



# Briefing Sheet: **Evacuation Team**

Sept 4, 1996: Preparation and Background Information

## Mission Preparation

To help you plan an evacuation you must learn a little about the Island of Montserrat and think about what they would have to do to survive if the volcano erupted or if a hurricane hit .

### You will need:

- Maps of the Island showing the towns, roads, population and the volcano,
- Pens or pencils to draw on the maps,
- Paper for notes.
- Enough copies of the background information for each member of the team to read it.

## Instructions

### 1. Soufrière Hills Volcano

- a) On the map find the 5 towns closest to the peak of the volcano. Draw a small circle around them.
- b) Using the coloured scale, estimate how many residents live in each of these towns. Write this estimate on the map next to the town.
- c) Consider and discuss the dangers. Look at the relief map (with the hills and rivers on it). Will the lava and pyroclastic flows flow downhill, Which towns will be affected by an Ash Cloud? Would it take longer to evacuate a larger town on a road or a smaller town without a good road?
- d) Now list these towns in the order that you would evacuate them.
- e) Find 5 towns that you think are **not at risk from the volcano**. Circle them in a different colour.
- f) Using the coloured scale, estimate how many residents live in each of these towns. Write this estimate on the map next to the town.
- g) By multiplying the population of a town by 2, you can work out how many refugees to send to each town. You can send roughly twice as many

refugees to a town as currently live there e.g. if a town has 100 people, you can send a further 200 refugees to that town.

- h) Plan where you would send the residents of each town that is near the volcano.
- i) Write down four ways in which you could transport the residents of these towns and four things they should take with them.
- j) Imagine you are on the Island as the volcano erupts. There is ash in the air and hot rock lava bombs landing all around you. What would you advise the residents to do?

### 2. Approaching Hurricane

- a) If a hurricane travelled west across the Atlantic Ocean which side of the Island would be most at risk from winds and high waves.
- b) On the map find the 5 towns they could be at risk from an approaching Hurricane. Draw a small circle around them.
- c) Using the coloured scale, estimate how many residents live in each of these towns. Write this estimate on the map next to the town.
- d) Consider and discuss the dangers. Look at the relief map (with the hills and rivers on it). If the storm surge waves will flow inland over flat land, which towns would you evacuate first?
- e) List the towns in the order that you would evacuate them.
- f) Find 5 towns that you think are **not at risk from the hurricane**. Circle them in a different colour.
- g) Using the coloured scale, estimate how many residents live in each of these towns. Write this estimate on the map next to the town.
- h) You can send roughly twice as many people to a town as currently live there. By multiplying the populations by 2, work out how many people you can send to each town.
- i) Plan where you would send the residents of each town that is at risk from the hurricane and the storm surge waves.
- j) How would these people be moved? What would they need? Is there any advice you could offer them as they travel to safety?
- k) Make a list of effects you would see on the island if a hurricane hit.

## **Situation Report and Previous Evacuations – Day by Day**

### **Sept 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1996**

Soufriere Hills volcanic activity is making Montserrat a very dangerous place. The official danger zone includes the area from Broderick's Estate, south to Old Fort Point and all areas south of the Aymer's Ghaut river. On Sept 3<sup>rd</sup>, these areas were completely evacuated. That places more pressure on the housing and shelters in the north of the island.

The volcanic activity now threatens all areas flanking the volcano, including some areas surrounding the Belham River Valley.

The British and the local government are encouraging voluntary, off-island evacuation. Evacuees will receive financial assistance. Details will come later in the week. Evacuees will first go to Antigua then to the United Kingdom or other Caribbean Islands. Teams of emergency workers have been formed including members from the police, immigration, customs, Red Cross, and the National Office of Disaster Services. Nurses sent to Montserrat last week from Grenada and St. Lucia are safe and are being kept updated.

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### **Sept 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1996, GMT 17:00**

Hurricane Bob is bearing down on the island. The eye of the storm is 460 miles away, travelling west at 10 miles per hour. The storm rotates around the central eye forming a circle with a radius of 150 miles. Expected time of arrival is less than 48 hours. The hurricane is currently a category 3, with wind speeds steady at 120 mph and gusts of up to 160 mph. Storm surge waves are 4 metres high. All ports are closed; boats and airplanes have been halted.

Today the volcano at Soufriere Hills has shown seismic activity nearly three times previous levels in the last few weeks. Scientists expect it could erupt explosively at any time. Small lava/mud flows have been sighted on the east side of the island in the Tar River Valley. Ash plumes and raining ash are constant and are creating difficulties for visibility, driving and breathing.