



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: **08**
Date: **21 January 2022**
Period: **11am Thurs 20th Jan 2022– 10am Fri 21st Jan 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

- The Logistics & Coordination Cluster (NEMO, MEIDEC and First Responders) continues to conduct clearing efforts and coordinate relief to affected communities, with non-government organisation (NGO) support.
- Relief distribution to 'Eua is underway today.
- The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster, on 20 Jan 2022:
 - re-established communication with limited capacity.
 - Travelled with Lulutai Airlines to Niua Toputapu and Niua Fo'ou (Ongo Niua) and Vava'u to assess these islands and install communication equipment,
- Water, Sanitation & Hygiene Cluster (WASH) Cluster advise that water has been tested and ground and rain water is safe to drink
- Tonga has received international humanitarian support from:
 - Australian Government – provision of relief items,
 - Government of China – provision of food relief packs,
 - Government of Japan – provision of relief items,
 - New Zealand Government – provision of relief items,
- Two flights arrived in Tonga from Australia and NZ to deliver relief supplies under COVID19 directions.
- Under the foreign assistance category, naval ships from NZ are en route with water supplies, due to arrive to Tongatapu on Fri 21 and Sat 22 2022
- Naval boats (*Ngahau Koloa and Ngahau Siliva*) returned to Tongatapu yesterday from Ha'apai.
- Safety & Protection Cluster members (Tonga Red Cross, Tonga National Youth Congress, Caritas and Tonga Family Health and Tonga Health Association) installed tents at Kanokupolu and provided food rations, dignity kits, hygiene kits and tents as well as counsellors for psychosocial support.
- Relief distribution on 20 Jan was to Ha'atafu, Ahau, 'Atata, Patangata and Siesia, Makapao, Pangaimotu, Lavengamalie and Kanokupolu.
- The Logistics & Coordination Cluster with support from MORDI Tonga who transported and distributed food packs, hygiene kits, jerry cans, buckets, kitchen kits to 'Eueiki also with support and items from Safety & Protection Cluster members.
- Tonga Red Cross is providing three (3) minutes of free calls to call family based overseas.
- NEOC received 105 calls, with 35 of these urgent, in the last 24 hours. The top 3 urgent requests are (1) water, (2) septic tank leak concerns and (3) tents.

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).
- 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 and to Ha'apai – water, hygiene kits, food, tents and tarpaulin, kitchen kits, dignity kits.
- Relief supply distribution on His Majesty's Armed Forces (HMAF) vessel to 'Eua is underway.

Tongatapu focus

- Water relief distributions on 20 January 2022

Houma (Liku side)	5000L
Houmakelikao	5000L
Nukuhetulu	100L
Fua'amotu	7900L
Kahoua	8000L
TOTAL	26,000L water

- NEMO water relief distributions to date: 59,959 litres of water.
- MORDI Tonga in collaboration with Logistics and Coordination Cluster, transported and distributed food packs, hygiene kits, jerry cans, buckets, kitchen kits to 'Eueiki, with support from NEMO, Ministry of Internal Affairs (as Safety & Protection Cluster Lead), Tonga Red Cross, Tonga National Youth Congress and Tonga Health, Caritas.
- Tonga Health Association provided psychologists to Kanokupolu.
- Free Wesley Church visited Kanokupolu on 20 Jan 2022.
- Tonga Family Health also provided 255 dignity kits for women and girls aged 15 – 45 in 'Ahau as part of relief distribution efforts.
- Psychosocial support provided through the Tonga Health Association.

'Eua Update

- Relief supplies for 'Eua are on its way today, 21 Jan 2022.
- 'Eua DEOC Manager updates:
 1. Essential services cluster: electrical supply is cut to affected areas; and power will be provided based on a schedule.
 2. Only residents are allowed to enter affected areas, as per Town Officer's request.
 3. Update from Shelter Cluster Lead, Ministry of Infrastructure required on wharf as clearance of ash & debris is required.
 4. WASH Cluster has completed spraying for decontamination of cemetery, with affected homes to be sprayed on Saturday. Affected homes will also be sprayed. Further advice sought on ground water consumption.

Ha'apai Update

- Daily updates are currently scheduled between NEOC and Ha'apai DEOC at 4pm.
- Lifuka and Foa island residents are currently organising food supplies for Lulunga and Mu'amu'a.
- HMAF's MV Late will transport the food supplies.

Vava'u Update

- Direct communication from Vava'u to the National Emergency Operations Centre is currently underway

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
Government of Japan	Provision of relief items,	US\$1million
Australia Government (via contactless dropoff by plane, due to COVID19 restrictions)	Provision of relief items	
New Zealand Government (via contactless dropoff by plane, due to COVID19 restrictions)	Provision of relief items	
New Zealand Government (via contactless dropoff by plane, due to COVID19 restrictions)	HMNZS Wellington due to arrive in Tonga on Friday 21 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 (via contactless dropoff by plane, due to COVID19 restrictions)	HMNZS Aotearoa due to arrive in Tonga on Saturday 22 Jan with bulk water supply for offload to shore and relief stores. <i>This activity is contactless.</i>	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. Ongoing provision of psychosocial support to the relief distribution by Ministry of Internal Affairs;
 - 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 (HMAF, Tonga Police, Tonga Fire & Emergency Services) to affected communities.
4. Shelter (Reconstruction Cluster) – conducted assessments on public buildings and wharves.
5. Essential Services Cluster – power is 90% on across Tongatapu; ongoing work in progress.

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 HTHH 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, HTHH 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