

Remarks to the Media

By Prime Minister Philip Davis, KC, MP

March 29, 2025

Good afternoon, members of the media,

I want to provide a full update on the bush fires affecting Grand Bahama, and the Government's coordinated response.

On Friday, 28th March 2025, at approximately 12:20 p.m., officers from the Fire Branch in Freeport received reports of a large bush fire threatening homes and property in the

Regency Park and North Bahamia areas. Two fire trucks were immediately dispatched. Upon arrival, officers met a large area of bush and a single-storey residential home engulfed in flames. While the fire was later extinguished, the home suffered extensive damage.

Due to the intensity of high winds, the fire spread quickly in a westerly direction. In response, Assistant Commissioner of Police Advardo Dames, Officer-in-Charge for Grand Bahama and the Northern Bahamas, along with Fire Chief ASP Javone Richards, mobilized additional resources from the Grand Bahama

International Airport Crash and Rescue Department, Freeport Container Port, BORCO, and three volunteer NGOs.

The fire eventually reached the Polymers International yard, then spread to the police compound on Peel Street where two dilapidated, unoccupied buildings were destroyed. Flames and flying embers also reached the West Sunrise and Hawksbill areas. An unoccupied structure on Abaco Drive in Hawksbill was extensively damaged.

Preventative measures were taken with the use of heavy-duty equipment to cut a fire buffer

between West Sunrise Highway and Bahamia, which helped prevent further spread of the blaze.

A preliminary damage assessment has recorded the following:

- A residential home in Regency Park – extensively damaged
- A derelict house in Hawksbill Subdivision – extensively damaged
- Two unoccupied police buildings on Peel Street – totally destroyed

- Freeport Ship Services storage warehouse – extensively damaged
- A warehouse in the Civic Industrial Area – fire damage sustained
- Industrial debris on the Polymers property on Queen’s Highway – fire damage

At approximately 7:15 p.m. Friday evening, another bush fire ignited near the BAIC site on East Sunrise Highway. Fire teams responded immediately and extinguished the fire without further property damage.

I am grateful to report that there has been no loss of life.

Minister Ginger Moxey and her team have remained on the ground, providing support and coordinating local resources, including relocation efforts and social assistance.

Officers from the Royal Bahamas Police Force are actively patrolling affected communities and providing fire prevention guidance to residents. The Government has arranged hotel accommodations for individuals displaced or impacted by the smoke and has commenced

the distribution of over 1,000 hot meals to assist affected residents.

This morning, ACP Dames and Fire Chief Richards continued to lead the firefighting operations. I am advised that the bush fires in the following areas are now fully extinguished:

- Regency Subdivision
- Polymers yard
- Hawksbill Subdivision
- West Sunrise Subdivision
- Sunset Subdivision

- BAIC area

At this time, fire teams are managing three smoldering hotspots, which are contained:

1. Warren Levarity Highway
2. Queen's Highway near Bahamian Brewery
3. North Bahamia

Fire units from the Grand Bahama Airport Crash and Rescue Department, Freeport Container Port, and the Grand Bahama

Shipyard remain on standby to assist as needed.

I want to extend my sincere thanks to ACP Advardo Dames, ASP Javone Richards, and the full fire service team for their decisive leadership. I also thank Minister Ginger Moxey, her team, and the various agencies and NGOs who have supported the response effort.

Special recognition goes to the young volunteers from the National Youth Guard who stepped forward in service to their community.

Additionally, I have authorized the deployment of 30 trained officers from the Royal Bahamas

Defence Force to Grand Bahama to provide logistical and manpower support.

Let me be clear: The Government is making every available resource and form of aid accessible. As a country with dry terrain and open forested areas, this is wildfire season for us in The Bahamas. These conditions pose serious risks, but what matters is how we respond—and I am proud of the teamwork and coordination I have seen across agencies.

This is not a political competition. This is not about the PLP or the FNM. This is not the time for politicians to get in the way of professionals

doing their job. This is an all-hands-on-deck moment. We are here to provide resources and solutions—not to stage photo ops.

We can all volunteer and lend support, but there is a time and place for politics. When there is a crisis, we are one family. Our duty is to protect each other, not posture. In these moments, unity and action must come before everything else.

The focus must remain on protecting lives, property, and ensuring that residents get the help they need.

I now invite ACP Dames to provide you with a situational update on where things stand.

Thank you.