

Working Group 1 Monitoring and Detection Systems

IOC Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Tsunami and Other Coastal Hazards Warning System for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions

CARIBE EWS SEA LEVEL DATA AVAILABILITY

2021 Report

Abstract

Report of coastal sea level stations and DARTs contributing to the CARIBE EWS in 2021. In December 2021, of the 177 stations in the CARIBE EWS sea level inventory, data from 44 were available in support of tsunami warning.

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Acknowledgments

First and foremost, a special recognition to the sea level station operators and data analysts in the Caribbean and adjacent regions; they keep the stations running and create awareness on data issues. Our appreciation also goes out to Stuart Weinstein from the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center for generating the monthly reports and maps on sea level status and for his support and updates to Tide Tool sea level data analysis program. We also acknowledge Tjess Hernandez and Bart Vanhoorne from the IOC Sea Level Monitoring facility for maintaining this vital tool and clarification on station status and data formats. An acknowledgement also to the International Tsunami Information Center Caribbean Office (previously known as the Caribbean Tsunami Warning Program), especially Stephanie Soto, Dariel Carrion, Desiree Bayouth, and Christa von Hillebrandt-Andrade for tracking station status and preparing this report.

Summary

Real-time sea level data is one of the essential data streams of a tsunami warning system. Tsunami Warning Centers use seismic data to determine whether there is potential for a tsunami threat following an earthquake. Sea level data are also used to confirm the tsunami generation, forecast its severity or to declare the threat is over. In the case of tsunamis generated by a non-seismic source, the sea level data will be the primary tool for the detection and evaluation of the threat. The main type of sea level data used to detect tsunamis are coastal sea level stations and tsunameters (DARTs).

Since 2010, at the request of the Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Tsunami and Other Coastal Hazards Warning System for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions (ICG/CARIBE EWS), the Caribbean Office of the International Tsunami Information Center has maintained an inventory of the sea level stations used for tsunami monitoring and warning in the region. It shares and posts monthly maps on the status of sea level data the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center, periodically updates and posts the inventory of stations and their status and produces an annual report on sea level stations and data availability.

For this report, data availability is reported from the UNESCO/IOC Sea Level Station Monitoring Facility (SLMF) for the coastal sea level stations, the NOAA National Data Buoy Center in the case of the DARTs and the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center as the designated Tsunami Service Provider for the CARIBE EWS, DART and coastal sea level stations.

In December 2021, of the 177 stations in the CARIBE EWS sea level inventory, 44 were contributing data in real time for tsunami warning. This includes 3 of 6 DART stations. In contract, in December 2020 there were a total of 176 stations and 59 contributing, which was very similar to December 2019.

Introduction

Since 2010, the International Tsunami Information Center Caribbean Office (ITIC-CAR) has been reviewing the status of seismic and sea level stations contributing to the CARIBE EWS. In 2021, it transitioned from preparing monthly to biannual report on the status of coastal sea level stations and DARTs. The PTWC also prepared monthly maps on sea level data availability at their center and ITIC-CAR has posted these on caribewave.info as well as shared with CARIBE EWS WG1 and operators of sea level stations.

At its Fourteenth Session, the Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Tsunami and Other Coastal Hazards Warning System for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions, (ICG/CARIBE EWS-XV) in its Recommendation ICG/CARIBE-EWS-XIV.2 on Tsunami Monitoring and Detection Systems:

• Requested ITIC-CAR to continue producing up to date maps and data availability reports based on current sea level and seismic stations contributing to the CARIBE-EWS.

Furthermore, at its Fifteenth Session, which took place online 27–29 April 2021, the ICG/CARIBE EWS-XV) in its Recommendation ICG/CARIBE-EWS-XV.1 on Tsunami Monitoring and the Systems:

• Recommended a survey of sea-level network operator status by WG1 and ITIC-CAR with the goal of improving the up time of the sea-level network,

This report covers the sea level component of the recommendations.

