

**The State of Tourism Security:  
The Implications of Safety and Security for  
Marketing at the Destination and Property Level**

PATA



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Understanding what Tourism Security is:

Students of tourism surety divide the field into six component parts or challenges.

These challenges are:

- Visitor Protection. Tourism surety assumes that security professionals and police will need to know how to protect visitors from locals who might seek to do them harm, from other visitors who may be in transit for the purpose of committing crime, and less than honest staff members. Finally, tourism surety seeks to protect the visitor from tourism professionals who may be willing to commit fraud or sell them a product that is defective.
- Protection of Staff. A tourism industry that does not care about its staff (workers) cannot long survive. The second aspect of a tourism surety program is to find ways to assure that honest staff members can work in an environment that is crime free and not hostile. Tourism is a high-pressured industry and it is all too easily for staff members to be abused or for tempers to flare leading to a hostile work situation.
- Site Protection. It is the responsibility of tourism surety specialists to protect tourism sites. The term site can mean anything from a place of lodging to an attraction site. In an age of terrorism there are people whose purpose it is to destroy or harm a specific site; site protection must also take into account the careless traveler. Often, vacationers simply forget to care for furniture, appliances or equipment. Tourism surety then also takes into account the needs of cleaning staffs and hotel engineers and seeks to assure that site environment is both attractive and as secure/safe as possible.
- Ecological Management. Closely related to and yet distinct from site security is the protection of the area's ecology. No tourism entity lives in a vacuum. The care of a locale's streets, lawns, and internal environment has a major impact on tourism

surety. Ecology, however, should not only be restricted to the physical; it also involves the cultural ecology. It behooves specialists in tourism surety to protect the cultural ecology of an area. Strong cultures tend to produce safe places. On the other hand, when cultures tend to die, crime levels may tend to rise.

Protecting the cultural ecology along with the physical ecology of a locale is a major preventative step that tourism surety professionals can do to lower crime rates and to assure a safer and more secure environment.

- **Economic Protection.** Tourism is a major generator of income on both national and local levels. As such it is open to attack from various sources. For example, terrorists may see a tourism site as an ideal opportunity to create economic havoc. Criminals do not wish to destroy a tourism locale, but rather view that locale as an ideal "fishing" ground from which to harvest an abundance of riches. Tourists and visitors do not distinguish between the treatment they are afforded by the local travel and tourism industry and by people living and working in the community. As such, law enforcement agents and tourism security professionals have a special role in protecting the economic viability of a locale. How security professionals act and the methods that they use can reinforce the marketing department's message or undercut it.
- **Reputation Protection.** You only need to read the newspaper to note that crimes and acts of terrorism against tourism entities receive a great deal of media attention. The classical method of simply denying that there is a problem is no longer valid and is counter-productive. When there is a lapse in tourism security, the effect is long term. Some of the consequences to a local's reputation include the locale's moving from upper to lower class clientele, the need to drop prices, the general deterioration of the site, and the need for a major marketing effort to counteract the negative reputation.

Because tourism is both a component industry and has a highly undefined population a Tourism Security unit must use a variety of methods. The chart below defines the various population types that need to be protected.

Tourism Security radically challenges the paradigm of law enforcement. Among these changes are reflected in the following paradigmatic changes:

Among the paradigm challenges that Tourism Security programs introduced are:

- Successes are to be measured by “non-events” rather than events. That is to say that is now became the task of a private and public security officers to prevent crime rather than react to crime.
- Security rather than being a necessary expense is now to be seen as a marketing tool that if used properly added to a community or attraction’s bottom line.
- Security officers must be professionalized. They are no longer to be shifted from one area of expertise to another but rather their model should be that of medicine in which physicians demonstrate high levels of specialization.
- Tourism security is as an integral part of the tourism experience and thus how its agents dressed, what they said and how they acted impacted the entire tourism structure
- Tourism security is part of the entire tourism system and a failure in security can cause system shut down or collapse.
- Tourism Security encompasses a far greater role than classical law enforcement or hotel security guards. Thus, Tourism Security officers are expected to interact with other professionals in issues as diverse as food safety to port security, from lost children and festival planning to traffic control and counter-terrorism

### Tourism Populations by Sociological Transience

Population type	Populations consistency
Visitors	Highly changeable and therefore transient
Frontline workers in tourism	Less changeable, but open to high levels of employee turn-over
Local businesses serving tourism industry	Higher levels of stability, low owner turn over
Festival attendees	Highly transient (by the hour)
Festival workers	Present only for festival duration
University Students	Actions similar to transient populations but physically present for stable (semester) periods of time
Cruise lines	Cruise line passengers are short term visitors, however cruise ships also need special protection and become an integral part of port security

As such Tourism Security recognizes the need to protect three distinct populations. These are

- Visitors to locale
- Frontline people working in the tourism industry such as hotel workers
- People who earn their living from the tourism industry, such as storeowners whose business are located in tourism zones.

