

# Emergency and School Security Quick Reference Guide

## Tsunami

### What is a Tsunami?

A tsunami is a series of fast moving waves produced during large scale ocean disturbances. A tsunami can occur with very little warning; caused by a variety of natural or technological events, such as earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, explosions, landslides, and meteorite impacts.

A tsunami is different from regular ocean waves in several ways:

- A tsunami is a series of sea waves that are extremely long. As a tsunami crosses a deep ocean the length from crest to crest may be as much as 150 kilometres and these waves can travel at speeds of 1,000 km/h
- A tsunami that is unnoticeable at sea, because of its long wave lengths, may reach several metres or more in height by the time that it reaches the coast
- Regular ocean waves move in the water from the surface down to around 150m deep, but a tsunami moves in the water all the way to the seafloor. Therefore the volume of water that is moved by a tsunami is significantly more than the amount moved by regular ocean waves
- As many tsunamis are a series of waves, there is often more than one wave and the first wave may not be the largest

### Pre-season planning

Tsunami can occur at any time of the year, coastal facilities need to be aware that the threat of Tsunami is an ongoing possibility.

- Ensure you have considered actions for a tsunami in your Emergency Response Plan (ERP)

### Preparedness prior to the event

- Contact your local council to find out about the risk of tsunami in your community
- Familiarise yourself with information about tsunami and the natural warnings signs, such as earthquakes, rumbling/roaring sounds or sudden changes in the behaviour of coastal seas (the sea level may recede dramatically)
- Visit the Bureau of Meteorology website for more information. The Bureau of Meteorology has the overall responsibility for issuing Tsunami Warnings in Australia
- If your School is in a tsunami prone area, ensure considerations for a tsunami are included in your ERP. Identify the nearest high ground and the safest routes to it
- WARNINGS will be relayed through Emergency Authorities via official channels (e.g. Emergency Alert, radio, television, sign boards and the internet), Lifeguards, Surf Lifesavers and/or unofficial channels (e.g. face to face or verbal announcement)
- Depending on the level of threat determined by the Joint Australian Tsunami Warning Centre (JATWC), the Bureau of Meteorology may issue a Tsunami Warning restricted to the marine environment and immediate foreshore area for parts of the Australian coastline. Tune into warnings via Emergency Alert, the radio, television, ['1300 TSUNAMI'](https://www.bom.gov.au/tsunami/) (1300 878 6264) or the Bureau of Meteorology's website

# Emergency and School Security Quick Reference Guide

## Immediate action

- Activate your ERP
- Listen to your local radio station for information and instructions
- Listen carefully to the warning and act immediately on the advice provided
- To help minimise the risk to your safety; it is important to follow the advice contained in these warnings
- If you are on land and instructed to evacuate; follow your ERP and immediately move inland or to higher ground at least 10 metres above sea level or, if possible, move at least 1km away from all beaches, harbours and coastal estuaries/riverbank areas
- If you are unable to leave the area, take shelter in the upper level of a sturdy brick or concrete multi-storey building and stay there until advised that it is safe to leave (small buildings are not usually designed to withstand tsunami forces)

## Follow up actions

- Tsunami Warnings will be cancelled by the Joint Australian Tsunami Warning Centre when the main threat is deemed to have passed
- Emergency authorities will inform the public when it is safe to return to the affected area. This advice will be related through emergency authorities via official channels, such as radio, television, signboards or via the internet, '1300 TSUNAMI' (1300 878 6264) or the Bureau of Meteorology's website [www.bom.gov.au/tsunami](http://www.bom.gov.au/tsunami)
- Contact your Regional Director
- Refer media to the Regional Director
- For support on any of the above, please contact your Regional Office Infrastructure Advisor
- Notify Education Queensland International if any international student is involved

## Recovery

- Review of processes, debriefing, and memorials (if necessary)
- Seek support from School Guidance Officers and Employee Advisors as appropriate: <http://education.qld.gov.au/health/contacts/contacts-ea.html>

NB: School closures are posted on DoE website <http://closures.det.qld.gov.au/> Facebook and Twitter.

## Additional Information

For further information contact the Emergency and School Security on (07) 303 46011

**DoE Website** <https://qed.qld.gov.au/>

**Twitter** [www.twitter.com/QLDEducation](http://www.twitter.com/QLDEducation)

**Facebook** <https://www.facebook.com/QueenslandDepartmentofEducation/>