



# CARIBBEAN TRADEMARK SERVICES

"One Stop Center - 29 Jurisdictions"

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Newsletter – SEPTEMBER 2017

## CARIBBEAN UPDATE AFTER HURRICANE IRMA



Map showing path of Hurricane Irma

Hurricane Irma, the strongest Atlantic hurricane on record, travelled over the Lesser Antilles, part of Cuba and made land fall in the State of Florida, U.S.A. This hurricane affected the Florida Keys and the Western Coast of Florida, U.S.A. The eastern coast of Florida experienced minimal damage mainly to trees and vegetation. Florida is expected to have a full restoration of electricity and other utility services soon.

Hurricane Irma was particularly devastating for the islands of Anguilla, Barbuda, St. Maarten, British Virgin Islands, and U.S. Virgin Islands. Turks and Caicos Islands were impacted to a lesser extent. The hurricane also brushed Haiti and Cuba. Despite the impact of Hurricane Irma, most of the Caribbean region were not affected directly by the hurricane and remains open for business. Reports coming out of the islands impacted by the hurricane show that there has been great progress in the cleanup efforts and the islands are well on the way to recovery.

Our offices in Florida and Anguilla are in operation following the hurricane. Our Florida office never lost electricity and our building did not sustain any damage. We operate a paperless office so clients' files are always protected. We are extremely fortunate to have been able to resume business immediately after the storm passed our area. In Anguilla, our office received minor damage and our staff worked diligently to clean up and restore operations. We resumed operations on September 14<sup>th</sup> 2017 with limited hours and expect to resume regular hours from October 1<sup>st</sup> 2017.

Below is island by island update as of September 15<sup>th</sup> 2017:

**Anguilla:** Anguilla was one of the islands that suffered major damage by hurricane Irma. A number of hotels, businesses and government buildings have been damaged. Private homes, churches and schools were also damaged. Immediately after the storm, there are positive efforts towards rebuilding. Assistance from British, many of the businesses and local government agents are leading an extensive cleanup campaign. An outpouring of assistance from tourists who regularly visit the island is also projected to assist with the rebuilding process. The International airport is open for limited flights. The Road Bay Port at Sandy Ground is also open. Some resorts and villas are projecting to be ready to accommodate guests by the end of the year

2017. The famous Zemi Beach House Resort and Spa sustained minimal damage. Mounts Bay's Commanding Officer Capt. Stephen Norris RFA stated that although Anguilla suffered extensive damage, normal signs of life were returning - roads are opened and the local population is beginning a clean-up operation. The Anguilla Commercial Registry has reported that members of the staff are present at the Registry engaged in cleanup and restoration efforts daily and it anticipates resuming operations soon.

**Antigua & Barbuda:** Barbuda suffered substantial damage while Antigua has sustained minimal damage. The International Airport in Antigua is opened for all flights and electricity was restored to the capital St. Johns and most parts of the island. The Antigua and Barbuda Intellectual Property and Commerce Office (ABIPCO), is located in Antigua and has not reported any damage. The ABIPCO is fully operational.

**Aruba:** The Island of Aruba is located far out of the tracked passage of Hurricane Irma and the island did not sustain any damages from the storm. The Bureau of Intellectual Property Aruba has confirmed that they are fully operational.

**Bahamas:** The Bahamas experienced winds from the outer bands of hurricane Irma. Most of the damage was sustained by the southern islands. It has been reported by the Ministry of Tourism and Aviation that the airports in Nassau, Grand Bahama Island, and nearly all of the other outer islands are open. The majority of the hotels, resorts, business places and government offices are open for business as usual. The Intellectual Properties Section of the Registrar General's Department is located in Nassau and is fully operational.

**Barbados:** Barbados was not affected by hurricane Irma. Business continues as usual in Barbados and furthermore, the British troops that have travelled to the Caribbean to aid in the cleanup and rebuilding process will be using Barbados as their distribution hub as supplies are delivered to the affected islands. The Intellectual Property Section of the Corporate Affairs and Intellectual Property Office has not reported any damage and is fully operational.

**Belize & Bermuda:** Belize & Bermuda were out of the path of hurricane Irma and therefore they were not affected. The Belize Intellectual Property Office (BELIPO) and The Government of Bermuda Registry General office have confirmed that the offices are fully operational.

