



# National Disaster Risk Management Office

Ministry of MEIDECC, Tonga

## NEWS LETTER

September-November 2025

*NDRMO's mission is strengthen resilience and improve preparedness to save lives, protect livelihoods and assets of communities and individuals from the impact of hazards*

Established in 2007, with the enactment of DRM Act 2021, NDRMO focus on national disaster resilience through policy, planning & partnerships

### NDRMO - News Updates

4-5 November 2025 - Koror, Palau:

## Tonga Participates in the Second Pacific Disaster Risk Management Ministers' Meeting in Palau



*Pacific Disaster Risk Management Ministers and senior officials gather for a group photo during the Second Pacific DRM Ministers Meeting held in Koror, Palau, from 4-5 November 2025*

The National Disaster Risk Management Office (NDRMO) under the Ministry of MEIDECC represented Tonga at the Second Pacific Disaster Risk Management Ministers' Meeting held in Koror, Palau, from 4–5 November 2025. The Tongan delegation included Mr. Mafua-'i-Vai'utukakau Maka and Mr. Aisea Vaituilua Fungavai from NDRMO, along with Mr. Vatulele Tuputupa Director of the Corporate Service Department (MEIDECC).

Hosted by the Government of Palau in partnership with the Pacific Community (SPC) and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), the meeting brought together Pacific ministers, senior officials, and development partners to strengthen collaboration on disaster preparedness, response, and resilience.

Key outcomes included endorsement of the Pacific Humanitarian Response Coordination Mechanism (PResCoM), advancement of the Pacific Humanitarian Warehousing Programme (PHWP), and the groundbreaking of Palau's new humanitarian warehouse, which will enhance regional logistics and emergency coordination.

The Tonga delegation also engaged with partners to advance national DRM priorities—strengthening early warning systems, finalising DRM Regulations, improving cluster coordination, and supporting new humanitarian warehouses in Vava'u and Ha'apai. NDRMO highlighted Tonga's commitment to regional solidarity and building a resilient Pacific through closer cooperation and shared action.

### In this Newsletter

- Tonga participates in the 2nd Pacific Disaster Risk Management Ministers' Meeting in Palau
- Key highlights of International Day of Disaster Risk Reduction IDDRR2025 Week; Tsunami Evacuation signboards, community preparedness drills, schools awareness in 'Eua
- EOC training held in 'Ha'apai and 'Eua
- Inter-Cluster Coordination Meeting to review preparedness for the Cyclone Season 2025-26
- Tonga MET and NDRMO Leads National TV Programme on Cyclone Season Preparedness
- Tonga Highlights National Priorities on Climate Action and Climate-Ready Infrastructure at COP 30
- NDRMO Attends Planning Meeting for Humanitarian Assistance Disaster Response (HADR) Exercise in USA
- Land Secured in Vava'u for New Humanitarian Warehouse - PHWP Team Site Visit
- Tonga Contributes to Regional Meetings on Early Warning & Disaster Readiness, Solomon
- Tonga Participates in Regional Workshop on Enhancing Pacific Disaster Risk Financing
- NDRMO Participates in Tsunami Early Warning Training in Hawaii
- Tonga conducted national-wide survey on Critical Infrastructure
- NDRMO Cyclone Season Small Islands Outreach in Ha'apai



*Tongan delegation Mr. Mafua-'i-Vai'utukakau Maka, Mr. Aisea Vaituilua Fungavai (NDRMO), Mr. Vatulele Tuputupa Director of the Corporate Service Department (MEIDECC), Ms. Popua 'Aho, Tonga Broadcasting Commission (TBC) with Dr. Paula Vivili - Director-General of SPC at the DRM Ministers' meeting in Palau.*



## Key Highlights - International Day of Disaster Risk Reduction (IDDRR 2025)

### ‘Eua Communities Joins NDRMO to Mark IDDRR Week 2025



On 13 October, the National Disaster Risk Management Office (NDRMO) launched the week-long International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction (IDDRR) 2025 celebrations in ‘Eua with an Opening Ceremony and Booth Exhibition at Malau Hall. The event brought together local communities, schools, and government partners to promote disaster preparedness and community resilience.

