

August 2, 2016

EIA Airport Employees Travelling for Business Purposes

The objective of this notice is to help provide safe business travel tips for all EIA Employees.

It should be noted some of the recommendations would seem somewhat overcautious for low risk destinations.

Vigilance, Confidence and Instincts

While there is no need to be overly nervous about business travel, it is important to remain vigilant throughout your stay to ensure a safe return.

The first thing you should consider is to not get involved in any sort of activity that you would refrain from doing in your own home town. By following this simple directive, you can avoid most of the problems that can present themselves while on a business trip. Before taking part in any type of activity, you should ask yourself: "Would this be safe to do where I live?" If the answer is no, it should be obvious that you should not participate in that activity. Common sense can steer one clear of many potential dangerous situations.

ALWAYS trust your instinct. If going somewhere feels wrong, you should avoid it. Firstly, a lack of confidence will affect alertness and you might freeze when you should be reacting quickly and instinctively. Secondly, if you do not feel at ease with something you will seem more nervous and will appear as an easy target for people with malicious intentions.

Confidence is key. Even if you are lost or are scared, you cannot let these emotions transpire, in order to avoid signaling distress to would-be attackers. If you do not look lost, chances are you will be left alone.

Instincts, confidence and vigilance are mentioned often in this document, the reason being that using these three attributes along with some sound practice and common sense should help avoid most dangerous situations.

Knowing the Threat

Prior to flying to sensitive areas, you should contact the Canadian Embassy or email the Government of Canada Travel advisory <http://travel.gc.ca/travelling/publications/bon-voyage-but> and obtain information pertaining to potential threats applicable to the countries you are visiting.

Ground Transportation Security

Taxis

If the hotel does not provide transportation, you will have to use city taxis to travel to your hotel. Whenever a taxi is used, you should:

- Always use approved taxis;
- Be aware of the identifications (logos, car colour, etc.) of registered taxis and where they can be found;
- Make sure the meter is turned on when departing unless a price has been agreed on;
- Avoid riding for a fixed price if alone, unless it is clearly stated in the taxi that there is a fixed price between the points of departure and arrival;
- Be aware of taxi drivers offering their service within the terminal, quite often these are not registered taxis;
- Avoid sharing a taxi with someone else;
- At the destination, wait until luggage has been removed from the trunk before paying the fare;
- Have some money ready for the fare separate from your wallet

Public Transportation

Public transportation is very seldom used when going from the airport to your hotel. However, it may be possible that you will use public transport when going out / touring. There are some very basic actions which you should do when using public transportation:

- Before leaving, check with hotel staff if any public transit stops can present a hazard. As an example, in many cities, stops in the business district are crowded during the day but can be deserted at night and might not be safe;
- Try to have a sense of which bus or train to take;
- Write directions on a piece of paper rather than carry a tourist map;
- Ask a transit employee or a passenger who looks trustworthy for directions if you are lost;
- Do not panic and do not become easy prey if you are lost;
- Stay in a well-lit area when waiting for a bus or train at night;
- Stay towards the middle of the ramp where most of the people wait for the train. If everyone seems to know each other consider moving away;
- Avoid boarding train carriages where there are no or very few passengers;
- Try sitting or standing as close to the bus driver as it is permitted;
- Exit the bus or train or leave the waiting area the moment you feel threatened. You should not get off in a panic but calmly and self-assuredly as if it is the stop you want to get off at.

Hotel Security

When checking-in you should:

- Ask the hotel reception to leave all valuable documents (passports, any other form of identification, etc.) and large amounts of money in the hotel safe. All documents should be put in a sealed envelope and signed in order to avoid any tampering if documents are left at the front desk.

Securing the Hotel Room

When entering your room for the first time you should:

- Familiarise yourself with the surroundings;
- Carefully study the hotel evacuation plan (usually on the room door) and note the emergency meeting point;
- Visually note where the nearest emergency exit is and determine the quickest way to get to it. The route should be memorised in case there is reduced visibility during evacuation;
- Make sure there is no evidence of tampering in the room. If this is the case, it could mean that someone else has access. Report this to the hotel reception immediately and ask for another room especially if the hotel does not use electronic keys;
- Make sure all the locks on the main door are working properly. All locks should be used when going to bed;
- Verify that the telephone is working properly and take note of the hotel and local emergency numbers;
- Make sure that you have air carrier contact numbers. Verify that contacting the front desk quickly is easy.

Preventive Actions

Hotels are relatively safe, however if you follow a few easy guidelines and procedures, it will greatly reduce your risk of becoming a victim during a business trip:

- Be wary of elevators. You should trust your instinct; if you do not feel safe about getting in an elevator with a stranger, you should wait for the next one;
- Be discrete with your room number; do not disclose it in public or on the telephone even if the person asking claims to be hotel personnel;
- Use caution if someone calls asking you to leave your room to come to the reception, it could be a trick;
- Verify if the person knocking is really who he/she claims to be by using the peephole. If the person claims to be a hotel employee and they were not requested, call the hotel reception to confirm their presence;

- Leave a light and/or the television on when you leave your room in order to detract thieves;
- Quickly go around your room when you come back in to make sure there is no one inside or that there is no evidence of intrusion;
- Use all the locks on the door overnight;
- Leave valuables, purse/wallet, key and a jacket next to your bed. In case of an emergency evacuation, everything necessary will be close by which will accelerate your evacuation;
- Always keep your room key secure. Drop your room key into Hotel reception whenever you leave the hotel;
- Do not keep the room key with any item that indicates the room number.

