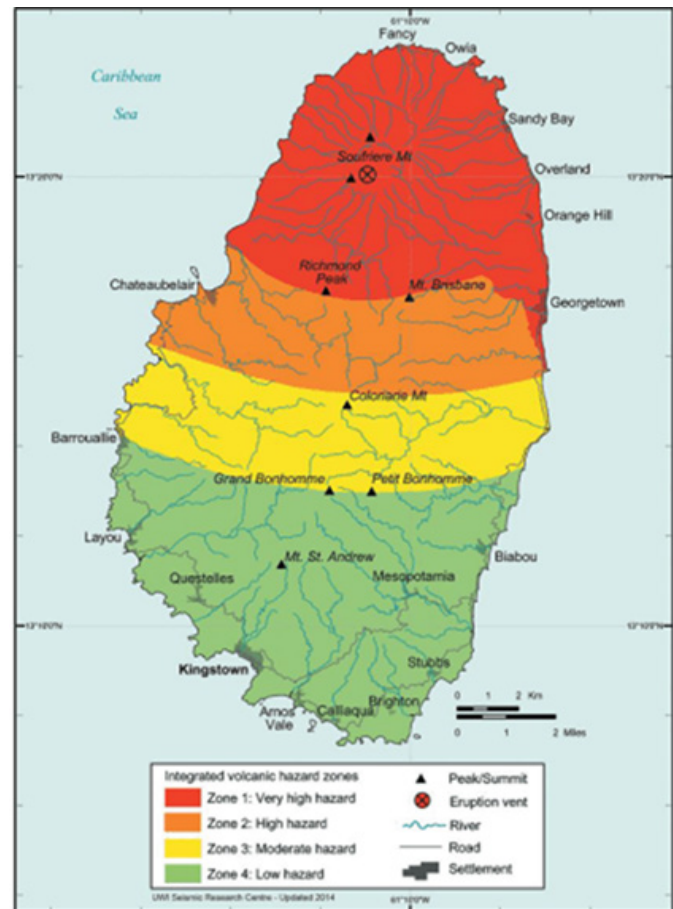


## Highlights

1. Explosive eruptions commenced at 8:42 am. Reports of pyroclastic flows and explosions reported at 9:05 am also heard in Grenada. Ash fallout on airport in St. Vincent & the Grenadines (VCT) (southeast of the Island). Airport in VCT closed at 10:00 am.
2. Barbados airport closed at 12:00 pm.
3. Evacuations from the Red zone continue, including Georgetown and Chateaubelair Hospitals, which are relocated to Hospital in Kingstown (Milton Cato Memorial Hospital)
4. Evacuation of persons from orange zone commenced
5. No casualties reported
6. 62 shelters occupied with 2,318 persons
7. Explosions expected to continue for weeks – month
8. Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) in shelters identified as a priority
9. Health Needs lists (incl. shelters) received from MoH VCT and National Emergency Management Organisation (NEMO)
10. Coastguard Barbados Defense Force departed on April 8, 2021 for support to VCT



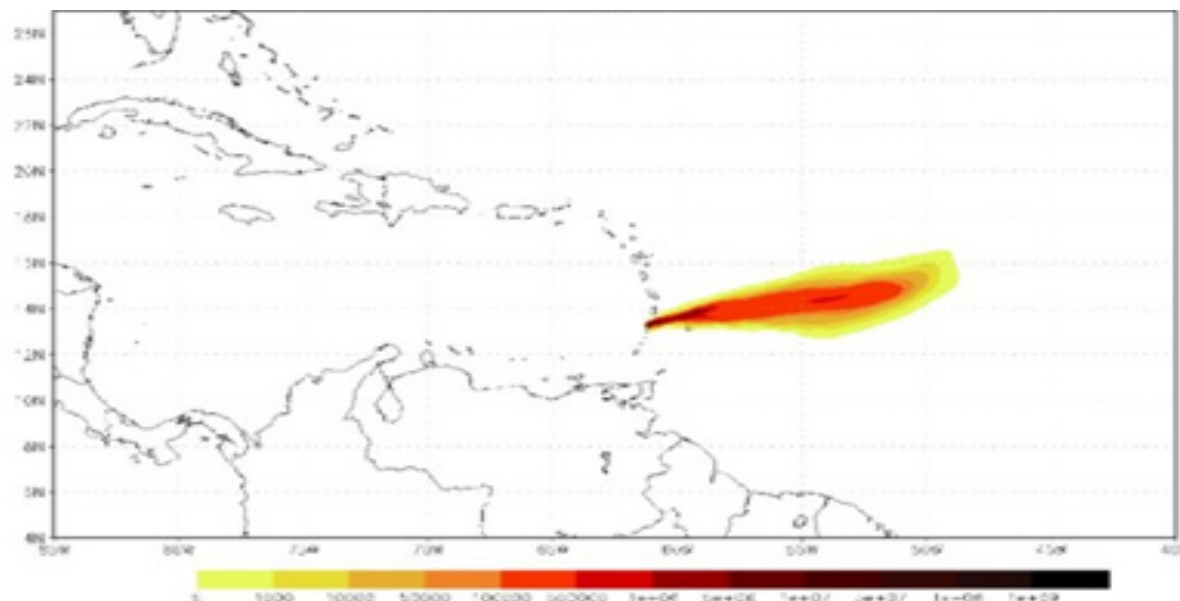
Source: Volcanic Hazard Map for the La Soufrière Volcano, St. Vincent (UWI SRC/NEMO)  
<https://tweathercenter.com/volcano/la-soufriere-volcano-st-vincent/>