Various booths showcased disaster risk reduction (DRR) initiatives, educational displays, and awareness materials developed by NDRMO, schools, and partner agencies. The activity showed Tonga’s ongoing commitment to building safer and more resilient communities, emphasizing that preparedness is key to protecting lives, livelihoods, and the nation’s future.



### Strengthening Tsunami Preparedness in ‘Eua Island: Unveiling of New Tsunami Evacuation Boards



To strengthen community preparedness for tsunami hazards, NDRMO unveiled new Tsunami Evacuation Boards in ‘Eua as part of ongoing efforts to enhance public awareness and early warning readiness.

A total of five evacuation signboards have been installed at key locations across the island — two in Tufuvala and three in ‘Ohonua. These signboards clearly mark evacuation routes and safe assembly areas, helping ensure that residents and visitors can respond quickly and safely in the event of a tsunami warning.

This initiative reinforces Tonga’s commitment to building safer and more resilient communities under the Disaster Risk Management Act 2021, National Disaster Risk Management Policy 2023–2030 and the Multi-Hazard Early Warning Policy 2024–2030.

The activity also aligns with global observances of the International Tsunami Day and the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction (IDDRR), promoting a culture of preparedness across the Kingdom.





## International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction Week 2025 School Tsunami Evacuation Drill Held in 'Eua



On 16 October, as part of the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction (IDDRR) Week 2025, the National Disaster Risk Management Office (NDRMO), in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, conducted a school tsunami evacuation drill in 'Eua.

Students and teachers from GMS 'Ohonua and GMS Tufuvai Schools participated in the exercise, practicing safe evacuation procedures and reinforcing Tonga's ongoing

commitment to disaster preparedness and resilience.

A debrief session followed, engaging school staff, local authorities, and response partners to discuss lessons learned and enhance coordination for future drills. The activity demonstrated the importance of practical preparedness to ensure that schools and communities in Tonga can respond quickly and effectively during a tsunami emergency.



## School DRR Awareness Sessions held in 'Eua



On 14 October, as part of the International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction (IDDRR) Week 2025 activities, the National Disaster Risk Management Office (NDRMO), in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, conducted school awareness sessions at GMS 'Ohonua School to promote disaster preparedness and safe practices among students.

The sessions featured interactive demonstrations and discussions on how to

stay safe before, during, and after disasters, helping children understand the importance of preparedness and early action in protecting themselves and their communities.

This joint initiative supports ongoing efforts to strengthen Safer Schools across Tonga, ensuring that students and teachers are better equipped with the knowledge and skills to respond effectively to emergencies.

## Tonga MET & NDRMO Lead TV Program on Cyclone Season Preparedness 2025-2026



On 30 October, Tonga Meteorological Services (MET) led a national TV program along with the National Disaster Risk Management Office (NDRMO) and relevant government ministries to raise public awareness on preparedness for the upcoming Tropical Cyclone Season 2025–2026. The discussion focused on the seasonal outlook, expected weather conditions, and key preparedness measures to help communities and sectors across Tonga stay safe and resilient. The program emphasized the importance of early warning systems, timely dissemination of information, and coordinated actions among all government agencies to strengthen national preparedness.



## Inter-Cluster Coordination Meeting Held to Review Preparedness for Cyclone Season 2025-26



On 30 October, National Disaster Risk Management Office (NDRMO) convened the Inter-Cluster Coordination Committee (ICCC) Meeting at the NDRMO Conference Room. The meeting brought together Cluster Leads and key partners to review the Tropical Cyclone Season Outlook 2025–26 presented by the Tonga Meteorological Services and to discuss

preparedness and coordination measures across sectors. Participants reviewed ENSO conditions, historical cyclone patterns, expected rainfall and sector impacts, key messages for the season, and dissemination plans. Cluster Leads and NDRMO also provided updates on their state of readiness and preparation for the upcoming cyclone season.

## National Survey on Critical Infrastructure

NDRMO, in partnership with the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) and the Pacific Community (SPC), continued work this quarter on the National Critical Infrastructure Survey. The assessment is mapping more than 3,600 schools, health centres, evacuation centres and water and power systems across Tongatapu, Ha'apai and Vava'u to understand their exposure to multi-hazard risks.

