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## Hurricane Maria Forecast Discussion

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WTNT45 KNHC 180836  
TCDAT5

Hurricane Maria Discussion Number 8  
NWS National Hurricane Center Miami FL AL152017  
500 AM AST Mon Sep 18 2017

Maria is maintaining a fairly circular area of intense convection with some accompanying banding features. There has also been considerable lightning occurring near the center over the past several hours, confirming the vigor of the core convection. The current intensity is set at 80 kt which is a blend of Dvorak estimates from TAFB and SAB. An Air Force Reserve Unit Hurricane Hunter aircraft is scheduled to investigate Maria in a couple of hours and will give another estimate of the strength of the hurricane. With warm waters and weak shear anticipated along the projected track of Maria, additional strengthening is forecast. According to the SHIPS-RI guidance, there is a significant probability of rapid intensification over the next day or two. The official intensity forecast is similar to the model consensus and the latest HWRP simulation. Maria is likely to be at category 3 or 4 intensity by the time it moves into the extreme northeastern Caribbean Sea.

Geostationary satellite fixes and the position estimates from the Martinique radar give a motion of about 290/11 kt. A high pressure area to the north of Maria should maintain the west-northwestward motion for the next several days. Late in the forecast period, the high weakens and this should cause a turn toward the north-northwest. The official track forecast is similar to the HFIP Corrected Consensus model as well as the ECMWF and lies on the left side of the guidance suite.

### KEY MESSAGES:

1. Maria is likely to strengthen significantly, and is expected to be at major hurricane intensity when it affects portions of the Leeward Islands over the next few days, bringing dangerous wind, storm surge and rainfall hazards.
2. Maria is likely to affect the British and U.S. Virgin Islands and Puerto Rico by mid week as a dangerous major hurricane. Hurricane watches have been issued for the U.S. and British Virgin Islands as well as for Puerto Rico. Interests in these areas should monitor the progress of Maria and follow any advice given by local officials.

### FORECAST POSITIONS AND MAX WINDS

INIT	18/0900Z	14.6N	59.5W	80 KT	90 MPH
12H	18/1800Z	15.1N	60.6W	90 KT	105 MPH
24H	19/0600Z	15.8N	62.0W	105 KT	120 MPH
36H	19/1800Z	16.6N	63.4W	115 KT	130 MPH
48H	20/0600Z	17.4N	64.8W	120 KT	140 MPH
72H	21/0600Z	19.0N	67.7W	115 KT	130 MPH
96H	22/0600Z	21.0N	70.4W	110 KT	125 MPH
120H	23/0600Z	23.5N	72.0W	105 KT	120 MPH

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## Quick Links and Additional Resources

### TROPICAL CYCLONE FORECASTS

[Tropical Cyclone Advisories](#)  
[Tropical Weather Outlook](#)  
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### MARINE FORECASTS

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### SOCIAL MEDIA

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 [NHC Blog: "Inside the Eye"](#)

### HURRICANE PREPAREDNESS

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[Watches and Warnings](#)  
[Marine Safety](#)  
[Ready.gov Hurricanes](#)  
[Weather-Ready Nation](#)  
[Emergency Management Offices](#)

### RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

[NOAA Hurricane Research Division](#)  
[Joint Hurricane Testbed](#)  
[Hurricane Forecast Improvement Program](#)

### OTHER RESOURCES

[Q & A with NHC](#)  
[NHC/AOML Library Branch](#)  
[NOAA: Hurricane FAQs](#)  
[National Hurricane Operations Plan](#)  
[WX4NHC Amateur Radio](#)

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