

NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE INSTRUCTION 10-702

JUNE 2, 2022

Operations and Services

Tsunami Warning Services, NWSPD 10-7

INTERNATIONAL TSUNAMI INFORMATION CENTER

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OPR: W/AFS26 (M. Angove)

Certified by: W/AFS2 (M. Mullusky)

Type of Issuance: Routine

SUMMARY OF REVISIONS: This directive supersedes NWS Instruction 10-702, *International Tsunami Information Center*, dated February 20, 2017. This instruction includes the following changes:

1. Addition of a Caribbean Office to the International Tsunami Information Center, formerly known as the Caribbean Tsunami Warning Program.
2. Adjusted for changes to 10-703, Post-Tsunami and Warning Effectiveness Surveys (January 2022).

May 19, 2022

Allison Allen

Date

Director

Analyze, Forecast and Support Office

International Tsunami Information Center

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1 General

The International Tsunami Information Center (ITIC) is operated by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s (NOAA’s) National Weather Service (NWS) Pacific Region Headquarters to serve as a national and international tsunami information resource assisting U.S. States / Territories / Commonwealths, U.S. Compact of Free Association countries, countries throughout the Pacific, the Caribbean, and around the world to mitigate the effects of tsunamis. The ITIC operates the ITIC Caribbean Office in Mayagüez, Puerto Rico to support the Caribbean region. The ITIC works in close partnership with the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center (PTWC), which in addition to their domestic Designated Service Area (DSA) responsibilities, serves as the Tsunami Service Provider for the Pacific Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System (PTWS) and for the Tsunami and other Coastal Hazards Early Warning System for the Caribbean and Adjacent Regions (CARIBE EWS) countries.

The ITIC was established upon request of the United Nations (UN) Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (UNESCO/IOC), and has been hosted, since its inception in 1965, by the NWS Pacific Region. The ITIC’s mission is to improve tsunami preparedness for all Pacific Ocean nations participating in the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC)-coordinated Pacific Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System, as well as for other nations of the global tsunami warning system coordinated by the IOC. The mandate and functions of ITIC for the Pacific are given in IOC Resolution X-23 (November 1977), as amended by IOC/Executive Council-XXI (March 1988). After the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, ITIC was requested to assist the Indian, Caribbean, and Mediterranean regions by IOC Resolutions XXIII-12, 13, 14 (June 2005).

ITIC serves a critical role as a U.S. international tsunami warning coordination center, working directly with countries and stakeholders. ITIC and the U.S. Tsunami National Contact will work closely with NWS International Activities Office (IAO) and the U.S. IOC Permanent Representative to formulate U.S. engagement in the IOC Tsunami Program. Domestically, ITIC serves as a resource for PTWC and NTWC, as well as their respective Regional Warning Coordination Meteorologists (WCMS) to provide States and Territories with warning coordination and tsunami preparedness program support. Effective warning coordination requires continuous user interaction, including on-site and in-person visits and/or training that will build tsunami resilient communities domestically and internationally.

The ITIC supports the NWS Mission objective of providing Impact-based Decision Support Services (IDSS) for the protection of life and property by providing outreach, training, technical assistance and warning coordination services. This ensures that users of “products of the National Weather Service can respond effectively to improve outcomes from weather events,” including tsunamis and the tsunami products provided by the two U.S. Tsunami Warning Centers (TWCs). It includes partner “collaboration appropriate in developing, proposing, and implementing plans to develop, modify, or tailor products and services of the National Weather Service to improve the usefulness of such products and services,” and to “work closely with State, local, and tribal, emergency management agencies, and other agencies related to disaster management, to ensure a planned, coordinated, and effective preparedness and response effort.” (Weather Research and Forecasting Innovation Act of 2017, 15 U.S.C. § 8545).

2 Domestic

The ITIC serves as an information and training resource for the U.S. National Tsunami Hazard Mitigation Program (NTHMP) partner States and Territories, and directly serves the Caribbean, and domestic territories including Puerto Rico, Guam, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. The purpose of the ITIC is to enable all levels of government to prepare for the tsunami threat—to save lives and to reduce damage to property and the economy from a destructive tsunami. The ITIC also answers questions and fulfills requests for information and awareness materials from the public.

To fulfill its domestic mission, the ITIC serves as a resource for NWS WCMs and the TsunamiReady® Program, the NTHMP and its partners, all NOAA line offices, and other U.S. Federal agencies, such as the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security (USDHS), including the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA).