Sea Level Stations Status Categories for 2021

In 2019, at the Fourteenth Session of the Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Tsunami and Other Coastal Hazards Warning System for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions, (ICG/CARIBE EWS-XIV) the status categories for sea level stations were updated to the following:

	Also known as Active on the SLMF. Data from these stations have been
	available for the past month in real time or near real time thru FTP or GTS
Cantributina	(GOES), are accessible to tsunami service providers and tsunami warning
Contributing Real Time	centers and can be accessed thru Tide Tool, IOC SLMF and other sites. For
	reports prepared thru 2018, once a station was contributing in real time, it
(Contributing	always remained with this status, irrespective of its operational status. There
RTX)	were stations that had not been contributing data in real time for months or
	even years. These non-contributing stations are now classified as down,
	being consistent with the SLMF.
	Stations that are understood to be operational through national reporting,
Existing	GLOSS or other mechanisms, but whose data are not shared and are not
	available in real time or near real time.
	These stations at one point were Contributing in Real Time but for a period
Down	of a month or longer have not been sharing data. There is the expectation
	that the data from the station will become available in the future.
Planned	Stations that Member States or Network Operators have indicated they have
Fiannea	funding for and are in the process of acquisition or installation.
	Station locations that the CARIBE EWS has indicated are of high priority
Gap	but for which no funding has been identified for their acquisition, installation,
	and operation.
Removed	Stations which have been removed or relocated.
Unknown	Stations for which there is no data on its current operational status.

This classification was used for the 2021 biannual sea level reports as well as this report. Figure 1 shows the status of the 171 coastal stations in the inventory at the end of 2021. Graph 1 shows the biannual number of sea level stations from December 2020, June 2021, and December 2021 for which data was contributing close to real time (Contributing RTX). According to the statistics, there has been a decline in the total number of Contributing RTX stations, from 59 stations contributing by the end of 2020 to 44 in December 2021. Graph 2 shows all the status categories used for each six-month term. The biannual reports/maps

were also posted to the ITIC-CAR website (caribewave.org). Appendix 1 has a table with the status of all the stations as of December 2021.

For the Contributing Real Time stations, the performance ratio statistics per station are based on the data in the UNESCO IOC Sea Level Monitoring Facility (SLMF) and the data from the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center (PTWC) was also used.

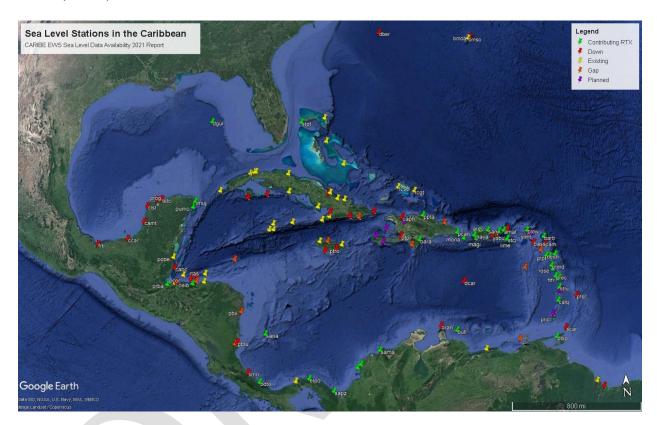
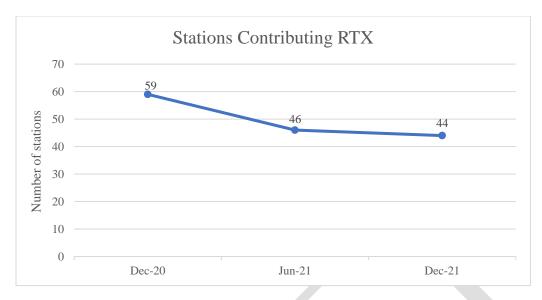
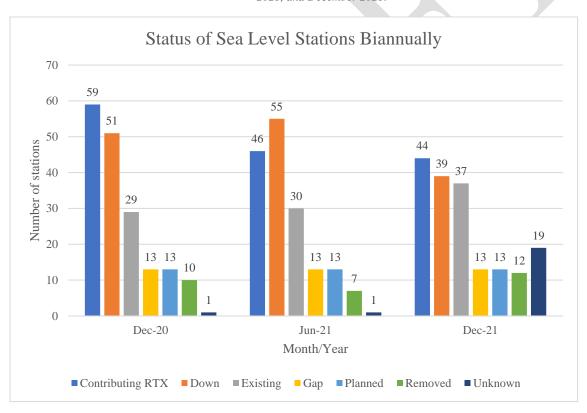


Figure 1. December 2021 Sea Level Stations Status.



Graph 1. Biannual variability of number of Contributing RTX coastal sea level stations and DARTs from December 2020, June 2021, and December 2021.



