



*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.*

## Tourism Safety & Security Risk Factors – A New Model

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## Introduction

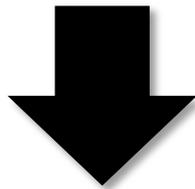
Even though risks certainly influence travel and tourism patterns, very little research has been conducted into how the industry generally perceives and manages risks, and especially risk factors.

The survival of any business, including those in the tourism industry, depends on identifying and managing risks. This can be done either by eliminating the risk entirely, or, if this is not possible, by ensuring that any adverse impact that might occur will be kept to a minimum. Many risks can be transferred, for example, by means of insurance. But regardless of whether or not a risk can be transferred, it has to be identified if it is to be managed.

Risk management is concerned with every kind of tourism industry business - tour operators, travel agents, hotels, lodges, game farms, bed and breakfast establishments, national, provincial and local parks, attractions, festivals, restaurants, airlines and guesthouses, to name but a few.

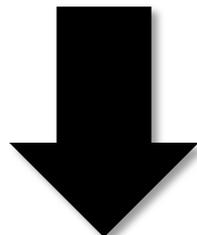
This paper posits a new model for tourism safety and security risk factors - the so-called **Tourism Safety and Security Risk Factor Model**<sup>©</sup>.

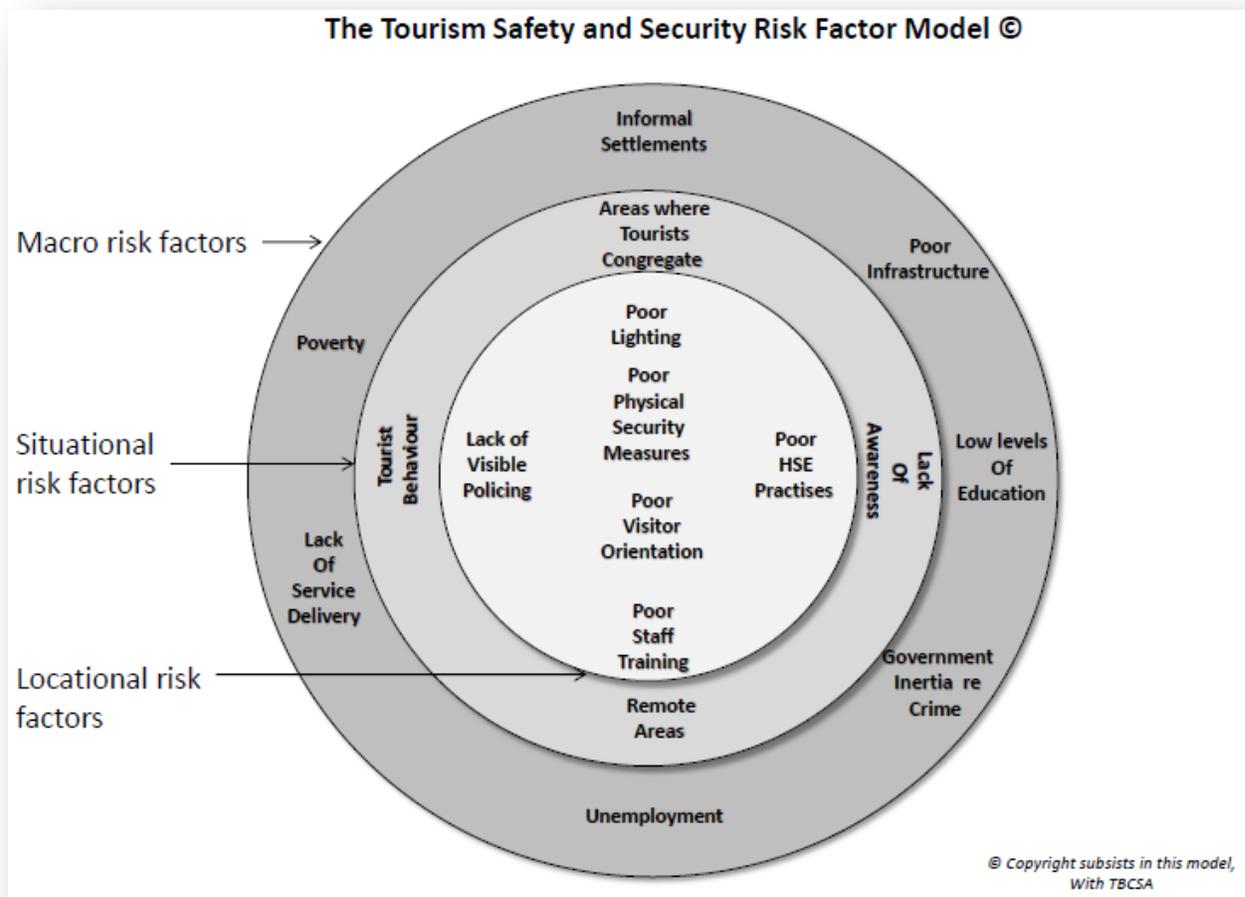
The Model is depicted on the next page, and subsequent pages will describe the various **risk factors** as outlined in the model. This remains a work in progress.



