

Introductory Statement

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs works to promote Belize's foreign policy objectives within the international community for the development of our people. It is within this established network that foreign assistance can be maximized to restore the country back to a state of normalcy after the event of a disaster.

The Foreign Assistance Committee Hazard Response Plan presents activities at the local and international level to respond to the event of a disaster in Belize. It establishes the Chief Executive Officer of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as Chairman of the Committee with general authority for plan activation and deactivation, and lists the responsibilities for several aspects of preparedness and response. It establishes guidelines for coordination of assistance, and sets procedures for the transportation of supplies and transfer of funds from abroad.

This plan is in accordance with the guidelines provided by the National Emergency Management Organization Secretariat. The Operational aspects are organized as activities and responsibilities which take place before, during, and after the activation of the National Emergency Operations Centre. It aims for a high level of thoroughness in its tasks and assumptions in order to be a foundation plan for FAC response in any hazard situation.

Signature Page

This plan has been approved by _____

Chairman of FAC and
Chief Executive Officer
Ministry of Foreign Affairs

On _____

Witness

Date

Record of Reviews and Amendments

Review/Amendment	Date	Signature

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

BATSUB	British Army Training Support Unit Belize
BDF	Belize Defence Force
BEL	Belize Electricity Ltd.
BPA	Belize Ports Authority
BTL	Belize Telecommunications Ltd.
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
CMO	Chief Meteorological Officer
DEC	District Emergency Committee,(includes Special Committees)
DEOC	District Emergency Operations Centre (includes Special Committee E.O.C.s)
DEP. COORD.	Deputy Coordinator
FAC	Foreign Assistance Committee
GOB	Government of Belize
HQ	Headquarters
HRMC	Human Resource Management Committee
HSC	Housing and Shelter Committee
EICWC	Education, Information, Communication and Warning Committee
LSART	Land Search and Rescue Team
MEC	Mitigation and Environment Committee
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Min.	Ministry
N	National
NAC	National Advisory Committee
NEC	National Emergency Coordinator
NEMO	National Emergency Management Organization
NEOC	National Emergency Operations Centre
NFS	National Fire Service
NMS	National Meteorological Service
NSAREC	National Search and Rescue and Evacuation Committee
NSART	National Search and Rescue Team
PM	Prime Minister
RC	Recovery Committee
RUAC	Restoration of Utilities and Access Committee
RECON	Reconnaissance
RSMC	Relief and Supplies Management Committee
SAR	Search and Rescue
SARE (C)	Search and Rescue and Evacuation (Committee)
SIT REP	Situation Report
SOPs	Standard Operating Procedures
SUMA	Supplies Management
UNDAC	United Nations Disaster Assessment Coordinator
VEC	Village Emergency Committee
VEOC	Village Emergency Operations Centre

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A. BASIC PLAN

1.0 Introduction

This National Foreign Assistance Committee (FAC) of Nemo Hazard Response Plan aims to prepare all FAC members for duties, procedures, and routines which take place during a national emergency in order to secure and coordinate foreign assistance to assist in returning the country to a state of normalcy as soon as possible. This plan is structured as activities which take place during **Pre Activation, Activation, and Deactivation** of the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC). Committee Members are:

- The Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs– Chairman
- The National Emergency Management Organization Coordinator
- A representative of the Ministry of National Development
- A representative of the Immigration and Nationality Department
- A representative of the Belize Tourist Board
- A representative of the United Nations agencies
- A representative of the Belize Red Cross Society
- Representatives of Churches and Religious Organizations
- A representative of NGO's (ANDA)
- A representative of the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps

Other actors of this plan include members of staff of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Hazard Analysis:

- Usability of runways and ports in the event of a national emergency.
- Sustainability of communications with diplomatic and consular missions.

1.1 SCOPE

- To update all Foreign Missions, Regional and International Agencies, and Governments on any emergency situation that may require external assistance.

