

RADIATION EXPOSURE

Small amounts of radiation — such as from X-rays — are considered safe. In the unlikely event that the City is exposed to unsafe levels of radiation, there are ways to minimize exposure.

THESE 3 GENERAL GUIDELINES WILL MINIMIZE YOUR EXPOSURE TO RADIATION:

- 1) **Time:** Radioactive materials become less radioactive over time. Stay inside until authorities alert you the threat has passed.
- 2) **Distance:** The greater the distance between you and the source of the radiation the better. Authorities may call for an evacuation of people from areas close to the release.
- 3) **Shielding:** Put as much heavy, dense material between you and the source of the radiation as possible. Authorities may advise you to stay indoors or underground for this reason. Close and seal your windows and turn off any ventilation.

ADDITIONAL STEPS TO REDUCE YOUR EXPOSURE INCLUDE:

- If you are outside, get inside. Remove all clothing and wash thoroughly.
- Cover your nose and mouth to avoid ingesting dust.
- If there's an event indoors, try to get out of the building without passing through the contaminated area. If you cannot escape, it may be better to shelter in place. See SHELTER IN PLACE on page 4.
- Potassium Iodide (known as KI) is a kind of salt that can prevent damage to your thyroid gland **ONLY** if you are exposed to radioactive iodine. It will not help you in other radioactive environments, and must be administered within a few hours of exposure to be effective. KI is generally only recommended for children, adolescents, pregnant women and others with growing thyroids. In the unlikely event of radiation exposure, the City may distribute KI.

Also see **GENERAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE** on page 4.

BUILDING COLLAPSES OR EXPLOSIONS



Building collapses or explosions can be the result of structural damage or sabotage. Either way, the set of rules below apply.

IF YOU ARE IN A BUILDING COLLAPSE OR EXPLOSION:

- Get out as quickly and calmly as possible.
- If you can't get out of the building, get under a sturdy table or desk.

IF YOU CLEAN UP DEBRIS:

- Wear gloves and sturdy shoes.
- Sort debris by type (wood, appliances, etc.).
- Do not touch debris that contains utility wires.
- Do not move large or heavy debris. Ask for help from neighbors, friends and recovery workers.

Also see **GENERAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE** on page 4.

HAZARDOUS MATERIALS OR CHEMICAL SPILLS



We use hazardous materials in our homes and businesses every day. Small spills occasionally occur, but these incidents generally cause the public little difficulty other than traffic delays. In the event of a major spill authorities will instruct you on the best course of action, however you should heed the precautions listed below.

For domestic incidents you can consult the **Poison Control** hotline at 1-212-POISONS (1-212-764-7667), NYC gov or call 311.

GENERAL GUIDELINES:

- Stay upwind of the material if possible.
- Seek medical attention as soon as possible if needed.
- If there's an event indoors, try to get out of the building without passing through the contaminated area. Otherwise, it may be better to move as far away from the event as possible and shelter in place. See SHELTER IN PLACE on page 4.
- If exposed, remove outer layer of clothes, separate yourself from them, and wash yourself.
- In some circumstances, after being exposed to hazardous materials, it may be necessary to be "decontaminated." Specially trained emergency personnel will perform decontamination procedures, which may include the removal of personal items and cleansing of exposed areas of the body. They will provide for medical attention if necessary.

Also see **GENERAL EMERGENCY RESPONSE** on page 4.

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THOUGHTS ON TERRORISM



A terrorist's primary objective is to create fear. With accurate information and basic emergency preparedness, you can fight back. Keep in mind that accidents can sometimes appear to be terrorist events and vice versa. Your response should be similar in either case.

KNOW THE FACTS AND BE RESPONSIBLE:

- Know the facts of a situation and think critically. Confirm reports using a variety of reliable sources of information, such as the government or media.
- Do not spread rumors.
- Do not accept packages from strangers and do not leave luggage or bags unattended in public areas such as the subway.

EXPLOSIONS:

- See BUILDING COLLAPSES or EXPLOSIONS section on page 10.

BIOLOGICAL ATTACKS:

- A biological attack occurs when a terrorist intentionally causes a disease epidemic.
- See DISEASE OUTBREAKS & BIOLOGICAL EVENTS section on page 9 for specific information on this type of emergency.

CHEMICAL ATTACKS:

- The intentional release of hazardous materials constitutes an act of terrorism, however accidents involving hazardous materials may also occur. Your course of action should be the same in either case.
- See HAZARDOUS MATERIALS or CHEMICAL SPILLS section on page 10 for specific information on this type of emergency.

