



INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION
COMMISSION OCÉANOGRAPHIQUE INTERGOUVERNEMENTALE
COMISIÓN OCEANOGRÁFICA INTERGUBERNAMENTAL
МЕЖПРАВИТЕЛЬСТВЕННАЯ ОКЕАНОГРАФИЧЕСКАЯ КОМИССИЯ
اللجنة الدولية الحكومية لعلوم المحيطات
政府间海洋学委员会

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IOC/TA/BA/LK
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- To :** ICG/PTWS Tsunami Warning Focal Points (TWFP)
ICG/PTWS Tsunami National Contacts (TNC)
ICG/PTWS Chair and Vice-Chairs
- cc. :** Official National Coordinating Body for liaison with IOC in IOC Member States
Permanent Delegates/Observer Missions to UNESCO of IOC Member States
National Commissions for UNESCO in IOC Member States
Directors of UNESCO and IOC Regional Offices in the Asia/Pacific Region
Regional Organizations cooperating with UNESCO/IOC
Director, Pacific Tsunami Warning Center
Director, Northwest Pacific Tsunami Advisory Center
Director, International Tsunami Information Center

Subject : International Tsunami Symposium Commemorating 50th Anniversary of the PTWS, “Making the Pacific Ready for the Tsunami Threat”, Honolulu, Hawaii, USA, 20–21 April 2015

The Pacific Ocean basin is the largest and most tsunami-prone of any of the Earth's ocean basins. Over history, 75% of the world's fatal tsunamis have occurred in the Pacific, and as such, Pacific nations face more frequent tsunami threats than in any other ocean. Modern tsunami warning system development and coordination of the international tsunami warning efforts started in 1960 after the M9.5 Chile tsunami crossed the Pacific killing 61 people in Hawaii, 139 in Japan and at least 20 in the Philippines a day later.

In 1965, culminating key meetings and discussions of scientists, policy-makers, and countries, Member States of the IOC established the International Coordination Group for the Tsunami Warning System in the Pacific (ICG/ITSU) to coordinate tsunami mitigation activities, including the issuance of timely international warning advice. Renamed the Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Pacific Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System (ICG/PTWS) in 2005 together with the establishment of three other regional tsunami warning systems, the ICG/PTWS has met biennially since 1968 to coordinate tsunami mitigation activities, including the issuance of timely international warning advice.

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To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the International Tsunami Warning System in the Pacific, the IOC of UNESCO, International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics (IUGG) and its Tsunami Commission, and the U.S. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) are organizing the Symposium "Making the Pacific Ready for the Tsunami Threat" to recognize the achievements of the last 50 years, review the current state of the System, and identify practical and tangible next steps, desirable partnerships, and necessary commitments needed to sustain and evolve the PTWS for the future. The Symposium will be held at the NOAA Daniel K. Inouye Regional Center located on the Joint Base Pearl Harbor – Hickam, in Honolulu, Hawaii, 20-21 April 2015.

The Symposium will be held in conjunction with the 26th Session of the ICG/PTWS that is scheduled on 22-24 April 2015 immediately following the Symposium (a separate invitation to the ICG session will be sent soon).

The 1st Circular Announcement for the Symposium is attached for your information and provides further details of the programme. The language of the Symposium will be English. The Symposium is open attendance with no registration fee. Registration is on a 'first-in, first-served' basis. Fully completed registrations are due 6 March 2015. For hotel reservations, registration and other information, please visit the PTWS 50th web site, <http://www.ptws50.info>.

For further information on the Symposium, please contact Dr Laura Kong, Director, International Tsunami Information Center at laura.kong@noaa.gov.

Yours sincerely,

[signed]

Wendy Watson-Wright
Executive Secretary

Enclosure:

First Announcement for International Tsunami Symposium Commemorating 50th Anniversary of the PTWS "Making the Pacific Ready for the Tsunami Threat", 20-21 April 2015, Hawaii, USA

1st Circular Announcement – 10 November 2014

**International Tsunami Symposium Commemorating
50th Anniversary of the Pacific Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System**

**Making the Pacific Ready for the Tsunami Threat
20-21 April 2015**

**NOAA Inouye Regional Center, Ford Island, Oahu, Hawaii
Organized by the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO
International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics (IUGG) Tsunami Commission,
and the Government of the United States of America**

Overview and History

The two-day International Symposium will recognize the history, achievements, and primary challenges facing the Pacific Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System (PTWS) – one of the IOC's most successful international scientific programs with a direct humanitarian aim of mitigating the effects of natural disasters to save lives and property. The Symposium will bring together tsunami experts and key decision-makers to review the current state of the PTWS and discuss practical and tangible next steps, desirable partnerships, and necessary commitments needed to sustain and evolve the System for the future.