## **Emphasizing Hotel and Lodging Security**

### Common problems

Interviews with spokesmen for hotel security personnel from around the world indicate certain common problems. Among the major problems are:

- **Lack of finances:** Hotel security personnel interviewed stated that despite the importance of tourism to their local economy, city, state, provincial, or national governments did not provide the agencies with the proper level of funding. There was a common perception that management wants tourists to receive extraordinary services within the confines of ordinary budgets. Often hotel security personnel suffer from low morale due in part to low pay and lack of resources.
- **Manpower shortages:** Hotel security personnel indicated that increasing manpower is a major way to prevent crime
- **Lack of cooperation within the media:** Hotel security personnel state that the media find stories about crime a good way to sell newspapers or increase ratings. Often the media are insensitive to the damage done to a community and to an agency's morale when only negative news items are reported. Inaccurate reporting, destroys media credibility with law enforcement agencies.
- **Need for greater community cooperation:** Hotel security personnel cannot completely end crime. Instead, they must depend on the local population, the

police, and the tourism industry in particular, to help them fight crime prior to the occurrence of an incident. Hotel security personnel see prevention as their best tool.

- Poor statistics and a lack of standardization: Currently there is no international standardization of what is a crime against a visitor, who a visitor is, or how records are to be kept. Hotel security personnel are well aware that the industry does not always report crimes and that often the statistics lack credibility.

### **Common solutions and methodologies**

Interviews also revealed that tourism communities share some common methodologies. Among these are:

- High police visibility: Hotel security personnel push for law enforcement officers to be visible. The traveling public is better protected by police officers on foot, on horseback, or on a bicycle rather than in a car.
- Police officers and hotel security personnel who are willing to talk to strangers: Tourism areas need extroverted officers who understand that part of their job is to "shmooz" with their community's guests. These informal conversations not only permit the police to have a better idea about what is on the person's mind, but also create the perception that the community is safe enough for the police officer to have the time to talk with an out-of-towner.
- Pro-active participation on tourism boards: By working with local hotel/motel associations, CVBs, and Chambers-of-Commerce, law enforcement agencies and hotel security professionals can develop joint programs to stop crime before it begins.

Some of the most useful programs are:

- √ Visible policing and professional security agents: Law enforcement in tourism cities takes the position that there is a direct negative correlation

between the number of police on the street and the amount of crime that takes place in a particular neighborhood.

- √ Property inspections with minimal safety standards: The interviews reveal that hoteliers and owners of attractions can learn a great deal from local law enforcement agencies and hotel security personnel. Hotel security personnel are very concerned with such issues as old-fashioned numbered keys, and easy access doorways. From the law enforcement perspective, it may be easier to prevent a crime than to deal with it post facto.
- √ Personnel checks: Interviews showed that people who work with tourists may have less than perfect reputations: Police forces encourage security training for anyone who works in places or areas frequented by tourists.
- √ Police tourism training: Police, who work in tourism areas, need to be sensitive to the special needs of the transient person. Sociologically it is known that tourists suffer from higher than normal levels of anomie, and are often "sitting ducks" for the criminal element. Police need to know how to comfort the tourist when he/she is a victim of a crime and how to help tourists so that they have a lower probability of becoming crime victims.
- Become part of the community: Law enforcement and hotel security personnel note that they alone cannot keep all visitor and guests safe. Both hotel security personnel and law enforcement agents recognize that they need the support of their community.

### **Tourism Safety Brochures**

Every hotel should have a security brochure. Include in this brochure basic safety features and emergency phone numbers. If you have not yet developed such a brochure for your community, here are some tips on how to design it and some points you may want to include in a tourism safety packet for your community.

