárez

59. Álex Morales Álamo
60. Emmanuel Montañez Ojeda

Área policiaca: Carolina

61. Benjamín Pizarro Díaz
62. Nelson J. Martínez Rivera
63. Luis A. Escobar García
64. Johany Benítez Collazo
65. Jesús M. Betancourt Cedres
66. Julio Ayuso Rivera
67. Javier Omar Soto Hiraldo
68. Josean Omar Soto Hiraldo
69. Juan Guerrero Figueroa

Área policiaca: Fajardo

70. Rubén Quiñones Segarra
71. Francisco García Pérez
72. Yarelis Santiago Martínez
73. Fernando Omar Cruz Rivera
74. William Fernández Rodríguez

Área policiaca: Guayama

75. Gilberto Rivera López
76. Irving Díaz Viñas
77. John Jr. Díaz Torres
78. Luis Reinaldo Fonseca
79. Juan A. Olmo Cortez
80. Misael Ocasio Vázquez

Área policiaca: Humacao

81. Raúl López Cay

Área policiaca: Mayagüez

82. Luis Cintrón Goden
83. Luis Matías
84. Carlos Flores Torres
85. Marilyn Luciano Rivera
86. Zenaida Martínez
87. Luis Negrón Ramírez
88. José A. Zapata Ramírez
89. Miriam I. Cabán Bermúdez
90. Angeli Luis Morales Rodríguez
91. Henry Ramos Camacho

Área policiaca: Ponce

92. Maritza Rivera Colón
93. Neisha Robles Lee
94. Roberto Maldonado Figueroa
95. Santos Salcedo

96. Ernesto de Jesús Echevarría
97. Juliet Yarelis Torres Martínez
98. Ezequiel Cardona Albarrán
99. Alexandra Pañiño Rivera
100. Melanie Dávila Meléndez
101. Alvin Manuel Rivera López

Área policiaca: San Juan

102. Daniel José García Ortiz
103. Delia Boria Quiñones
104. Raúl Cepeda Ortiz
105. Harrison Isaac Sánchez Berrios
106. Keyslyann Rivera Burgos
107. Víctor Manuel de León Marengo
108. Aleysha Sánchez Delgado
109. Jamal Velázquez Díaz

Área policiaca: Utuado

110. Minerva Pérez Santiago
111. Miguel A. Santiago Santos
112. Juan Caraballo Cruz
113. Juan Vázquez Montañez

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## **BUSINESS**

### **A month after hurricane, only half of Puerto Rico's banks are open (CNN)**

#### **'The lines are endless'**

By Patrick Gillespie

Posted: 9:20 AM, October 16, 2017 Updated: 9:39 AM, October 16, 2017

[CNN](#)

NEW YORK (CNNMoney) - Half the banks in Puerto Rico are still closed, almost a month after Hurricane Maria.

For weeks, Puerto Ricans have been waiting in long lines to get cash, food, water and gas. But banks have had a harder time reopening than other stores.

Nearly 80% of gas stations are open, and 86% of supermarkets. But only 157 of 314 bank branches on the island are open, according to government figures. About 870 ATMs are working, but the government can't say how many were working before the storm.

Most businesses are still without power and are only accepting cash. The island isn't low on bills: Treasury Secretary Steven Mnuchin said in September that two "giant" cash shipments had been sent. But the devastated electric grid, poor cell service and other problems make it difficult to safely coordinate deliveries of money.

"When the telecommunication is down and the energy is down in most of the places, then you're going to have to do a cash-based economy," Puerto Rico Governor Ricardo Rossello told CNNMoney earlier this month.



One complication has been finding enough drivers to deliver the cash in armored trucks. Another is finding gas. And the lack of power makes it hard for banks to bring software security systems back online.

Progress is being made. Two weeks ago, only 40% of banks were open. But the long wait is still too much for many people.

"The lines are endless," says Cely Rivera, a 37-year-old mother of two in Guayanilla, on the southern coast. "There isn't any communication."

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## SURVIVOR' STORIES

### **We asked Puerto Ricans about their future plans. Many want to stay and rebuild. (PRI)**

Hear directly from some of them, below.

