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1 The six WHO regional offices: AFRO – Regional Office for Africa; EMRO - Regional Office for the Eastern Mediterranean; EURO - Regional Office for Europe; PAHO/AMRO – Pan American Sanitary Bureau/Regional Office for the Americas; SEARO - Regional Office for South-East Asia; WPRO - Regional Office for the Western Pacific.
WHAT’S NEW IN IHR COORDINATION AND SUPPORT

▪ **Report to the 126th Executive Board on the Implementation of the International Health Regulations (2005)**
This year’s report to the WHO Executive Board summarizes information received from States Parties on IHR implementation and WHO activities in this area, including those relating to the (H1N1) 2009 pandemic. In line with World Health Assembly Resolution WHA61.2 and Article 54.2 of the IHR, the report to be submitted to Sixty-third Assembly in May 2010 will also include the views of the IHR Review Committee on the functioning of the IHR and relevant technical issues.

http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/EB126/B126_5-sp.pdf
http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/EB126/B126_5-ru.pdf
http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/EB126/B126_5-ar.pdf
http://apps.who.int/gb/ebwha/pdf_files/EB126/B126_5-ch.pdf

▪ **IHR Decision instrument online training course – French and Spanish versions now available**
The online training course on the IHR decision instrument -- Annex 2 -- is now available in French and Spanish. The Arabic, Chinese and Russian versions are in production and will be made available in the first quarter of 2010. For further information: ihrinfo@who.int

▪ **Third Meeting of the Steering Committee on the laboratory twinning initiative, 22-23 October 2009 WHO Lyon, France**
During the third Steering Committee meeting, discussions centered on the following issues: updates on progress made on the 13 ongoing twinning projects from the first call for proposals, lessons learned from the first cycle of twinning projects, recommendations for twinning project management and the evaluation of seven new potential twinning proposals. For further information: ihrinfo@who.int

▪ **WHO/IATA Train-the-trainer course on Transport of infectious substances**, 26–29 October 2009, Geneva, Switzerland
This course included participants from AFRO, EURO and PAHO/AMRO and from disease specific programmes at Headquarters -- Global Influenza Programme, Stop TB, Tropical Diseases Research – and the Global Alert and Response programme. The objective was to train more WHO staff on how to deliver the WHO transport course; the WHO trainers will then deliver the course worldwide. For further information: ihrinfo@who.int

▪ **WHO Biosafety Level 3 Training for National Influenza Centres. The French Food Safety Agency, 2–3 November 2009, Lyon, France**
This training was co-organized by the WHO IHR Coordination and Global Influenza programmes, and the Emory University BSL3. An onsite behavioral based biosafety training programme was delivered to participants from 19 countries. The goal of the programme was to provide participants with the skills needed to modify behavioral practices in high-containment environments. For further information: ihrinfo@who.int

▪ **WHO Consultation on areas where aircraft disinsection measures are recommended for conveyances (flights and ships) arriving from these areas, 30 November – 1 December 2009, Geneva, Switzerland**
The two objectives of this consultation were to i) reach an agreement on the methodology, formula or criteria for the selection of areas where disinsection measures would be recommended for conveyances arriving from these areas, and ii) propose a list of country/areas from which disinsection would be required for conveyances (flights and ships) in accordance with Annex 5 of the IHR. Participants included scientists, entomologists and other experts from the six WHO
Regions and WHO Headquarters and IHR Coordination. The conclusions and recommendations will be made available in the first quarter of 2010. For further information: ihrinfo@who.int

- **Fourth Global Health Security Communication Network Coordination Meeting, 1-3 December 2009, Lyon, France**

  The Fourth Global Health Security Communication Network Coordination Meeting was held from 1 to 3 December in Lyon, France. Over eighty participants from Member States, UN Agencies, universities and research institutes gathered to consider the challenge of risk communication for public health emergencies. The meeting explored three main themes: International Health Regulation risk communication capacity building, recent experience concentrating on the public communication response to pandemic (H1N1) 2009, and improved animal health–human health communication coordination. A meeting report and list of recommendations is available to Network members upon request from John Rainford at rainfordj@who.int

- **Global Laboratory Directory (GLaD) consultation, 7-8 December 2009, Geneva, Switzerland**