Hotel Fire and Evacuation

If the hotel fire alarm sets off while you are in your room, you should:

- Never use the hotel elevators;
- Collect the room key and head for the room door. If there is smoke in the room, roll out of your bed and crawl to the door always staying as close as possible to the ground;
- Touch the door before opening it. If it is warm there might be fire on the other side. It should be kept closed;
- If the door is cool, open it while keeping foot and shoulder against it which will enable you to close it quickly if necessary;
- Check for smoke and fire in the corridor;
- Follow the exit sign, exit the hotel and go to the emergency meeting point.

If there is a confirmed fire but cannot exit the room or hotel because of the fire:

- Return to your room, close the door, all windows and shut the air conditioner off;
- Call the hotel emergency and advise that you cannot leave your room;
- Fill bathtub, rubbish bin and all other containers with water;
- Wet all sheets and towels and place them around the room door to prevent smoke from entering;
- If there is smoke or fire in the room, wet another towel and put it over your mouth and nose;
- Refrain from breaking any window unless the room is completely filled with smoke;
- Try to attract attention, do not attempt to jump or climb out of a window;
- As soon as it is possible call home to report that you are safe;

Leisure Time

Dress Appropriately

The best piece of advice when going out while on a business trip is to fit in as much as possible with the rest of the local population. It can sometimes be difficult not to stand out because of physical appearances. However, being sensitive to local styles when choosing what to wear can avoid attracting attention, and possibly avoid getting into awkward situations. Xenophobia and racism are unfortunately worldwide problems; showing that efforts have been made to fit in by wearing appropriate clothing can help avoid the resentment that many people have towards foreigners, especially those coming from western industrialized States:

- Try to dress casual or business casual. However, wearing designer labels, especially where only the elite can afford such clothes, will attract unwanted attention;
 - Only wear a minimum of jewellery and try to avoid wearing obviously expensive items. Not only can the items be stolen, you will signal yourself as having money and probably other valuable goods in your possession or in their hotel room;

- Only carry what will be necessary for the outing. Excessive amounts of money or important documents should be left in the hotel safe;
- Unless specified otherwise you should always carry your passport when you leave your hotel;
- Carry all important documents in a money belt or pouch, preferable under at least one layer of clothing;
- Try to avoid carrying objects that highlight yourself as a tourist or outsider. If possible do not carry belongings in a knapsack or backpack, use a purse or a bag with a shoulder strap instead. Make sure to wear the shoulder strap across the body to avoid the bag being easily snatched away by pickpockets;
- When walking on the street, as far as possible walk facing oncoming traffic and carry handbags and belongings in on your side away from vehicle traffic or in front of you;
- Try to avoid walking near shrubbery or dark doorways;
- Have necessary keys ready when approaching a residence or car;
- Never hitchhike or accept an offer for a ride from a stranger.

“Know” the Area

Before going out familiarize yourself with the city using a map. As far as possible, avoid having to open large maps in public areas and/or on the street. It is more preferable to carry a small map or pocket street index. If you are headed to a particular location, write the directions to get there on a piece of paper. It is less conspicuous than carrying a map especially if you get lost and need to ask for directions.

Check with the hotel staff at reception as to which neighborhoods should be avoided.

In the event that you do get lost, the most important thing is not to panic and still act as if you have a sense of where you are. Some cities have very confusing street systems, even local residents can get lost if they venture out of their own neighborhood. The difference between a lost resident and a lost outsider has everything to do with the body language. A resident who gets lost will still have a general idea of where he/she is and will calmly ask for direction using points of reference familiar to him/her.

This is what you should be doing if you get lost, do not look like a victim. For this method to be effective it is very important that you have some sort of familiarity with the area you are in.

Finally, in order to avoid standing out as an outsider, try to familiarize yourself with local customs like tipping, introducing yourself with the proper etiquette, etc. While these efforts might not completely hide the fact that you are not local residents, it will show that you are sensitive about the culture of country you are in, something that can go a long way in eliminating the resentment certain individuals might have towards foreigners.

Use Caution when Talking with Strangers

Whenever you go out whether for a meal, a drink or to visit a museum you are bound to meet new people. However, you should:

- Always use common sense when talking to people you have recently met;
- Try to figure out if the person is genuinely alone. Look for non-verbal cues or communication with other people in the surrounding area;
- If drinking alcoholic beverages is locally acceptable, refrain from consuming large quantities of alcohol, especially when alone;
- Never leave a drink unattended even for a few seconds. Do not drink beverages left unattended;
- Avoid accepting drinks from strangers, unless ordering straight from the bar;
- Be aware of Rohypnol and other date rape drugs;
- Do not discuss politics, ideology or religion with locals;
- Do not become spectators where there are protests or demonstrations. Bystanders can quickly become embroiled if the protest turns violent.

Avoid Being Alone

As far as possible try to avoid going out alone, especially at night. However, if you decide to venture out alone you should:

- Keep to the main streets and roadways which should be more populated even late at night. Also, try to use well lit areas even if it means walking for a few more minutes;
- Walk confidently and with a sense of purpose. It is important not to become an easy target;
- Do not isolate yourself from the outside. Choosing to use a personal music device prevents you from gathering valuable information about the surroundings when walking or jogging. Also, it makes it easier for attackers to sneak up on their victims;
- Inform your other friends/family staying at the hotel or the hotel reception. Provide an itinerary and an approximate time of return. When you do get back, inform them that you have come back from your outing.

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