RADIOLOGICAL ATTACKS:

- Radiological attacks occur when radioactive material is intentionally released.
- **Radiological Dispersion Device (RDD):** An RDD is designed to scatter amounts of radioactive material over a wide area. The further the material disperses, the less harmful it is. In most cases, the amount of material is unlikely to be lethal.
- **"Dirty Bomb":** A Dirty Bomb is a kind of RDD that combines conventional explosives and radioactive material. The explosive is intended to scatter the radioactive material. More damage and casualties may result from the explosion than from the radiation itself.
- See the RADIATION EXPOSURE section on page 10 for more information.

A PARCEL OR LETTER MAY BE CONSIDERED SUSPICIOUS WHEN IT HAS MORE THAN ONE OF THE FOLLOWING CHARACTERISTICS:

- Handwritten or poorly typed address, incorrect titles or titles with no name, or misspellings of common words.
- Addressed to someone no longer with your organization or not addressed to a specific person.
- Strange return address or no return address.
- Marked with restrictions, such as "Personal," "Confidential" or "Do not X-ray."
- Excessive postage.
- Powdery substance on the outside.
- Unusual weight given its size, lopsided, or oddly shaped.
- Unusual amount of tape on it.
- Odors, discolorations or oily stains.

IF YOU RECEIVE A SUSPICIOUS PACKAGE OR ENVELOPE:

- PUT IT DOWN – preferably on a stable surface.
- Cover it with an airtight container like a trash can or plastic bag.
- Call 911 and alert your building's security officials.
- Alert others to the presence of the package and evacuate the area.
- Wash your hands with soap and water if you have handled the package.
- Make a list of the people who were in the room or area where the suspicious package was recognized, and give it to authorities.
- Do not stray far from the area if you believe you have been exposed.

IF YOU RECEIVE A BOMB THREAT:

- Ask the caller as many of the following questions as possible:
 - 1) When is the bomb going to explode?
 - 2) Where is the bomb right now?
 - 3) What does the bomb look like?
 - 4) What kind of bomb is it?
 - 5) Where are you calling from?
 - 6) Why did you place the bomb?
- Keep the caller on the line for as long as possible and try to write down or record the conversation.
- Write down the exact time and length of call.
- Listen carefully to the caller's voice and background noise.
- After you hang up, call 911 IMMEDIATELY.

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**IF YOU HAVE INFORMATION ABOUT POTENTIAL TERRORISM,
call 1-888-NYC-SAFE.**
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INFORMATION FOR YOU AND YOUR LOVED ONES

SENIORS & PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES



Seniors and people with disabilities may need to take additional steps to prepare for emergencies. If you or someone in your household has special needs, consider the following tips when preparing your disaster plans.

For more planning assistance, you may contact the NYC Department for the Aging or the Mayor's Office for People with Disabilities via 311 or TTY: 212-504-4115.

- Keep a 7-14 day supply of necessary medications on hand at all times.
- Develop a personal emergency plan for each place where you spend time – at home, work, school and in the community.
- Evaluate your capabilities, limitations, needs and surroundings to determine what type of support you may need in an emergency.
- Include your home care attendant and other people in your network in your planning process. For specific planning, see the Office of Emergency Management's brochure, "New York City's Guide to Preparedness for Seniors and People with Disabilities," on OEM's website at NYC.gov or call 311.
- If you are dependent on electricity for your wheelchair, breathing machine or any other life-sustaining device, plan for a loss of power. Consult your power provider.
- The hearing impaired may need to make special arrangements to make sure they receive emergency warnings.
- Mobility impaired people may need assistance to get to a shelter or to evacuate from buildings. Keep in mind elevators will not work in a power outage. Technologically dependent people should check in with 911 or their doctors.
- People with special dietary needs should have an adequate emergency food supply.
- It is a good idea to write down your support needs and numbers. Medical conditions, medications and dosages, allergies, special equipment, medical insurance, Medicare insurance cards as well as personal and medical contact details are important to have available. Keep this list with you in emergencies and supply a friend with a copy.
- If you have a service animal, make sure that it is registered for a service tag.

What Else You Can Do to Prepare Your Household For Emergencies

- Use the websites and phone numbers listed in MORE RESOURCES on page 14 to learn about more ways to protect yourself and your household in an emergency.
- Take a first-aid or Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) class to learn how to help family and neighbors if they are injured.
- Install smoke and carbon monoxide detectors in all areas of your home and check them regularly to make sure they are working.
- Install fire extinguishers in your home and make sure all household members know where they are and how to use them.
- Change batteries in smoke and carbon monoxide detectors and check on emergency supplies twice a year during daylight-saving times.

MENTAL HEALTH



Disaster victims are likely to experience at least one of several emotional responses: anger, fatigue, loss of appetite, sleeplessness, nightmares, depression, inability to concentrate, hyperactivity, or increased alcohol or drug use.

