

Risky Business:

Managing Your Company's Travel
Risks

Part 1

Risky Business: Managing Your Company's Travel Risks

Part 1: Understanding travel-related risks/risk assessment

1. Understanding travel-related risks/risk assessment

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Part 1: Managing your Company's Travel Risks

Part 2: Choosing the right business travel insurance

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Part 2

Choosing the Right Business Travel Insurance

Part 2: Choosing the right business travel insurance

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Part 3: Choosing a Business Travel Safety Partner

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Risky Business

Managing Your Company's Travel Risks

Companies today are facing greater risks than ever before. More and more companies are growing from local to global businesses. In the process, they become exposed to new and sometimes unexpected dangers. Nowhere are these risks more present than in the world of business travel.

As companies continue to expand their international activities, business travel risks become increasingly complex. When it comes to assessing and managing these risks, business travel managers are often faced with complicated questions and situations. Sometimes, it's difficult to even know exactly where the responsibilities lie – with the employer or with the individual employee?

One thing is clear: travel insurance is an absolute necessity for managing the various kinds of risks associated with business travel today.

If your company is not fully up to speed on its obligations toward its business travellers, this eBook gives you a chance to look more closely at this topic.

This is the first in a three-part series examining the ins-and-outs of business travel insurance and employers' duties to protect the safety and well-being of their employees on the road.

Below, we look at the various **risks** facing business travellers and what you can do to help manage these risks. We also examine your company's **duty of care** as an employer of business travellers. You will find many tips and suggestions for meeting your company's risk management obligations towards its employees. These include topics such as pre-travel precautions, specialised trainings and health screenings.

As you will see, it is extremely important to choose the right business travel insurance. Part two in this series is all about choosing the right insurance provider for your company's specific risk profile. Part three takes a closer look at health and safety providers for business travellers. You will receive parts 2 and 3 by email shortly.

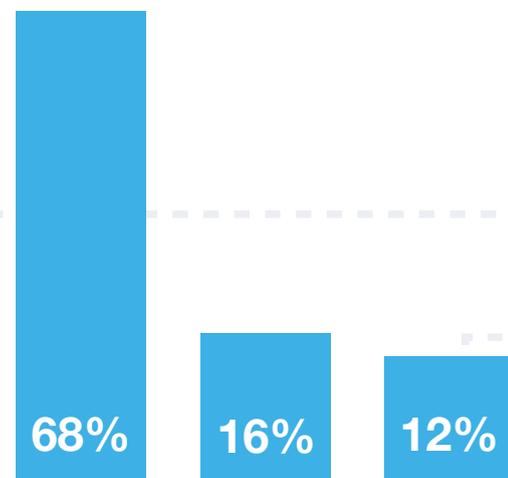


Reported business safety incidents

68%
Medical emergencies

16%
Theft and other significant risks

12%
Kidnapping



Knowing the risks

Managing Your Company's Travel Risks

We may not like to admit it, but risk is a part of everyday life. Any time we get behind the wheel of a car, board an airplane or cross the street, we assume a certain level of risk to our personal safety. While the chances of serious accidents continue to decline in much of the world, it is still extremely important to be aware of the dangers that exist all around us. This awareness enables us to make smarter choices and avoid unnecessary hazards.

According to a recent survey conducted by the [Forum for Expatriate Management](#), 86% of corporate mobility managers believe that business travel exposes their companies to a significant level of risk. 48% of those surveyed even found that the risk posed by business travel is 'medium to high'.

Despite this widespread awareness of risk, many business travellers and travel organisers are surprisingly uninformed when it comes to identifying actual risks – and how best to manage them.

Although the research found that 14% of organisations had experienced a travel-related safety incident in the past 12 months, over half of those surveyed (52%) said that they were unsure whether their company offers any personal security training for employees who travel for business.

A clear majority (68%) of reported business travel safety incidents involve medical emergencies. Other significant risks included theft (16%) and, shockingly, even kidnapping (12%).

Considering the huge numbers of people travelling for business every day, it is safe to say that the chances of a safety or health-related incident are fortunately quite small. However, there's no such thing as being too careful – a single health or safety incident can have devastating implications for the individual or company involved.