- Use bright and cheerful colors: While you want your tourists to be safe, you also do not want them to be afraid. Use clear and easy to read fonts placed on a background of colors that are upbeat and encouraging. Design these guides so as the reader receives the subtext that although caution is critical, your community is still a safe and fun place to visit.
- Teach tourist to avoid overly-structuring their activities: Emphasize that vacations are a time for spontaneity. The reason for this emphasis is that criminals often go after the predictable traveler. For example, if someone plays tennis every day at 3:00 p.m. it is much easier to rob his/her room than that of the guest who staggers his/her playing times.
- Teach tourists to be observant: Most tourists simply leave their hotel/motel room without ever noticing who may be in the area. Tourists should remember that it is always a wise idea to take note of anyone who may be suspicious.
- Advise guests about neighborhoods: Your out-of-town guests do not know your community. Tourists do not know where choke points (areas such as construction sites and busy intersections) are located. These points are often places where the tourist is most vulnerable. Tourists do not know what is "ordinary" in a neighborhood or what to look for.
- Encourage guests to avoid discussing their travel plans in public places: "Surveillants" consider staff-personnel (and children) to be a prime source of information. The more the criminal knows about a particular tourist the easier it is to make that tourist a victim.
- Research demonstrates that the higher the level of general crimes in an area, the higher the levels of crimes against tourists. Though specific attacks against tourists do happen, it is rare for tourists to be singled out for violent crime. Instead most violent

crimes against tourists take place when the tourist, either through ignorance or thoughtlessness, wanders into the wrong neighborhood. Develop special maps that highlight the safest routes to and from major attractions.

- When new hotels are being constructed, emphasize CPTED: "Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design" is a very successful crime fighting method. For example, ask if your locale's hotels have physical boundaries, what type of lighting do they use , how safe are their parking areas? When building a new hotel, install clearly visible security cameras, electronic locks, etc.
- It is the responsibility of the hotelier to think of possible criminal and terrorist acts and then take proper precautions. Innkeepers are subject to the "*Principle of Foreseeability*," meaning that it is their legal responsibility to foresee a possible act of violence against their guests. The same is true of the principle of "*Infra hospitum*" in which it is the duty of the innkeeper to protect his/her guests in hallways, elevators, parking garages etc. Unless the property advises against the ordering of foods etc, the proprietors are responsible for the acts of private vendors or delivery services.  
Better prevention than apprehension

Make sure that the following departments work together

- Security
- Surveillance
- Safety
- Risk
- Food services
- IT
- Legal
- Medical

Make sure to flaunt your security and safety. It sells!

The 7 S's for security

- **Strategy**
- **Structure**

- **System**
- **Skill improvement and renewal**
- **Staff cooperation**
- **Style of security**
- **Sharing values for security**

Do you know who is in your hotel?

How well do you know your workforce?

Which group(s) are at your hotel, are there conflicting groups?

How well do you control your hotel; who has access to what?

Is there an emergency crisis response plan?

What tools/technology do you have, what tools does the opposition have?

Have you developed partnerships and with whom?

## SECURITY QUESTIONS FOR HOTELS ©

### TOP THREE

- Do you consider your hotel secure?
- Does your General Manager believe and acknowledge that the safety and security of hotel guests is the moral and legal responsibility of the hotel and its staff?
- Have you increased your overall level of security since 9/11?

### SECURITY PERSONNEL

- Who is the director of security?
- What certifications have they attained?

- How many security staff does your hotel employ?
- How many security staff are bilingual?
- How many are part time and how many are full time?
- Do they work split or full shifts?
- Do your security personnel receive daily Guard Post Orders?
- Is there a different supervisor for each shift?
- What training have your security employees received?
- Have any of them been certified by ASIS or a similar accrediting agency?
- Do you perform background checks on security employees?
- Do the shift supervisors have the same or more advanced training as the security employees they supervise?
- Is the security staff required to demonstrate or acknowledge proficiency upon reviewing your hotel's Security Policies and Procedures Manual?
- Do you issue access passes to all security staff?
- How do you authenticate the access passes?
- How often do you renew name badges, photo ID's or access passes?
- Do you employ plain-clothes security personnel?
- Where are they posted?
- How many on each shift?
- Do you employ uniformed security personnel?
- Are they highly visible?
- How many on each shift?
- Do all security personnel have access to master keys?
- How many security personnel have been fired in the last six months?

- How many security personnel, who are presently employed, have worked in your hotel for one year or more?
- Have you ever had an incident where your security personnel were involved in crimes against hotel guests?
- Has a hotel guest ever accused any employed security staff member of a crime or breach of duty?