MENTAL HEALTH EXPERTS SUGGEST A NUMBER OF WAYS TO RELIEVE THE SYMPTOMS OF EMOTIONAL DISTRESS:

- Talk about your feelings with family, friends and neighbors. These people are good medicine, and sharing common experiences helps people overcome anxiety and feelings of helplessness.
- Get back into daily routines as soon as you can, and try to maintain a healthy diet and get plenty of sleep.
- Get some physical exercise every day.
- If you continue to have the symptoms described above for an extended period of time, think about consulting a mental health professional.

For more information, a referral, or if you need someone to talk to, call New York City's "LifeNet" 24-hour Mental Health Hotline via 311.



Include your children in planning for an emergency. Teach them how to get help and what to do in different situations. Practice your family emergency plan with your children and quiz them about preparedness information.

EVERY CHILD SHOULD KNOW:

- Family contact information for use in an emergency.
- Never to touch wires lying on the ground or hanging from poles.
- How to identify the smell of gas. Tell them that if they smell it, they should tell a grown-up or leave the building.
- How and when to call 911.

INFORMATION TO KNOW ABOUT YOUR CHILD'S SCHOOL OR DAY CARE FACILITY:

- Find out what your child's school does in the event of an emergency and know the school's emergency plans.
- Find out where can you pick up your child during an evacuation.
- Ensure that the school has up-to-date contact information for you and at least one other relative or friend.
- Find out if you can authorize a friend or relative to pick up your children in an emergency if you cannot.

GO BAG:

- Pack child care supplies as well as games and small toys in your family's Go Bag.

REASSURANCE:

- Children are particularly vulnerable to emotional stress after a disaster and may exhibit excessive fear of the dark, crying, fear of being alone and constant worry. Reassure children that they are safe. Encourage them to talk about their fears, emphasize that they are not responsible for what happened, and comfort them.

For more information, see **EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS ADVICE** on page 3 and refer to **MORE RESOURCES** on page 14.

NON-ENGLISH SPEAKERS

Non-English speakers should consider their special needs in an emergency.

- Make special preparations to get the information and special assistance you may need in advance.
- Call 311 for more information.



Pet owners should include provisions for their pet in a household disaster plan. Please note that pets are not allowed in shelters (only service animals are allowed in shelters). Therefore, it is important that you have a plan for your pet in the case of an evacuation.

PET EMERGENCY PLANNING TIPS:

- Contact friends or relatives outside your area to see if they would be willing to accommodate you and your pets in an emergency. Also, ask a neighbor, friend or family member if they will look after your pet if you cannot return home due to a disaster.
- See if your veterinarian or groomer provides shelter for animals during an emergency.
- Transport your pets in a carrier for the duration of the disaster. This makes pets feel safer and more secure.
- Know your pets' hiding places so that you can easily find them in times of stress.
- Make sure each pet has a license and ID tag.
- See the Office of Emergency Management's brochure, "Disaster Preparedness for Animals in New York City" on OEM's website at NYC.gov or call 311.

ASSEMBLE A "PET SURVIVAL KIT" THAT CAN BE READY TO GO IF YOU ARE EVACUATING YOUR PET TO A KENNEL OR TO FRIENDS OR FAMILY. YOU SHOULD INCLUDE:

- Water, food and containers.
- A leash/muzzle/harness.
- A copy of all current vaccination and health records, license numbers and microchip numbers.
- Medication for your pet (if needed).
- A pet carrier or cage (a luggage carrier can be used to wheel the carrier around).
- Plastic bags for pick-up.
- Photo of your pet.

SUBWAY PREPAREDNESS



Disaster can happen anywhere. If you are caught on the subway during any kind of emergency, follow the guidelines below.

- Stay as calm and quiet as possible so that you can hear any instructions.
- Do not leave the subway unless you are instructed to do so. The safest place is usually in the subway car.
- Subway tracks are dangerous. Never exit a subway train onto the tracks unless directed to do so by the train crew or emergency response personnel. While being escorted by emergency response personnel, be careful to avoid the larger third rail, which carries a dangerous electrical current.
- The Subways Control Center is in constant communication with train crews. In the event that there is a problem in the system and if the PA system is not operating, the train crew will walk through the train to instruct passengers on emergency evacuation procedures.
- Think before you pull the emergency cord. Only pull the cord when the train is in motion if someone gets caught between closing subway car doors and is being dragged. If your train is between stations and you pull the cord, the train will stop, preventing medical or any other kind of assistance from reaching the train. Help will be much more accessible if the train reaches the nearest station without interruption, where police and medical services will be waiting or can be quickly summoned.

HOW YOU CAN HELP THE CITY



Many of the tips in this guide are designed to help you and your household. Here's what you can do to help the City recover from all kinds of emergencies.

