

FEMA Surges Hundreds of Additional Personnel to Puerto Rico for Hurricane Fiona Response

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San Juan, Puerto Rico – Today, FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell will travel to Puerto Rico to assess the devastation caused by Hurricane Fiona and determine the additional resources needed to support the island’s recovery.

FEMA deployed one national and four regional Incident Management Teams and two Urban Search and Rescue teams to augment the hundreds of FEMA personnel on the ground. The additional staff will help bolster the Government of Puerto Rico’s response efforts.

“Our partnership with the Government of Puerto Rico has never been stronger and we remain committed to helping them respond to and recover from Hurricane Fiona,” said FEMA Administrator Deanne Criswell. “We’re sending hundreds of additional **personnel** in the next few days to place staff in each of the **affected** communities to supplement our already vast footprint.”

The Administrator’s trip comes on the fifth anniversary of Hurricane Maria hitting the island and follows the emergency declaration President Joseph R. Biden approved on Sunday. The declaration authorizes FEMA to coordinate all federal disaster relief efforts to save lives and protect property.

Administrator Criswell called Governor Pedro R. Pierluisi on Monday to discuss Fiona’s impacts and how FEMA can provide additional support. One of the ways FEMA is providing additional resources is by increasing the number of field operations resources, including staff.

Hurricane Fiona’s rain bands continue to cause flooding along with potential mud and landslides across Puerto Rico. While the storm has moved north, additional flash and urban flooding is possible in the southern portion of the main island. Although the storm is moving away from Puerto Rico, residents are encouraged to



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stay alert to continuing hazards.

FEMA's support of the Government of Puerto Rico has been ongoing. And while heavy rain and strong winds of Fiona have devastated the island, FEMA has been in collaboration with Puerto Rico and other local and federal partners to help better prepare the island for hurricane response.

"FEMA has been tracking the potential impacts of this severe weather event well-ahead of the storm's landfall." said Region 2 Administrator David Warrington. "It is our mission to help people before, during and after disasters and we remain committed to supporting the Government of Puerto Rico for as long as we are needed."

"The Government of Puerto is appreciative of the support FEMA has already provided and we welcome the support of additional personnel," said governor Pierluisi. "The amount of rain Puerto Rico received has been extraordinary, approximately 25 inches, but according to the National Weather Service, that number could rise to as much as 35," governor Pierluisi added. "Life safety remains to be a top priority and it is my sincere hope that people will continue to follow the advice of local officials and stay home."

FEMA will continue to work with the Government of Puerto Rico to respond to and recover from the storm and remain committed to helping reduce risks and hazards posed by future disasters and extreme weather events.