#### HOTEL EMPLOYEES: Background checks

- Are all employees regularly tested for substance abuse?
- Has the entire staff had security awareness training?
- Are all employees regularly reminded of safety and security measures?
- Are hotel employees required to demonstrate or acknowledge proficiency upon reviewing your hotel's Security Policies and Procedures Manual?
- Do you issue a security photo ID for all staff?
- How often do you renew name badges, photo ID's or access passes?
- Are all hotel employees trained in crisis response?
- How often do employees receive training?
- What kind of training do they receive?
- Do employees have the opportunity to interact with local law enforcement to understand the security issues concerning the local community?
- Do you feel confident that hotel employees are capable of executing proper contingency plans in a crisis situation?

#### EQUIPMENT

- Have you installed metal detectors on property?
- Do you have x-ray machines on property?

- Do you have bullet proof or locked windows overlooking sensitive areas?
- Are all of your exit doors alarmed?
- What key system exists on your property?
- Who dispenses keys on your property?
- Is there a master list of employees who have been issued keys?
- Who has the master keys?
- Have you ever lost master keys?
- Who has access to your room key system?
- Do you really know who has keys and to what?
- Do you have security cameras?
- Are all exits monitored by cameras?
- What specific areas are monitored by cameras?
- Do you have cameras in your elevators?
- Are they monitored 24/7?
- Who is responsible for evaluating and updating your security equipment/technology?
- How often do you re-evaluate your equipment and technology?
- Can you assure me that all cameras and all security equipment are presently functioning?
- What, if any, equipment is missing or malfunctioning at the present time?
- When do you expect your security equipment to be fully functional?
- Has there been an annual budget line item increase since 9/11 for maintaining and updating security equipment?

## FACILITIES

- Are all fire exits clear of blockages?
- Are all exits manned by security personnel?
- Are air vents secured?
- Do you have clear roof access?
- Is the roof considered to be a secured area?
- Do you have helicopter access?
- Do you have an emergency power generator?
- How long are you able to sustain power in an emergency?
- When did you last test the emergency power generator?
- Do you have an emergency lighting system?
- When was the emergency lighting system last checked?
- When was your fire system last checked?
- Do you have an emergency PA/Communication system?
- Can your emergency PA/Communication system be used immediately in the event of a power failure?
- Does your emergency PA system broadcast in multiple-languages?
- Are your parking areas attached to the main building? Remote?
- Are your parking areas lighted?
- Are there security personnel posted in parking areas?
- Are cars screened or passengers checked prior to being admitted to parking areas?
- Are there barriers between your main buildings and your parking facilities?
- Are there surveillance cameras in parking areas?
- Do you have safe deposit boxes for guests' valuables?

- Who has access to these?
- Are they routinely checked/searched by security personnel?
- Are dumpsters and trash disposal areas secured?
- Are trash disposal areas accessible to the general public?
- Are there surveillance cameras in the trash disposal areas?

## PROCEDURES

- Have you contracted an outside security consulting firm to perform a comprehensive security analysis?
- Have you increased your security budget since 9/11?
- What do you feel are the greatest security exposures at your facility?
- What security risks exist in your surrounding community?
- Do you have a published security incident report for the last year? Last five years?
- Is your hotel committed to continually increasing its investment in security?
- Where has the investment been made so far since 9/11?
- Do you have a published Security Policies and Procedures Manual?
- When was it last updated?
- Do you have an updated emergency contact list?
- Do you have the names and contact numbers for local law enforcement?
- Does your security team meet with local law enforcement on a regular basis?
- Does your General Manager participate in these meetings? Why or why not?
- Who is the hotel's liaison with the local embassies/consulates?
- Who is the hotel's liaison with the local law enforcement agencies?
- Who is the hotel's liaison with the local emergency medical facilities?

- Do you have a strategic crisis management plan in place?
- Do you have a designated on-site crisis management team?
- Who are the members of that team?
- Does each member of the emergency response team have a specific task in the event of a crisis?
- Has your crisis management team had any special training?
- What type of training and how often?
- Have they been trained to respond to different types of crisis management? (ex: medical, crime, severe weather, terrorism, etc.)
- Describe your crisis response procedures.

