



ICAO



Ebola Virus Disease Outbreak – Aviation Action Plan

A meeting chaired by the President of the ICAO Council and attended by the ICAO Secretary General and representatives of African States and Organizations was held at ICAO Headquarters, in Montréal, Canada, on 1 October 2014 with the objectives of:

- Recalling WHO/ICAO recommended measures on Ebola and in particular, removal of air travel restrictions;
- Taking note of Africa's collective response to the Ebola threat through the African Union Executive Council Decision Ext/EX.CL/Dec.1(XVI) which calls for compliance with the ICAO/WHO travel guidelines;
- Sharing States' experiences and challenges faced in implementing the said recommendations; and
- Agreeing on appropriate steps to facilitate implementation of WHO recommendations and strengthening capacity of States to handle the Ebola Virus Disease outbreak in West Africa.

The President of the Council summarized the main points of the discussion and on the basis of which an action plan was developed, in collaboration with WHO, as follows:

1. States, airports and airlines implement emergency preparedness plans and containment measures:

- a. States with widespread and intense transmission implement public health emergency plans, regulations, standards, guidelines and recommendations from WHO, ICAO, International Air Transport Association (IATA) and Airports Council International (ACI), including procedures for exit screening of travellers at airports, to prevent and manage identified cases and contacts.
- b. National health authorities of non-affected States revise, update, test and implement National Public Health Emergency Plans for improving capacity to detect, investigate, and manage contacts, suspects and confirmed Ebola cases, including procedures for exit screening of travellers at airports.
- c. The national authority responsible for Civil Aviation, in coordination with the national health authority implements a National Aviation Plan for a Public Health Emergency. Airport Public Health Emergency Contingency Plans and related procedures at airports concerning

- the prevention, detection and management of Ebola Virus Disease cases are implemented in coordination with the relevant public health authority.
- d. Airlines implement procedures for management of suspected infected travellers on board aircraft.

2. Airlines are encouraged to continue operating into the affected States, or to re-start operations if currently halted:

- a. ICAO to approach individual airlines which have ceased operations to affected States requesting information on the reasons why they have ceased operations and conditions necessary for the resumption of services.
- b. WHO to provide information, in coordination with national authorities, on provision of health care facilities for flight and cabin crew who are transiting in affected countries.

3. Exit screening procedures are implemented in affected countries, are documented and made public:

- a. ICAO, as chair of the Joint Ebola Transport and Travel Task Force Team, to promote dissemination of information, such as in joint statements of the Task Force and news releases, that exit screening (which is critical for reducing the exportation of Ebola cases and increasing public confidence) is being undertaken in affected countries.
- b. WHO to facilitate provision of details concerning exit screening procedures and make them available to States.
- c. ICAO and WHO to consider joint evaluations, in collaboration with national authorities and other partners, of exit screening procedures (e.g. joint WHO/ICAO Collaborative Arrangement for the Prevention and Management of Public Health events in Civil Aviation (CAPSCA) Assistance Visits to States/Airports).

4. Communication and awareness amongst key players at a political level is improved and assurances given on measures being put in place by States:

- a. ICAO Regional Directors (RDs) in Africa to establish communication with the Ministries of Transport, African Union, African Civil Aviation Commission, Sub-regional economic organisations and regional and country offices of United Nations organizations.
- b. ICAO RDs to request that awareness communications of the measures implemented in the most affected States be shared with the Ministers of Health and Heads of State and that the aviation sector is fully represented at any future meetings on Ebola.

5. States to review relevant Notices To Airmen (NOTAMS) and cancel Ebola related restrictions, where feasible:

- a. Civil Aviation Authorities/Air Navigation Service Providers to cancel or revise relevant NOTAMs.
- b. IATA and the African Airlines Association to communicate changes to airlines, and encourage resumption of services.

6. To facilitate development of preparedness planning and response capacities in the aviation sector, States are encouraged to join CAPSCA. Assistance Visits (AVs) are made available to CAPSCA member States in Africa:

- a. ICAO and WHO jointly with other partners to facilitate collaboration for training African aviation and public health officers as technical advisors who can undertake Assistance Visits to States/international airports and facilitate exercises. The request for AVs from certain African States for which funding is available may serve as a platform for such training. Funding will be needed for CAPSCA to support such training and for AVs.
- b. ICAO and States to consider additional funding for the continuation of CAPSCA's activities to assist States in the implementation of relevant Articles of the International Health Regulations (2005) and related ICAO Standards and Recommended Practices with meetings, training, development of guidance, and assistance visits to States and airports.