



National Heat Response Plan

The primary mission of government in an emergency is to protect the lives and property of its citizens. Regardless of how well all systems are organized to provide assistance, the unpredictable nature of heat and the time and space factors involved dictate that the local jurisdiction must be prepared to cope with the initial impact of extreme heat on its own.

Recognizing that routine emergency services will, by their nature, be inadequate to cope with the effects of a heat incident, it is the duty of local government to provide for the emergency expansion of its survival capabilities within the limits of available resources.



This Plan is to provide a sound basis for heat-oriented emergency programmes and establish the organizational and operational concepts and procedures designed to minimize the impact of this hazard.

Emergency duties and responsibilities have been assigned, to the extent possible, to agencies having the same or similar responsibilities in the ODPMEMP's Basic Plan. Agencies should develop specific SOPs explaining which tasks need to be performed and how they will be accomplished in the event of extreme hot weather conditions.

To be prepared to recover from the effects of heat conditions requires constant development and revision of emergency procedures, training of staff and auxiliary personnel, and exercises. This process and the results of actual emergency response operations will allow refining this guideline and its associated SOPs and supporting plans so that we are as well prepared as possible to cope with heat related effects.

Noteworthy are the trigger levels for actions in the Plan, which are to be reviewed periodically. Those presently identified are based on current knowledge and will be reviewed in the light of future research and improved operational experience.

Situation and Assumptions

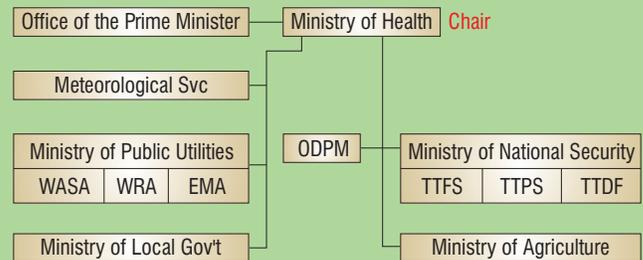
- An extreme heat event can be described as a period of very hot weather lasting several days but can sometimes extend over longer durations with temperatures averaging more than 38C
- Extreme heat events may be caused by disruptions in the north easterly Trade Wind regime producing less effective ventilation or advection of warmer, more humid air from the equatorial region
- The likely impact of extreme heat events includes a range of human disorders such as unusual discomfort, heat cramps, heat exhaustion, or heat stroke (hyperthermia)

Purpose: To define a concept of operations and the duties and responsibilities of the Emergency Support Function (ESF) agencies, specific to a heat incident. It identifies conditions that would warrant activation of this Plan, and provides a framework for coordinating efforts among stakeholders that provide services to those most vulnerable, namely seniors and medically-at-risk persons; and, also to reduce the health risks associated with extreme hot weather.

Concept of Operations

Coordinating Committee

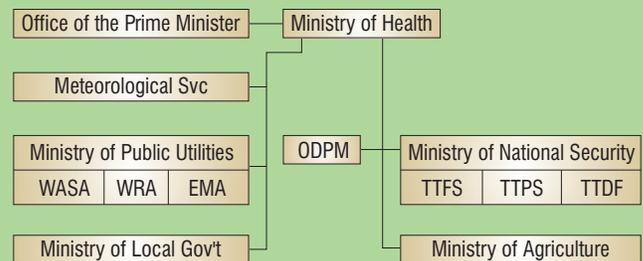
Mission: to work cooperatively with all critical stakeholders to ensure that new water supplies are developed/ limited resources are managed



Prime Minister's Heat Advisory Committee (PMHAC)

During prolonged periods of heat, regular meetings/conference calls may be conducted by this Committee to discuss the current situation and to recommend actions to the Prime Minister.

Meetings will be chaired by a designee appointed by the Prime Minister (Minister responsible for Disaster Risk Mgmt). Conference calls will be conducted at the ODPM executive board room.