Graph 2. Station Status Biannually.

UNESCO - Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) Sea Level Monitoring Facility (SLMF)

The objectives of this service are:

- to provide information about the operational status of global and regional networks of real time sea level stations;
- to provide a display service for quick inspection of the raw data stream from individual stations.

This service and website (Figure 2) initially focused on operational monitoring of sea level measuring stations in Africa and was developed from collaboration between Flanders Marine Institute (VLIZ) and the ODINAFRICA project of IODE. The site has since been expanded to a global station monitoring service for real-time sea-level measuring stations that are part of IOC programs, i.e. (i) the Global Sea Level Observing System Core Network and (ii) the networks under the regional tsunami warning systems in the Indian Ocean (IOTWMS), Northeast Atlantic & Mediterranean (NEAMTWS), Pacific (PTWS) and the Caribbean (CARIBE-EWS).

In the case of the IOC SLMF, the performance ratios of the desired stations for specific time periods are accessed. A manual check is done to verify operational status and check inconsistent data. For example, if there is no sea level data, a station might appear as Contributing RTX on IOC SLMF if data on battery voltage is available. ITIC-CAR and the managers of the IOC SLMF are constantly comparing data.

A document with figures highlighting the variability of data availability per station and sensor in SLMF can also be accessed through the ITIC-CAR website. Figure 2 shows a screenshot of the map of coastal sea level stations in the IOC SLMF data base taken on February 18, 2022. The SLMF does not include DARTs, these will be discussed in another section of this report.

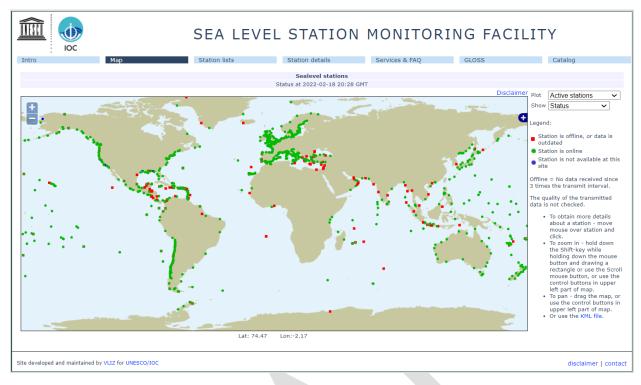


Figure 2. Screenshot of IOC Sea Level Monitoring Station Website on Map on February 18, 2022

Pacific Tsunami Warning Center (PTWC)

The Pacific Tsunami Warning Center (PTWC) operated by the United States National Weather Service of NOAA served from 2005-2015 as the interim Tsunami Warning Center. Since 2016 the PTWC is designated as a Tsunami Service Provider (TSP) for the Tsunami and Other Hazards Warning and Mitigation System for the Caribbean and Adjacent Seas (CARIBE-EWS), a subsidiary body of UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC).

Products issued by PTWC to countries around the Caribbean in support of this mission have evolved over time as supporting data, analysis methods, computational capabilities, and communications have all improved. The products developed by the PTWC are for only advisory for the CARIBE EWS Member State. National authorities are responsible for determining the level of tsunami alert within each Member State.

On 1 March 2016, the US NOAA Pacific Tsunami Warning Center (PTWC) commenced issuance of new forecast-based Enhanced Tsunami Products for all Caribbean countries. The PTWC PTWS and CARIBE-EWS products use the same forecast methodologies and the same graphical formats to depict the tsunami threat for the basin and coastal polygons.

The PTWC depends on sea level data to confirm, forecast and determine end of threat from tsunamis in the region. In the case of non-seismic generated tsunamis, sea level data are the main mechanism used to detect and inform on tsunami threat. Over the past years the PTWC has been developing an alarm event detection system based on sea level data.

Since November 2019, the PTWC data have been incorporated into the ITIC-CAR Sea Level biannual reports to compare the data reported by the IOC SLMF with the data from PTWC. The PTWC generated map for December 2021 is shown on Figure 3. The color legend is attached to the map; sea level stations are represented as circles while the DART stations are represented by triangles. These maps show the ranges of percentage availability of the *Contributing RTX* stations. *Down* stations are reported in black. *Removed*, *Planned, Gap* and *Unknown* stations are not included in the PTWC reports, nor do they appear on this map.



