



**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: **11**
Date: **25 January 2022**
Period: **11am Mon 24th Jan 2022 – 10am Thurs 27 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

- As at 8.00am Sun 16 Jan 2022 Tonga was declared as a State of Emergency (SOE) for the Hunga Tonga Hunga Ha'apai volcanic eruption that triggered tsunami waves on Sat 15th Jan 2022.
- This SOE commenced at Sunday 16 January 2022 to 8.00am Sunday 13 February 2022 and was announced on 19 Jan by the Prime Minister, Honourable Hu'akavameiliku.
- 'Otunga'ofa left for Ha'apai on 24 Jan 2022, with 20 tents, 40 tarpaulin, 60 hygiene kits, 4 drums of diesel, 1 drum of benzene.
- The Initial Damage Assessment (IDA) team departed for Ha'apai on 24 Jan 2022 as part of the verification process.
- The Intra-Cluster meeting was held on Tues 25th Jan 2022 for Cluster updates and to request the Clusters response plan for submission by
- HNWASH conducted an IDA on the health system:
 - Tongatapu (Vaiola) Hospital, health centres & clinics & 'Eua (Niu'eiki) Hospital operational though with layers of volcanic ash on premises, water tanks and rooftops.
 - In Ha'apai, Princess Fusipala Hospital (in Pangai) was used as an evacuation shelter and remains operational, Niu'ui Hospital (in Hihifo) had minor damage but operational.
 - In Ha'apai Islands, Ha'afeva Health Centre is operational due to HMAF support with clean up, Nomuka Health Centre is not operational.
 - Tonga Emergency Medical Assistance Team (TEMAT) supported by the World Health Organisation (WHO) mobilised on 16th Jan 2022 and has conducted health assessments to stabilise conditions and address immediate and critical health needs
- Distribution to Mango and 'Atata – 2 washing machines, 2 deep freeze freezers, 4 clothes iron, 4 stoves, 4 crockery sets, 65 cutlery sets for Mango and 110 cutlery sets for "Atata.
- International humanitarian support has been received recently from Australia, Japan, China, France and New Zealand and continue to arrive by air and sea. All vessels are required to abide by Tonga's COVID19 protocols with delivery of relief items, to keep Tonga COVID19 safe.
- The National Emergency Operations Centre (NEOC) received 254 calls on Mon 24 Jan – Wed 26 Jan. The top 3 requests were for (1) water blasters, (2) relief supplies, (3) Sitreps.
- Top 3 complaints received: (1) not involved in IDA (2) not received distribution (3) distribution not fairly done.

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.
- Relief supplies

Cluster Update

- An Intra-Cluster meeting was held at Fa'onehua Centre on Tues 25 January 2022.
- Each cluster provided a brief update and is required to submit a response plan to NEMO by close of business Thurs 27 Jan 2022.
- Logistics & Coordination Cluster
 - coordinated the IDA team to travel to Ha'apai to Pangai, for verification of data for 4 days, with the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Infrastructure also travelling to the affected communities,
 - coordinating the arrival of vessels and flights and the release of supplies.
 - Tonga Fire and Emergency Services (TFES) continue to provide support with cleaning efforts and now focused on schools in Fasi and Maufanga with plans for Nuku'alofa GPS, St Andrew, Tonga College.
 - His Majesty's Armed Forces also advised that HMS Ngahau Koula and Late are on standby.
- Emergency Shelter and Non Food Items Cluster continue to distribute tents, tarpaulin, hygiene kits, kitchen kits to affected families with support of Tonga Red Cross, MORDI Tonga, Tonga National Youth Congress with deliveries and supplies.
- Health, Nutrition, Water, Sanitation & Hygiene (HNWASH) Cluster:
 - Conducted an IDA on the health system and report that Tongatapu Hospital, health centres and clinics
 - All tap water in Tongatapu has been tested and is safe and treated with chlorine.
 - Continue to treat rainwater to minimise risk of contamination.
 - Ha'apai is identified as a priority for water distribution, with water filters.
 - Completed first week of spraying to reduce risk of disease outbreak, will conduct another one the following week.
 - Mango Island evacuees all received a health screening upon arrival.
 - Focus on sanitation and need to determine the number of portaloos available or use disposable loo card boxes.
- Essential Services Cluster:
 - Cable damages were found approx 90km from Tonga indicating significant damage
 - TCC used business continuity plan, activated satellite plan on 16th Jan and with increased capacity on 20th Jan to restore embassies and public offices. Satellite link needed to establish connection to Vava'u.
 - Tonga Broadcasting Commission (TBC) advised the AM radio is not working due to ash and had requested assistance (TFES) to clear the ashes at Popua Tower.
 - Tonga Airports Limited (TAL) need sweeper to clear the runways in Vava'u and Ha'apai. Current domestic travel is still limited.
 - Friendly Island Shipping Agency advised that ropes to tie ships were broken on the wharf, ships radar is fixed to enable travel to the outer islands.
 - Ports Authority is in 'Eua to clear the port.

