



NATIONAL COMMISSIONER OF THE ICELANDIC POLICE
DEPARTMENT OF CIVIL PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT



THE SCIENTIFIC ADVISORY BOARD OF THE ICELANDIC CIVIL PROTECTION

Date: 03.02.2015 **Time:** 09:30 **Location:** Crisis Coordination Centre, Skogarhlid.

Regarding: Volcanic activity in the Bardarbunga system.

Attending: Scientists from Icelandic Met Office and the Institute of Earth Sciences University of Iceland along with representatives from the Icelandic Civil Protection, Directorate of Health and The Environment Agency of Iceland.

Main points

- Volcanic eruption in Holuhraun
- Air quality
- Scenarios

Notes

- The volcanic eruption in Holuhraun continues. Small if any changes of the intensity of the eruption have been detected over the last few weeks.
- Seismic activity in Bardarbunga continues to be strong. Five earthquakes between M4.0-4.6 were detected since the last meeting of the Advisory Board on Friday. The strongest one was measured M4.6 yesterday at 21:35. About 10 earthquakes between magnitudes M3.0-3.9 were detected over the period. In total around 130 earthquakes were detected around the caldera since last Friday, or between 20 and 30 per day. No earthquake over M5,0 has been detected in Bardarbunga since 8. January.
- Around 10 earthquakes per day were detected in the dyke during the same period. All of them were under M2.0.
- GPS measurements near northern Vatnajökull glacier show continuing slow deflation towards Bardarbunga.
- On Saturday around 2300 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ SO₂ was measured in Hofn in Hornafjörður.
- A new risk analysis for the area around the eruption site is being conducted. The new risk map for the area will be issued next week.

Air quality:

- Today (Tuesday) gas pollution will affect the area around Holuhraun, but mainly northeast and east of it in the afternoon. Tomorrow (Wednesday) gas pollution might be felt to the east of the eruption.
 - The Icelandic Met Office provides two-day forecasts on gas dispersion from the eruptive site in Holuhraun. Most reliable are the forecast maps approved by meteorologist on duty, see [Gas forecast](#). And although still being developed further, an automatic forecast, see [Gas model](#), is also available (trial run, see [disclaimer](#)).
 - Measurements of air quality can be found on the webpage www.airquality.is Data from handheld gas monitors, spread around the country, can also be found on that page
- Instructions:**
- People who feel discomfort are advised to stay indoors, close their windows, turn up the heat and turn off air conditioning. Use periods of good air quality to ventilate the house. People experiencing adverse effects should be in immediate contact with their healthcare centre. Measurements of air quality can be



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found on the webpage www.airquality.is The Meteorological Office issues forecast on its web-page and warnings if conditions change to the worse.

- Instructions from [The Environment Agency of Iceland](#) and [Chief Epidemiologist](#) can be found on their web-sites.
 - Check the Icelandic Met Office forecasts for sulphuric gas dispersion on the web as described above.
 - Handheld meters have been distributed around the country for SO₂ measurements three times a day.
 - Information and any questions on air pollution can be sent to The Environment Agency through the email gos@ust.is. The Environment Agency is especially looking for information from people who have been in contact with high concentrations of gas; where they were, at what time it happened, how the gas cloud looked (colour and thickness of the cloud) and how they were affected by it.
- The volcanic eruption has now been going on for five months, the lava flow is still great in Holuhraun and the rate of the subsidence of the Bardarbunga caldera is still significant. Three scenarios are considered most likely:
 - The eruption in Holuhraun continues until the subsidence of the Bardarbunga caldera stops. The eruption can still go on for many months.
 - The volcanic fissure may lengthen southwards under Dyngjajokull, resulting in a jokulhlaup and an ash-producing eruption. It is also possible that eruptive fissures could develop in another location under the glacier. If such an eruption would be prolonged it could eventually produce a lava flow.
 - Volcanic eruption in the Bardarbunga caldera. Such an eruption would melt large quantities of ice, leading to a major jokulhlaup, accompanied by ash fall.

Other scenarios cannot be excluded.

- **From the Icelandic Met Office:** The Aviation Colour Code for Bardarbunga remains at 'orange'.
- The next meeting will be held on Friday 6th of February 2015.

The National Commissioner of the Icelandic Police, Department of Civil Protection and Emergency Management
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