

Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA)



The Regional Response Mechanism (RRM)





A publication of the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA)

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Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, The Commonwealth of The Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, British Virgin Islands, The Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, Republic of Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Montserrat, St. Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Turks and Caicos Islands.



Contents

Acronyms	4
1.0 Introduction	5
2.0 Purpose of Booklet	5
3.0 The Regional Disaster Response Support - A Doctrine	6
4.0 What is the Regional Response Mechanism?	13
5.0 Levels of Response	14
6.0 Key Regional Organisations	15
7.0 The Regional Security System (RSS)	16
8.0 Sub-Regional Disaster Emergency Response Operational Units	17
9.0 Response Units of the RRM	19
10.0 CARICOM Disaster Relief Unit (CDRU)	20
11.0 CARICOM Operational Support Team (COST)	24
12.0 CARICOM Disaster Assessment and Coordination (CDAC) Team	25
13.0 Rapid Needs Assessment Team (RNAT)	26
14.0 The Regional Search and Rescue Team (RSART)	28
15.0 The Regional Coordination Centre (RCC)	29
16.0 The CDEMA Participating States	30

Figures	
1 The CDEMA Participating States	6
2 The Regional Response Mechanism Enhancement	7
3 The Regional Response Mechanism	14
4 CDEMA Four Sub-Regions	17
5 The CARICOM Disaster Relief Unit (CDRU) Structure	22
6 The Rapid Needs Assessment Team (RNAT) Structure	28
7 Diagrammatic Layout of the RCC Operations	29



Acronyms

CARICOM	Caribbean Community
CDAC	CARICOM Disaster Assessment and Coordination (Team)
CDEMA	Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency
CDRU	CARICOM Disaster Relief Unit
CIMH	Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology
CLO	Central Liaison Office
COST	CARICOM Operations Support Team
CU	Coordinating Unit
DART	Disaster Assessment Response Team
ECDPG/DM	Eastern Caribbean Development Partner Group/Disaster Management
ED	Executive Director
FAHUM	Allied Forces Humanitarian
INSARAG	International Search & Rescue Advisory Group
NWCDG	North Western Caribbean Donor Group
OFDA	Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
PS	Participating States
RCC	Regional Coordination Centre
RDRSD	Regional Disaster Response Support Doctrine
RNAT	Rapid Needs Assessment Team
RSART	Regional Search and Rescue Team
RRM	Regional Response Mechanism
RSS	Regional Security System
SAR	Search and Rescue
SOP	Standard Operating Procedure
SRC	Seismic Research Unit
SRFP	Sub Regional Focal Points
SUMA	Supply Management
UNDAC	United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination
UNRC	United Nations Resident Coordinator
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USAR	Urban Search and Rescue



1.0 Introduction

The Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) is a regional inter-governmental agency for disaster management in the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and comprises eighteen Participating States.

The Agency was established in 1991 as CDERA (Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency) with primary responsibility for the coordination of emergency response and relief efforts to Participating States that require such assistance. It transitioned to CDEMA in 2009 to fully embrace the principles and practice of Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM).

The Regional Response Mechanism (RRM) was established as the vehicle to deliver timely and coordinated response support to affected Participating States. The need for a RRM was first highlighted in 1988 following the impact of Hurricane Gilbert on Jamaica, when the use of “Disciplined Forces” was introduced in disaster response and recovery in the Caribbean as a regional collaborative framework.

The RRM is coordinated by the CDEMA Coordinating Unit (CU) and seeks to deliver timely response and effective and efficient use of resources.

The Regional Disaster Response Support Doctrine (RDRSD) was developed to enhance regional coordination and increase awareness of the RRM. This doctrine embraces the “Good Practices” in the region and clearly illustrates the roles of global, regional and national entities towards a more harmonised approach in providing disaster support assistance to affected Participating States making response more efficient and effective.

2.0 Purpose of the Booklet

The purpose of this booklet is to provide general information on the CARICOM Regional Response Mechanism including the functions that currently identifies response teams that are part thereof.

The booklet also describes the Regional Disaster Response Support Doctrine and the Regional Disaster Support Concept of Operations which will guide the development of a Regional Disaster Support Capacity Enhancement Programme.

It provides detailed information on the following Regional Response teams:



- CARICOM Disaster Relief Unit (CDRU)
- CARICOM Operational Support Team (COST)
- CARICOM Damage Assessment Coordination (CDAC) Team
- Rapid Needs Assessment Team (RNAT)
- Regional Search and Rescue Team (RSART)
- CDEMA Technical Support (Specialist) Teams



