



Barbados 2016 Crime & Safety Report

Travel Health and Safety; Transportation Security; Stolen items; Theft; Drug Trafficking; Hotels; Burglary; Cyber; Aviation; Hurricanes; Earthquakes; Volcanoes; Intellectual Property Rights Infringement

Western Hemisphere > Antigua and Barbuda; Western Hemisphere > Barbados; Western Hemisphere > Barbados > Bridgetown; Western Hemisphere > British Virgin Islands; Western Hemisphere > Dominica; Western Hemisphere > St. Kitts and Nevis; Western Hemisphere > St. Lucia; Western Hemisphere > St. Vincent and the Grenadines

5/26/2016

Overall Crime and Safety Situation

Post Crime Rating: High

Crime Threats

Crime is a major concern throughout the Eastern Caribbean. Americans visiting the Eastern Caribbean are not targeted for crime to a greater extent than other foreigners. Robberies and other crimes committed in high traffic business areas are usually opportunistic in nature. A common concern is visitor harassment. Individuals and groups in tourist areas will offer a variety of items for sale, including drugs. The news media in Barbados is reluctant to report criminal incidents against visitors that could have a negative impact on the tourism industry.

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Resorts, hotels, and other businesses that cater to tourists provide additional security measures. Some examples are: walled-in compounds with access controls, private security staff, background checks on employees, and hired drivers for safe transport of guests.

Below are notable crime statistics for the past three years:

Country

Homicides

Robberies

2015

2014

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2013

2015

2014

2013

Antigua & Barbuda

5

13

12

111

238

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155

Barbados

31

21

23

300

252

351

Dominica

12

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9

12

85

85

52

Grenada

6

8

6

76

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64

90

St. Kitts & Nevis

27

24

21

57

52

56

St. Lucia

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28

30

34

362

307

215

St. Vincent & the Grenadines

24

38

0



82

80

0

Cybersecurity Issues

Cyber security incidents continue to rise worldwide. Cyber security attacks are frequently directed at public institutions, financial institutions, and critical infrastructure. ATM skimming has also been on the rise in the Caribbean. Many of the Eastern Caribbean police forces are ill-equipped to prevent and investigate these types of attacks and intrusions. During 2015, the Royal Barbados Police Force (RBPF) experienced several attacks against its website, and government websites were targets of attacks in St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Antigua and Barbuda.

Transportation-Safety Situation

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Road Safety and Road Conditions

Road conditions on the main coastal highways in Barbados and other Eastern Caribbean islands are adequate but may deteriorate rapidly on smaller roads in the interior. Smaller roads are often narrow with poor visibility, particularly in curves. These roads are also generally not marked, and informal signs at road junctions, particularly on small inland roads, are often the only way to find your way to your destination.

Public Transportation Conditions

There is a public transportation system owned and operated by the government of Barbados. These big, blue and yellow buses operate on a routine schedule. Buses are required to stop only at designated stops on assigned routes, which are clearly marked.

There are also smaller, privately owned buses. These transit buses are frequently involved in vehicle accidents, as they often drive at a high rate of speed and are known to stop without notice to pick-up or drop-off passengers.

Use of licensed taxis is encouraged. Negotiate the price before the trip to avoid being charged inflated fares.

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Aviation/Airport Conditions

Grantley Adams Airport (BGI) is the international airport of Barbados. BGI is the only designated port of entry for persons arriving/departing by air and operates as a major gateway to the Eastern Caribbean. There are over 35 flights a week departing from the various airports in the U.S. to Barbados that carry over 200,000 passengers a year. BGI does not maintain sufficient screening technology for passengers, carry-on bags, checked baggage, or liquids. The Embassy and relevant U.S. agencies continue to work with BGI and other international Caribbean airports to strengthen their security posture.

Terrorism Threat

Post Terrorism Rating: Low

Local, Regional, and International Terrorism Threats/Concerns

Though specific terrorism reporting from the Eastern Caribbean remains relatively low, the region has several vulnerabilities that could be exploited by terrorist elements, notably: porous borders, established narcotic/alien smuggling routes, and limited law enforcement counter-terrorism capabilities. The exploitation of one of these vulnerabilities could have serious implications for U.S. border security, American businesses based in the Caribbean, and the Caribbean tourism trade in general. The Embassy continues to work with its host nation counterparts to develop and implement counter-terrorism strategies and capabilities.

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Political, Economic, Religious, and Ethnic Violence

The islands of the Eastern Caribbean are peaceful and have experienced little political violence or revolution. The political climates are stable with little threat of political violence. The labor riots of the 1930s were the last major event to transcend the entire Eastern Caribbean. The last major political incident in the Eastern Caribbean occurred in 1983 when a military coup took place in Grenada, leading to a U.S. led military intervention.

