



UNESCO/IOC – NOAA ITIC Training Program in Hawaii (ITP-Hawaii)  
TSUNAMI EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS  
AND THE PACIFIC TSUNAMI WARNING CENTER (PTWC) ENHANCED PRODUCTS  
TSUNAMI EVACUATION PLANNING AND UNESCO IOC TSUNAMI READY PROGRAMME  
7-18 August 2023, Honolulu, Hawaii USA

# 12.4 Local Source Tsunami Response Best Practice

---

Laura Kong  
Director  
International Tsunami Information Center



# 1.0 Local-Source Tsunami Priorities

---

- **Self Evacuation** – Key to Surviving Local Tsunamis with very short lead times
- **Official Warnings **Supplementary** to Natural Warnings** – Official warnings reinforce self-evacuations & assist **all-clear** decisions
- **Official warning systems** – Must have fast and simple warning chains, conservative, pre-scripted products, don't delay

## 2.0 Warning Types

---

- **Natural** – Strong ground shaking and/or rapidly receding sea-level, NZ “long, strong, get gone”
- **Official** – Issued by TSPs and/or NTWCs
  - Designed to reinforce natural warnings
  - Released within 10 minutes
  - Be Conservative
  - Regular warning updates, cancellation
  - All Clear – what it is, how it is communicated
  - Multi-media, redundant
  - Consistent (same alert, same mechanism)
- **Unofficial** – Word-of-mouth, Social Media

## 3.0 Public Awareness and Education

---

- **Effective, comprehensive and Continuous Public Education Programs** – what to expect from official warning, how to recognize and respond to natural warnings
- **Exercises** – Local, Regional, National
- **Debriefings and post-event public response analysis** – learn and improve locally and internationally, SOPs
- **Communication Tests**

## 4.0 Detection and Characterization

---

- **Ground Shaking** – Strength and Intensity/Duration. Proxy but depends on source location and person feeling
- **Magnitude Threshold Tables** – Agree before. Follow during actual event. Conservative
- **Refine With more Information** – Procedures should be in place as to how updates are managed and communicated
- **Regular SOP Training and Exercising**

## 5.0 For Future Consideration

---

- **Inclusion of False Alarms in 3.0** – need to maintain confidence and ensure proactive action
- **Dealing with non-tectonic events** (landslides, volcanoes) **or slow earthquakes** (long shaking, not abrupt, but large tsunami)
- **Refinement of definition of Natural Warnings**
- **Recommendations on communications channels.**



UNESCO/IOC – NOAA ITIC Training Program in Hawaii (ITP-Hawaii)  
TSUNAMI EARLY WARNING SYSTEMS  
AND THE PACIFIC TSUNAMI WARNING CENTER (PTWC) ENHANCED PRODUCTS  
TSUNAMI EVACUATION PLANNING AND UNESCO IOC TSUNAMI READY PROGRAMME  
7-18 August 2023, Honolulu, Hawaii USA

# Thank You

---

Laura Kong  
Director  
International Tsunami Information Center