Figure 1: The CDEMA Participating States

3.0 Regional Disaster Response Support – A Doctrine

3.1 Background

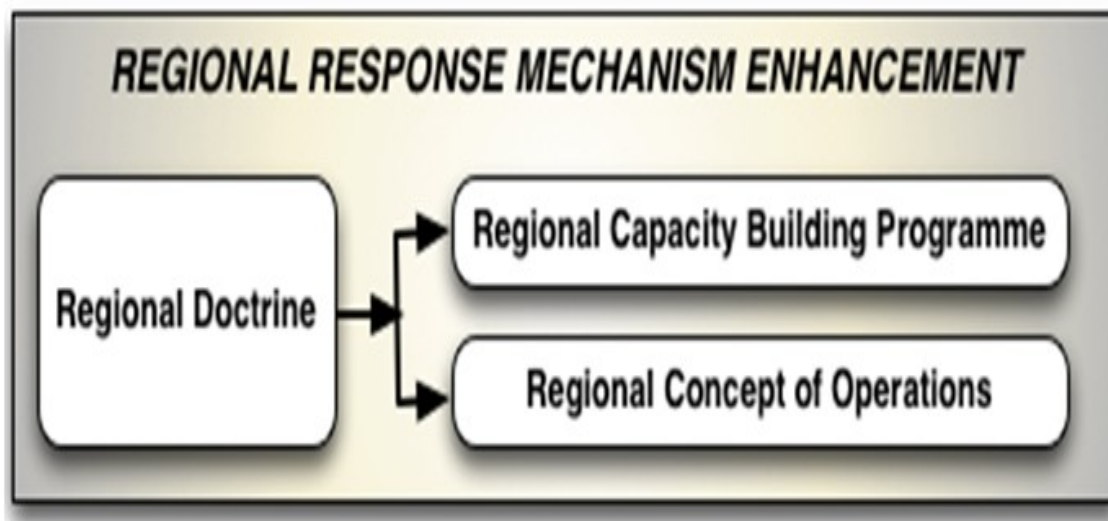
According to the report, *Natural Disasters in Latin America and the Caribbean: An Overview of Risk* (Inter-American Development Bank, 2000) and the *International Monetary Fund Report on Caribbean Small States: Challenges of High Debt and Low Growth* (2013), the Caribbean is one of the most disaster-prone regions in the world. As a result, sustainable development efforts have been hampered by periodic and cyclical events such as earthquakes, hurricanes and floods. Over the past twenty years, collective efforts to face and deal with this reality, including the adoption and promotion of a Comprehensive Disaster Management Strategy (CDM), have resulted in some Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) progress and successes. However, and notwithstanding these successes, the fact remains that natural and man-made or technological hazard events will continue to impact the region.

3.2 The Need for a Regional Disaster Response Support Doctrine

Recognizing the negative socio-economic and environmental effects of natural and man-made hazards on the region, there has been political agreement amongst the countries of the Caribbean region/CARICOM to assist each other through mutual aid when a disaster occurs. This agreement was manifested in the promulgation of the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA) Agreement of 1991 and its reaffirmation through its successor, the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) Agreement of 2009. The Agreement Establishing CDEMA lists objectives for CDEMA at Article V(a, c, d, f) and functions of the Coordinating Unit (CU) at Article XIII (a to q except g, k, p and q) which speaks to providing response support.

The Regional Disaster Response Support Doctrine (RDRSD) provides the foundation to the RRM and guides the development of the regional capacity building programme and the regional disaster support concept of operations. The RDRSD contributes to the broader objective of enhancing the region's disaster response capacity.

Figure 2: The Regional Response Mechanism Enhancement





3.3 Aim

The overall aim of the Regional Disaster Response Support Doctrine is:

To provide effective and efficient coordinated disaster response support to CDEMA Participating States requiring regional and/or international assistance for their response to the consequences of an event based on regionally agreed Principles, Concepts and Realities.

3.4 Basic Principles

The basic principles underpinning the Regional Disaster Response Support are:

Each State has the responsibility first and foremost to take care of the victims of emergencies occurring on its territory by initiating, organizing, coordinating and implementing humanitarian assistance.

1. **Respect for Sovereignty**

The sovereignty of the State must first and foremost be respected by all external partners. State sovereignty also requires that States do not [cannot] abdicate their responsibility to either prepare for and/or mount a response to the effects of a natural or man-made hazard event. Their preparation for and response to an event should, when possible, be first executed using all available means at their disposal. When local means are or expected to be exhausted, regional and international support resources may be requested. Accepting external assistance does not, and should not imply handing over or relegating control of the coordination of the national response and responsibility to regional or international entities. All external responding parties, whether regional or international, shall ensure that their response to an affected State will always be in support of the national mechanism. External parties shall in no way undermine or compromise the sovereignty of the receiving State and every effort shall be made to preserve the sovereignty of the State.



2. Regional Solidarity

Participating States and regional organisations shall offer assistance to affected States when necessary. Therefore, CDEMA's Participating States beyond being signatories to the CDEMA Agreement will adhere to the regional philosophy of Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) and operate using the same models and standards. The provision of mutual assistance demonstrates regional solidarity, regional strength and commitment to other Participating States.

Comprehensive Disaster Management (CDM) is the regional approach to disaster risk management that has received the buy-in of regional and international stakeholders. CDM has been defined as incorporating management of all hazards through all phases of the disaster management cycle – prevention and mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery – by public and private sectors, all segments of civil society and the general population in hazard prone areas.

3. Compliance with International Humanitarian Principles

The selection of the **Regional Disaster Response Doctrine's** tenets has been guided by international humanitarian principles adapted to the regional context. "The Caribbean Community (CARICOM) and the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) signed a Cooperation Arrangement on International Humanitarian Law on March 1, 2007. The Arrangement facilitates the promotion, ratification and implementation by CARICOM member states of the major international humanitarian law instruments".

Humanity

Impartiality

Neutrality

Independence

- ISAC RC Handbook



4. Adherence Principles of Partnership

Transparency

Result-oriented approach

Responsibility

Complementarity

- ISAC RC Handbook

In Keeping with the principles laid out in the Global Humanitarian Platform (July 2006), the Regional Disaster Response Doctrine is based on mutual respect among members of the Regional Response Support Mechanism as it pertains to their Mandate and obligations. It also stipulates independence as well as constraints and commitments. Early consultations and early information sharing as part of transparency will also be included. All humanitarian action will be reality based and action oriented with an ethical obligation to carry out task responsibly. The partnership is based on comparative advantage and complementing each other's contribution.

