



MEDIA RELEASE

Community input to unlock tsunami puzzle

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Community input will provide vital assistance to a team of scientists who will be carrying out research into the impact of tsunamis along Australia's coastline. The results of this research will help to strengthen community safety

Geoscience Australia is working in collaboration with the Fire and Emergency Services Authority (FESA) of Western Australia to define tsunami risk to the Western Australian coastline.

"Eyewitness accounts provide us with a more detailed history of tsunamis around Australia, and will validate research already undertaken, to develop an understanding of tsunami risk in Western Australia", said Amy Prendergast, a palaeotsunami scientist at Geoscience Australia. "If residents have seen unusual waves or strange tides, it may have been a tsunami. We invite residents and visitors to the area to get in touch and tell us your tsunami story. Your input will greatly assist us in understanding how tsunamis have affected remote, isolated and populated areas along the coast."

"We'll be carrying out reconnaissance research in north-west Western Australia to identify three to four areas that warrant closer investigation, and eyewitness accounts from the public could help determine where those sites will be", she said.

Geoscience Australia and FESA are developing inundation maps to show how far flooding occurs inland as a result of a tsunami. Inundation maps are one of many key scientific tools used by emergency planners to assist in safeguarding communities against the impact of any future tsunami.

"Essentially the environment retains evidence of tsunamis through a build-up of deposits, and these deposits help us identify how large, and how often, tsunamis have occurred on that particular piece of coastline", said Amy.

Geoscience Australia staff will be undertaking research along the WA coastline during the month of June. If you would like to meet with them to relay your tsunami story, please contact: 1800 882 035 (free call) for specific locations and dates. Alternatively the information is available online at www.ga.gov.au/hazards/tsunami/report.jsp

For more information or to arrange interviews, please contact:
Geoscience Australia 24 hour Media Hotline 1800 882 035