



**FIJI METEOROLOGICAL SERVICES
GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF FIJI**

MEDIA RELEASE No.35

5pm, Tuesday 13 February 2018

SEVERE TC GITA (CAT4) PASSES JUST SOUTH OF ONO

Severe TC Gita (Category 4) entered Fiji Waters this morning and passed just south of Ono-i-lau at around 1.30pm this afternoon.

Hurricane force winds of 68 knots and maximum momentary gusts of 84 knots were recorded at Ono-i-lau at 2pm this afternoon as TC Gita tracked westward. Vanuabalavu also recorded strong and gusty winds (Table 1).

Severe “TC Gita” was located near 21.2 degrees south latitude and 178.9 degrees west longitude or about 60km south-southwest of Ono-i-lau or 390km southeast of Kadavu at 3pm this afternoon. It continues to move westward at about 25km/hr and expected to continue on this track and gradually turn west-southwest.

On its projected path, Severe TC Gita is predicted to be located about 140km west-southwest of Ono-i-lau or 300km southeast of Kadavu around 8pm tonight. By 2am tomorrow morning, Severe TC Gita is expected to be located about 240km west-southwest of Ono-i-lau and 250km southeast of Kadavu and the following warnings remains in force:

- A “*Hurricane Warning*” remains in force for Ono-i-lau and Vatoa;
- A “*Storm Warning*” remains in force for the rest of Southern Lau group;
- A “*Gale Warning*” remains in force for Matuku, Totoya, Moala, Kadavu and nearby smaller islands and is now in force for Lakeba and Nayau;
- A “*Strong Wind Warning*” remains in force for Central Lau Group, Lomaiviti Group, southern half of Viti Levu and is now in force for rest of Fiji.

Severe TC Gita is predicted to be 340km west of Ono-i-lau or 230km south of Kadavu at 8am tomorrow and is likely to be located 280km south-southwest of Kadavu around 2pm tomorrow afternoon.

The onset of *damaging gale force* winds can be several hours before the cyclone centre passes and may persist several hours after the centre has actually passed.

For Ono-i-Lau and Vatoa, *destructive hurricane force* with average speed of 195km/hr and momentary gust up to 275km/hr. Periods of rain, frequent and heavy at times with squally thunderstorms. For Mariners, hurricane force winds and phenomenal seas within 50 nautical miles of the centre. Damaging heavy swells and sea flooding of low-lying coastal areas.

For the rest of the Southern Lau Group, *destructive storm force* winds with average speed of 110km/hr and momentary gusts up to 155km/hr. Periods of rain, frequent and heavy with squally thunderstorms. For Mariners, expect storm force winds and very high seas out to about 120 nautical miles of the centre. Damaging Heavy Swells with sea flooding of low-lying coastal areas expected.

For Matuku, Totoya, Moala, Lakeba, Nayau, Kadavu and nearby smaller islands, *damaging gale force* winds with average speed of 85km/hr and momentary gusts to 120km/hr. Periods of rain, becoming frequent and heavy with squally thunderstorms. For Mariners, gale force winds and high seas out to about 240 nautical miles from the centre.

For rest of the Fiji, Strong winds with average speed of 60km/hr and momentary gusts to 80km/hr. Occasional rain, heavy at times and squally thunderstorms with rain becoming frequent from tomorrow. For Mariners, southerly winds 15 to 20 knots, increasing to 25 to 30 knots and becoming gusty. Moderate to rough seas and becoming very rough from tomorrow.

The Severe TC Gita will be closely monitored and all communities are advised to remain prepared for as hurricane, storm and gale force wind warning remains in force and expand to other areas. Keep updated with the latest weather information and take alerts, warnings and advisories seriously.

For more details and the latest on weather, please contact the National Weather Forecasting Centre on 6736006, 9905376 or visit the Fiji Meteorological Service's website, www.met.gov.fj, for Special Weather Bulletin: http://www.met.gov.fj/aifs_prods/20021.txt.

