Tsunami Warning and Earthquake Information Sources

When a tsunami warning is issued time is of the essence. The task to move everyone out of harm's way and to protect the hotels physical assets is at centre stage. Most hotels applying for tsunami ready status are well prepared for this task. However a common bottle neck is the availability of current and relevant tsunami warnings and a fail prove and speedy decision making process. As in Indonesia only very little time remains between the initial tsunami generating earthquake and the arrival of the first wave no time must be wasted for the evacuation decision making process.

In Indonesia the availability of tsunami warning information is still a challenge. Official tsunami information is generated by Badan Meteorologi dan Geofisika [BMKG] in Jakarta and usually broadcasted via the media,- TV and radio. However TV and radio often malfunction after an earthquake so we recommend to keep a battery powered radio at 24/7 stand-by in a central location like the operators room.

It is important to know that BMKG does not issue evacuation orders, this is the responsibility of the local decision makers. To date many local administrations are not prepared for that task due to a number of reasons like e.g. a lack of knowledge, clear regulations, technology, procedures, priorities etc. In Bali sirens for official tsunami warnings are installed at beach locations in Kuta, Legian and Seminyak as well as Sanur, Tanjung Benoa and Nusa Dua. The sirens are very loud and have a range of several kilometres. They are triggered by PUSDALOPS in Denpasar. However amongst experts the reliability of the sirens trigger management is still subject to discussion.
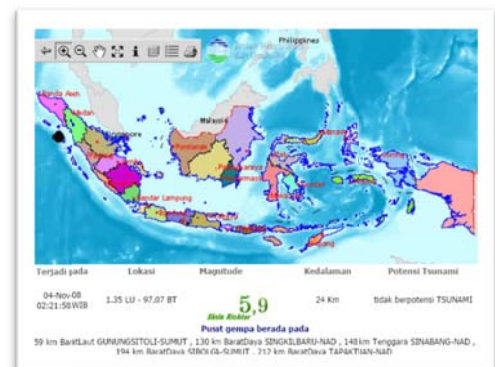
Recommended Tsunami Early Warning Sources:

BMKG Website
The BMKG website provides almost real time tsunami and earthquake information on a map. It is one of the best tsunami and earthquake sources available in Indonesia. However it only functions if power is available and the Internet works. During emergencies the site is often overloaded.
www.bmkg.go.id
http://www.bmkg.go.id/BMKG_Pusat/Geofisika/terkini.bmkg

BMKG Twitter Service
Fast tsunami and earthquake information, straight from the source. Note that the mobile network might break down after an earthquake.
http://twitter.com/#!/infoBMKG

BHA Tsunami Early Warning Service

Bali Hotels Association is running its own sms based tsunami early warning system. The system was created as a secondary warning source aimed to assist with the evacuation decision making process of hotels. The service provides clear evacuation recommendations. Each member hotel can register two numbers.
info@balihotelsassociation.com

GempaLoka

GempaLoka is a free Blackberry application providing up to date earthquake info for Indonesia straight to your Black Berry Smartphone. You get is from the Applications Section on your BB.

GDACS

The Global Disaster Alert and Coordination System provides near real-time alerts about natural disasters around the world and tools to facilitate response coordination, including media monitoring, map catalogues and Virtual On-Site Operations Coordination Centre.
www.gdacs.org

USGS

The 'Earthquake Notification Service' (ENS) of the US Geologic Survey is a free service that sends you automated notification emails when earthquakes and tsunami warnings happen in your area. You can decide about the strength and location of earthquakes you want to be informed about.
https://sslearthquake.usgs.gov/ens/

Please be aware that none of the listed services can guarantee a timely notification. The best information comes from BMKG – evacuation orders are given out by the local decision makers. If the sirens go of – don't discuss – evacuate!