

Response to the Tsunami Disaster



When the tsunami devastated the coasts of the Indian Ocean on Boxing Day, 2004, International SOS responded immediately to assist clients and other affected persons



IMMEDIATE RESPONSE

More than 70 dedicated staff, one third medical professionals, worked around the clock to render assistance.

- 4 crisis management teams were activated – Singapore, New Delhi, Jakarta, Bangkok
- 4 teams of medical, logistics and operations specialists deployed to Phuket, Male, Colombo and Medan within 24 hours
- A temporary 24-hour alarm centre was setup in Phuket, manned by senior doctors
- A security/operations team subsequently moved into Aceh

TYPES OF ASSISTANCE

SOS alarm centres in Jakarta, Singapore, Malaysia, India and Bangkok managed more than 2,000 cases of requests for assistance.

A wide range of assistance was rendered:

- Evacuations
- Repatriations
- Missing persons
- Medical and travel advice
- Repatriation of mortal remains
- Situation updates

Medical Evacuations

International SOS evacuated more than 100 injured victims and mortal remains on air ambulance, chartered aircraft or commercial flights. The majority of injured victims were tourists vacationing in Thailand. They were airlifted from Krabi, Surat Thani, Phuket, Phang Nga and Colombo to seek medical treatment in Bangkok and Singapore. The youngest victim airlifted was a 7-year-old.



Security Assistance

We also conducted non-medical evacuations. International SOS security and logistics specialists brought victims and their families to safety from Singkil, a coastal town near Aceh, due to security concerns.

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Missing Persons

A dedicated Missing Persons Team in Singapore to centrally manage the data received. International SOS teams on the ground liaised with local authorities performing search, rescue, and recovery operations. A database of photos of deceased and casualty lists from embassies and hospitals was established to assist in identifying missing persons.

Internet resources were published on the SOS Tsunami website to help locate missing persons. Our medical team assisted families with the Disaster Victim Identification process.

Our regional security director, deployed to Thailand, advised clients on the management of the deceased.

Support for the World Health Organisation

When a request for help was received from the World Health Organisation (WHO), International SOS despatched an experienced security expert to assist in Banda Aceh. A letter of appreciation was received from the WHO.

Support for the Special ASEAN Leaders' Meeting

International SOS provided 24 hour medical support for the leaders and support staff of 18 countries attending the Special ASEAN Leaders' Meeting in Jakarta, January 2005. This support included the provision of doctors, paramedics, medical equipment and ambulances on site for the duration of the meeting.

COMMUNICATIONS

International SOS personnel communicated directly with affected clients with face to face meetings and telephone communications.

However, International SOS also established the SOS Tsunami Website, available to the public through www.internationalsos.com.

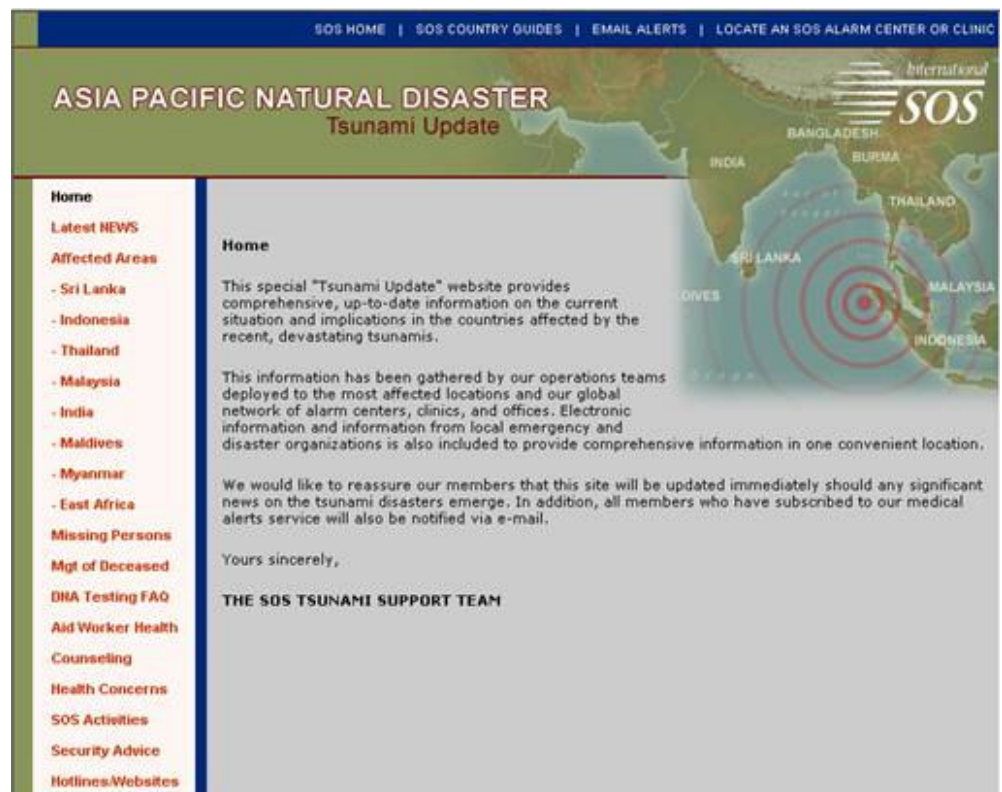
This site was updated daily during the crisis by doctors with information from the SOS teams on the ground, government bodies and international health authorities