[PRI's The World](#)

Oct. 16, 2017 · 9:00 AM EDT

By [Jasmine Garsd](#) and [Andrea Crossan](#)

[Public Radio International](#)

As some Puerto Ricans fill flights to Miami, we asked a handful of people in San Juan their thoughts about leaving their homes for the mainland US. About 3.4 million people live in Puerto Rico, and some will choose to leave the island behind and move permanently.

The House passed a \$36.5 billion aid package last week and on Sunday, Puerto Rico Gov. Ricard Rosselló said he expected power to be restored to 95 percent of the island's electric grid by Dec. 15. Currently, 85 percent of the island is still without electricity.

Most of the people we spoke to responded that they would not leave their families behind but planned to stay and rebuild.

**"I'm going to lose people that I have known."**

"I do have quite a few neighbors that have already gone to Miami, which is where most of them are leaving to. And a lot of them already bought their trip, their one-way trip to Miami and they're just waiting, and the flights have been cancelled. I feel sorry that I'm going to lose people that...that I have known."— Yolanda Prosper, teacher, San Juan resident

**"I need to help, and I need to be part of this rebuilding."**

"So I would love to stay, and I wanna stay, at least for...I feel like this: I need to help, and I need to be part of this rebuilding. But at the same time, like professionally, it's going to be like devastating like for my career staying here. It's gonna be terrible because it's gonna be one, two years of doing absolutely nothing with my career. So I would have to rethink myself and do something else. I have no problem with it, but, you know, it's a decision I have to make."— Gabriel Rodriguez, production and creative director at an advertising agency, San Juan resident

**"... it's very shocking to see how my island is right now."**

"I never lived in the United States, so I stay. And for me, it's very shocking for me to see how my island is right now." — Maria Olivero, acting public affairs officer at VA Caribbean Healthcare System

**"... I can leave no one behind."**

"My kids are here, my family, everybody else, so I can leave no one behind. You know, I need to help them. Still it's going to be a sucky part of it, but I gotta do it."— César Gutiérrez, Marine Corps veteran, San Juan resident

*Produced by Alex Newman; edited by Anna Pratt. Reporting and images by Jasmine Garsd and Andrea Crossan in San Juan, Puerto Rico. Lead image by Carlos Barria/Reuters.*

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## **A casi un mes de María, aún hay 5,000 refugiados (Primera Hora)**

Prensa Asociada

10/16/2017 | 07:06 a.m.

[Primera Hora](#)

**Over 5,000 people who lost their homes and now live in temporary shelters throughout the island. The 85% of the island remains without power electricity and about 40% do not have access to water for the last three weeks, since hurricane Maria**

TOA BAJA, Puerto Rico. Arden Dragoni y su familia perdieron todo cuando el huracán María devastó Puerto Rico el mes pasado. Sólo algunas paredes de su casa de madera siguen en pie. Su ropa, muebles, otros bienes del hogar y su viejo automóvil están en ruinas.

Dragoni, su esposa Sindy, sus tres hijos y su perro Max viven ahora en un albergue establecido dentro de una escuela en este pueblo en la costa norte de Puerto Rico. Él mantenía a su familia como trabajador de la construcción, pero su empleador cerró el negocio, por lo que Dragoni se quedó sin una fuente de ingresos.

Están entre las más de 5,000 personas que perdieron sus viviendas y ahora viven en albergues temporales en toda la isla, donde cerca el 85% de la isla sigue sin suministro eléctrico del Estado y cerca del 40% carece de acceso regular de agua tres semanas después del paso de la tormenta.

La mayoría de la gente que está en los albergues perdió su vivienda por inundaciones, que fueron especialmente intensas en comunidades tales como Toa Baja. Las casas y los apartamentos se llenaron de aguas turbias, las cuales se llevaron los electrodomésticos y destruyeron todo lo que había en el interior.

En la escuela Ernestina Bracero Pérez en Toa Baja hay 73 personas de todas las edades que duermen en los salones de clase, se bañan con agua de lluvia y pasan el tiempo en el patio.

