



Western Cape
Department of Economic Affairs and Tourism

Business Promotion and Tourism

TOURISM SAFETY

*Emergency Communications and
Crisis Management Plan (Part 1 of 4)*

(Working Document)

NOVEMBER 2002



1. Purpose of Document

This document aims to establish a well-coordinated and managed Tourism Emergency and Crisis Communication Plan for the Western Cape Province. Implementation of the basic generic plan, adapted to suit different areas, will enable the Province to address issues of Tourism Safety in more coordinated manner according to pre-determined standards. Such a plan will ensure that the Western Cape maintains its good reputation both nationally and internationally.

2. Problem Statement

As Western Cape tourism faces the realities of emerging markets and global demand trends, it is of utmost importance that visitors feel safe and protected. Accordingly, effective and efficient execution of a holistic Tourism Management Plan, including a Crisis Communication Management Plan is of key importance. Consensus between various public and private institutions and active implementation of the plan by each role-player are of cardinal importance to ensure tourism growth and development.

3. Background

It is generally accepted that tourism is potentially the single most powerful generator of jobs, investment and economic growth in the Western Cape. There is no other region in the country so widely endowed with the cultural, scenic and lifestyle attributes necessary to distinguish it as a tourist destination of international status.

Recent years have however seen Cape Town and the region gaining an international reputation for high levels of crime and social instability. Crime, violence and social unrest remain the most immediate and challenging threat confronting the Western Cape's aspiration to become a globally competitive tourist destination.

The nature of tourism safety for the region and its public prominence imposes, as a result, a special level of accountability on provincial authorities to develop and implement a provincial framework for a local and co-ordinated response to tourism safety. Integral to this framework is the development of a Tourism Safety Management



Plan to enable tourism stakeholders to communicate in a prepared and proactive manner to the full range of crises that might occur.

Following the bombings of 1999, the Tourism Safety Forum was initiated to coordinate media responses which had become potentially damaging to the image of the Province, and were having a negative impact on the tourism industry. The reactive nature of the forum was realigned after the potential threat had passed to address certain proactive steps that were needed to ensure the Province was being marketed as a safe tourist destination.

The Tourism Safety Workshop held in August 2001 identified the need to develop and implement a Provincial framework for a local integrated response to Tourism Safety. The workshop provided the forum with an instrument for developing a clear strategy for dealing with Tourism Safety, giving clear guidelines as to strategic objectives and outcomes to be achieved by relevant individuals.

The Tourism Safety Forum mandated a task group to further consult with key stakeholders and make a proposal, in the form of a Tourism Safety Management Plan. This culminated in two workshops being held at Provincial level, which responses have informed this proposal. While a Strategic Framework had been developed, the stakeholders have recommended something less elaborate, and far more practical. This functional model has taken international best practice into account, but has been developed for local conditions and economic situations.

4. Key Principals Arising From Tourism Safety Workshops

In providing input to a Tourism Safety Management Plan, the participants in the October 2002 workshops comprising key tourism stakeholders recognised the following key principals:

- It is not the intention or desire to duplicate the efforts of existing initiatives, nor is it the core business of the Department of Tourism to prevent crime or manage incidents of crime. However, where a tourist is threatened by or becomes the victim of crime, it is essential that a Tourism Safety Management Plan exists to bring



together the skills and functions that protect, minimise and resolve the impact of crime committed against tourists;

- Rather than create a new body requiring new resources and financing, a network should be established to provide the services needed for effective Tourism Safety;
- There is no “quick -fix” solution to tourism safety. It was agreed that the plan developed will recognise potential areas of crisis, devise proactive preventative guidelines and reactive proposed action plans for when these fail and a crisis happens;
- It is understood that what will be developed will not be prescriptive, but will provide a set of guidelines to assist local councils to develop and implement an acceptable tourism safety framework. The guidelines developed must be easy to implement, affordable and be constantly revised and updated to incorporate latest learning, and;
- To ensure a workable solution, a Public/ Private partnership would need to be entered into to ensure long -term sustainability and economic viability.

5. Requirements of a Tourism Safety Management Plan

The following recommendations arose from the workshop held with the appropriate tourism stakeholders:

Appointment of a Provincial Facilitator/Project Manager

It was recommended that a facilitator/project manager be appointed by the Provincial Ministry to develop, guide and implement the process of finalising and implementing a generic and detailed Tourism Safety Management Plan. The facilitator should report directly to the Minister and/or Head of the Tourism Department.

Development of Detailed Tourism Safety Management Plan

The development of a generic and detailed Tourism Safety Management Plan will provide the Province with a model, which includes the essential building blocks and internationally accepted best practice for Tourism Safety. It will consider how to implement the proactive preparations and reactive plans for tourism crises. The enormity of this task necessitates cooperation from a variety of stakeholders in developing pragmatic solutions.

