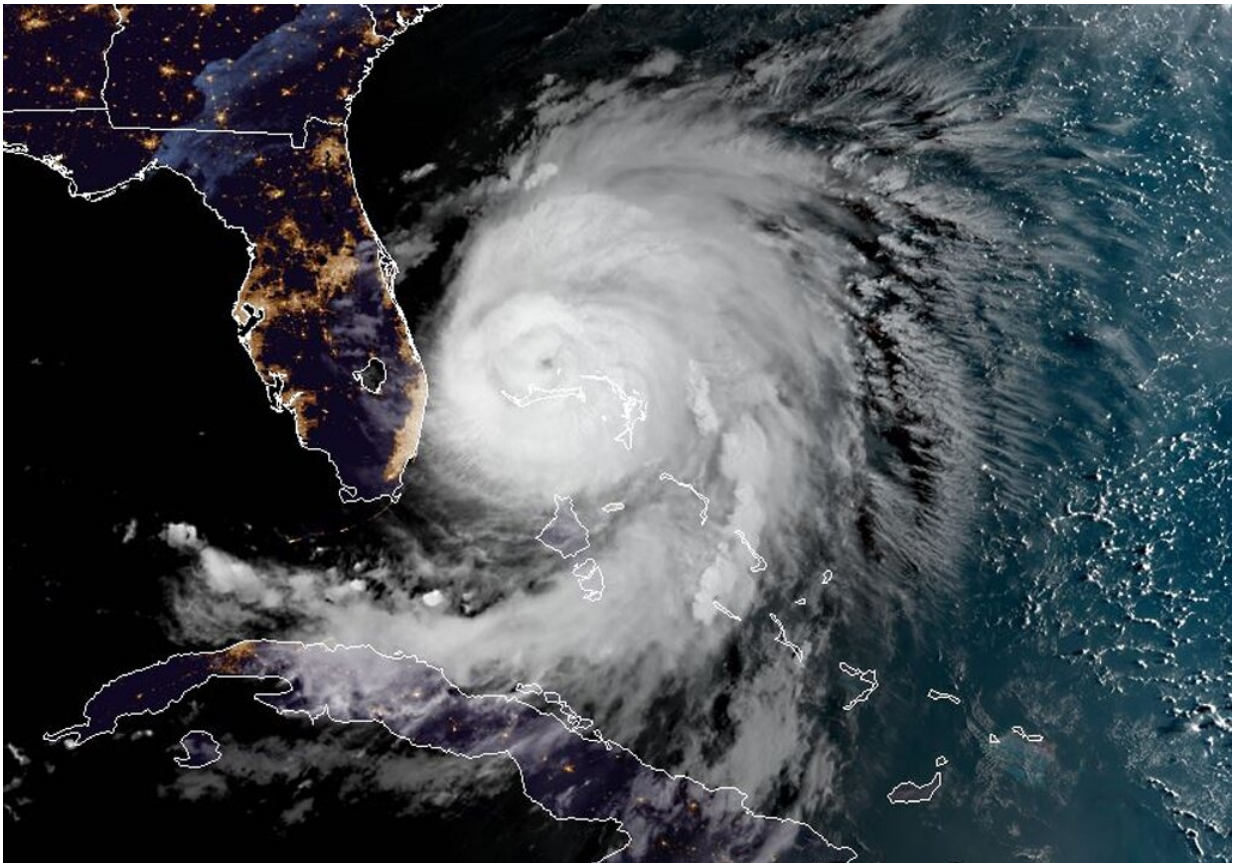


Hurricane Dorian moves towards US coast as seven killed in Bahamas

September 4 2019, by Cyril Julien



This satellite image obtained from NOAA/RAMMB shows Hurricane Dorian as it sits over the Bahamas

Hurricane Dorian churned towards the United States Wednesday after leaving seven dead in the Bahamas, where the prime minister said

terrified residents had endured "days of horror" at the hands of the monster storm.

