



Panama earthquake – Ad hoc risk assessment Canal, ports and infrastructure disruptions

• Reporting date: 10 October 2026

As of 10 October 2026, 09:12 EEST, based on available reporting for 9 October earthquake

➤ The Panama Canal remains **operational**, with vessel transits continuing without reported earthquake-related interruption. However, inspections identified minor damage to Canal-associated buildings and water infrastructure. Disruption elsewhere includes damaged roads, power outages, interruptions to water treatment, and a temporary suspension of flights at Tocumen Airport, which subsequently reopened. Port-by-port operating conditions remain insufficiently confirmed in the reporting reviewed. [\[infobae\]](#)[\[jpost\]](#)[\[nbcpalmsprings\]](#)

➤ Confirmed impacts and operational status

Asset / sector	Reported status	Maritime and logistics implications
Panama Canal — vessel transits	The Canal Authority reported normal operations and uninterrupted vessel passage. Emergency protocols were activated, with technical inspections of locks, dams and other essential facilities.	No earthquake-related closure or transit suspension reported. Continued operations should not be interpreted as a completed damage assessment. [jpost] [infobae]
Canal-associated facilities	Initial inspections identified minor damage to four office buildings on the Pacific side and damage to steel structures associated with elevated tanks at the Monte Esperanza Water Treatment Plant in Colón.	Damage was reported outside the vessel-transit function; the Authority stated that navigation was unaffected. Monte Esperanza continued pumping directly into the distribution network while damage was evaluated. [infobae] [unotv]
Commercial ports and terminals	The reviewed reporting does not provide sufficiently specific operator confirmation for Balboa, Cristóbal, Manzanillo International Terminal or Colón Container Terminal.	Neither a major-port shutdown nor full terminal normality can be established from these sources. Canal operating status is not a substitute for berth, crane, gate and cargo-handling status.
Canal approaches / vessel queues	Reuters reported approximately 90 vessels at both ends of the Canal, waiting either to transit or to berth at storage and transshipment facilities.	This is a combined transit/berthing figure—not evidence of 90 vessels delayed by the earthquake. The same report states vessel passage remained uninterrupted. [jpost]
Roads and inland access	Road damage and fissures were reported in central provinces. AFP reported that Tonosí, in Los Santos, was cut off.	Local inland movements face disruption, but these reports do not establish closure of the principal access corridors serving the major Canal-area container terminals. [france24] [inquirer]
Bridges across the Canal	Local reporting stated that the Bridge of the Americas and Centennial Bridge remained open and operating normally.	No confirmed closure of these crossings was reported, despite footage showing movement of Centennial Bridge cables during the earthquake. [telemetro] [kq2]
Electricity and water	Naturgy reported power outages across six provinces. Several water-treatment plants experienced interruptions associated with loss of electricity.	Utility disruption is confirmed, but its extent at individual ports, warehouses and logistics facilities is not established in the reviewed coverage. [gmanetwork] [nbcpalmsprings]
Tocumen International Airport	Flights were temporarily suspended, with some diversions; operations resumed later on 9 October.	An initial interruption affected air connectivity. Residual impacts on particular flights, air cargo or crew transfers require service-specific confirmation. [france24] [gmanetwork]
Tsunami alert	The initial regional tsunami warning was subsequently lifted.	The warning is no longer reported as an active restriction; its cancellation does not establish that every

Asset / sector	Reported status	Maritime and logistics implications
		coastal facility has completed inspections. [france24][nbcpalmsprings]

➤ Impacts on port and inland logistics

Logistics area	Reported impact / status	Influence on port and inland logistics	Assessment
Panama Canal transits	Vessel passage continued normally; inspections of critical infrastructure were undertaken.	No confirmed earthquake-related interruption to Canal transit. Port-call and cargo-handling status still require separate verification.	Operational; inspections ongoing. infobae
Commercial ports and terminals	No sufficiently specific operational confirmation for Balboa, Cristóbal, Manzanillo International Terminal or Colón Container Terminal in the reviewed reporting.	Berth availability, crane operations, yard capacity and truck-gate services cannot be assumed to be either disrupted or fully normal.	Terminal-level status unverified.
Canal-associated buildings	Minor damage reported to four office buildings on the Pacific side, without impact on navigation.	No demonstrated effect on vessel transit; any impact on administrative or support services remains unconfirmed.	Limited facility damage confirmed. infobae
Roads and inland distribution	Road damage and fissures reported in central provinces; Tonosí was reported cut off.	Local cargo collection and delivery may be affected where routes cross damaged sections. No confirmed nationwide freight interruption.	Localized road-access disruption confirmed. france24+1
Main access routes to container terminals	Reviewed reporting did not establish closure of the principal road corridors serving Canal-area container terminals.	Terminal access and truck turnaround times remain route-specific verification points; reported provincial damage should not be generalized to all port approaches.	Port-access disruption not established.
Canal road crossings	Bridge of the Americas and Centennial Bridge were reported open and operating normally.	Cross-Canal road connectivity remained available according to the cited reports.	No reported closure of these crossings. telemetro+1
Electricity supply	Outages reported across six provinces; individual terminal impacts were not established.	Potential interruption to electrically powered handling equipment, warehouse systems, reefer support and gate processing if affected facilities lose supply. These are exposure pathways, not confirmed port failures.	Regional outages confirmed; port-specific effects unverified. gmanetwork+1
Water supply and treatment	Some treatment plants experienced power-related interruptions. Monte Esperanza	Potential constraints on local water availability and supporting	Water-system impacts confirmed; maritime-service