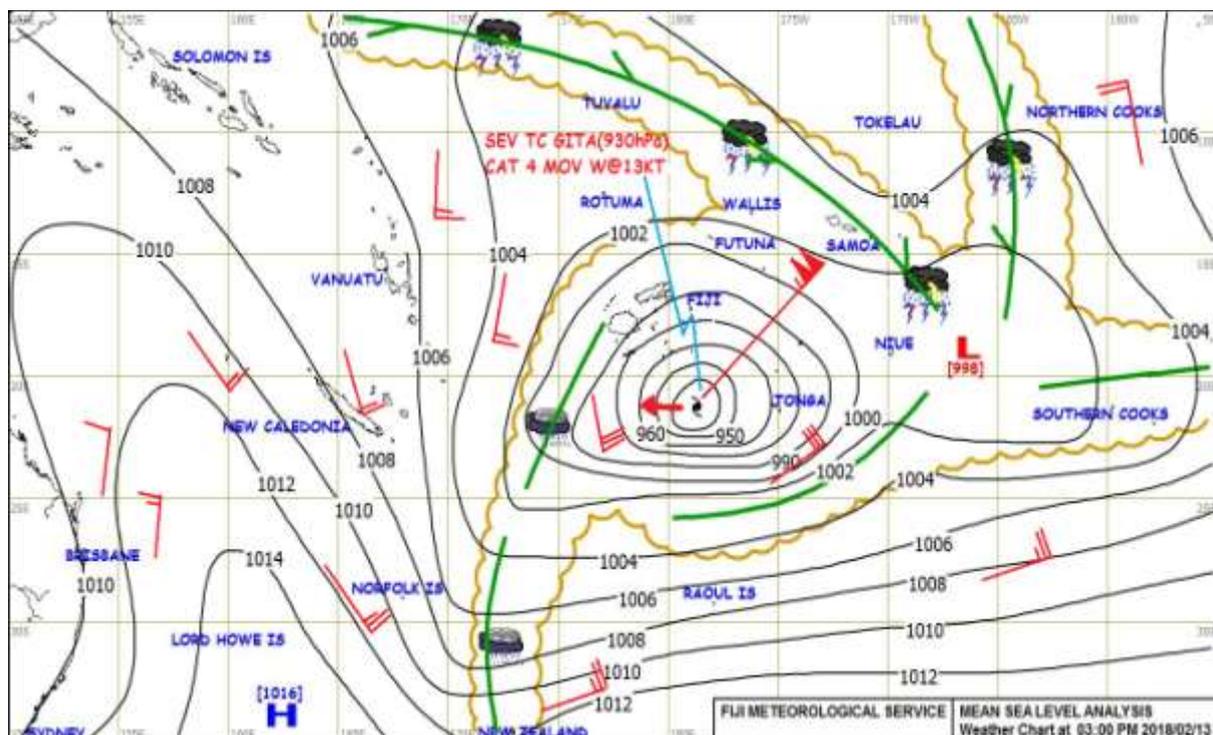


Figure 1: Mean Sea Level Weather Map at 3pm on 13 February 2018.