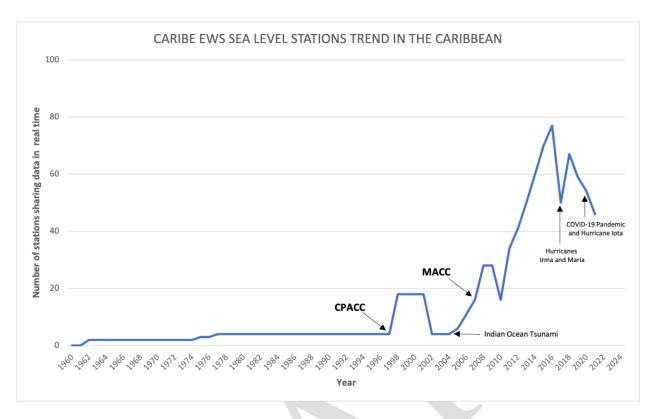
Figure 3. Regional and Expanded maps of status data from Sea Level and DART Station at PTWCs for December 2021. The percentage refers to the percentage of data received at the PTWC within 15 minutes of recording.

Contributing RTX Sea Level Stations

The number of Contributing RTX stations declined during the 2020 to 2021 period from 59 stations in December 2020 to 46 stations in June 2021 and the 44 in December 2021 (Table 1). Note that the usual change goes from *Contributing RTX* to *Down* and vice versa. There were a few stations that were removed, and others reinstalled. Four stations from the Cayman Islands as other stations were installed in and should be reflected as contributing data as of 2022. The evolution of sea level observations since 1960 is highlighted in Graph 3. After stady gains since 2010, the impacts of Hurricanes Irma, Maria, Eta and Iota and compounded by COVID 19 which limited technician travel is significant. In June 2021 several stations were taken out due to the impact of the hurricanes ETA and IOTA in the western Caribbean. Some other stations were recovered and new stations were installed in other parts of the region, if not the net decrease in data availability would have been greater.

Status by amount			
	Dec-20	Jun-21	Dec-21
Contributing RTX	59	46	44
Down	51	55	39
Existing	29	30	37
Gap	13	13	13
Planned	13	13	13
Removed	10	7	12
Unknown	1	1	19

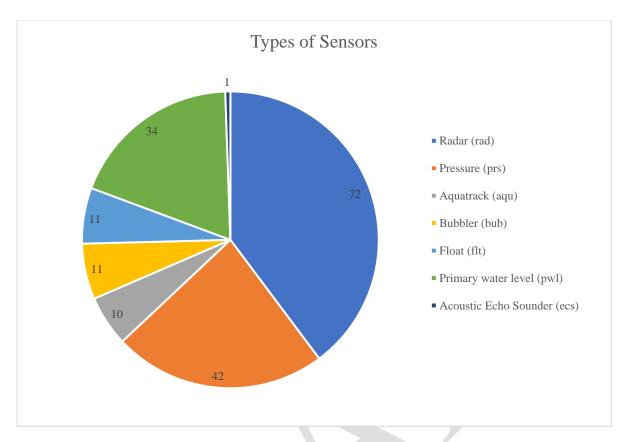
Table 1. Status of Sea Level Stations through 2021.



Graph 3. Historical projection of coastal sea level stations 1960 to present (2021).

Of the 177 stations being reported, 171 stations are coastal sea level stations and 6 of them are DART. The DARTs are going to be discussed in another section of this report. For the coastal Sea Level stations, each station has one or more sensors: radars (rad, ra1, ra2), pressure (prs, pr1, pr2), float (flt) or acoustic (Aquatrack, aqu). Graph 4 shows the distribution of types of sensors. For US stations, the nomenclature of primary water level sensor (pwl) or backup water level sensor (bwl) is used, depending on operational status, not on the type of sensors. In the past, the pwl were mostly Aquatrack sensors, but these have been replaced with radar sensors, while bwl sensors are bubblers or pressure sensors.

For December 2021, 44 stations were contributing RTX while 39 stations were down. The other 94 stations are existing (data not available), down, planned, unknown or represent gaps in monitoring.