Logistics area	Reported impact / status	Influence on port and inland logistics	Assessment
	sustained elevated-tank structural damage but continued pumping directly into the distribution network.	services; no confirmed suspension of vessel freshwater supply.	effects unverified. infobae+1
Airport and supporting logistics	Tocumen temporarily suspended flights, then resumed operations.	Initial disruption to air connectivity; any remaining effects on crew transfers, urgent spare parts or airfreight require flight-specific checks.	Airport reopened following temporary interruption. france24+1
Coastal operations / tsunami alert	The initial tsunami warning was subsequently lifted.	No continuing restriction established from that warning; individual coastal-facility inspection status remains separate.	Warning lifted. france24+1
Aftershocks and infrastructure inspections	Aftershocks occurred while damage assessments continued.	Additional findings could alter facility availability or route access; no specific subsequent terminal closure is established here.	Preliminary operating picture. gmanetwork+1

➤ Maritime operational assessment

The available evidence supports a distinction between continued operation of the international shipping route and disruption to supporting infrastructure:

- Canal transit: No confirmed earthquake-induced stoppage. Minor damage to associated facilities means that “operating normally” should not be rewritten as “no infrastructure damage.”[[infobae](#)]
- Port cargo handling: Unverified at individual-terminal level. The reviewed sources do not establish earthquake-related berth closures, crane damage, gate restrictions or reductions in cargo-handling capacity.
- Inland logistics: Confirmed road and utility disruption is concentrated in affected provinces, including parts of the Azuero peninsula and central Panama. It should not be generalized to all national freight corridors.[[france24](#)][[telemetro](#)]
- Continuing uncertainty: Numerous aftershocks and ongoing inspections mean the assessment remains preliminary. Subsequent inspection findings could change the operating picture.[[infobae](#)][[gmanetwork](#)]

For an imminent port call, the unresolved checks are terminal acceptance and berth availability; crane and yard operations; pilotage, tug and mooring services; gate access and the actual trucking route; and availability of power, freshwater and bunkering. These are verification priorities, not reported failures.

➤ Report-ready summary

Following the 9 October 2026 earthquake, the Panama Canal continued normal vessel transits, with no reported earthquake-related interruption. Initial inspections identified minor damage to four Pacific-side office buildings and elevated-tank structures at the Monte Esperanza Water Treatment Plant in Colón, without impact on navigation. Wider disruption included damaged roads, electricity outages and interruptions to water treatment. Tocumen International Airport resumed operations after a precautionary suspension. Operating conditions at individual commercial ports and terminals remain insufficiently verified and should be confirmed separately from Canal transit status.”[[infobae](#)][[nbcpalmsprings](#)][[unotv](#)][[france24](#)][[gmanetwork](#)]

CONTACT US FOR FURTHER SUPPORT

Sea Guardian S.G. Ltd — Intel & Security

E-mail: intelsec@sguardian.com • info@sguardian.com • www.sguardian.com

CY: +357 25351125 • GR: +30 210 9703322 • +30 6944 373465

REQUEST A TRIAL OR BOOK AN APPOINTMENT FOR “DACOR” SYSTEM

<https://sguardian.com/ai-services/>

Book a Google Meet: <https://calendar.app.google/LmPSoo5fDxZMVq357>



Copyright and Confidentiality

This document is generated from processed information (intel) produced in near-real time by the in-house SEA GUARDIAN database and algorithms together with the SEA GUARDIAN R&I team, and is a service to SEA GUARDIAN partners. This intellectual property is provided as a service for specific clients and purposes and may not be distributed outside the company without the written consent of SEA GUARDIAN, in accordance with GDPR.

Sea Guardian S.G. Ltd / Intel Department (www.sguardian.com / +30 6944 373465) can support your operational planning, help determine risk assessments, and aid decision-making by producing tailor-made assessments on request — on ports, routes, cargoes and specific merchant vessels. Refer to our previous Threat & Risk assessment briefs for background on each region