

# Safety Essentials for Business and Leisure Travel

## Testimonials

*This book, by David Birkett and Kay Danes, is interesting, informative, and well written, which addresses many of the current threats and risks of global travel. I have experienced some of the situations discussed in the book. From my perspective, I found the provision of sources of information regarding travel and security such as the US State Department website, the information on cybersecurity and the horrific story of Kay Danes' incarceration fascinating. Even if one is not involved in travel, this is an interesting book that reflects the complicated world we live in.*

—Robert M. Clark, Director, Water Supply and Water Resources Division, United States Environmental Protection Agency (Retired), United States of America.

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*Birkett and Danes have written an Owner's Manual for those taking themselves out into the dangerous world of global travel. How to prepare yourself, protect yourself and repair yourself while navigating hazardous shoals. It would be a valuable addition to any traveller's rucksack. Better still, read it before you go. And if you are not going, read it anyway for a mass of useful information.*

—Professor Bob Catley, Former Labor MP and former adviser Hawke Government (Australia); Professor of Management, University of Newcastle; Author of *The Triumph of Liberalism in Australia*.

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*A gem of a book, offering common sense and practical advice to travellers of all kinds who may find themselves in confronting situations. Few travel guides embrace the subject so comprehensively.*

—Jim Truscott, OAM, CEO—Boardroom Closer and former Australian Special Air Service Regiment Officer.

# Safety Essentials for Business and Leisure Travel:

*Air, Land, Sea and during  
Pandemics!*

By

David Birkett and Kay Danes

**Cambridge  
Scholars  
Publishing**



Safety Essentials for Business and Leisure Travel:  
Air, Land, Sea and during Pandemics!

By David Birkett and Kay Danes

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*Twenty years from now, you will be more disappointed by the things  
you didn't do than by the ones you did do. So throw off the bowlines,  
sail away from the safe harbour. Catch the trade winds in your sails.*

*Explore, dream, discover*

—Mark Twain.

This book is dedicated to all those who embrace global travel, either for business or leisure. Whatever your journey, may it be filled with wonder and excitement so that you might inspire others through your adventurous nature, those who dare not step beyond the barriers of life!

Thank you, Lowell Tarling, for assisting us in the editing of this book.

In memory of our associate and valued crisis practitioner, Nathan Verity, cowardly murdered by a terrorist suicide bomber in the J.W. Marriott Hotel, Jakarta, Indonesia, on 17 July 2009.



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## ABSTRACT

In 2019, the world went into a sudden spiral of chaos with the emergence of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic. The World Health Organisation (WHO) and governments endeavoured to come to terms with how best to manage this silent killer's devastating impact, as the virus spread across the globe, sending billions of people into lockdown. As the world begins to recover from a COVID-19 pandemic's global influence, this book's research is essential reading. It aims to re-establish confidence in those who are planning to embark on business and leisure travel. This book blends both the female and male voice into a narrative that combines professional security perspectives, common sense travel advice, and academic research rigour. The authors' views and experiences of security and risk mitigation systems offer easy-to-follow essential travel safety guidance for both domestic and international contexts. This book includes a unique section on extreme travel that provides business and leisure travellers fresh insights on kidnapping, risk mitigation and contingency planning. Real-life travel case studies of those who have survived abduction are analysed. This includes one of the author's personal experience of abduction, which informs Australian Defence Force training of personnel deployed to armed conflict environments. This book is essential reading for anyone intending to travel, either in their own country or overseas, and for those responsible for the safety of other travellers. It is also a valuable resource for anyone studying business, travel and tourism from an academic viewpoint.

## FOREWORD

My career in the Special Air Service Regiment (SASR) and working within the information collection sphere for over 30 years has seen me operating in and travelling to some of the world's most dangerous places. The most common question I am asked since retiring from the Special Forces is, 'How the hell are you still alive?' Among the many skills and techniques that I learned in my military career was that you should NEVER set a pattern or routine. You should ALWAYS be aware of your surroundings – no exceptions. This advice served me well working in hostile environments. Advice that is just as relevant today, in the context of personal security, as it ever was. On many occasions, I have been face-to-face with unexpected events like; natural disasters, riots, coups, etc. I was always able to navigate my way to safety because I remained calm and executed a well-thought-out plan to mitigate risk. Understanding some of the most common threats that may confront you when travelling is essential. Having the knowledge to respond to unexpected changes to your travel itinerary may save you from having a terrible travel experience. It may even save your life.

