



THE KINGDOM OF TONGA
NATIONAL EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT OFFICE
NATIONAL EMERGENCY OPERATIONS CENTRE

SITUATION REPORT

Event: **Hunga Tonga Hunga Ha'apai Volcanic Eruption & Tonga Tsunami**
Sit Rep No: **13**
Date: **31 January 2022**
Period: **10am Sat 29 Jan 2022 – 10am Tues 1 Feb 2022**

This situation report released by the National Emergency Management Office (NEMO) is to inform operational partners on current situation of the secondary effects of the Hunga-Tonga-Hunga-Ha'apai (HTHH) Volcanic eruption. This Situation report (Sitrep) covers the period stated above. Frequency of reports will depend on availability of new information and evolving operation.

Highlights

- Tonga is currently under a State of Emergency for the HTHH volcanic eruption and Tonga Tsunami (HTHH disaster) until 13 February 2022 and a State of Emergency, since March 2020, for COVID19.
- The Logistics & Coordination Cluster's First Responders (Tonga Fire and Emergency Services (TFES)) in preparation for the school year, have cleared debris off roofs at 8 schools listed here: GPS Fasi, GPS Ngleleia, GPS Maufanga, GPS Nuku'alofa, GPS Ha'atu'a ('Eua) Tonga Side School (Havelu, Api Mataka), St Andrews College.
- TFES has also supported Tonga Power with the maintenance of power-line transformers in 48 communities and has also cleared debris from public roads in Tongatapu, Fua'amotu airport, Vuna Wharf and the Royal Palace.
- The two ships that departed for Ha'apai returned following the issuance of relief supplies and the final verification of damage and loss data by a whole of government assessment team.
- The Ministry of Fisheries (as a sub cluster within the Food Security & Livelihood Cluster) assessed that 90 small boats were damaged in Ha'apai, as a result of the HTHH disaster, with 25 damaged small boats from Nomuka, and 8 each from Fonoi, Haafeva and 'O'ua.
- The water testing conducted by Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources in Ha'apai tested the water and found Fonoi, Tungua and Nomuka's water contaminated with sea water from the waves and not fit for consumption.
- International humanitarian relief supplies continue to arrive in Tonga, from Australia, China, Fiji, France, Japan, New Zealand and the UK by air and sea. All deliveries are contactless and are required to be placed in quarantine for 72 hours before it is released to NEMO for distribution.
- The Government of Fiji through the National Disaster Management office (NDMO) has also sent relief supplies from various non government organisations and private businesses as well as Regional UN agencies to support the Government of Tonga's relief and recovery efforts.
- The National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) received 47 calls on Sun 30 Jan to Mon 31 Jan 2022. The top 3 requests are for (1) water blasters (2) relief items, (3) cleaning.
- Top complaints received: (1) not received distribution (2) distribution not fairly done.
- NEMO continues to review complaints and address these appropriately.

Current situation

- The HTHH volcanic eruption followed by the tsunami warning triggered an immediate evacuation of communities on 15th January 2022, particularly coastal communities.
- The National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) was activated on Fri 14th Jan 2022, due to a tsunami marine warning issued by Tonga Meteorological Services (Tonga Met).
- Tonga is under a State of Emergency for the HTHH volcanic eruption triggering tsunami waves, in addition to the State of Public Health Emergency (for the COVID19 global pandemic).
- Communities sought safety during the tsunami and further volcanic eruptions on the night of the 15th January 2022 at evacuation centres (church halls, community halls).
- Relief distribution continues to affected communities in Tongatapu, Ha'apai and 'Eua – water, hygiene kits, food, tents and tarpaulin, kitchen kits, dignity kits.
- The National Emergency Operations Centre continues to coordinate relief efforts while also ensuring data and information is continuously collected to assist with next stages of planning.
- NEMO is supported by the First Responders with representatives from Tonga Police, TFES and more recently, His Majesty's Armed Forces (HMAF) based at the NEOC.
- HMAF continue to provide much needed logistical support particularly with transportation to and from the outer islands, during this HTHH disaster.