BECOME A VOLUNTEER:

- It is best to affiliate with a recognized disaster volunteer organization such as the Red Cross or the Salvation Army before a disaster happens.
- Before going directly to volunteer at a relief organization, hospital or disaster site after a disaster, wait for instructions from local officials, or check with specific organizations.
- Be patient. In the wake of a disaster, there are often many people waiting to volunteer. However, there may be a greater need for volunteers in the weeks and months after a disaster.

More Resources



LEARN MORE ABOUT EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS AND EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT:

New York City Office of Emergency Management:
NYC.gov/oem or **311**

New York State Emergency Management Office:
1-518-457-2200 or
www.nysemo.state.ny.us

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA): FEMA published a longer, more detailed guide to emergency preparedness called "Are You Ready? A Guide to Citizen Preparedness." To order this publication, call FEMA's distribution center at **1-800-480-2520** or visit **www.fema.gov/library**.

The FEMA website, **www.fema.gov** also contains a great deal of information about preparing for and responding to emergencies.

U.S. Department of Homeland Security: **1-800-BE-READY** (**1-800-237-3239**) or **www.ready.gov**

U.S. Centers for Disease Control & Prevention: **1-800-311-3435** or **www.cdc.gov**

U.S. Department of Energy: **1-800-DIAL DOE** (**1-800-342-5363**) or **www.energy.gov**

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency: **1-800-424-8802** or **www.epa.gov**

National Weather Service:
www.weather.gov

NOAA All Hazards Radio
www.nws.noaa.gov/nwr

American Red Cross:
1-877-733-2767 or
www.nyredcross.org

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES IN NEW YORK CITY:

There are many volunteer opportunities for New Yorkers interested in donating their skills and time to help people during a disaster.

New York Cares: **1-212-228-5000** or **www.nycares.org**

American Red Cross:
1-877-733-2767 or
www.nyredcross.org

Citizen Corps:
NYC.gov/citizencorps

Salvation Army:
www.salvationarmy-newyork.org

FOR PARENTS AND FAMILIES:

FEMA:
www.fema.gov/kids/

American Red Cross:
www.prepare.org/children/
beredybook.pdf

The Sesame Workshop's safety page:
www.sesameworkshop.org/
parents/solutions/safety

American Academy of Pediatrics:
www.aap.org

- Following a disaster, New York Cares will post disaster volunteer opportunities on its website **www.nycures.org**.
- To learn about additional disaster preparedness volunteer opportunities, visit the City's Citizen Corps website at **NYC.gov/citizencorps**, or see Volunteer Opportunities in "More Resources."

MAKE A DONATION:

- Making a financial contribution to a volunteer agency involved in disaster relief is often the most sensible and efficient way of helping people in need after a disaster.
- Before donating any goods, including food or clothing, wait for instructions from local officials or check with a specific organization. Unneeded items overwhelm the recovery effort and may go to waste.
- For more information on donating goods and services during disasters read "When Disaster Strikes" available at **www.NVOAD.org**.

EMERGENCY REFERENCE CARD

Household Emergency Information

Contact information for household members. Please complete this form and keep it up to date.

Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Social Security Number: _____

Business or School Evacuation Location: _____

Medical Information: _____

Work, School or Other Address _____

& Telephone Numbers: _____

Name: _____

Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Social Security Number: _____

Business or School Evacuation Location: _____

Medical Information: _____

Work, School or Other Address _____

& Telephone Numbers: _____

Name: _____

Medical Information	Name:	Telephone #	Policy #
Doctor(s):			
Other:			
Pharmacist:			
Medical Insurance:			
Home Owners/Rental Insurance			

Fire House #: _____ Fire House Phone #: _____

Police Precinct #: _____ Police Precinct Phone #: _____

Household Disaster Plan

Home Meeting Address: _____

Home Meeting Phone #: _____

Neighborhood Meeting Address: _____

Neighborhood Meeting Phone #: _____

more on back

Household Disaster Plan

Home Meeting Address: _____

Home Meeting Phone #: _____

Neighborhood Meeting Address: _____

Neighborhood Meeting Phone #: _____

more on back

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CONTACTING THE CITY IN EMERGENCIES

Call 911:

- When you are in immediate danger or witness a crime in progress.
- For a serious injury or medical condition.
- Any other situation needing urgent attention.

Do NOT call 911 for non-emergencies or to report a power outage (to allow telephone capacity for emergency calls).

Call 311:

- When you need access to non-emergency services or information about City government programs.
- TTY: 212-504-4115

311

Do NOT call 311 for emergencies.