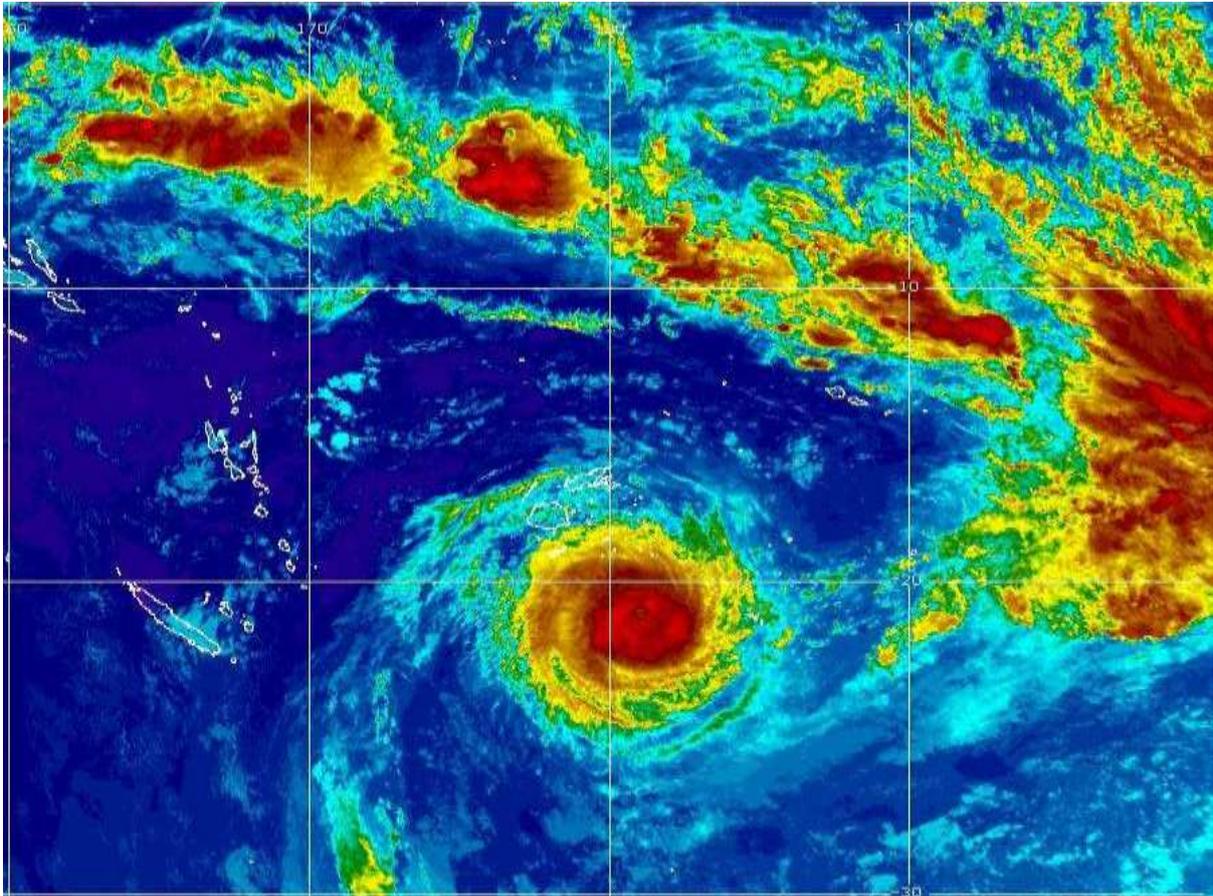


Figure 2: Satellite image at 2.30pm on 13 February 2018.

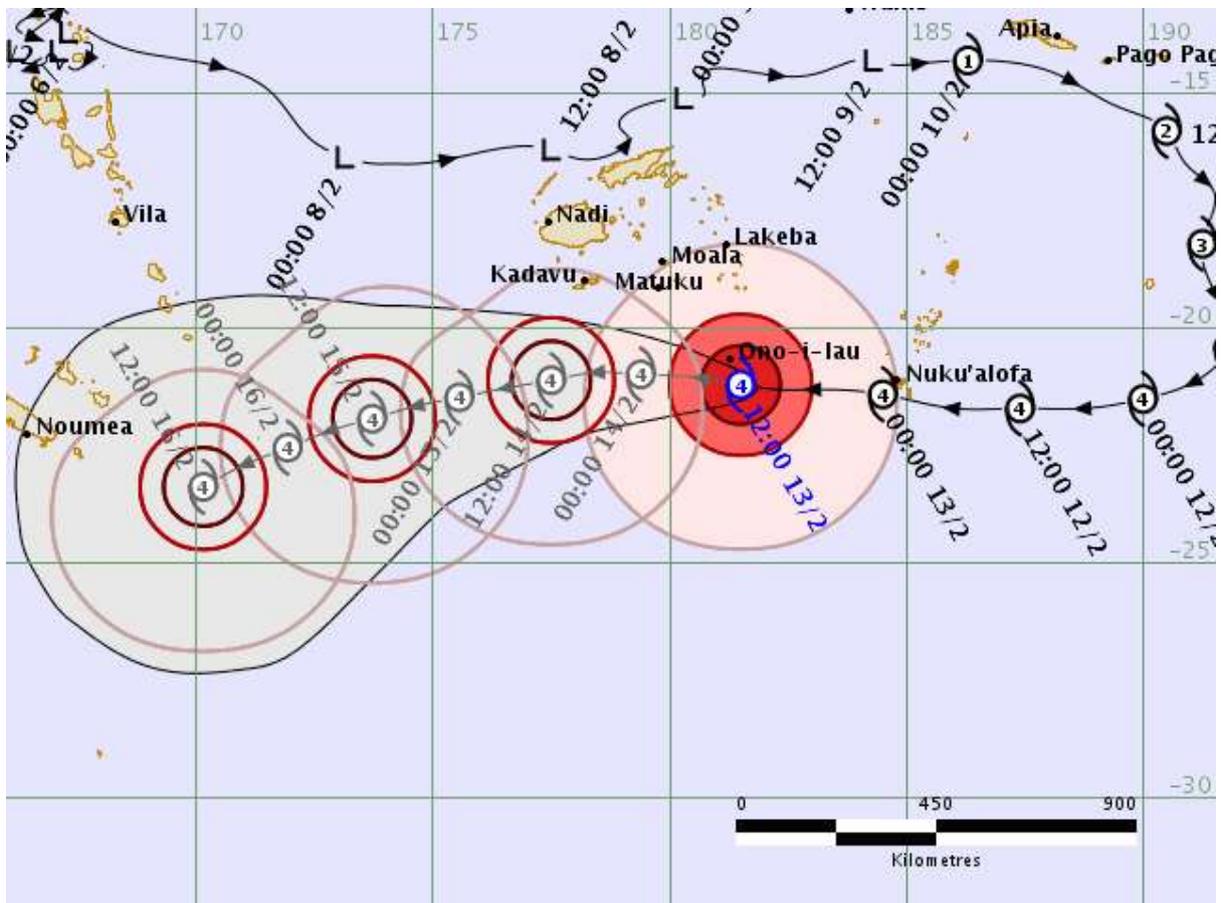


Figure 3: Forecast track of Severe TC Gita at 1.30pm on 13 February 2018.