- To make short, medium and long term requests for assistance to Foreign Governments, agencies and organizations.
- Assess requirements in conjunction with NEMO
- Monitor, in coordination with NEMO and the SUMA (Supplies Management) programme the efficient flow of assistance.
- To disseminate information on the health and welfare of foreigners in Belize, in collaboration with the Belize Tourism Board.
- Assist the NEMO in formulating and updating policy guidelines on response procedures relating to requests for international assistance.
- Be the official channel for communication to the International Community in Belize and abroad of developments as they occur, and to coordinate relief efforts.
- Prepare information briefs for nationals overseas as a means of educating and sensitizing them on the appropriateness of donations and the need to await specific requests before responding.
- Be the official channel for information to relatives and other interested parties, on conditions in Belize and of the health and welfare of nationals, as well as visitors and other foreign nationals in Belize; prior to and after the time of the disaster.
- Ensure the preparation and dissemination of the response procedures to be followed by Representatives of the International Community in Belize, and Belize's Missions overseas.
- Coordinate/Provide translation and interpretation services for NEMO EOC

1.2 Authority

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has the authority to carry out this plan under the Disaster Preparedness and Response Act Chapter 145 of the Laws of Belize {see annex }

1.3 Responsibility

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has the responsibility for maintaining, updating, reviewing, and testing this plan.

1.4 Assumptions

- There exist responsible liaison personnel to represent all Committee entities
- Each of Belize's missions has a FAC coordinator
- There is a consistent response mechanism
- All representatives, coordinators, and relevant staff are knowledgeable of the plan
- There exist accountability procedures for provision of assistance

1.5 Standard Operating Procedures for FAC management

Upon NEMO activation, the FAC Chairman will order the call out of all FAC members by MFA staff and the manning of the EOC via the FAC liaison officers. FAC activities will be conducted by MFA senior officers and managed by the FAC representatives as directed by the committee chairman. Deactivation of FAC will be ordered by the committee chairman in consultation with the Chairman of NEMO, the Minister of foreign Affairs, and the National Emergency Coordinator.

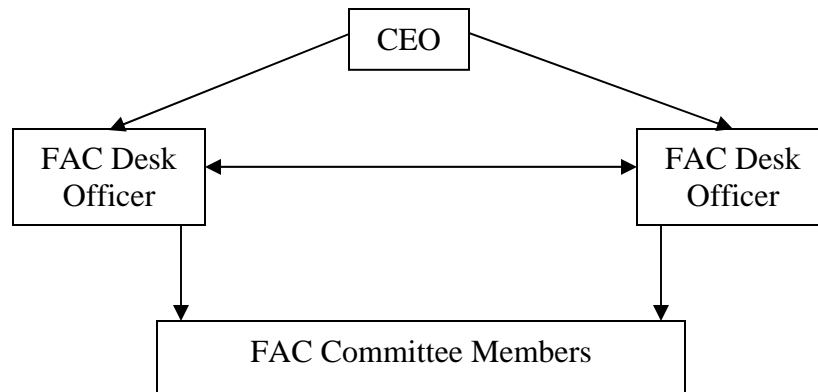
1.6 Concept of Operations

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs National Foreign Assistance Committee is activated by NEMO in the event of a national emergency in order to ensure maximum, relevant, and timely foreign assistance in order to respond to post impact needs; as well as to report of the condition of foreign nationals in the country.

This plan is structured by activities which take place during 1. Pre Activation, 2. Activation, and 3. Deactivation of the (NEOC).

1.7 Warning, Alerting, Call Out

Warning can come from a variety of sources. Weather systems, for example, are monitored by the media and by the NMS. FAC members will be alerted utilizing the same call out procedure: by CEO ordering a FAC call out to FAC liaison officers who will see to the notification of FAC members by MFA staff. Call out tools will be as available: telephone, fax, MFA website, and email.



1.8 Activation

The Chief Executive Officer, in consultation with the Chairman of NEMO, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the NEC will activate the FAC. Once the decision to activate is taken, all staff and committee members will be expected to put into effect their roles, responsibilities, and work routines as outlined by this plan.

1.9 Deactivation

This plan will be deactivated when the NEOC is deactivated. The CEO in consultation with the Chairman of NEMO, Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the NEC will deactivate the plan and instruct that staff return to routine office procedures.

1.10 Relationship to other plans

As long as the FAC plan is in effect it must be coordinated with several of the other Operational Committees until deactivation. This plan will also cooperate with the Hazard Response Plan for the Ministry of Foreign

Affairs, Defence and NEMO which is a preparation of NEMO Headquarters to support an activated NEOC.

1.11 Administrative Aspects

FAC team members are responsible for their own food and wellbeing. For all other administrative aspects, kindly refer to the Government Financial Regulations, Stores Orders, or other relevant GOB Regulations.

B. OPERATIONAL ASPECTS

PRE - ACTIVATION

Concept:

FAC will conduct all measures/activities to ensure a high state of preparedness to facilitate a rapid coordinated response.