Emergency Telephone Tips:

If you call 911, specify the type of emergency (fire, medical, police) and be prepared to answer questions. During a medical emergency, turn a light on so that emergency responders can find your home.

- During emergencies, please use the telephone only when absolutely necessary to keep the lines free for emergency calls. If you have broadband Internet access, use NYC.gov.

NYC.gov provides New Yorkers access to a number of City resources, as well as up-to-date information about emergencies affecting New York City. The New York City Office of Emergency Management (OEM) maintains the Emergency Management Online Locator System (EMOLS) – an Internet application that conveys important emergency information to the user through an easy-to-use mapping interface. In a hurricane, for example, EMOLS can tell you if you are located in a danger zone, identify your closest shelter and how to get there by public transportation or car. Find EMOLS on OEM's website at NYC.gov.

NEW YORK CITY AND EMERGENCIES: THE CITY IS PREPARED

New York City has plans for emergencies and dedicates important resources to emergency preparedness. Plans include information on sheltering, evacuation, public safety, public information, transportation and other issues, which ensure the City recovers from disasters quickly and safely.

During an emergency, the City activates the Emergency Operations Center (EOC). The EOC is an emergency facility staffed by representatives from City, State and Federal agencies as well as private and non-profit organizations. These representatives coordinate the most effective response to emergencies.

Who is involved in local emergencies?

The Mayor: The Mayor oversees all aspects of the City's response to emergencies.

Office of Emergency Management (OEM): OEM secures resources and facilitates communication between all participating agencies before, during and after emergencies. OEM creates contingency plans to respond quickly and efficiently to

a variety of situations. In response to emergency situations, OEM will activate the City's Emergency Operations Center to facilitate coordination between agencies during large incidents. Additionally, OEM sends Citywide Interagency Coordinators to serve as field liaisons at the scene of myriad localized emergencies each year, such as water main breaks, fires and building collapses.

City Agencies, Businesses and Non-Profit: These entities assess the emergency situation and make decisions to ensure continuity of government and provide services for those affected. They also send representatives to the EOC to foster coordination.

City Council, Community Boards and Borough Presidents: Elected officials provide leadership and valuable information on possible damage in their districts and feasible solutions to problems. They can also pass emergency legislation to deal with the situation at hand.

YOU: You have a responsibility – disasters can affect everyone. It is important that you are prepared and understand your responsibilities during a disaster. When you are prepared, you become part of the solution.

Out of State Contact Name:

Contact Address:

Contact Phone #:

Other Information:

Out of State Contact Name:

Contact Address:

Contact Phone #:

Other Information:



WITHOUT WARNING

Hundreds died when Indonesia's tsunami-alert system failed its first real-world test. What went wrong?

By **BRYAN WALSH**

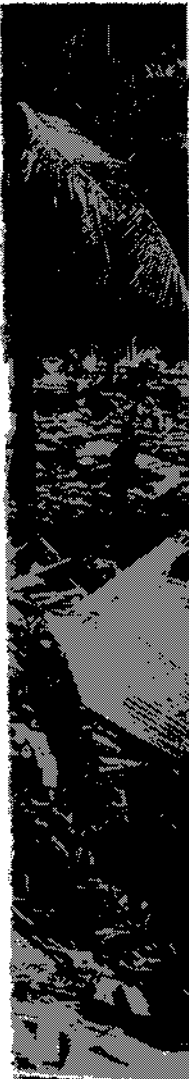
AESIH IRAWAN WAS DRINKING ICED tea at a friend's house near the beach in Pangandaran, a resort town on the Indonesian island of Java, when the ocean crashed through the living room. The 27-year-old housewife was seized by the churning water and carried hundreds of meters down the beach before she became tangled in cable, which prevented her being swept out to sea. Irawan survived, but almost 700 people were killed, nearly 1,000 injured and some 20,000 families left homeless by the July 17 tsunami that hit a 177-km stretch of Java. Triggered by a magnitude-7.7

undersea earthquake about 200 km offshore, the 2-m waves that slammed ashore were a frightening flashback to the December 2004 tsunami that claimed the lives of 230,000 around the Indian Ocean. Now, as then, the victims were taken by surprise. "There was no warning," Irawan says. "We didn't even feel the earthquake."

It wasn't supposed to be a surprise this time. Soon after the 2004 disaster, the international community began work on a regional tsunami-alert system for the Indian Ocean similar to the one already operating in the Pacific Ocean. Germany, Japan, the U.S. and others helped to upgrade the region's shore-based tide-gauge stations,

which can measure the sea-level changes caused by a tsunami, and planned to install sophisticated deep-ocean buoys off Indonesia to detect tsunamis when they're still out to sea. By last month, the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the U.N. body leading the international effort, declared that an interim alert system was up and running. Warnings would be relayed to Indian Ocean nations from existing tsunami-monitoring centers in Hawaii and Japan.