I have known both David Birkett and Dr Kay Danes for over 30 years. Their experience working in hostile environments and indeed travelling the world on commercial business and within the sphere of security operations well equips them for writing this book with absolute authenticity and credibility. I strongly recommend their work forged within these pages. It is a helpful guide for business or leisure travellers. It will prepare you for any environment you are travelling to. If someone asks, 'How the hell are you still alive?' or 'how did you have such a safe travel experience in a post-COVID world?' You can tell them it was down to good planning advice from a great book!

'Safety Essentials for Business and Leisure Travel' is also an excellent resource for academics and researchers, especially those undertaking field-work. More often than not, academics and researchers end up in places they know little about, especially the political context. In many instances, their research takes them to remote locations that are not always friendly or safe. They may get lucky where their journey is pretty uneventful. Or they may end up experiencing something horrific that could leave them traumatised, permanently injured, even dead. This book is the ideal companion for them

and covers everything from dealing with extremes in travel to the fear of flying.

Birkett and Danes provide a fresh insight into modern-day travel safety, allowing those ready to take the plunge and venture out into this exciting world of ours, to do so with confidence.

Russel Hutchings  
Author  
MANTRA-6

Russel Hutchings was born in Perth, Western Australia, in 1960. He is a former Special Air Service Regiment (SASR) Warrant Officer with over 20 years of service in the Australian Defence Force. Russel has operated in many of the world's troubled areas and most recently performed a military adviser's role and provided other information collection services to a US-based company operating in Afghanistan. He draws on decades of experience in the SAS and within the intelligence collection sphere to write the MANTRA-6 series with the utmost authenticity and credibility. Russel is now retired and concentrating on a writing career in Thriller, SAS and Espionage novels.

# INTRODUCTION

From the first recorded death, COVID-19 claimed the lives of over two million people worldwide.<sup>1</sup> The virus did not discriminate between rich or poor, first world or developing countries, business or leisure travellers, or first-class or economy. Predictions on when the world will return to normal or what that *new* normal will look like arrive daily. No one knows for sure how the world will transform. Still, as the post- COVID-19 recovery period slowly emerges with the opening of borders and the lifting of lockdowns and transport routes, business travellers are expected to lead the way in global travel. For that reason, the information they and leisure travellers need to stay safe should reflect new practice models from lessons learned during the crisis and those from previous studies on other pandemics. Only then will people make the best decisions about where they travel, for how long, and how to travel safely.

Global business and leisure travel often takes place in volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous environments. The threat landscape does not discriminate. It is variable and unpredictable, with new dangers emerging every day, such as cyber-attacks, active shooter incidents, extreme weather events and perhaps more COVID-like pandemics. Free trade agreements have opened international markets to business and leisure travellers. One cannot expect to apply the same carefree behavioural patterns as one would in familiar environments. Travellers may be excited by the prospect of exploring those markets, especially in a post- COVID-19 world. They will still require skills and knowledge to navigate the challenges because different cultures bring different traditions, values, differing legal systems and political environments. With exposure to such environments comes an element of risk, sometimes more significant than anticipated.

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<sup>1</sup> Pablo Gutiérrez and Sean Clarke, "Coronavirus world map: Which countries have the most Covid-19 cases and deaths?" *The Guardian Newspaper* (Australian Edition), 27 September 2020, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/sep/25/coronavirus-world-map-which-countries-have-the-most-covid-cases-and-deaths>.

