

# Epidemiological Analysis of Covid-19 Tourist Establishments, Maldives

06<sup>th</sup> January 2021



# **COVID19 Epidemiological Report of Maldives Tourist Establishments:**

**01 October to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020.**

## **Summary**

Tourism was re-opened in the Maldives on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020 with public health measures for the prevention and containment of COVID-19. Since then several COVID-19 cases were detected on the resort islands. Additional measures, specifically prearrival test for COVID-19 was made mandatory since 10<sup>th</sup> September 2020 to further limit import of cases. This report presents the findings for the period 01 October to 31 December 2020. During this period 151,097 tourists arrived in the country.

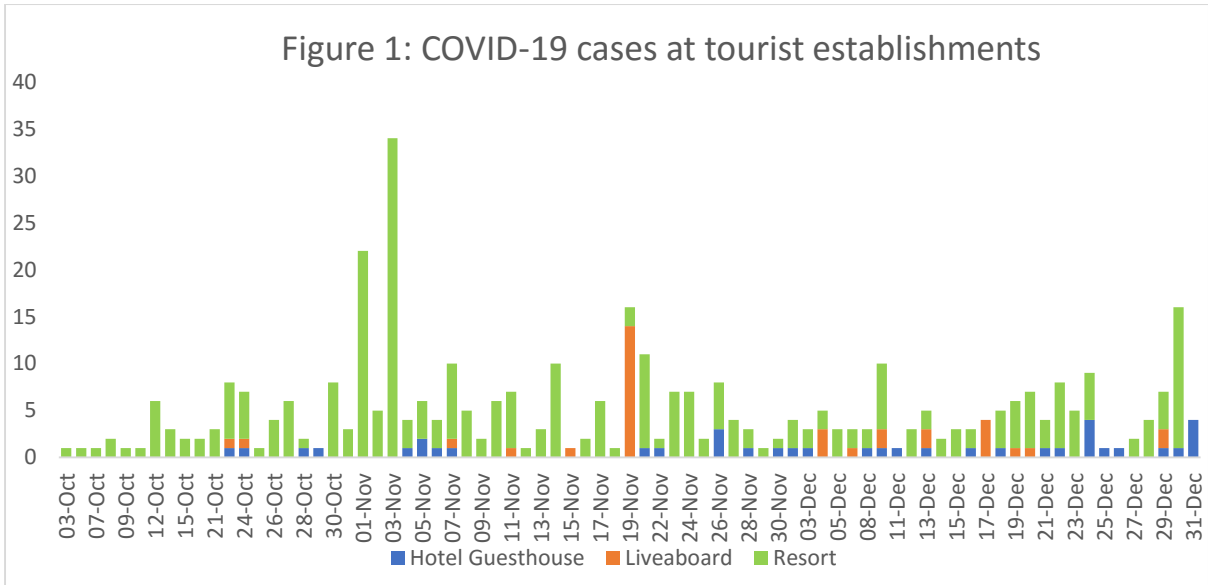
In the period October to December 2020, 100 tourist establishments reported cases. This includes 81 operational resort islands, 10 hotel guest houses, and 9 liveaboards (e.g safaris, yachts). During this period, 386 cases (187 tourists, 199 staff) were detected in the resort islands, among workers and tourists. Incidence among tourists arrived in Maldives during this period was 7.5 per 1000 tourists a significant increase from 3 per 1000 tourists in Aug-Sep 2020. This can be attributed to the decreasing proportion of testing of tourists (tourists tested decreased from 88% of the arrivals in August to 51% in October and 27% in December).

Cases are mostly associated with international travel history or from other local inhabited islands with limited onward transmission that were contained to immediate partner or family. However, at liveaboards the transmission was not contained with onward transmission to residents and crew with an average secondary attack rate of 46%. One tourist establishment had local transmission detected early November and the island was placed under quarantine until mid-December with restriction of movements to and from the island.

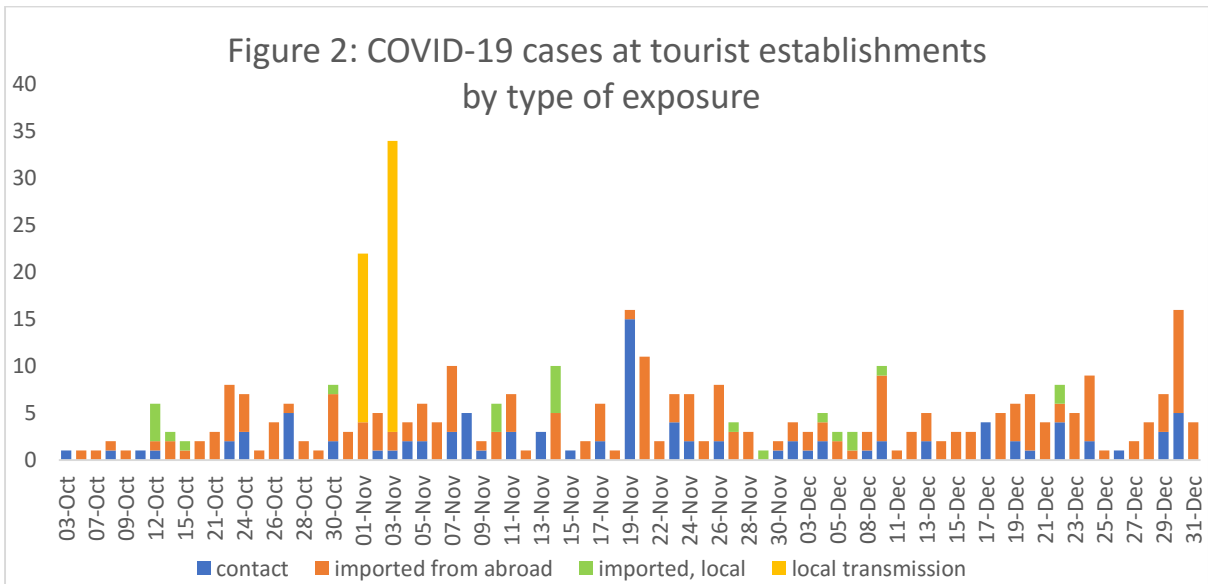
Severity of cases is low; one death of a staff and two hospitalisations among staff were reported from the tourist establishment that had local transmission.