Several Tongan ministries are actively participating — including Infrastructure, Health, Education, Lands and Natural Resources, and MEIDECC — ensuring the results reflect national priorities.

The survey will be completed next year and will provide Tonga's first nationwide baseline for identifying priority facilities for retrofitting and guiding resilience-focused investment by Government and development partners.

## EOC Training held in 'Eua Island

### Enhancing Emergency Response Capacity



On 14 & 15 October, NDRMO conducted Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) training in 'Eua Island to strengthen coordination and response during emergencies.

The training brought together representatives from the Ministry of MEIDECC, Tonga Police, Tonga Fire and

Emergency Services, Ministry of Health, and His Majesty's Armed Forces, focusing on teamwork, communication flow, and operational procedures during disasters.

This initiative, held as part of IDDRR Week 2025, aims to enhance local response capacity and ensure 'Eua is well-prepared for future emergencies.

## NDRMO Build EOC Capacity in Ha'apai Ahead of Cyclone Season

From 18-19 November, the Early Warning and Response Division of NDRMO conducted Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) Training in Ha'apai. The program combined theoretical sessions with a simulated exercise to strengthen the Island EOC's ability to manage emergencies in a coordinated way.

The training also introduced the forthcoming Island EOC Manual and equipped participants with skills to respond effectively as cyclone season approaches. Similar trainings were held in Vava'u and 'Eua to enhance preparedness across the islands.

NDRMO acknowledges the technical support from NEMA and financial support from BRSP II Project under (SPC) for the training.

26-28 September, Sydney, Australia

## NDRMO Engages in Space-Based Solutions for Coastal Resilience at IAF Workshop



Ms. 'Ofa Ema Petulisa Masiwawa, GIS Specialist at NDRMO Tonga, attended the IAF Workshop on "Resilient Coasts, Resilient Earth: Innovative Space Solutions for Coastal Resilience & Emergency Management."

During the event, Tonga met with UNOOSA Director Mrs. Aarti Holla-Maini, where NDRMO highlighted the success of the UN-

SPIDER Tonga Disaster Platform pilot for Tongatapu and discussed continued satellite-based early warning support.

Ms. Masiwawa also joined a regional panel session, sharing Tonga's experience in applying Earth observation and geospatial technology to strengthen disaster risk reduction and emergency management.



## NDRMO Strengthens Climate Change Adaptation Capacity through Training in China



Ms. Kalisi Veikoso from NDRMO Tonga attended the Seminar on Climate Change Adaptation Capacity Building and Marine Environmental Protection in Qingdao, China, from 1–13 September 2025. The programme, organised by the Centre for Ocean Carbon Neutrality of the Ocean University of China and funded by the Ministry of Ecology and Environment of China, brought together participants from developing countries to share knowledge on climate adaptation, blue economy, and marine protection.

Ms. Veikoso's participation strengthened NDRMO's technical capacity in climate adaptation, carbon neutrality, and disaster risk reduction, while highlighting the value of enhanced collaboration with China and greater coordination among Tonga's NDRMO, Ministry of Education, and Ministry of Fisheries in promoting climate awareness and sustainable development.

6-15 November, Ha'apai

## NDRMO Cyclone Season Small Islands Outreach



From 6–15 November, NDRMO team conducted the Cyclone Season Small Island Visit across the Ha'apai island group to strengthen preparedness ahead of the cyclone season. The team focused on updating geospatial databases, confirming tsunami mapping and signboard locations, and collecting critical infrastructure spatial data. The team also carried out courtesy engagements with community leaders and local authorities.



In total, the team reached 11 islands and over 20 communities, concluding with a courtesy visit to the Office of the Governor of Ha'apai together with the EOC team. This activity was proudly supported by the BSRP II Project under SPC.

From 24–29 November, the NDRMO team will continue the Cyclone Season Small Island Visit in Vava'u.

## NDRMO Participates in Tsunami Early Warning Training in Hawaii



Mr. Mafi Toutai Penisoni, Manager of the Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) at NDRMO, attended the ITIC Training Programme on Tsunami Early Warning Systems in Honolulu, Hawaii, from 15–26 September 2025. The training, delivered by UNESCO-IOC and NOAA's International Tsunami Information Center, focused on tsunami early warning, evacuation planning, and community preparedness. The skills gained will support updates to SOPs, strengthen evacuation mapping, and advance the UNESCO-IOC Tsunami Ready Programme in Tonga, contributing to NDRMO's ongoing work to improve early warning and tsunami response systems nationwide.