**British Virgin Islands:** The British Virgin Islands were in the direct path of Hurricane Irma and as such the destruction caused by the storm was severe. We have been in contact with persons on the island of Tortola who work with the local government and have confirmed that the island is engaged in extensive clean up and rebuilding efforts to get businesses and government agencies fully functional soon. With communication lines being affected, it has been difficult to receive communication from the Intellectual Property Unit within the Registry of Corporate Affairs to fully assess the damage.

**Caribbean Netherlands (Bonaire, St. Eustatius & Saba aka BES Islands):** The Caribbean Netherlands islands were out of the path of Hurricane Irma and therefore the islands did not sustain any damage from the storm. The Netherlands Patent Office Netherlands Enterprise Agency Ministry of Economic Affairs has confirmed that they are open and fully operational.

**Cayman Islands:** The Cayman Islands was not severely impacted by Hurricane Irma. Although the island received some effects from the winds, business operations have resumed to normal activity. The Cayman Islands Intellectual Property Office has confirmed that it is open for business and fully operational.

**Costa Rica:** Costa Rica was out of the path of Hurricane Irma and therefore the island did not sustain any damage from the storm and the Intellectual Property Office is fully operational.

**Cuba:** Half of the island of Cuba was affected by Hurricane Irma since it went from the eastern province of Guantanamo through the central province of Santa Clara. The northwestern city of Havana, which is the capital province of Cuba and where the TM Office (OCPI) is located, was not affected directly by Hurricane Irma. The north part of the city did suffer inundations, but being the OCPI about a mile away from the coast the flooding did not affect their offices. The OCPI was reopened for normal business on Monday 11<sup>th</sup> September, and is fully operational.

**Curaçao:** The Island of Curaçao was out of the path of Hurricane Irma and therefore the island did not sustain any damages from the storm. Bureau of Intellectual Property Curaçao has confirmed that business operations were not affected by hurricane Irma and they are fully operational.

**Dominica:** Dominica was not in the path of Hurricane Irma and was not impacted by the storm. The Companies and Intellectual Properties office in Dominica has not been affected and is fully operational.

**Dominican Republic:** Although Hurricane Irma went through the north side of the island, the Dominican TM Office (ONAPI) was not affected or suffered any damage. The ONAPI is located on the south side of the island, at Santo Domingo city. The ONAPI reopened normal business and is fully operational.

**Grenada, Guyana, Jamaica, & Montserrat:** These islands were not in the path of Hurricane Irma and were not impacted by the storm. The Intellectual Properties offices have not been affected and are all fully operational.

**Haiti:** Haiti did not receive a direct hit from Hurricane Irma. There was some damage to structures trees and vegetation. The Haitian Intellectual Properties Office is open and is fully operational.

**Puerto Rico:** Hurricane Irma went through the north side of the island and affected San Juan city, where the Puerto Rico TM Office (PRTO) is located. Fortunately, most of San Juan was mainly covered by the weak tail of the hurricane so Irma did not affect the city severely. Although a third part of the island lost power, the PRTO was not affected by this and their system has remained fully operational.

**St. Kitts & Nevis:** Both St. Kitts and Nevis were not severely affected by Hurricane Irma. There was damage to some properties however, the island's business places and government offices are reopened.

The Airport has reopened and the Intellectual Properties office is fully operational.

**St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad & Tobago:** These islands were not in the path of Hurricane Irma and were not impacted by the storm. The Intellectual Properties offices have not been affected and are open for regular hours of business.

**St. Maarten:** St. Marten experienced a direct hit from Hurricane Irma. The storm damaged the airport, and most of the islands' structures. The Bureau for Intellectual Property St. Maarten remains closed and due to the inability to communicate with the island, the extent of damage is unknown.

**Turks & Caicos Islands:** This territory made up of 40 coral islands, was hit by Hurricane Irma. The extent of the damage to the low-lying islands is still unknown. The Turks & Caicos Islands Financial Services Commission, Trademarks and Patents Department is located in Grand Turk Island and is expected to be reopen on Monday September 18th 2017.

**United States Virgin Islands:** The United States Virgin Islands was in the path of hurricane Irma. The Island of St. Thomas suffered damage to buildings and vegetation. The resorts on the islands have indicated that they will remain closed until further notice. However, the island has started its cleanup process to restore the island. Ports and airports have reopened and the majority of hotels on St Croix are welcoming guests again.



Photo of little yellow lilies that are growing all over the islands after the hurricane

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**The George C.J. Moore P.A. law firm stands ready to assist you  
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