



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

UNESCO - 1, rue Miollis - 75732 Paris Cedex 15
cable address: UNESCO Paris - telex: 204461 Paris - fax: (33) (0)1 45 68 58 12 - contact phone: (33) (0) 1 45 68 39 83/84
E-mail: p.bernal@unesco.org

IOC Circular Letter N°. 2186
(English only)

6 March 2006

To : National Contacts PTWS;
Chairman, Vice-Chairman ICG/PTWS;

cc : Chairman, Vice-Chairmen IOC;
Chairman, Vice-Chairman IOC Regional Committee (WESTPAC, IOCARIBE);
IOC Member States (Action Addresses) of the ICG/PTWS
Permanent Delegations/Observer Missions to UNESCO of IOC PTWS Member States;
Directors of UNESCO and IOC Regional Officers in the Pacific, Indian Ocean, Caribbean,
and Mediterranean areas;

Subject: ICG/PTWS Pacific-wide Tsunami Exercise “Exercise Pacific Wave 06”

Dear Sir/Madam,

At the XXth Session of the Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Pacific Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System (ICG-PTWS, formerly ICG-ITSU) held in Vina del Mar, Chile, October 2005, Member States noted that a Pacific Ocean-Wide Tsunami exercise has never taken place, and agreed that an exercise of the Pacific Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System (PTWS) should be conducted in 2006. This letter seeks to advise you of the planned exercise.

The 26 December 2004 Indonesia Earthquake and Indian Ocean tsunami dramatically reinforced the need for an effective tsunami warning system. Indeed, activity is currently underway across the Indian Ocean to implement an Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System (IOTWS). Already, opportunities for coordination between the developing IOTWS and the existing PTWS are

.../...

Chairperson

Prof. D.T. Pugh
National Oceanographic Centre,
Southampton
Empress Dock
Southampton SO14 3ZH
UNITED KINGDOM

Executive Secretary

Dr P. Bernal
Intergovernmental Oceanographic
Commission
UNESCO
1, rue Miollis
75732 Paris Cedex 15
FRANCE

Vice-Chairpersons

Prof. M. Ruivo
Chairman, Portuguese Committee
for IOC
Av. Infante Santo – 42/4th Floor
Lisbon 1350
PORTUGAL

Dr A. Frolov
Deputy Head, Russian Federal
Service for Hydrometeorology &
Environmental Monitoring
(ROSGIDROMET)
12, Novovogon'kovsky Pereulok
123242 Moscow
RUSSIAN FEDERATION

Capt. de Navio J.A. Valladares
Jefe Departamento Asuntos Marítimos
Armada Argentina
Comodoro Py 2055
Piso 12° - Ofic. 103
(C1104BEA) Buenos Aires
ARGENTINA

Dr Neville Smith
Acting Chief of Division
Bureau of Meteorology Research Centre
G.P.O. Box 1289
Melbourne, VIC. 3001
700, Collins St., Docklands VIC
AUSTRALIA

Dr Alfonse M. Dubi
Director,
Senior Research Fellow
University of Dar es Salaam
Institute of Marine Sciences
P.O. Box 668 Zanzibar
UNITED REP. OF TANZANIA

being identified. As is being done for the IOTWS, there is a need to identify the current level of capability of the PTWS, and, more importantly, identify gaps to improve that capability. An Ocean-wide tsunami exercise is an effective tool in achieving this end. Moreover, the exercise will also commemorate the May 1960 Chilean Tsunami that crossed and impacted countries throughout the Pacific Basin.

The name of the exercise will be "Exercise Pacific Wave 06." The exercise will take place from 16-17 May 2006. The exercise will simulate Pacific countries being placed into a Tsunami Warning situation, and require Member State decision-making, and steps taken to just prior to public notification. These steps may be played during the exercise dates or the following days. The exercise scenario will use two originating earthquake source regions in the eastern and western Pacific Rim. A Tsunami Warning Cancellation will be issued as the wave nears the central Pacific. At least three Tsunami Warning Centres will issue exercise bulletins in a compressed time schedule, including the U.S. Pacific and West Coast/Alaska Tsunami Warning Centers, and the Japan Meteorological Agency Northwest Pacific Tsunami Advisory Center.

A sessional Task Team of the ICG-ITSU-XX has developed the guiding principles for the planning and conduct of Exercise Pacific Wave 06, and is continuing as an intercessional Task Team to oversee the conduct of the exercise. These are listed in Attachment 1 for your information. The key point to take from these principles is that the exercise is not required to be conducted through to community level. Rather, the aim is to exercise the operational lines of communication within the PTWS without disrupting or alarming individual citizens. Member countries will, however, be encouraged to exercise, evaluate and report back on communication and decision making within a warning situation down to the level just prior to public notification.

Despite this, you will note that there remains an option to exercise further levels of communication, such as public broadcasts and sirens, and provide relevant feedback during exercise evaluation. This activity will be regarded as optional. Each country will decide and design its own national exercise that commences after receiving the first message from the warning centers. Examples of sample operational tsunami response plans are placed in Attachment 2

Planning of the exercise will require significant work across many areas. Accordingly, in addition to the guiding principles at Attachment 1, a list of the ICG Task Team members is at Attachment 3. You will note that some of these members have been allocated specific responsibilities for developing certain parts of the exercise.

In order to ensure the commitment of participating countries is fully coordinated, we seek your nomination of National Contact for the Exercise Pacific Wave 06 with whom we will communicate to about *planning* for the conduct of the exercise. The designated National Contact will be expected to confirm the accuracy of existing tsunami warning arrangements within your country, including the identification of operational points of contact for the receipt and dissemination of tsunami warnings downstream from the national tsunami operational centre. The designated National Contact will also be responsible for coordinating input to the exercise evaluation instrument, which will be circulated post-exercise. **I would be grateful if you could provide the details of your nominated representative by 15 March 2006 to the ICG/PTWS Secretariat through email, facsimile, or post at the address below.** You are also encouraged to further disseminate copies of this letter to appropriate organizations and authorities within your country.

.../...

A copy of this letter will be provided to Southwest Pacific Island Countries through Australian diplomatic channels, as well as to SOPAC.

The 26 December 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami has put the whole tsunami warning community into a pro-active, action oriented mode that has stimulated this very important and time-critical work. We trust that you and your country Authorities will support this initiative, and we look forward to hearing from you further on this matter.

Yours sincerely,



Patricio A. Bernal
Assistant Director-General, UNESCO
Executive Secretary, IOC

ICG/PTWS Secretariat
Dr Laura Kong
Director, International Tsunami Information Centre
737 Bishop Street, Suite 2200
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813 USA
Ph: <1> 808 532 6422
Fax: <1> 808 532 5576
Email: l.kong@unesco.org

- Attachments:**
1. Recommendation ITSU-XX.3, Pacific-wide Tsunami Exercise
 2. Tsunami Emergency Response, SHOA, Chile Tsunami Emergency Response, French Polynesia, France
Tsunami Emergency Response, Hawaii, USA
 3. Exercise Pacific Wave 06 Task Team

cc: Dr Laura Kong, Director, ITIC, ICG/PTWS Secretariat
Mr Koichi Nagasaka, Director-General, JMA
Dr Charles McCreery, Director, PTWC