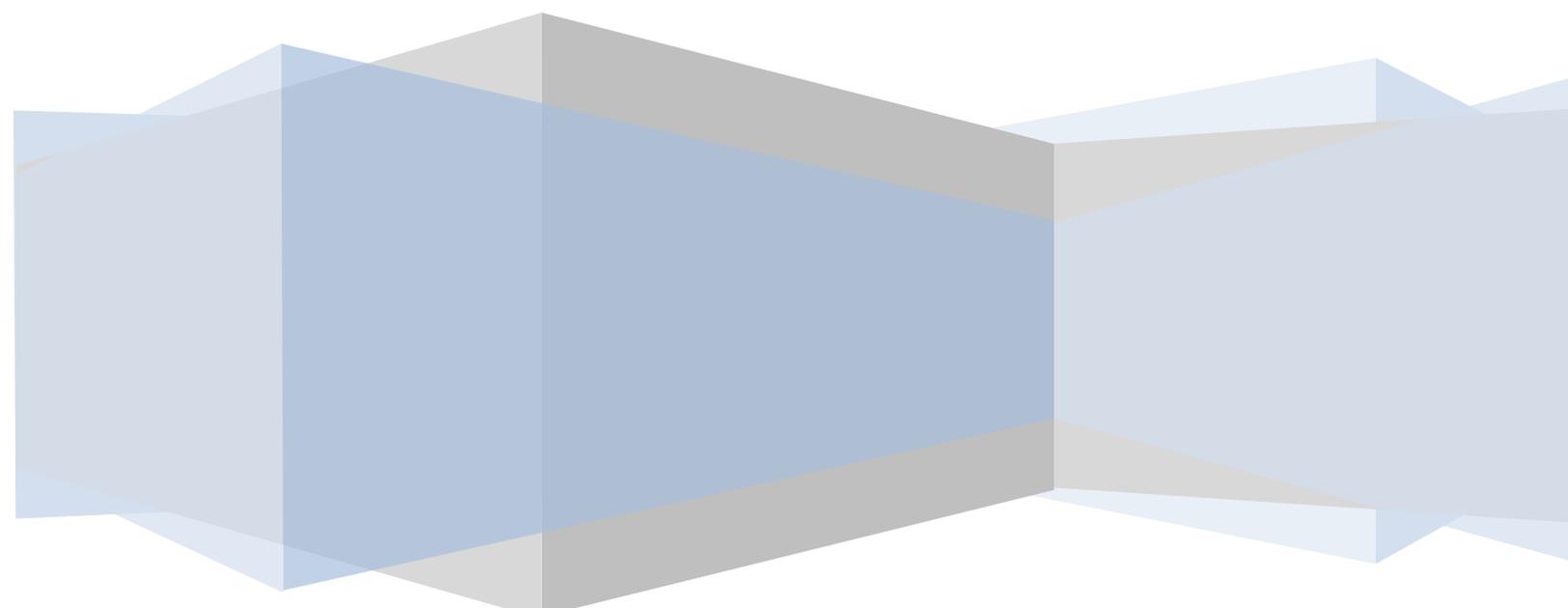




# National Response Framework

December 2010



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## Acronyms

|              |                                                                    |
|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>AAR</b>   | After-Action Review                                                |
| <b>CDEMA</b> | Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency                     |
| <b>CDM</b>   | Comprehensive Disaster Management                                  |
| <b>CEPEP</b> | Community Based Environmental Protection and Enhancement Programme |
| <b>CFP</b>   | Critical Facilities Protection                                     |
| <b>COOP</b>  | Continuity of Operations Plan                                      |
| <b>CPR</b>   | Cardiopulmonary resuscitation                                      |
| <b>DMU</b>   | Disaster Management Unit (Ministry of Local Government)            |
| <b>EOC</b>   | Emergency Operations Centre                                        |
| <b>ESF</b>   | Emergency Support Function                                         |
| <b>GMRTT</b> | Global Medical Responders Trinidad and Tobago                      |
| <b>GORTT</b> | Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago                  |
| <b>HFA</b>   | Hyogo Framework for Action                                         |
| <b>ICS</b>   | Incident Command System                                            |
| <b>MOLG</b>  | Ministry of Local Government                                       |
| <b>MOPSD</b> | Ministry of the People and Social Development                      |
| <b>MOWT</b>  | Ministry of Works and Transport                                    |
| <b>NEOC</b>  | National Emergency Operations Centre                               |
| <b>NRF</b>   | National Response Framework                                        |
| <b>ODPM</b>  | Office of Disaster Preparedness and Management                     |
| <b>PTSC</b>  | Public Transport Service Corporation                               |
| <b>SAUTT</b> | Special Anti-Crime Unit of Trinidad and Tobago                     |
| <b>TEMA</b>  | Tobago Emergency Management Agency                                 |
| <b>THA</b>   | Tobago House of Assembly                                           |
| <b>TTDF</b>  | Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force                                  |
| <b>TTFS</b>  | Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service                                   |
| <b>TTPS</b>  | Trinidad and Tobago Police Service                                 |
| <b>URP</b>   | Unemployment Relief Programme                                      |

## Review of the National Response Framework

The *National Response Framework (NRF)* is set within the multi-hazard environment of the twin island Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. In that regard, it is underpinned by an understanding of the respective threats and vulnerabilities the nation faces. The NRF outlines an overarching goal, objectives and principles that enable all response partners in Trinidad and Tobago to prepare for and provide a unified and integrated national response to disasters and emergencies – from the smallest incident to the largest catastrophe.