3.5 The Fundamentals of a Regional Disaster Response Support Doctrine (RDRSD)

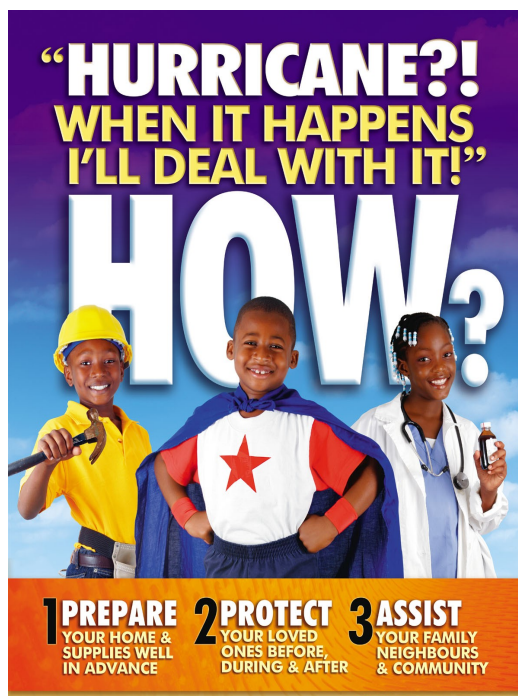
The fundamental expectations below are key to the success of the Regional Disaster Response Support effort:

1. The Disaster Response Support provides Participating States with coordinated support to limit additional injuries, loss of life, damage to property and environmental degradation in the aftermath of events.
 - It will strive for the effective and efficient use of regional on-hand, earmarked and potential resources to revert a Participating State to a state of normalcy after a disaster
2. The affected Participating State always retains control of response priorities and operations even when provided with additional regional and international resources.
3. CDEMA CU coordinates the regional response support to affected Participating State through the National Disaster Office (NDO) including:
 - National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) reinforcement to assist in the management of the national response

- Regional on-hand and earmarked material support
 - Technical assistance ranging from individuals with required technical expertise to earmarked Technical Teams
 - When required, additional human and material resources made available within the region
 - International support from development partners
4. CDEMA and regional partners continue to enhance regional disaster support capacity. CDEMA Participating States need to maintain/enhance their national disaster response capacity. This is a key contributor to the increased regional response support capacity.
 5. International disaster support assistance mechanisms support to affected CDEMA Participating States are harmonized with the regional disaster support system.

3.6 Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR)

National disaster response capacity building measures contribute to DRR. At the national level, it raises the threshold between a potential national emergency and disaster. The aggregate of national level response capacity enhancements raises the threshold at the regional level thus making the region less dependent on international assistance. Therefore, the enhanced RRM must have the capacity to effectively and efficiently harness regional resources to support the affected State's national response when needed in a timely fashion.



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3.7 Regional Realities

The following are some of the key regional realities that underpin the Tenets:

Inter-Agency Coordination in a Region at Risk

The frequency and intensity of events in the region, particularly hurricanes, is expected to rise. It is inevitable that some Participating States will experience national disasters requiring both regional and international support. Inter-agency coordination is critical at the national level to respond effectively to the consequences of an event. Inter-agency coordination is also essential at the regional level if regional disaster support is to be provided efficiently and effectively. The

The permanent increase of natural disasters that are exacerbating due to the effects of climate change in the region of Latin America and the Caribbean, the second most affected region in the planet, generated the need to facilitate a better coordination of humanitarian aid at all levels and to explore possible cooperation paths.

- OCHA IMH Report Aug 2013

real challenge arises when international humanitarian assistance is also needed. Not only do international actors have to coordinate their respective efforts but

also these have to be harmonized with the regional disaster support if affected Participating States are to be provided what they actually require for an effective national response. The enhanced RRM is based on a model that provides an avenue for international/regional coordination of disaster support.

3.8 Disciplined Forces

In the regional context, the term disciplined forces refers to police, fire, and the military. National response capacity in terms of saving lives is largely dependent on the availability of disciplined forces.

Fire: All Participating States have professional fire departments with responsibilities for providing search and rescue. This is utilized at the regional level as the nucleus of the regional search and rescue teams.

Police: The Participating States that do not have a military force have police Special Services Unit (SSU) that are trained and equipped to perform para-military roles in country. The police is a key part of the discipline forces that focuses on security, incident command, search and rescue support.

Military Forces: Nine of the Participating States have military forces varying from a few hundred to several thousand personnel. Military forces play an important role in public welfare emergencies by providing assistance to civil authorities in responding to disasters. Besides the ability to provide organized manpower, military forces also have assets and experience in communication, transportation and logistic operations.

One of the strengths of the military is its expertise in logistics. This could be utilized at the regional level. A key feature of the enhanced RRM is restructuring the Regional Coordination Centre (RCC) to include a strong logistic component supported by regional military forces.

Members of the discipline forces form part of CDEMA's CARICOM Disaster Relief Unit (CDRU) that provides humanitarian support to the Participating States.



Members of the Regional Military Forces at the CDRU Training, 2015

4.0 What is the Regional Response Mechanism (RRM)

The RRM is based on the collaboration and cooperation of CDEMA and a number of key regional organisations. The RRM has been evolving over the years and currently consists of a number of Plans, Procedures and Guidelines. It also involves a small group of Response Units/Teams and a number of agencies and organisations which is supported by a collection of Agreements, Memoranda of Understanding and Protocols.