Graph 4. Types of sensors

DART

To facilitate early detection of tsunamis and to acquire data critical to real-time forecasts, NOAA operates Deep-ocean Assessment and Reporting of Tsunami (DART®) stations at sites in regions with a history of generating destructive tsunamis. NOAA completed the original 6-buoy operational array (map of original six stations) in 2001 and expanded to a full network of 39 stations in March 2008. See <u>DART®</u> development for more info. Since 2008 there have been changes of locations and upgraded technology.

The National Data Buoy Center (NDBC) currently is responsible for the operation of the DARTs.

The DARTs in the Caribbean and Atlantic and included in the report are: Southeast Block Canyon (DART 44402), Sable Island Bank (DART 44403), Southwest Bermuda (DART 41425), South of Puerto Rico (DART 42407), Gulf of Mexico (DART 42409), Dart Wave Glider Station, West Florida Area (DART 42429), North of St. Thomas (DART 41421) and North of Santo Domingo (DART 41420). At the endo of 2021 the only stations reporting data online were the DARTs in the Gulf of Mexico and two off north eastern US (Figures 4 and 50. Graph 5 illustrates the variability of availability of DART data between December 2020 and 2021.

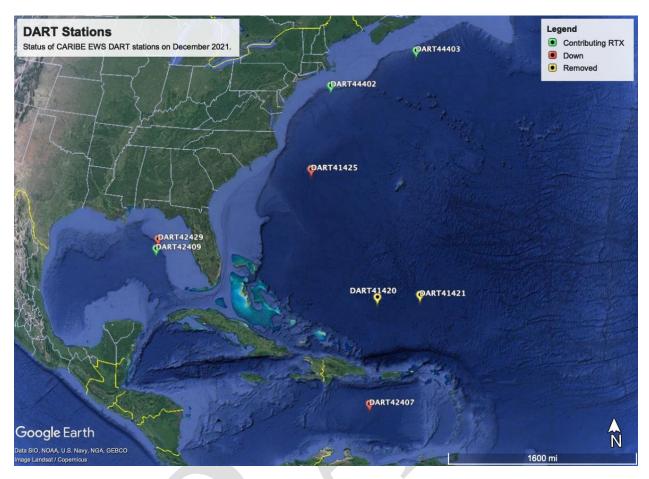


Figure 4. Map of DART stations for December 2021.

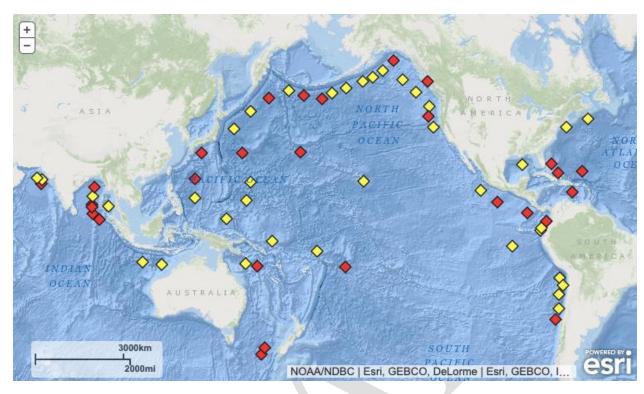
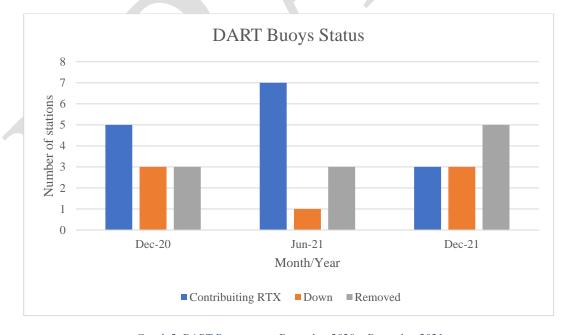


Figure 5. Originally developed by NOAA, as part of the U.S. National Tsunami Hazard Mitigation Program (NTHMP), the DART® Project was an effort to maintain and improve the capability for the early detection and real-time reporting of tsunamis in the open ocean.¹