Tasks:

- Staff Training sessions should be arranged periodically by the Coordinator in missions or the NEMO liaison officer at headquarters. Members of staff, where possible, should be exposed to training courses in Emergency Management.
- Encourage personal and family emergency contingency plans
- Update Recall system and contact lists
- Update information on Ports and Aerodromes
- Update guidelines for coordination of assistance and procedures for transporting supplies to Belize
- Convey all warnings, information and updates to missions overseas for appropriate attention.
- Coordinate with the Relief and Supplies Management Committee on list of items to be required (annexed).
- Coordinate with Human Resource Management Committee on required expertise.
- Coordinate with Medical Care and Public Health on list of required Medications

(BTB and INS)

- Liaise with BTB and INS officials to ensure an information flow on the whereabouts and wellbeing of foreign nationals during times of crisis
- Inform BTB of Nemo DEC's who will be rural points of contact in the event of a breakdown in communication

(Belizean Missions Abroad)

- Acquaint staff with the FAC plan and with the guidelines for the coordination of assistance
- At the start of the Hurricane Season, Belizean Missions in all countries should take advantage of the various Belize News Services, Ministry web site www.mfa.gov.bz, and NEMO web site www.nemo.org.bz, to advise Belizeans of the procedures to follow when seeking information on relatives after a hurricane or disaster strikes Belize.
- Identify specialized agencies or focal points and establish a working relationship with the offices for external disaster assistance of these agencies within the host country.
- Inform leaders of the Belizean Community, Missions of countries within our region and other interested parties of the mechanisms and procedures to be used for coordinating an effective disaster response.
- Maintain contact with and sensitize Airline Officials and Shipping Executives as to the nature of assistance that is likely to be required from them.
- Sensitize donors on the types of assistance that can or should not be given and why.
- Maintain an updated list of items likely to be required by Belize, in consultation with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Activation

Concept:

FAC will be manned in the EOC by trained senior officers of MFA, under the direction of regular meetings of the FAC committee.

Tasks:

- Effect recall /call out system as soon as possible
- Begin work routine by continuous FAC representation in the NEOC

Assumption:

- In the event that the national communication system fails, the NEMO Headquarters Building in Belmopan will be given priority access for reconnection. The FAC has dedicated the telephone number 822 3764 and fax number 822 3778 for priority access

(Regional and International Agencies / Diplomatic Corps)

- The Chairman of the FAC is the official point of contact with the Government of Belize for the Diplomatic Corps and Regional and International Agencies.
- The Office of the Dean of the Diplomatic Corps will be the command headquarters for the Diplomatic Corps during the event of an emergency.
- The UNDP Headquarters in Belmopan will be the coordinating centre for the Regional and International Agencies.
- Diplomatic Missions, Regional and International Agencies are to provide the Chairman of the FAC, at the beginning of the hurricane season, information on location and contact details where they can be reached in the event of a national emergency such as a hurricane.

(Safety of Foreign Nationals)

- The Director of Immigration and Nationality will provide information on the total number of tourists and visitors in the country at the time of a national emergency.
- Information concerning tourist location, safety, health and welfare, should be forwarded to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for onward transmission to relatives and for information to relevant diplomatic and consular missions. This does not preclude direct calls to the diplomatic and consular missions by foreign nationals including tourists and visitors.
- The Ministry of Foreign Affairs will provide to the Diplomatic Corps, details of foreign nationals remaining in the country during a national emergency, as provided by the Belize Tourist Board and the Director of Immigration.
- Diplomatic Missions are encouraged to maintain a roster of nationals of their respective countries who reside in Belize.

DEACTIVATION

Concept:

FAC will aggressively perform the tasks of identifying and bringing in much needed foreign aid into the country in an organized, informed, and accountable manner.

Tasks:

- FAC to carry out ‘Guidelines for coordination of assistance’ and ‘Procedures for transporting supplies to Belize’
- Missions will provide information to the general public overseas on conditions in Belize, and information about the health and welfare of relatives in Belize to nationals and foreigners making such inquiries.

Assumptions:

(Belizean Missions in General)

- That missions realize the primary role of Belize’s Missions Overseas in the aftermath of a disaster striking Belize is to serve as facilitators for the Foreign Assistance Committee in coordinating requests and offers of assistance to Belize from host Governments, International Organizations, Private Voluntary Organizations and individuals.
- Only requests originating from FAC contact personnel should be responded to. In the event that directives are received from other sources, Missions should consult with the FAC before taking any action.
- Missions should undertake and sensitize nationals about what they should or should not donate in times of disasters, and the importance of awaiting on specific instructions before responding.
- Missions outside of North America are encouraged to accept financial contributions since transportation arrangements to dispatch donations to Belize may prove difficult and costly. Opening of Bank Accounts

must be notified to the FAC prior to appeal for donations being issued.

