

## Situation in The Bahamas and Turks and Caicos Islands 4<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

### CONTEXT

On 30<sup>th</sup> January 2020 the World Health Organization (WHO) declared Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) a public health emergency of international concern. As of 4<sup>th</sup> June 2020, there were 6,478,521 cases and 386,590 deaths reported globally. The Region of the Americas accounted for 3,084,517 confirmed cases and 172,276 deaths.

On 15<sup>th</sup> March 2020, the first confirmed case of COVID-19 was reported in The Bahamas. On 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2020, the first confirmed case was reported in The Turks and Caicos Islands.

### HIGHLIGHTS

#### The Bahamas

Since 29<sup>th</sup> May 2020, there was one newly confirmed case and no deaths from COVID-19.

The newly confirmed case is:

- Female in the age group: 20 to 39 (1);
- Resides in New Providence and is in isolation at home.

Among total confirmed cases:

- 41 males in age groups: ≤19 (1); 20 to 39 (7); 40 to 59 (21); 60-79 (9); and ≥80 (3);
- 61 females in age groups: ≤19 (4); 20 to 39 (21); 40 to 59 (21); 60-79 (13); and ≥80 (2);
- 2,142 real time PCR (RT-PCR) tests have been conducted;
- There have been no new deaths since 24<sup>th</sup> April 2020.

#### Turks and Caicos Islands (TCI)

Since 29<sup>th</sup> May 2020, there were no newly confirmed cases and no deaths from COVID-19. The last case was confirmed on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2020.

Among total confirmed cases:

- 8 are male in age groups: ≤19 (1); 20 to 39 (3); 40 to 59 (3); 60-79 (1);
- 4 are female in age groups: ≤ 20 to 39 (3); 40 to 59 (1);
- 1 case departed TCI prior to recovering;
- 43 persons are quarantined/home isolation;
- 153 persons have been tested for COVID-19 to date.

#### The Bahamas

Island	Confirmed cases	Deaths
New Providence	80	8
Grand Bahama	8	2
Bimini	13	1
Cat Cay	1	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>11</b>

#### Turks and Caicos Islands

Island	Confirmed cases	Deaths
Parrot Cay	2	0
Providenciales	10	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>1</b>

## SITUATION IN NUMBERS

### TOTAL CASES

**102 Bahamas**

**12 Turks & Caicos**

Confirmed

**36 Bahamas**

**0 Turks & Caicos**

Active Cases

**55 Bahamas**

**10 Turks & Caicos**

Recovered

**2 Bahamas**

**0 Turks & Caicos**

Hospitalized

**1 Turks & Caicos**

Left country

**11 Bahamas**

**1 Turks & Caicos**

Deaths

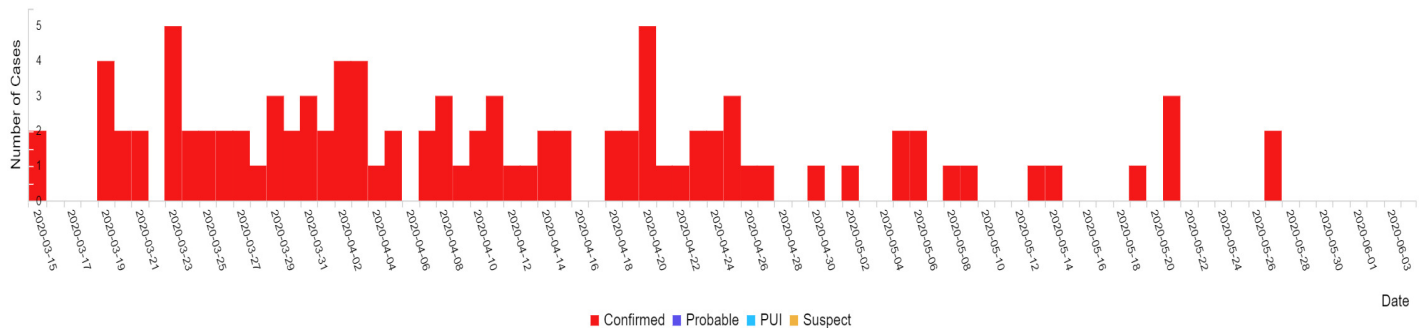
## PAHO RESPONSE

- ✓ Donation of laboratory supplies
- ✓ Risk assessment and situational analysis
- ✓ Investigation of HCW infection in The Bahamas
- ✓ Technical guidance
- ✓ Communication
- ✓ Support to local authorities on surveillance and health systems planning