Graph 5. DART Buoys status December 2020 – December 2021

¹ https://www.ndbc.noaa.gov/dart/dart.shtml

Appendix List

Appendix A: Sea Level Station List and Status 2021



Appendix A: Sea Level Stations 2021

Appenuix A. Seu Level Suulons 2021		
Station name	Country	Status
Blowing Point	Anguilla	Contributing RTX
Barbuda	Antigua and Barbuda	Contributing RTX
Parham (Camp Blizard), Antigua	Antigua and Barbuda	Down
Oranjestad	Aruba	Down
Settlement Point	Bahamas	Contributing RTX
Lee Stocking Island, Exuma	Bahamas	Existing
Matthew Town, Inagua	Bahamas	Existing
Nassau Harbour, New Providence	Bahamas	Existing
Treasure Cay, Abaco	Bahamas	Existing
Bridgetown Port	Barbados	Unknown
Port St. Charles	Barbados	Down
Pelican Fort	Barbados	Removed
Conset Bay	Barbados	Removed
Speightstown	Barbados	Removed
Carrie Bow Cay	Belize	Down
Belize City	Belize	Planned
Belize	Belize	Existing
Port of Belize	Belize	Down
St. Georges Cruice Pier	Bermuda	Existing
St. Georges Island / Esso Pier	Bermuda	Existing
Bermuda Biological Station	Bermuda	Down
Bermuda Somerset	Bermuda	Existing
Road Town Harbor, Tortola	British Virgin Islands	Down
Cayman Brac	Cayman Islands	Existing
George Town	Cayman Islands	Existing
Gun Bay	Cayman Islands	Existing
Little Cayman	Cayman Islands	Existing
Cartagena	Colombia	Contributing RTX
San Andres	Colombia	Contributing RTX
Santa Marta	Colombia	Contributing RTX
Capurganá	Colombia	Removed
Sapzurro	Colombia	Contributing RTX
Islas del Rosario	Colombia	Removed
Isla Naval	Colombia	Contributing RTX
Coveñas	Colombia	Unknown
Puerto Estrella	Colombia	Unknown
Limón	Costa Rica	Down
Cabo Cruz	Cuba	Existing
Cabo San Antonio - Morros de Piedra	Cuba	Existing
Gibara	Cuba	Existing
Isabela de Sagua	Cuba	Existing
		6

Manzanillo	Cuba	Down
Guantanamo	Cuba	Gap
Casilda	Cuba	Existing
Maisí	Cuba	Down
Mariel Boca	Cuba	Existing
Bahia de la Habana	Cuba	Existing
Nuevitas Punta de Practicos	Cuba	Existing
Puerto Padre	Cuba	Existing
Nuevitas Bufaderos	Cuba	Down
Siboney	Cuba	Existing
Santiago de Cuba	Cuba	Down
Santa Cruz del Sur	Cuba	Existing
Carapachibey	Cuba	Down
Cayo Loco	Cuba	Existing
Cayo Largo	Cuba	Down
La Coloma	Cuba	Existing
Willemstad	Curacao	Removed
Bullen Bay (Replaces Willemstad)	Curacao	Contributing RTX
Portsmouth	Dominica	Planned
Marigot	Dominica	Unknown
Roseau	Dominica	Contributing RTX
Portsmouth	Dominica	Contributing RTX
Barahona	Dominican Republic	Contributing RTX
Puerto Caucedo/San Andres/Santo	Dominican Republic	Unknown
Domingo		
Puerto Plata	Dominican Republic	Contributing RTX
Punta Cana	Dominican Republic	Contributing RTX
Bahía de Luperón	Dominican Republic	Gap
Bahía de Samaná	Dominican Republic	Gap
Bayahibe	Dominican Republic	Gap
Pedernales	Dominican Republic	Gap
Puerto de Santo Domingo	Dominican Republic	Removed
Ile Royale	French Guiana	Unknown
Prickly Bay	Grenada	Contributing RTX
Sauteurs	Grenada	Planned
The Sisters Island	Grenada	Planned
Pointe à Pitre	Guadeloupe	Contributing RTX
Deshaies Harbour	Guadeloupe	Contributing RTX
La Désirade Island, Grande Anse	Guadeloupe	Contributing RTX
Marina Harbour	Customals	Containuting DTV
Puerto Barrios Harbour Master Boathouse	Guatemala	Contributing RTX
	Guyana	Existing
Market Place Georgetown	Guyana	Existing

