

REPUBLIC OF MAURITIUS

National Report: Tsunami Warning System in the Republic of Mauritius

1. Introduction

26th December, 2004 earthquake, in the Indonesian seismic zone, unleashed deadly waves that swept through the Indian Ocean coastlines and islands leaving behind a wake of death and destruction as the world watched in disbelief.

The level of sea water reached 163 cm above mean sea level (MSL) at Rodrigues and 114 cm above msl in Mauritius and penetrated over 100m inland in Rodrigues and caused damages to infrastructures and the local fishing boats especially in the area. In mainland Mauritius, parts of the coastal roads in the northern and western sector were inundated with no significant damage to the engineering structures and vegetation.

The need for the establishment of an Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning and Mitigation System (IOTWS) was highlighted at local, regional and international levels.

2. Meetings with major stakeholders were held and responsibility allocated as follows:

Prime Minister's Office

The central cyclone and other Natural Disaster Committee chaired by the Secretary for Home Affairs and now Secretary to Cabinet included Tsunami as one of the natural disaster. The PMO is also responsible for Evacuation Strategy, Damage assessment and Rehabilitation Strategy.

Mauritius Meteorological Services

- Alert protocol
- Receipt of alert from other centres
- Issuance of alert to population and stakeholders
- Installation/maintenance of Tsunami monitoring equipment
- Evaluation of Tsunami with real-time data
- Assist the MOE in public awareness campaign.

Mauritius Oceanography Institute

- produce a risk map
- carry research on Tsunami

Ministry of Environment and National Development Unit

The MOE has been assigned to promote education preparedness and risk reduction against Tsunami hazard (mitigation and public awareness).

3. The Republic of Mauritius participated actively in the following meetings:

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| 03 to 08 March 2005
Paris | : International meeting |
| 14 to 16 April 2005
Mauritius | : 2 nd International Coordination High Level Meeting |
| 15 to 17 August 2005
Albion, Mauritius | : Experts mission to assess requirements and capacity needs |
| 14 to 18 March 2005
Jakarta, Indonesia | : Workshop on the exchange of Early Warning and Related Information including Tsunami |
| 11 to 14 July 2005
Tokyo | : ISDR Study Tour |
| 26 to 29 July 2005
Honolulu, Hawaii | : ISDR/IOC Tsunami Warning System Study Tour |
| 3 to 5 August 2005
Perth, Australia | : First session of the Intergovernmental Coordination Group for the Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning and mitigation system (ICG/IOTWS-1) |
| 12 to 16 December 2005
Hyderabad, India | : ICG/IOTWS Second Meeting and modeling workshop |
| 14 to 16 December 2005
Hyderabad, India | : Intergovernmental coordination group for the Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning and mitigation system (ICG/IOTWS) second session |
| 22 January to
11 February 2006 | : JICA Regional Seminar on Tsunami Early Warning System |
| 27-29 March, 2006
Bonn, Germany | : Third International conference on Early Warning EWCIII |
| 14 – 16 June 2006
Thailand, Bangkok | : UN/ISDR Regional Workshop |

4. **Activities implemented**

- Establishment of a Tsunami Warning Centre at the Mauritius Meteorological Services. (Annex I)
- Installation of a new tide gauge at Port Louis 18 April 2005.
- upgrading of the tidegauge at Port Mathurin, Rodrigues 11 April 2005.
- Upgrading of the existing global Telecommunication network in the Meteorological Services by the World Meteorological Organisation.
- An Automatic alarm system installed at the Mauritius Meteorological Services for instant notification.
- A standard operating procedures has been adopted at the MMS to implement assessment and dissemination.
- An expert mission report for the Republic of Mauritius highlighting the gaps and constraints for the establishment of a National Tsunami Warning Centre.
- Education programmed during visits to schools and coastal community
- Public awareness program relayed through electronic and written media. Brochures highlighting safety rules emphasized.
- A provisional inundation map has been identified.
- An operation warning system and procedures has been designed. (Annex II)
- A seismometer would be shortly installed at the Meteorological Services premises with the collaboration of IOC/UNESCO.
- An IOTWS action plan for the Republic of Mauritius has been prepared and submitted to ISDR/Consortium for approval.