### Hazards

Of the many possible hazards, the following pose the greatest threat to Trinidad and Tobago:

- Flooding
- Earthquakes
- Landslides
- Tornadoes
- Drought
- Fires
- Mud volcanoes
- Spontaneous combustion of lignite
- Hurricanes and Tropical Storms
- Tsunamis and other Coastal Hazards
- Industrial hazards (such as chemical leaks/spills and explosions)
- Biological hazards (such as H1N1 pandemic)
- Other threats, such as civil unrest, terrorism and cyber attacks.

### Vulnerabilities

Some of the intrinsic physical and socio-economic vulnerabilities of Trinidad and Tobago to hazards include:

- **Public perception** that Trinidad and Tobago is unlikely to be impacted by a major hazard and that hazards are strictly seasonal phenomena.
- The **close proximity of Oil, Gas and Chemical facilities** to dense and expanding residential and commercial centres.

- **Hazard mitigation is not sufficiently integrated into planning and development.** Settlements and structures are often planned without adequate consideration and mitigation of the risk to the development and its possible effect on the occurrence and/or severity of hazards.
- **Construction standards are not properly regulated; a national, legislated building code does not exist.** Therefore, many structures are highly vulnerable to structural collapse and damage.
- Trinidad and Tobago's food security is highly vulnerable as quite an extensive amount of food is imported. In addition, **a high percentage of local agriculture production is located within flood prone areas.**
- The **majority of government buildings, financial institutions and facilities are centralized in the capital** thereby giving rise to a national economic vulnerability.
- The majority of the population of Trinidad reside along the East-West Corridor. This has increased the **potential for massive human casualties in the event of a serious earthquake** as the Arima and El Pilar Faults lie below this corridor.
- Cities and settlements have been growing without adequate consideration for drainage capacity. Often the **existing drainage cannot accommodate the increased run-off from the rapidly expanding urban areas.**
- Settlements, road networks and the general infrastructure along our coasts are being affected by **sea level rise and increased wave action.**

The above is not a complete list of all the vulnerabilities inherent to Trinidad and Tobago. It should be noted that more detailed nationwide hazard vulnerability assessments are necessary to determine the specific risks faced by different communities, settlements, social groups and public and private sector agencies. Such assessments are being conducted by the ODPM on a national level, and by the Red Cross on a community level (Vulnerability and Capacity Assessments). In addition, a comprehensive countrywide risk assessment is due to start shortly as part of an IDB-funded project.