Risk assessment

Making risks visible

Employers and employees must be prepared for any eventuality. This starts with performing a risk assessment to determine what could potentially go wrong during a business trip. Insurance giant AIG recommends [a multi-step approach](#) to assessing travel-related risks. Start by taking a general inventory of possible dangers. Be sure to consider the following points:

- **Health precautions:** These are health topics that can impact any individual (not just those who are prone to specific health concerns). For example, what is the healthcare infrastructure like in the countries your business travellers are visiting. Are there adequate emergency services? Are there any specific food or water safety concerns employees should know about?
- **Safety precautions:** Is there civil unrest or a high risk of crime in the destination country? Is there a significant danger of terrorism or kidnapping? Should certain areas or situations be avoided?
- **Adequate accommodations:** Are there adequate safety and security measures at the hotels and other facilities where employees will be staying?

Special risks

In addition to screening for the general risks listed above, you should also consider whether specific employees may be prone to additional risks. For example:

- AIG reports that **American citizens** may be more prone to greater dangers when travelling abroad. These dangers include violence and kidnapping. Are your company's American employees aware of these risks and trained to take necessary precautions?
- **Women and minorities** may also face increased security threats. Does your company provide cultural training to make its travellers aware of possible dangers?
- Employees with **pre-existing health conditions** may have special requirements. Will the employee have access to the necessary medical facilities in case of an emergency while travelling?

Helpful resources

It can be difficult to find answers to these questions on your own. Fortunately, many government agencies and NGOs offer free, detailed resources. Check with your own country's embassy or consulate in the destination country to learn about health-related risks. These include topics like vaccination requirements and current public health situations in the country.

Another great resource for risk-related information is [UK Travel Health Pro](#). This is a vast online database maintained by the British government. It provides current country-by-country information, including any specific travel advisories related to safety risks (like epidemics, civil unrest or terrorism threats).

In addition to consulting government resources, many insurers advise using business travel agencies like Booking.com for Business to ensure that accommodations are screened in advance. This is a smart way to ensure that hotels are safe and suitable for your employees. Booking.com for Business provides ratings and guest reviews that help you make safer, better informed decisions.

Duty of care

An employer's responsibilities

Assessing and managing risks is not just a 'courtesy' that companies should offer their employees – in many cases, it's the law. This is because employers have a 'duty of care' to ensure their employees' safety and well-being, even when their employees are travelling on the job.

According to reporting by the world's leading business travel safety provider, [International SOS](#), Australia, Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, the United Kingdom, the United States and many other countries now legally require employers to exercise a duty of care.

Employers who fail to provide adequate risk management for their travelling employees may be at risk of paying fines or being sued by employees in case of an accident. Always research the duty of care legislation for your specific country. Consult with your company's legal department or an external legal expert to ensure that your company is complying with its duty of care requirements.

Putting duty of care into practice

There are various ways for companies to exercise their duty of care, but the most powerful and by far the best option is to take out adequate insurance coverage. Part two of this eBook contains valuable information for choosing the best insurance coverage to manage your company's business travel-related risks.

While full insurance coverage is the ideal form of risk management, your company should also offer a full range of helpful resources to its travellers. These include special trainings, technology and other support systems. Increasingly, insurance companies are working side by side with businesses to implement some of these health and safety-related measures.

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The best policy...

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Travel policies come in all shapes and sizes, but all of them should consider the possibility of health and safety-related incidents. They should also account for risks such as loss and theft of company property, as well as loss of revenue due to travel delays or cancellations.

Be sure to check your company's current travel policy to ensure it accounts for these risks. You can also refer to the [handy online travel policy creation tool](#) from Booking.com for Business for more ideas on creating a tailor-made travel policy for your company.

When considering possible risks and strategies for managing them, be sure to carefully consider the following topics.

Duty of care

An employer's responsibilities

Caring about travellers' health

Traveller's health is a major risk management topic. After all, we're all human and all of us are prone to becoming ill or getting injured unexpectedly.

In fact, as many as 70% of travellers experience so-called 'travel diarrhoea' according to business travel safety experts [beTravelwise](#), who even cite travel diarrhoea as the most likely reason for interrupting a business trip. It's surprising how such a common health issue can pose such a huge business risk.

In addition to insuring travellers, companies can exercise their duty of care for travellers' health by:

Training employees about specific health risks:

This should cover risks related to the specific destination, such as food and water-related hazards. Is it safe for employees to drink the tap water in the destination country, for example? Are there certain local foods employees should be advised for health reasons to avoid?

Providing pre-travel health screenings:

Employers should ensure their employees are in good health and safe to travel. Employees must be up-to-date on any vaccinations required or recommended for visiting specific destinations.

