

Health & Safety Report

November 2014

**YTD 2014 Days due to Lost Time Injuries**: 1444 days

**YTD 2014 Lost Time Injuries:** 93

**Non-Lost Time Injuries 2014 (MINOR) as reported by AC in graphs:** 441

**Top Three Causes:** Catering Equipment 78, Aircraft Part 45, Catering Item 34

**Top Three Types:** Sprain/Strain 107, Bruises 60, Burns 48

**Ebola**The first case of EVD in West Africa was reported in December 2013. The disease spread between three countries; Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia. In March 2014, an outbreak was officially recognized by the World Health Organization. Even though there have been cases of EVD in other countries, they were travellers from Guinea, Sierra Leone or Liberia. No one contracted the disease outside one of the three infected countries.

It takes 2 to 21 days to show symptoms and the disease has a 50% fatality rate. A person is not infectious until they become ill.

Even if the risks of contracting the disease is very low, crew members should take every necessary precaution. Many flight attendants came forward concerning using gloves for trash collection onboard. Air Canada’s SOPs stipulate that gloves should be worn when cleaning visibly contaminated surfaces, passenger cabin and lavatories. Although the SOPs have not changed, a letter sent by Corporate Safety to Michel Cournoyer dated October 16th states that the Employer has no objections for the use of gloves by cabin crew for garbage pickup. It’s important to remember that cabin crew **ALWAYS** have the right to use Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) when they feel their health and/or safety is in jeopardy.

On October 21st, The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) held a conference call hosted by the GTAA. CUPE was invited to participate among other unions representing various groups of workers. PHAC considers the risk of contracting EVD during air travel very low. Approximately 2% of travellers from the infected countries come to Canada, which represents 30 to 50 travellers per week. Most of them enter Canada through YYZ and YUL. To this day, no one has contracted EVD during air travel. PHAC confirmed that since September 17th, every passenger entering Canada from one of the three infected countries (Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone) either on a direct flight or through a connecting hub are automatically sent to secondary inspection to be assessed by a Quarantine Officer. If a passenger shows symptoms during the flight, the Quarantine Officer will meet the flight and assess the Pax on site with the help of a medical officer on-call. There have been 2 events in YYZ where a Quarantine Officer met the flight for passengers suspected of having Ebola. CUPE Health & Safety was made aware of two other events at other airports where YYZ crew members were involved. In every situation, the passengers were assessed by a Quarantine Nurse and were deemed not at risk for Ebola.

On October 24th, CUPE Health and Safety participated in a conference call hosted by Corporate Safety. The company committed to increase the number of PPE in both the medication kit and the flight satchel. The number of disinfectant towellettes went from 54 to 108, the number of glycerin soap went from 10 to 15 and the number of blue nitrile gloves went from 8 packages to 16 packages. The use of PPE will be most effective when combined with hand washing with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds when in contacts with an ill passenger or contaminated surfaces.

Should you encounter a situation where a passenger is suspected of having Ebola, you should follow the SOPs for suspected communicable disease. Refer to Pub. 356, 6.4.2, Suspected Communicable Disease.

**Chateau Lacombe**

**YEG** – The Chateau Lacombe hotel has been problematic since the beginning.

Several flight attendants reported concerns of bed bugs, noise, cleanliness and overall security issues.

There were two cases of bed bugs that were officially acknowledged by the hotel administration and one case where a crew member was assaulted by one of the hotel guests. CUPE has raised these issues at length with the Company to no avail. While Corporate Safety recognized the assault as being a serious event, they maintained their position that it was an isolated incident that could have happened anywhere.

Construction at the hotel was reported in early September. While the pilots were displaced at the Sheraton, flight attendants were still going to the Chateau Lacombe. On Sept 23rd, YVR crew members booked off fatigue after their layover due to construction noise. The next day, the Company announced that cabin crew were being relocated to the Sutton Place Hotel starting October 23rd for a six months period until the company finds a permanent solution. A memo from Corporate Safety mentioned that the YVR workplace committee conducted an inspection of the Chateau Lacombe in August and the noise problem was reported. However, the memo was misleading as the YVR IFS CUPE Work Place Committee members were never invited to participate in an inspection and in fact, it was the YVR Flight Ops Workplace Committee that did the inspection.

**In Solidarity, your Health & Safety Team**

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