

## 6 **INTERNATIONAL OUTBREAKS OF IMPORTANCE TO SOUTH AFRICAN TRAVELLERS AND HEALTHCARE WORKERS**

### a **Ebola virus disease (EVD) outbreak: situation update**

On 17 March 2016 the World Health Organization declared the Ebola outbreak in Sierra Leone over for the second time. Sierra Leone was first declared Ebola-free on 7 November 2015; however the Ebola virus disease re-emerged in the country in January 2016. As Guinea and Liberia were declared free of Ebola transmission on 29 December 2015 and 14 January 2016 respectively, the declaration that Sierra Leone is Ebola-free would have marked the end of the longest and worst Ebola outbreak ever reported in history. However at least two new confirmed cases of EVD were reported in Guinea in March 2016. This marked the first re-emergence of the Ebola virus disease in Guinea since the outbreak was declared over on 29 December 2015. Guinea would have been celebrating the end of its 90-day enhanced surveillance period on 27 March 2016. The cases emerged from the same family out of Koropara village in the N'Zerekore prefecture, about 1 000 kilometres southeast of the capital Conakry. As at 18 March 2016, a cumulative total of 28 605 cases (laboratory-confirmed, probable and suspected) including 11 303 deaths with a case fatality rate of 40% has been reported in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. A summary of case numbers and deaths reported is shown in Table 1.

#### **Situation in South Africa**

As at 14 March 2016 there have been no EVD cases in South Africa associated with the current outbreaks in West Africa. In addition, there are no suspected cases of EVD in South Africa at present. The risk of Ebola being introduced into South Africa still remains low.

Testing for viral haemorrhagic fever viruses (including Ebola virus) in South Africa is only available at the NICD. EVD testing is neither warranted nor useful for persons that are not suffering from a clinical illness compatible with EVD, even in the event of compatible travel histories. The tests cannot be used to determine if the patient has been exposed to the virus and may develop the disease later. Requests for testing (with a detailed clinical, travel and exposure history) should be directed to the NICD Hotline at 082 883 9920 (a 24-hour service, for healthcare professionals only)

**Source:** Division of Public Health Surveillance and Response, NICD-NHLS; ([outbreak@nicd.ac.za](mailto:outbreak@nicd.ac.za))

**Table 1.** Number of Ebola virus disease cases and deaths in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone (as at 17 March 2016)

<b>Country</b>	<b>Total cases (laboratory-confirmed, probable and suspected)</b>	<b>Total deaths</b>
Guinea (as at 29 December 2015)	3 804	2 536
Guinea (from 17 March 2016)	2	2
Liberia	10 675	4 809
Sierra Leone	14 124	3 956
<b>Total</b>	<b>28 605</b>	<b>11 303</b>

Source: World Health Organization: Ebola outbreak - Ebola situation report of 16 March 2016 2016 ([www.who.int](http://www.who.int)); <http://www.who.int/csr/disease/ebola/new-ebola-cases-confirmed-guinea/en/>; <http://who.int/mediacentre/news/statements/2016/end-flare-ebola-sierra-leone/en/>