

UK deploys a team of three humanitarian experts to Bahamas following devastating Hurricane Dorian

The UK has deployed a three-strong team of humanitarian experts to the Bahamas to begin immediate work on assessing the damage and support needed following Hurricane Dorian.

Hurricane Dorian is a category five hurricane, with wind speeds reaching up to 185 mph as it passed over the Bahamas.

The team of DFID experts, who departed from London this morning, are expected to arrive in the region later today and will work closely alongside the Bahamas Government and the Caribbean's regional disaster management agency (CDEMA) to assess the scale of the damage and help coordinate the relief effort.

International Development Secretary Alok Sharma said:

My thoughts are with everyone affected by this devastating hurricane which is causing widespread disruption.

I have sent an initial team of experts to the Bahamas to help assess the damage and coordinate the UK's response, including any potential use of military assets if required.

The UK is a world leader in providing disaster relief, and it's right that we support the people of the Bahamas in their time of need.

The British Royal Navy auxiliary ship Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) Mounts Bay has been pre-positioned to the region to offer her support if required. The ship is capable of carrying specialist water rescue vehicles and includes a helicopter that can be used to deliver humanitarian aid. RFA Mounts Bay has relief supplies on-board including water carriers, hygiene kits and shelter kits.

This is in addition to UK support provided for the deployment of specialist teams in the region from CDEMA – including engineers, health professionals and logistics experts – who will support the local authorities' response and assess whether further international assistance is required.

Notes to editors

1. The Bahamas is not eligible for Official Development Assistance under internationally agreed rules because of its Gross National Income per capita. International aid rules do not prevent the UK from responding to

humanitarian crises like this. For this particular crisis, we are drawing non-ODA funding from the Conflict, Stability and Security Fund (CSSF).

2. Final costs will depend on the path and intensity of the storm, how many teams are needed to deploy and for how long.