Tongatapu (TBU) update

- Distribution to affected people continues in Tongatapu.
- Water distribution continues with a specific focus on elderly and persons with disabilities in affected areas this week. To date, NEMO has distributed
- A targeted relief distribution was to Fijian families who were significantly affected by the tsunami

'Eua Update

- 'Eua DEOC Manager reported that the Police do not have power at 'Ohonua headquarters so are operating in Angaha.
- Niu'eiki Hospital is back to normal opening hours.
- Safety & Protection Cluster will provide psychosocial support through counseling; and are also providing \$200 to persons with disabilities.
- Waste Authority will continue to clear waste. NEMO and MORDI will commence clearing/ cutting trees
- The Government representative has requested a tent for the wharf

Ha'apai Update.

- Distribution of food and non-food items is ongoing
- Filtering of water tank at MEIDECC office and Ha'apai High School
- Water tanks have been filtered at MEIDCC office and Ha'apai High School, priority are the schools due to the new school year commencing and ensuring there is clean drinking water available for students.
- Further plans underway for the :Late to travel to Ha'apai with more relief supplies.

International Humanitarian Support

International humanitarian support to the Government of Tonga's response efforts with relief provided in the form of and from, noting that COVID19 protocols still apply with 72 hours quarantine prior to contactless dropoff and release

The Government of Tonga is grateful to the following donor's for providing humanitarian relief supplies for Tonga's communities to support Tonga's recovery efforts. 0

To date, there has been:

Donor	Description
Australia	Provision of humanitarian relief supplies via cargo from: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- nine (9) flights, one surveillance only- One ocean vessel – <i>HMAS Adelaide</i>
Fiji	Provision of humanitarian relief supplies via cargo from: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- One vessel
France	Provision of humanitarian relief supplies via cargo from: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Two (2) flights- One vessel
China	Food packs provided for distribution. Provision of humanitarian relief supplies via cargo from: <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Two (2) flights- Two (2) ocean vessels

Japan	Provision of humanitarian relief supplies via cargo from: - Two (2) flights
New Zealand	Provision of humanitarian relief supplies via cargo from: - Three (3) flights - 3 vessels – <i>HMNZS Aotearoa</i> , <i>HMNZS Wellington</i> , <i>HMNZS Canterbury</i>
United Kingdom	Provision of humanitarian relief supplies via cargo from: - 1 vessel, <i>HMS Spey</i> . - Items also on <i>HMAS Adelaide</i>

- All flights and vessels from Australia, China, France, Japan, NZ and UK with relief supplies continue to arrive with have successfully completed the COVID19 requirement to quarantine the relief supplies for 72 hours and have been released from Fua'amotu.

Background

The Hunga Tonga Hunga Ha'apai (HHTH) volcanic activity commenced on 20 December 2021 and was immediately heightened to red for aviation. Tonga Geological Services monitored the volcanic activity providing public health advice from 20 December 2021 until 2 January 2022. Environmental and public health warnings were provided about the potential of water contamination from the ash fall and potential of acid rain in Ha'apai. Advice included information on potential of fish poisoning due to volcanic fluid polluting the ocean and raising awareness on the hazardous areas surrounding the islands and ensuring the public kept clear of these areas. TGS continued to monitor HHTH and noted that there was no activity from 2nd January to 11th January 2022.

On 14th January 2022 TGS reissued an alert at 7am, following increased volcanic activity as Tongatapu and 'Eua communities were impacted by the smell of sulfur.

On 14th January 2022, Tonga Met issued a Tsunami Marine warning from the National Tsunami Warning Centre at 11.12am directly to the public. The warning was cancelled for Vava'u and Ongo Niua in the evening of Friday 14th Jan 2022 and for the remainder of Tonga on Sat 15th Jan 2022 in the morning.

On Sat 15th Jan 2022, at approx. 5.20pm, HHTH volcano erupted and created a significant impact across the Kingdom of Tonga. A tsunami was triggered with a mass evacuation response immediately declared to attempt to keep Tongan residents safe.

Based on the effects of the volcanic eruption with the ash fall and effects of the tsunami the affected population is approx. 84,776 (84% of population, Tongatapu, Ha'apai, 'Eua); with the impacted population – approx. 99,059 (99% Tongatapu, Ha'apai, 'Eua, Vava'u)¹

Further updates

NEMO will provide the next SitRep at the next meeting or within 24 hours or as the situation may evolve, as determined by NEMC.

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¹ Based on Tonga Statistics Department, Tonga Population Census 2021. Preliminary Result