GOVERNMENT OF THE COOK ISLANDS

Disaster Risk Management Act 2007 (No. 33)

DECLARATION OF A STATE OF EMERGENCY: NASSAU

Declaration No. 1 of 2026

Recitals

A. The Director of Emergency Management Cook Islands (the Director) recommended in writing on 18 November 2026 that a State of Emergency be declared over the island of Nassau.

B. The Director convened the National Disaster Risk Management Council (the Council) under section 6(c) of the Act. The Council met on 18 November 2026 at 1500 hours and supports the recommendation.

C. With the concurrence of the Council, the Director determined at 1600 hours on 18 November 2026 that an immediate, coordinated, multi-agency Response is required (section 20(b)).

D. I am satisfied that Severe Tropical Cyclone Xavier and its effects on Nassau are an Emergency within the meaning of section 3 of the Act, being an actual or imminent event that endangers or threatens life, property or the environment and requires a significant coordinated response.

Declaration

1. **Declaration.** Under section 20(a) of the Act, I, the Hon. Mark Brown, Prime Minister of the Cook Islands, declare a State of Emergency over the island of Nassau in the northern Cook Islands, in response to Severe Tropical Cyclone Xavier.
2. **Effect.** This Declaration has effect from 12:00am Cook Islands Standard Time on 19 November 2026. Nothing in this Declaration limits any earlier existence of a State of Emergency under section 20(b) or (c) of the Act.
3. **Response Executive and Centre.** The Response Executive must be convened under section 11(2)(b) and must direct the response to the event. The National Emergency Operations Centre becomes operational under section 14(2).
4. **National Controller.** The National Controller, in consultation with the Response Executive, exercises the functions in section 12(2) of the Act in relation to Nassau. Every Government Agency must comply with the National Controller's directions as soon as practicable (section 12(3)).

5. **Pukapuka-Nassau Island Government.** The Pukapuka-Nassau Disaster Risk Management Committee must implement the Disaster Risk Management Plan for Nassau under section 15 of the Act. Government Agencies must support them.
6. **Emergency Area.** The Director must facilitate the formal declaration of an Emergency Area under section 21(2) of the Act, where the National Controller, the Disaster Coordinator or the senior police officer in attendance makes one.
7. **Notification.** The Director must notify this Declaration immediately to the public by notice on television and radio, publish it in a daily newspaper and place it in the Government Gazette. The Director must also ensure that it reaches the people of Nassau directly, by the quickest available means.
8. **Reporting.** The Director must report to me on the response, and on whether the event meets the threshold for a State of Disaster under section 19, at least daily until this Declaration is revoked, and immediately if circumstances change.
9. **Duration.** This Declaration remains in force until I revoke it. I may vary or revoke it at any time on the recommendation of the Director.
10. **Offences.** Under section 24(1) of the Act, a person commits an offence who fails to comply with a declaration, notice, request, recommendation or order made under the Act.

Signed at Rarotonga, Cook Islands on 19 November 2026.

Hon. Mark Brown Prime Minister