Rosignol	Guyana	Down
Parika	Guyana	Unknown
Cap Haitien	Haiti	Down
Jacmel	Haiti	Unknown
Port au Prince	Haiti	Down
Gonaives	Haiti	Planned
Port de Paix	Haiti	Planned
Jeremie	Haiti	Planned
St. Louis du Sud	Haiti	Planned
Guanaja Island	Honduras	Existing
Omoa	Honduras	
Puerto Cortes	Honduras	Existing Down
	Honduras	
Puerto De Castilla, Trujillo		Existing
Roatan N	Honduras	Existing
Punta Gorda Harbor, Roatan S	Honduras	Down
Tela Harbor	Honduras	Unknown
Utila Island	Honduras	Down
Cabotaje Harbor, La Ceiba	Honduras	Contributing RTX
Cochino Pequeño	Honduras	Gap
Swan Island	Honduras	Gap
Port Royal	Jamaica	Down
Montego Bay	Jamaica	Existing
Port Antonio	Jamaica	Existing
Discovery Bay, Jamaica	Jamaica	Gap
Alligator Pond	Jamaica	Down
Fort de France Harbour	Martinique	Contributing RTX
Le Precheur Harbour	Martinique	Contributing RTX
Le Robert	Martinique	Contributing RTX
Alvarado	Mexico	Unknown
Celestun	Mexico	Down
Ciudad del Carmen	Mexico	Down
Lerma Campeche	Mexico	Down
Frontera	Mexico	Down
Isla Mujeres	Mexico	Contributing RTX
Progreso	Mexico	Down
Puerto Morelos, Q. R.	Mexico	Contributing RTX
Sanchez Magallanes	Mexico	Unknown
Sisal	Mexico	Unknown
Tuxpan	Mexico	Unknown
Telchac	Mexico	Down
Veracruz	Mexico	Unknown
Montserrat	Montserrat	Gap
Corn Island	Nicaragua	Unknown

			1
Blue Fields	Nicaragua	Gap	
Puerto Bilwi	Nicaragua	Down	
Puerto Cabezas	Nicaragua	Gap	
Puerto El Bluff	Nicaragua	Down	
El Porvenir	Panama	Contributing RTX	
Bocas del Toro	Panama	Contributing RTX	
Galeta Point	Panama	Existing	
Limon Bay (replaced Coco Solo)	Panama	Existing	
Aguadilla	Puerto Rico	Removed	
Arecibo	Puerto Rico	Contributing RTX	
Culebra Island	Puerto Rico	Contributing RTX	
Fajardo	Puerto Rico	Unknown	
Isabel II, Vieques	Puerto Rico	Down	
La Esperanza, Vieques	Puerto Rico	Contributing RTX	
Magueyes Island	Puerto Rico	Contributing RTX	
Мауадüеz	Puerto Rico	Contributing RTX	
Mona Island	Puerto Rico	Contributing RTX	
San Juan	Puerto Rico	Contributing RTX	
Yabucoa	Puerto Rico	Down	
Peñuelas	Puerto Rico	Removed	
Caja de Muertos	Puerto Rico	Removed	
Baseterre (Coast Guard Base)	St. Kitts & Nevis	Down	
Dennery Harbour	St. Lucia	Planned	
Soufriere	St. Lucia	Planned	
Vieux Fort Bay	St. Lucia	Planned	
Ganter's Bay	St. Lucia	Contributing RTX	
Calliaqua (Coast Guard Base)	St. Vincent & the	Contributing RTX	
•	Grenadines		
Gustavia	St. Barthelemy	Planned	
Saint Martin Island	St. Martin	Down	
Cedros Bay	Trinidad and Tobago	Unknown	
Charlotteville	Trinidad and Tobago	Unknown	
Point Fortin	Trinidad and Tobago	<u>Unknown</u>	
Port Of Spain	Trinidad and Tobago	Contributing RTX	
Scarborough	Trinidad and Tobago	Down	
Toco Trinidad	Trinidad and Tobago	Unknown	
Point Galeota	Trinidad and Tobago	Removed	
Point a Pierre	Trinidad and Tobago	Planned	
Grand Turk	Turks and Caicos	Existing	
Sapodilla Bay, Providenciales	Turks and Caicos	Existing	
Charlotte Amalie, St. Thomas	USVI	Contributing RTX	
Christiansted Harbor, St. Croix	USVI	Contributing RTX	
Lameshur Bay, St. John	USVI	Contributing RTX	
·			i .

Lime Tree Bay, St. Croix Aves Island Punta Arenas, Margarita Island La Guaira

USVI	Contributing RTX
Venezuela	Gap
Venezuela	Gap
Venezuela	Existing