## Situation Overview

### NEMO - St. Vincent and the Grenadines<sup>1</sup>

- Evacuation from the Red Zone to safe areas is continuing.
- Around 8:42 am NEMO VCT confirmed an explosive eruption and indicated that La Soufriere has moved into an explosive state with plumes up to eight kilometres and expected ashfall within five minutes of this announcement.
- Ash fall recorded as far as Argyle International Airport
- Ash plumes up to 20,000 feet headed East.
- Heavy ash fall has resulted in extremely poor visibility and created a challenge with the evacuation.

<sup>1</sup>NEMO SVG (@NEMOSVG) / Twitter



Volcanic Ash Concentration from La Soufriere St. Vincent: For A1 Particle Sizes at 20000 ft ( $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ ) 00:00

## Emergency Press Conference - Friday 9 April 2021 <sup>2</sup>

- Persons with private vehicles and privately owned transportation services asked to help with the continuation of evacuation efforts.
- Evacuees are currently being placed in hotels and guest houses in St. Vincent.
- Approximately 4,500 persons have been evacuated via road and sea transport
- An estimated 2,318 persons are in shelters but further confirmation from NEMO is needed
- Cruise ships assisting with evacuation from St. Vincent to neighbouring islands only have sufficient staff to facilitate transportation but not for on board stay
- Overwhelming response from other Caribbean Islands to accommodate evacuees.
- Grenada, Dominica, Antigua, St. Lucia and Barbados should be in a state of readiness by Sunday or Monday to receive persons.

## Health Situation

- According to Chief Medical Officer (CMO) Dr. Simone Keizer-Beache, SMART HOSPITALS and other medical facilities in the red and orange zones are closed and their services will be relocated to areas in the green zone<sup>3</sup>. This includes the 2 district hospitals, Chateaubelair Hospital and Georgetown Hospital (including the medical center with the dialysis unit attached)
- Health Services, including chemotherapy and dialysis services have been moved to the Milton Cato Memorial Hospital in partnership with the private sector.
- For this reason the CMO stated that “elective procedures would be suspended at the Milton Cato Memorial Hospital to allow for any increased admission of persons who may be impacted by an explosive eruption”

<sup>2</sup> [Emergency Press Conference - Friday 9th April 2021](#)

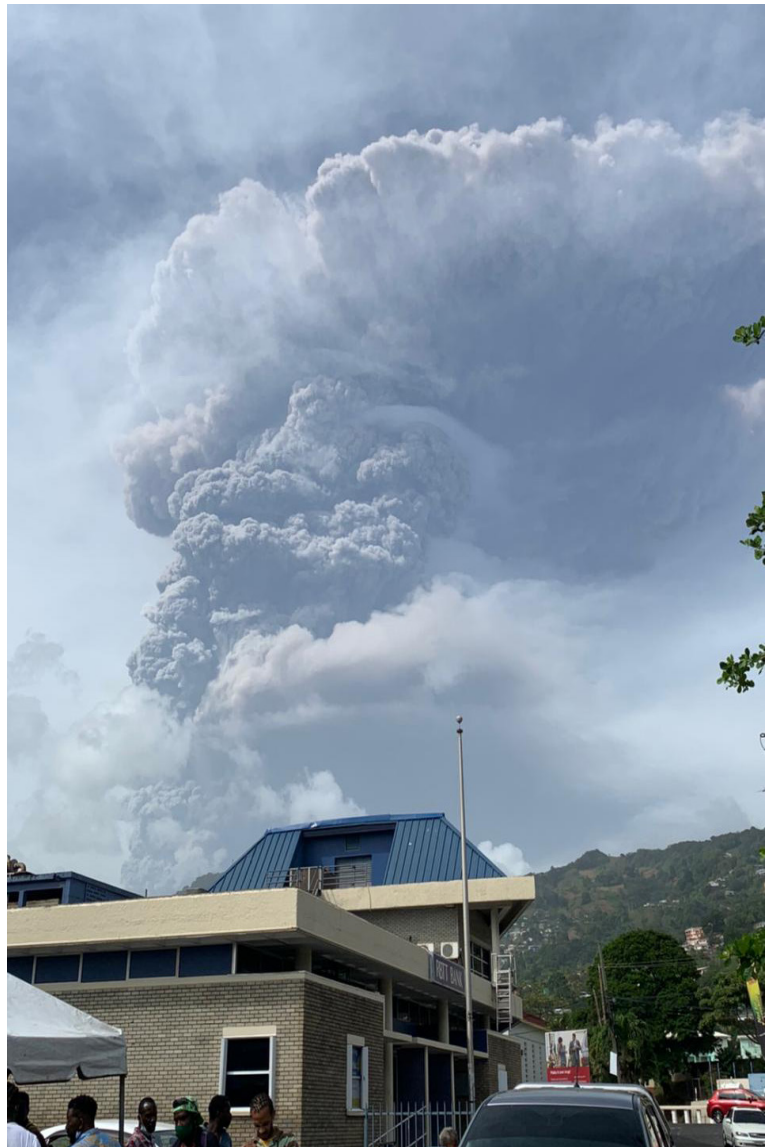
<sup>3</sup> [Health services in red, orange zone have been relocated to green zone – CMO - Searchlight](#)

