

YachtAid Global – Operation Evergreen - Dorothea III - Turks and Caicos After Action Report - By Captain John Crupi

Week of Sept. 4th, 2017:

Hurricane Irma was clearing the Caribbean with a track through the Turks and Caicos and possibly a direct hit to South Florida as a possible Category 5 hurricane. With so many friends and family who would be affected by this catastrophic storm, there wasn't much of a question as to whether we should stop and provide aid, rather it was how and where. This is when we reached out to YachtAid Global who provided us with the guidance and information to direct our efforts properly. At the time we were anchored in Pinas Bay, Panama with the owner on board and brainstorming ideas of what kind of provisions we could gather to be most effective, how we could gather them, and who would be most affected by our aid efforts. YachtAid Global provided us with objective information and reports as to what needs these islands required and facilitated direct communication with teams on the ground.

Week of Sept. 11th, 2017:

After several brainstorming sessions, contact was made through YAG to local government officials, NGOs, and depots housing disaster relief cargo and humanitarian aid. D3 utilized channels of communication through their local agent, Francis Zeimetz and his agency Panama Agencies, social media, yacht publications in the United States, and other local Panamanian contacts.

Week of Sept. 16th, 2017:

Crew departed to Balboa Yacht Club with Panama Agencies at 0900 to purchase items from the local PriceMart with donated money from their contacts totaling 1600.00 USD. That afternoon at 1200, D3 commenced with loading and unloading procedures of donated provisions. During this time Barrett Blume of Last Shadow Enterprises asked if we were the boat delivering aid to the Caribbean and how much time he had to gather provisions. He heard of our efforts from Carson Dolan, People to People Coordinator at the US Embassy in Panama City. Capt. Crupi advised him that D3 had a pilot time of 1530 and that he should try and gather as much goods as possible in that time. He returned with 60 - 20# bags of rice, 15 large cans of baby formula, 10 large cans of powdered milk, 40 cases of baby wipes, 30 - 5# cans of tuna, and a half pallet of beans. Upon loading the initial purchased provisions, Francis' donations arrived, which consisted of 5 pallets. This included various dry goods and 300 gallons of water in 1L bottles. The logistics of the loading and unloading was made much easier and efficient by the use of a private launch provided by the Balboa Yacht Club. 1515 D3 is fully loaded and at 1600 the pilot boarded, in which time we were ready to transit the Panama Canal.

Week of Sept. 18th, 2017:

D3 arrives to San Andres, Colombia where we would wait out the weather following Hurricane Maria.

Week of Sept. 22nd, 2017:

Local families, churches, and businesses donated additional goods including bottled water, canned food and miscellaneous items. D3 departed SA 1600 with direct routing to Grand Turk, Turks and Caicos.

Sept. 23-25th, 2017:

While underway, various phone calls were had with YAG founder Mark Drewelow as well as DART team updating us on conditions of Turks and Caicos as well as a needs assessment for Grand Turk and Salt Key.

Sept. 26th, 2017:

0900 local time, D3 un-towed Post One just outside the government dock at Grand Turk. A general depth and wharf assessment was conducted using Post One. On D3, lines and fenders were made ready and vessel was made secure at 1003 local time. Once secured, team leaders from DART, and POC from the British Marines welcomed us and were brought aboard. Immediately following was the commencement of filling 1,000 10L portable water bags, provided by (?) along with the discharging of cargo. Approximately at 1200 the cargo discharge was finished and water pumping continued to the portable 10L bags. At 1330, the DART team leaders returned from meeting with the Disaster Management team on island as well as local officials. They advised the procurement of a water truck with the capacity of about 2,000 gallons. Shortly after the water truck arrived and D3 Engineer Aaron Drake did an assessment of the water tank where he found that there were small holes as well as some dirt inside, which he then sanitized with the help of DART team doctor D3 initially provided two feed lines to the truck. At around 1430 the filling of the portable water units was finished and then properly distributed to locals, which then freed two additional feed lines that could be used to feed the water truck. DDE head Richardia... made her initial visit to the boat where she then gave approval to dispatch a total of 14 buffet tin trays of fresh made food by our chef to the Red Cross of Turks and Caicos as well as the Elderly Shelter of Grand Turk. During this time water pumping continued into the water truck.

