



International
Civil Aviation
Organization

Organisation
de l'aviation civile
internationale

Organización
de Aviación Civil
Internacional

Международная
организация
гражданской
авиации

منظمة الطيران
المدني الدولي

国际民用
航空组织

Tel.: +1 514-954-8219

Ref.: AN5/29 – 26/48
EC6/22

1 June 2026

Subject: Public Health Emergency of International
Concern – Ebola disease caused by Bundibugyo virus

Action required: a) Implement appropriate mitigation
measures in the aviation sector and b) disseminate this
letter accordingly.

Sir/Madam,

1. I have the honour to draw your attention to the ongoing Ebola disease outbreak caused by the Bundibugyo Virus Disease (BVD) affecting the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) and Uganda. The virus is transmitted through direct contact with infected bodily fluids or contaminated materials. As it is not airborne, it has a low pandemic potential, provided that appropriate public health measures are effectively implemented.

2. On 17 May 2026, the World Health Organization (WHO) determined that the outbreak constituted a Public Health Emergency of International Concern¹. The International Health Regulations (IHR) Emergency Committee issued temporary recommendations on 19 May², and on 26 May WHO issued a Technical Note for the implementation of border health and international travel-related temporary recommendations³.

3. As of 26 May, WHO assessed the risk of BVD to be very high at the national level in DRC, high at the regional level, and low at the global level. WHO does not recommend any restrictions on international traffic, including suspension of flights, closure of borders, travel bans or routine entry screening, at this stage.

¹ [Epidemic of Ebola Disease caused by Bundibugyo virus in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda determined a public health emergency of international concern](#)

² [First meeting of the IHR Emergency Committee regarding the epidemic of Ebola Bundibugyo virus disease in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Uganda 2026 – Temporary recommendations](#)

³ Technical Note for the implementation of border health and international travel-related temporary recommendations [B09769-eng.pdf](#)

4. Operational challenges affecting response efforts in the affected areas include insecurity, population displacement and limited capacity for contact tracing, isolation and referral. Cross-border transmission risks remain elevated due to high population mobility and porous borders.

5. However, movement of infected persons and contacts may pose a risk of international spread through air transport if not managed appropriately through close collaboration between Civil Aviation Authorities (CAAs) and Public Health Authorities (PHAs).

6. A coordinated response between CAAs and PHAs is essential for the implementation of risk-based and practical evidence-informed mitigation measures to prevent the onward transmission of BVD, safeguard the health and safety of aviation personnel and passengers, and maintain international connectivity to facilitate essential travel and the transport of urgent blood samples, medical equipment or other medical supplies needed to mitigate the public health impact.

7. States, in accordance with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Annex 9 — *Facilitation* and WHO IHR (2005), are urged to:

- a) enhance surveillance and preparedness at points of entry, including procedures for the detection, assessment and management of ill travellers;
- b) strengthen coordination between PHAs, CAAs and airport and aircraft operators;
- c) utilize and set-up, if not already existing, National Air Transport Facilitation Committees or equivalent coordination mechanisms to ensure a multi-agency response, including coordination between aviation, health and border control stakeholders;
- d) implement appropriate screening and public health measures at points of entry, consistent with WHO advice;
- e) ensure availability of procedures for isolation, referral and management of suspected cases;
- f) disseminate accurate and timely information to travellers, airport stakeholders and aircraft operators;
- g) reinforce cross-border coordination and information sharing mechanisms, particularly with neighbouring States; and
- h) avoid unnecessary interference with international traffic, in accordance with IHR (2005).

8. States are further encouraged to collaborate with PHAs and aviation stakeholders in accordance with the relevant ICAO Annexes and Documents, WHO guidance and other relevant guidance pertaining to:

- a) the implementation of aerodrome emergency plans for public health emergencies (Annex 14 — *Aerodromes*, Volume I — *Aerodrome Design and Operations*);
- b) the transportation of infectious blood samples (Doc 9284, *Technical Instructions for the Safe Transport of Dangerous Goods by Air*);

- c) the notification of suspected communicable disease on board an aircraft (Doc 4444, *Air Traffic Management*);
- d) assisting with contact tracing by provision of the General Declaration, Passenger Manifest and Public Health Passenger Locator Form (Appendices 1, 2 and 13 to Annex 9);
- e) the detection and management of a suspected case of Ebola on board (ICAO Collaborative Arrangement for the Prevention and Management of Public Health Events in Civil Aviation (CAPSCA) website);
- f) aircraft waste management practices; and
- g) chemicals used for disinfection that are compatible with the aircraft structure to maintain aviation safety.

9. Technical guidance for managing Ebola disease outbreaks is provided by the ICAO CAPSCA programme ([CAPSCA – Ebola](#)). The CAPSCA national focal points in States are reminded to access the CAPSCA website regularly for updates and to communicate with the IHRs National Focal Point.

10. Member States are invited to implement the above appropriate mitigation measures in the aviation sector and to disseminate this information to all relevant national stakeholders, including PHAs, airport operators, aircraft operators and air navigation service providers.

11. ICAO continues to collaborate closely with WHO and other United Nations partners to support Member States and aviation stakeholders in managing public health emergencies in aviation.

Accept, Sir/Madam, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Juan Carlos Salazar
Secretary General