

2014 OCT 30 AM 9:17
Vice Mayor Larry Reid and the Oakland City Council

FROM: Deborah Ale Flint, Aviation Director, Oakland International Airport

DATE: October 30, 2014

RE: Informational Report Regarding The Recent Ebola Outbreak As It Pertains To What Precautions Are Being Taken At The Oakland International Airport (OAK) For Screening Passengers Who Arrive In Oakland

Background

There has been intense media and public attention concerning the Ebola Virus Disease (Ebola) since the first case was diagnosed in the United States and confirmed by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) on 9/30/14. The facts of the initial case have been covered extensively by the media.

The Ebola outbreak continues to be centered primarily in three West African countries, Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia although cases have emerged in neighboring countries as well.

As with any public health situation that may potentially impact the general public, the CDC and state and local Public Health Departments, such as the Alameda Public Health Department, are the lead agencies in developing directives and protocols followed at points of entry, including ports and airports, in health care institutions, and elsewhere. OAK is working closely with the Alameda County Public Health Department and the San Francisco Office of the CDC to both coordinate appropriate response plans and stay apprised of new information and take steps that the lead health agencies deem appropriate and necessary.

Current Status

The CDC has repeatedly stated that the risk of Ebola transmission to the general public is extremely low, given that transmission occurs through direct contact with bodily fluids of a person who is sick with or has died from Ebola.

CDC continues to work with airlines, airports, ministries of health, and other partners to provide technical assistance to countries with Ebola outbreaks. Affected countries have been screening departing travelers (exit screening). Exit screenings are conducted at airports in these outbreak-affected countries to identify sick travelers or anyone that may have been exposed to Ebola. As a further measure on October 8th, the (CDC) and the Department of Homeland Security's Customs & Border Protection (CBP) announced that new layers of entry screening would be implemented at five U.S. airports that receive over 94% percent of travelers from Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. OAK has no direct flights from the affected region and as of October 22, 2014, all flights originating

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from one of the three affected countries are required to fly to one of the five airports where entry screening has been implemented which are:

- John F. Kennedy International Airport (JFK)
- Washington Dulles International Airport (IAD)
- Newark Liberty International Airport (EWR)
- Chicago O'Hare International Airport (ORD)
- Hartsfield-Jackson Atlanta International Airport (ATL)

Although there are no immediate plans to institute entry screening at airports in California, CDC is working with California Department of Public Health and other agencies to ensure that the two international airports in California with CDC stations, San Francisco and Los Angeles International Airport, have the capability to perform entry screening if the need arises. There are no current plans to perform such screening at OAK due to the relatively low volume of international operations, but CBP personnel working at OAK and all other locations where individuals are attempting to enter the country have been trained to look for signs of illness and will take appropriate actions when they suspect an individual poses a health risk to individuals in the United States.

Political pressure continues to mount for the United States to implement a travel ban on all in-bound flights from the three West African countries experiencing the Ebola outbreak. Thus far, both the White House and the CDC have resisted the calls for a travel ban on commercial flights from West Africa, stating that it will impede the efforts to get supplies and personnel into the affected region to help control the outbreak, and that the best way to eliminate the risk to the general public is to stop the disease at its source in West Africa.

Oakland International Airport Procedures and Plans

OAK staff has been in focused and action-oriented communications with the CDC, Alameda County Department of Public Health, Oakland Fire Department, and Airline tenants to ensure that current protocols at OAK that would be employed in the event an individual with a suspected or confirmed case of Ebola is at or enroute to OAK are effective and that they comport with procedures from each of these agencies. OAK has also developed an Ebola-specific response plan, which has been shared with appropriate agencies and details the Airport's response to both a passenger arriving on an aircraft and one that exhibits signs of Ebola while in the Terminal. This response plan, as well as our overall contagious disease and pandemic plan, was evaluated as part of a tabletop exercise that took place at OAK on October 30, 2014 and included the following agencies:

- Oakland International Airport
- Alameda County Department of Public Health
- Oakland Fire Department
- Alameda County Sheriff's Office
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Paramedics Plus (Alameda County Paramedic Service Contractor)
- Airlines that fly into OAK
- Customs and Border Protection

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Although the risk of an individual arriving at OAK with Ebola remains extremely remote, passengers arriving at OAK are observed by flight and cabin crews, and, in the case of international flights, additionally observed by CBP personnel when passing through the Federal Inspection Facility, to look for signs of illness. If an individual is suspected to have Ebola, airlines and/or CBP would communicate with CDC as well as OAK, which has established protocols in conjunction with appropriate agencies to ensure the safety of passengers and other individuals at the airport. Such protocols include the ability to evaluate, isolate, and quarantine passengers as deemed necessary by appropriate health agencies.

Currently, CDC still maintains that there is "No Identifiable Risk" to individuals who have remained outside the three affected countries or are asymptomatic for at least 21 days after leaving one of the three countries and that there continues to be "Low (but not zero) Risk" for individuals who are traveling on board an aircraft that has a person with Ebola and is symptomatic (individuals that are asymptomatic are not contagious)¹. To reduce the likelihood of individuals being exposed to Ebola while flying, CDC has advised public health agencies that any individuals who are "Low" risk or greater should not be permitted to board aircraft. "Low Risk" individuals primarily include those individuals who have been to one of the three affected countries or have had brief contact with an individual that has Ebola and was symptomatic².

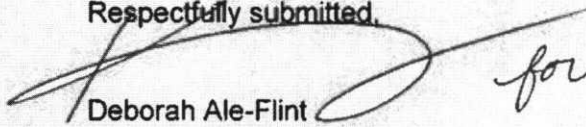
To ensure that risk levels remain low, OAK will continue to work with public health partners and other stakeholders to refine procedures as necessary to limit the likelihood of an outbreak occurring at the Airport and to ensure that individuals who may be affected are effectively isolated from other individuals in the terminal. It is believed that through these proactive measures, OAK and public health partners will be successful in minimizing the possibility for an outbreak in Alameda County.

Resources

- ACPHD Health Alerts - <http://www.acphd.org/health-alerts.aspx>
- CHDP Ebola Page - <http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/cder/Pages/Ebola.aspx>
- CDC Ebola Page - <http://www.cdc.gov/vhf/ebola/index.html>

For questions on this report please contact Joanne Karchmer, Government Affairs Rep. at 510-627-1384.

Respectfully submitted,



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¹ Epidemiologic Risk Factors to Consider when Evaluating a Person for Exposure to Ebola Virus. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, October 27, 2014

² Interim U.S. Guidance for Monitoring and Movement of Persons with Potential Ebola Virus Exposure, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, October 28, 2014

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