- Types of injuries expected are related to respiratory system, possibly burns and broken bones
- Water system has been shut down in some areas (From Sandy Bay to Fancy) on the windward side of the island by The Central Water and Sewerage Authority (CWSA) in order to replenish the reservoirs due to low water supply possibly resulting from the dry period <sup>4</sup>
- Ministry of Health has initiated the process of rapid antigen testing and vaccination of persons in shelters. 48,000 COVID-19 vaccines available in VCT; 12,000 vaccine doses administered to date.

## Risk Assessment

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- A team of Scientists from the Seismic Research Unit, led by Dr. Richie Robertson confirmed the explosive events that began at 8:40am on 9th April, 2021 with ash fall as far as the Argyle International Airport.
- Risks from the volcano include pyroclastic flows, dome collapse and the formation of pyroclastic flows, surges and lava flows as a result.
- It is estimated that a total of 20,000 persons will have to be moved which amount to approximately 18% of the 110,589 (2019) population.
- Of that amount 12,000 will be able to be accommodated in shelters and the remaining 8000 with family and friends.
- The Island has the capacity to accommodate 5000 in emergency shelters with an offer from Grenada to accommodate 1800; Antigua 500; Saint Lucia 750 and with others pledging support pending details. There is a shortfall of 3950 persons who will need shelter.
- 62 shelters in St. Vincent are currently occupied by evacuees
- Due to the community spread of SARS-CoV-2, persons entering or leaving for nearby countries should receive at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.
- The risk of increased cases of COVID-19 through gathering in emergency shelters is significant.
- Health Services in danger zones have been moved to safe districts and the Barbados Defence Force has been asked to provide a field hospital



Credit: Alex Williams, PAHO Consultant

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<sup>4</sup> PAHO Consultant

<sup>5</sup> CDEMA

## Need received from NEMO - Thursday 8 April 2021

1. Provision of emergency supplies for shelters to include:

ITEM	QUANTITY
Water Tanks (800 & 1,000 gallons)	1,000
Buckets (5 gallons)	5,000
Folding Cots	10,000
Portable Toilets	150
Blankets	30,000
Field Tents (10ftx10ft) & (20ft x20ft)	50
Field Kitchens	2
Sleeping Mats	3,000
Respirators	1,000
Goggles	25,000
Reflective Vests	2,000
Rolls of Caution Tape (100ft)	100
Hygiene Kits	10,000
A C Units	8

2. Support for epidemiological surveillance in Emergency shelters
3. Water quality monitoring
4. Health and Emergency supplies
5. Medical Team Support as the district hospitals have been evacuated – The Modern Medical Diagnostic facility along with the Georgetown Hospital and the Chateaubelair Hospital both of which

## Response Actions

### National Response

- Transportation being provided by local ferry services.
- SVG Coast Guards
- Request for assistance sent to all heads of states of the OECS – sheltering, supplies for shelters and assistance from the French Islands

### Regional

- Martinique and Guadeloupe have been asked to provide helicopter support for more rapid evacuation.

### Private Sector

- Martinique and Guadeloupe have been asked to provide helicopter support for more rapid evacuation.

