

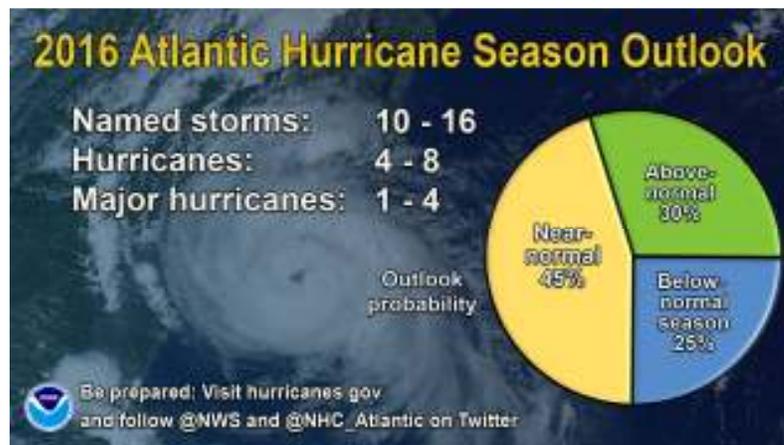


GOVERNMENT OF ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA
Meteorological Services
V.C. Bird International Airport
P.O. Box 1051
Coolidge
St. John's, ANTIGUA W.I.
Telephone: (268) 462-3229; 462-4606
Fax: (268) 462-4606
Email: metoffice@ab.gov.ag

30th May, 2016

PRESS RELEASE

HURRICANE SEASON 2016 'STORM AMOUNT DOESN'T COUNT' BE PREPARED!



The 2016 Hurricane Season for the Atlantic Basin (North Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea and the Gulf of Mexico) will start officially on Wednesday, June 1 and ends on November 30.

Tropical cyclone activity in the Atlantic basin during the 2015 season was somewhat below average. Of the 11 tropical storms that formed, 4 became hurricanes, and 2 reached major hurricane strength (*category 3 or higher on the Saffir-Simpson Hurricane Wind Scale*). In comparison, the 1981-2010 averages are 12 tropical storms, 6 hurricanes, and 3 major hurricanes. In 2015, Hurricane Joaquin battered the Bahamas as a category 4 hurricane, and was the strongest October hurricane known to have affected the Bahamas since 1866. Joaquin caused 34 deaths almost all of which occurred when the U.S.-flagged cargo ship “El Faro” was lost at sea near the Bahamas. Additionally that year, Tropical Storm Erika was responsible for some 271 houses damaged or destroyed in Dominica and about 30 direct deaths. The storm was also responsible for one death in Haiti and left a number of persons homeless.

According to agencies which provide hurricane forecasts, 2016 is expected to be a near-normal to slightly above normal season with 10 to 16 named storms, 4 to 8 hurricanes and 1 to 4 major hurricanes (*greater than or equal to category 3*). The one factor that looks increasingly likely to bring about a more active season is the likelihood of weak to moderate La Niña conditions by late summer.

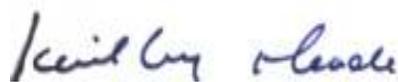
It is important to bear in mind that seasonal forecasts are by no means exact. A forecast of near normal or below normal should not be a reason for letting your guard down. Instead, be reminded that it takes only one storm, hurricane or some other weather disturbance to wreak havoc on our small societies. Local authorities and the general public are therefore urged to prepare as usual for a hurricane season and to take all the necessary precautions as instructed.

Antigua and Barbuda Meteorological Services will monitor the development of all systems which threaten the Leeward and British Virgin Islands and if necessary, issue public advisories, watches or warnings through our website: www.antiguamet.com , Weather hotline: **463-4638**, and other media channels. We will also coordinate with disaster management authorities in Antigua and Barbuda, other Leeward Islands and the British Virgin Islands to sensitize the general public to the threats and likely hazards, with the passage of storm systems and the need to monitor and prepare as necessary.

The names prepared for this 2016 Hurricane Season are: **Alex, Bonnie, Colin, Danielle, Earl, Fiona, Gaston, Hermine, Ian, Julia, Karl, Lisa, Matthew, Nicole, Otto, Paula, Richard, Shary, Tobias, Virginie, Walter.**

Remember, awareness and good preparedness are essential to limiting the loss of life and property this and every hurricane season.

Keithley Meade



Director

Antigua and Barbuda Meteorological Services