

**INTER-AMERICAN COMMITTEE AGAINST TERRORISM (CICTE)**

MEETING OF EXPERTS TO EVALUATE THE  
RESULTS OF THE PILOT PROJECT ON SECURITY  
OF TOURISM AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES  
March 4, 2008  
Washington, D.C., United States

OEA/Ser.L/X.5  
CICTE/RESITUR/doc.7/08 add. 2  
3 March 2008  
Original: English

**RESULTS AND EVALUATION OF THE PILOT PROJECT**

PRESENTATION BY DON MOSS  
DIRECTOR OF SECURITY, ATLANTIS RESORT  
KERZNER INTERNATIONAL (BAHAMAS)

## RESULTS AND EVALUATION OF THE PILOT PROJECT

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ATLANTIS RESORT KERZNER INTERNATIONAL (BAHAMAS)

Terrorism throughout the globe has been gaining increased support as it becomes less recognizable and as it takes stronger root with wider support in more communities throughout the Caribbean, as in the other parts of the world. The concern now is the level of our ability to adequately respond to an act of terrorism occurring anywhere within the Caribbean that would quickly bring tourism communities back to normal functional capability.

This continues to be of concern to The Bahamas and in particular the Kerzner Brand; an international developer and operator of luxury resorts, casinos and marinas; inclusive are a number of our luxury destination resorts in Maldives and Mauritius, Indian Ocean, Mexico, Dubai, United Kingdom, United States of America, Morocco and South Africa.

Kerzner's flagship brand Atlantis Resort, located on Paradise Island, Bahamas, is a four thousand (4000) room resort that comprises of six interconnecting hotel towers and the Caribbean's largest, fully modernized, Casino. At peak occupancy Atlantis provides accommodation for over 11,000 visitors, over 95% are US citizens.

Built around a 7 acre lagoon and a 34 acre marine environment, the Resort includes the world's largest open air marine habitat. The company also prides itself as the owner and operator of three (3) marinas and an eighteen (18) Hole professional golf course, surrounded by a high-end exclusive residential gated community.

Direct and indirect economic impact in 2006, we represented 8-10% of the GDP, which translates to 620 million dollars.

The interesting thing is that the Resort sits on a very small island connected to Nassau by two bridges with sharp elevations stretching some 600 yards across Nassau Harbor. It is important to note that the Bahamas is an Archipelago of islands accessible by ocean. Although we have clearly defined borders, there are no physical barriers to protect same. What I have described to you represents the challenge we now face as it relates to man-made or natural disasters.

After the Terrorist acts of 9/11, our company embarked upon a Vulnerability Assessment Study to determine the level of security needed to protect our property. In a follow up to the findings, our security management and other senior hotel personnel were assisted by a reputable U.S. company with the preparation of a Terrorism Response Plan. One of the main and possibly one of the most significant points derived from the response plan was a need for continuous extensive and frequent training of our four hundred member security team. It was determined that without proper education, decisions and responses made would be based upon fears, prejudices and misconceptions. It is with this recommendation that Security Officers, at the levels **of Guard, Supervisor and Manager**, participated in this Pilot Project on Security of Tourism and Recreational Facilities under the auspices of CICTE. It was felt that if we exposed our security team at the various levels, that is, Manager, Supervisor and Guard, to training in this program, we, as an organization, would be able to disseminate knowledge in a timely manner throughout our Security Team to ensure standardization in a more effective method enabling the team to function at its optimum.

With an entity as large as Atlantis, it was imperative to establish a sound and effective, systematic way of monitoring its premises and also to make preparation for any unforeseen terrorist attacks. This extends beyond the property to the island itself and by extension the country of islands.

As previously mentioned, this training was given to three levels within the security team; I am able to share the participants' views in short.

**Guard/Line Staff** – indicated that although they were familiar with some of the information, it provided them with the advanced training required to properly disseminate information or indicators that would prepare them for or, to ward off a possible terrorist attack.