## Goal

Our disaster management goal should be to create a resilient nation whose continuous protection from new and existing threats, posed by all natural and man-made hazards, is integrated into routine practices of individuals, communities, government and public and private sector businesses, in such a manner that the potential effects of disasters on the quality of life of its citizens are greatly mitigated

and recovery is rapid and comprehensive. To achieve this goal, the NRF identifies the key objectives outlined below:

## Objectives

- Protect life, property and livelihood;
- Reduce suffering;
- Protect government facilities;
- Avert the cascading of a single event into a multi-event situation;
- Protect the economy of the country;
- Ensure the continuity of government;
- Ensure efficient and effective restoration of normality for citizens and business enterprise.

## Principles

The above-mentioned objectives of the NRF are achieved by adherence to the following five key principles which are engendered through unity of purpose, best professional judgment, and the effective achievement of the objectives.

1. **Engaged Partnership** signals ongoing communication among leaders at all levels toward alignment of capabilities and mutually supporting preparedness activities. These capabilities are strengthened through integrated planning, resource identification, training, and simulation exercises. Also important for success are partnerships that are engaged at the community, national and regional levels.
2. **Tiered Response** refers to the ability of the response system to handle incidents from the lowest jurisdictional level. Strengthening capacities from the individual and community levels through the Regional/Municipal Corporations is therefore key to effectiveness.
3. **Scalable, flexible, adaptable operational capabilities** are essential for handling the range of extreme events that may have disastrous consequences. The number, type and sources of resources must be able to expand rapidly to meet needs associated with a given incident. The ability to surge

### Five Key Principles

1. Engaged partnership
2. Tiered response
3. Scalable, flexible, and adaptable operational capabilities
4. Unity of effort through unified command
5. Readiness to act

(after Homeland Security, NRF, USA, 2008)

4. **Unity of effort through unified command** highlights the importance of each participating agency to maintain its own authority, responsibility and accountability through the Incident Command System, while working as a team to provide joint support to achieve commonly established objectives.
5. **Readiness to act** will be facilitated not only by well-honed operational procedures at the level of individual, household, community, institutions, Regional Corporations and the ODPM, but also by well-developed targeted public information and communication plans.

In addition to the foregoing, the NRF outlines the governance structure, the Concept of Operations and the roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders within the country's existing comprehensive disaster management system.

## Structure

The NRF should enable all response partners in Trinidad and Tobago to prepare for and provide a unified national response to hazards, emergencies and disasters – from the smallest incident to the largest catastrophe. The *Framework* organizes the way Trinidad and Tobago responds to such incidents. The principal actors within the NRF are the Central Government, the Local Government represented by the Municipal Corporations, the ODPM, various Ministries and Agencies, non-governmental organisations and the private sector.



The NRF recognises that none of these actors will be successful acting alone, and that further support is needed from individuals, communities and civil society in general. Together, these key constituents execute the NRF's Concept of Operations.

## Concept of Operations

The Concept of Operations provides response agencies with a guide to the way a hazard incident may be approached. In this regard, a three-levelled system of response is used depending on the severity of the emergency. These three levels are:

**A Level 1** emergency is a localized incident. Such incidents are within the capacity of the local government authorities and other first responder agencies within a Municipality, or the Tobago Emergency Management Agency in the case of Tobago. The first responder agencies may include the Trinidad and Tobago Police Service (TTPS), the Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service (TTFS) and the Health Services, as necessary. At Level 1, the Emergency Operations Centre of the Municipal Corporation or Tobago will be activated as needed to coordinate the Regional, Borough or City response.

