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*'Understanding volcanoes and society: the key for risk mitigation'*



## **Procedures for early warning of volcanic activity utilised in the English-speaking eastern Caribbean.**

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One of the primary functions of The UWI Seismic Research Centre is to provide early warning of volcanic activity to vulnerable communities in the English-speaking Eastern Caribbean. To facilitate this the Centre maintains a volcano monitoring network, complemented by a program of hazard mapping and basic geologic investigation designed to improve the understanding of volcanic systems in the region. The Centre uses a set of procedures for situations of unrest that ensures an appropriate response by both scientists and civil authorities. Activity at each volcanic centre is defined by an alert level table that summarises the state of activity at that volcano and provides a list of recommended actions to be taken by the civil authorities and the scientific team at each level of alert. Data from volcano monitoring sites is continuously analysed by the scientific team to determine whether there are any changes in activity above (or below) the pre-existing level. Based on this analysis the scientific team recommends that a certain level of alert be maintained for the volcanic centre. This recommendation is given to the National Disaster Coordinator in the respective island who is the first point of contact between the scientific team and the local authorities. If activity continues to increase action is taken as defined in the alert level table and it may be necessary to provide a direct briefing to the Government. The response of the scientific team usually involves an increase in the level of monitoring and eventually the deployment of a scientific team to the island in question. Throughout the development of the crisis extensive use is made of all aspects of the media (including social media), to relay information on the volcano. The entire system is currently under review.