## What are Risk Factors?

*Risk factors are personal characteristics or environmental conditions scientifically established to increase the likelihood of problem behavior. In simple parlance - they are therefore the "causes" of safety and security risks in the industry.*





**Figure 1: Risk Factor Model**

The model above describes three categories of risk factors in this industry – Macro Risk Factors (also known as Precipitating Factors), Situational Risk Factors, and Locational Risk Factors.

### **Risk Factors**

Macro Risk Factors – these operate at a strategic level. They are equally as applicable to all other industries’ safety and security risks as to tourism, i.e. not uniquely relevant to tourism.

Situational Risk Factors – these operate at an operational level and are specifically applicable to this industry, although there may be some overlap with other industries as well.

Locational Risk Factors – these operate at a tactical level and are expressly applicable to the tourism industry.

## Macro Risk Factors

**Informal Settlements** – these are notoriously difficult to penetrate by law enforcement, and criminals often flee into these areas. Where they are close to targets of opportunity, e.g. the Muldersdrift area, the problem is exacerbated.

**Poverty** – a well-known contributor to crime.

**Poor Infrastructure** – poor infrastructure in certain parts of the country leads to vehicles breaking down, providing targets of opportunity, or results in socio-economic deprivation, which is exacerbated by poor economic conditions.

**Low Levels of Education** – leads to *inter alia* a lack of jobs, and hence a propensity in certain areas to resort to crime.

**Unemployment** – firmly correlated with all of the above, and in certain circumstances acts as a precipitating factor for crime.

**Lack of Service Delivery** – strongly correlated with poor infrastructure, and often leads to mass protests during which crime is committed – see the recent torching of schools in Vuwani (<http://www.iol.co.za/capetimes/burning-down-of-schools-national-disaster-2020091>).

**Government Inertia re Crime** – nothing bears this out stronger than the 2015 SAPS crime statistics. There is clearly no effective strategy in place.

*"Tourism businesses and the different levels of government will have to cooperate more closely if businesses are to proactively address various external risks. The issue of national image and competitiveness is a case in point. Aspects like basic infrastructure, high levels of safety and security and the need for marketing should be addressed by government, but in collaboration with the industry."*

## Situational Risk Factors

**Areas where Tourists Congregate** - in areas with many adult entertainment venues, tourists tend to congregate and be disproportionately targeted by offenders. Hotels, downtown centers, shopping malls, bars, restaurants, tourist attractions, beaches, and airports are all potential points of encounter for victims and offenders.

**Remote Areas** – the converse of the above. Certain remote areas lend themselves to aggravated robbery – see Signal Hill in Cape Town as an example in the past.

**Tourist Behaviour** - tourists may unwittingly contribute to the problem through excesses and dangerous practices in sport and leisure activities, driving, gaming, and drinking. They may also contribute to their victimisation by carrying and flashing large sums of money, visiting dangerous locations, or walking in isolated areas or dark alleys.

**Lack of Awareness** – there is a stand-off at present between the industry and government as to how far one should go to warn tourists of potentially hazardous areas/behaviour, versus scaring them off. This in fact amounts to a trade-off between our duty of care versus revenue pursuit. In certain cases, where the duty of care is executed it is often based on outdated/incorrect information.