The Pacific Ocean basin is the largest and most tsunami-prone of any of the Earth's ocean basins. Approximately 75% of the world's known fatal tsunamis have been generated in the Pacific. Modern tsunami warning system development and coordination of the international tsunami warning efforts started in 1960 after the M9.5 Chile tsunami crossed the Pacific killing 61 people in Hawaii, 139 in Japan and at least 20 in the Philippines a day later.

In 1965, culminating key meetings and discussions of scientists, policy-makers, and countries facilitated by UNESCO and its Intergovernmental Commission (IOC), International Union of Geodesy and Geophysics (IUGG), and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), Member States of the IOC established the International Coordination Group for the Tsunami Warning System in the Pacific (ICG/ITSU), along with the International Tsunami Information Center (ITIC) and Pacific Tsunami Warning Center (PTWC). In 2005, the ICG/ITSU was renamed as the Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Pacific Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System (ICG/PTWS). The ICG/PTWS, encompassing 46 countries of the Pacific Ocean and its marginal seas, has met biennially since 1968 to coordinate tsunami mitigation activities, including the issuance of timely international warning advice. Today, thanks to international coordination and data sharing, the System's Tsunami Service Providers (US and Japan) are able to rapidly assess the tsunamigenic potential of great earthquakes and provide tsunami threat forecast information to nations within 5-10 minutes.

Objectives:

The aim of this Symposium is to bring tsunami experts together with key decision-makers to:

1. Reflect upon the 50 years development of the Pacific Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System, the state of the science and emerging science, technological and policy advances, and people-centered, community-based preparedness and mitigation solutions;
2. Share state-of-the-art information, techniques, and technologies that will allow all nations to improve their capacity to provide useful tsunami warnings to their citizens; and
3. Articulate requirements and commitments needed to sustain and evolve the PTWS to continue to protect lives and property throughout the Pacific.

Session Themes:

Sessions will cover themes outlined by the PTWS Medium-Term Strategy (MTS) 2014-2021.

The PTWS MTS is comprised of three pillars with four foundational elements. The three pillars are:

- Risk Assessment and Reduction: Hazard and risk identification and risk reduction.
- Detection, Warning and Dissemination: Rapid detection and warning dissemination down to the last mile.
- Awareness and Response: Public education, emergency planning and response.

The supporting foundational elements are:

- Interoperability: Free, open and functional exchange of tsunami information.
- Research: Enhanced understanding and improved technologies and techniques.
- Capacity Building: Training, technology and knowledge transfer.
- Funding and Sustainability: Resources to sustain an effective PTWS.

These pillars comprise stages within the disaster management cycle. During the Pre-Disaster phase, risk assessment, mitigation, and preparedness activities are carried out. During the Response phase, early warning and appropriate emergency response (potentially including evacuations) are conducted. Finally, during the Post-Disaster phase, relief, rehabilitation, and recovery projects are carried out that feed back into mitigation and preparedness activities.

Format:

The language of the Symposium will be English.

Each Thematic Session will begin with a keynote speaker and topical briefings, followed by a moderated discussion via a panel of experts representing planning and policy, science and research, warning and emergency operations practitioners. Each panelist will be asked to highlight pertinent issues and challenges, and recommend improvement solutions. A Summary Session will capture Symposium recommendations to be presented at the 26th Session of the Intergovernmental Coordination Group/PTWS, that immediately follows the Symposium from 22-24 April 2015. Symposium proceedings will also be published as part of a peer-reviewed Special Volume on the *Pacific Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System: Past, Present, and Future*.

Who Should Attend:

National agencies responsible for tsunami public safety and International organizations supporting tsunami resiliency. National Policy Decision-Makers, Leaders of Operational Warning and Emergency Response Centers, Planners, Scientists, Engineers, Technical Experts, Emergency Managers, and Community government and non-government organizations involved in tsunami disaster risk reduction.

Registration:

The Symposium is open attendance with no registration fee. Registration is on a 'first-in, first-served' basis up to a limit of 150 participants. Fully completed registrations are due March 13, 2015. To register, visit <http://www.ptws50.info>

Symposium Organizing Committee:

Mike Angove (US Tsunami National Contact), David Coetzee (NZ, PTWS Disaster Management and Preparedness Working Group Chair), Dr Ken Gledhill (NZ, PTWS Chair), Dr Laura Kong (ITIC Director), Dr Vasily Titov (USA, IUGG Tsunami Commission President, PTWS Tsunami Hazard Assessment Working Group Chair)

Symposium Contact: Dr Laura Kong, ITIC (laura.kong@noaa.gov)