PACIFIC METEOROLOGICAL COUNCIL

SPREP Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme

Strengthening the Resilience and Security of Pacific Communities through an Integrated approach to Weather Climate and Water Risks

Second Meeting of the Pacific Meteorological Council (PMC-2)

1-5 July 2013
Nadi
Fiji Islands

Agenda Item 6.4.1: Challenges and issues experienced during recent Santa Cruz earthquake and tsunami

Purpose

1. To inform the meeting of the experience and challenges and lessons learned pertaining to early warning and response during the recent Santa Cruz earthquake and the tsunami.

Background

2. At 12.12pm on the 6th of April 2013, an 8.0 magnitude undersea earthquake occurred 33km West-Southwest of the Santa Cruz Islands and generated a destructive tsunami.
3. The first PTWC Bulletin was received at 12:20pm and TWC was activated following the threat assessment done using all the available Tsunami tools including the MOST tsunami model. At 12.23pm the SI Meteorological Service issued a tsunami warning for 5 provinces in Solomon Islands; Temotu, Malaita, Makira-Ulawa, Central and Guadalcanal.
4. Following the threat assessment, NEOC was activated and NEOC took over the warning responsibility. By 1.18pm the threat to the 5 Provinces had been re-assessed and the warning for Guadalcanal and Central Provinces was downgraded to a tsunami watch status. The tsunami warning remained in effect for Temotu, Makira-Ulawa and Malaita Provinces until 5pm. A total of four bulletins were issued including cancellation and all clear message.
5. About 75 communities with a total population of 6,482 people along the coast and interior of Santa Cruz were affected by the earthquake and the tsunami. The dual disaster claimed the lives of 9 people and badly injured 13 others with waves estimated to be around 3 to 4 metres inundating coastal villages and some run-ups estimated to be around 1 km inland.

Recommendations

8. The Meeting is invited to:
   - **Encourage** Members to develop a sustainable automated early warning system through the support of partners.

- **Note** that close collaboration between NMS and NDMO is essential for effective warning and response
- Note the new changes to the PTWS and coordinate at the national level to reflect the changes

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