Those centers, which rapidly interpret earthquake data sent in by seismic observatories around the world, detected last week's Java tsunami. But due to gaps in the way a tsunami alert is broadcast to the public, no warnings reached the people on the Javanese beaches—underscoring just how difficult it still is to protect the most vulnerable



countries from killer tidal waves. "Let's not kid ourselves and think we solved the warning problem because we can detect a tsunami and say, 'It's coming,'" says Laura Kong, head of the International Tsunami Information Center in Honolulu. "We have to make sure that the information gets out to the last person, and that they know what to do. We're not there yet."

What went wrong? Patricia Bernal, executive secretary of UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Committee, says the response to the Java tsunami actually represented a success for the interim warning system—and in a sense, he's right. Just 17 minutes after the earthquake struck off the coast of Java, scientists at the Pacific Tsunami Warning Center (PTWC) in Hawaii crunched the seismological data and sent a bulletin to colleagues in Jakarta, warning of the possibility of a local tsunami for land within 100 km of the tremor's epicenter. In the

2004 tsunami, those simple lines of communication did not exist. But that's the easy part. "The initial system did work," says Bernal. "From then on, it is the responsibility of the Indonesian system."

What came next was a failure to communicate. About 20 minutes after the quake, the Indonesian Meteorology and Geophysics Agency's technical department for tsunamis received the e-mail bulletin from PTWC in Honolulu that included a warning about the risk of a local tsunami, according to Fauzi, the department's chief. Fauzi told TIME his agency subsequently relayed text messages warning of the quake to about 400 Indonesian officials in disaster management, but there was little they could do: there were no alarm bells to ring on the beach, no emergency broadcasts to transmit over the radio or TV, no way to warn the people on the coast. The Ministry of Research and Technology, which heads the development of Indonesia's tsunami-warning system, came under criticism for failing to raise a clear alert, but officials point out correctly that the interim system is still far from complete. And because the quake occurred so

close to shore, even a flawless system would have been hard-pressed to disseminate a warning in the roughly 30 minutes it took the tsunami to reach the beach. "It's not enough just to tell people," says Fauzi. "If they are not prepared and don't know what to do, you could create even more confusion and panic."

That last mile is the hardest one, and even rich countries can be caught off-guard—witness Hurricane Katrina. Indonesia, with its 34,716 km of often densely populated and earthquake-prone coastline, is particularly exposed to the threat of local tsunamis. "There need to be sirens or SMS messages on cell phones or even Internet warnings," says Arthur Lerner-Lam, director of the Center for Hazards and Risk Research at Columbia University. "The public has to be aware of what to do, and that's education." In Indonesia, such educational programs are only in place on Sumatra, which bore the brunt of the 2004 tsunami, and even there, only pockets of the island would be prepared if a wave hit tomorrow. "The rest of the country is still very vulnerable," says Pariatmona, coordinator for the development of the tsunami-warning system.

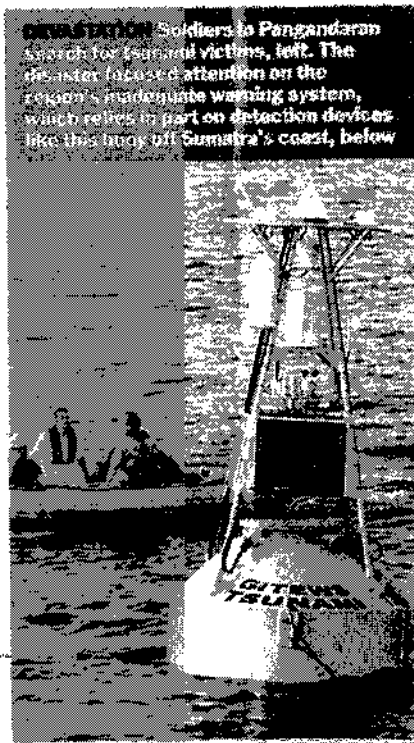
The level of readiness also varies among other nations around the Indian Ocean. Thailand, which lost 8,000 people in the 2004 tsunami, has worked hard to improve local warnings, erecting 62 sirens on towers along beaches in six provinces, each capable of alerting people as far as 2 km inland. Those alerts are issued by the government's National Disaster Warning Center, the first

such command post opened in the region after the 2004 tsunami. Sri Lanka, too, has earned plaudits for coordinating with UNESCO's regional efforts, and developing a strong system for disseminating warnings from the capital, utilizing churches and temples to help sound the alarm.