  The GLaD project aims to support the operational capacity of laboratory networks. The project includes components to provide support by mapping global laboratory networks (GLaDMAP); to facilitate and provide guidance to networks (GLaDNet); and to archive the resources such as lessons learned, protocols, templates related to network operability (GLaDResource). During the consultation, experts and stakeholders reviewed the GLaD components and strategic plan and endorsed the project. Participants saw a demonstration of the GLaDMAP mapping tool and a plan of action and timeline were formulated for launching GLaDMAP globally after the pilot evaluation is completed (to be carried out in the first quarter of 2010). For further information: ihrinfo@who.int

- **WHO Consultative meeting to review the WHO microbiology External Quality Assessment Programme in the Eastern Mediterranean Region (EMRO), 7-8 December 2009, Cairo, Egypt**

  This External Quality Assessment Programme provides proficiency-testing panels to the EMRO National Public Health Laboratories for the diagnostic of parasitic and bacterial diseases. The objective of the meeting was to review the results from the three last surveys (2007, 2008 and 2009) and propose ways to improve and enhance the programme over the long term. For further information: ihrinfo@who.int

- **Ports, airports and ground crossings: Informal technical consultation - IHR Implementation and public health measures in response to public health emergencies at ports, airports and ground crossings, 9–11 December 2009, Lyon, France**

  The consultation brought together representatives from the six WHO regional offices and travel and transport experts from national port authorities and industry associations from around the world. The objectives were to agree how to integrate travel and transport – points of entry (PoE) initiatives into national health surveillance and response activities under the IHR framework; strengthen the network of public health partners at PoE (PAG Net); review the international assessment of health measures undertaken at PoE during the pandemic (H1N1) 2009; update existing and develop new guidance tools for response to public health emergencies of international concern at PoE based on the guidance tool developed by the WHO Regional Office for the Western Pacific and on the preliminary results of the international assessment of health measures undertaken at ports, airports and ground crossings during the pandemic (H1N1) 2009. For further information: ihrinfo@who.int

- **Assessment tool for core capacity requirements at designated ports, airports and ground crossings**

  This document was developed through international collaboration, WHO internal consultations and informal technical working group meetings of point of entry experts from different regions of the world. It is intended to serve as a tool to be used to support States Parties in determining existing capacities and needs at points of entry when deciding which airports, ports and ground crossing to designate under Article 20.1 and Annex 1B. States Parties may also use it when deciding which airports, ports and ground crossing to designate under Article 19(a). It also will be
used as the basis for future development of WHO guidance for certification of airports and ports, according to the International Health Regulations (2005) provisions. For further information: ihrtransport@who.int

- **IHR implementation course (IHR i-course): Registration for 1st session successfully underway**

Registration for the first session of the IHR implementation course (IHR i-course) is underway (see IHR News, no. 8, 30 September 2009) and registration for 2010 remains open until 31 December 2009. For more information or if you would like to apply, please contact Mrs Anouk Berger: bergera@who.int or ihrinfo@who.int

**WHAT’S NEW IN RISK AND DISEASE CONTROL**

- **Pandemic (H1N1) 2009: WHO situation updates**

WHO continues to provide full coverage and situation updates on pandemic (H1N1) 2009 on the Global Alert and Response - Pandemic (H1N1) 2009 web site. On this site you will also find the latest guidance documents for national authorities, as well as information for the general public. Visit: [http://www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/csr/disease/swineflu/en/index.html)

- **WHO interim technical advice for case management of pandemic (H1N1) 2009 on ships – now available online**

This document is part of a series of guidance documents on pandemic (H1N1) 2009 and the public health emergency of international concern determined by WHO Director-General on 25 April 2009. These documents are updated regularly and can be accessed on the WHO web site. The target audience for this document includes National IHR Focal Points under the International Health Regulations (2005), competent authorities at ports, national public health officials, as well as ship operators, port administrators, other port personnel, ship crew members, and other port authorities and stakeholders involved in ship travel. [http://www.who.int/csr/resources/publications/swineflu/guidance_ships/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/csr/resources/publications/swineflu/guidance_ships/en/index.html)

- **Five keys to safer food – Train the Trainer course – Module 1: Directed to Women**

Further to publication of the WHO Guide on Safe Food for Travellers*, the WHO Food Safety programme has released the Train the Trainer course – Five keys to Food Safety – Module 1: Directed to Women. This training course provides guidance on how to both educate on and promote the adoption of safe food handling behaviour. The first module was designed to target women as women play an important role in the production and the preparation of safe food. The course was developed in response to the increasing number of requests from countries to assist in strengthening their food safety education programmes for the prevention of foodborne diseases. This course also supports the WHO Director-General’s priority to promote the health of women, particularly in developing countries (see the WHO Report on Women and Health launched on 9 November 2009 at [www.who.int/gender/women_health_report/en](http://www.who.int/gender/women_health_report/en)).