Based on the outcome of the meetings/conference calls the PMHAC may recommend:

Heat Watch and Warnings	
Heat Warnings	Issued when forecasted temperature is unusually hot but not life-threatening
Excessive Heat Watch	Issued when conditions are likely to result in life-threatening heat emergency within next 24 to 48 hrs
Excessive Heat Warning	Issued when a life-threatening heat emergency exists or is imminent

Each stage is guided by:

1. Temperature
2. Humidity
3. Amount of cloudiness, and
4. Expected duration

Key Operating Guidelines

- a) The combination of factors needed to trigger any heat-related message will vary according to the time of year
- b) An excessive heat incident will be led by the Ministry of Health (MOH) and supported by the Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service (TTFS), Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force (TTDF), and any other legally recognized body deemed necessary by health officials
- c) Pertinent information relating to heat conditions will be disseminated by media
- d) Individuals, organizations, and agencies should make provisions to stockpile bottled water and other liquids prior to heat conditions becoming severe. A three-day supply per person is recommended
- e) During an incident, all requests for assistance that cannot be solved at the local level will be routed to the National Emergency Operation Centre (NEOC), when activated. These requests will then be routed to the appropriate ESF representative for immediate action
- f) The Prime Minister will be informed of the situations and response being taken
- g) The Prime Minister may declare a State of Emergency or a Disaster.

Organization and Responsibilities

The Prime Minister

- a) Directs implementation of the ODPM Emergency Management Plan (EMP) through the Minister with responsibilities for DRM
- b) Declares a State of Emergency or Disaster
- c) Enacts plans for safe guarding the public from adverse heat related impacts
- d) Designates Minister with responsibilities for DRM to chair PM HAC meetings
- e) Issues supplemental declarations and orders
- f) Requests external assistance, as required

Office of Disaster Preparedness and Management (ODPM)

- a) Directs activation of the National EOC, if necessary
- b) Monitors/evaluates together with the Meteorological Service the forecasts
- c) Completes the checklist actions for Command and Control, Operations, and Public Information
- d) Implements the Emergency Mgmt Plan (EMP) and the required annexes
- e) Informs its line ministry, Ministry of National Security (MNS), of protective action and safety recommendations
- f) Conducts conference calls and assessments on heat conditions
- g) Coordinates all emergency support function resources
- h) Deploys emergency mgmt liaison personnel to local Emergency Operation Centres (EOCs) to assist with response and recovery operations, if necessary
- i) Assists in procurement and coordinates the distribution of needed water and other necessary supplies to the public
- j) Assists in coordinating of media information and keeping the public informed
- k) Coordinates external assistance

Ministry of Health (MOH)

As lead agency for heat related issues Ministry of Health will steer the response to adequately address the needs of the most vulnerable. This entity will also be responsible for ensuring the necessary infrastructure is available to address the issues associated with heat related incidents. Further, they will outline any possible strategy to address any anticipated shortfalls in the present system.

Emergency Support Functions (ESFs)

All ESF agencies will perform their normal emergency response functions as indicated in the ESF section of the ODPM EMP. ESF primary agencies will also ensure that the following activities are accomplished:

- a) Review emergency plans specific to heat conditions
- b) Support heat operations and ensure compliance with any restrictions
- c) Ensure 24-hour staffing availability. If activated, ESF representatives responding to the NEOC shall be knowledgeable of their resources and shall have authority to coordinate the release of these resources
- d) Remind agency personnel in the field to follow safety procedures for their responsibilities, and to be aware of any heat-related preparedness measures that will safeguard them in the field

Continuity of Government (COG)

- a) The Prime Minister is in control throughout and has delegated authority to coordinate state resources to the ODPM CEO through the line Minister
- b) Once activated, the NEOC will coordinate state resources for preparedness, response, and recovery operations. Recommended actions will be directed through ESF representatives to the responsible responding agencies
- c) Agencies will establish procedures to protect personnel, vital records, and equipment
- d) Primary and secondary facilities will be identified by each agency to relocate essential operations
- e) Each agency should have a Continuity of Government (COG) Plan

Administration and Logistics

- a) Each response agency is responsible for its own administration and logistics
- b) Each response agency should develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and implementation checklists to ensure that actions in this plan are performed in a timely, efficient, and effective manner
- c) Each response agency is responsible for maintaining lists of emergency resources to include personnel, supplies, and equipment
- d) Each response agency should maintain detailed logs and financial records directly related to the event. These records shall be submitted to ODPM upon request
- e) ODPM will prepare an after action report describing the situation and response actions of national, local and private organizations
- f) Based on after action reports and critiques, each agency should update their annexes, plans, SOPs, to facilitate preparedness, response, and recovery activities

