= Cyclone Cilla =

Cyclone Cilla (RSMC Nadi designation : 10F , JTWC designation : 13P) was a tropical cyclone that brought minor damage several islands in the South Pacific in January 2003 . The fifth cyclone of the 2002 @-@ 03 South Pacific cyclone season , Cyclone Cilla developed from a monsoon trough on January 26 northwest of Fiji . Initially , Cilla moved east , and due to decreased wind shear , Cilla was able to intensify . On January 28 , Cilla reached its peak intensity of 75 km / h (45 mph) . After slightly weakening , Cilla briefly re @-@ intensified the next day . However , Cilla transitioned into an extratropical cyclone on January 30 . Along its path , Cilla dropped heavy rainfall over islands it passed . During its formative stages , the low dropped heavy rain over Fiji , which had already been effected by Cyclone Ami two weeks prior . Damage in Tonga was mostly limited to vegetation and fruit trees ; infrastructural damage was also relatively minor . Cilla also brought moderate rain to American Samoa .

= = Meteorological history = =

On January 25 , 2003 , a low @-@ pressure area formed within a monsoon trough about 300 mi (485 km) northwest of Fiji and moved to the east @-@ southeast . That morning , the Joint Typhoon Warning Center (JTWC) began to issue warnings on the system , designating it as 12P . Shortly thereafter , Cilla turned southeast hours later in the general direction of Tonga Early on January 26 , RSMC Nadi designated the low as Tropical Depression 07F , after attaining 10 @-@ minute sustained winds of 35 mph (55 km / h) . At the time , the slow moving system had a poorly defined center of circulation that was hard to identify via radar and satellite imagery . In addition , most of the deep thunderstorm activity was displaced to the north and southeast of the center . Later that morning , the JTWC reported winds of 35 mph (55 km / h) ; however , the depression did not become any better organized throughout the day . Early the next day , RSMC Nadi upgraded the tropical depression to a Category 1 tropical cyclone on the Australian intensity scale and named it Cilla . By 0600 UTC January 27 , the JTWC reported that Cilla had attained 1 @-@ minute sustained winds of 40 mph (65 km / h) , which according to JTWC data , was its peak intensity . Subsequently , Cilla turned east @-@ southeast .

Throughout the day , wind shear conditions lessened further ; however , shower activity separated from the center , prompting the JTWC to issue its last warning on Tropical Cyclone Cilla later that day . At 2100 UTC January 27 , RMSC Nadi remarked that the cyclone had become better organized . Upon attaining peak intensity , the storm passed fairly closed to Tonga . At 0600 UTC January 28 , Cilla reached its peak intensity , with 10 ? minute sustained winds of 45 mph (70 km / h) per RMSC Nadi . At this time , the tropical cyclone was located about 400 mi (645 km) south @-@ southeast of Pago Pago . Rapidly moving , Cilla showed baroclinic characteristics , hinting that the system was a hybrid low , sustaining characteristics of both tropical and nontropical cyclones . According to RMSC Nadi , Cilla weakened slightly as the storm lost organization due to increased wind shear .

On January 29 , thunderstorm activity once again increased in converge around the center , though at first , the convection was sheared at times . On 0000 UTC , Dvorak satellite intensity estimates yielded a 3 @.@ 0 , suggesting a tropical cyclone with 10 ? minute winds of 45 mph (70 km / h) , Cilla 's secondary peak intensity . Satellite images indicated a banding pattern associated with the cyclone . The JTWC briefly watched this system for regeneration , noting it had a " fair " chance . However , continued wind shear began to weaken Cilla , and by 1200 UTC on January 29 , Cilla was reduced to a tropical depression just before the system turned south @-@ southeast . With the center exposed from the deep convection , Tropical Depression Cilla transitioned into an extratropical cyclone at 1100 UTC the next day , on January 30 . The extratropical cyclone completely dissipated two days later .

= = Impact and aftermath = =

As a tropical depression , Cilla passed over Vanua Levu . Even though the region had been severely affected by Cyclone Ami two weeks earlier , flood waters that resulted from rains associated with the cyclone quickly receded due to the storm 's rapid motion .

When Cilla first posed a threat to Tonga , the Fiji Meteorological Service (FMS) issued a tropical cyclone alert for the entire island chain . Damage in Tonga was mostly limited to vegetation and coconut and banana trees ; damage to infrastructure was minor . Peak winds of 32 mph (51 km / h) and peak gusts of 67 mph (108 km / h) were recorded in Ha 'apai . Power was lost on Lifuka for about three hours during the night of January 27 . Communications services were also affected but restored on January 28 .

Cilla also affected the American Samoa , providing moderate rainfall over the area , peaking at 2 @.@ 21 in (56 mm) in Asasfou . The name Cilla was retired by the World Meteorological Organization after the season .