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## General

**Mauritius** (20°17'S., 57°33'E.), an island of volcanic formation, lies about 500 miles E of Madagascar. The island has a small coastal plain that rises to mountains with heights of over 800m. The shores are mostly fringed with coral reefs.

The climate is tropical, being modified by the Southeast Trade winds. There is a dry season, from May to November, and a hot, wet season, from November to May.

**Ile Rodrigues** (19°41'S., 63°25'E.), the **Agalega Islands** (10°26'S., 56°40'E.), and **Cargados Carajos** (Saint Brandon) (16°50'S., 59°30'E.) are dependencies of Mauritius.

Ile Rodrigues lies about 350 miles E of Mauritius. It is 9.5 miles long, 4.5 miles wide, and formed of volcanic formations. The island attains a height of about 400m; its shores are fringed by coral reefs. Ile Rodrigues produces salt and onions. Livestock raising and fishing are carried out.

Agalega Islands, two in number, are low, wooded, and fringed by reefs.

Cargados Carajos is an extensive group of reefs, small islands, islets, and shoals. The main reef, mostly above water, extends about 26 miles in a SSW/NNE direction.

## Buoyage System

The IALA Buoyage System (Region A) is in effect. See Chart No. 1 for further IALA Buoyage System information.

## Cautions

Fishing with traps, handlines, and trolling gillnets is carried out in the vicinity of the islands.

Rollers, occasionally lasting for 4 to 5 days, frequently inflict great damage on harbor installations at the island.

## Currency

The official unit of currency is the Mauritian rupee, consisting of 100 cents. It is reported that British sterling and French francs can also be used.

## Government

Mauritius, which received independence from the United Kingdom in 1968, is a parliamentary democracy. It is divided into nine districts and three dependencies.

The head of state is the President, who is elected for a 5-year term by the National Assembly. The National Assembly consists of 66 members; 62 are directly elected to 4-year terms, with four appointed from losing political parties.



**Flag of Mauritius**

The Prime Minister, who is appointed by the President, heads the Council of Ministers and is responsible for the direction and control of the government.

The legal system is based on French civil law with some elements of English common law.

The capital is Port Louis.

## Holidays

The following holidays are observed:

New Year's Days	January 1-2
Independence Day	March 12
Easter Monday	Varies
Labor Day	May 1
Assumption Day	August 25
United Nations Day	October 24
All Saints Day	November 1
Christmas Day	December 25
Boxing Day	December 26

Cavadee, Maha Shivaratree, Chinese New Year/Chinese Spring Festival, Holi, Ougadi and Varusha Piruppu, Ganesh Chaturthi, Mid-Autumn Festival, Divali, and Ganga Asnan are religious festivals, the dates of which vary from year to year depending on the appearance of the moon.

In addition, the Islamic holidays of Id-El-Fitr, Id-El-Adha, and Yaum-um-Nabi are observed, the dates of which vary from year to year depending on the appearance of the moon.

## Industries

Agriculture and livestock raising are important. The main crops include sugar cane, tea, tobacco, cannabis, and vegetables.

The major industries are food processing, fishing, tourism, textiles, chemicals, and diamond cutting.

## Languages

The official language is English. French and Creole are also widely used.

## Search and Rescue

In order to facilitate rescue operations in the event of aircraft/ships in distress, all vessels within the area bounded by 10°S, 30°S, 55°E, and 95°E are requested to transmit to Mauritius Radio, at 0700 daily, their call sign, position, course, and speed. This information is rebroadcast at 0930 daily.

## Time Zone

The Time Zone description is DELTA (-4). Daylight Savings Time is not observed.

**World Time Zone Chart**  
<http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/ref/pdf/802801.pdf>

## U.S. Embassy

The U.S. Embassy is situated at 4th Floor, Rogers House, John Kennedy Avenue, Port Louis.

The mailing addresses are, as follows:

1. International mail—  
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<http://mauritius.usembassy.gov>