- For instance, they became more acutely aware of persons in designated areas of the property; look for signs that deviate from the normal persona (Jittery, change in appearance and actions); obtaining a physical description of the person.
- Unauthorized persons in Public places, electrical and elevator control rooms etc.
- Persons entering for deliveries (ensure that they have authorized access to the areas).
- Conducting routine checks where there are assigned areas.

Based on the content that was revealed in the program, the following recommendations were made regarding line staffing:

- Provide additional manpower to ensure the security and safety of all hotel guests.
- List tasks to execute and log those having been executed.
- Consultation with management/supervisory staff for information processing and providing solutions.

**At this level**, which is felt to be the most important of the security structure pyramid, the **Guard/Line Staff level**, would have been prepared had the World Cup 2007 Cricket Games been held at our venue, as much of the controls required in the prevention process (all except manpower), were already in place at Atlantis.

**The Supervisors** - indicated that it opened a spectrum of security concepts that Caribbean Tourism would need in order to provide maximum security for properties. They were able to examine and improve on security in the following:

- Securing the physical site.
- Securing access points, for example access passages, beaches, perimeter security.
- Identifying characteristics of a potential terrorist posing as a hotel guest. For instance, guests photographing surveillance cameras, asking questions about the aspects of your property and the awareness that potential terrorist will recruit employees to get the job done.
- Liaising with Line staff, when engaging with guests who ask questions regarding the property and security infrastructure, so that you are better able to identify the characteristics of a potential terrorist.

It was felt at the **Supervisor's Level** that the Pilot Project was both **positive and informative**. A number of initiatives have been implemented again further positioning Atlantis for readiness to host any world class event.

**The Managers** – were acutely receptive of the information disseminated in the training sessions, even though much of what they discussed had already been implemented at the Atlantis Property. It gave them a heightened awareness however of the following:

- Terror attacks are well planned events.
- A great deal of Intel, time, money and energy go into the planning phase.
- Acts of terror are fast evolving in nature and can take less than (7) seconds to complete.
- Terrorists are determined to succeed.
- Following the chain of command is not always possible.
- Actions of officers in the field, on patrol, or at the gate, are the ones that count.
- **Quick and decisive action can defeat an attack.**

It is therefore my conclusion that the cost of not being prepared with tourism security measures could result in a total disruption of your countries economic structure. Persons will avoid coming to your country, resulting in the immediate cancellation of reservations for air and ground transportation and accommodations. There will be a pending ripple effect throughout the Caribbean as the islands are in very close proximity to each other. Lack of information and knowledge by the traveler along with the sensationalism of the media will cause negative judgment to be passed by all potential tourists.

The average traveler will group all islands in the area and collectively call them Caribbean Islands. This will have the same ripple effect on property brand name. Tourism is one of the top three industries globally and in the Caribbean. Growth in the Caribbean region is strong. Tourism is a major contributor for employment tax revenue and provides opportunities for entrepreneurs. In the Caribbean, Tourism provides a lifestyle that tourist use to counteract the daily pressures at their work place. Also because of the location of the islands in providing a warm and stable climate such adverse activity, like acts of terrorism, could adversely impact travel causing loss of revenue hence economic change.

Therefore, effective tourism security in the Caribbean must be governed by a body such as this. Properties and countries within the Caribbean must continue to develop in terms of:

- Threat analyses
- Vulnerability assessments
- Mitigation Planning and Implementation, and
- Ongoing Monitoring and Training

In this the year 2008, it is imperative that Countries and organizations in the Travel, Hospitality and Tourism Industry are prepared to counter potential terrorism attacks. Anti-terrorism training is essential for Security and Surveillance personnel worldwide, as its benefits impact not only the host properties, but the respective nations and the world at large. This Pilot program has been most beneficial to the Atlantis Resort and stands to benefit all member states as it gives us the edge in Preparedness for acts of terrorism. It demands and fosters cohesiveness within the security department. Keeping aware that the tactics of terrorists are constantly changing, it is essential that anti-terrorism training be ongoing, as we cannot rest on our laurels. As a result of anti-terrorism training obtained from CICTE's Pilot Program, Security staff at Atlantis are trained, aware and eager to learn more, as good enough, never is.