



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 Circular Letter No 2939
(Available in English only)

IOC/VR/BA/ah
9 March 2023

- To : Registered SCSTAC Tsunami Warning Focal Points (TWFP) and Tsunami National Contacts (TNC) of the following countries: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam
- Cc. : Corresponding Official National Coordinating Bodies for liaison with the IOC
Corresponding Permanent Delegates/Observer Missions to UNESCO and National Commissions for UNESCO
Director, Pacific Tsunami Warning Center
Northwest Pacific Tsunami Advisory Center
Director, International Tsunami Information Center
IOC Tsunami Unit

Subject: Backup South China Sea Tsunami Advisory Center (BSCSTAC) fully operational from 29 March 2023; BSCSTAC Communication Test for the Registered SCSTAC Focal Points on 10 April 2023 at 0600 UTC

At its 28th session (Barcelo Montelimar, Nicaragua 2–5 April 2019) the Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Pacific Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System (ICG/PTWS) through recommendation ICG/PTWS-XXVIII.4 and further endorsement by the IOC Assembly at its 30th session (26 June–4 July 2019) decided to commence the full operation of the South China Sea Tsunami Advisory Center (SCSTAC) hosted by the National Marine Environmental Forecasting Center (NMEFC) of China as from 5 November 2019.

Since the start of its full operation, the SCSTAC has been providing timely and effective tsunami advisory services to officially designated National Tsunami Warning Centres (NTWCs) of the riparian countries of the South China Sea. In order to enhance the availability and serviceability of SCSTAC, the NMEFC has invited the Hong Kong Observatory to establish and operate a backup centre for SCSTAC, namely Backup South China Sea Tsunami Advisory Center (BSCSTAC). BSCSTAC will be activated upon the request of SCSTAC in case SCSTAC cannot function properly to provide its tsunami advisory services for the South China Sea region. BSCSTAC will also be activated to assume the role of SCSTAC during the winter months for a period not exceeding 2.4 months per year to ensure continuity of advisory service. SCSTAC/BSCSTAC will issue an announcement for notification to the recipient organizations of its tsunami advisories in the above-mentioned countries and territories prior to the activation of BSCSTAC.

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MOROCCO

By this letter, I wish to inform you that the current plan is to have the BSCSTAC fully operational from 29 March 2023. Accordingly, BSCSTAC will conduct a communications test on 10 April 2023 at 0600 UTC to verify that the communication channels between the Centre and the recipient organizations of its tsunami advisories are operating properly.

The concerned Tsunami Warning Focal Points (TWFPs) should expect to receive the test message within a few minutes of issuance through all their designated communication methods. These may include:

1. Global Telecommunication System (GTS) using the World Meteorological Organization product header WESS31 VHHH, the same product header used by SCSTAC to issue an advisory
2. E-mail – sent by bscstac@hko.gov.hk
3. Telefax – sent by BSCSTAC.

The concerned national TWFPs should verify that the test message is received by all of their designated communication methods. TWFPs are requested to complete and return the acknowledgement form attached hereafter by Telefax to +852 2721 5034, and/or by e-mail to info-bscstac@hko.gov.hk. Prompt responses (preferably by 0700 UTC on 10 April 2023) are highly desirable. The results of this communication test will be processed by SCSTAC.

Please note that the communication test will be postponed in case actual tsunami advisories are issued in the South China Sea region or if a severe event (also non-tsunamigenic one) occurs in or near the Pacific Ocean, which would require the service of SCSTAC. In the event, the test will be conducted on 18 April 2023 at 0600 UTC.

Ensuring the operational functionality of all communication methods is critical to the effectiveness of the Pacific Tsunami Warning System (PTWS) in the South China Sea region. We count on your full participation in the test.

With assurances of my highest consideration, I remain,

Yours sincerely,

[signed]

Vladimir Ryabinin
Executive Secretary

Enclosures (2): 1/ Sample of a test message sent by the Backup South China Sea Tsunami Advisory Center (BSCSTAC) – Appendix 1
2/ Acknowledgement form for receipt of the BSCSTAC test message – Appendix 2

TEST for South China Sea Tsunami Advisory (SCSTA)

Date: 10 April 2023

From: Backup South China Sea Tsunami Advisory Center (Hong Kong)

To : Tsunami Focal Point for SCSTAC, PTWC, JMA (NWPTAC)

WESS31 VHHH 100600

BSCSTAC COMMUNICATION TEST

ISSUED BY BACKUP SOUTH CHINA SEA TSUNAMI ADVISORY CENTER (HONG KONG)

ISSUED AT 0600Z 10 APR 2023

THIS IS A TEST BULLETIN

THIS IS A TEST TO VERIFY COMMUNICATION LINKS AND DETERMINE TRANSMISSION TIMES INVOLVED IN THE DISSEMINATION OF OPERATIONAL TSUNAMI ADVISORY PRODUCTS FROM THE BACKUP SOUTH CHINA SEA TSUNAMI ADVISORY CENTER TO DESIGNATED 24-HOUR TSUNAMI WARNING FOCAL POINTS OF THE SOUTH CHINA SEA TSUNAMI WARNING AND MITIGATION SYSTEM.

RECIPIENTS ARE REQUESTED TO RESPOND TO THE BACKUP SOUTH CHINA SEA TSUNAMI ADVISORY CENTER (HONG KONG).

PLEASE RESPOND VIA ONE OF THE FOLLOWING MEANS

* EMAIL: INFO-BSCSTAC@HKO.GOV.HK

* FAX: +852 2721 5034

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN THIS COMMUNICATION TEST

NNNN

Date: _____

To: Backup South China Sea Tsunami Advisory Center (Hong Kong)
Hong Kong Observatory (HKO)
Facsimile: +852 2721 5034 E-mail: info-bscstac@hko.gov.hk

Acknowledgement form for receipt of the BSCSTAC test message

1. Name of country: _____
2. Recipient organization: _____
3. Responsible office: _____
4. Name of officer in charge: _____
5. Reception status of the BSCSTAC test message

(1) GTS

- Received (Time of receipt (UTC): _____ h _____ m)
- Failed to receive
- Not registered

(2) E-mail

- Registered address 1: _____
- Received (Time of receipt (UTC): _____ h _____ m)
 - Failed to receive
 - Not registered

- Registered address 2: _____
- Received (Time of receipt (UTC): _____ h _____ m)
 - Failed to receive
 - Not registered

- Registered address 3: _____
- Received (Time of receipt (UTC): _____ h _____ m)
 - Failed to receive
 - Not registered

(3) Facsimile

- Registered number 1: _____
- Received (Time of receipt (UTC): _____ h _____ m)
 - Failed to receive
 - Not registered

- Registered number 2: _____
- Received (Time of receipt (UTC): _____ h _____ m)
 - Failed to receive
 - Not registered