Researching healthcare facilities in the destination country: Employers should always provide their travellers with contact information and advice on how to seek medical attention when travelling abroad.

Providing 24-hour travel emergency support:

In case of an emergency, employees should have access to a 24-hour hotline where they can seek medical assistance. This is a service that many business travel insurers and corporate travel health providers now offer. Read more about this in part three of this eBook series.

Individual health screenings:

Employees who have specific health needs should be examined regularly and briefed before travelling abroad. For example, if an employee has life-threatening food allergies, he or she should be advised to carry an epinephrine auto-injector (a so-called 'epi pen') while travelling. Employees who wear glasses should bring a spare pair in case of loss or theft. Also, employees should ensure they have an adequate supply of any necessary prescription drugs they require.

70%

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Duty of care

An employer's responsibilities

Caring about travellers' safety

External safety threats such as crime, terrorism, extreme weather, housing and travel conditions are also a major risk area for business travel policymakers to consider. Theft is a growing hazard for business travellers, resulting in huge expenses for companies each year.

Be sure to make your business travellers fully aware of the possible safety threats they will face while travelling in their destination city or country.

Check government advisories regularly:

Governments issue advisories to their citizens to warn them of threats when travelling in specific countries. These threats may be 'man made' risks, such as violence from civil unrest or terrorism, but can also be related to dangerous weather conditions, such as flooding or extreme temperatures. Check regularly (at least once a week) for any such advisories and be sure that you and your business travellers heed all government-issued warnings regarding travel to a certain country.

Provide cultural training:

Cultural sensitivity is important to ensuring an employees' safety while travelling abroad. Employees should be informed of any customs, practices or ways of communicating that may lead to misunderstandings or conflict. For example, [AIG](#) suggests that common hand gestures that mean 'yes' or 'ok' in one culture may be seen as insulting or rude in other cultures. Cultural training may also need to cover proper etiquette with regard to topics like table manners, gift-giving, greetings and even dating.

Travel safety tips:

Travellers should be advised to dress inconspicuously while travelling, avoiding overly expensive or 'eye-catching' clothing. They should keep jewellery and watches out of sight, and carry belongings in a zipped cross-body bag (like a shoulder bag or messenger bag), which is less likely to be targeted for theft.

Driving safety:

If employees will be travelling by hire car, they must be briefed about local traffic rules and safety precautions. In some cases, it may be preferable to use a taxi or shuttle service to reduce the risk of traffic accidents.

Identify individual risks:

As with health risks, certain individuals may also be more prone than others to safety risks. Female business travellers in particular should be informed of any relevant safety precautions. Be sure to research the destination to determine whether travellers should be advised to avoid certain areas for safety reasons, for example, due to higher rates or crime or violence.

Duty of care

An employer's responsibilities

Caring about intellectual property

In today's business world, theft is no longer limited to the 'real world'. Virtual theft is a growing risk for business travellers. In fact, around [38% of data security breaches](#) take place on hotel WiFi networks.

Raise awareness:

Teach employees about the risks of using non-secure networks or sharing sensitive data with untrusted sources.

Provide effective security technology:

Work with your IT department to ensure antivirus and other cybersecurity measures are adequate for travellers. Require employees to keep their company laptops and mobile devices fully up-to-date.

To find out more tips for a safe, hassle-free trip, check out [the Guide to Worry-Free Business Travel](#) from Booking.com for Business.

Caring about travel disruptions

Caring about travel disruptions

As more companies are going global to expand their markets, business travellers are becoming used to increasingly complex, multi-stop international itineraries. These can pose risks in the forms of flight delays as well as reduced safety and loss of communication if a traveller is rerouted to an unexpected destination.

Keep in touch:

All employees travelling on multi-stop itineraries should carry a mobile or satellite phone so they can contact their employer at any time. A 24-hour answering service should be available. This is a service that insurers and travel health providers often offer.

Plan ahead:

Be sure to have a backup plan in case a flight is delayed or unexpectedly cancelled. Employees should be informed of whom to call or where to go in case they miss a flight or become stranded at an airport.

Total coverage:

Keeping risks under control

While there is no such thing as a 100% guarantee, companies can keep risks under control by implementing the travel risk assessment and management measures discussed in this eBook. However, the best way to protect your company and its employees against travel-related risks is to secure adequate travel insurance.

In part two of this eBook, we take a closer look at selecting the right travel insurance solution for your company's specific risk profile. There you will find practical tips for navigating through this complex and often confusing topic.