



SHIP SAFETY BULLETIN

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Subject: **EBOLA VIRUS DISEASE (EVD)**

Scope

The purpose of this SHIP SAFETY BULLETIN is to provide information and guidance, based on recommendations developed by the Public Health Agency of Canada and the World Health Organization (WHO), concerning the current outbreak of Ebola virus disease (EVD) in West Africa.

Background

EVD is a rare and severe viral disease that causes haemorrhagic fever in humans and in animals (e.g. monkeys, gorillas, etc.). When infected, people can get very sick, with fever, intense weakness, headache, sore throat and muscle pains, and may bleed from different parts of the body (i.e. haemorrhage). The time from infection to symptoms can range from 2 to 21 days.

The public health risk posed by EVD in Canada is considered very **low** at this time.

Ebola virus disease is not spread through casual contact with asymptomatic individuals. It is spread through direct contact with infected body fluids (e.g. contact with infected animals, contact with blood, body fluids or tissues of infected persons or, contact with medical equipment that is contaminated with infected body fluids). In the absence of direct contact with blood or body fluids of an infected individual who is showing symptoms of EVD, there is a low risk of contracting EVD in a country where the disease is present. There are currently no confirmed cases of EVD in Canada.

As with other infectious diseases, personal hygiene measures such as: frequent hand washing with soap and water, avoiding touching your eyes, nose and mouth and avoiding close contact with people who are symptomatic are important preventative measures. Health Canada's website provides more information on the benefits of hand washing: <http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/hl-vs/iyh-vsv/diseases-maladies/hands-mains-eng.php>

Keywords:

1. Ebola
2. Virus
3. Disease

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Affected Countries (at time of issue)

The Ebola outbreak is ongoing in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

There have been no cases of Ebola virus disease reported in Nigeria for at least 42 days. On October 20, 2014 the World Health Organization declared the end of the outbreak in Nigeria.

For the latest updates on Ebola virus disease, please visit the World Health Organization's Global Alert and Response website.

[Global Alert and Response \(GAR\)](#)

Additional Sources of Information

Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC)

PHAC has developed general information pages concerning Canada's response to EVD and the disease itself.

[Canada's Public Health Response to Ebola
Ebola virus disease](#)

Public Health Agency of Canada has also issued guidance to assist conveyance and terminal operators in determining infection control measures. The guidance focuses on reducing the risk of illness that can be spread through contact with contaminated surfaces or body fluids.

[Environmental Sanitation Practices to Control the Spread of Communicable Disease](#)

World Health Organization (WHO)

The WHO has published a travel and transport risk assessment that includes interim guidelines for public health authorities and the transport sector. A link to International Health Regulations is also provided below:

[West Africa - Ebola virus disease](#)

[International Health Regulations \(WHO\)](#)

International Maritime Organization (IMO)

The WHO identified specific procedures for ships and shipping companies. Copies of the guidance can be found in circular letters (Nos. 3484 & 3485) issued by the IMO, which are available through the IMO website (these provide information and guidance, based on recommendations developed by WHO, on the precautions to be taken to minimize risks

to seafarers, passengers and others in the maritime environment from the Ebola virus disease).

[IMO Circular Letter No.3484](#)

[IMO Circular Letter No.3485](#)

A joint letter issued by the WHO and the IMO to Ministers responsible for ports and shipping concerning EVD can be found at the following link:

[World Health Organization \(WHO\) International Maritime Organization \(IMO\)](#)

Contact information

Questions or queries should be directed to Public Health Agency of Canada using the following email address:

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