



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 2972**

(Available in English only)

IOC/VR/BA/ON/ah

7 November 2023

- To : Registered SCSTAC focal points and Tsunami Warning Focal Points of the following countries: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam
- Cc. : Corresponding Official National Coordination Bodies for liaison with the IOC  
Corresponding Permanent Delegates/Observer Missions to UNESCO and National Commissions for UNESCO  
Chair, ICG/PTWS  
Director, Pacific Tsunami Warning Center  
Director, Internal Tsunami Information Center  
IOC Tsunami Resilience Section

**Subject: Backup South China Sea Tsunami Advisory Center (BSCSTAC)  
Communications Test for the Registered SCSTAC Focal Points  
on 20 November 2023 at 0200 UTC**

At its 11<sup>th</sup> meeting (Guangzhou, China, 25–26 September 2023), the Regional Working Group on Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System for the South China Sea Region (SCS-WG) of the Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Pacific Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System (ICG/PTWS), agreed that the Backup South China Sea Tsunami Advisory Center operated by the Hong Kong Observatory (HKO) would operate from 11 December at 0200 UTC to 22 December 2023 at 0200 UTC in place of the main centre SCSTAC operated by the National Marine Environmental Forecasting Center (NMEFC) in Beijing. Before the scheduled operation, a communication test will be carried out with the recipient Focal Points and organizations of the SCSTAC tsunami advisories.

The communication test conducted by BSCSTAC will take place on 20 November 2023 at 0200 UTC. The goal is to verify that the communication channels between the centre and the recipients of the tsunami advisories in the above-mentioned countries and territories of the Northwest Pacific region are working 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/BSCSTAC to issue an advisory

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2. E-mail – sent by [bscstac@hko.gov.hk](mailto:bscstac@hko.gov.hk)
3. Telefax – sent by BSCSTAC.

The concerned TWFPs should verify that the test message is received by all of their designated communication methods. TWFPs are requested to complete the acknowledgement form attached hereafter and return it by Telefax to +852 2721 5034 and/or by e-mail to [info-bscstac@hko.gov.hk](mailto:info-bscstac@hko.gov.hk). Prompt responses (preferably by 0300 UTC on 20 November 2023) are highly desirable. The results of this communication test will be processed by SCSTAC and BSCSTAC.

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 (including non-tsunamigenic one) occurs in/or near the Pacific Ocean, which may require the service of the NMEFC and the HKO. In the event, the test will be carried out on 24 November 2023 at 0200 UTC.

Ensuring the operational functionality of all communication methods is critical to the effectiveness of the Pacific Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System (PTWS) in the South China Sea region. Please also ensure the contact detail for these communication channels are up to date and provide regular updates to the IOC Secretariat following the established procedures as described in IOC Circular Letter No [2563](#). We count on your full participation in the test and thank you for your kind cooperation.

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 (Hong Kong) (BSCSTAC)

                          2/ Acknowledgement form for receipt of the BSCSTAC test message

**TEST for South China Sea Tsunami Advisory (SCSTA)**

Date : 20 November 2023  
From : Backup South China Sea Tsunami Advisory Center (Hong Kong)  
To : Tsunami Focal Point for SCSTAC, PTWC, JMA (NWPTAC)

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**WESS31 VHHH 200200**

BSCSTAC COMMUNICATION TEST

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

ISSUED AT 0200Z 20 NOV 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) (BSCSTAC)  
Hong Kong Observatory (HKO)  
Facsimile: +852 2721 5034 E-mail: [info-bscstac@hko.gov.hk](mailto: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