## The Bahamas

- The Emergency Orders have been extended to 29<sup>th</sup> June 2020. Effective 8<sup>th</sup> June 2020, a 9pm to 5am curfew will commence, Mondays through Sundays.
- “Lockdown” measures will continue for the Labor Day holiday weekend from 9 pm on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2020 to 5am on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2020. Weekend lockdowns will be discontinued beginning 13<sup>th</sup> June 2020.
- The country transitioned to the fourth phase of reopening the economy. Effective 8<sup>th</sup> June 2020, all professional services and commercial activities are to resume during regular operating hours, but closed by 7pm daily. Operations must comply with social distancing and face mask protocols.
- The phased reopening for the tourism sector will commence 15<sup>th</sup> June 2020. Boaters, yachters, private aviation, and commercial airlines bringing Bahamian nationals, residents, homeowners, and family members will be permitted entry. Hotels will be permitted to reopen to allow staff to prepare for a full opening.
- Domestic commercial air travel will resume 8<sup>th</sup> June 2020. International flights to New Providence and Exuma will resume 7<sup>th</sup> July 2020.
- On 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2020, 107 Bahamian national were repatriated on a flight from Fort Lauderdale, Florida to New Providence.
- A Tourism Readiness and Recovery Plan was drafted outlining safety protocols for pre-arrival, arrival, pre-departure, departure, pre-screening, embarkment and disembarkment and public health protocols for airports and seaports across the archipelago.
- The National Food Distribution Task Force distributed \$400,000 worth of food this past week.
- Cosmetology service providers are required to be trained and certified in Infection Prevention and Control by the Ministry of health before resumption of services.
- The Government’s quarantine facilities in New Providence and Grand Bahama will be shut on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2020). Mandatory quarantine for returning Bahamian nationals and residents will also cease. Returnees will be monitored by the Surveillance Team through electronic geographical fencing and security software application.

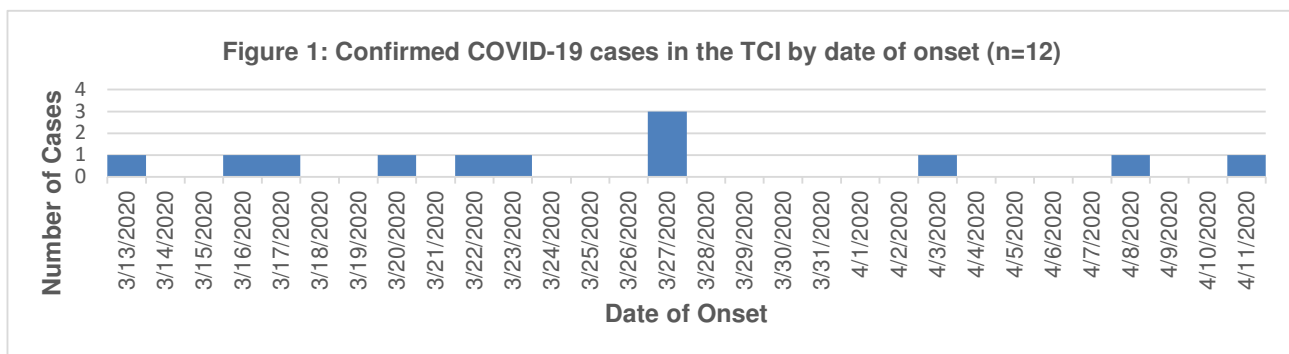
Confirmed COVID-19 Cases in The Bahamas by Date of Onset



## Turks and Caicos Islands

- Emergency Powers continue with nightly curfews extended to 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2020 from 10:00 pm to 5:00 am. Closure of businesses on Sunday remain in effect until 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2020.