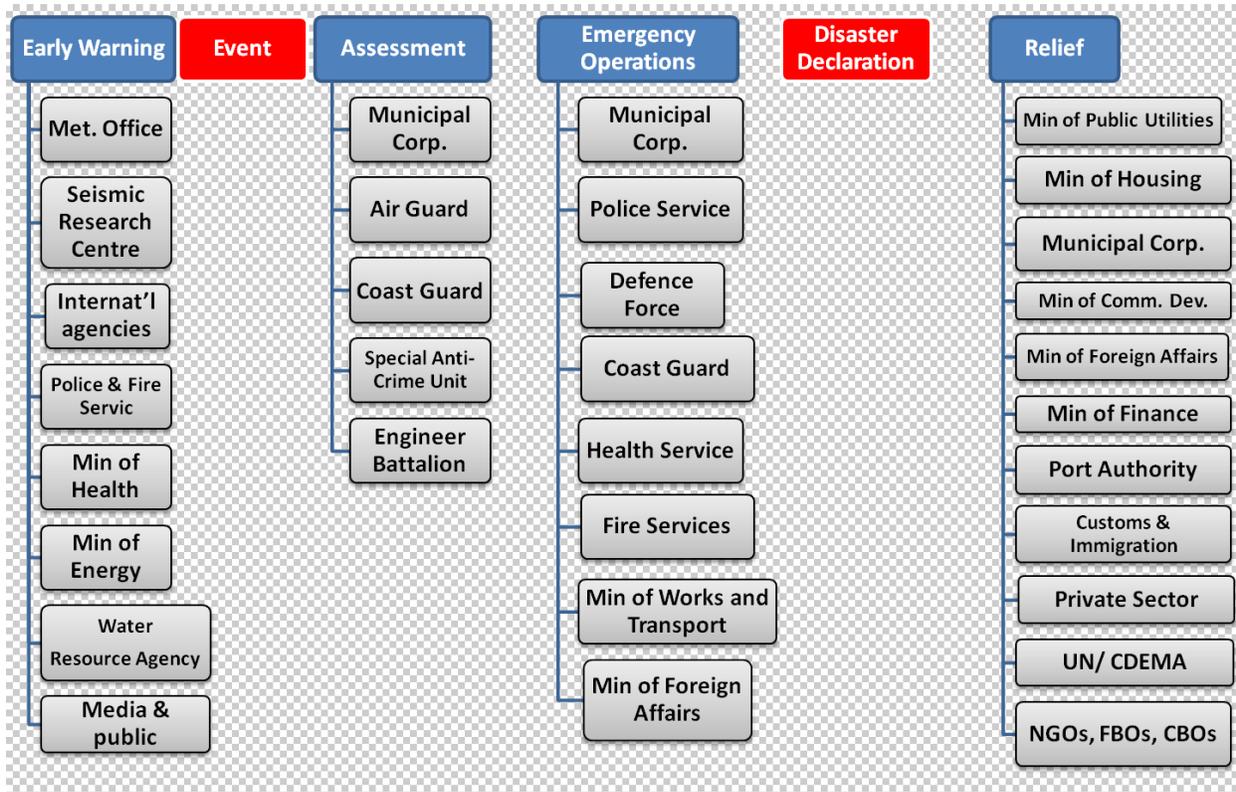
**At Level 2**, the emergency or disaster event usually affects two or more municipal regions/Tobago, or while confined to one municipality, may be of a very serious nature (that is, have the potential for significant loss of life or damage to property, environment or economy). In such instances, the response can be dealt with using municipal and national resources.

If it is perceived that a Level 1 incident has the potential to escalate to a Level 2 event, the ODPM's National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) would be notified and become partially activated. This activation would facilitate the closer monitoring of events and initiate preparation for response should the Level 1 response become overwhelmed. (The NEOC is explained in the next section.) At Level 2, greater resources would be required for damage assessment, search and rescue, security/ crowd control, relief supply distribution, etc., depending on the type of incident. The Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force (TTDF) usually becomes involved at this level.

