

## **Lava moves at 4 metres per hour and advanced just 15 metres last night**

- **Authorities stress need for public to take safety precautions, observe exclusion zones and stay away from lava flows**
- **Steering Committee reported that evacuees currently housed in shelters will be moved to a hotel in Fuencaliente today**
- **Persons with reduced mobility to be transferred to a community care centre**

The meeting of the PEVOLCA Steering Committee, attended by Spain's Interior Minister Fernando Grande-Marlaska and the president of the Canary Islands, Ángel Víctor Torres, highlighted the importance of prevention as a safety measure in the light of the fact that the La Palma volcano is still active and the island remains in an emergency situation, at red alert status. The lava is currently advancing at 4 metres per hour and travelled just 15 metres last night. In the opinion of the scientists, diverting it is not feasible and nothing can be done in that regard.

The president of the Canary Islands, Ángel Víctor Torres, announced today that evacuated persons currently staying in the shelter will be transferred to a hotel in Fuencaliente during the course of today (Wednesday), while those with reduced mobility will be taken to a community care centre. The authorities hope to use the current shelter only for initial registration in the event of further evacuations caused by the eruption on La Palma and will continue to explore alternative accommodation arrangements for those people forced to stay with relatives at present.

The authorities reiterated the need for the public to facilitate the work of the emergency services and observe the exclusion zones of 2.5 km around the vents recommended by the scientists to minimise the risk of impact of pyroclasts and exposure to volcanic gases. The public are also asked to stay away from the lava flows due to the risk posed

---

**Oficina de Relaciones con los Medios de Comunicación**

Centro Coordinador de Emergencias y Seguridad (1-1-2 Canarias)

616 061 112

[prensa@gscanarias.com](mailto:prensa@gscanarias.com)

Para más información consulta el Portal de Noticias



by possible landslides and the high temperatures, and they should take all possible precautions regarding falling ash to avoid potential damage to their health.

The total area affected by the eruption now stands 140.44 hectares, with a flow front of 600 metres. PEVOLCA technical director Miguel Ángel Morcuende explained that the volcano remains active, spewing lava, and the two lava flows continue to advance, even if very slowly due to their increased viscosity and also because they fill natural depressions in the land as they move forward. Mathematical models indicate that the lava will continue to advance but it is uncertain whether it will reach the sea.

Morcuende added that there is just one fissure with 9 vents, not all of them active. Lava in the southern zone that had been still began to move slightly during the night, although the movement was minor and there is no variation with respect to the night before. Last night saw several episodes of explosive activity which may continue, although the land deformation has not increased any further and remains at 28 cm. According to Morcuende, we are in a phase of mini-stability, the duration of which is uncertain.

With respect to the measurements of sulphur dioxide, he added that the SO<sub>2</sub> emissions do not represent a threat to human health. The plume is at 3000 metres altitude.

### **Scientific Committee**

The Scientific Committee reported that the eruption continues to exhibit the same strombolian fissure eruption style, in a NW-SE fissure. Yesterday, the main vent experienced a phase of greater explosivity which intensified at 19.00 (local time), peaked at 21.00 and ended with the partial collapse of the upper part of the cone at 02:00 (local time) today. The average speed of the lava front as it advances towards the sea has slowed in recent hours and now stands at 4 m/h.

The lava reaches thicknesses of between 8-15 metres. Seismicity remains low. Today at 01:25 (local time), an earthquake of 2.2 mbLg magnitude and intensity II was

---

#### **Oficina de Relaciones con los Medios de Comunicación**

Centro Coordinador de Emergencias y Seguridad (1-1-2 Canarias)

616 061 112

[prensa@gscanarias.com](mailto:prensa@gscanarias.com)

Para más información consulta el Portal de Noticias



recorded. The rate of sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) emissions into the atmosphere due to the eruptive process yesterday was estimated at between 6140 and 11500 tonnes daily. Although correctly measured, these figures are under-estimations due to the size of the sulphur dioxide plume as observed by satellite. Material emissions reach 3000 m, according to Toulouse VAAC.

The amplitude of the volcanic tremor signal recorded in seismic stations is falling, probably due to the concentration of strombolian activity in fewer vents. Land deformations have also slowed and have remained relatively stable in the last 12 hours. INSAR measurement of the average deformation indicates a maximum cumulative average of 28 cm.

In terms of weather conditions, the current anti-cyclone situation continues, with NE winds from ground level up to 3000 metres reaching speeds of 20-30 km/h (decreasing with altitude). On the western side of the island affected by the eruption, westerly breezes prevail during the day and downhill mountain winds at night. The most important aspect of note is the wind change from N/NE to W and increase in speed from 5 km/h to 10-15 km/h in the early hours of tomorrow at 700 hPa (approx. 3000 metres). This will cause the ash to move towards the east of La Palma. Any rain falling in the coming 24 hours will not be acid.

