



INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION  
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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 2777**  
(Available in English only)

IOC/VR/TA/BA/eba  
16 September 2019

- To** : Registered Tsunami National Contacts (TNC) and Tsunami Warning Focal Points (TWFP) of the Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Pacific Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System (ICG/PTWS)
- cc.** : Official National Coordinating Bodies for liaison with IOC  
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 and Latin America Regions  
Regional Organizations cooperating with UNESCO/IOC  
Director, Pacific Tsunami Warning Center  
Northwest Pacific Tsunami Advisory Center (NWPTAC)  
Director, International Tsunami Information Center  
IOC Tsunami Unit

**Subject : Full operation of the South China Sea Tsunami Advisory Center (SCSTAC) starts on 5 November 2019**

As early as 2008, Member States around regional seas were encouraged to actively promote the development, establishment and sustained operation of national and sub-regional Tsunami Warning and Mitigation Systems within the framework of Intergovernmental Coordination Groups (ICGs) (Resolution EC-XLI.6).

In February 2009, a sub-regional Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System for the South China Sea region was established within the framework of the ICG/PTWS together with the Working Group for the South China Sea region (WG-SCS) (Recommendations ICG/PTWS-XXIII.4 and 5).

At its 25th session (Vladivostok, September 2013), the ICG/PTWS agreed on forming a Task Team on the Establishment of a South China Sea Tsunami Advisory Center (SCSTAC), and accepted the offer of the Government of China to host the SCSTAC at the National Marine Environmental Forecasting Center (NMEFC).

At its 27th session (Tahiti, April 2017), the ICG/PTWS decided to commence the trial operation of SCSTAC in late 2017, with specific date to be decided by the PTWS Steering Committee. Through

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IOC [Circular Letter, 2706](#) dated 3 January 2018 we announced the start of the trial issuance of SCSTAC products effective on 26 January 2018.

At its 28th session (Barcelo Montelimar, Nicaragua 2–5 April 2019), the ICG/PTWS through Recommendation ICG/PTWS-XXVIII.4 and further endorsement of the IOC Assembly at its 30<sup>th</sup> session (26th June–4th July 2019), decided to commence the full operation of SCSTAC on 5 November 2019. ICG/PTWS further accepted the “User’s Guide for the South China Sea Tsunami Advisory Center (SCSTAC) products for the South China Sea Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System” for publication as an IOC Technical Series issue.

By this letter, it is my pleasure to announce the start of full operation of the South China Sea Tsunami Advisory Center (SCSTAC) on 5 November 2019. As a consequence and as endorsed by the IOC Assembly, the interim tsunami services provided by the North West Pacific Tsunami Advisory Center (NWPTAC) to the South China Sea region will be stopped following the commencement of full operation of SCSTAC. Please note also that the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center (PTWC) will continue to provide tsunami services to the region in parallel with SCSTAC.

As part of this announcement, the *User’s Guide for the South China Sea Tsunami Advisory Center (SCSTAC) products for the South China Sea Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System* is attached to this letter and made available to registered Tsunami National Contacts (TNC) and Tsunami Warning Focal Points (TWFP) of the ICG/PTWS. The guide includes detailed information about SCSTAC products, geographical coverage, bulletins, forecast points and other technical aspects.

Yours sincerely,

*[signed]*

Vladimir Ryabinin  
Executive Secretary

Enclosure (1):

UNESCO-IOC 2019. User’s Guide for the South China Sea Tsunami Advisory Center (SCSTAC) products for the South China Sea Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System. Paris (IOC Technical Series 149): <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000370602.locale=en>