Aerial footage showed scenes of catastrophic damage with hundreds of homes missing roofs, cars submerged or overturned, [widespread flooding](#) and boats reduced to matchwood.

Harrowing accounts emerged, with one survivor describing how he had watched his wife drown.

Announcing the updated death toll, Prime Minister Hubert Minnis warned the number would rise as he called Dorian "one of the greatest national crises in our country's history."

"Parts of Abaco are decimated. There's [severe flooding](#), there's severe damage to homes, businesses, other buildings and infrastructure," he said.

Bahamas residents "endured hours and days of horror, fearing for their lives and the lives of their loved ones," Minnis said.

As the storm moved away from the islands, more accounts of the suffering it inflicted emerged.

Crab fisherman Howard Armstrong described how the water flooded his home, coming up to his roof.

"I would imagine 21 feet (six meters) at least. We were doing all right until the water kept coming up and all the appliances were going around the house like a washing machine," he told CNN.



The runways at Grand Bahama International Airport were under water, complicating rescue efforts

"My poor little wife got hypothermia and she was standing on top of the kitchen cabinets until they disintegrated... I kept with her and she just drowned on me," said Armstrong, who eventually made it to his boat.

"Devastated"

The online Bahamas Press published video of flooding in the Rand Memorial Hospital in Freeport and said patients had been forced to evacuate the facility.

The US Coast Guard sent helicopters to Andros Island in the southern Bahamas to help with search and rescue operations as residents trapped in their homes by floodwaters issued distress calls.

But the runways at Grand Bahama International Airport in the island's largest city Freeport were under water, complicating rescue efforts.

The Miami-based National Hurricane Center (NHC) said the core of the storm "will move dangerously close to the Florida east [coast](#) and the Georgia coast through Wednesday night."



In this image courtesy of the US Coast Guard, boats are seen strewn across a marina in Andros Island, Bahamas

Dorian would move "near or over" the South and North Carolina coasts Thursday through Friday morning.

President Donald Trump warned people against complacency.

"The U.S. may be getting a little bit lucky with respect to Hurricane Dorian, but please don't let down your guard. As it heads up the coast, lots of very bad and unpredictable things can happen!" he tweeted.

"On the other hand, the Bahamas have been devastated," he wrote.

Dorian, which has dumped as much as 30 inches (76 centimeters) of rain on the Bahamas, was downgraded Tuesday morning to a Category 2 hurricane on the five-level wind scale.

But it is "expected to remain a powerful hurricane during the next few of days," the NHC said.



Dorian was downgraded Tuesday morning to a Category 2 hurricane on the five-level wind scale

A [state of emergency](#) has been declared in parts of the east coast for millions of US residents potentially in its path.

Late Tuesday, Trump tweeted: "I am getting the North Carolina Emergency Declaration completed and signed tonight. Hope you won't need it!"

