



Special Report

G4S Global Risks Ltd.

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Special points of interest:

- Avian Influenza - update page 1 & 2
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Avian Influenza - update

Contingency plans for private business

While Europe is beginning to come to terms with the first human cases of Avian Flu in Turkey (for more information on Avian Flu in Turkey see our latest newsletter: <http://www.g4s.com/grk/grk-news-and-media/grk-specialist-reports.htm>) companies worldwide have to think of their state of preparation for a worst case scenario and the quality of their contingency plans.

HSBC for example, the world's third largest bank, is estimating that up to half of its staff could fall ill or be absent from work at the peak of the next flu pandemic. A speaker said that while this was a "worst case" scenario, it was common sense to plan for every eventuality. The one-in-two rate is higher than many official forecasts, including the 25% seen by the World Health Organization. HSBC's business in Asia was affected by the outbreak of the SARS virus in 2003. A spokeswoman for the lender said that it routinely planned for events that may pose a threat to its staff, customers and business. "While we have no reason to disbelieve the World Health Organization guidelines on bird flu, it is entirely proper that we prepare for any contingency," HSBC said. The bank's spokeswoman added that the 50% total included staff who might be unable to

travel or needed to take time off to care for loved ones. "None of us know the virulence of the [bird flu] virus, but I would rather be prepared for the worst," Bob Piggott, the bank's head of crisis management said. Mr Piggott said that HSBC was preparing for staff to work from home, or via video link and teleconference facilities. It also is planned to clean offices once an hour in an attempt to limit the possibility of infection, something that was done in HSBC's offices during the outbreak of SARS. Mr Piggott added that while many of the staff would be ill for at least a week, others would be caring for loved ones and family members, or avoiding public transport and public places. He said that several other banks were working with similar estimates.

In the UK, ministers have ordered the nations major banks and financial institutions to prepare contingency plans for a possible outbreak to ensure Britain's economy does not grind to halt. According to sources within one of the major banks, Lloyds TSB, who are working together with HSBC on their contingency plan, they were told by the government to work on the assumption that up to half of their workforce would be unable to work. Analysts within the British Department of Health estimate that in Britain alone there would be 600,000 deaths and 50,000 could be killed in case of an pandemic. Food and fuel shortages would occur. (BBC / FT).

The situation

Experts at WHO and elsewhere believe that the world is now closer to another influenza pandemic than at any time since 1968, when the last of the previous century's three pandemics occurred. WHO uses a series of six phases of pandemic alert as a system for informing the world of the severity of the threat and of the need to progressively launch more intense preparation activities.

Inter-pandemic phase	Low risk of human cases	1
New virus in animals, no human cases	Higher risk of human cases	2
	No or very limited human-to-human transmission	3
Pandemic alert	Evidence of increased human-to-human transmission	4
	Evidence of significant human-to-human transmission	5
	Efficient and sustained human-to-human transmission	6
Pandemic		

Source and Graphic: WTO

According to the WHO the world is presently in phase 3: a new influenza virus subtype is causing disease in humans, but there is not yet any efficient and sustainable spread among humans.

The Background

Like humans and other species, birds are susceptible to flu. There are 15 types of avian flu. The most contagious strains, which are usually fatal in birds, are H5 and H7. The type currently causing concern is the deadly strain H5N1, which can prove fatal to humans. Migratory wildfowl are natural carriers of the viruses, but are unlikely to actually develop an infection. The risk is that they pass it on to domestic birds which are much more susceptible to the virus.

Bird flu was thought only to infect birds until the first human cases were seen in Hong Kong in 1997. Humans catch the disease through close contact with live infected birds. Birds excrete the virus in their faeces, which dry and become pulverised, and are then inhaled. Symptoms are similar to other types of flu - fe-

ver, malaise, sore throats and coughs. People can also develop conjunctivitis. Researchers are now concerned because scientists studying a case in Vietnam found that the virus can affect all parts of the body, not just the lungs. This could mean that many illnesses, and even deaths, thought to have been caused by something else, may have been due to the bird flu virus.

For the most part, humans have contracted the virus following very close contact with sick birds. There may have been examples of human-to-human transmission, but so far not in the form which could fuel a pandemic.

More background information on influenza is available on WHO web site at: <http://www.who.int/csr/disease/influenza/> in particular, the Fact sheet on Avian Flu and the Frequently Asked Questions booklet.

So far there have been 79 confirmed human cases of Avian Influenza A/(H5N1) reported to WHO since 2003.

HUMAN CASES OF BIRD FLU

9 January 2006 (*Turkey data subject to WHO confirmation)

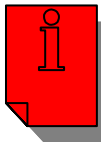
Country	Cases	Deaths
Cambodia	4	4
China	8	5
Indonesia	16	11
Thailand	22	14
Turkey*	14	3
Vietnam	93	42
Total	157	79

Source and Graphic: BBC News

Contingency plan - Is your business prepared?