There is a darker side to travel that cannot be ignored. Organised crime and corruption directly impact tourist destinations, and some are entirely controlled and managed by criminal organisations.<sup>2</sup> Drug cartels ruthlessly murder and perpetuate a vicious and inseparable cycle between the management of illegal activities and capital reinvestment in the legal economy.<sup>3</sup> Reinvesting revenue from their unlawful actions and illicit markets into the legal economy enables criminal organisations to operate behind the facade of legitimacy. Business travellers, in particular, are at the most risk of fraud from organised crime (e.g., theft of goods or business identity, cross-border, transnational crime, freight crime etc.).<sup>4</sup> More commonly, travellers pay scant attention to the darker side of travel or the risks that may befall them in unfamiliar environments. But it is essential to be aware that there is a relationship between crime and tourism. It goes well beyond the mere concept of opportunism.

Another category of organised crime that can directly affect travellers are threats linked to terror-related attacks and kidnappings. These can occur in regions of the world that travellers assume are entirely safe. Although the chances of falling victim to a terror attack during a vacation are relatively small, attacks do happen. For that reason, the authors of this book have incorporated a section on extreme travel relevant to survival in hostile environments. It includes a narrative around the impact of real-life incidences of torture and abduction, kidnapping, risk mitigation, contingency planning, and post-traumatic stress recovery. These narratives have helped transform pre-deployment training for Australian Defence Force personnel. The section on extreme travel also provides essential reading. Importantly, so individuals and organisations can better understand the concepts of risk exposure when travelling. As we know, even the best-laid plans may encounter

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<sup>2</sup> Janez Mekinc, Tina Kociper, Bojan Dobovšek, "The Impact of Corruption and Organized Crime on the Development of Sustainable Tourism," *Journal of Criminal Justice and Security*, 2015, Vol 2, pp-218-239.

[http://www.fvv.um.si/rV/arhiv/2013-2/06\\_Mekinc\\_Kociper\\_Dobovsek.pdf](http://www.fvv.um.si/rV/arhiv/2013-2/06_Mekinc_Kociper_Dobovsek.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> Marco Musumeci, "The impact of organized crime on the legal economy: Identifying strategies to disrupt criminal investment in key sectors," *United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute*, June 16, 2014.

[http://www.unicri.it/news/article/organized\\_crime\\_](http://www.unicri.it/news/article/organized_crime_).

<sup>4</sup> Paige Schaffer, "Identity theft as part of duty of care," *Business Travel News*, September 19, 2016. <http://www.businesstravelnews.com/Interviews/Identity-Theft-as-Part-of-Duty-of-Care?a=trans&cid=eltrTrans>



problems. Hence, access to reliable information helps build a safety-conscious mindset for travellers. Simple strategies can manage and lower risk.

This book illuminates safety essentials for business and leisure travellers to give them the knowledge and confidence to mitigate some of the anxiety associated with post-COVID travel. Excessive fear prevents people from thinking clearly, leading them to poor decision-making. It is impossible to avoid risk entirely when travelling. Still, even in extreme situations, there is always a way to navigate it. Quite commonly, it comes down to making sure you look before you leap. The current COVID-19 pandemic may instil fear in some travellers, but eventually, most will regain their confidence to travel. We hope this book helps develop your confidence and a security mindset to make better decisions about your personal safety and the safety of those you may be responsible for when embarking on business and leisure travel!

DAVID BIRKETT, MA  
KAY DANES, PhD, OAM

*"Knowledge is power in an uncertain world."*  
(Derrier, 1992)

# CHAPTER 1

## TRAVEL AWARENESS

COVID-19 has significantly impacted world economies and people's ability to move freely and safely throughout the world and within their own countries. Before COVID-19, business and leisure travel was worth over trillions of US Dollars which translated into significant job creation for many global economies.<sup>5</sup> One new job was created for every 30 new tourists to a single destination.<sup>6</sup> The global mobile workforce had expected to increase by 50% (1.87 billion people) by 2022. The most apparent effect of such employment growth meant improved stability in fragile states and a virtual cycle of poverty reduction.<sup>7</sup> Sadly, COVID-19 ruined opportunities for many people and hit the travel industry hardest of all. Some are not entirely perturbed, however, and are ready to resume travel as they once did. They are prepared to freely explore new cultures and environments, get experiences that cannot be had at home, and capitalise on new trade and investments. As border lockdowns lift and restrictions ease, people are resuming travel within their own countries and overseas. They are, for the most part, adhering to contact tracing as an essential safety measure. As we know, contact tracing is a way of slowing the spread of infectious disease by identifying people who have been in contact with an infected person. Contact-tracing is used globally to monitor the spread of COVID-19 and governments are

