

ISO 31030 Travel Risk Management Standard

What is it and how can
you prepare?





Introduction

Effectively managing risks for an organization is crucial to success. In the field of travel risk the challenges range from day-to-day events that can impact on performance, through to crises that can threaten life or destroy reputations.

Risk to people working around the world for their organizations is complex, and many organizations have struggled to understand and balance what capabilities they need and what is appropriate for their people and business.

This paper introduces new guidance from the International Standards Organization (ISO) providing a framework developed by experienced international experts to help meet the 'duty of care' expected and deliver cost effective travel risk management.



What is ISO 31030 All About?

Many surveys over recent years have highlighted a perception of increasingly complex and intensifying risks and the greater priority assigned to safety and security by corporate travel executives. The Covid-19 global pandemic has now etched this particular risk on the corporate mindset and has accelerated the trend to prioritise safety security and wellbeing above all else in corporate travel.

ISO 31030 is designed to help organizations manage the challenges associated with the fast-changing and diverse risk and threat landscape that surrounds business travellers. The standard will be the first truly global benchmark for travel risk management and provides a framework of good practice developed by experts from over 160 countries. Organizations should be planning for these risks and ensure that when people are travelling for business they are meeting the expectations of its duty of care.

It's All About Context

The ISO 31030 Standard stresses the importance of an organization having a clear understanding of the factors that may affect or influence its travel risk management programme objectives. These factors will, to a greater or lesser extent, need to be understood in relation to the internal context of the organization and those external to it. Recognising the context of a risk is critical to being able to manage the uncertainty effectively. Context supports your assessment and decision-making and helps ensure the measures being taken are appropriate and effective.



How to Reduce Risk

Organizations should consider the following risk reduction activities:



Active management of travel safety, health and security



Travel route & destination risks



Traveller profile



Work with experts



Accommodation safety & security



Relevant geopolitical circumstances



Relevant government/ regulatory advice



Expert advisory



Internal context means considering the following factors:

- **Organizational strategy, policy, plans, regulations & objectives**
- **An organization's general culture & travel risk management culture**
- **Risk appetite**
- **Risk management strategy and risk criteria**
- **Traveller competences (experience and skills)**
- **A traveller and group profile (for multiple travellers) (to identify any needs due to nationality, cultural identity, gender, orientation, religion, age, occupation, position, disability or medical history which can all affect the risks associated with the travel)**
- **Travellers' interest, knowledge, & travel risk management awareness**
- **Minors for whom the traveller or organization is responsible**
- **Resources & tools needed to manage organizational travel risk**
- **Risk management and travel risk management scope.**



External context means considering the following factors:

- **International, regional and national political, legal & regulatory factors**
- **Social and cultural factors,**
- **Terrorism, insurgency & war**
- **Social unrest (including sectarian, communal and ethnic violence)**
- **Violence & petty crime**
- **Quality, availability and reliability of the proposed transport**
- **Quality, availability and reliability of telecommunications**
- **State of industrial relations**
- **Effectiveness of the security and emergency services**
- **Risk of natural disasters**
- **Potential health threats and standards of medical care**
- **Pandemic and epidemics**
- **Information & cyber security threats**

It's All About Context

ISO 31030 has the flexibility needed to cope with differences in size and scope of organizations and the different environments in which they have to operate. Guidance is provided on how to apply the standard proportionately. The risk framework provided helps identify the priorities based on business objectives and helps with the necessary planning.

Managing travel risk needs to be personal to the traveller and organization and undertaken on a case-by-case basis. However, adopting good practice means that it will become much easier to include all formal business trips into the risk assessment process, improving the travel experience and meeting the duty of care.

A key characteristic of the guidance is substituting assessment for assumption wherever possible. An important consideration regarding the adoption of ISO 31030 is litigation. In the event of a major safety or security incident, litigants are very likely to site ISO 31030 guidelines as the global benchmark standard in managing risk and courts are likely to deem this reasonable. Therefore, evidence of diligent adoption of the guidance is likely to provide de-facto rebuttal to claims of a lack of due diligence being exercised in travel risk management.



The Accommodation Problem

Some aspects of business travel have regulatory or quality regimes (e.g., aviation, maritime, rail transportation, road transportation) that help tremendously when assessing risk, but there is a problem when selecting accommodation. There are no consistent global standards for accommodation safety and security.