(Support role of Embassy of Belize, Washington, D.C.)

- It is anticipated that the most immediate response and the greatest volume of assistance will come from the United States of America. For ease of organization and control and to avoid duplication, the Embassy of Belize in Washington, D.C. is designated as the focal point for coordinating the flow of requests and assistance. The Head of Mission is designated as Coordinator and principal contact person.
- All other designated Coordinators will liaise with the Mission in Washington, D.C.; forwarding copies to Headquarters, the type of assistance available in their respective host country. The Coordinator in Washington, D.C., after consultation with the FAC will advise all Missions what types of assistance each should seek. The method of sending the assistance to Belize will be the responsibility of the sending Mission. Where there is difficulty arranging transportation, this should be communicated to the FAC.

(Delays)

- There may be reasons why information from the FAC is delayed. If this occurs, the Washington, D.C. Mission will be requested by the Committee to convey the required information to the other Missions until communication is restored.
- Pressure will be put on Missions to respond and act before adequate and authentic information is received from Headquarters. Staff should therefore resist such pressure and wait for instructions from the FAC.

Guidelines for coordination of assistance

1. Headquarters sends official request list to all Missions if possible or to the Washington, D.C Mission
2. Each Mission will then determine if the items on the list are available in the host territory.

3. The Coordinator in each Mission will advise the Washington, D.C. Mission of the respective Missions capabilities, with details of logistics for transportation to Belize.
4. The Coordinator in Washington, D.C. determines what each Mission should seek based on the following criteria:
 - Urgency of requirement for the particular item
 - Quantity required
 - Proximity of Mission to Belize
 - Method of transportation
 - Cost of transportation
 - Documentation requirements
5. The Coordinator in Washington, D.C. sends the advance list to the FAC outlining assistance to be sought by individual Missions; including Washington, D.C.
6. Once advised by the FAC that assistance should be sought, each Mission should make its own arrangements for transportation to Belize. All goods are to be consigned to the Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Belmopan, Belize and clearly labeled as to its contents to enable easy dispatch on arrival.
7. Each Mission must advise the FAC of:
 - Items being sent
 - Method of transportation – ship, plane, courier service
 - Expected time of arrival
 - Documentation being sent or required to clear the items
8. Missions are required to provide the following:
 - Accurate records of all accepted offers
 - Description of donations
 - Name, address and phone numbers of donors
 - Information on whether the donation was sent by ship, air, or road
 - Encourage cash donations
 - Open a fund with Mission’s Banker to receive cash donations. The name of the fund is to be the same for all Missions eg. “Belize (name of disaster) Relief Fund”

Missions are instructed to periodically transfer all funds to the Central Bank of Belize. The Governor of the Central Bank of Belize must be notified in writing of all financial transfers. The letter must clearly outline where the funds derived from. A copy of this letter must be sent to Headquarters.

A list of donors must be sent to Belize at least one week after the initial deposits have been made. This will enable the Government of Belize to issue letters of thanks.

Missions should be firm in not accepting services and items not identified as being required. Missions should not accept packages addressed to individuals, families or groups.

Missions should not sanction fundraising activities by any individual, group or organization on behalf of the government, unless instructed to do so.

Procedure for transporting supplies to Belize

- All medical supplies should be consigned to the Ministry of Health, c/o Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Belmopan, Belize.
- Advance information about transportation of any supplies should be sent in order to facilitate clearance and immediate dispatch to needy areas.
- Electrical specifications on equipment should be checked before shipping to ensure compatibility with local systems (60 cycles/110 volts)
- Where supplies are being sent directly to non- Governmental Organizations, donors should be advised to ensure that supplies will be classified as bona fide relief supplies and that the consignee is able to effect clearance.

- Individuals who wish to send supplies directly to relatives or friends should be advised to use the normal postal, shipping channels or road freight where available.

Post Impact Debriefing

- Each Mission should arrange debriefing sessions with donors and others who assisted in any way in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the responses and to make recommendations for improvements on future occasions.
- “Thank you” letters should be written to all donors, and a list of donors and their supplies should be maintained and updated after each disaster event.
- Headquarters is to draft an accountability matrix displaying placement of donated supplies and finances for distribution to relevant parties.