Too often, however, politics have trumped practicalities. Initially the Indian Ocean warning system was supposed to be truly regional, with a single center processing and sending out alerts to endangered countries. But that plan collapsed as various nations balked at sharing data and responsibility; instead they competed to host the headquarters. The result is a net of national tsunami centers, hopefully sharing data but currently less integrated than the system in the Pacific. India has decided to go it virtually alone, investing \$30 million to create a detection system that will in many ways mirror UNESCO's. Unlike the Pacific, "this is not a region that has a history of cooperation," says David McKinzie, coordinator for the U.S. National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration's Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning System Project.

Another worry is that a heavy focus on detection technology for the entire region may be draining resources from the more critical problems of basic preparedness in those areas most threatened by tsunamis. "In western Sumatra, there is no emergency preparation beyond what would save 1% of the people here," says Kerry Sieh, a geologist at the California Institute of Technology who has spent years studying Indonesia. Sieh fears that a tsunami far deadlier than the one on July 17 could strike the western coast of Sumatra or Java at any time, and warns that the international community first needs to devote itself to the unglamorous work of building up basic seismology and education within the country, to ensure that every Indonesian in harm's way is ready to respond if the big one hits. "Otherwise, it's a tragedy waiting to happen."

For Aesih Irawan, tragedy was averted, but she wonders what will happen the next time the earth shakes. Last week, refugee camps in the hills of Pangandaran were still packed with survivors too scared to return home while soldiers dug for corpses along the beach. "I'm very happy to be alive," Irawan says. "But every time I feel an aftershock, I feel like that may change." In catastrophe-plagued Indonesia, you never know when the next warning—if there is one—may be the last. —With reporting by Robert Horri/Bangkok, Benjamin Siegel/New Delhi, Jason Tedjasukmana/Jakarta and Lasantha Wickrematunge/Columbo



DETECTION Soldiers in Pangandaran search for injured victims, left. The detector focused attention on the region's inadequate warning system, which relies in part on detection devices like this one off Sumatra's coast, below

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Local Government New Zealand conference
17 – 19 July, 2006

Wellington, New Zealand

Tom Calma
Acting Race Discrimination Commissioner and
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Social Justice Commissioner

'Cronulla: could it happen here?'
Managing racial conflict and building community

New Zealand
18 July, 2006

[Http://www.hreoc.gov.au/racial_discrimination/index.html](http://www.hreoc.gov.au/racial_discrimination/index.html)

Tena ko to, tena ko to, tena ka to, kia ora ladies and gentlemen.

I would like to begin by acknowledging and paying my respects to the traditional owners of the land on which we stand today and I acknowledge Minister Chris Carter, Minister for Ethnic Affairs, Joris De Bres, Race Commissioner with the NZ Human Rights Commission, distinguished guest, Mayors, Councilors and friends.

I would also like to thank local government New Zealand for inviting me to speak at this very important conference.

As the acting Race Discrimination Commissioner my role is to promote and monitor compliance with the federal Racial Discrimination Act. This includes monitoring racism, conducting research and developing education programs to combat racism in all its forms. The recognition and protection of diversity, and cultural, and religious rights is an important part of what we do.

Late last year, about the time I and others were marking the 30th anniversary of the introduction of the national Racial Discrimination Act in Australia, race relations in the Cronulla area of Sydney were building into the melee that we all witnessed as national and international headlines on TV and in the print media.

Four days into the 2005 summer season in Sydney, on Sunday 4 December, two volunteer lifesavers were bashed on Cronulla beach after an altercation with young Australians believed to be of Lebanese background. This incident was labeled as a racial conflict and was followed by strong condemnation of the attack on an 'Aussie icon' - with many calling the act "un-Australian."

This was followed by a week of disturbing mobile phone text messages urging all "Aussies" to gather at Cronulla the following Sunday, waging "war on lebs and wogs", and protest against attacks on the "Australian way of life". No appeal for calm from political and community leaders was made. On national radio, talk back radio hosts read out the full text messages being circulated.

Exactly one week later, on Sunday 11 December, over 5,000 Australians, mostly of Anglo Australian background, gathered at north Cronulla beach. Their protest was against Lebanese and Arab young people, whom they accuse of engaging in anti-social behaviour, including harassing locals and sexually intimidating women at the beach and taking up large spaces on the beach to play soccer or other games. They came together to "reclaim their beach" and take matters into their own hands.

What started off as a call for locals to show unity against violence at the beach, and a relatively peaceful gathering in the morning, turned into what is now known as the Cronulla riots or "Cronulla anti-social behaviour" as some people prefer to call it. As the video clips indicate, it turned ugly as the alcohol charged crowd, many of whom were draped in the Australian flag, occasionally singing the national anthem and chanting racist slogans aimed at "lebs", "wogs" and "Muslims", called on these

people to 'get off our beach', that it was 'their land' and 'to go back to their own country'.

