



International Civil Aviation Organization

ELECTRONIC BULLETIN

For information only

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EBOLA OUTBREAK IN THE DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO (DRC)

1. An outbreak of Ebola virus disease was declared in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) on 8 May 2018. As of 15 May 2018, a total of 44 suspected Ebola cases have been reported, including 23 deaths (3 confirmed Ebola cases and 20 probable) and 21 other suspected cases. (<http://www.who.int/csr/don/17-may-2018-ebola-drc/en/>).
2. Ebola is a severe, often fatal illness in humans. The virus is transmitted to people from wild animals and spreads in the human population through human-to-human transmission. It presents with symptoms of fever, diarrhoea, abdominal pain, muscle pain, joint pain and sometimes bleeding.
3. The outbreak has been reported in a remote area and appears to be geographically limited. An air-bridge between Kinshasa, Mbandaka and affected areas has been put in place to deliver supplies and personnel. WHO is working with the Government and key partners to strengthen coordination of the Ebola response at the national level, including surveillance activities, case investigation and management, risk communication, contact tracing and planning of further public health measures such as vaccination campaigns.
4. Nationally, DRC has activated exit screening measures at the international airport at Kinshasa. To date sixteen countries have implemented entry screening measures, although it has not been confirmed whether it involves airports. ICAO urges States follow WHO recommendations regarding entry and exit screening measures.
5. In view of available data, the WHO considers the overall risk for spreading of the disease at national level to be very high. The risk to surrounding countries is considered to be high because of its proximity to the Congo river; while the international risk is considered to be low. The WHO Director-General has convened an Emergency Committee on 18 May 2018 to provide advice on whether the current outbreak constitutes a public health emergency of international concern (PHEIC) as defined in the International Health Regulations (IHR).
6. ICAO is working closely with the WHO in providing guidance to States and aviation stakeholders regarding measures to be implemented to mitigate transmission of the disease by air transport. International travellers should be informed about the current Ebola outbreak and should receive advice on prevention and where to seek medical treatment should they develop Ebola related symptoms. ICAO supports WHO and CDC guidelines and advise States and stakeholders to review preparedness and response plans; and to monitor and implement recommendations communicated by the WHO and the Centres for Disease Control (CDC) using the following link: <http://www.afro.who.int/health-topics/disease-outbreaks/outbreaks-and-other-emergencies-updates>.
7. ICAO also advises States to consult the *Handbook for Management of Public Health Events in Air Transport*. This publication of the WHO is a comprehensive text that draws on the scientific literature and lessons learned from recent disease outbreaks to provide substantive public health guidance. The guide can be downloaded using the following link: http://www.who.int/ihr/publications/9789241510165_eng/en/.
8. Currently WHO advises against any restriction of travel and trade to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and there are no restrictions of international traffic in place.

Issued under the authority of the Secretary General