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<sup>5</sup> World Tourism Organisation, "International Tourism exceeds expectations in the first months of 2018." *UN World Tourism Organisation*, June 25, 2018, <https://www.unwto.org/global/press-release/2018-06-25/international-tourism-exceeds-expectations-first-months-2018>.

<sup>6</sup> Professor Klaus Schwab, Cheryl Martin, Richard Samans, John Moavenzadeh, and Margareta Drzeniek-Hanouz, "*The Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Report 2017*." *World Economic Forum*, Geneva, Switzerland, 2017. [http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF\\_TTCR\\_2017\\_web\\_0401.pdf](http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_TTCR_2017_web_0401.pdf).

<sup>7</sup> Rebecca Holmes, Anna McCord, and Jessica Hagen-Zanker with Gina Bergh and Franzisca Zanker, "What is the evidence on the impact of employment creation on stability and poverty reduction in fragile states: A systematic review." *Overseas Development Institute*, May 2013, <https://www.odi.org/sites/odi.org.uk/files/odi-assets/publications-opinion-files/8386.pdf>.

likely to continue this practice long after the COVID-19 pandemic is under control.<sup>8</sup> After all, who knows when or where there will be another pandemic. Wearing face masks in public and adopting sanitation practices is another safety measure likely to remain, as health officials advise continued vigilance in hygiene standards. Being better prepared for ‘next time’ is the ‘new norm’ for the world’s citizens, and business and leisure travellers mostly.

As the world rights itself, and it will, the devil will be in the details, especially staying safe in a post-COVID-19 world. No matter where people travel, security protocols will be accentuated. For future business and leisure travel, preparing for the post-COVID-19 world will require everyone to be more situationally aware.

The English philosopher, Sir Francis Bacon, is credited as saying ‘*Scientia potentia est*’, a Latin aphorism meaning ‘knowledge is power.’<sup>9</sup> While travelling will always present certain risks, the knowledge gained from this book should give travellers the confidence to better manage most situations. Proper planning prevents poor performance. Another adage that can also apply to a global travel context: Plan before travel to prevent mishap or misadventure! Prior planning is essential to ensure ongoing personal security for any journey, whether for business or leisure, to a foreign country or merely interstate. It helps to research the security level and travel advisories for intended travel locations before departure. Doing so allows travellers to understand and fully comprehend those environments where they will be frequenting. Using the Internet, liaising with local travel agencies and travel advisories are simple ways of gaining knowledge to heighten personal security. This book cannot provide every response to every single scenario. Still, it is a helpful resource for understanding safety essentials for business and leisure travellers. The advice given comes with a reminder that each new destination will present unique challenges, and consideration must be given to the impact decisions have when planning any journey. Just as you would pack a warm coat for winter and hiking boots for trekking, you also need to pack a security mindset.

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<sup>8</sup> Australasian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health Medicine. “Australasian Contact Tracing Guidelines,” *Australian Department of Health*, 2016, <http://contacttracing.ashm.org.au>.

<sup>9</sup> José María Rodríguez García, “*Scientia Potestas Est* – Knowledge is Power: Francis Bacon to Michel Foucault.” 28, 109–121 (2001), <https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1011901104984>.