**La familia de Dragoni comparte espacio con otra familia en un salón de clases en la escuela.**

La pareja llevó a su hijo Ian al hospital después de que le salió una ampolla detrás de la oreja, ya que el agua contaminada ha estado provocando enfermedades en algunas personas, pero el doctor lo diagnosticó como un salpullido común.

Agustina Lugo, una anciana de salud delicada, también se refugió en la escuela después de que la tormenta del 20 de septiembre inundó su casa. Dijo que no había tenido contacto con sus parientes hasta que una sobrina la localizó recientemente.

Las autoridades escolares dicen que la escuela no puede reabrir hasta que las víctimas desplazadas por las inundaciones puedan retirarse de ella. Las autoridades locales intentan hallarles un nuevo albergue en el poblado.

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## **EDUCATION**

### **Estimados de UPR superan los \$100 millones en daños (Primera Hora)**

10/16/2017 | 01:32 p.m.

Alex Figueroa Cancel

[Primera Hora](#)

## **University Of Puerto Rico reports the institution's damages are over \$100 million but that the students will be able to complete their academic courses.**

Con la actualización de los informes de daños, el presidente interino de la Universidad de Puerto Rico (UPR), Darrel Hillman, informó hoy que los daños en la institución ascienden a sobre \$100 millones.

A la vez que aseguró que el año académico no se perderá y los estudiantes podrán completar sus cursos, Hillman indicó que el monto de los daños ha ido en aumento según han continuado las evaluaciones de las estructuras y de los equipos.

“La UPR, como todos, sufrió un gran embate”, expresó Hillman. “Ya hemos evaluado edificios. Entró mucha agua en los planteles. Estamos trabajando con el hongo y otras situaciones”.

“Empezamos con unos estimados, pero según se van energizando los edificios, nos vamos dando cuenta de equipos que se dañaron”, agregó.

El funcionario sostuvo que inicialmente la UPR trabajará con su seguro privado, que cubre hasta \$100 millones.

Luego, lo que supere dicho tope y los deducibles - que pudieran superar los \$2 millones - serían costeados por **FEMA**, según Hillman.

Señaló que el recinto que más daños sufrió “por pies cuadrados” fue Humacao, donde la cantidad estimada ronda los \$34 millones.

“Estamos trabajando con todo esto, pero los estudiantes pueden estar seguros de que no perderán el año y que podrán continuar con sus carreras académicas”, explicó Hillman.

“Van a completar este semestre aunque sea (terminando) en febrero. No obstante, comenzaría el segundo semestre para que se termine antes del 30 de junio”, abundó el presidente interino, al mencionar la posibilidad de reponer el tiempo lectivo con sábados y métodos alternativos.

Asimismo, mencionó que ofrecerán la flexibilidad de que estudiantes puedan completar cursos en recintos que tengan más cerca de sus casas, aunque sea diferente al que esté matriculado.

Después de que el Recinto de Ciencias Médicas comenzara a dar clases - pese a algunas interrupciones - el pasado 9 de octubre, los recintos de Carolina y Arecibo iniciarán el 23 de octubre.

“Luego, la próxima semana, el 30 de octubre, empezarán todos los demás recintos, con excepción de Cayey”, señaló Hillman.

“Cayey se va a tomar una semana adicional por una avería que tuvo la subestación eléctrica”, añadió. “Eso se está trabajando internamente en el campus”.

Los únicos recintos que todavía no tienen servicio de la Autoridad de Energía Eléctrica (AEE) son Cayey, Humacao y Utuado.

Carolina tampoco tiene, pero Hillman dijo que tienen un generador que le permite las operaciones esenciales.

En el caso de Ponce, comentó que sí tiene el servicio de la AEE, pero están atendiendo algunas averías internas.

Por otro lado, Hillman indicó que sí podrán abrir las residencias de estudiantes, aunque se están preparando para un “plan B”

“Se pudieran usar escuelas públicas. Ya tenemos asignada la (escuela) José Celso Barbosa en Río Piedras para hospedarlos (a los universitarios) si fuera necesario”, informó.

En dicha escuela el gobierno estableció uno de los puntos denominados “stop-and-go”, donde se preparan comidas calientes para personas afectadas por el huracán.

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