*"It is evident that the severity of the risks for the various sectors of the industry differs. There is therefore a need for both continuous research and sector-specific solutions that cater for each sector. While other industries, such as banking and insurance, have risk management officers to address risks and have strategies and plans in place, this is not yet standard practice in the tourism industry, despite the industry's susceptibility to risk."*

## Locational Risk Factors

**Poor Lighting** – dark unlit hotel parking areas or walkways close to hotels or entertainments venues are conducive to crime.

**Poor Physical Security Measures** – many tourist accommodation venues suffer from a dearth of proper security measures, be it fencing, guards, CCTV.

**Poor Visitor Orientation** – visitors are either not properly briefed on safety and security hazards, or if they are it is in many cases done by junior, ill-informed staff.

**Poor Staff Training** – closely correlated to the previous point. Staff often is not properly trained on safety and security, as well as awareness issues, and is often also not properly drilled in emergency/evacuation procedures. This is especially the case at smaller facilities.

**Poor HSE Practices** – closely correlated with both the previous points. Staff is not trained in HSE risk and hazard identification; nor is proper planned preventive maintenance practices followed.

**Lack of Visible Policing** – incredibly, many hotels do not want visible policing in their areas, because it “may scare visitors off.” Past experience with big events have shown that this still remains one of the most effective deterrent measures though.

*“Crimes against tourists can impede tourism by significantly damaging a location’s image. Therefore, the most important prerequisite for a successful tourist industry is a reputation for having crime under control and guaranteeing tourists’ safety.”*

## A Systems Approach to Address the Problem

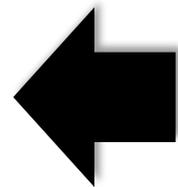
Each of the circles/rings in the Tourism Safety and Security Risk Factor Model should be viewed as a Centre of Gravity (CoG). For industry/trade, the inner circles are paramount. For government, the outer circle should be of greatest importance. Each of the risk factors may be viewed as system components of the overall risk factor system.

For the industry therefore, prioritising these circles, or CoG's, should be done from the inside out. By government, from the outside in. Importantly though – this should be a joint exercise in PPP (Private Public Partnership) synergy.

To reach the future scenario (a safe and secure tourism environment), one should change the relevant components by affecting their centres of gravity. Enough CoG's must experience an impact to create the system change that leads to the future scenario. **Impact Plans** must be developed that show what should happen and when, to each CoG and how it will be measured.

The basic strategic components of an impact plan are:

- Desired effect: what needs to happen to the CoG (its end state)?
- Measure of merit: Measures progress toward the desired effect.
- Timeframe: when must the desired effect be realised?



A further element of targeting the risk factor system through the CoG approach, is that it must be done in a parallel, as opposed to a serial fashion – i.e. targeting the risk factors should be done through all levels of the risk factor landscape – from strategic to tactical level, and across all three rings at the same time, and not in silo-like fashion per ring. This can/should be done in different phases, based on a jointly (PPP) developed strategy.

A hypothetical impact plan is illustrated in Table 1:

Macro Risk Factors	Situational Risk Factors	Locational Risk Factors
Informal Settlements	Areas where Tourists Congregate	Poor Lighting
Poor Infrastructure	Remote Areas	Poor Physical Security Measures
Low Levels of Education	Tourist Behaviour	Poor Visitor Orientation
Government Inertia re Crime	Lack of Awareness	Poor Staff Training
Unemployment		Poor HSE Practices
Lack of Service Delivery		Lack of Visible Policing
Poverty		

Phase 1
  Phase 2
  Phase 3

**Table 1: Impact Plan – Hypothetical Phases**

This document does not delve into specific operational strategies and methodologies that should underpin an impact plan. The risk factor system analysis and identification of COG's should first be refined, before the detailed operational approaches are developed.

However, it should be clear that there is a requirement for the development of new capabilities to address these risk factors by the PPP. We need new thinking...

**Conclusion**

This Infosum suggests a new approach to Tourism Safety and Security Risk Factor Analysis. It also makes recommendations as to how Impact Plans can be jointly developed by industry and government to enhance tourism safety and security. In the final analysis this can only come to fruition if there is a collective will to do so.

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