

## BVI Remains Tsunami ready – Achieves Recognition For Four More Years

### Press Release

📌 Topic: Disaster Preparedness (/tags/disaster-preparedness) | 👤 Posted By: aphillip

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The British Virgin Islands remains a Tsunami Ready Territory with the renewal of its TsunamiReady recognition for another four years.

The renewal was awarded under the UNESCO Intergovernmental Coordination Group for Tsunamis and Other Coastal Hazards in the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions (IOC CARIBE EWS) pilot project.

The renewal was officially awarded to the Territory at the UNESCO IOC Assembly held in Paris this week. Mr. Steven Hall from United Kingdom delegation and IOC Vice Chair accepted the certificate on the BVI's behalf.

As part of the renewal process a site verification visit was conducted on June 8 by Manager of the National Weather Service Caribbean Tsunami Warning Programme and Chair of the UNESCO IOC CARIBE EWS, Mrs. Christa von Hillebrandt-Andrade, followed by a meeting of the CARIBE EWS TsunamiReady Board on June 15 to review the BVI's application.

Mrs. von Hillebrandt-Andrade said, "We commend the BVI for continuing to advance tsunami readiness across the Territory. The preparedness for and awareness and education of tsunamis is a continuous process which has been proven to save lives."

She further noted that the TsunamiReady renewal process is a critical aspect of promoting tsunami preparedness.

Mrs. von Hillebrandt-Andrade added, "Maintaining the recognition is the hard part as TsunamiReady communities and countries must show evidence that even after being initially recognised, they continue to strengthen their mitigation, preparedness and response mechanisms and procedures for a tsunami event."

The Department of Disaster Management (DDM) has been spearheading the Territory's TsunamiReady efforts.

Director of the DDM, Ms. Sharleen DaBreo said, "Achieving TsunamiReady recognition is not an easy feat but we remain dedicated to this process because we understand how destructive a tsunami event in our region can be. By expanding our knowledge of tsunamis, implementing awareness and education programmes and strengthening our response through the establishment of robust early warning systems we are confident that the people in the Territory are better prepared for tsunamis."

Ms. DaBreo stated that the DDM's work in this regard include the development of tsunami evacuation maps, annual Territory-wide tsunami evacuation exercises, ongoing hazard awareness education programmes and continuous maintenance and testing of the early warning and National Emergency Broadcast Systems.

The director added, "These efforts have all been done in collaboration with several key agencies that also recognise the importance of tsunami preparedness in the Territory. In fact, the Territory's Tsunami Warning Focal Point is the Royal Virgin Islands Police Force which operates a 24-hour service with the capacity to receive tsunami threat information and ability to activate the early warning system."

The first TsunamiReady recognition was awarded to the Territory by the US Based National Weather Service (NWS) in 2014 through a joint US National Oceanic Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and UNESCO Pilot Project. The BVI, Anguilla and St. Kitts/Nevis are the only three Caribbean territories that have been awarded TsunamiReady recognition.

Photo Attached: Mr. Steven Hall from UK delegation/IOC Vice Chair receiving the TsunamiReady certification for the British Virgin Islands from IOC Secretary, Dr. Vladimir Ryabinin and ICG CARIBE EWS Chair, Christa von Hillebrandt Andrade.

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