



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

SITUATION REPORT

Event: Hunga Tonga Hunga Ha'apai Volcanic Eruption  
Sit Rep No: 06  
Date: 19 January 2022  
Period: 11am Tues 18<sup>th</sup> Jan – 10am Wed 19<sup>th</sup> Jan 2022

This situation report released by the National Emergency Management Office (NEMO) is to inform operational partners on current situation of secondary effect 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

- The tsunami warning for HTHH volcanic eruption on 15 Jan 2022 was cancelled on 17 Jan 2022 at 10am.
- Interisland and international communication (inc. internet) remains non-operational.
- Current priority requests from the affected and impacted communities:
  - Clean drinking water
  - Fuel – diesel
  - Food
- Affected population approx. 84,776 (84% of population, Tongatapu, Ha'apai, 'Eua); Impacted population – approx. 99,059 (99% Tongatapu, Ha'apai, 'Eua, Vava'u)<sup>1</sup>
- Ha'apai advised as at 10am 19 Jan 2022 – Ha'apai has no fuel.
- Ha'apai's Emergency Operations Centre reported from *immediate situation overview*:
  - 16 households (from Pangai to Houma Tofua) severely damaged,
  - Government buildings severely damaged (Governor's office, Ministry of Police building, Ministry of Justice),
  - Foreshore from Holopeka to Pangai severely damaged,
  - Urgent request for clean drinking water.
  - Fonoi – 85 people directly affected (as per , 16<sup>2</sup> households directly affected
  - Mango – 36 people<sup>3</sup> directly affected, 12<sup>4</sup> households directly affected
- 'Eua Emergency Operations Centre reported from *immediate situation overview*:
  - Drinking water is out of stock at shops,
  - Limited fuel available, will affect power supply
- Relief distribution continuing based on requests to National Emergency Operations Centre
- NEMO water relief distributions to date: 14,959 litres of water
- NEOC received 46 calls, with 24 of these urgent, in the last 24 hours.

<sup>1</sup> Based on Tonga Statistics Department, Tonga Population Census 2021. Preliminary Result

<sup>2</sup> Based on Tonga Statistics Department, Pre-census survey. Household Listing.

<sup>3</sup> Based on Tonga Statistics Department, Tonga Population Census 2021. Preliminary Result

<sup>4</sup> Based on Tonga Statistics Department, Pre-census survey. Household Listing.



### Current situation

- The HTHH volcanic eruption followed by the tsunami warning triggered an immediate evacuation of communities on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2022, particularly coastal communities.
- The National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) was activated on Fri 14<sup>th</sup> Jan 2022, due to a tsunami marine warning.
- Communities sought safety during the tsunami and further volcanic eruptions on the night of the 15<sup>th</sup> January 2022 at evacuation centres (church halls, community halls).
- Relief distribution is underway to affected communities in Tongatapu and to Ha'apai – water, hygiene kits, food, tents and tarpaulin, kitchen kits.
- Planning is underway to provide relief items to 'Eua for 20 January 2022.

### Tongatapu focus

- Relief distributions on 18 January 2022

Kanokupolu & Ha'atafu	HM Queen Nanasipau'u distributed food rations of milk noodles, beef (2kg) and crackers per household 136 households: 58 households in Ha'atafu; 78 households in Kanokupolu
Vahe Hahake	5,833 ltrs of water
Vahe Hihifo	5,000 ltrs of water ('Ahau & Vaotu'u)
Individual Households	168 ltrs (Hologna & Maufanga)

- Tonga Power – 90% power has returned; remaining 10% is Kanokupolu and cleaning electricity lines along coastal areas of Hihifo.
- Tonga Red Cross also continues to provide relief to affected communities. An update on quantities will be available in the next SitRep.
- IDA data review for assessed Tongatapu communities is underway.

### 'Eua Update

- 'Eua DEOC Manager had audience with His Majesty King Tupou VI at 6pm.
- Food stocks in shops are decreasing (sugar, rice, flour, tinned fish, tinned corned beef, salted beef, chicken, lamb.
- Education Cluster recommendation is to delay school start for health & safety purposes.
- No drinking water at shops.

### Ha'apai Update

- Daily updates are currently scheduled between NEOC and Ha'apai DEOC at 4pm.
- Ha'apai DEOC requesting access to TFES for access to resources, including water truck, awaiting.
- Tungua Island has damaged houses as reported to Ha'apai DEOC. All Tungua residents sought shelter and remain at Siaosi Sesi Tonga Tau'atina and Free Wesleyan Church Buildings.
- Matuku, Tungua and Kotu all in good health as reported by VOEA Ngahau Koula.

### Vava'u Update

- On Wed 18<sup>th</sup> Jan 2022, Vava'u District Emergency Operations Centre Manager contacted NEOC for the first time since Sat 15<sup>th</sup> HTHH volcanic eruption.
- Reported very low diesel stocks available which is likely to run out by Sunday 23 Jan 2022.
- Request for clean drinking water.
- Daily updates are currently scheduled between NEOC and Vava'u DEOC at 4pm

### Cluster Response

- On Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> January 2022, a full Cluster meeting was held at Fa'onehua Centre at 11am to provide updates on current immediate response activities and plans:
1. Essential Services
    - a. Tonga Power – 90% of Tongatapu restored.

- b. Tonga Water Board – allocated one water supplier at Mataki-Eua to assist NEMO with water distribution to the community.
- 2. Safety & Protection
  - a. Providing psychosocial support to evacuees at Liahona and those that evacuated from 'Atata community.
  - b. Plans to provide more psychosocial support to affected communities
- 3. Food Security & Livelihood
  - a. Plans to support farmers in affected coastal areas by providing two hours for ploughing.
- 4. Health, Nutrition, Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (HNWASH)
  - a. Sent teams to Ha'apai for health checks and to provide psychosocial support.
  - b. Public notice issued to advise public that tap water is safe to drink, following water quality testing.
  - c. Continuous water testing for water safety.
- 5. Emergency Shelter & Non food items
  - a. Distributing tents, tarpaulin, hygiene kits, kitchen kits to affected communities.
- 6. Logistics & Coordination
  - a. Coordinating and supporting relief efforts with Cluster members to affected communities.
- 7. Shelter (Reconstruction)
  - a. Currently clearing roads and clearing areas.
- 8. Education
  - a. In 'Eua, recommendation to delay start of school for health and safety reasons.
  - b. Plan to clean schools and ensure the school water is safe by testing through HNWASH.

## 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 2<sup>nd</sup> January to 11<sup>th</sup> January 2022.

On 14<sup>th</sup> 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 14<sup>th</sup> 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 14<sup>th</sup> Jan 2022 and for the remainder of Tonga on Sat 15<sup>th</sup> Jan 2022 in the morning.

## 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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