People, who were perceived as being of 'middle eastern background' or simply of 'ethnic origin', were chased and brutally attacked. Moving from the beach to the main roads, shopping district and trains, rioters continued to violently attack 'foreigners', including two on the local train and cars with youths of middle eastern appearance being jumped on. Police and paramedics were also attacked as they protected and tried to rescue those being targeted. Right-wing white supremacists seized the day and used it as a platform for distributing anti-multiculturalism, anti-immigration and anti-Muslim literature.

Several days of reprisal attacks followed. The day after the riot over 2,000 people gathered outside Sydney's largest mosque with religious and community leaders urging the community to keep the peace. This was largely ignored by many young men, who do not normally identify with such leaders nor consider themselves religious. These men drove to Cronulla and surrounding beachside suburbs seeking revenge. They smashed parked cars and shop windows, bashed locals and stabbed a man in the back outside the local golf club.

The violence continued for days as text messages were sent "in a call for Arabs and Muslims to protect themselves and seek revenge." The violence and hatred from both sides spread across suburbs and states throughout Australia. A Christian church was burnt down, and an attack on a family of Middle Eastern descent in Perth in Western Australia and an Australian Lebanese taxi driver in Adelaide in South Australia were linked to the Cronulla riot. Victoria police successfully intercepted text messages calling for race riots in Melbourne. Queensland, western Australia, South Australia and Tasmania were also reported as having anti-Arab text messages being circulated, calling for a "show of force". At the same time Lebanese youths were urging further reprisal attacks at Cronulla the following weekend - also through text messages. All leaders called for calm and no incidents of violence were reported at the beaches the following weekend.

Four days after the riot, legislation providing for new police powers was enacted in the NSW parliament to enable police to search all cars and check the id of people entering the area.

In relation to both the riot and the reprisal attacks, police made 87 arrests and laid 239 charges. The most common charge was affray and riot. Other charges included assaulting police, threatening violence, malicious damage and resisting arrest. Of the 87 arrested, 19 were prosecuted leading to 14 convictions. Four have been jailed. Three were fined, one received a suspended sentence, and two received bond orders and four got community service orders. This means 73% of those accused of crimes related to the riot have not proceeded. The most recent arrest was of one man for inciting violence by sending the original text message and one man has been charged for the stabbing of the local Cronulla man. And because race hate is not a crime in NSW, none will face these charges.

That summer, numbers on Cronulla beach, indeed all Sydney beachers, were at a record low. Immediately following the riot, during the peak holiday season, only twenty people went to Cronulla beach on a hot summer's day that would usually attract thousands.

On Australia day, 26 January, around 800 police were at hand to deal with any racial violence. And while white supremacists were encouraging people to rally at Cronulla on that day, no incidents of violence were recorded.

The Cronulla riot was indeed a sad time in Australia's history. While Sydney's highest rating breakfast show host claimed that he "led the charge for a community show of force" in Cronulla, the initial response to the riot was one of regret by most Australians.

So what was the initial response to the riots?

Politicians and community and religious leaders alike condemned the riot. Prime Minister John Howard stopped short of calling it racism and declared "I do not accept that there is underlying racism in this country." In his national Australia Day speech, four weeks after the riot, he called for a renewal of the teaching of Australia's history in schools. The NSW State Premier, only days earlier had announced that students of government public schools would be taught about Australian values as part of a revamp of Australian studies. The Australian Democrats' multi-cultural affairs spokesman condemned the violence as "mindless racism cloaked as a distorted form of nationalism." The NSW Premier described the behaviour as "disgraceful" and "cowardly" and the NSW Police Commissioner called it "un-Australian".

The reprisal attacks drew even more comment and the focus quickly moved to criticizing the anti-social behaviour of Lebanese Muslim Australians. On the reprisal attacks the NSW premier criticised "violent gangs" that had "caused inconvenience by emptying many of Sydney's beaches at the height of summer." The State Opposition Leader called for them to be "locked up". Following this, and with a state election just 12 months away, the state government set up a Middle Eastern Crime Taskforce to deal specifically with Middle Eastern crime in Sydney.

However, rather than taking sides, some people's response was to seek unity between the communities involved in the riots. Actress Cate Blanchett, along with other prominent Australians, read a joint statement at Coogee beach in which they called for "all Australians, regardless of religion or ethnic origin, to work together to end violence on our streets".

Anthony Mundine, a famous boxer in Australia, who is both Muslim and Aboriginal, and Hakim El Mazri, a rugby league player who has a Lebanese background, met at a local Sydney beach which was the scene of some of the violence, for a game of touch football. The match was organised by the local city council mayor in a bid to encourage people to go back to the suburb and its beaches.