- Food Security & Livelihood Cluster
 - Fisheries update - Funding from NEMC has been approved for: (1) decreasing price for deep sea fishing to \$5 per kg for palu for a month, similar for tuna fishing vessels.
 - Fish and other ocean stock will be tested and the public will be advised, this is with the support of NZ Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.
 - Rehabilitation of farming aquaculture is underway, esp mokohonu and kanahe.
 - Ministry of Food & Forests report, from previous NEMC as sent apologies for this meeting, conducted a survey crop damage identifying new crops and crops close to harvest to indicate the availability of fresh crops and timeframes.
- Shelter / Reconstruction Cluster reported:
 - 32 fully destroyed/ major and 13 minor damages in ‘Eua, including commercial buildings in Tufuvai.
- Education cluster:
 - Request to HNWASH to treat water at schools for safe drinking,
 - Currently targeting Mon 31 Jan for school to start for the year, to be determined by Friday to prepare the students.
 - Concerned about Ha’apai as reports are not clear though Ministry for Education and Training representative is on the boat too.
- Economic and Social Recovery Cluster:
 - Cash distribution to affected families is awaiting data verification before proceeding.
 - Requested immediate response plan for each Cluster.
 - Tourism sector are to conduct a survey on damaged resorts, highlighting that all resorts in ‘Eua were all completely damaged.
 - Trade and Economic Department will conduct an assessment (IDA) on all businesses affected in Tongatapu.
- Emergency Telecommunications Cluster:
 - continues to work to repair cable and communication between the islands;
 - internet connectivity is available though limited.
 - Telecoms advised that Digicel and TCC internet is up and running though limited capacity, Digicel is awaiting equipment (in quarantine) to restore some of their services.
 - Awaiting equipment that has been sent to assist with repair.
 - Work on tower dependent on receipt of equipment.
- Safety & Protection Cluster is providing:
 - Ongoing psychosocial support with the relief distribution teams
 - established a counselling telephone line through the Council of Churches on 7580110.
 - Cluster members from NGO sector providing relief to affected communities.
 - 70 families were supported in the islands.

Tongatapu (TBU) update

- Tonga Family Health Association (TFHA) have conducted mobile clinic outreach to Mango camp at Longolongo, Patangata, ‘Aha and Sopa.
- TFHA also provided sexual reproductive health and gender based violence sessions in gender friendly safe spaces.
- Distribution to 6 homes in Ma’ufanga, 3 homes in Kolomotu’a, 3 homes in Patangata.
- Water distribution from HMNZS Aotearoa

Details	Litres
Total Water from Aotearoa	400,000
Water Rec @ Matatua	223,000
Water from Aotearoa delivered to Community	177,000
Water Dis from Matatua	133,320
Balance as of 26/01	89,680

‘Eua Update

- Clean up of wharf has been completed, however still on standby for repairs,
- Maintenance of petroleum tanks is currently underway
- ‘Ohonua community has:
 - commenced their clean up (as it was delayed due to health concerns) and requested a loader to support their efforts.
 - requested further assistance for waste management with the excess waste at ‘Ohonua.
 - Requested water bill be waived for this month as still recovering.
- HNWASH advise:
 - patients have been sent to TBU via Late,
 - hospital operations are back to normal,
 - Second dose of vector control spray to Makaunga cemetery and all affected areas,
 - water is safe for consumption following testing.
- TFES has completed cleaning the Palace in ‘Eua and the airport’s irrigation.

Ha’apai Update.

- Ngahau Koula has reached Tungua Island, currently taking the surveyors there.
- Assessments were conducted at Uiha, Felemea on Wed 26th Jan 2022.

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

Donor	Description
Australia	Provision of relief items - 5 flights arrived to date, 4 flights’ cargo completed quarantine. - 1 vessel – HMAS Adelaide – cargo undergoing quarantine.
China	Food packs provided for distribution. Two vessels arriving today (27 Jan 2022)
Japan	Provision of relief items - 2 flights have landed and provided relief items, one flight has completed the 72 hours quarantine
New Zealand	Provision of relief items - 2 flights have arrived to date, cargo completed quarantine. - 2 vessels – HMNZS Aotearoa, HMNZS Wellington
United Kingdom	Provision of relief items - 1 vessel, HMS Spey – cargo undergoing quarantine.

- Flights from Australia, NZ and Japan 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.
- There are currently four ocean vessels in Tonga, all are required to conduct contactless delivery of relief supplies: HMNZS Wellington, HMNZS Aotearoa, HMS Spey and HMAS Adelaide.
- HMNZS Wellington and HMNZS Aotearoa relief supplies have been released, following the COVID19 protocols.

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