



INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION  
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COMISIÓN OCEANOGRÁFICA INTERGUBERNAMENTAL  
МЕЖПРАВИТЕЛЬСТВЕННАЯ ОКЕАНОГРАФИЧЕСКАЯ КОМИССИЯ  
اللجنة الدولية الحكومية لعلوم المحيطات  
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**IOC Circular Letter N° 2654**  
(Available only in English)

IOC/VR/BA  
12 January 2017

To: CARIBE-EWS Tsunami Warning Focal Points (TWFP)  
CARIBE-EWS National Tsunami Warning Centres (NTWC)  
CARIBE-EWS Tsunami National Contacts (TNC)  
ICG/CARIBE-EWS Chair and Vice-Chairs

Cc: Official National Coordinating Bodies for liaison with the IOC  
Permanent Delegates/Observer Missions to UNESCO of IOC Member States  
National Commissions for UNESCO of IOC Member States  
Directors of UNESCO and IOC Regional Offices in the Caribbean Region  
Regional Organizations cooperating with UNESCO/IOC  
NAVAREA Coordinators  
IHO/IMO World-Wide Navigational Warning Service Sub-Committee (WWNWS-SC)  
Director, Pacific Tsunami Warning Center  
Director, USA National Tsunami Warning Center

**Subject: CARIBE WAVE 2017 Exercise in the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions  
on 21 March 2017**

The Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Tsunami and Other Coastal Hazards Warning System for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions at its eighth session (ICG/CARIBE EWS-VIII, Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago, 29 April–1 May 2013), decided to conduct exercises named CARIBE WAVE on an annual basis leaving each Member State to define its level of participation. At its Eleventh Session in Cartagena, Colombia, 5-7 April 2016, the ICG/CARIBE-EWS, recommended that Exercise CARIBE WAVE 17 take place on 21 March 2017, with three hypothetical scenarios.

The initial dummy messages for the three scenarios will be issued by the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center (PTWC), which is the CARIBE-EWS Tsunami Service Provider, on March 21, 2017 at 1400 UTC and will be disseminated over all its standard broadcast channels.

- The first scenario simulates a tsunami generated by a magnitude Mw 7.9 earthquake located off the Caribbean coast of Costa Rica, in the southern Caribbean Sea. Event origin time: **14:00:00 UTC March 21, 2017.**

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- The second scenario simulates a tsunami generated by a magnitude Mw 8.2 earthquake located along the south eastern coast of Cuba. Event Origin time: **14:00:00 UTC March 21, 2017**.
- The third scenario simulates a tsunami generated by a magnitude Mw 8.5 earthquake along the Northern Lesser Antilles. Event Origin time: **14:00:00 UTC March 21, 2017**.

The purpose of the exercise is to improve the Tsunami Warning System effectiveness along the coasts of the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions. The exercise provides an opportunity for the corresponding emergency management organizations to exercise their operational lines of communications, review their tsunami response procedures, and promote tsunami preparedness. Regular exercising of response plans is critical to maintain readiness for an emergency. This is particularly true for the Caribbean and Adjacent regions, where tsunamis are infrequent but can be of very high impact. All Emergency Management Organizations (EMO) are encouraged to participate and include the communities at risk.

The initial dummy messages will be issued by the US Pacific Tsunami Warning Center (PTWC) on 21 March 2017 at 14:00:00 UTC (Universal Time Coordinated) for the three scenarios. These messages will be disseminated over all standard Tsunami Warning Centre broadcast channels. The dummy messages are issued to test communications with Tsunami Warning Focal Points (TWFPs) and National Tsunami Warning Centres (NTWC), and to start the exercise. As of 14:05 UTC the PTWC will only send by emails the simulated tsunami products to officially designated TWFPs and NTWCs according to the chosen scenario.

For CARIBE WAVE 17 each Member State needs to select one scenario in advance of the exercise. **By March 10, 2017** each Member State must inform of its chosen scenario PTWC ([charles.mccreery@noaa.gov](mailto:charles.mccreery@noaa.gov) and [gerard.fryer@noaa.gov](mailto:gerard.fryer@noaa.gov)) with a copy to the Caribbean Tsunami Warning Programme ([carolina.hincapie@noaa.gov](mailto:carolina.hincapie@noaa.gov) and [cherrymar.reyes@noaa.gov](mailto:cherrymar.reyes@noaa.gov)). In cases where a Member State does not inform the PTWC and CTWP, the organizers will decide for which scenario the PTWC will send the products. For the exercise the TWPF/ NTWC will receive only the simulated products for that scenario and will decide if and how to disseminate them within their area of responsibility.

The ICG/CARIBE-EWS of UNESCO/IOC, the US National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and the Caribbean Regional Stakeholders (CEPREDENAC, CDEMA, and EMIZ) are providing the framework for this exercise as a means for emergency responders throughout the Caribbean and adjacent regions to test and update tsunami response plans. Attached is the participant handbook for the *CARIBE WAVE 17: A Caribbean and Adjacent Regions Tsunami Warning Exercise, 21 March 2017. Volume 1: Participant Handbook. IOC Technical Series, 133* and additional information relevant to the exercise are also available at <http://www.caribewave.info>.

For CARIBE WAVE 17, the CARIBE-EWS organization team has teamed up with TsunamiZone.org for online registration. The link for registration is <http://tsunamizone.org/caribbean>. Under the Caribbean Zone Region Tab participants will be able to sign up and choose among the following community categories: individuals, businesses, schools, faith-based organizations, community groups, government agencies, individuals. After registering, they will be sent a confirmation email. Emergency Management Organizations (EMOs) will have real-time access to the status of registration of participants within their areas of responsibility. EMOs are encouraged to promote this registration system. In CARIBE WAVE 16 over 331,000 participants were registered.

Online seminars in English, Spanish and French to orient participants on the exercise are planned on January 17-19 and March 7-9, 2017. If you intend to participate in these seminars please register at <http://www.caribewave.info>. For further information on the exercise, contact Ms Christa G. von Hillebrandt-Andrade, Manager US NWS Caribbean Tsunami Warning Program and Chair of the Intergovernmental Coordination Group of CARIBE-EWS (email: [christa.vonh@noaa.gov](mailto:christa.vonh@noaa.gov)), and/or the Technical Secretary ICG/CARIBE-EWS, Mr Bernardo Aliaga (email: [b.aliaga@unesco.org](mailto:b.aliaga@unesco.org)). You are

also encouraged to further disseminate copies of this letter to appropriate organizations and authorities within your country.

With the assurances of my highest consideration, I remain,

Yours sincerely,

*[signed]*

Vladimir Ryabinin  
Executive Secretary

Enclosure:

- Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission. 2017. *Exercise CARIBE WAVE 17, Costa Rica, Cuba and Northeastern Antilles Scenarios – A Caribbean and Adjacent Regions Tsunami Warning Exercise, 21 March 2017. Volume 1: Participant Handbook*. IOC Technical Series, 133. Paris: UNESCO (English)