



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: **09**
Date: **22 January 2022**
Period: **10am Fri 21st Jan 2022– 12pm Sat 22nd 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, MEIDECC and First Responders) continues to conduct clearing efforts and coordinate relief distribution of affected communities, with non-government organisation (NGO) support.
 - Coordinating the evacuation of Mango Island residents to Tongatapu, arrival time in Tongatapu is to be determined.
- The Emergency Telecommunications Cluster has:
 - established direct contact with Vava'u and the NEOC. Communication is available with Niua Toputapu (NTT), Niua Fo'ou (NF) though intermittent.
 - Continue to work on restoring cable connection.
- The National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) logged an update from Ongo Niuas on 21 Jan 2022 for the first time since the HTHH eruption – tsunami disaster.
- Niua Toputapu residents received warning from family across Tonga and evacuated to high grounds. These residents remain at the evacuation centre and have not returned to their homes.
- Health, Nutrition and Water, Sanitation & Hygiene Cluster (HNWASH) Cluster have:
 - sprayed Popua, Patangata, Kanokupolu, 'Ahau for vector control and decontamination,
 - Tested village tap water and private households rainwater tanks, and
 - Chlorinating village ground water, for safety purposes.
- International humanitarian relief supplies arrived in Tonga from Australia, China and New Zealand, with Japan's supplies due to arrive by plane today. Usual COVID19 restrictions apply to continue to keep Tongans COVID19 safe.
- Two flights arrived yesterday from Australia and New Zealand.
- Mainstreaming of Rural Development Initiative (MORDI) Tonga is providing support to transfer water supplies from the HMNZS Aotearoa. The vessel has commenced producing water from port.
- HMNZS Wellington is in 'Eua currently and will return to Tongatapu on Monday 24 Jan 2022, with SH-2GI Seasprite helicopter to commence work in Tongatapu.
- The Economic & Social Recovery Cluster, led by the Ministry of Finance, provided immediate financial support to 174 households that were deemed completely and severely damaged in Tongatapu.
- Safety & Protection Cluster has:
 - established a counselling telephone line through the Council of Churches for all to access, if needed.
 - Distributed 430 food packages to persons with disabilities (Tongatapu 1, Tongatapu 4 and Tongatapu 5).
- NEOC received 157 calls, with 22 of these urgent, in the past 24 hours. The top 3 urgent requests are (1) shelter (tarpaulin), (2) water pumps and (3) water.

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, Ha'apai and 'Eua– water, hygiene kits, food, tents and tarpaulin, kitchen kits, dignity kits.

Tongatapu (TBU) update

- NEMO water relief distributions remain to date: 85,959 litres of water.
- Caritas and Tonga Youth National Congress (TNYC) distributed 20 jerry cans and 100 x10 L buckets to Kanokupolu.

Niuas Ongo Update

- Niuva Toputapu (NTT) has run out of fuel stocks; approximately 1/3 of the solar street lights are not working (24/86),
- NTT need a ferry to bring fuel and retail shop supplies to the island and to transport children to TBU for school.

'Eua Update

- 'Eua DEOC Manager updates:
 1. First Responders (Tonga Fire and Emergency Services (TFES)) are cleaning up 'Eua High School roof,
 2. Kaufana Airport runway is being cleaned,
 3. 'Ohonua is being cleaned of debris by the First Responders, including auxiliary and NGO representatives from Tonga Red Cross and MORDI Tonga.
 4. Food rations to be distributed to all families of damaged houses.

Ha'apai Update

- Evacuating communities from Mango to Tongatapu, coordinated by Logistics & Coordination Cluster (transportation support by His Majesty's Armed Forces (HMAF)).
- *MV Maui* departed Fri 21 Jan for Ha'apai with stocks provided by NEMO (26,000 L water) and 7 drums of diesel and 1 drum of benzene and was organised by the Church of Latter Day Saints for Ha'apai.

Vava'u Update

- Vava'u DEOC has requested: (1) two cables, (2) turner, (3) power supply.

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	HMNZS Wellington due to arrive in Tonga on Friday 20 Jan with Hydrographic Survey and Diving teams and a SH-2GI Seasprite helicopter	chart changes to the port and approaches from the sea

plane, due to COVID19 restrictions)	to conduct surveying activities. <i>This activity is contactless.</i>	
New Zealand Government (via contactless dropoff by plane, due to COVID19 restrictions)	HMNZS Aotearoa due to arrive in Tonga on Saturday 21 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 (ongoing efforts)

1. Logistics & Coordination
 - a. Coordinating and supporting relief efforts with Cluster members (HMAF, Tonga Police, Tonga Fire & Emergency Services) to affected communities.
 - b. First Responders (TFES) are supporting Tonga Power (Essential Services Cluster) when working in the communities.
2. Safety & Protection
 - a. Ongoing provision of psychosocial support to the relief distribution by Ministry of Internal Affairs
 - b. established a counselling telephone line through the Council of Churches on 7580110.
 - c. Cluster members from NGO sector providing relief to affected communities.
3. 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.
4. Shelter (Reconstruction Cluster) – conducted assessments on public buildings and wharves. Data to be shared with NEMO
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