

Royal Navy Ship Delivering Emergency Aid into Tonga

Press release

Royal Navy ship HMS Spey arrived into Tonga today (Wednesday 26 January) where her crew have unloaded disaster relief following the devastating Tonga-Hunga-Ha'apai underwater volcanic eruption and tsunami.



HMS Spey delivering humanitarian aid to Tonga

The Batch 2 Offshore Patrol Vessel (OPV) delivered UK Aid stores comprising:

- 30,000 litres of bottled water
- Medical supplies for over 300 first aid kits
- PPE
- Basic sanitation and baby products

The ship arrived into Nuku'alofa, the capital city of Tonga on the island of Tongatapu. The aid stores are being collected at a logistics hub as part of international aid efforts. The supplies are then coordinated and will be moved to islands near to the volcano that were severely impacted by the disaster.

Tonga's protective COVID regulations mean that sailors could not disembark the ship so all stores were moved using HMS Spey's crane. The packaging and moving the deliveries by crane was supported by the whole ship's company.

Armed Forces Minister James Heappey said:

Responding to humanitarian crises across the globe is a core part of our of Armed Forces' daily business. The crew and company of HMS Spey have demonstrated that this week by delivering this vital aid.

The UK is a long-standing partner of the Pacific Islands and having the ship deployed in the Indo-Pacific meant that we could be there

for Tonga in their hour of need, as the Island begins to rebuild their homes and communities.

Nuku'alofa is away from the worst damage however there are still visible signs of ash and debris coating the rooftops and trees along the shore. New Zealand's ship HMNZS Aotearoa and Australian ship HMAS Adelaide, carrying vital UK Aid supplies requested by the Tongan government, have arrived off the coast of Tonga and are preparing to disembark their supplies.

Commanding Officer of HMS Spey, Commander Michael Proudman, said:

I am immensely proud of my Ship's Company. Their flexibility, hard work and speed of reaction in assisting our Commonwealth Friends in Tonga demonstrate the epitome of a modern, global Royal Navy, ready to respond at a moment's notice.

We wish the people of Tonga the very best in their recovery from this terrible disaster and stand ready to assist in any way we can.

HMS Spey will continue to work closely with the Royal New Zealand Navy, the Royal Australian Navy and with other allies to coordinate relief efforts with the Tongan Authorities and the British High Commission. The UK has provided a liaison officer to the Australian-led International Humanitarian and Disaster Relief Coordination Cell.

HMS Spey has returned to sea but remains on task in the waters off Tonga, ready to help where needed in the coming days.

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