Numerical modelling of the size of the lava flows continues, as does monitoring of their speed of advance and size. Daily monitoring of sulphur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>) emissions from the focal points of the eruption also continues using helicopter-mounted remote optical sensors. The chemical composition of the plumes is being monitored using multi-gas sensors. Ash and lava samples are collected regularly and both field inspections and observations using drones are being carried out.

Explosive episodes like those which occurred last night (21/09) may be repeated. Given its thickness at certain points, break-ups of the lava front may occur and lead to the formation of large fragments of lava in steeper parts. Depending on the terrain, these

---

**Oficina de Relaciones con los Medios de Comunicación**

Centro Coordinador de Emergencias y Seguridad (1-1-2 Canarias)

616 061 112

[prensa@gscanarias.com](mailto:prensa@gscanarias.com)

Para más información consulta el Portal de Noticias



may travel several metres from the flow front following sudden detachment. Small pyroclastic flows are also possible on very steep slopes.

The scientists warn that, if the lava reaches the coast, interaction with the sea could trigger columns of water vapour with acid gases and the lava flow front could separate, ejecting fragments close to the point of contact (instant fragmentation and emission of ballistics).

Accordingly, continuous monitoring of the seismic activity has been further increased and any significant change observed will be notified.

### **Red alert remains in force**

The PEVOLCA Plan establishes a “volcanic traffic light” public alert mechanism. The traffic light consists of four colours according to the level of risk: green, yellow, amber and red. At the red level, compulsory evacuation of hazard zones is implemented.

In this regard, the public are asked to follow the instructions of and cooperate with the law enforcement agencies during evacuation, to keep calm and not spread unfounded rumours. In the event of an evacuation, local Town Halls will provide details of evacuation routes and designated meeting points. Evacuation will only take place when required by the situation.

Recommendations include closing all outside windows and doors, lower shutters and turn off water, gas and electricity.

Take a backpack with your personal identification documentation, daily medication, mobile phone and charger, a battery-operated radio, torch and clothes for approximately three days. Only use your phone when strictly necessary.

---

#### **Oficina de Relaciones con los Medios de Comunicación**

Centro Coordinador de Emergencias y Seguridad (1-1-2 Canarias)

616 061 112

[prensa@gscanarias.com](mailto:prensa@gscanarias.com)

Para más información consulta el Portal de Noticias



Go to the designated meeting points and, if you do need to go to a shelter, you should go to the registration area on arrival.

At the red alert level, instructions are also issued for protection against ashfall. Do not go near the volcano or lava flows for any reason.

If volcanic ash is falling, stay indoors until it has settled unless the roof is in danger of collapsing.

Avoid going out but if you do, cover your nose and mouth with a mask to avoid inhaling ash directly. Protect your eyes with goggles, use glasses instead of contact lenses and cover your mouth with a damp cloth. Avoid doing physical exercise outdoors.

If ash is falling, close doors, windows and all ventilation sources (chimney vents, heating, air conditioning, etc.). Clear ash from flat roofs and rain gutters, and keep water tanks and cisterns covered.

Do not allow ash to come into contact with food. Wash fruit and vegetables well and do not eat food outdoors.

Collect built-up ash in plastic bags and place in rubbish bins. Do not throw it down drains.

Avoid driving when ash is present. If you have to drive, take extra care and keep your speed below 40 km/h.

Volcanic ash is made up of very fine particles that can cause lesions to respiratory tracts, eyes and open wounds, as well as skin irritation.

Keep vehicle engines switched off. Driving can stir up ash, engines can clog, and your vehicle might break down.

---

**Oficina de Relaciones con los Medios de Comunicación**

Centro Coordinador de Emergencias y Seguridad (1-1-2 Canarias)

616 061 112

[prensa@gscanarias.com](mailto:prensa@gscanarias.com)

Para más información consulta el Portal de Noticias



If you feel an earthquake when indoors, take cover in a doorway or under solid furniture such as a table and stay well away from windows. Do not use lifts. If you have to leave your home, turn off the water, gas and electricity.

If you are outdoors, stay away from tall buildings, street lights, advertising hoardings, etc. If you are near the sea, keep away from the shore.

Please remember that the Canarian government's 112 telephone number is for emergency use only. If you require general information on the situation, you should dial 012 or follow the news via the media.

---

**Oficina de Relaciones con los Medios de Comunicación**

Centro Coordinador de Emergencias y Seguridad (1-1-2 Canarias)

616 061 112

[prensa@gscanarias.com](mailto:prensa@gscanarias.com)

Para más información consulta el Portal de Noticias