## **Epidemiological analysis**

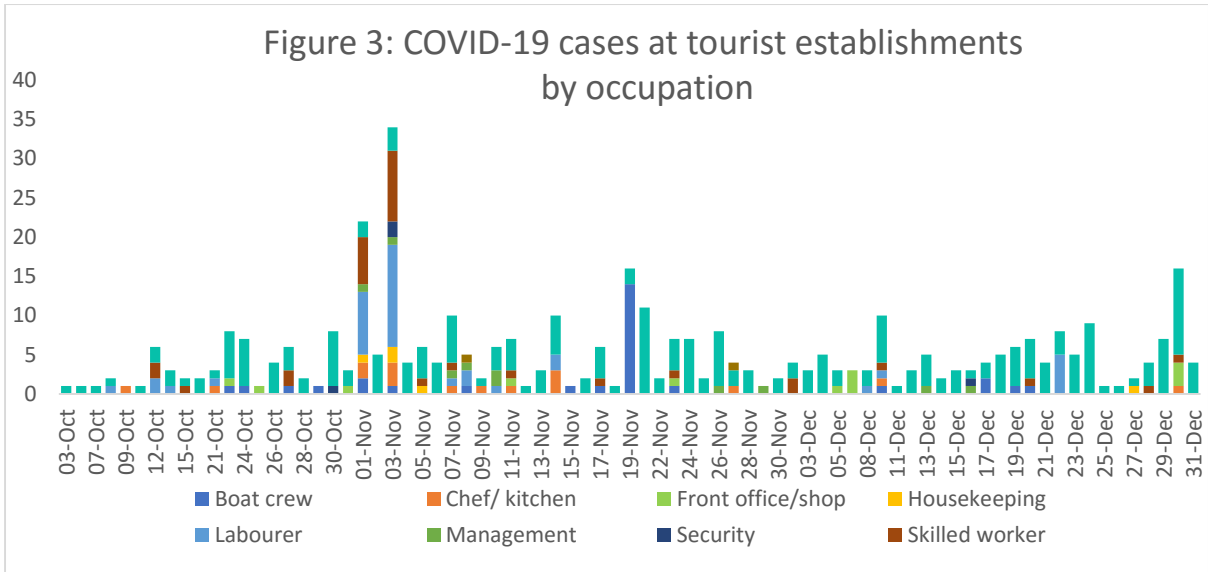
1. A total of 386 cases were detected during October to December 2020. The daily highest of cases were detected on 03<sup>rd</sup> November (Figure 1). Cluster of cases found in liveaboards (safaris and yachts). Sporadic cases are found on operational resort islands and guest houses or hotels with onward transmission limited to family and in clusters where tourists engaged in joint excursion activities. Number of cases was highest in November with 192 cases, 63 cases in October and 131 in December. Case per 1000 tourists was 5.8 in October 2020 and 12 in November and 5.1 in December 2020.



