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|  Hon Nikki Kaye Minister of Civil Defence | cid:image001.jpg@01D20370.17E1F330 |
| 31 August 2016  |       Media Statement          |
| **State of national emergency declared as tsunami approaches**A state of national emergency has been declared for New Zealand, says Civil Defence Minister Nikki Kaye.“I have spoken with the Prime Minister, and declared the state of national emergency at 9.55am this morning,” says Ms Kaye.“This follows the magnitude 8.8 earthquake that occurred off the Kermadec Trench at 9.02am today, and which has resulted in a tsunami that’s expected to affect all of New Zealand’s coastline from pot within 10 minutes“The situation will potentially change, as the tsunami panel is still meeting. The parameters could shift, both in terms of the earthquake’s magnitude and the tsunami impact.“Waves could begin impacting parts of the North Island within 20 minutes.“I have declared a state of national emergency to ensure agencies have the powers they need to manage this event. This includes carrying out warnings and evacuations necessary over the coming hours to help protect public safety.“This is a serious situation. I urge everyone to follow the instructions of Civil Defence staff and emergency services. If you are near the coast, you should immediately move as far as possible inland or to higher ground.“We are well prepared to manage this event, but it’s essential that you heed the advice of authorities – they know what to do as this event unfolds.“This situation could change, but it’s important to understand that the tsunami could potentially affect us for several hours at the very least, up to several days.“Once you have evacuated coastal areas, do not return until authorities give you the all clear to do so.“Under the Civil Defence Emergency Management Act, this declaration means the Director of Civil Defence Emergency Management will control and prioritise the response efforts and performance of functions, duties, and powers of CDEM Groups and Group Controllers. “This will ensure the maximum possible coordination and cooperation between central and local resources, and international assistance. It also demonstrates the Government’s commitment to help the people of New Zealand to respond to this disaster.“I am receiving regular briefings from Civil defence officials, and will be providing regular public updates.“This is a time for everybody to look out for each other. Authorities and emergency services will do everything possible to protect you. For your own safety and the safety of others, please follow their instructions.”**Media contact: Glenn Donovan xxxx** |