DART team leaders advised that delivery of food and water to Salt Key was to be conducted before sundown based on their visit the previous day. About 250 gallons of water and approximately 500# of food were loaded onto Post One. Two DART team members followed Post One in D3's small tender for an 8 mile run to Salt Key. Once the team arrived, they unloaded supplies into the small tender and shuttled it to shore where they were welcomed by locals. These locals were grateful and taken by surprise as they thought they had been forgotten and left to fend for themselves. At that time there were about 60 people on the island who had returned to reconcile what damage had been done to their property and hopefully start to rebuild. The D3 and DART team did a needs assessment update on the island and found that their desalination unit was having difficulty. Fuel was needed and there were some technical issues with the unit set up. At about 1630 the D3 and DART teams left Salt Key to return to D3 and report findings.

At 1530, D3 finished pumping water to the water truck. D3 provided water services to locals who had personal containers (i.e. water bottles and buckets) and also provided refreshments to long shore men who were loading and unloading cargo from a docked commercial vessel. DART team and Post One returned to the government dock in Grand Turk where they then debriefed everyone on current conditions at Salt Key. Plans were formulated to return the following morning to bring more food and water as well as engineering assistance to put RO plant online.

Individuals from the local shelter run by Red Cross and from the Elderly Shelter arrived to pick up cooked food for evening meals including beans and rice, pasta dishes, cookies, homemade nut/fruit bars and other nutritious items.

The decision was made to have the DART team spend the night onboard D3 in order to provide security and assistance while dockside at the government dock. Dinner was provided by the vessel for the entire team. The dockside conditions were made difficult due to significant surge, therefore requiring overnight watch with one member of the DART team and one crew member of D3. During this time, multiple dock lines snapped and fenders were compromised. Thanks to vigilant watch no damage was done to the vessel.

Sept. 27th, 2017:

0700 all crews were on deck, where DART team was provided with breakfast and preparations were made to depart for Salt Key using Post One and D3's 16' inflatable tender. At about 830, four DART team members and two crew members from D3 departed for Salt Key, where more dry food and water was delivered and additional prepared food including homemade breads, granola bars, beans and rice. Once the team arrived on island, the D3 engineer diagnosed the problem with the smaller water maker unit and provided them with fuel. The larger water maker unit was running fine

but because there are no power lines there was no power for the unit, therefore a generator is required. On island there is a portable C9 generator, but the power company is in charge of operating and maintaining the unit.

Arrangements were made to join Richardia on a brief area tour for an assessment of damage to the island. We visited the local shelter and were able to see first hand the conditions. They were very grateful for the meals provided the previous night. They returned the containers and we agreed to once again prepare meals for that evening. The chef cooked all afternoon and another 6 large tins were made ready for delivery.

1330 the DART team and D3 crew return to the government dock and had lunch while debriefing full findings of the operation with Captain. At 1430 the DART team departed D3 and returned to Provo. 1445 D3 departed the government dock and set anchor in front of town.

1630 D3 crew used tender to deliver prepared food to the Red Cross volunteers at a nearby pier arranged by Richardia.

Communications:

Prior to our arrival in T& C and throughout our time dockside upgraded internet service was provided by Station 53 and Speedcast. We provided service to the DART team, British military and other government officials.

Marketing and photos:

In dealing with disaster relief and the nature of response associated with the delivery of aid, food, water, and communications combined with the necessary needs of the vessel, the crew and other extraordinary needs, the responsibility of photo documentation, videography and logging events needs to be the responsibility of a designated person from either the DART team or YAG volunteer or vessel crew, if such person is available. From personal experience, this is a difficult task given the nature of our 8 person crew and the necessary procedures during this event. We had little time to do anything other than focus on the immediate tasks at hand as they unfolded.

Yacht assistance:

There is no doubt that yachts ranging from 30-100m can assist and be valuable in similar situations. Obviously, a large part of disaster relief is the delivery of food, shelter, water, and medical aid. Based on this experience it seems crucial that these items are available to the affected people no later than 96 hrs after the disaster. Beyond that, vessels can still be effective as they house critical systems that can benefit teams



Changing The World Without Changing Course

www.iyag.net

619.630.4626

info@yachtaidglobal.org

rendering assistance on land in such capacities as hotel services (i.e. food, water, shelter, etc.), communications, power, and base operations.

In Summary:

The entire crew of D3 is grateful for this experience. We learned a great deal about the process and difficulties of successfully executing a large scale aid delivery in time of need. The team of people on the ground from DART, the local military and government officials were a pleasure to work with and very inspiring in their dedication to the tasks at hand. We send a heartfelt thank you to the YachtAid Global team for all the behind the scenes effort and coordination. We are proud of what we accomplished working together.