

TSUNAMI PUBLIC AFFAIRS WORKING GROUP REPORT

Seattle, June 18-19, 1997

The Tsunami Public Affairs Working Group (PAWG) was formed in March 1997 in coordination with the Tsunami Hazard Mitigation Federal/State Working Group to publicize the five year tsunami implementation plan. Each participating Steering Group organization (with the exception of the U.S. Geological Survey) has appointed a representative to PAWG.

A Public Affairs Strategy was developed as a guideline for PAWG operations. The strategy outlines a purpose, goals, key themes and messages, milestones and strategies; lists available resources and targeted media; and contains an evolving calendar of events.

Activities to Date:

Regular conference calls have been instituted for updates and coordination.

A PAWG e-mail list has been established for communication and exchange of information.

Tsunami resource materials have been exchanged among PAWG members and retained in the International Tsunami Information Center.

Media lists and databases are being developed by each PAWG member.

PAWG generated media interest in the March 25-27 tsunami buoy detection system test in Hawaii and coordinated followup coverage in Seattle, resulting in over 30 minutes of television time on all networks, numerous radio interviews, and newspaper articles. Videotapes of television news coverage and newsclips are available. Videotapes and reports were provided to the Hawaii Congressional delegation.

PAWG helped to coordinate tsunami training for National Weather Service Warning Coordination Meteorologists, May 7-8, at the NWS Alaska Region HQ and the West Coast/Alaska Tsunami Warning Center.

Media coverage was generated for the May 17 Tsunami Inundation Mapping Effort (TIME) Center in Oregon. PAWG coordinated an announcement over the FEMA Radio Network 1-800 phone line. Locally, announcements were mailed and media kits were provided to coastal and Portland newspapers, radio, and TV stations. A press release was issued to national media and local advisories in Alaska and Hawaii. PAWG sponsored an exhibit and handout materials. These efforts produced coverage locally as well as in Hawaii and California. Followup stories are planned by KING-TV in Seattle and a Vancouver, Washington, paper. Based on comments received, additional future coverage is anticipated. The exhibit

will remain on display for an extended period.

Planning is underway for media coverage of the tsunami buoy deployment in July.

Regular PAWG participation in Steering Group meetings will begin with the June 1997 meeting. PAWG will participate in Natural Disaster Awareness Day, an interagency effort being planned for October 8, 1997.

RECOMMENDATION: In order for PAWG to be effective, it is recommended that PAWG members receive notification of all Steering Group meetings and be included on the distribution list for pertinent materials. Close coordination with Steering Group Working Committees is also recommended.