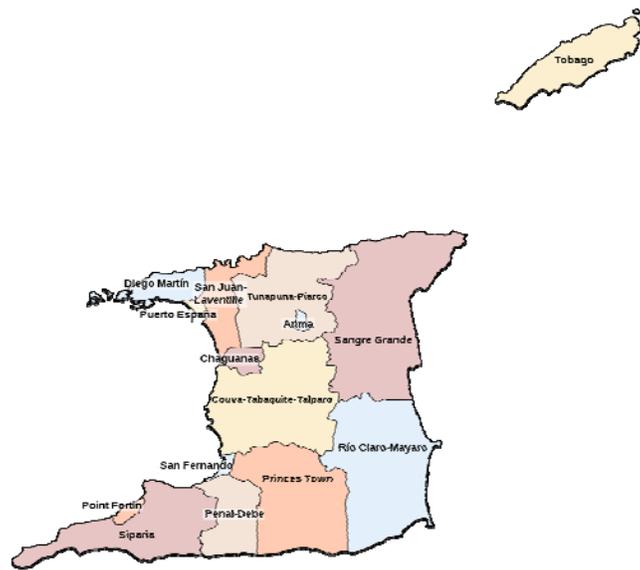
**At Level 3**, should the national resources become overwhelmed, the President will declare a national emergency. In such a scenario, the ODPM, through the Ministries of National Security, Foreign Affairs and Finance, will coordinate the acquisition of regional and international aid assistance.

## Roles and Responsibilities of the Key Stakeholders within the National Response Framework

As depicted in the following diagram, the National Response Framework involves several agencies coordinating their efforts to provide a range of services which include early warning, assessment, emergency operations and relief.



## Ministry of Local Government (MOLG)/ Municipal Corporations



Trinidad is divided into fourteen (14) municipal corporations. The **Disaster Management Unit (DMU)** at each Corporation comprises approximately four (4) staff members, on average. Emergency management on the island of Tobago is managed by the Tobago Emergency Management Agency (TEMA). (TEMA is discussed on page 10).

All DMUs are managed by the Chief Disaster Management Coordinator appointed by the MOLG, who is tasked with ensuring that the individual needs of Corporations are met, as well as coordinating joint initiatives and operations. Each Corporation is responsible for coordinated emergency operations before, during and after a Level 1 emergency affecting the region, borough or city. Coordination should exist between the MOLG, the ODPM, the first responders and/or other stakeholders responding to the emergency situation.

The DMUs have the following responsibilities:

- Ensure that all Emergency Response Plans and Standard Operating Procedures for the Municipal Corporations are completed, updated and applied.
- Conduct familiarisation/practice exercises.
- Ensure that Evacuation/Egress Plans are prepared for each city/ borough/ municipality.
- Engage in public awareness activities that will strengthen the community's capacity to mitigate, prepare for and respond to hazard impacts.

- Work alongside other first responder and emergency support agencies and private enterprise to effectively and efficiently deal with the effects of hazards to the region impacted.
- Assist with the restoration and improvement where appropriate, of facilities, livelihoods and living conditions of hazard-impacted communities, including efforts to reduce disaster risks.

### **Trinidad and Tobago Police Service (TTPS)**

In an emergency situation, the TTPS functions include:

- Maintenance of law and order
- Search and rescue operations
- Traffic and crowd control
- Identification of deceased individuals
- Establishment of Incident Command and coordination

### **Trinidad and Tobago Fire Service (TTFS)**

The functions of TTFS include:

- Assistance to local fire fighting efforts in detecting, controlling, and/or suppressing urban, rural, or wildfires that may result from any cause.
- Coordination of national resources for search and rescue operations during an emergency or disaster that is beyond the capabilities of Municipal Corporations within affected areas.
- Coordinated response through local and national resources to minimise adverse effects on the population and environment resulting from the release of, or exposure to, hazardous biological, chemical, radiological or nuclear materials. These releases may be accidental or from acts of terrorism.
- Swift Water Search and Rescue, Land Search and Rescue, Urban Search and Rescue.

### **Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force (TTDF)**

The four formations of the Trinidad and Tobago Defence Force – Regiment, Coast Guard, Air Guard and Reserves – together contribute land, sea and air capabilities to the Force’s response efforts. Among these, the First Engineer Battalion of the Regiment is mandated by Government to work directly with the ODPM in times of emergency. The Battalion’s functions include:

- Assisting the TTFS and TTPS with search and rescue operations, and TTPS with law enforcement, during an emergency above Level 1.