## SHIPPING AND RECEIVING

- Do you have a loading dock attached to your hotel?
- Do you consider it to be a secure area?
- Are delivery vehicles regularly searched prior to approaching the hotel?
- Are delivery schedules monitored by security personnel?
- Who is authorized to be in the loading dock area?
- Are these employees wearing special identification?
- Is your loading dock open 24/7?
- Are all deliveries signed for by hotel staff?
- Are shipments allowed to be dropped without verification or signature?
- Do you have a policy for suspicious package handling?
- What would be considered a suspicious package by your mailroom personnel?
- How are unexpected packages handled? Are they held at a remote site until sender and/or receiver can be identified?

- Have the employees working in your shipping and receiving department received training in any type of surveillance or security awareness regarding the handling of mail and packages?
- Are trained security personnel positioned in the mailroom?
- When packages are received, are they immediately matched to guests or groups?
- If packages cannot be matched to guests or groups, how long are they stored?
- Are they stored on property or moved to a remote location?
- Are shipments routinely verified with the shippers at point of origin?
- Is there a designated security supervisor in charge of the shipping/receiving department of your hotel?

#### ANCILLARY SERVICES

- Do you perform security checks for all outside contractors?
- Does your valet service perform background checks on its employees that handle parking at your hotel?
- Do the valet service employees participate in security awareness training with other hotel employees?
- How are unattended/unregistered vehicles handled by the valet service employees?
- Are photo I.D.'s checked when valet tickets are presented to claim a vehicle?
- Are valet service employees trained to identify suspicious passengers or suspicious packages in vehicles?
- What procedures do they follow when suspicious packages are identified?
- How procedures do they follow when they are suspicious of a driver or passengers?
- Do the valet service employees check trunks when cars are checked in?

#### GUEST CHECK-IN

- Do you ask guests for photo ID when registering?
- Do you make and retain a copy of the guests' photo ID's during their stay?
- How are these copies disposed of upon guests' departure?
- Do you allow guests to register with an alias?
- Are guests required to provide their current home address upon check-in?
- Are guests' room numbers audibly announced upon check-in?
- Are employees at the front desk trained to safeguard the privacy of guests' personal and financial information?
- Are these policies stated in a formal policy and procedures manual?
- Who has access to guests' data?
- Do you have adequate measures to safeguard handicapped, blind, deaf or mute guests?
- What specific procedures are followed to safeguard handicapped guests?
- Who is responsible for knowing where those guests are housed in the hotel in case of a crisis or evacuation?
- Are guests provided a contact list of local resources (medical, police, weather, airport, hotel security, embassies, etc.) upon check-in?
- Are guests provided with domestic and international security advisories or travel alerts?
- Are guests provided with updated destination intelligence reports (domestic situations effecting safety and security)?
- Are front desk/reception personnel trained to be alert for suspicious behavior or mannerisms of guests?
- What procedures do the front desk personnel follow when they have identified a suspicious guest?
- How are "lost and found" articles handled by the front desk personnel?
- Are "lost and found" items thoroughly checked and searched prior to storage?

- Do you perform background checks on all front desk employees, including part time employees?
  - Do you regularly conduct audits of cash and credit receipts handled by front desk personnel?
  - Are guest folios routinely slipped under guests' doors the night before departure?
  - Are guest folios that are left in the guest rooms or left at the front desk shredded?
- Is all paperwork containing guests' proprietary information shredded prior to being disposed of in trash receptacles?
    - Has there ever been an incident of credit card fraud perpetrated by any of your front desk personnel?
    - How secure is the front desk's fax/computer/phone equipment?
    - Do you provide guests with a short survey upon check-out regarding the security features of your hotel?
    - Do bellmen escort guest to their rooms?
    - Do bellmen open room doors, turn on lights, and make sure room is safe for guest to enter?
    - Do bellmen store unidentified luggage or packages at the bell stand?
    - Are bellmen trained to identify suspicious packages or luggage?
    - How long is luggage stored before it is considered "suspicious"?
    - Is there an accurate time log for luggage being checked in/out?
    - What procedures do your bellmen follow in order to handle suspicious packages or luggage?
    - Are photo I.D.'s required for guests to claim stored luggage?

## FOOD AND BEVERAGE

- Do you hire temporary banquet staff or are your servers and banquet captains full time staff members?
- How are food and beverage areas secured?
- How often do security personnel check for illnesses or food contamination?
- If hiring part time banquet staff, do you perform background checks on these individuals?
- Are part time staff members required to complete security awareness training prior to working at your hotel?