The Tourism Safety Initiative (TSI) is a project of the Tourism Business Council South Africa (TBCSA). Information Summaries (Infosums) are produced on a fortnightly basis and are aimed at providing information related to safety and security matters and how they impact, or could impact, the tourism space in South Africa.

The Changing Concept of Safety and Security in Tourism

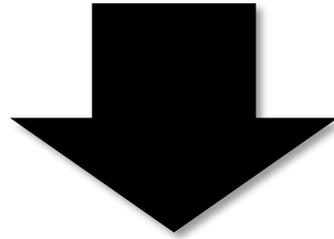# Infosum 04/2016

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Overview

Safety and Security have always been indispensable issues considered in the tourism industry world-wide. It is interesting though, when one considers developments within the industry over the past half century, how these concepts have changed. This Infosum provides a brief Infographic of these changes.

Period	Main Characteristics	Features/Attributes
Initial Period 1950-1970	• Safety and security in tourism is see as one of the problems in tourism. • The era is characterised by a simplified approach to issues of safety and security issues in tourism.	• Security problems may effect the image of a city or country but not the image of a whole region, e.g. Africa. • Travel-related risks and problems are not raised to the international level of tourism. • Solving problems of security depends mainly on the regulations and actions of national authorities. • Security problems are localized in time and space. • Within the elements of safety and security only a small number of factors are given importance (e.g. heath and hygiene problems: 1. drinkable water, 2. necessity of vaccination, 3. cleanness of toilets). • Tourism security is a one or two-dimension notion. • Only a few elements of security issues are in focus (public safety, health, road safety).

So safety and security is seen as just another issue to be considered when planning for travel, with the main focus being on the safety issues, i.e. recreational safety, including the quality, and health and safety of accommodation facilities.
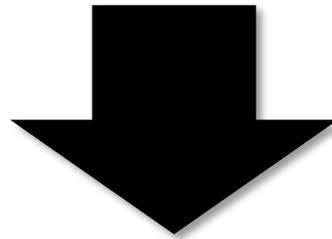
The next period may be termed the "era of paranoia", when especially the safety of air travel was put under a much harsher spotlight.

Period	Main Characteristics	Features/Attributes
Mass Tourism 1970-1990	The period of enlargement of the security concept.	• Additional risk factors appear in travel and tourism, like airplane hijacking, - terrorist actions take place as a tool of social struggle. • Security threats reach the regional stage in some regions of the world (Middle East, Basque country etc.). • It is the beginning of a wider international cooperation related to security issues. • Technical improvements in safety e.g. air transport take place. • WTO draws attention to safety and security of tourists (Hague Declaration on Tourism, 1989). • Compact but specific (that is to say not general) solutions are created (e.g. the case of El Al Airlines).

For the first time terrorism impacts air safety, and general enhancements are to be found at airports, with scanners and other technology making it onto the tourism scene.

The third period brings together all of these developments into an integrated whole – tourists are sensitive to anything that may impact their health and safety. Countries and airports can no longer afford not to have the best security technology in place. All of this comes with a concomitant upwards pressure on the cost of especially air travel, but there is a knock-on effect on the rest of the industry as well. Safety and security is no longer a luxury – it is non-negotiable variable in tourists' buy decision. Safety and security becomes the latest competitive advantage around which companies (and countries) compete.

Period	Main Characteristics	Features/Attributes
Transition to Global Tourism 1990 -	The period of complex perception of safety and security in tourism.	• Numerous new elements appear within tourism security issues due to greater integration as a result of a worldwide network of communication (internet), mobility, trade of goods and services. (personal data security, environmental security, natural disasters, pandemics etc). • Security of travel has become a global problem that we cannot disregard. • Number of destinations, situations and tourists affected by a lack of security is increasing. • In some cases the lack of security causes regional stagnation or decrease in tourist flows and even on a global level (9/11). • Fundamental changes in the security concept around travel and tourism, necessitating an understanding of common actions and approaches.

Conclusion

Security has undergone a significant change over the past half-century - from a more or less passive factor it is now an active element in the tourists' decision whether to visit a destination, and hence of travel companies and countries' strategies.

Going forward a number of challenges remains for safety and security practitioners:

- *Consequences of the indivisibility of security problems in an integrated world.*
- *Security-related problems created by the Internet.*
- *Security in travel and tourism versus human freedom and rights.*

Tourism and hospitality research and education has to face the new issues of security and safety in tourism in order to prepare future practitioners in the industry by incorporating new results of research into academic curricula. This could be done by introducing new subjects (e.g. Risk Management in tourism), or by complementing the content of already existing subjects with new knowledge of security and safety (e.g. Marketing, Consumer Relations, Tourism Destination Management).

Based on the paper "SAFETY AND SECURITY IN THE AGE OF GLOBAL TOURISM" (The changing role and conception of Safety and Security in Tourism)

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