



MEDIA RELEASE

The Hon Peter Garrett MP

Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts

PG /39

14 March 2008

AUSTRALIA BOOSTS TSUNAMI DETECTION CAPABILITY

Australia's tsunami detection capability has been boosted with the installation of a second deep ocean tsunami detection buoy, this time in the Coral Sea, Federal Environment Minister Peter Garrett announced today.

"The new buoy was deployed in the Coral Sea last week and is now operational," Mr Garrett said.

"It is monitoring changes in sea levels for signs of potential threat from the South Solomon and New Hebrides trenches to the east coast of Australia.

"It is the second buoy deployed as we develop a state-of-the-art early warning system for Australia's vast coastline.

"The massive devastation caused by the Indian Ocean Tsunami in 2004 is a stark reminder of the potential for destruction that can be caused by the sudden movement of the sea floor.

"The sooner that people can be alerted to the chance of a tsunami the greater the likelihood that they can take action and survive."

Strategically placed tsunami buoys provide real-time tsunami detection as waves travel across the open sea.

The Deep-ocean Assessment and Reporting of Tsunami, (DART) buoy is part of the \$68.9 million Australian Tsunami Warning System. Last weeks installation follows the successful installation of a DART buoy 1200 kilometres off the south-east coast of Tasmania in April 2007.

The DART buoys consist of a bottom pressure sensor that is anchored to the seafloor, and a companion moored surface buoy. An acoustic link transmits data from the bottom pressure sensor to the surface buoy, and then satellite links relay the data to warning centres for scientific analysis by the Bureau of Meteorology.

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