## PAHO Priority Response Actions

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1. Provision of emergency supplies for Emergency Shelters
2. Epidemiological surveillance in Emergency shelters
3. Water quality monitoring
4. Provision of support to Barbados Defense Force Medical team and Emergency supplies
5. Coordination of international assistance and Logistics
6. Risk Communications

## Priority Response Actions for PAHO Barbados / PHE EOC WDC

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1. Review needs list from MoH VCT
2. Submit memo on emergency declaration to PAHO EOC WDC
3. Finalize donor alert (2 pager)
4. Facilitate shipment of 150,000 masks from Barbados to VCT
5. Clear container with 60,000 masks, 7,000 N95 and 60,000 gowns. To be delivered to Barbados Defense Force.
6. Identify support requirements for PHE EOC Barbados
7. Identify available funding for immediate use
8. Identify available military shipping in the region (CMCOORD)
9. Identify available supplies from Panama
10. Identify support for psychosocial support/protection in shelters
11. Support Public Health promotion
12. Review updated COVID-19 protocols for evacuees and deployment of aid workers as shared by CARPHA
13. Prepositioning of NCD kits
14. Finalize preparations for PAHO Response Team
  - a. PAHO Consultants already stationed in VCT
  - b. 1 WASH expert (Deploy on Sunday 11 April, 2021 from Barbados to VCT (transport by WFP (TBC))
  - c. 1 Epidemiologist
  - d. 2 Logistics experts
15. Ongoing discussions with Hospitals in French Islands to provide services for:
  - a. Burns
  - b. Trauma
  - c. Respiratory services
16. Participation of Incident Management Team in CDEMA, UNETT and UNST coordination meetings.

## Available Assets PAHO:

ITEM	QUANTITY	LOCATION
Generator	1	PAHO Barbados Office
Mosquito nets	100	PAHO Barbados Office
Oral Hydration Salts (boxes)	3	PAHO Barbados Office
Aquatabs	40,000	PAHO Barbados Office
Aquatabs 8.68g	24,480	PAHO Barbados Office
Deployment bags	150	PAHO Barbados Office
Water testing kits	6	PAHO Barbados Office
Masks	150,000	PAHO Barbados Office
SAT phones	4	PAHO Barbados Office
Masks	60,000	in container with broker for BDF
Gowns	60,000	in container with broker for BDF
N95 Mask	7,000	in container with broker for BDF
Goggles		Panama
Tents		Panama
Collapsible jerry cans		Panama
Tarpaulins		Panama
Waterbladders		Panama
Wildfire kits		via Direct Relief

## Challenges

- Airports in VCT and Barbados closed
- Availability of maritime assets
- Availability of Syndromic Surveillance, Health Services and air quality experts
- Evacuees entering shelters or leaving for nearby countries should be vaccinated with at least one dose.
- Dutch navy ship HNLMS Pelikaan and HMS navy ship both in maintenance and not available on short notice
- Limited available capacity to run PHE EOC Barbados. Support requirements are currently being identified.

## Annexes

1. Health EOC and Shelter Needs List MoH SVG
2. Shelter management and COVID-19 case study

# HOW CAN I PROTECT MYSELF FROM BREATHING VOLCANIC ASH?

## RESPIRATORY PROTECTION

A facemask should fit well to your face but should not make breathing difficult.

Industry-certified masks (e.g., N95-style) provide the best protection.

Cloth materials (e.g., handkerchief) will not be as effective as a well-fitting facemask.

## STAY INDOORS

The best way to reduce your exposure to ash is to shelter indoors, especially for children, older people and people with respiratory or cardiovascular disease.

Close windows and doors and seal up large gaps and spaces to the outdoors.

Keep indoor air as clean and cool as possible.

## CLEANING UP

Once volcanic ash has settled, carefully dampen the ash with water and remove it. Wear a well-fitting facemask whilst doing this.

**CONTACT A HEALTH PROFESSIONAL IF YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT YOUR HEALTH**

Illustration by Pierre-Yves Jourigand



For more information see: [www.ivhnn.org/ash-protection](http://www.ivhnn.org/ash-protection)

This poster was developed by the International Volcanic Health Hazard Network / Durham University UK.



Credit: Alex Williams, PAHO Consultant

## HEALTH CONCERN

Breathing volcanic ash can be a nuisance, cause discomfort, and may have more serious health effects for some people. You may wish to reduce your exposure to volcanic ash, or you may have been advised to do so.

The most effective way to reduce exposure, especially for people at particular risk (e.g., children and infants, older people and those with existing respiratory (lung) or cardiovascular (heart and blood vessels) disease) is to shelter where there is no exposure to ash, ideally inside a building where you can stay indoors for some time, if necessary. If you are very concerned about your health, take advice from a health professional.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

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