Hotels, and potentially other accommodation, are inherently vulnerable to criminals and terrorists alike. Crime analysis in many countries demonstrates that hotels are perceived as 'soft' targets, rich in opportunity to target people or their possessions when their guard is down.

The 'public' nature of hotel buildings, where guests and other legitimate visitors come and go freely, provides the opportunity for attackers to enter the building to exploit opportunities for crime or terrorist acts. The hotel sector has also become a target for cyber-criminals with cyber-attacks increasing significantly. There is real economic and public interest behind these attacks and uncertainty about the level of unknown attacks. This makes hotel security difficult for travellers and travel risk managers to assess, as the industry culture places an emphasis on comfort, facilities, service and other attributes of guest comfort - and doesn't necessarily prioritise security. Whilst many hotels do take security seriously and have good policies, procedures, systems and trained staff, it is a fact that security capabilities in hotels vary enormously.



Duty of Care

'A moral responsibility or legal obligation of the organization to protect the traveller from threats and risks.'





The Accommodation Problem

The lack of a consistent standard to ensure appropriate and proportionate security systems and capabilities are in place, and an objective means of validating that this exists, has exposed travellers, operators and organizations to additional risks that need to be recognised and addressed.

In the past, travel managers and their travel management company partners have sought assurances from hotels about safety and security standards in RFPs.

This system of 'self-certification' is discouraged by the ISO guidance in favour of travel managers seeking independent assurance that the security in a hotel or other accommodation choice is fit for purpose and appropriate.

With the advent of the International Standard ISO 31030, an opportunity is presented to not only improve the management of travel risk, but for accommodation providers to positively differentiate themselves in a very competitive market.



Independent Security Assurance

The ISO 31030 Travel Risk Management Standard encourages travel risk managers to adopt consistent systems of evidence-based validation, developed with input from their own internal security department, and/or more robustly independent providers of capabilities and assurance.

This in turn will encourage expert security accreditation and assurance providers into the market. In future, a hotel will be assessed by a validating organization against a published standard to determine if they meet, or exceed, the standard.

Successful accreditation will reassure corporate clients and their travelling staff, enable the corporate to be aligned with ISO 31030 and reduce risk for the hotel of a serious security incident.

Where the hotel or other accommodation do not meet the standard, the hotel will be given an action plan to address the areas of weakness before re-seeking accreditation or certification.

Successful certification or accreditation will enable the hotel to market its security qualifications accordingly and become an attractive choice to those organisations who have adopted ISO 31030.

10 Benefits of ISO 31030



1. Cost effective development and adoption of consistent and transparent security standards
2. Introduction of credible, recognised and independent accreditation or certification systems which are compliant with ISO 31030 – such as GSA
3. A 'level playing field' with more transparency and scrutiny of security standards, reducing the risk of security being compromised due to competitive pressure
4. Reduction in the costs of assessing hotel security standards as a single accreditation would make selection of the hotel compliant with ISO 31030 guidance
5. Supports internal governance and risk management processes
6. Annual reaccreditation, which maintains on-going duty of care commitments and supports continual improvement in security
7. Accreditation builds business for hotels and simplifies the validation process for corporate clients
8. Builds confidence and brand loyalty in independent travellers through greater security assurance
9. Generates reports and other assets that hotels can use as marketing tools to provide assurance to potential clients
10. Great reputational protection and defence against litigation in the event of a serious security incident

In Conclusion... Safer Travel for All

The introduction of the 'Travel Risk Management' Standard is long overdue. Travel risk is real, and represents a major risk for many employees and their employers.

The risks and threats are complex and dynamic, and their management can be very challenging. Every year, there are tragic consequences rooted in poor assessment and failure to manage processes. Whilst the risks and threats cannot all be eliminated; they can be minimised and mitigated by adopting tried and tested risk management and mitigation processes.

The ISO Standards development process has assembled considerable expertise at a global level to consider these threats and risks, and to identify the best management and mitigation practices to help make travel a safer endeavour. ISO31030 will doubtless evolve over time, but the release later this year will be a major step forward for the travel management world in raising the standard and consistency of approach.

