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How Business Travellers Can Stay Safe in the Worlds Hotspots

By John Williams

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word count: 614

character width: 60

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"How Business Travellers Can Stay Safe in the Worlds
Hotspots"

– by John Williams

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Business travellers increasingly find themselves needing to visit hotspots. Outside Europe and America, many countries need special care. Obviously, Iraq wouldn't be the number one choice for a business trip. But other countries, like Saudi Arabia or parts of the Far East, require attention too.

Horrific stories of kidnapping and murder scare anyone planning to visit a hotspot. But what are the real risks ? And what can you do to minimize those risks ?

Let's make a list, and discuss each in turn.

- * Kidnapping
- * Attack

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- * Robbery
- * Accident

It's reassuring to discover few travellers fall victim to kidnapping. Kidnap victims are usually local people or resident expatriates. Why ? Probably because travellers are unpredictable. Kidnappers don't know their plans, where they're staying, or even that they're there at all !

Random attacks are much more likely, but the risk of these can be much minimized, as we'll discuss later.

Robbery – theft of possessions and money can be common among travellers. But these risks can also be minimized.

The biggest threat to business travellers comes from accidents. The number of road accidents, in particular, far exceeds any deaths in terrorist incidents.

How to minimize risk

Reduce your risk by good preparation. Learn about the country and city you plan to visit. A number of websites will help your research. The U.S State Department runs a website at <http://travel.state.gov/travel/> The British Foreign Office maintains a website at www.fco.gov.uk – you can find constantly updated general and country specific travel advice.

If you get advice, follow it. Don't ignore it. Keep a low profile where possible, and don't draw unfavourable attention. Is that a good neighbourhood you plan to walk around ? How about that quaint little bar ? Maybe it's the local criminal hangout ?

Find out what you can before you leave, and then take local advice when you get there. Chat with your taxi driver and your hotel manager. You'll find out 99% of what you need to know from these two guys !

So, before you go you've already found out about good and bad areas of town. You've learned enough to book a good hotel in a good area. Then you'll fill in more detail when you get there (manager, taxi driver etc.)

But what if things go wrong ?

Okay, you've taken steps to reduce your risk. But accidents sometimes happen. You might get robbed in broad daylight on a busy street, though it's unlikely.

Get proper insurance. Standard travel insurance covers most situations, and you should check with your broker. Not all insurance covers business travel, so check. In some higher risk countries, you might need specialist insurance. Yes, you can get insurance to cover emergency evacuation, or even payment to skilled negotiators to help secure your release.

But you only need insurance when it's already too late. Make contingency plans to get yourself out of a bad

situation. You've got backup plans for your computer systems and other business operations. Make backup plans for yourself.

If you get caught in political disruption or natural disaster, what will you do ? Communication usually disappears first. Buy or borrow a mobile phone that works locally. Take your own tri-band phone, or rent a phone locally at the airport. Make sure you've got a local contact who can get messages back if necessary (agree this in advance).

So there's little need to worry about the more horrific incidents we see on T.V every day. But more mundane risks, such as robbery or attack can be minimized by the right preparation. Use the internet to research where you're going, and use the U.S and U.K Government web sites for up-to-date advice.

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Vacationers... Did you know?

By News Canada

(NC)—The long-awaited vacations of 1.3 million Canadians may be ruined every year by Travellers' Diarrhea, also referred to as Montezuma's Revenge. While rarely life threatening, Travellers' Diarrhea has a way of disrupting a perfectly planned vacation by keeping you running to the bathroom or even stuck in bed.

To make sure your vacation is as wonderful as can be, travellers to Mexico, the Caribbean, Africa, Latin America, the Middle East and most parts of Asia should take precautions to avoid Travellers' Diarrhea.

"Now you have a tool that is recommended to help prevent Travellers' Diarrhea" said Dr. Suni Boraston, travel medicine specialist, Vancouver BC. "Travel specialists like myself are thrilled that there is now a prevention available for Travellers' Diarrhea. Called Dukoral™, it's an oral vaccine that you drink prior to your trip to help protect you from Travellers' Diarrhea. You still need to be cautious while travelling, but you can be a more confident traveller knowing that Dukoral is protecting you."

Travel Tips:

- Drink only carbonated bottled water or soft drinks, bottled fruit juices, alcoholic beverages without ice and hot beverages
- Only eat fruit and vegetables that you have peeled yourself
- Make sure that foods are well cooked
- Don't forget to visit a travel clinic or your family doctor well in advance of your trip to ensure you are medically protected from travellers' diseases including Travellers' Diarrhea.

– News Canada

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