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To the Members

Ebola Outbreak in DR Congo

We have obtained the following information from [Budd S.A.](#), our correspondent in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Ebola situation in DR Congo

The WHO updated on 29 May 2018 that the Ebola virus in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) has so far caused 25 deaths among the total of 53 cases since the beginning of the outbreak on 4 April 2018.

Latest situation

The report of the WHO of 29 May 2018 confirms the outbreak is still localised to the three health zones initially affected: Iboko, Bikoro and Wangata in the province of Equateur, about 1,500 kilometers from the province of Kongo Central where are situated three sea ports, Matadi, Boma and Banana.

According to Budd Kinshasa, the situation in the three health zones could be brought under control thanks to the intervention of the WHO teams preventing the spread of Ebola virus to other areas of the country. The response plans have been established and the Ebola vaccines are provided to the people in the high risky communities. For the time being, there is no impact of Ebola on the maritime operations in the three sea ports of the DRC.

Our recommendations

Although the government of the DRC is confident to halt the current outbreak of the deadly Ebola disease, and the WHO experts stressed “there should be no international travel or trade restrictions”, members trading to the ports in West and Central Africa are suggested to remain vigilant and monitor the situation closely by consulting the P&I correspondent in the port concerned.

Members are also suggested when negotiating a charterparty to contain an Ebola clause to allow owners to refuse to call at the port and to request alternative instructions. Attentions should be brought, when parties are drafting the Ebola clause, to define the level of risk needed and the width of area affected to trigger the clause, and the consequence of calling at the risky port which depends more on the approaches taken by the different port authorities, to avoid the charterparty disputes between owners and charterers.

Relevant sources of information:

[WHO: Ebola situation reports](#)

[BBC News: Why DR Congo is confident it will halt Ebola](#)

[BBC News: DR Congo Ebola outbreak 'not global emergency'](#)

[BUDD Kinshasa: information on the sea ports of the DR Congo](#)

Yours faithfully,

The Japan Ship Owners' Mutual Protection & Indemnity Association

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