

Friday July 27

### MetService and TOA Systems collaborate on world-first

[MetService New Zealand](#) is pioneering the first-ever South Pacific-wide lightning detection network in partnership with [TOA Systems, Inc.](#), a leading global provider of lightning detection solutions.

In South Pacific countries, lightning information from the SPLN will assist with forecasting and monitoring of events by National Meteorological Services. Disaster response agencies in these countries will also have an increased ability to mitigate the impacts of lightning through awareness and education.



The first installation phase was completed in June 2018, with ten lightning sensors established in Fiji, Kiribati, Niue, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and the Cook Islands.

Two further installation phases are planned in later 2018 and in 2019. Once complete, the SPLN will constitute 34 sensors.

The network will provide real-time coverage of lightning events to an area encompassing the wider south Pacific, from eastern Papua New Guinea right across to the Pitcairn Islands.

These new sensors will work in concert with over 500 sensors in TOA's [Global Lightning Network](#).

The SPLN is made possible in part by a grant from the Pacific Fund administered by the French Government. Part of this funding will be used to install sensors at the French Pacific territories of Wallis & Futuna, and in French Polynesia. The remainder will be used for future maintenance and expansion.

The SPLN is operated and monitored by TOA, with MetService providing engineering and sales support, and is an example of a public/private partnership supporting innovation and weather safety.

Peter Fisher, MetService's Business Development Manager (Key Accounts), says:

"This will be the first time many Pacific Island nations have had access to real-time lightning data in their region. Small islands have characteristics which make them especially vulnerable to the effects of climate change. We expect this data to become invaluable to decision-makers and communities. Lightning is a key indicator of severe weather activity and can provide significant advantage in forecasting thunderstorm activity as well as providing vital information for safety preparedness."

ENDS

**TOA Systems** is based in Florida, USA and is a pioneer of lightning detection with over 30 years' experience in accurately locating and detecting lightning events, providing early warning and lightning awareness solutions.

**MetService** is New Zealand's National Meteorological Service. As a State-Owned Enterprise its core purpose is to protect the safety of life and property in New Zealand while operating as a commercial business. MetService recently emerged as one of the highest rated agencies in Colmar Brunton's annual survey of reputation in the public sector. <http://www.colmarbrunton.co.nz/opinion-doesour-public-sector-measure-up/>