Globally many fear a similar scenario as in 2003 with the SARS virus if there is a flu pandemic, with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) putting the potential cost to the region at between \$99.2bn and \$282.7bn in lost consumption, trade and investment.

An additional \$14.2bn could be lost through staff incapacity and death. The ADB believes a pandemic could hit the region harder than anything since the 1997 currency crash. Furthermore Citigroup in Singapore estimates an outbreak could shave 5% off GDP in Asia - with international trade hit by quarantines.



In accordance with the UN Staff Contingency Plan and the WTO advice, **G4S Global Risks Limited** advises you to ask yourself the following questions and is looking forward to assist you on issues concerning your own contingency plans:

Planning and Coordination

- Have you briefed the relevant people in your organization on the present situation and possible outcomes?
- Have you identified members and functions for a Crisis Management Team, both organizational and on HQ/country levels?
- Have you assessed your preparedness status, identified gaps and developed plans to address these gaps?
- Have you identified essential functions and the associated staff needed to maintain those functions?
 - Physical security staff
 - Medical care of staff
 - Maintenance of computers and telephone services
 - Ability to communicate with other organizations and governments
 - Ability to make important operational and policy decisions related to the pandemic
 - Ability to make important operational and policy decision related to critical projects and business

continuity

- Have you made a plan for departure of international staff members who are not needed to maintain essential functions and all recognized dependants of international staff to their home countries if circumstances permit?

Medical Interventions

- Have you identified the groups who will be receiving the vaccination once the pandemic vaccine becomes available?
- Have you taken into consideration to stockpile Tamiflu to treat 30% or more of your staff and dependants?

Interventions

- Have you familiarized with the national preparation plan? See UK: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/shared/bsp/hi/pdfs/19_10_05_bird_flu.pdf
- Have you developed plans to distribute masks?

Communication

- Once established have you communicated your preparation plan to all organizations and country offices?
- Have you provided health advice to your staff and have you updated your advice on personal hygiene?

Suggestion for Health Advice to your staff

For your staff travelling to/through or living in areas where avian influenza A (H5N1) outbreaks among poultry or human H5N1 cases have been reported.

- To minimize the possibility of infection, observe precautions to safeguard your health. Specifically, travelers should avoid touching live or dead poultry (e.g., chickens, ducks, geese, pigeons, quail) or any wild birds or their feces, and avoid settings where H5N1-infected poultry may be present, such as commercial or backyard poultry farms and live poultry markets.

- Do not eat uncooked or undercooked poultry or poultry products, including dishes made with uncooked poultry blood.
- As with other infectious illnesses, one of the most important preventive practices is careful and frequent hand washing. Cleaning your hands often, using either soap and water (or waterless, alcohol-based hand rubs when soap is not available and hands are not visibly soiled), removes potentially infectious materials from your skin and helps prevent disease transmission.

When preparing food:

- Separate raw meat from cooked or ready-to-eat foods. Do not use the same chopping board or the same knife for preparing raw meat and cooked or ready-to-eat foods.
- Do not handle either raw or cooked foods without washing your hands in between.
- Do not place cooked meat back on the same plate or surface it was on before it was cooked.
- All foods from poultry, including eggs and poultry blood, should be cooked thoroughly. Egg yolks should not be runny or liquid. Because influenza viruses are destroyed by heat, the cooking temperature for poultry meat should reach 70°C (158° F).
- Wash egg shells in soapy water before handling and cooking, and wash your hands afterwards.
- Do not use raw or soft-boiled eggs in foods that will not be cooked.
- After handling raw poultry or eggs, wash your hands and all surfaces and utensils thoroughly with soap and water.

Suggestions for an update of your advice on personal hygiene

- Hand washing is one of the most important measures to prevent the spread of infection.
- Anyone with respiratory-type illness should be careful with secretions from the nose and mouth.
- Cover the nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing use a tissue and once used, dispose of this in the waste.
- Always wash hands after having any contact with respiratory secretions.
- Be careful with respiratory secretion (e.g. coughing and sneezing) when around other people.
- It may be best to avoid contact with individuals at risk (small children or those with underlying or chronic illnesses such as immune-suppression of lung disease) until respiratory symptoms have resolved.
- Avoid contact with secretions of people who have respiratory illnesses.
- Ask people to use a tissue and cover their nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing.

Suspected cases

If you believe you might have been exposed to avian influenza, take the following precautions:

- Monitor your health for 10 days.
- If you become ill with fever and develop a cough or difficulty breathing, or if you develop any illness during this 10-day period, consult a health-care provider. Before you visit a health-care setting, tell the provider the following: 1) your symptoms 2) if you have had direct poultry contact, and 3) where you travelled.
- Do not travel while sick, and limit contact with others as much as possible to help prevent the spread of any infectious illness.
- Suspected cases should be placed in isolation and managed according to recommended procedures for infection control.
- Suspected cases should be sampled according to national or WHO guidelines and samples should be submitted to local or national reference laboratories.

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