Nowadays, many travellers access digital platforms like ‘Trip Advisor’ or ‘Google’ to plan their internet and smartphone journey. The former is an excellent resource because it allows you to browse hundreds of traveller reviews; their experiences, the accommodation they chose, and the transportation they used. Trip Advisor also has an interactive community forum and a *Help Centre* where you can ask questions to get the most out of your next trip (<https://www.tripadvisor.com.au/>). Trip Advisor also has a range of informative sections like; ‘Things to do’ or ‘Nine money-saving trips for family vacations.’ There are plenty of recommendations on ‘the top travel destinations’ most frequently visited by travellers all year round. Trip Advisor makes it easy to plan all your travel ideas for places to eat, things to do and where to stay. Google searches are also useful to locate information that can help keep you safe. For example, those travelling to a new city can simply google ‘crime statistics’ or ‘staying safe’ in any country or city. We googled the words ‘staying safe in Russia’, and the following quick tip came up:

Russia is a safe country, especially if you travel as a tourist to large cities (such as Moscow, St. Petersburg, Vladivostok, etc.) or making the Trans-Siberian route. However, there are several risk areas in Russia. Is advisable not to travel to its border with Ukraine.

Most people know how to use Google. Like Trip Advisor, it has many features to help travellers learn about various destinations, explore points of interest, and to get an estimate of what a trip may cost. In 2019, Google revamped its Google Travel business to make it easy for users to navigate Google Flights, Google Hotels and Google Trips. Search engines like Google have many advantages. But if you plan your trip too hastily, you could easily find yourself in a compromising situation. Planning requires a careful assessment of the stability of the region you intend to visit to understand what is happening in that location. It identifies any threats, allowing you to evaluate them in consideration of an acceptable level of risk as it relates to your intended travel. You can find travel security risk rating definitions on varying websites to evaluate typical traveller threats.<sup>10</sup> Risk ratings: Insignificant Travel Risk—Low Travel Risk—Medium Travel Risk—High Travel Risk—Extreme Travel Risk are used by the SOS Travel Assistance APP. This service sends up-to-date security analysis and medical information to smartphones and electronic devices (<https://www.international-sos.com/assistance-app>). The technology is simple to use and enables travellers to implement mitigation strategies in any unwarranted incidents.

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<sup>10</sup> International SOS, “Travel Security Risk Rating Definitions.” 2019, <https://www.internationalsos.com/risk-outlook/risk-ratings-definitions>.

But even if travellers do not have access to digital Apps, they can still mitigate the risks when travelling by making *smart* choices. So, when planning to visit a museum, you may discover a public demonstration outside it. The smart choice is to avoid the museum. Visit another location. It will be safer to go another day. Do not be curious, as you might be back home. Remember, a peaceful demonstration can become violent. Being an outsider may make you a target. Do not get involved in other people's politics. Smart choices are essential to having a positive experience. Make sure your itinerary is flexible enough to adapt to change. Only you will be able to assess your situation on the ground and make decisions to ensure you remain safe in that particular moment. The more accurate knowledge you have about safety protocols, the less likely you will fall victim to harm.

Travelling to new places can be somewhat daunting for those who have never travelled outside of their comfort zone. Thankfully, there are some extensive government and travel advisory websites that you can easily access that have been developed specifically for safe travel. These advisories offer guidance on the most common types of incidents that travellers can face at any time. Whether related to security, safety, health, local laws, emergencies, incidents or natural disasters. Travel advisories also highlight areas that are *not safe for travel*. A word of caution: travel advisories are not a news service. They do not consider every incident in a new location, a new city or a foreign country. Travellers still need to be diligent and monitor multiple sources to stay informed.

### Some examples of helpful travel advisories

US Government	<a href="https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/alertswarnings/worldwide-caution.html">https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/alertswarnings/worldwide-caution.html</a>
Australian Government	<a href="https://smartraveller.gov.au/guide/all-travelers/Pages/default.aspx">https://smartraveller.gov.au/guide/all-travelers/Pages/default.aspx</a>
UK Government	<a href="https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice">https://www.gov.uk/foreign-travel-advice</a>
Canada Government	<a href="https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/advisories">https://travel.gc.ca/travelling/advisories</a>
Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)	<a href="https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html">https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/travelers/index.html</a>

As stated, the information provided in travel advisories may not be all-inclusive, and of course, they are time-sensitive. Incidents frequently occur

without warning in many locations. Hence you must access a range of reliable resources to assist you when planning your next trip. For example, the travel advice at the Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provides a wealth of information to advise when planning to travel during a pandemic. They offer travel health notices and suggestions on when to delay travel. They also provide information on how to know if your journey will incur risks (e.g., are there notable incidents in the location you intend to travel to?)