Conceptual Framework for the Regional Response Mechanism

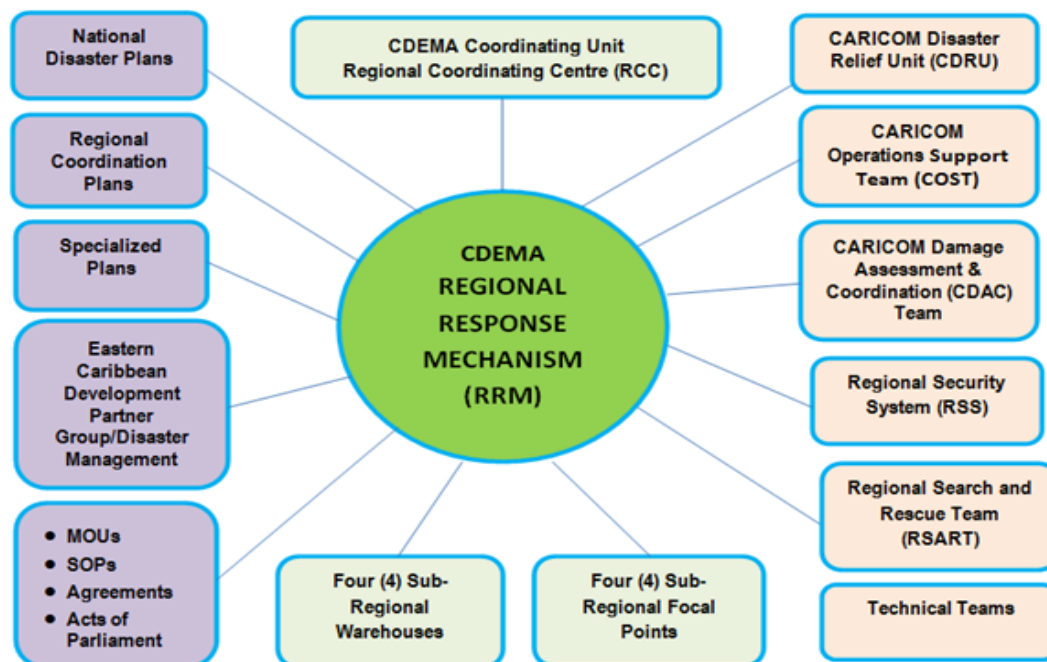


Figure 3: Regional Response Mechanism

5.0 Levels of Response

The extent of CDEMA's involvement in disaster response operations in Participating States depends on the severity of the situation and the type of assistance required by the affected State. Three levels of regional response have been defined:

LEVEL 1:

A local event in which no external assistance is required is considered as Level 1. The affected Participating State has adequate resources to manage the event. The RRM is not activated for a Level 1 event. The CDEMA CU monitors and shares information with partners and other CDEMA Participating States.

LEVEL 2:

A Level 2 event is one in which the national capacity to respond is not overwhelmed but some external assistance is required. The affected State may or may not declare a disaster.

In this scenario, the CDEMA CU may provide technical assistance, specialised equipment, support personnel and information sharing.



For example, Hurricanes: Andrew – Bahamas, 1992; Debby – Saint Lucia, 1994; Keith – Belize, 2000; Tomas – Saint Lucia and St Vincent and the Grenadines, 2010; Hurricane Joaquin – Bahamas, 2015 and for Tropical Storm Erica – Dominica, 2015.

LEVEL 3:

A Level 3 event overwhelms the capacity of an affected State to respond. In such cases the RRM is activated and regional operations are mounted to support national response. Other support from international agencies may be required (e.g. in response to Hurricanes Gilbert – Jamaica, 1988; Hugo – Montserrat, 1989; Lenny – 7 Eastern Caribbean Countries, 1999, Ivan – Grenada, 2004, and Haiti Earthquake, 2010).

6.0 Key Regional Organizations

6.1 The Eastern Caribbean Development Partner Group (ECDPG)

The Eastern Caribbean Development Partner Group (ECDPG) was established to provide a forum for information sharing among donors and development partners, and to make strategic decisions regarding programme development and coordination. This committee is chaired by the United Nations Resident Coordinator (UN RC) and comprises donor and development partners serving Barbados and the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS). A number of sub-committees were formed from this group and these have been consolidated into four thematic areas: Governance, Trade, Poverty & Social Issues and the Environment.

6.2 ECDPG for Disaster Management (ECDPG/DM)

The ECDPG/DM was formulated as a separate and distinct group from the Environment, Climate Change and Disaster Management (ECCDM) sub-committee of the ECDPG to facilitate the coordination of external emergency assistance to the countries of the Eastern Caribbean following a major natural or technological disaster. The ECDPG/DM is co-chaired by the Executive Director of CDEMA and the United Nations Resident Coordinator. The main objective of the ECDPG/DM is to facilitate an effective, timely and coordinated response operation, based on a request from an affected Participating State. The specific objectives of the ECDPG/DM are to:

- a. Carry out initial assessments after the occurrence of a disaster
- b. Assist affected Governments in coordinating the assistance in response to an emergency situation
- c. Enhance and support CDEMA as the regional mechanism for disaster response



The countries covered by the ECDPG are from the Central and Eastern Sub-Regions: *Anguilla, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, Saint Lucia, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and the British Virgin Islands.*

6.3 The North Western Caribbean Donor Group (NWCDG)

The NWCDG was formed in 2006/2007, a few years after the ECDPG, and was fashioned from it. The NWCDG provides similar coverage as the ECDPG for CDEMA's North-Western Sub-Region which comprises: *the Bahamas, Belize, Haiti, Jamaica and the Turks & Caicos Islands.* A similar development partner grouping is being explored for the Southern Sub-Region.

7.0 The Regional Security System (RSS)

The RSS is an integral part of the RRM. The RSS is a critical link between the disciplined forces and CDEMA. Under the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), it is responsible for activating the CDRU when requested by the CDEMA CU or the Regional Coordinating Centre (RCC), if it is activated. This is a mutually beneficial arrangement where RSS assists CDEMA with training and activation of the CDRU. The CDEMA CU provides disaster management training for the RSS troops undergoing training and capacity development through its Regional Training Centre (RTC). The RSS also provides logistics support to CDEMA's response teams, supplies and equipment and for performing reconnaissance missions over impacted areas.



The Regional Security System Aircraft preparing for a mission to

8.0 Sub-Regional Disaster Emergency Response Operational Units

The Sub-Regional Disaster Emergency Response Operational Units are geographically formed groups from which response support is provided in the CDEMA Participating State. This function is performed by four States namely: Jamaica, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados and Trinidad and Tobago.

