

Australians injured after earthquake and tsunami

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The death toll from the earthquake and tsunami that hit the South Pacific this morning may be more than 100.

Australians are among the injured but at this stage none are thought to be in a serious condition.



Photos: [The tsunami devastation](#) Wednesday September 30, 2009

Local officials in Samoa say the death toll in that country could reach 100, while another 20 people were reported dead and thousands more homeless in American Samoa.

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[Tsunami expert discusses specifics](#)

The quake sparked a tsunami warning for a large swathe of the South Pacific although Australia is not expected to be affected.

If you are concerned for family in the ares, the Department of Foreign Affairs has set up a hotline. Call 1300 555 135.

The quake of up to 8.3 magnitude hit at 6.48am Tuesday local time (0348 Wednesday AEST) midway between the two island groups of Samoa and American Samoa.

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There were reports of deaths in American Samoa, although a US official was unable to confirm numbers.

Samoa police also say the tsunami has caused an unknown number of deaths there, the ABC reported.

There were reports that three children had been killed in Samoa, the ABC said.

The Pacific Tsunami Warning Centre put the quake's magnitude at 8.3 and issued a general alert for the South Pacific region, from American Samoa to New Zealand.

It said the tsunami generated by the quake "may have been destructive along coasts near the earthquake epicentre and could also be a threat to more distant coasts".

The US Geological Service said the quake struck 35km below the ocean floor, 190km from American Samoa and 200km from Samoa.

New Zealander Graeme Ansell said the beach village of Sau Sau Beach Fale in Samoa was levelled.

"It was very quick. The whole village has been wiped out," Ansell told National Radio from a hill near Samoa's capital, Apia.

"There's not a building standing. We've all clambered up hills, and one of our party has a broken leg. There will be people in a great lot of need 'round here."

The powerful quake jolted people awake.

In Apia, families reported shaking that lasted for up to three minutes.

"It was pretty strong; it was long and lasted at least two minutes," one resident told local radio.