Post Political Violence Rating: Low

Civil Unrest

Violent public protests and demonstrations are practically non-existent. Very little civil unrest occurs on the islands. Most unrest is connected to labor issues, which are usually settled by union and government intervention.

Post-specific Concerns

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Environmental Hazards

The Eastern Caribbean is occasionally victim to tropical storms and hurricanes between June-November.

Dominica sustained damage to its infrastructure when Tropical Storm Erika hit on August 27, 2015.

Barbados was hit by Hurricane Tomas in November 2010, the most significant hurricane since 1955.

The most recent, notable earthquake in the region occurred on July 16, 2015, and struck the northeast part of the island. The 5.7 magnitude earthquake caused no reported damage or casualties and was felt on St. Vincent, the Grenadines, and Martinique. According to the U.S. Geological Survey, the last significant earthquake in the region occurred on November 29, 2007, 30 miles northwest of Martinique. The 7.4 magnitude earthquake caused one fatality.

Grenada has the only known submarine volcano (Kick 'em Jenny) in the region, located five miles north of the mainland. The first recorded eruption occurred in 1939. Studies dating back to 1972 indicate that minor eruptions have been occurring on a fairly regular basis and that the summit of the volcano is growing at a rate of approximately four meters (13 feet) per year. The potential hazard of Kick 'em Jenny lies in the form of a tsunami, should a major, underwater volcanic eruption occur.

Economic Espionage/Intellectual Property Thefts

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Strong intellectual property regulation is foreign to the Caribbean, and enforcement is relatively weak.

Privacy Concerns

There is relatively low risk to privacy concerns in the Eastern Caribbean; however, the growth of Internet usage and social media has raised concerns about privacy of their citizens. Individuals are reminded to be careful with the information they share online.

Drug-related Crimes

Many tourists report being harassed by individuals attempting to sell illegal narcotics. All Eastern Caribbean nations and territories have laws prohibiting the purchase, possession, transportation, sale, or use of illegal substances; but effective law enforcement is somewhat reduced by lack of resources.

While local drug dealers do get involved in shootings, this type of activity is localized and not directed at innocent citizens. The Eastern Caribbean countries are primarily drug transshipment points from South America (Peru, Colombia, Bolivia, Venezuela) to Europe, West Africa, British Virgin Islands, U.S. Virgin Islands, Puerto Rico, and the U.S.

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Kidnapping Threat

Below are kidnapping statistics for the past three years:

2015

2014

2013

Antigua & Barbuda

2

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1

2

Barbados

14

3

8

Dominica

0

3



6

Grenada

0

0

0

St. Kitts & Nevis

2

0

0

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St. Lucia

12

6

6

St. Vincent & the Grenadines

6

5

0

Police Response

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Regional police forces usually cooperate with U.S. counterparts. Generally, uniformed police are adequate to have an influence on crime deterrence, but police response to alarms or emergency calls are sometimes below U.S. standard. Response time to law enforcement and security requests can be quite slow due to inadequate funding, lack of equipment/training, and staffing shortages. Police performance and conduct varies from poor to acceptable in professionalism and training, and regional police organizations have definite resource/manpower limitations that inhibit their deterrence and response effectiveness.

American citizens who reside in the Eastern Caribbean do not always enjoy the same level of police protection that regional governments provide to tourist areas.

The level of professionalism and quality of service can vary, and the level of protection is directly proportional to its impact on the tourist trade. Areas frequented by tourists command a more visible police presence than other parts of the island. Uniformed police presence is higher in residential and business areas frequented by tourists. Police stations and outposts are strategically located in those areas. The Royal Barbados Police Force (RBPF) response in these areas is usually timely and efficient, but response delays to the non-tourist, less populated, and rural areas of the islands can be significant. However, the RBPF enjoys comparatively greater resources than its Eastern Caribbean neighbors.

How to Handle Incidents of Police Detention or Harassment

Any American citizen detained or harassed by police or other security services should immediately contact American Citizen Services (ACS) at the U.S. Embassy Bridgetown during business hours, or the U.S. Embassy duty officer during non-business hours or holidays. Both may be reached at Tel: 1-246-227-4000 (24/7). Consular Officers at the U.S. Embassy are not

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substitutes for legal counsel, but they do routinely check on the well-being of incarcerated American citizens and work to ensure that American citizens have access to legal counsel, if desired, and are treated fairly in accordance with local and international laws.

Crime Victim Assistance

For after-hours emergencies, call 1-246-227-4000 and ask for the duty officer. For emergencies during business hours, call 1-246-227-4000 and ask for the American Citizens Services Unit. For routine inquiries, call 1-246-227-4193 between the hours of 2 p.m. and 4 p.m., Monday through Friday (excluding U.S. and Barbados holidays). You may also send us an email at BridgetownACS@state.gov or reach us by fax at 1-246-431-0179.

