

Pacific Arbovirus Alert Update – 9 April 2014

There are a number of mosquito-borne disease outbreaks currently affecting Pacific nations that travellers should be aware of and take appropriate [precautions to prevent being bitten](#).

Dengue

- The **Fiji** Ministry of Health (MOH) has reported 18 969 clinically-suspected cases of dengue in the past few months. Of these, 70 per cent were reported from the Central Division, 20 per cent from the West, 9.5 per cent from the North and less than 0.5 per cent from the Eastern Division.
- The **Tuvalu** MOH is experiencing a dengue outbreak with seven lab confirmed cases as of 3 April 2014. The MOH has embarked on an extensive clean-up campaign around the areas where the seven cases reside.
- **French Polynesia** is currently facing a dengue serotype-1 and serotype-3 epidemic. As of 28 March, 2014 the total number of positive cases of dengue reported since February 2013 is 1 865. The number of cases is decreasing: 146 cases in January, 127 cases in February and 102 cases in March. There has been one death.
- In **New Caledonia**, as of 26 March, 2014 there have been 144 cases of dengue since 1 September 2013. There were 24 cases in 2013, 16 cases in January, 58 cases in February and 46 cases in March.

Zika fever

- Zika fever is an illness caused by the Zika virus that is spread through the bite of infected mosquitoes. The virus is closely related to dengue virus and causes a similar illness. Symptoms of Zika fever may include fever, headache, red eyes, rash, muscle aches, and joint pains. The illness is usually mild and lasts 4-7 days.
- **Cook Islands** has reported 257 dengue-like illness cases for week ending 30 Mar 2014. In total there have been 905 cases since 13 February 2014; Zika virus has been identified in 49 cases.
- There has been an imported case of Zika virus in **Townsville**, Queensland in a recent traveller to Cook Islands. This is the first known imported case into northern Queensland where the potential mosquito vector *Aedes aegypti* is present.
- **New Caledonia** – As of 27 March, 2014 there have been 437 confirmed cases of Zika virus since 25 November 2013. Of these, 405 are locally transmitted cases while the other 32 cases were imported from French Polynesia.
- Since early October 2013, 8,700 suspected cases of Zika have been reported by the health professionals sentinel network in **French Polynesia**.

Sources:

- Fiji Times Online - [Rise in suspected dengue cases](#), 1 April 2014.
- WHO/WPRO [Pacific syndromic surveillance report - Week 13, ending 30th March 2014](#).