Contents include:

- Latest statistics
- Management of the deceased
- DNA testing/sampling
- Links to official sites with photos of deceased
- Medical updates
- Relevant hotlines for assistance
- Travel and security advice
- Vaccinations for aid workers

NORTH SUMATRA RELIEF FUND

This fund was launched to raise funds for victims of the tsunami in the northern part of Sumatra. Cash donations are continuing to be used specifically for medical equipment, supplies and other humanitarian projects. A priority list of projects has been developed that will have a mid-to-long term impact on helping the affected population attain a greater level of medical self-sufficiency in the region. Approximately US\$200,000 was raised.



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ASIA PACIFIC NATURAL DISASTER Tsunami Update

Home

This special "Tsunami Update" website provides comprehensive, up-to-date information on the current situation and implications in the countries affected by the recent, devastating tsunamis.

This information has been gathered by our operations teams deployed to the most affected locations and our global network of alarm centers, clinics, and offices. Electronic information and information from local emergency and disaster organizations is also included to provide comprehensive information in one convenient location.

We would like to reassure our members that this site will be updated immediately should any significant news on the tsunami disasters emerge. In addition, all members who have subscribed to our medical alerts service will also be notified via e-mail.

Yours sincerely,

THE SOS TSUNAMI SUPPORT TEAM

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ABOUT INTERNATIONAL SOS

International SOS provides risk management & duty of care services to more than 6,400 multinational corporations, governments and NGOs who have expatriates and travellers throughout the world.

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION



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3 March 2005

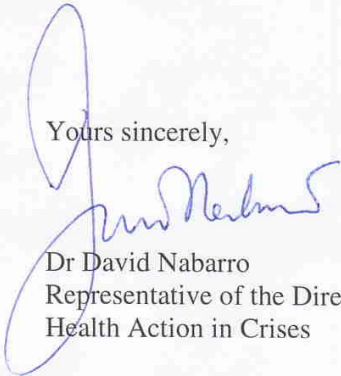
Dear Mr Culver,

This is to reiterate WHO's warmest thanks to International SOS (UK) for agreeing to second Mike Penrose at short notice to help out with the tsunami disaster in South-East Asia. Mike travelled to Banda Aceh, Indonesia - the hardest-hit area - in the early days following the disaster. The task of organizing WHO operations in such a devastated area and such difficult living conditions was daunting. Mike did an admirable job in extremely tough circumstances, and we are most grateful for his hard work and dedication.

We are most grateful to International SOS for its readiness to assist when WHO was faced with the unprecedented task of coordinating relief efforts in the aftermath of the tsunami.

Best wishes

Yours sincerely,



Dr David Nabarro
Representative of the Director-General
Health Action in Crises