



**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: **07**  
Date: **20 January 2022**  
Period: **11am Wed 19<sup>th</sup> Jan 2022– 10am Thurs 20<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; Repair equipment for the cable is anticipated to arrive in Tonga this weekend, to support reinstallation efforts
- Current priority requests from the affected and impacted communities remain as clean drinking water, fuel, food
- Depleted stocks: fuel stocks in Ha'apai, fuel stocks available until Sunday in Vava'u, clean drinking water in 'Eua.
- Ha'apai:
  - Otu'omu'omu'a: 62 evacuated from Mango to Nomuka. One person medevacked from Nomuka to Nuku'alofa today.
  - Lulunga (Tungua, Matuku, Koto) safe as islands are high.
  - Pangai, damages along coastal areas from Pangai to Hihifo.
  - Boat departing today at 12pm and will contact Nuku'alofa to advise of arrival time.
- Priorities for Government of Tonga currently is:
  - (1) cleaning up of Kanokupolu
  - (2) clearing runway
  - (3) water distribution and testing for safety
  - (4) support to Ha'apai.
- International humanitarian support from:
  - NZ Government with the provision of water for distribution on HMNZS Aotearoa (up to 70,000L/day and diving surveyors & a helicopter to chart changes from sea and ports on HMNZS Wellington.
  - Chinese Embassy for food packs for relief distribution
- NEOC received 110 calls, with 21 of these urgent, in the last 24 hours.
- To date, there have been 18 calls from persons with disability & elderly reporting lack of access to tap water. These concerns and requests have been resolved, as a matter of priority
- NEMO water relief distributions to date: 33,959 litres of water.

### 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.
- Initial plans to provide relief items to 'Eua has been postponed from 20 Jan 2022 due to vessels requiring repairs following trips to Ha'apai

### Tongatapu focus

- Relief distributions on 19 January 2022

Kanokupolu/ Ha'atafu	6000L water
Kanokupolu	8000L water
Makaunga, Haveluliku, Veitongo	5000L water
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19000L water</b>

- Tonga Red Cross as partner to NEMO as lead for the Emergency Shelter & Non Food Items, continued to distribute to 254 people across 39 families. TRC distributed kitchen sets, hygiene kits, blankets and solar lamps.
- IDA data review for assessed Tongatapu communities is underway.
- NEMO in collaboration with Tonga Red Cross, MORDI Tonga, Tonga National Youth Congress and Tonga Health, Caritas are distributing food packs, hygiene kits, jerry cans, buckets, kitchen kits to 'Eueiki today.

### 'Eua Update

- 'Eua DEOC Manager advised that community members of the Church of Latter Day Saints were clearing and cleaning the airport.
- 'Ohonua Town Officer has advised that no one can enter the area until it has been surveyed due to health and safety concerns.
- MOH have agreed to send nurses to 'Eua to address the health concerns of the 3 patients at the hospital and the 6 pregnant women.
- Initial plans to travel to 'Eua are postponed due to necessity for boats currently in Ha'apai to return to Tongatapu for repair first.

### Ha'apai Update

- Daily updates are currently scheduled between NEOC and Ha'apai DEOC at 4pm.
- Ha'apai advised that their fuel/ benzine quantity is finished.
- Ha'apai also needs a water pump.

### Vava'u Update

- Reported damage to the marine port lights.
- NEMO has requested an update on Japanese citizens from Vava'u and is awaiting the status update.
- Daily updates are currently scheduled between NEOC and Vava'u DEOC at 4pm.

### International Humanitarian Support

International humanitarian support to the Government of Tonga's response efforts with relief provided in the form of and from:

Donor	Description	Value
New Zealand Government	HMNZS Wellington due to arrive in Tonga on Friday 20 Jan with Hydrographic Survey and Diving teams and a SH-2GI Seasprite helicopter to. <i>This activity is contactless.</i>	chart changes to the port and approaches from the sea

New Zealand Government	HMNZS Aotearoa due to arrive in Tonga on Saturday 21 Jan with bulk water supply for offload to shore and relief stores.	The vessel can carry 250,000L and produce 70,000L per day.
Chinese Embassy	Food packs	TOP\$100,000

### Local support – donations

NEMO & The Government of Tonga has been fortunate to receive generous donations from the following kind residents and businesses:

Donor	Description	Value
Mr Makisi Tonga of Nualei	supplying underground water	can produce 160,000Ltrs/ day. Note: NEMO has been a fortunate recipient of 4000 Ltrs to distribute to the public
Punjas	food packs	\$6,142.50

### Cluster Response

1. Safety & Protection
  - a. provide psychosocial support to the relief distribution;
  - b. Cluster members from NGO sector providing relief to affected communities.
2. Emergency Shelter & Non food items
  - a. Distributing tents, tarpaulin, hygiene kits, kitchen kits to affected communities.
  - b. Working in partnership with Safety & Protection Cluster for distribution.
3. Logistics & Coordination
  - a. Coordinating and supporting relief efforts with Cluster members to affected communities.

### 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.

On Sat 15<sup>th</sup> 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)<sup>1</sup>

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