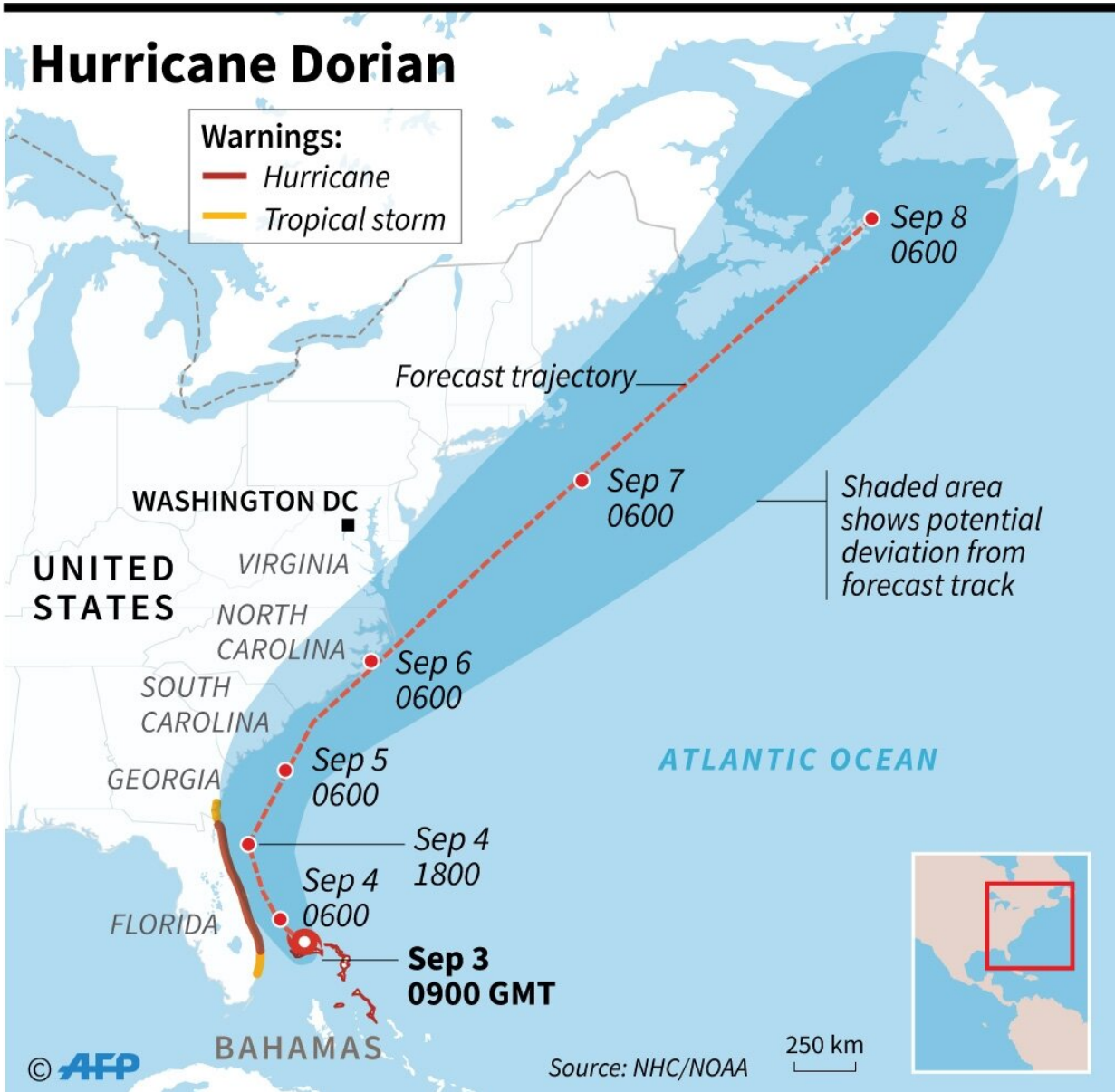
The Pentagon said 5,000 members of the National Guard and 2,700 active-duty troops were ready to help out if needed.

Some mandatory evacuations were lifted Tuesday afternoon for parts of

southern Florida, while further north, a large swathe of the state's coast—as well as that from mid-Georgia to southern North Carolina—remained under a hurricane warning.

"The images coming in from the Bahamas are gut-wrenching, but show exactly how fortunate Florida has been with this storm," said Jared Moskowitz, director of the Florida Division of Emergency Management, warning the state would still be impacted by Dorian.

"Throughout tonight and tomorrow, our state will still experience storm surge, high winds and other impacts along the coast, and I urge every Floridian to take these threats seriously," he said.



Map of the forecast path of Hurricane Dorian

At 11:00 pm (0300 GMT), Dorian was packing maximum sustained winds of 110 miles (175 kilometers per hour), the NHC said, as it moved towards the north-northwest at 8 mph (13 kph).

Meanwhile, Freeport resident Yasmin Rigby told AFP that "most of the island is still flooded" and it was "still raining with gusty winds."

"I am still getting calls from people calling for help," Rigby said. "I cannot move from my apartment. Thankfully we have sufficient supplies."

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