These four Participating States have been designated as sub-region heads, also known as Sub-Regional Focal Points (SRFPs), and provide essential support to the CDEMA CU in the coordination of response initiatives.

The SRFP is located within the National Disaster Office (NDO) of the country where it resides and should have within its domain disaster resource inventories of the participating countries falling within its sub-group. For the purposes of management and logistics, the SRFPs have been maintained and continue to be effective in supporting emergency response.

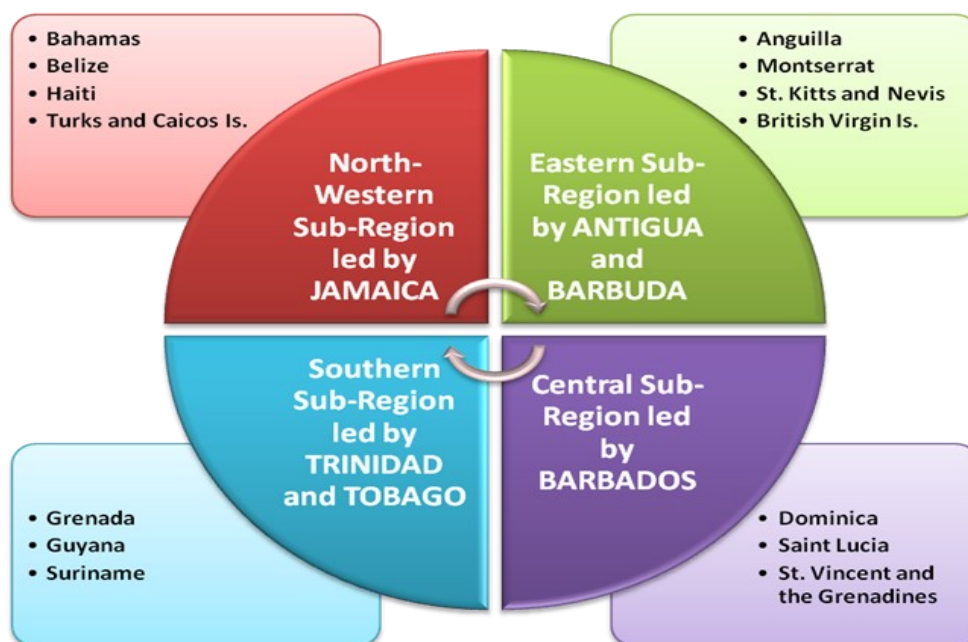


Figure 4: CDEMA Four Sub-Regions



8.1 CDEMA Sub-Regional Warehouses

Associated with and located in the SRFPs are four (4) sub-regional warehouses, which maintain basic levels of first response and search and rescue items. In recent times, several Participating States have also established national level warehouses; all of which are linked to the region's warehouse programme.

The CDEMA System also maintains a "Virtual" regional warehouse that will respond to the needs of the impacted States.

To support the management of relief supplies, the CDEMA System has designed and utilized a Relief Supplies Tracking System (RSTS). The RSTS is an online database designed to facilitate the management and tracking of disaster relief supplies. It supports better management and co-ordination of relief operations by providing a means to collect, organise and analyse disaster relief information.

The RSTS was developed to provide assistance in sourcing and tracking relief supplies in disaster relief operations by capturing information on identified needs, assistance pledged, and assistance en-route or dispatched and assistance received during disaster response operations.



Relief supplies being distributed in the aftermath of Tropical Storm Erica Dominica, 2015 (GP)



9.0 Response Units of the RRM

9.1 CDEMA Technical Support Teams

CDEMA has a pool of disaster management specialists from across its 18 Participating States available to form standing or non-permanent technical teams. These technical personnel can come from several agencies including:

- National Disaster Offices
- National Emergency response services (Eg. Fire, Police)
- Regional & National Universities
- Disciplined Services
- Regional institutions such as Caribbean Institute for Meteorology and Hydrology (CIMH), University of the West Indies Seismic Research Centre (UWI SRC), and the Regional Security System (RSS).

Depending on the needs of the impacted state CDEMA is able to draw from the pool of individuals to provide assistance. Technical expertise includes:

- Damage Assessment and Needs Analysis
- Engineering/Geological Assessment
- Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) Management
- Logistics/Warehouse Management
- Relief Supply Management
- Search and Rescue

Countries requiring assistance after an event can request one or more specialists, one or more teams or any combination depending on the needs. The Government of any CARICOM Member State can access technical teams from CDEMA through its local National Disaster Office.

At this time, CDEMA has six (6) standing technical support teams referred to as response units:

- CARICOM Disaster Relief Unit (CDRU)
- CARICOM Operational Support Team (COST)
- CARICOM Disaster Assessment & Coordination (CDAC) Team
- Rapid Needs Assessment Team (RNAT)
- Regional Search and Rescue Team (SART)
- Other CDEMA Technical (Specialists) Team

When teams are deployed to an impacted State, they come under the command of the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) of that State.



9.2 Funding/Financing of Response Units

Article XXV of the CDEMA Agreement, outlines the cost of providing assistance to an impacted State. Except as may otherwise be agreed between them, the expenses incurred by a sending State in providing assistance to a requesting or impacted State shall be defrayed by the sending State. There are other methods of financing response units such as a combination of funding sources that are customarily available from CDEMA's development partners and donors after the impact of the event.

10.0 CARICOM Disaster Relief Unit (CDRU)

10.1 Background

In 1989 when Hurricane Hugo devastated Antigua & Barbuda and Montserrat, elements of Caribbean Military Forces were mobilised to coordinate relief operations in the affected States and operated as an organisation. This arrangement became the forerunner to the CDRU.

Recognising the tremendous value of this support facility, the concept was incorporated into the 1991 Agreement Establishing the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Response Agency (CDERA). This arrangement has been retained in the 2009 transition Agreement from CDERA to CDEMA.