- Assisting the Ministry of the People and Social Development (MOPSD) to provide mass care services such as shelter, food and first aid.
- Assisting the MOLG DMUs and the ODPM with damage and needs assessments after an incident.
- Assisting the MOPSD with the collection, analysis and dissemination of information in order to facilitate the overall provision of services and resources during an emergency or disaster.

### **Ministry of Works and Transport (MOWT)**

The function of the MOWT in Disaster Management includes the following:

- Public works, utility and engineering support to assist Municipal Corporations.
- Coordination of national transportation support to responding agencies, ministries and Municipal Corporations to ensure the effective utilization of all available transportation resources and systems during emergencies and disasters. In major emergencies, the MOWT is responsible for transporting large quantities of personnel, equipment, and supplies into and out of affected areas.
- Transport of evacuees from affected areas to shelters, through the Public Transport Service Corporation (PTSC).
- Removal of fallen debris and soil that obstruct roadways in the aftermath of a landslide or landslip, hurricane or other incident.
- Utilisation of resources available to ensure the timely repair of roads and bridges that incur damages after a hazard impact.
- Maintenance and management of sea and airports.

### **Special Anti-Crime Unit of Trinidad and Tobago (SAUTT)**

SAUTT provides the following to support Disaster Risk Management:

- Air reconnaissance to provide a Common Operating Picture of areas impacted by hazards through the use of its imagery assets.
- Air transport for persons who are marooned, confined to hazard impacted areas or may be in need of immediate medical attention.

### **Global Medical Responders of Trinidad and Tobago (GMRTT)**

GMRTT is responsible for providing immediate medical assistance to affected persons in the form of first aid and CPR if the need arises. GMRTT also provides medical transportation services for victims affected during a hazard event or emergency.

### **Community Based Environmental Protection and Enhancement Programme (CEPEP)**

CEPEP provides personnel for the clearing of roads and the general sanitization of affected communities after a hazard impact.

### **Unemployment Relief Programme (URP)**

The URP provides support to communities in the aftermath of a hazard situation. The personnel of this organisation assist in conducting minor repairs to structures.

### **Tobago Emergency Management Agency (TEMA)**

The Tobago House of Assembly (THA) performs a similar role to the 'local government' authority in Trinidad. Disaster Management is the remit of the Tobago Emergency Management Agency (TEMA) which is within the THA. TEMA co-ordinates a network of agencies and individuals within the island of Tobago in order to direct their efforts to ensure the maximum preservation of life and the protection of property in times of disaster. In carrying out its mandate, TEMA works in close collaboration with the ODPM. Therefore, should TEMA become overwhelmed in an emergency, the ODPM will provide its full support to Tobago. While at the operational level the relationship between the ODPM and TEMA works well, there remains great potential for improvement at the strategic level.

### **The Office of Disaster Preparedness and Management (ODPM) and the National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC)**

The ODPM is the country's strategic disaster management agency which mobilises and coordinates the country's key agencies and resources to improve national disaster risk reduction and emergency management. In so doing, the ODPM integrates the competencies and capabilities of the Defence Force and Protective Services, Ministries and Agencies, the Private Sector, Non-Governmental Organizations, Community and Faith Based Organizations, and other key stakeholders to prepare for, mitigate, respond to and recover from disasters.

In responding to an emergency or disaster situation, the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) of a Ministry, agency, company, municipality or the nation is activated. In the case of a Level 2 emergency,

the **National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC)**, managed by the ODPM, is responsible for the coordination of activities and development of the strategy for response and relief. The ODPM encourages the use of the **Incident Command System** which establishes and transfers command responsibility, manages information and intelligence and integrates communications.

During activation, the Operations Manager of the ODPM or his/her designee serves as the NEOC Director and is responsible for the planning, direction and coordination of all emergency activities. He/she directs these activities through coordination with regional EOCs, first responders and other emergency support function agencies.

