



KISH P & I LOSS PREVENTION CIRCULAR KPI-LP-164-2014
(Warning about West Africa - Ebola Virus (APRIL-2014))

It is important to inform all shipping companies that there has been an outbreak of the Ebola virus in the West African country of Guinea. The number of infected persons is increasing, and cases have also been reported in Liberia and Sierra Leone.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), the present epidemic amounts to 127 suspected and confirmed cases of Ebola resulting in 83 deaths. The majority of infections in Guinea have occurred in the south east and center of the country. However, 12 cases including 4 deaths have been reported in the port of Conakry.

In Liberia there have been 8 suspected and confirmed cases of Ebola, 5 of which were fatal. The confirmed cases have been limited to an inland region bordering with Guinea and involve people who had previously travelled to that country. The coastal areas of Liberia do not appear to be affected at the present time.

In Sierra Leone it is suspected that the Ebola virus may have been responsible for the deaths

of 2 nationals, both of whom were in Guinea at the time they were taken ill.

Although WHO does not consider that travel to Guinea, Liberia or Sierra Leone needs to be restricted at the present time, shipping companies may nevertheless wish to advise their crews to remain on board when calling at ports in these countries to minimize the risk of them encountering someone who may be carrying the virus, and to postpone any crew changes until clear of the area.

Most human infections of Ebola are caused by direct contact with the bodily fluids or secretions of an infected person. Crewmembers should try to avoid bodily contact (including shaking hands) with the local population in infected countries. Fruit bats, a culinary delicacy in south eastern Guinea, are believed to be the natural host of the Ebola virus and should not be handled or consumed. Other animals may host and pass on the disease therefore contact with animals should also be avoided.

WHO advises that Ebola is "a severe viral illness often characterized by the sudden onset of fever, intense weakness, muscle pain, headache and sore throat. This is followed by vomiting, diarrhoea, rash, impaired kidney and liver function, and in some cases, both internal and external bleeding". Crewmembers should be alert to these symptoms but should be mindful that they may also be indicative of other diseases such as "malaria, typhoid fever, shigellosis, cholera, leptospirosis, plague, rickettsiosis, relapsing fever, meningitis, hepatitis and other viral haemorrhagic fevers".

All KPI Members are advised to inform their ships concerning the issue.