Police/Security Agencies

Founded in 1987, the Association of Caribbean Commissioners of Police (ACCP) promotes and facilitates law enforcement within 24 Caribbean countries. The ACCP promotes regional cooperation to fight crime through:

- 1) Collaboration to develop and implement policing strategies, systems, and procedures;
- 2) Developing the professional and technical skills of police officers; and
- 3) Taking proactive measures to prevent crime and improve police community relations.

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Medical Emergencies

Ambulance service in Barbados can be slow; therefore, for minor incidents it is advised to proceed immediately to the emergency room at the FMH Emergency Medical Clinic or Sandy Crest Medical Center. In the event of a major accident/emergency, await the arrival of Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH) ambulance service or contact Island Care ambulance service at (246) 435-9425. There are six ambulances at the QEH and two at the Barbados Defense Force. Ambulance crews are allowed to perform CPR, and they are trained to administer IVs and other advanced life support services.

Ambulance Service: 311

Contact Information for Recommended Hospitals/Clinics

The U.S. Embassy in Barbados maintains lists of medical facilities and physicians by country for American citizens needing medical care at: http://barbados.usembassy.gov/med_phy.html.

For emergency care, please see the Tricare-approved facilities below:

FMH Emergency Medical Clinic

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Tel:(246) 228-6121 or (246) 228-6120.

Address: 3rd Avenue, Belleville, St. Michael.

Hours: 8:00 am-12:00am. The last patient is taken at 11:30 pm.

Sandy Crest Medical Center

Tel: (246) 419-4911

Address: Sunset Crest, St. James

Hours: 24-hr service. It is wise to call before going, especially after midnight.

Both FMH and Sandy Crest will refer cases beyond their capabilities to QEH in Bridgetown. They do not have overnight facilities for extended medical care.

Queen Elizabeth Hospital (QEH) (Tel: (246) 436-6450) is a 600-bed facility. It has the capacity to manage major trauma, medical, and obstetric emergencies. QEH is the only major trauma facility in Barbados with a 24-hour accident and emergency room. The hospital has on-staff physicians and surgeons of almost all specialties. Be prepared for long waits in the emergency room for minor emergencies; such cases are dealt with in priority order based on severity.

Available Air Ambulance Services

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Air Ambulance Professionals

Tel: 1-800-752-4195 or (954)-730-9300

Website: www.airambulanceprof.com

CDC Country-specific Vaccination and Health Guidance

For vaccine and health guidance, please visit the CDC at:
http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/barbados?s_cid=ncezid-dgmq-travel-singgle-001.

OSAC Country Council Information

In April 2015, the Regional Security Office re-established the OSAC Country Council for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean. For additional information on the Country Council, please visit <https://www.osac.gov>. To reach OSAC's Western Hemisphere team, please email OSACWHA@state.gov.

U.S. Embassy Location and Contact Information

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Embassy Address and Hours of Operation

U.S. Embassy of Barbados, the Eastern Caribbean, and the OECS

Wilkey Business Park

Wilkey

St. Michael BB 14006

Barbados, W.I.

Embassy Contact Numbers

Embassy Main: (246) 227-4100

Marine Post One: (246) 227-4066

Regional Security Office: (246) 227-4130

Consular Affairs: (246) 227-4193

Website: <http://barbados.usembassy.gov/>

Consular coverage for multi-post countries

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U.S. Embassy Bridgetown responsibility extends to seven independent nations of the Eastern Caribbean: Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Dominica, Grenada, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Lucia, and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

Consular American Citizen Services also cover three British overseas territories -- Anguilla, Montserrat, and the British Virgin Islands -- and four French islands -- Martinique, St. Barthelemy, St. Martin, and Guadeloupe.

Embassy Guidance

American citizen travelers should enroll in the Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP) in order to receive messages from the Embassy about safety and security. Travelers can enroll by visiting <https://step.state.gov/step>. It is also recommended that travelers consult the Country Specific Information for Barbados and the Eastern Caribbean and any Travel Warnings located on the same website.

Tips on How to Avoid Becoming a Victim

Situational Awareness Best Practices

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In general, travel outside of tourist areas should be undertaken with caution, especially at night, due to the prevalence of unmarked and poorly illuminated roads. Be vigilant when using public telephones or ATMs, especially those located near roadsides or in secluded areas. Wearing expensive jewelry, carrying expensive objects, or carrying large amounts of cash should be avoided.

Visitors should use caution in dealing with beach merchants. While at the beach, visitors should safeguard valuables. Although hotels and resorts are generally safe, loss of unattended items is possible. Hotel burglaries may occur in less reputable hotels, and all valuables should be locked in room safes when possible.

Keep doors and windows locked especially at night. Burglaries of residences are generally achieved by exploiting an existing vulnerability (unlocked doors/windows, substandard door/window grilles, and poor/non-existent outdoor lighting).

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