- The country remains in Phase 1B of its plan for reopening. Phase 2A will take effect 5<sup>th</sup> June 2020.
- Incoming travel commenced and is restricted to TCI nationals, permanent residents, British Overseas Territory Citizens, and residence permit holders. All incoming persons are subject to a 14-day quarantine or as directed by the Chief Medical Officer.
- Face and respiratory masks, gloves, infrared thermometers, and antibody testing kits were donated by private-sector donors made a donation to the Premier of TCI.
- A COVID-19 Stimulus package approved 4,610 payouts.
- Approvals were given for 147 waivers for the Hotel, Restaurant, and Tourism Services Tax.
- Processing of Coronavirus Business Assistance Grants commenced for 1,050 applicants.
- Discussions with the Cruise Industry are ongoing. Closure of the Cruise Port has been extended to 31<sup>st</sup> August 2020.
- The Government announced that the borders will reopen for regional and international air travel on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2020.



## NATIONAL RESPONSE

### The Bahamas Ministry of Health (MOH)

- Contact tracing has been completed for the most recent active cluster of cases in New Providence and laboratory testing is pending completion for 18 persons representing cases or contacts at the end of their isolation or quarantine in Bimini.
- The last reported case in Grand Bahama was 29 days ago, and in Bimini was 21 days ago.
- The “lock down” in Bimini was completed on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020. There were no reports of new suspect cases during the lockdown period.
- Monitoring of individuals in self-quarantine or self-isolation continues using a geographical fencing and security software application. There is evidence of sub-optimal compliance by persons to be monitored by those mechanisms. MOH continues to provide parallel traditional approaches for monitoring isolated/quarantined persons, as needed.
- The National Virtual Call Centre was discontinued.
- The Prime Minister received a donation of face shields to be used by health care workers from a local manufacturer.

### Turks and Caicos Islands Ministry of Health

- In-country COVID-19 PCR testing has commenced and is available for frontline workers and for

persons requesting approval for inter-island travel. Testing may also be done for travel outside of the country for medical or other reasons.

- Validation of in-country COVID-19 PCR testing is being done through parallel testing of samples with CARPHA.
- The United Kingdom Security Assistance team along with Public Health England continue to provide technical assistance to the MOH.
- Public health communication continues to provide prevention advice for COVID-19, linked to the gradual “reopening” of the country.
- The MOH has developed multisectoral Standard Operating Procedures and Guidelines for preparedness and response to COVID19. The guidance addresses advice on wearing of facial masks and safety measures for seacrafts, religious gatherings, public transport, recreational sports, construction sector, post pandemic cleaning in non-health care settings, reopening tourism accommodations, reopening of international ports of entry, and general cleaning and disinfecting measures.

## **PAHO/WHO RESPONSE**

PAHO continues to provide both The Bahamas and Turks and Caicos Islands with access to updated technical guidelines and technical assistance.

### **The Bahamas**

- PAHO Country Office (CO) personnel remain embedded within the Bahamas’ MOH Emergency Operating Centre (EOC).
- PAHO CO and MOH continue a collaborative project to: investigate risk factors for HCW infections; describe clinical course and disease outcomes; plan and implement fact driven mitigation measures. A complete data set of COVID-19 exposed and infected health care workers has been provided to the PAHO team in Washington.
- PAHO CO continues to provide technical assistance to the MOH for COVID-19 outbreak data management. Complete case data have been uploaded into the WHO Go Data platform, and plans are in place to upload contact data. In the interim EPI-Info and excel spreadsheet applications are in use.

## **GAPS/CHALLENGES**

### **The Bahamas**

- Lack of mobile phones or limited technology skills limit monitoring of older persons using the geographical fencing and security mobile application.

### **Turks and Caicos Islands**

- No in-country intensive care capacity