For the global traveller, the world is a dynamic and fast-changing *political* arena. Some of the most beautiful travel destinations are in the most volatile locations - primarily due to civil unrest, war and terrorism. Staying safe means making sure you use the latest information regarding the political climate and any criminal or belligerent activity within the region you intend to travel. There is so much information available that travellers can plan for most occurrences. In addition to travel advisories, you may also wish to consider *news sources*. What is reported in the print media, on television, radio, and the Internet? What are people saying on social media platforms? If you remain observant of your environment, you should be able to pick up on the early indicators of risk, especially when travelling to, within, or from a specific region. Remember, even short-term travel to low threat destinations is still never entirely risk-free. There is a range of issues that can affect your safety and security even on the shortest stop-over. Bad things do happen to good people. If there is an incident, you need to be prepared for how you will respond. You may only have seconds to respond. It can be challenging to predict what your reaction will be. Unless you have had some prior emergency response training, your responses may not be automatic as per security protocols. The average business and leisure travellers have not had any previous security-related training, so staying safe can be a combination of confusion and luck. Therefore, you should maintain a high level of vigilance and keep watch for any suspicious or unusual activity.

How do you know what suspicious behaviour is? What should you report to the authorities? These are both excellent questions. In 2010, the US Department of Homeland Security put out a campaign message: 'If you see something, say something.'<sup>11</sup> This campaign was orchestrated to raise public awareness of the indicators of terrorism and terrorism-related crime. It was

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<sup>11</sup> US Department of Homeland Security, "About the Campaign." Washington DC, America, 2010,  
<https://www.dhs.gov/see-something-say-something/about-campaign>.

also designed to raise awareness about the importance of reporting suspicious activity to state and local law enforcement. Thus, empowering communities to play a critical role in their safety. While a sense of heightened awareness is a way of empowering people to take responsibility for their security, it has resulted in people mistrusting others. Sometimes all that vigilance can turn into a false alarm. Thinking someone is acting suspiciously when they simply are not. Reporting *that event* may be an over-reaction, or it may save a life, including *yours*. We can all help keep our communities safe by paying attention to what is happening around us. Report *specific activity* to local law enforcement and other relevant authorities but remember, the devil may be in the details. The detailed information you provide may thwart a potential crime, or it may put an innocent person in a dire situation.

### Key Summary Points

Exercise caution in public places. Sharing a conversation with a stranger can provide a source of local intelligence. You may gain practical advice, cultural insight and awareness of the happenings in your immediate location but remember to choose who you speak with care. Be aware of your surroundings and what information you may be giving away that could compromise your safety.

There is an old saying that when meeting someone for the first time, you should always avoid talking about; money, religion and politics. This is an excellent rule to follow, particularly when travelling overseas. Seldom will you know who is within earshot of your conversations and what their political or ideological position is?

Potential kidnappers and fundamentalists are not always as easy to spot as you might think. They often appear very normal and unassuming. They may even be helpful and welcoming.

Whether you are in your hometown or in a foreign country, you should apply common 'street smarts'. For example, avoid wandering around late at night where you may expose yourself to crimes of robbery, rape, assault, kidnapping, or even murder. Do not wander alone and in unfamiliar places.

Do not accept a lift from someone you do not know. It is all basic common sense, but it is surprising how many people forget to apply these simple rules when travelling beyond their familiar territories. Often their mind is not focused on being security-aware. To travel safely, you must travel smart.



Avoid racial profiling. Just because someone has a Middle Eastern appearance, this does not automatically mean those persons are a terrorist. There have been all different nationalities who have joined terror groups, making it extremely difficult to 'spot the terrorist.'

