



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: **02**
Date: **15 January 2022** Period: **1100 15 Jan 2022 to 1630hrs**

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

- Tonga Geological Services issued a public notice at 0720AM of the HTHH volcanic activity monitored from 0420 to 0620AM on Fri 14th Jan 2022.
- The National Emergency Management Committee met at 0100PM on Friday 14th Jan 2022.
- The National Emergency Coordination Centre was activated, District Emergency Operation Centres in the outer islands are on standby.
- Ha'apai's Fonoi and Mango Islands report volcanic ash compromising water supplies and fluctuating sea levels.
- NEMO and HMAF implemented the Government of Tonga's immediate response to provide clean drinking water the Fonoi and Mango island residents.
- The Voea Ngahau Siliva departed Tongatapu at 0800hrs on Sat 15th Jan 2022 with 3450 litres of clean water for 10 days for up to 115 residents over 28 households for drinking and food.
- Fonoi island received 264 water containers (8L each) for 88 residents.
- Mango island received the remaining 171 water containers, to be confirmed by distributing crew.

Figure 1: HIRAWARU B AH Satellite Imagery captured at 12:00 PM, 14/1/2022 (Local Time) showing volcanic ash clouds at altitude 5-20km above sea level spreading at 160km radius from the volcano.



Background

The Tonga Geological Services commenced reporting on the Hunga Tonga Hunga Ha'apai (HTHH) volcanic activity on 20 December 2021 with aviation code immediately heightened to red. TGS monitored the volcanic activity with public advice provided to the public from 20 December 2021 until 2 January 2022. Environmental and public health warnings were provided with regards to the potential of water contamination from the ash fall and potential of acid rain in Ha'apai, as well as 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 advised on 11th January 2022 that there was no activity from HTHH since 2nd January 2022.

On 14th January 2022, Tonga Met issued a Tsunami Marine warning from the National Tsunami Warning Centre at 11.12am directly to the public, following TGS' public notice of increased volcanic activity again. The tsunami marine warning was cancelled for Vava'u and Ongo Niua in the evening of Friday 14th January and for the whole of Tonga on Sat 15th January 2022.

Current situation

- On 14th January 2022 TGS reissued an alert, following volcanic activity and Tongatapu and 'Eua communities impacted by the smell of sulfur.
- The National Emergency Operations Centre remains activated 24/7 and is monitoring TGS updates on HTHH activity.
- NEMO developed a targeted immediate response plan for HTHH affected communities in the Ha'apai Islands group and will implement with HMAF support and transportation.
- On 15th January 2022, NEMO and HMAF departed Tongatapu, on the HMAF naval vessel, *VOEA Ngahau Siliva*, at 0800hours for Fonoi and Mango Islands with 3450 litres of clean drinking water.
- NEMO and HMAF distributed 435 containers of water (each 8 L) to Fonoi and Mango Islands with an estimate of 115 residents based on Tonga Statistics Department Census Survey 2021 across 28 households.
- The community have been advised that it is for drinking and food and encouraged to use it wisely so it can last up to 10 days. Extra water supplies were provided for households with women and girls, persons with disabilities, elderly and sick for sanitation and hygiene purposes.
- NEMO is developing a medium – long term to response to ensure Fonoi and Mango island residents have ongoing access to clean water for drinking and food.
- NEMO will also assess dwellings and food supply in Fonoi, Mango and Nomuka.
- TGS via the Potungaue Koloa Naturale facebook page continues to keep the public up to date.
- NEMO will provide updates to NEOC on the distribution.

Further updates

TGS will continue to monitor volcanic activity and advise NEMO and the public accordingly, to assist in any further preparations as required.