The NEOC is based on the coordination of **Emergency Support Functions (ESFs)**. The ESF roles are held by representatives of particular ministries/agencies/organisations that are key participants in the National Response System. These representatives form an integral part of the NEOC as they have the direct responsibility for coordinating the efforts of their respective bodies either in a leading or supporting role, during an incident requiring NEOC activation. The functional areas and participants are shown in the table below.

| Emergency Support Function |                             | Ministry/ Agency Leads                                    |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| 1                          | Transportation              | Works and Transport                                       |
| 1A                         | Airports                    | Airports Authority of Trinidad and Tobago                 |
| 1B                         | Sea Ports                   | Port Authority of Trinidad and Tobago                     |
| 2                          | Public Utilities            | Public Utilities/Telecommunications                       |
| 2A                         | Water                       | Water and Sewage Authority (WASA)                         |
| 2B                         | Telecommunications          | Telecommunications Services of Trinidad and Tobago (TSTT) |
| 2C                         | Electricity                 | Trinidad and Tobago Electricity Commission (T&TEC)        |
| 3                          | Public Works/Infrastructure | Works and Transport                                       |
| 4                          | Fire fighting               | National Security / Fire Service                          |
| 5                          | Emergency Management        | National Security / ODPM                                  |
| 6                          | Human Services              | People and Social Development                             |
| 6A                         | Human Services              | Local Government                                          |
| 7                          | Resource Support            | Finance                                                   |
| 8                          | Health and Medical          | Health                                                    |

|       |                                   |                                                        |
|-------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| 8A    | Ambulance Services                | Global Medical Response of Trinidad and Tobago (GMRTT) |
| 9     | Search and Rescue                 | TTPS/TTFS/TTDF/SAUTT                                   |
| 10    | Hazardous Materials               | National Security/Fire Service                         |
| 11    | Food and Agriculture              | Agriculture, Land and Marine Resources                 |
| 12    | Energy                            | Energy and Energy Industries                           |
| 13    | Public Safety/Security Services   | National Security/Police                               |
| 13A/B | Intelligence                      | Joint Intelligence Group/MNS                           |
| 14    | Long Term Recovery and Mitigation | Planning, Housing & Environment/Social Development     |
| 15    | Public Information                | Office of the Prime Minister                           |
| 16    | Military Support                  | Defence Force                                          |
| 17    | Border Management/Control         | Immigration Division                                   |
| 18    | Customs                           | Customs and Excise                                     |
| 19    | International Relations           | Foreign Affairs                                        |

### The President – Emergency Proclamation and Powers

Currently, the **President of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago is authorized by law to proclaim a ‘state of emergency’ or a ‘disaster area’** (Disaster Measures Act 1978). A ‘state of emergency’ proclamation is the legal method which authorizes extraordinary measures to meet emergencies and/or solve disaster problems. A proclamation allows for the emergency use of resources, the bypassing of time consuming requirements and the activation of extraordinary measures. A proclamation is usually a prerequisite for state assistance and made at the onset of a disaster to allow the local government to do as much as possible to help itself. Any proclamation issued has the force of law and supersedes any conflicting provision of law during the period of the declared emergency.

In addition to any other **emergency powers** conferred upon the President, he/she may:

- Suspend the provisions of any regulatory ordinance prescribing procedures for the conduct of country business, or the orders or regulations of any department if compliance with the provisions of the statute, order or regulation would prevent, or substantially impede or delay action necessary to cope with the disaster emergency.
- Use all the resources of the Government as reasonably necessary to cope with the disaster emergency.

- Transfer personnel or alter the functions of government departments and offices or units of them for the purpose of performing or facilitating the performance of disaster emergency services.
- Direct and compel the relocation of all or part of the population from any stricken or threatened area in the country if relocation is considered necessary for the preservation of life or for other disaster mitigation purposes.
- Prescribe routes, modes of transportation and destinations in connection with necessary relocation.
- Control ingress to and egress from a disaster area, the movement of persons within the area and the occupancy of premises in it.
- Suspend or limit the sale, dispensing or transportation of alcoholic beverages, firearm, ammunition, explosives and combustibles.
- Make provisions for the availability and use of temporary emergency housing.
- Impose a curfew
- Allocate, ration or redistribute food, water, fuel, clothing and other items deemed necessary.