10-21 November, COP30 Belém, Brazil

## Tonga Highlights National Priorities on Climate Action and Climate-Ready Infrastructure at COP30



Tonga participated actively at COP30 in Belém, Brazil, demonstrating the Kingdom's strong global leadership on climate action and adaptation. Delivering Tonga's national statement, Chief Secretary and Secretary to Cabinet, Mr. Paula Pouvalu Ma'u, stressed that climate change remains the most serious and existential threat to Tonga and called for urgent, scaled-up action to keep the 1.5°C target within reach, improve access to climate finance, and accelerate efforts on loss and damage, adaptation, and renewable energy.

Tonga also highlighted its national frameworks during the CDRI High-Level Side Event on Infrastructure for Climate Adaptation, where Mr. Mafua 'i Vai'utukakau

Maka, Director of NDRMO, outlined Tonga's national priorities under the Disaster Risk Management Act 2021 and the National DRM Policy 2023–2030. He emphasized the need for predictable long-term financing for climate-ready infrastructure in small island developing states and strengthened Tonga's commitment to global and regional collaboration through the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI).

Through strong engagement across multiple COP30 platforms, Tonga continued to amplify Pacific priorities and climate justice, ensuring that the experiences and needs of frontline communities remain central to global climate negotiations and decision-making.

## NDRMO Participates in Gender and Diversity in Disaster Risk Reduction Programme - Japan



In November, Mr. Mafi Toutai Penisoni, EOC Manager at NDRMO Tonga, participated in the "Gender and Diversity in Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change" training held in Japan.

The programme focused on integrating women, youth, the elderly, persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups into disaster preparedness, response, and recovery. Mr. Mafi shared Tonga's experience in community-based DRM, NEOC operations, and the rollout of Village and Island DRM Committees.

The knowledge gained will support more inclusive emergency operations and resilience-building for all communities in Tonga.

## NDRMO Attend Planning Meeting for HADR Exercise Taufatahi in Nevada, USA



The director of the NDRMO Mr. Mafua-'i-Vai'utukakau Maka along with senior NDRMO officer Mr. Lazarus Vaipulu attended the Planning Meeting for the Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Exercise Taufatahi, held in Reno, Nevada, USA, from 10–19 September 2025.

Financial assistance provided by the Nevada National Guard, aimed to strengthen coordination and planning for Exercise Taufatahi, a live disaster response exercise

scheduled for September 2026.

The event provided valuable insights into developing disaster response plans, strengthening collaboration with first responder agencies, and enhancing coordination mechanisms—key priorities under Tonga's DRM Policy.

NDRMO's participation enhances Tonga's efforts to strengthening preparedness, coordination, and operational readiness for effective disaster response.

## NDRMO Attends Climate Change Training in China



In October, Ms. Melelupe Mafi Tulikihakau from the NDRMO Tonga attended a training program on Climate Change and Sustainable Development in China, supported by the Ministry of Commerce of the People's Republic of China. The program shared China's experience in addressing climate change, promoting renewable energy, emission reduction, and reforestation, and strengthening cooperation with other developing countries. It also highlighted how climate action is integrated into national development to reduce disaster risks. The training enhanced the importance of collaboration between the Departments of Climate Change, Energy, and NDRMO to support Tonga's efforts in climate resilience and sustainable development.



22-26 September 2025, Honiara, Solomon

## Strengthening Early Warning Coordination: Tonga Takes Part in Regional Meeting



Mr. Aisea Vaituilua Fungavai from the National Disaster Risk Management Office (NDRMO) represented Tonga at a series of high-level regional engagements held in Honiara, including the Early Warning and Weather Ready Programme Meeting, the Weather Ready Pacific Steering Committee Meeting, and the Pacific Meteorological Council (PMC) Out-of-Session Meeting.