Look for *specific* behaviour, not suspicious behaviour and report it. Describe why that behaviour is *specific instead of* simply saying 'I have a bad feeling about that person.' Human instincts are generally powerful. Trust your human intuition if it is screaming that something is wrong. If you do not like how a particular person is behaving, consider why that may be. Seek out someone in authority who can utilise their training to assess the level of risk involved.

Be vigilant, not paranoid

Figure 1: Spotting a Terrorist.<sup>12</sup>

# ATTENTION!

## ONE OF THESE MRT TRAIN PASSENGERS IS CARRYING A BOMB!



# CAN YOU TELL WHO?

<sup>12</sup> Joshua Chiang, "Spotting a Terrorist." *The Online Citizen*, June 17, 2010, <https://www.onlinecitizenasia.com/2010/06/15/spotting-a-terrorist/>.

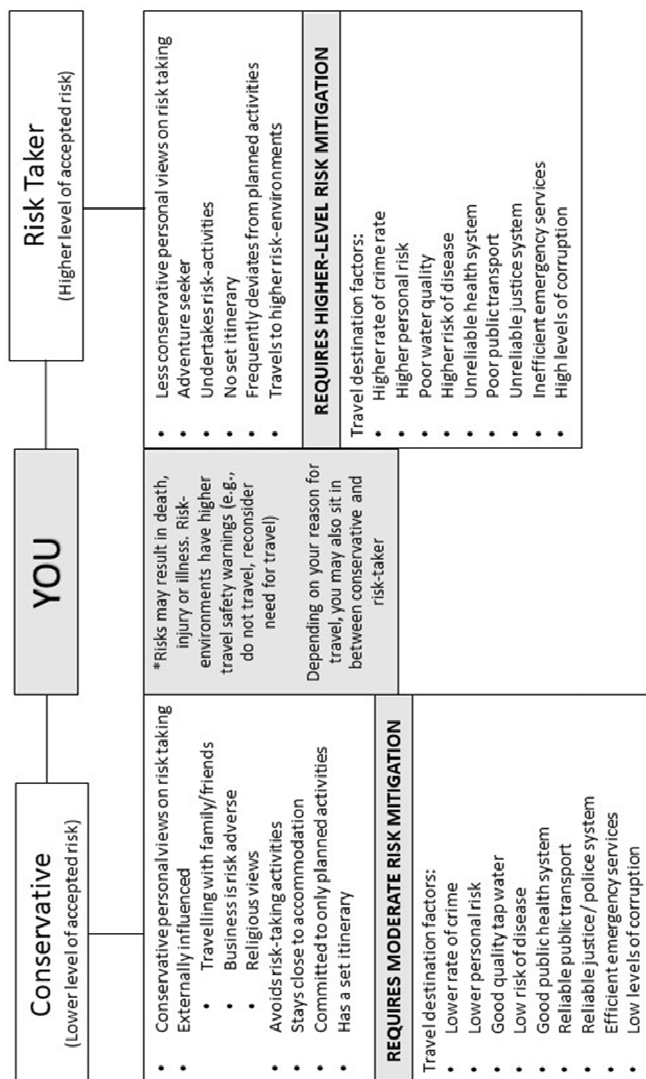
## **What type of traveller are you?**

You may be a conservative traveller or more of a risk-taker. You may also sit somewhere in between these two categories. In either case, developing risk mitigation and management strategies are essential before any travel. Risk mitigation and management training involve developing systems that manage, eliminate, or reduce risk to an acceptable level. These strategies help influence better decision-making to avoid interruption to your travel (See—Appendix B: Training Essentials). Four basic things to consider when planning to manage risks: avoid them if you can. If you cannot avoid trouble, you may be able to mitigate it. This means taking some form of action that will minimise harm. Transferring the risk is about paying someone else to accept that risk for you (e.g., buy insurance) or let someone else travel in your place. When you cannot avoid, mitigate, or transfer risk, you have to accept it. You have to respond as calmly as possible to ensure you stay as safe as you possibly can. Part of accepting risk is about understanding what type of traveller you are. Your motivations for travel often determine this. To that end, we have produced the following traveller risk profile:

