

**From:** Julia Wells <jwells@doc.govt.nz>  
**Sent:** Thursday, 15 May 2025 9:03 am  
**To:** Andy Roberts <aroberts@doc.govt.nz>; Nicholas Sutcliffe <nsutcliffe@doc.govt.nz>  
**Subject:** RE: Milford tsunami

Hi Andy

Thanks for sharing, it's interesting to see how this has developed. A few bits of feedback from me, quite similar to my feedback last time:

- I'd still encourage them to try and simplify the wording in the comms messages, especially since they will need to reach a very international audience. Some of the messages are simple, but others still use language that is more complex than needed. E.g., rather than saying "New Zealand's entire coastline (including Milford Sound / Piopiotahi) is exposed to tsunami hazard", it could say "There can be tsunamis anywhere on the coast around New Zealand, including at Milford Sound/ Piopiotahi".
- I think risk comparators are useful but always tricky, since they rely on people having a good sense of the risks associated with the activity being used as the comparison. I agree with the recommendation in the report that comparative risk messages should be tested with audiences. For example, a one year stay in Milford Sound is listed as comparable to the risk of death on a single Everest ascent or x20 the death rate per registered motorcycle in NZ. It would be interesting to see which of those was a more accurate and understandable measure for visitors – I'm not sure NZ motorcycle death rates would mean much to international visitors.
- I think it would be valuable for them to provide more detail on working with the tourism industry to share these risk messages, especially off-shore agents and tour operators. It would be interesting to know how big a role travel influencers play in promoting Milford Sound/Piopiotahi, and if it is significant, then whether they should be considered more heavily in this report.
- I think there's still some tension between the Harris 2023 findings that only 0.1% of people could safely evacuate on a busy summer day and the emphasis on evacuation messaging. We clearly still do need to do evacuation messaging, but it's a hard one to

land without either making it seem like a more realistic option than it is, or discouraging people from attempting it. GNS have included a message saying that the geography of Milford Sound/Piopiotahi means that evacuation is challenging, but potentially the message could be a little stronger, especially pre-trip. It's a tricky issue and I don't have an easy solution, but I think it would be useful for GNS to include a paragraph discussing this issue and their recommended approach.

- I think it would be worth emphasising further the important of risk disclosure very early in the recruitment process for long-term employees who have the highest level of risk, i.e. in job ads. It shouldn't be something they only find out once they are quite invested in the process.

As I said in my earlier feedback, user testing of messages was out of scope for this GNS report, but I think it will be an important step as the project develops.

Cheers

Julia

---

**From:** Andy Roberts <[aroborts@doc.govt.nz](mailto:aroborts@doc.govt.nz)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, 14 May 2025 11:33 am

**To:** Julia Wells <[jwells@doc.govt.nz](mailto:jwells@doc.govt.nz)>; Nicholas Sutcliffe <[nsutcliffe@doc.govt.nz](mailto:nsutcliffe@doc.govt.nz)>

**Subject:** Milford tsunami

Hi Julia and Nick,

Here is the final version of the GNS report re Milford Sound tsunami.

Julia – is there any feedback on the steps outlined in the report, I suspect they haven't incorporated much of the feedback. So I'll be using your previous feedback again.

Nick – this is a piece of work that I'd like you to pick up more of, after I've been to the meeting next week.

Andy Roberts

Standards & Visitor Safety Team Manager,  
Heritage & Visitor Unit  
Department of Conservation.

**S9(2)(a)**

Released under the Official Information Act