

= Hurricane Ekeka =

Hurricane Ekeka was an unusual Pacific tropical cyclone that attained major hurricane status during the month of February . The first storm of the 1992 Pacific hurricane season , Ekeka developed on January 28 well to the south of Hawaii . It gradually intensified to reach major hurricane status on February 2 , although it subsequently began to weaken due to unfavorable wind shear . It crossed the International Date Line as a weakened tropical storm , and shortly thereafter degraded to tropical depression status . Ekeka continued westward , passing through the Marshall Islands and later over Chuuk State , before dissipating on February 9 about 310 miles (500 km) off the north coast of Papua New Guinea . The storm did not cause any significant damage or deaths .

= Meteorological history =

During the El Niño of 1991 ? 92 , as typical with other such events , the monsoon trough extended into the central north Pacific Ocean , which is the body of water between the International Date Line and 140 ° W. At the same time , sea surface temperatures near the equator were anomalously warm , and wind shear values were low . At the end of January , a large area of convection persisted for several days near the north side of the equator . By January 23 , several ships reported squalls and strong southwesterly winds in the region . The Central Pacific Hurricane Center (CPHC) began monitoring the system on January 26 , while it was located about 950 miles (1530 km) south of Ka Lae , the southernmost point in Hawaii . The disturbance organized further as it tracked westward , and on January 28 it developed into Tropical Depression One @-@ C , located a short distance north of Kiritimati and east of Tabuaeran .

With favorable conditions , the depression quickly intensified into a tropical storm ; upon doing so , it was named Ekeka by the CPHC , which is Hawaiian for Edgar . Ekeka continued gradually intensifying while moving slowly west @-@ northwestward , and it attain hurricane status on January 30 about 100 miles (160 km) northwest of Palmyra Atoll . On February 2 , the hurricane attained peak winds of 115 mph (185 km / h) , making Ekeka a major hurricane , or Category 3 hurricane on the Saffir @-@ Simpson scale . Subsequently , it began to weaken due to increased wind shear , and concurrently its forward motion increased as the subtropical ridge strengthened to the north of the hurricane . A large trough in the Westerlies increased the wind shear , which weakened Ekeka to a tropical storm early on February 3 . Later that day , it crossed the International Date Line into the western Pacific Ocean ; both of the Joint Typhoon Warning Center (JTWC) and the Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA) assessed the storm 's winds at 50 mph (85 km / h) . Shortly before that , the JMA assessed the pressure as 985 mbar , which is the lowest known minimum central pressure associated with the storm ; the CPHC did not include pressure in their year @-@ end report .

Tropical Storm Ekeka continued weakening , degrading to tropical depression status by February 4 . The depression moved quickly through the Marshall Islands , and on February 6 turned to the west @-@ southwest . On February 8 , the JMA declared Ekeka dissipated ; however , the JTWC continued monitoring the system , with Ekeka passing over Chuuk as a weak depression . Early on February 9 , the JTWC declared Ekeka dissipated about 800 miles (1300 km) east @-@ southeast of Palau , or about 310 miles (500 km) off the north coast of Papua New Guinea .

= Impact and records =

No deaths were reported in association with Ekeka . The storm passed through the Marshall Islands without causing significant impact . When Ekeka hit the island of Chuuk , winds of 20 mph (32 km / h) were reported . While in the central Pacific Ocean , Ekeka became one of only three tropical cyclones on record to be located within the Palmyra Atoll Exclusive Economic Zone ; Ekeka was the only hurricane within the area .

Ekeka is most unusual for its formation in January . Tropical cyclones rarely form east of the International Date Line outside of the tropical cyclone season , which starts May 15 in the eastern

Pacific and June 1 in the central Pacific , and ends on November 30 in both regions . In the official Pacific hurricane database , Ekeka was the second tropical cyclone on record to occur in January or February within the Pacific Ocean east of the International Date Line , after Tropical Storm Winona of 1989 . It is third earliest cyclone on record within the basin , behind Hurricane Pali of 2016 , and the aforementioned Winona .