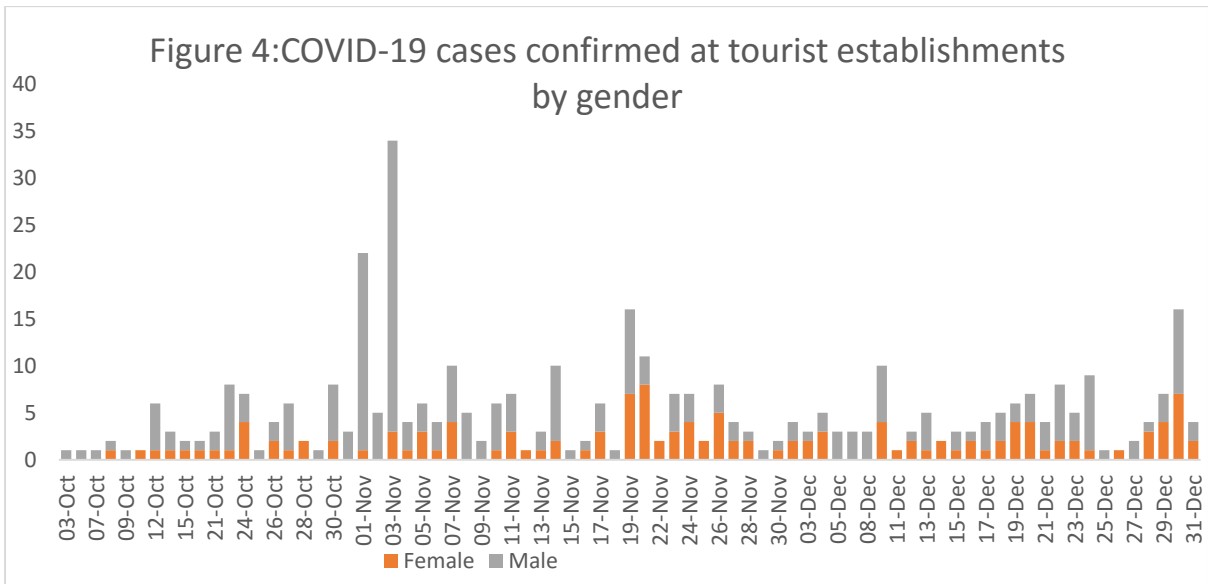
- Most of the cases in resort islands were imported cases with a travel history (Figure 2); either from abroad from a person with travel history outside Maldives (56%) or imported from Male’ area of Maldives where there is community spread (6%). These cases are detected at the time of release from quarantine after 14 days among workers and prior to departure of tourists. The travel quarantine period was reduced to 10 days from 16<sup>th</sup> December 2020. Only 5% of cases were close contacts in resorts. One resort had local transmission accounting for 13% of cases.



- Cases are detected more frequently among tourists (61% of cases) than staff (39%). Among staff, labourers are most affected, followed by skilled workers and boat crew (Figure 3).

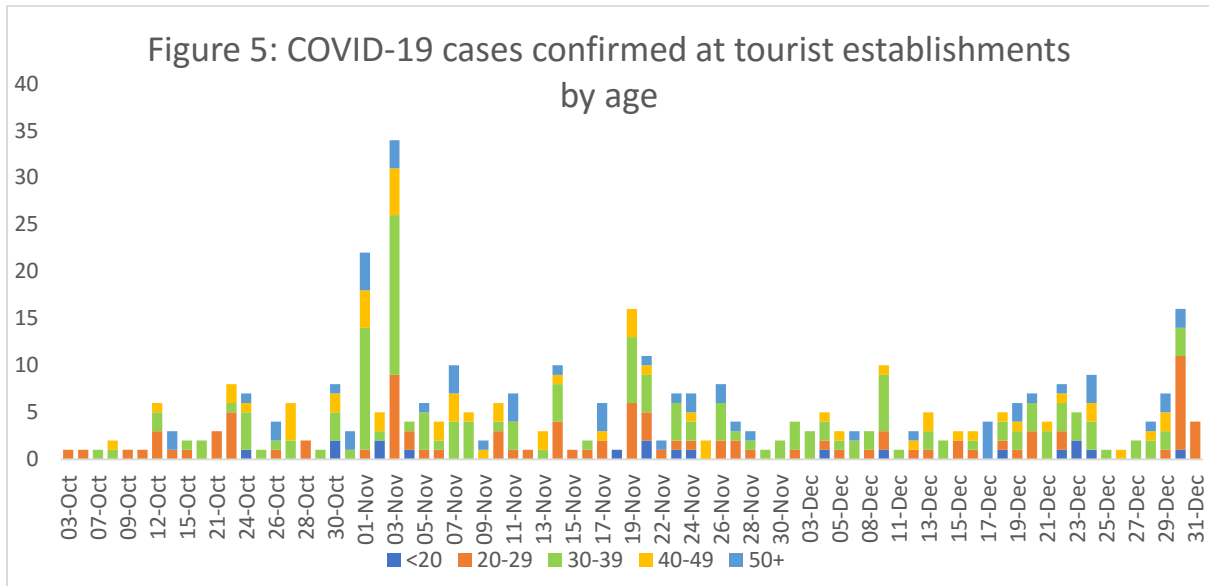


4. Among the cases, males are more common (65%) than females (Figure 4), consistent with the epidemiological findings of the early outbreak in Male’ area of the Maldives. In the tourist establishments islands, the higher ratio of male workers compared to females in the tourism industry in the Maldives is evident in the higher proportion of infected male staff (87%). However, among tourists the gender different is smaller with 52% males and 48% females.



5. Younger age groups 20-40 years are more common (66%) among the detected cases (Figure 5). This is also consistent with the epidemiological findings of the of the early outbreak in Male’ area of the Maldives. It is also consistent with the age cohorts of workers in the

tourism industry in the Maldives. Only 55 of the cases were among people under 20 years and 14% accounted for people 50 years and above.



- During the reporting period of October to December 2020, the cases had been mild. Two hospitalisations and one death were also reported among cases detected in the tourist establishment that had local transmission. At the time of reporting, 83% of the cases had recovered.