# INFO

## Communication Network of SARs
### Linking SAR Communities along the South Coast of Java

### THE INITIATIVE

The Search and Rescue Teams, or SAR, along the south coast of Java are generally committed to provide help to people found in trouble along the coast. The members of SARs are trained personnel. They constantly watch and warn visitors to keep away from unsafe spots on the beaches. SAR members are normally from the local population, and becoming a member is a true voluntary commitment. The individual professional backgrounds of the members vary from fishermen, vendors to employees.

Maintaining good communication amongst members of SAR, either within or outside their own areas, is considered important. Almost all members are known to be skilful in operating radio-communication equipment. Some members are also affiliated with Radio Antar Penduduk Indonesia (RAPI) or Organisasi Radio Amatir Republik Indonesia (ORARI) local amateur radio networks.

In conjunction with the current collective efforts of their local governments and the coastal communities to implement tsunami early warning, the roles of SAR increase. The members have been equipped with some basic knowledge about early warning for tsunamis. Recently, SARs in Bantul, Kebumen and Cilacap particularly have consented to strengthen their links and to involve themselves in a Communication Network known as "Komunitas SAR Selatan-Selatan".

### THE GOAL

The Communication Network of "Komunitas SAR" along the south coast of Java aims to strengthen their daily communication link primarily to exchange information amongst members concerning any changes of coastal and weather conditions, and occurrences of natural phenomena, such as earthquakes and tsunamis.

### WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED ?

The Network was technically strengthened by adding modest equipment of some radios and repeaters, contributed by GTZ IS-GITEWS, installed in Bantul, Kebumen and Cilacap that enable better communication amongst the members using VHF and UHF radios.

In early 2008, the Navy Post in Logending Beach, Kebumen, voluntarily took an initiative to serve as the centre of coordination for communications; they claim to run for 24 hours/day. The members have been transmitting information to this Navy Post about the daily weather and coastal conditions in their respective areas, regularly at 07:30-08:30 and 19:30-20:30. Updates on relevant information have also been provided to this network by the Regional Office of BMKG in Yogyakarta. The community may access this information through the frequencies of 161.850MHz in Bantul, 157.225MHz in Kebumen and 163.550MHz in Cilacap.

All SAR posts are now connected to the local tsunami warning centres and the local authorities in their respective districts. Whilst the posts are modestly devised to be able to receive information from their local warning centres, they are also expected

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to disseminate further issued warnings and guidance to the people in their surrounding areas. In the event of a tsunami alert the posts are hoped to provide feedback regarding any natural signs observed from the coasts.

In line with its goal, the members encourage participation from more elements in the society in the network. It is noted that more community groups and government agencies based in the neighbouring districts, i.e., Gunung Kidul, Kulon Progo, Purworejo and Ciamis, now also enjoy the network service.

The initiators intend to maintain the network as a community based-network. They are currently in the process of institutionalising this communication network.

## LESSONS LEARNT & POTENTIAL FOR REPLICATION

The presence of the communication network is admitted to be useful for different groups in the local communities. For example, the regular information updates about coastal and weather conditions evidently directly benefits fishermen when determining the time for fishing. Exchange of information concerning occurrences of earthquakes and tsunamis amongst SAR members, local warning centres and local authorities becomes viable and timely. The network may likely be the real links for further dissemination of warning and guidance to the communities closest to tsunami risk.
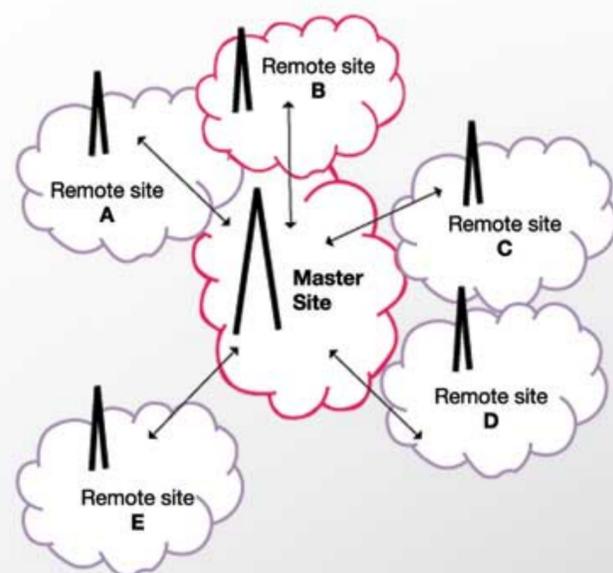
Creative modification of applied technology and further links to communication media existing in the community remain possible. Such an attempt should aim to strengthen the functions of the communication network.

The communication network is a realisation of efforts to reinforce the existing mechanisms in the warning system. Similar systems are commonly found in other areas throughout the south coast of Java- stretching from the Province of East Java to the Province of Banten. The systems are usually managed by the local people. To support initiation of a stronger network, clear coordination and additional modest communication are required. It is generally understood that the operational responsibilities and the sustainability of the network are commonly assumed by the members themselves.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Communication Network of SAR Communities was developed collectively by SAR Linmas Parangtritis of the Bantul District, Komunitas SAR 'Elang Perkasa' of the Kebumen District and BASARNAS of the Cilacap District.

The technical design was conceived upon consultation with and installed by Muhammad Ayyub of ORARI and Taufiq Oesman Faqih of SAR in Bantul, and the institutional aspect was designed upon consultation with Serma Beni Sabirun of Navy Post Logending Beach-Kebumen. The daily information of weather and coastal conditions are updated by the Regional Office of BMKG in Yogyakarta.



Model of Repeaters in Bantul, Kebumen and Cilacap



Testing Radio Link



SARS Members Preparing Equiptment



Meeting of SAR Members at the Navy Post