Duties: The principal domestic duties of the ITIC are summarized as:

- Support the NTHMP States, Territories, Commonwealths, and partners, consistent with the U.S. Tsunami Warning, Education, and Research Act of 2017, 33 U.S.C. § 3204.
- Develop and provide tsunami training. The ITIC is the USDHS / FEMA - National Disaster Preparedness Training Center’s (NDPTC) tsunami focal point for the development and delivery of certified training. The NDPTC, funded through the FEMA Preparedness Directorate under a Cooperative Agreement with the University of Hawaii and is the only member of the USDHS National Disaster Consortium that focuses on natural hazards disaster preparedness training.
- Support the recognition and renewal of TsunamiReady® communities in the U.S. NWS Pacific and Caribbean Region Areas of Responsibility, including Hawaii, the Territories of American Samoa and Guam, the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands, the Territories of Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands.
- Develop and sustain a culture of tsunami preparedness and response.

3 International

Under the U.S. Tsunami Warning, Education, and Research Act of 2017, 33 U.S.C. § 3206(a), the NWS shall provide technical assistance to the IOC, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), and other international entities as part of international efforts to develop a fully functional global tsunami forecast and warning system comprised of regional tsunami warning

networks, and based on the experience of the PTWS. Pursuant to 33 U.S.C. § 3206(b), ITIC provides support to PTWS and CARIBE-EWS countries and other nations of the global tsunami warning system.

To fulfill its international mission, the ITIC works closely with the UNESCO/IOC and other UN agencies such as the UN Development Program, the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, international and intergovernmental regional specialized scientific and disaster risk reduction agencies, U.S. and international tsunami warning centers, IOC Tsunami Service Providers, IOC Tsunami Information Centers, and the U.S. State Department as well as federal agencies such as the USGS, the National Science Foundation (NSF), and all NOAA line offices. All international cooperation is coordinated with the NWS IAO and the U.S. Tsunami National Contact. The NWS IAO keeps ITIC informed of relevant NWS and NOAA international policies, priorities and programs, as well as bilateral and multilateral agreements related to tsunamis.

Duties: The principal international duties of the ITIC are summarized as:

- Monitor the international tsunami warning activities in the Pacific and other nations of the global tsunami warning system, and make recommendations for improvements to the PTWS and other IOC-coordinated warning and mitigation systems, and/or to the NOAA/NWS Tsunami Program.
- Provide Pacific countries information about the PTWS, the affairs of the ITIC, and how to join in the activities of the IOC (ICG/PTWS).
- Assist member states of ICG/PTWS, ICG/CARIBE-EWS, and other nations of the global tsunami warning system including countries participating in the U.S. Compact for Free Association in the North Pacific, in the establishment of regional and national warning systems and in the improvement of preparedness, including implementation of the UNESCO/IOC Tsunami Ready Programme.
- Gather and promulgate knowledge on tsunamis and foster research and its application.
- Cooperate with the World Data System in collecting tsunami data information.
- Assist national authorities in conducting investigations of all aspects of major tsunamis and develop standard survey procedures for such investigations.
- Provide technical assistance to various UNESCO/IOC Intergovernmental Coordination Groups (e.g., the Caribbean, Indian Ocean, and Mediterranean).
- Support the Caribbean Tsunami Information Center (CTIC) as requested per Recommendation ICG/CARIBE-EWS II.12 (2007), Recommendation ICG/CARIBE EWS-VI.1 Annex CTIC (2011).

4 Post-Tsunami Surveys

Under NWS Instruction (NWSI) 10-703, [*Post Tsunami and Warning Effectiveness Surveys*](#), the ITIC will facilitate and coordinate international post tsunami surveys for ITIC-served partners. It coordinates with the IAO, ITIC-Caribbean Office, NTHMP Partners, and Federal Agencies, the UNESCO/IOC, the U.S. State Department, and the affected country.

To improve the quality and accessibility of tsunami historical data for hazard risk analysis and warning guidance, the ITIC works with the International Science Council's World Data System, Marine Geology and Geophysics, co-located at NOAA's National Centers for Environmental Information, to collect, verify, and archive tsunami event data.

5 Reporting Responsibilities

The ITIC Director, will report to the appropriate IOC authorities on matters not affecting NWS operations or U.S. policy and is responsible for funds allocated to ITIC by the IOC. For administrative purposes, the ITIC Director, reports to the Director, Pacific Region, who is also responsible for logistical support. Financial resources are provided by the NOAA/NWS Pacific Region. International activities may be additionally augmented by other funding sources within NOAA, other federal government agencies, the UNESCO IOC, USAID, WMO Voluntary Cooperation Program funds, or other international and national organizations.

6 Office and Staffing

The ITIC office is located in Honolulu, Hawaii. The ITIC Caribbean Office is located in Mayagüez, Puerto Rico. NOAA/NWS will provide the ITIC Director, Deputy Director and office staff. The position of Deputy Director, ITIC, manages the ITIC Caribbean Office. The position of Associate Director, ITIC (IOC International Coordination Group for the Tsunami Warning System in Pacific (ICG/ITSU), Rec 1, 1974), is funded by a foreign member state of the ICG/PTWS and/or the IOC. The Associate Director will report directly to the ITIC Director. Additional foreign staff may be detailed by countries to work at ITIC in coordination with the IOC and the IAO.