



What is a **CATEGORY 5** TROPICAL CYCLONE



A Category 5 Tropical cyclone corresponds to the highest category on the Beaufort Scale with VERY DESTRUCTIVE winds with typical gusts over open flat land at more than 280km/h. Sustained wind speed of 115 knots(215km/hr) and greater with momentary gusts of 155(290km/hr) and greater. Eg. Severe **Tropical Cyclone Winston** was the strongest tropical cyclone to make landfall in Fiji and the South Pacific Basin in recorded history. Winston again rapidly intensified, reaching Category 5.

! EXTREMELY DANGEROUS, CAUSING WIDESPREAD DESTRUCTION



One of the five categories.

- Highest level of cyclone destruction. Destruction is not only attributed to Cat number. It is more a combination of Cat number and track. A CAT 5 cyclone tracking over Northern Lau may not be as destructive as a CAT 3 tracking over Viti Levu.
- Complete Destruction - Widespread destruction would be a better term. Winston showed this to us. Though most of the houses were affected, they were not "completely destroyed".
- Widespread power failure - Normally a precautionary measure taken to eliminate "electrocution".

What to expect

- 1. Wind Speed**
Sustained wind speed of 115 knots(215km/hr) and greater with momentary gusts of 155(290km/hr) and greater. Note that wind speeds are 10minute average winds as compared to the 1 minute average American classification
- 2. Storm Surges**
Height : Differs for different places(Tuvaki ni matasawa) but theoretically what you get is a combination of normal high tide plus storm tide. Winston showed us that while the general public are always in tuned to the wind strengths, they tend to neglect the storm surge and coastal inundation component of it.

Remember, globally.. "9 out of every 10 deaths in a tropical cyclone are attributed to storm surge and coastal inundation".

- 3. Ability to destroy**
 - Homes.
 - wooden/Concrete buildings and structures
 - Trees will be snapped or uprooted
 - Wide spread power outages
- 4. Rain and Flooding**
- High intensity rainfall over a short duration of time or prolonged rainfall over a wider area leads to flooding. Flooding "does not only" occur from Tropical Cyclones. The famous 2012 flooding was not due to a CAT 5 system, not even a CAT 1 system. It was due to a Tropical Depression which was anchored off the coast of Nadi and pumped bucket loads of rainfall for just a few hours. The rest is history.

How to Prepare

- ✓ Create a Plan**
Designate specific meetings locations, emergency contacts, procedures and make sure everyone in your household is aware of.
- ✓ Make a Kit**
Organise a supply kit that includes essentials like food, clothing, water, flashlight and a radio with spare batteries, beddings, medications and copies of important documents. Keep your Kit updated and located somewhere you can easily access it.

- ✓ Protect your Home**
Secure any items that cannot sustain high winds and reinforce fragile components like windows.
- ✓ Stay Informed**
Be aware of current storm systems. Listen closely to local officials and weather services for updated news and instructions on evacuation efforts.

Tropical Cyclone Winston inflicted extensive damage on many islands and killed 44 people. A total of 40,000 homes were damaged or destroyed and approximately 350,000 people—roughly 40 percent of Fiji's population—were significantly impacted by the storm. Total damage from Winston amounted to FJ\$2.98 billion (US\$1.4 billion).



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