

Zika Key Points: Updated 3/7/17

- During 2016, even during the heaviest part of the Zika period, Meet Puerto Rico received 225 groups and had approximately 120,000 confirmed attendees. To our knowledge none of the attendees contracted Zika.
- **Since the arrival of the Zika virus to the Island on December 2015 the impact on Puerto Rico's population has been minimal.**
- Early in 2016 the CDC had predicted that by year-end from 20-25% of the population would have contracted Zika. However, thanks to the joint efforts of the Department of Health, the CDC and the tourism industry, **less than 1% of the population has been diagnosed with the virus.**
- In fact, the group ICANN's March 2018 North American meeting, bringing approximately 1,500 attendees for a total of 8,406 room nights was rebooked after cancelling last year's conference.
- During 2016 Puerto Rico hosted many groups, including a major city-wide conference for the Jehovah's Witnesses - the largest city-wide convention of the year, from August 22-31, hosting more than 34,500 attendees from the United States, Puerto Rico, Brazil, Colombia and Cuba.
- Dr. Lyle Peterson from the CDC stated Puerto Rico is leading the nation in efforts to protect pregnant women from Zika.
- Some 100 CDC staff still continue to work in Puerto Rico, as part of 750 CDC workers assigned to work on the Zika virus, according to Dr. Thomas Frieden, head of the CDC. In addition to research, the team is providing education as well as assisting the Health Department of Puerto Rico in the monitoring of cases and communications to the public.
- Puerto Rico's hotels as well as the major tourism organizations - the Puerto Rico Tourism Company (PRTC), the Puerto Rico Hotel & Tourism Association (PRHTA) and Meet Puerto Rico (Puerto Rico Convention Bureau) are taking every precaution possible to eliminate mosquito breeding grounds at hotels and resorts as well as educating visitors about preventing mosquito bites.
- The CDC and Puerto Rico have an **integrated vector control program** that includes weekly house inspections, weekly clean-up campaigns, and surveillance to track the mosquito population and the use of chemical and biological larvicides and adulticides to kill young and adult mosquitos. According to statements from the CDC Station in the Island: **"Puerto Rico has the strongest surveillance of the region."**
- Equally important, the CDC Station in Puerto Rico together with the Puerto Rico Health Department closely studies the behavior of the Zika outbreak in the Island which has followed the same behavior as other Dengue and Chikungunya outbreaks. **According to Carolina Luna-Pinto, CDC San Juan Station, Officer-in-Charge and Dra. Brenda Rivera, leading State Epidemiologist for the Puerto Rico Department of Health the fact that the Zika outbreak has followed the same behavioral pattern of Dengue and Chikungunya means that, "by the end of 2016 the breakout should have died out."**
- Right now the CDC is considering Puerto Rico as host to bring several groups for various meetings (not Zika related)