## Traveller Risk\* Profile

### Motivations for Travel

Leisure | Employment /Study/Research | Reward for self achievement | Adventure | Self-identity and development  
Connectedness with others | Independence | New life perspectives



## Pre-travel Threat and Risk Assessment

Travel risk assessments for business travel are fairly standard policies that can identify the most likely threats that a traveller can face.<sup>13</sup> Still, some companies fail to implement them or provide detailed instructions to their employees.<sup>14</sup> The exact purpose of a pre-travel Threat and Risk assessment is to enable the traveller to make intelligent decisions regarding which security measures and mitigation strategies to adopt, to reduce any harm. When deciding and selecting appropriate security measures, travellers face two competing goals:

- **Effectiveness**—that is the action of selecting and adopting appropriate security measures that will provide you with some form of protection from the specific threats you are *most likely* to face, and
- **Efficiency**—that is the avoidance of adopting security measures with high ‘costs’ on your journey (e.g., financial costs or diversion of staff time, effort, and focus).

The nature of potential risks can quickly become very complicated. Hence, every effort should be made to understand the risks of each traveller’s perspective. This means that travellers should collect and analyse specific information about their travel, the destination, the schedule and the length of time they will spend in any one place. Travellers should also consider modes of transport, additional insurance requirements and emergency contacts. Be vigilant about keeping this information updated to ensure your security measures remain appropriate. Avoid subconsciously becoming habituated to changes in threats. Whenever the threat changes, so too should you change your security measures, as appropriate. The process of updating security measures should be done *before* travel. Accessing relevant ‘home’ government websites and online resources, such as risk management agencies (refer to the bibliography at the end of this publication).

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<sup>13</sup> Peter Markham King, “*Your Personal Security Guide.*” *King Cobra Consulting*, 2014, (Open Source Material).

<sup>14</sup> Mike Atherton, “*Why You Should Perform a Travel Risk Assessment.*” *Mantic Point Solutions*, <http://www.manticpoint.com/blog/why-you-should-perform-a-travel-risk-assessment>.

## Spatial and Situational Awareness

Spatial and situational awareness is about closely monitoring what is going on around you. It is the most unappreciated feature of personal travel security. However, it is possibly the most significant element to be developed by the travellers intending to remain safe. Most victims of crime say, in hindsight, that there were indicators of the impending danger *before* an incident occurring.<sup>15</sup> They were just not aware of what was happening at the time. Distracted by unfamiliar scenes, smells, noises, languages, etc., caused them to neglect their vigilance. Many threats or incidents, such as pickpocketing, wallet theft, armed robbery or carjacking, can be avoided or mitigated if you remain *aware* of your surroundings. Essentially, three basic principles provide a solid base of knowledge and resources for appropriately responding to and surviving almost any emergency. Regardless of whether it is a natural disaster or a criminal/terrorist threat.

- Situational Awareness and Environmental Knowledge.
- Planning, Preparation, and Skill Building.
- Basic Emergency Equipment.

Being situationally aware is being alert to the changing events around you in the environment. Being calm and mentally prepared to react to any sudden incident. Having environmental knowledge is understanding the specific *threats* in your environment. Keeping track of local crime and weather conditions is critical, especially knowing where the hot spots are, what types of crimes occur there, when, to whom, and how. Taking the safest routes to and from different locations means you can avoid potential risks. You must have a 'Plan B' for emergencies. Planning, preparation and skill-building are about: planning the routes you will take; giving thought to where you will go; what you will do when you get there; what you will do if something happens; and how you will extract yourself from harm's way. Skills are important. Knowing how to apply First Aid and Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) is essential for any travel, even to the local shopping centre. You never know when you may be called to assist someone who needs that skill. Being prepared to save a life, including your own, also means knowing how to use emergency equipment (e.g., a defibrillator). Most First Aid courses provide training in effectively using emergency procedures and equipment in response to incidents. More specific personal security training can prepare you mentally and physically to deal with almost any situation. Skills

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<sup>15</sup> John Haynes and Frank Rosetti, *"Personal Security & Terrorism Awareness."* Writers Club Press, 2014.