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## PRESS RELEASE

### **Belize Concludes 2026 CARICOM Disaster Relief Unit Training Programme**

*Belmopan, June 23, 2026.*

Belize concluded the 2026 CARICOM Disaster Relief Unit (CDRU) National Training Programme today with a closing and certification ceremony recognizing more than forty emergency response personnel who completed the intensive week-long training.

Held from June 13 to 20, 2026, the programme was conducted through a partnership between the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) and Belize's National Emergency Management Organization (NEMO), with support from the Regional Security System (RSS) and the Ministry of the Public Service and Disaster Risk Management.

The training brought together personnel from the Belize Defence Force, the Belize Coast Guard, the National Fire Service, and the Belize Search and Rescue Institute. Throughout the programme, participants engaged in classroom sessions and practical exercises focused on emergency relief operations, logistics and supply chain management, emergency telecommunications, team coordination, and safer building and engineering techniques that can be applied in post-disaster environments.

At today's closing ceremony, participants were presented with certificates in recognition of their successful completion of the programme and their commitment to strengthening Belize's disaster preparedness and response capabilities. The certification represents an important milestone in enhancing the country's cadre of trained responders and reinforces Belize's readiness to effectively respond to emergencies at both the national and regional levels.

The programme also welcomed Rear Admiral Errington Shurland, Executive Director of RSS, and Retired Lieutenant Colonel Mr. Kester Craig, Deputy Executive Director of CDEMA, whose participation

underscored the importance of regional collaboration in building resilience and strengthening disaster management systems across the Caribbean.

The CDRU serves as the Caribbean's primary humanitarian response mechanism, comprising military, fire service, and police personnel from participating states who can be rapidly deployed to support countries affected by disasters. Through this training, Belize has further strengthened its operational readiness while contributing to a more resilient and coordinated regional response system.

The Ministry of the Public Service and Disaster Risk Management and NEMO extend their appreciation to CDEMA, the RSS, facilitators, and all participating officers for their dedication and commitment to advancing disaster preparedness and response capabilities in Belize and throughout the Caribbean.

**Ends**