31 August 2016

ATTENTION: CHIEF REPORTERS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TIME OF RELEASE: 11.07am

**Local evacuation centres open**

**Help available for people with mobility issues**

Fortrose and Waikawa residents are advised to make their way immediately to the Gorge Road Hall as their townships are evacuated in preparation for a tsunami expected to reach the south coast at 1pm today.

Fortrose and Waikawa residents, along with all people in Southland’s coastal areas, particularly Bluff, Riverton, Fortrose, Waikawa and Stewart Island, are advised to evacuate immediately and seek their own accommodation.

People with disabilities, or who need help to evacuate, should contact their local medical centre, or telephone Southland Hospital on 03 218 1949.

A state of National Emergency has been declared in response to the imminent threat of tsunami on Southland’s coastline.

By law, people are required to evacuate when requested to do so by the police and other emergency services personnel.

If people are unable to find their own accommodation in safe inland areas, they should make their way to the Civil Defence welfare centre at Stadium Southland.

People should avoid beaches and shore areas and not go sightseeing.

**Share this information with family, neighbours and friends**
**Listen to the radio and/or TV for updates**
**Follow instructions of local civil defence authorities**
Information is also available on Facebook at civildefence.govt.nz/cdem-sector/exercises/exercisetangaroa2016.

ENDS.

Inquiries: Public Information Team

CDEM Emergency Management Southland

0274 26 21 24