

**LA SOUFRIÈRE VOLCANO: INFORMATION NOTE #4 – FRIDAY 9<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2021**



Image: Eruption at La Soufrière Volcano, St. Vincent & the Grenadines  
Source: UWI Seismic Research Centre ([www.uwiseismic.com](http://www.uwiseismic.com))

**MESSAGE:**

La Soufriere has moved into an explosive state as of the morning of April 9<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Reports from the St. Vincent & the Grenadines' (SVG) National Emergency Management Organisation (NEMO) indicate that the 4049 ft volcano has erupted and ordered residents to leave the surround areas. NEMO also informed that the ash plume from the eruption has reached 20,000ft and was drifting eastwards into the Atlantic Ocean.

**ALERT LEVEL:**

Red

**IMMEDIATE EVACUATION ORDERS HAVE BEEN ISSUED FOR RESIDENTS LOCATED IN THE RED ZONE**

**SITUATION:**

Since our previous information note on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> February 2021, the alert level of the La Soufrière Volcano has now been upgraded to Red. During a press conference held on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2021, Prime Minister Dr. Ralph Gonsalves issued a mandatory evacuation order for approximately 1600 residents living in the northern part of the island, after NEMO warned that there was a '*substantial prospect of disaster*' due to La Soufriere's seismic activity. Dr. Gonsalves further announced that the red zone encompassed the northwest and northeast sections of the island. In an earlier statement, Dr. Erouscilla Joseph, Director of the University of the West Indies (UWI) Seismic Research Centre (SRC) warned that further eruptions could be imminent.

Two (2) Royal Caribbean and two (2) cruise ships are expected to arrive on Friday 9<sup>th</sup> April 2021 to transport evacuees to other Caribbean Islands, where they will be granted temporary refuge. To date, the islands of St. Lucia, Grenada, Barbados, and Antigua have agreed to accept evacuees. Prime Minister Gonsalves has said that evacuees would need to be vaccinated before boarding the cruise ships or granted refuge in the other islands.

**BACKGROUND:**

The most recent dome building (effusive) eruption began on December 27<sup>th</sup>, 2020 and visual observations on December 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020 confirmed that high temperatures detected by satellites used to track fires were in fact caused by magma reaching the surface. Also, the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) has since activated the Regional Response Mechanism comprising a group of regional experts to support the ongoing eruption in St. Vincent.

A 4-person team comprising of senior scientists and technicians from UWI SRC and the Montserrat Volcano Observatory (MVO) is currently on island. This team is led by Professor Richard Robertson of the UWI SRC and is based at the Belmont Observatory, while working closely with local authorities (National Emergency Management Organisation and Soufriere Monitoring Unit) to monitor the volcano.

During the past fourteen (14) days, two (2) earthquakes have been recorded which both impacted the La Soufriere Volcano. The first earthquake occurred 78 km east of Kingstown St. Vincent & the Grenadines, on March 29<sup>th</sup> at 3:07 a.m. AST and recorded a magnitude of 3.4. The second earthquake occurred 67 km east of Castries, St. Lucia, on April 7<sup>th</sup> at 11:20 p.m. AST and recorded a magnitude of 2.4.

**RED ALERT LEVEL:**

A Red Level Alert indicates that eruption is in progress or may occur without further warning.

**MORE INFORMATION:**

Visit the [UWI Seismic Research Centre](#) webpage for more information on the La Soufrière volcanic activity.

**SOURCES:**

*Effusive Eruption at La Soufrière Volcano, St. Vincent, CDEMA Situation Report #5, as of 8 p.m. (AST) on February 9, 2021.*

*La Soufriere Eruption Media Fact Sheet Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2021, The University of the West Indies, Seismic Research Centre. (<https://rb.gy/6o3sla>)*

*Latest Earthquakes Near Soufriere St. Vincent Volcano Past 14 Days, Volcano Discovery. (<https://www.volcanodiscovery.com/soufriere-st-vincent-earthquakes.html>)*

*La Soufriere Volcano on Caribbean St. Vincent Island Erupts as Thousands Evacuate, ABC 7 News. (<https://abc7news.com/volcano-in-st-vincent-erupts-as-thousands-evacuate-/10501485/>)*

*NEMO SVG Confirms an Explosive Eruption at La Soufriere, Loop News Barbados. (<https://www.loopnewsbarbados.com/content/nemo-svg-confirms-explosive-eruption-la-soufriere>)*



*St. Vincent Rocked by Explosive Eruption at La Soufriere Volcano, The Guardian.*  
(<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2021/apr/09/st-vincent-volcano-eruption>)