

The BHA Tsunami Early Warning Service

Fast, Reliable and Targeted Information for Bali's Hotel Industry

THE INITIATIVE

Bali Hotels Association (BHA) is an association of over 100 star rated hotels in Bali. In its endeavors to improve Bali's security situation BHA is supported by the Indonesian Ministry of Culture and Tourism through the deployment of a CIM integrated expert. The expert drives numerous public/private partnership security sector initiatives geared to improve Indonesia as a safe and sustainable tourism destination.

THE CHALLENGE

Indonesia is prone to earthquakes and tsunamis. The National Agency for Meteorology Climatology and Geophysics (BMKG) in Jakarta produces and provides Indonesia's tsunami warnings. Tsunami warning sirens are deployed on some of Indonesia's major beaches. However, the dissemination of tsunami information to the community at risk remains a challenge because official decision making processes as well as timely and targeted warning dissemination isn't assured yet. Evacuation orders are only provided by local administrations. Most administrations are not ready for this task yet.

This situation poses a threat to Bali's tourism industry, which is mainly concentrated on Bali's southern shores. Here between the initiating earthquake and the arrival of the wave, often only very little time remains.

THE GOAL

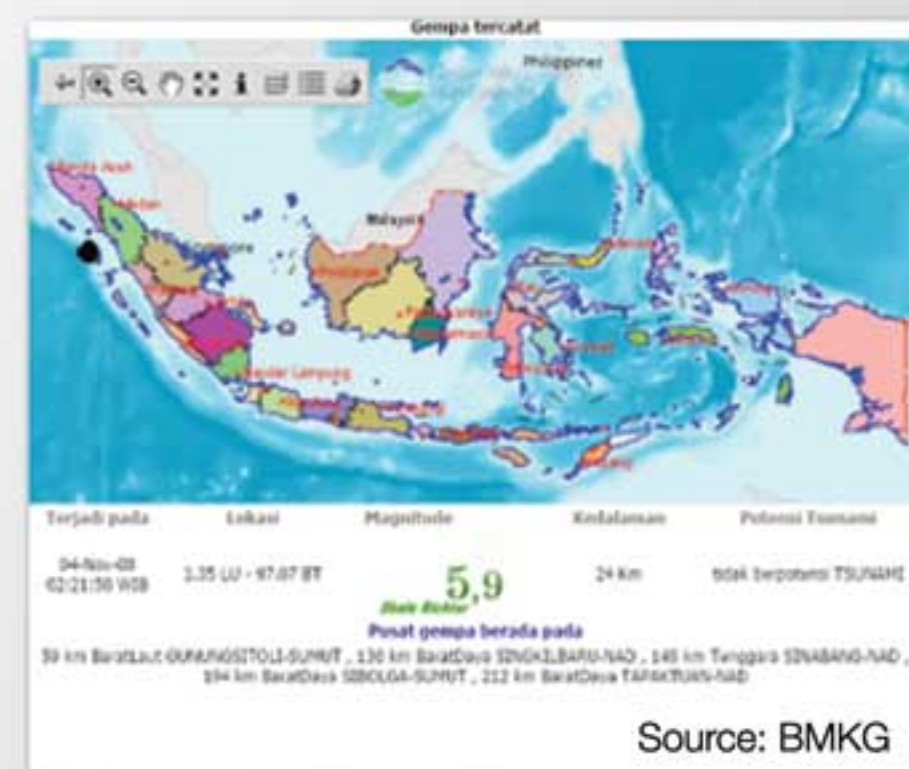
Provision of timely and targeted tsunami warnings to Bali's hotel industry as a basis for evacuation decision making.

SOLUTION & RESULTS

BHA purchased a RANET technology based 5 in 1 communications system from BMKG. The system receives tsunami early warnings directly from BMKG.

The system functions as follows: BMKG Jakarta sends out earthquake and tsunami information to a computerized receiver which is installed at the 24/7 operator's room at Kuta's Hard Rock Hotel. An audio alarm is triggered. The location of the earthquake automatically pops up on a computer screen, supported by a map and data about the earthquake's strength, geographic location, depth and tsunami potential. The set-up resembles the official BMKG websites service at www.bmg.go.id

However, the system is not providing targeted information for specific areas like Bali, and false alarms need to be kept to a minimum as evacuation of major hotels is always costly and difficult.



That is why the operators are using a decision making SOP to forward Bali specific tsunami warnings only. The procedures and documents were provided by GTZ IS-GITEWS and modified by BHA to address the organization's specific needs. The current procedures are similar to the ones being used by official local decision making bodies like PUSDALOPS/Denpasar. The decision making and warning dissemination process of BHA is 100% formalized to take the burden of decision making off the shoulders of an individual and to avoid judgment errors.

The earthquake and tsunami information is sent out via SMS, followed by supporting information via e-mail. In the near future, UHF radio communication will serve as a back up.

BHA is sending out 6 different standardized messages. Hotels are encouraged to set-up an individual emergency phone, which is kept under 24/7 surveillance by a person with decision making power. System subscribers register two numbers on a disclaimer form, freeing BHA from any liability arising from human or technical error. To date, BHA tsunami warnings reach 76 hotels, contributing to the safety of approximately 20.000 hotel employees plus guests.

SUCCESS FACTORS

Consistency: Consistent and professional training of the BHA operators is essential. Constant reminders and test runs ensure that nothing delays the decision making and warning dissemination process. Reliability should never be taken for granted and needs to be enforced on a regular basis. Recognition and support through the Hard Rock Hotel's top management encourages personal identification of the operators with their task and enhances their commitment.

Action: BHA ensures that its tsunami warnings are not just received, but also translated into action. The 'Tsunami Ready Toolbox', a joint development project of BHA, BUDPAR and CIM, is the basis for the tsunami readiness of BHA hotels. Complimentary 'Tsunami Ready' seminars are providing all participating hotels with tailored information and solutions.

Versatility: The BHA tsunami warning dissemination system is utilized for multiple purposes. After the 2009 Jakarta bombings, it was used to coordinate the response of BHA member hotels just 20 minutes after the explosion of the first bomb. The system's versatility is an extra incentive for BHA to maintain it.

Marketing: The tsunami warning system provides BHA member hotels with a comparative advantage over other hotels. Tsunami readiness was identified as a marketing tool, adding extra value, motivation and sustainability to the initiative.

Awareness of Limitations: Awareness that nothing is perfect is essential. The BHA tsunami warning service is designed to function complimentary to other information sources. Sensibility for the system's limitations, and the necessity for individual self-initiative and responsibility is a further key to successful disaster risk reduction.



The BHA Tsunami Early Warning Service



Reference Map



Decision Making SOP

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