Organised by SPREP in collaboration with WMO and UNDRR, the meetings focused on strengthening multi-hazard early warning systems, weather and climate services, and coordinated disaster preparedness across

the Pacific. Discussions aligned closely with Tonga's national priorities under the Disaster Risk Management Act 2021 and the National Multi-Hazard Early Warning Policy 2024–2030, offering valuable opportunities for technical learning and regional collaboration.

NDRMO acknowledges the UNDRR Pacific Office for financial support. Key outcomes from the meetings will be shared with internal teams and community-level DRM committees to reinforce national preparedness as Tonga enters the cyclone season.

## NDRMO Participates in Osaka Expo International Exchange Programme in Japan



From 1-12 August, Ms. Kalisi Veikoso from NDRMO Tonga, participated in the 2025 Osaka Expo International Exchange Program held in Osaka and Saga City, Japan. The programme—funded by the Terra People Association (TPA)—focused on strengthening cooperation between Tonga and Japan on climate change, disaster preparedness, and youth engagement. It forms part of Japan's broader Expo International Exchange initiative, aimed at long-term partnerships with participating countries.

Through workshops, discussions, and site visits, the exchange highlighted shared challenges in climate resilience and natural disaster countermeasures.

Ms. Veikoso's participation helped strengthen networks with Japanese partners and reinforced the importance of investing in youth-focused disaster awareness and preparedness programmes, including collaboration with TPA and schools across Tonga.

October 2025 - Neiafu, Vava'u:

## Land Secured in Vava'u for New Humanitarian Warehouse - PHWP Team Site Visit

The Pacific Humanitarian Warehousing Programme (PHWP) team visited Tonga in October to progress plans for the establishment of a new humanitarian warehouse in Vava'u.

During the visit, the PHWP team visited the allocated land in Fangatongo, Neiafu, which has been formally consented by His Majesty for the exclusive purpose of disaster preparedness.

The site is positioned near Neiafu town, the harbour, and the airport, ensuring efficient access for emergency deployment across northern Tonga. The PHWP team also held discussions with local stakeholders and paid a courtesy call to the Governor of Vava'u, reinforcing

strong community and government collaboration for future development of the warehouse.

The warehouse will serve as a strategic logistics hub to improve disaster preparedness and emergency response for Vava'u, Niuafo'ou, and Niuatoputapu, and strengthen Tonga's national supply chain for humanitarian relief.

Once completed, the warehouse will enable pre-positioning of essential relief supplies and enhance coordination through the Vava'u Emergency Coordination Centre, marking a major step forward in decentralizing Tonga's humanitarian logistics and strengthening national resilience.





30-31 October 2025 in Fiji:

## Tonga Participates in Regional Workshop on Enhancing Pacific Disaster Risk Financing



Representatives from the National Disaster Risk Management Office (NDRMO) — Mr. Lazarus 'Ahiohio Vaipulu and Mr. Taha'asilamea Sila Ki Vai Manu — participated in the Regional Consultation Workshop on Enhancing Pacific Disaster Risk Financing, held from 30–31 October 2025 in Nadi, Fiji.

Organized by the Asian Development Bank

(ADB) with support from the Government of Japan, the workshop brought together officials from Pacific Island countries to discuss ways to strengthen financial resilience against disasters.

Discussions focused on developing a multi-donor trust fund (MDTF) for disaster risk financing, sharing experiences from the Pacific Disaster Resilience Program, and

exploring innovative financial solutions to improve disaster preparedness and response.

Tonga's participation highlights its continued commitment to building financial resilience and advancing disaster risk management across the Pacific.

## Highlights of Various NDRMO Engagements



Director NDRMO Mr. Mafua-'i-Vai'utukakau Maka at Ministerial Meeting, Palau



Photo during PHWP Team Visit in Tonga



Early Warning and Weather Ready Programme Meeting in Honiara, Solomon



NDRMO Team delivering School Awareness in 'Eua during IDDRR2025



Director NDMRO in a Panel discussion at the CDRI Side Event, COP30, Brazil

### For Contact:

National Disaster Risk Management Office (NDRMO), the Ministry of MEIDECC, Tonga  
Phone: 28004, 28005, Toll Free: 0800-6366, Website: [www.nemotonga.gov.to](http://www.nemotonga.gov.to)