The training course is available in English at: [www.who.int/foodsafety/consumer/keys_training/en](http://www.who.int/foodsafety/consumer/keys_training/en). Contact: Françoise Fontannaz (Tel: +41 22 791 3697 - E-mail: fontannazf@who.int)


- **Natural ventilation for infection control in health-care settings**

Adequate ventilation can reduce the transmission of infection in health-care settings. Natural ventilation can be one of the effective environmental measures to reduce the risk of spread of infections in health care. This guideline first defines ventilation and then natural ventilation. It explores the design requirements for natural ventilation in the context of infection control, describing the basic principles of design, construction, operation and maintenance for an effective natural ventilation system to control infection in health-care settings. [http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/publications/natural_ventilation/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/water_sanitation_health/publications/natural_ventilation/en/index.html)
WHAT’S NEW IN THE WHO REGIONS

• **AFRO: Progress towards IHR implementation**
  From October to December 2009, the following activities were carried out to support IHR implementation in the WHO African Region:
  - country assessments to assess IHR core capacities in Cameroon, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo and Eritrea. The results were shared with major stakeholders and partners, and a plan of action for strengthening IHR core capacities will be developed shortly based on the findings and recommendations.
  - Integrated Disease Surveillance (IDSR) review meeting from 2–4 December 2009 at AFRO Headquarters, Brazzaville, Congo (the). The meeting was held in collaboration with the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, WHO Headquarters and representatives from WHO intercountry teams and country offices. The objective was to finalize the revised *Technical Guidelines for Integrated Disease Surveillance and Response in the African Region*[^2], which now reflect the requirements under the revised IHR. For further information on the activities above: ihrinfo@who.int

• **EMRO: Interim guidance on public health measures for the returnee Hajj Pilgrims**
  The continuing spread of pandemic (H1N1) 2009 virus may potentially pose a risk to the countries from their returnee Hajj pilgrims owing to the special religious rituals that the Hajjees go through in very crowded conditions during the pilgrimage. Respiratory infections are the commonest illnesses encountered at the Hajj among others; increases in the incidence of influenza may therefore be expected in these countries when the Hajjees return after the pilgrimage. The objective of this interim guidance is to assist Member States of the WHO Eastern Mediterranean Region to design their own surveillance measures for monitoring the health of their returnee Hajjees. The following guidance statements are not exhaustive.

• **PAHO/AMRO: Availability of Pandemic Influenza Vaccine for the Americas**
  PAHO/AMRO has been supporting countries in the Region to prepare for the use of the vaccine. Following the instructions of its Member States, the WHO Regional Office for the Americas has coordinated actions to guarantee wide and equitable access to the vaccine. For further information on the mechanisms in place to deliver the vaccine, please visit: [http://new.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=2119&Itemid=1](http://new.paho.org/hq/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=2119&Itemid=1)

• **SEARO and WPRO: WHO-ASEAN meeting on international points of entry, 24–26 November 2009, Manila, Philippines**
  The WHO-ASEAN Meeting on Public Health Measures at International Points of Entry: New Role under the new International Health Regulations, was jointly convened by WHO WPRO and SEARO in collaboration with the ASEAN Secretariat. This was the first meeting to bring together senior health officials with the competent authorities and other responsible stakeholders to discuss public health measures at international points of entry under the IHR. Over 60 participants attended the workshop from WPRO and SEARO countries and regions, representatives from ASEAN, WHO Headquarters and other international organisations. For further information: ihrinfo@who.int

OTHER NEWS

• Holiday greetings

IHR Coordination would like to thank our contributors and readers for your continued support to IHR News. Warmest wishes to you and your families for the end of year holidays and we look forward to joining you again for the next issue.

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This newsletter seeks to provide useful information for NFPs, countries and partners in implementing the IHR. We welcome your suggestions and comments and invite you to send these to Ms Sophia Desillas at: inrinfo@who.int

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