The CDRU comprises military, fire and police assets drawn from the 18 CDEMA Participating States. The Unit is deployed to provide humanitarian assistance in direct support to the civil authorities of any CDEMA State affected by natural or technological hazards.



CDRU Training Barbados, 2015



Food Distribution Team in Haiti, 2010

The CDRU is activated, mobilised and deployed by the Regional Security System's Central Liaison Office (RSS/CLO) in consultation with and on behalf of CDEMA. Its operations are guided by the CDRU Operational Plan, Standing Operating Procedures and a Memorandum of Understanding between CDEMA and the RSS.

10.2 Mission and Tasks of the CDRU

The CDRU's mission is to conduct disaster response and relief operations on behalf of CDEMA in support of any CDEMA Participating State stricken by natural or technological hazards.

Its main tasks include the management of relief supplies, emergency telecommunications and the provision of appropriate personnel for repairing critical lifeline facilities.

“Regional security forces provide humanitarian assistance after disasters”

10.3 CDRU Staffing

The positions within the CDRU are pre-determined based on the skill set required for the effective management and operation of the Unit. Members of each position are rotated from within the region's disciplined forces. This arrangement also includes the non RSS states such as Bahamas, Belize, Guyana, Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago. CDRU staff members are also exposed to training in disaster management and the functioning of the RRM on an annual basis by the CDEMA Regional Training Centre.



CDRU issuing relief supplies in Haiti, 2010

10.4 CDRU Structure

The CDRU is a self-sufficient unit which forms the basis of a forward command post. It comprises a headquarter element and support troops as necessary.



The diagram on page 21 shows the expanded structure of the CDRU and its reporting relationships with other key elements of the RRM.

On receiving the request for the CDRU, the CDEMA CU would authorise the RSS to mobilise and deploy the Unit to assist the requesting State.

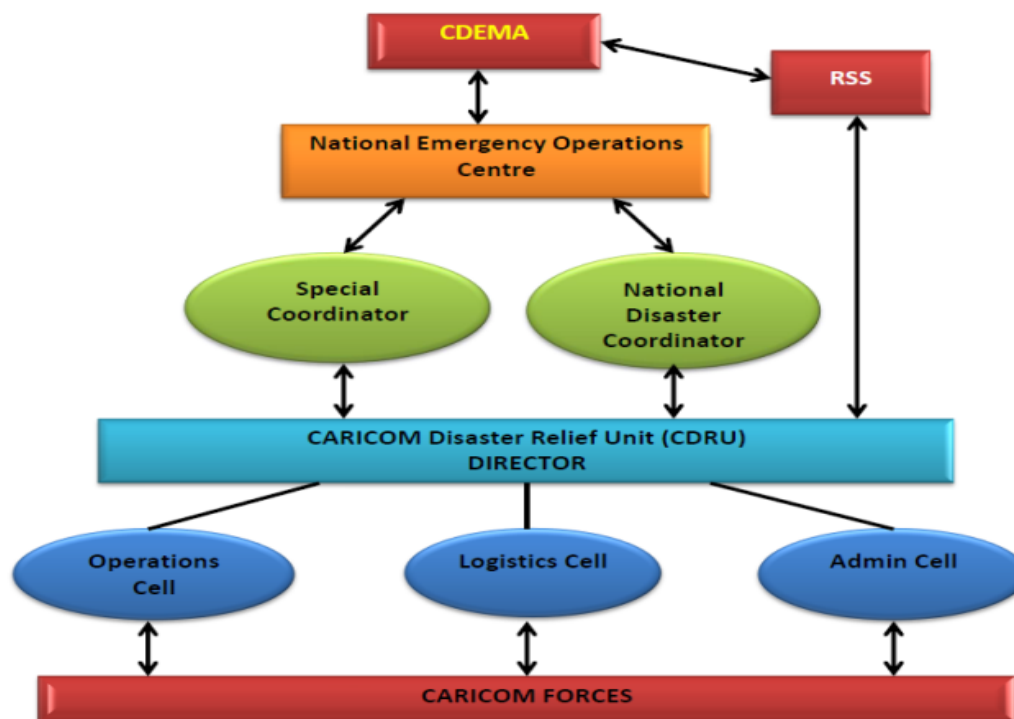


Figure 5: The CDRU Structure

10.5 Role of CDRU Director

The CDRU Director is the On-Scene Commander and is responsible for directing the work of the Unit. He/she reports to the Director of the National Emergency Operations Center or the National Disaster Coordinator on arrival in the requesting/impacted State for tasking.

The CDRU works for the national authority and does not take control of any operations unless directed to do so by the designated national authority.

10.6 Role of the Special Coordinator

The CDEMA Executive Director in consultation with the Coordinating Chief of Staff, the RSS/CLO and the impacted State will designate a senior official to undertake the role of Special Coordinator. This is deemed necessary because the CDRU comprises of police and military personnel who may not be experienced in civil military operations.



CDRU being deployed to Haiti 2010

Their deployment in a humanitarian context often requires a civilian liaison person who is familiar with civil military operations. The authority for appointing the Special Coordinator is provided for under Article XXI of the CDEMA Agreement.

The Special Coordinator is the liaison between CDEMA and the impacted State and will also form the link between CDEMA and the disciplined forces on the ground.

10.7 The CDRU in Action

The CDRU has been called into action on a number of occasions and has distinguished itself in the field. As early as in 1989 following the devastating impact of Hurricane Hugo on Antigua & Barbuda and Montserrat, the CDRU was introduced to provide support to both countries. Since then the Unit has been deployed following impacts in the Commonwealth of the Bahamas, Belize, St. Kitts/Nevis, Grenada, and Haiti.



A CDRU Communications Team at work



Outside of actual operational experience, the CDRU maintains its readiness by participating in regional exercises such as TRADEWINDS .