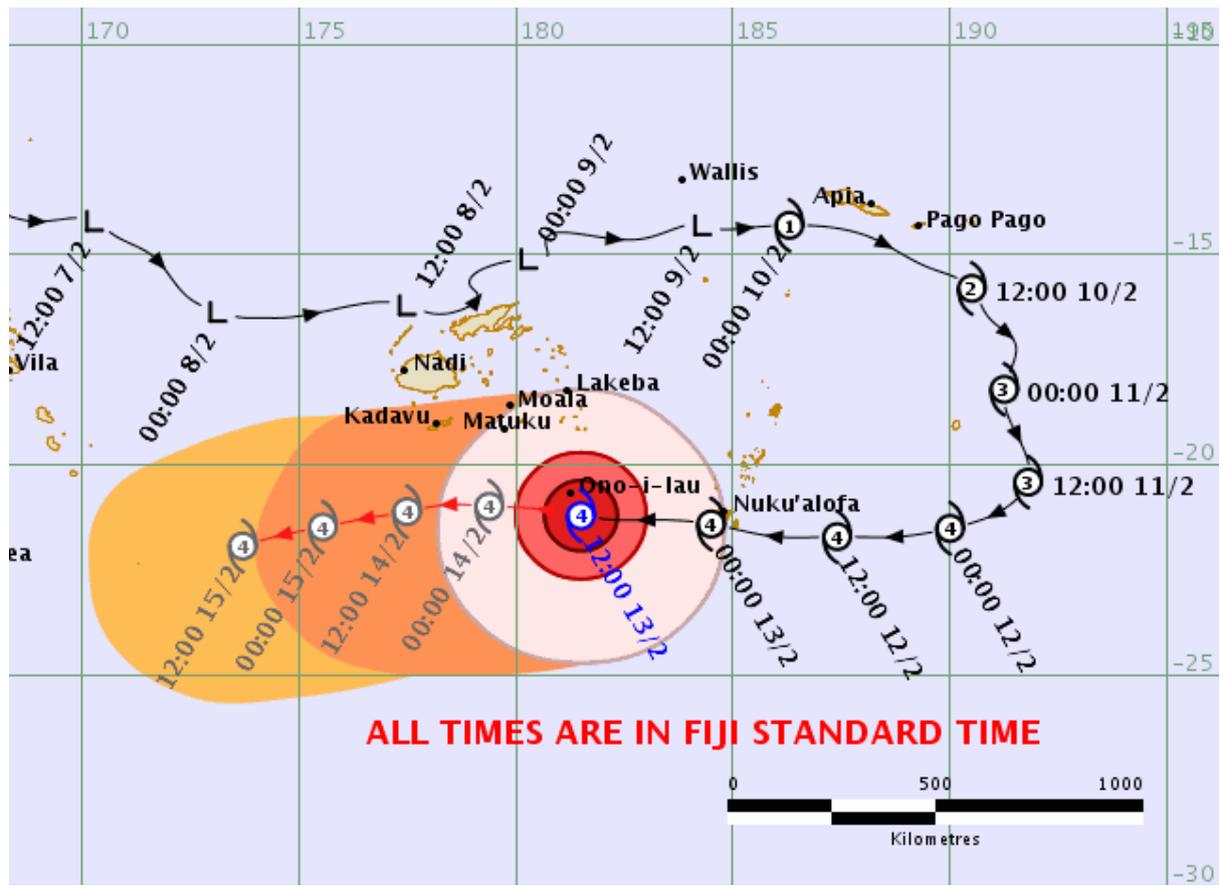


Figure 4: Projected Threat Map of Severe TC Gita at 1.30pm on 13 February 2018.

Station	9 am (direction/speed)	Mid – day (direction/speed)	3 pm (direction/speed)
Ono –i-lau	230/32 Gusts 46 knots	260/49 Gusts 72 knots	320/68 Gusts 84 knots
Lakeba	270/28	260/27	280/27
Matuku	220/20	240/25	260/27
Vunisea	250/06	250/04	250/05
Vanuabalavu	280/25 Gusts 33 knots	285/23 Gusts 33 knots	290/21 Gusts 29 knots

Table 1: Recorded average wind direction, speed and maximum gusts at various stations.