10.8 How to Access the CDRU

The CDRU is available to support humanitarian response and relief operations and can be accessed from CDEMA by the Government of any CARICOM Member State through its local National Disaster Office.

11.0 CARICOM Operational Support Team (COST)

11.1 Background on the COST

In instances where the capacity of a National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) was overwhelmed, assistance was provided to support the national level coordination.

In accordance with the Regional Disaster Response Support Doctrine and the Comprehensive Disaster Management Strategy Output 1.4 “Strengthened Coordination for Preparedness, Response and Recovery at the National and Regional Levels”, the COST was developed as the instrument to sustain National EOC when required.

The COST provides surge capacity to the NEOC and provides direct support to the impacted State within 24-36 hours after the initial impact. COST teams help to operate the EOC, compile data, generate information, coordinate resources both external and internal as well as generate reports.



COST Training in Barbados, 2015



11.2 Activation of the COST

The COST teams are activated at the request of the NEOC/NDO to provide EOC technical support to the impacted State during an emergency or crisis. The COST serves in the following capacity:

- To directly support the NEOC in the maintenance of national coordination.
- To support in the NEOC operations utilizing their flexibility and expertise in whichever areas required.

11.3 How to Access the COST

The COST is available to support the operations of the EOC and can be accessed from CDEMA by the Government of any CARICOM Member State through its local National Disaster Office.

A COST Team of up to five persons can be deployed upon request from the impacted State within 24 to 48 hours of the request.

12.0 CARICOM Disaster Assessment & Coordination (CDAC) Team

12.1 Background on the CDAC

The CDAC was established to provide support to Participating States in generating timely Damage Assessment and Needs Analysis (DANA) reports to inform response efforts where required. This includes the collection of damage information, the collation and analysis of the post impact data and the drafting of the DANA reports.

The CDAC was conceptualised using regional and international good practices. It generally follows on the principles of the United Nations Disaster Assessment and Coordination (UNDAC) but is designed to cater to a Caribbean context and nuances.

CDAC is a six-person team specializing in supporting an impacted State with surge capacity in DANA skills. The CDAC team is trained annually by CDEMA through the Regional Training Centre and operates with agreed standardised methodologies for damage assessment.



The CDAC team is deployed to augment the national capacity for DANA and works directly in support of local teams which have similarly been trained in the standardised DANA approach.

Flexibility is key since the situation on the ground and the capabilities of the national teams will dictate the specific roles to be played by the CDAC team in supporting the DANA process.

12.2 Activation of the CDAC

The CDAC team is activated as “Surge” capacity to provide direct support to the impacted State. The CDAC Team can be deployed upon request from the impacted State within 24 to 48 hours of the request.

12.3 How to Access the CDAC

The CDAC Team is available to support DANA operations and can be accessed from CDEMA by the Government of any CARICOM Member State through its local National Disaster Office.

13.0 Rapid Needs Assessment Team (RNAT)

13.1 Background on the RNAT

The RNAT is an organ of the Eastern Caribbean Development Partner Group for Disaster Management (ECDPG/DM) and the North Western Caribbean Donor Group (NWCDG).



The RNAT Team being deployed to the Bahamas after Hurricane Joaquin (2015)

It is the mechanism for the initial, independent verification of the impact of a disaster event in an affected country and will provide the information for the necessary early response by external agencies.

The RNAT comprises six to eight persons drawn from a pool of experts provided by the ECDPG/DM and the NWCDG members. The skill sets provided depend on the nature of the event and the request from the affected State(s). Experts may include: Engineers, Geologists, Hydrologists, Health Specialists and Logistic Specialists.

This group of technical personnel is deployed by the ECDPG/DM or the NWCDG immediately on request from the impacted State after a disastrous event. The team is led by CDEMA and provides DANA reports to the ECDPG/DM or the NWCDG.

13.2 Activation of the RNAT

The RNAT can be activated when an impact on a Participating State is imminent (warning issued) or after the impact has occurred. This condition must be established through the relevant competent authority by hazard or an actual event.

A precondition for the activation of the RNAT is that the Regional Response Mechanism/Regional Coordination Plan (RRM/RCP) is already activated.

The RNAT is stood-up only when response activities at the regional level are required or initiated.

13.3 How to Access the RNAT

The RNAT will be activated and if necessary mobilized by the UNRC on the instruction of ECDPG/DM, after a request for assistance has been received from an impacted State. The Activation Order from the UNRC will be sent to the RNAT members through their respective agencies as per the RNAT SOP.



The RNAT from North-Western Caribbean Donor Group in the Bahamas after Hurricane



CDEMA CU leads the team and facilitates its transportation through support from RSS or USAID OFDA. The CDEMA CU also organizes the reception of the RNAT to the stricken State and liaises with the national authority for their accommodation and operations. The team shall be deployed in the field for 2-3 days and is self supported and liaises with local experts.

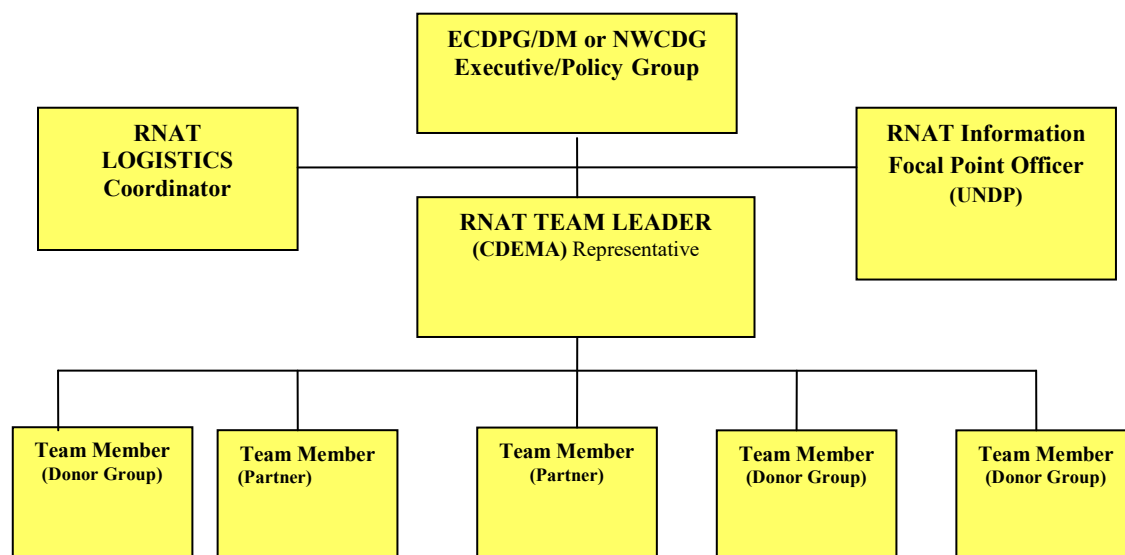


Figure 6: The RNAT Structure

14.0 The Regional Search and Rescue Team (s) (RSART)

The Regional Search and Rescue Team (RSART) is a group of persons from the CDEMA Participating State who have been certified to conduct Urban Light Level Search and Rescue (USARLL) at the International Search and Rescue Advisory Group (INSARAG) level. INSARAG is an internationally recognized standard of certification.



Caribbean USAR Team being trained in Barbados (RSS, 2016)

Upon activation the RSART conducts operations in teams of six persons. The teams come equipped with Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and team equipment. The teams only conduct their operations in support of the local SAR teams of the affected State.

14.1 How to Access the RSART

The RSART can be accessed by any Participating State and is available to support humanitarian response and relief operations following a disaster impact. The Government of a stricken State accesses the RSART from CDEMA through its local National Disaster Office.

15.0 The Regional Coordination Centre (RCC)

The Regional Coordination Centre (RCC) is the central focal point within the CDEMA response system for the coordination and management of any declared emergency or disaster event in an impacted Participating State.

The RCC is located within the CDEMA Coordinating Unit and is responsible for coordinating all aspects of the response operations when the RRM and RCP are activated.

The RCC does not function as a centralised 24hr coordinating facility. Its operations are guided by the RCC SOPs which are included in the CDEMA CU Contingency Plan. The RCC is staffed as per the RCC SOP with persons from within the CDEMA CU staff complement and is directed by the Programme Manager, Preparedness and Response at the CDEMA CU.

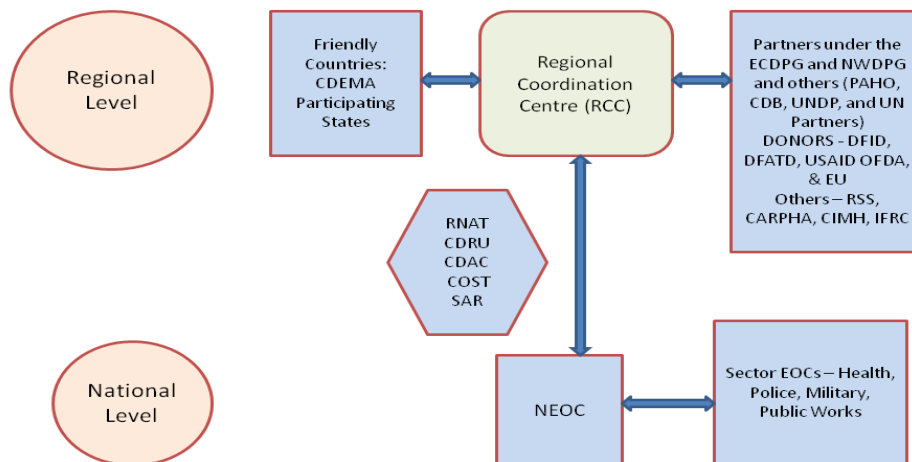


Figure 7: Diagrammatic Layout of the RCC Operations



The CDEMA Participating States

Below is the list of CDEMA eighteen (18) Participating States and the Sub-Region they fall under:



Anguilla (*Eastern Sub-Region*)
Department of Disaster Management



Antigua & Barbuda (*Eastern Sub-Region*)
National Office of Disaster Services



Bahamas (*North-Western Sub-Region*)
National Emergency Management Agency



Barbados (*Central Sub-Region*)
Department of Emergency Management



Belize (*North-Western Sub-Region*)
National Emergency Management Organization



Virgin Islands (UK) (*Eastern Sub-Region*)
Department of Disaster Management



Dominica (*Central Sub-Region*)
Office of Disaster Management



Grenada (*Southern Sub-Region*)
National Disaster Management Agency



Guyana (*Southern Sub-Region*)
Civil Defense Commission

The CDEMA Participating States



Haiti (*North-Western Sub-Region*)
Directorate of Civil Protection



Jamaica (*North-Western Sub-Region*)
Office of Disaster Preparedness and Emergency Management



Montserrat (*Eastern Sub-Region*)
Disaster Management Coordination Agency



St. Kitts & Nevis (*Eastern Sub-Region*)
National Disaster Management Agency



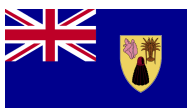
St. Lucia (*Central Sub-Region*)
National Emergency Management Organisation



St. Vincent & the Grenadines (*Central Sub-Region*)
National Emergency Management Organisation



Trinidad & Tobago (*Southern Sub-Region*)
Office of Disaster Preparedness & Management



Turks & Caicos Islands (*North-Western Sub-Region*)
Department of Disaster Management & Emergencies



Suriname (*Southern Sub-Region*)
National Coordination Center for Disaster Relief

Contact Information
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Resilience Way
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