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Essay: Learning Assignment 1 – ‘Handle with Care’ – safety and security in the hotel industry

November 26, 2015 by Essay Sauce

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Introduction

Given that there are always a significant number of students, guests, lecturers as well as other staff in Hotelschool The Hague security is naturally a top priority. Natural deterrents are used such as the ten to five method where an employee makes eye contact with the guest and smiles at a distance of ten paces, followed by walking towards the guest and at a distance of five paces requesting whether there is a service that can be provided for the guest or information they might need. This is an effective way of deterring unsavoury

characters as they prefer to operate in the shadows or unnoticed. In this way the establishment provides the occupants with a first line of defence.

There are a plethora of reasons as to why safety as well as security is paramount in the hotel industry, however, three key factors can be identified. First factor would be money, in the form of potential lost revenue or insurance and claims payouts that the establishment might incur. Secondly, reputation, a hotel's reputation has a huge impact on the clientele and this can fluctuate rapidly following a breach in safety or security. Thirdly the laws established by the government, regional bodies or municipal courts which can place constraints on a hotel. (Bolier, 2006)

The hospitality industry has witnessed several attacks of significant terror such as in Mumbai 2008 or Nairobi 2014, this can be due to an unstable political climate or simply for shock and awe tactics. Terrorism is by its very definition illogical and unstable. Furthermore, the world has been shocked by kidnappings, robberies and attacks. Hence security is a huge concern and it is vital preparations in the form of disaster plans are made to ensure that damage is minimal as well as the personal safety of all people being top priority.

1. Analysis targets and threats

Safety and security play vital roles within the hotel industry, it is paramount that both issues are addressed and that there are protocols in place for the prevention of risk and reduction of said risk should it occur. Safety can best be described as "the prevention of accidents caused by nobody" unintentional or accidental whereas "security is the prevention of accidents caused by somebody" which would be intentional or premeditated (Bolier, 2006)

When discussing the safety and security of people and their surroundings bomb alerts are a very realistic and harmful threat. The security team of Hotelschool The Hague did broad research into the targets and threats that would be present in case of a bomb alert. The targets the security team found were:

- People
- Critical Infrastructure
- Key resources

The threats that exist are:

- Terrorists or radicals (People that perhaps have taken offence to lyrics or ideology of the guests) this would take the form of premeditated actions or intentional. Whereas something such as a fire could be accidental the detonation of a bomb could not be accidental as to even have an explosive device on the premise is a security risk.
- Rival crews (Different group of rappers that feel marginalised) could enlist the aid of assassins (hired to perform a murder) or perform a 'hit' themselves to gain street credibility or notoriety. This is of particular consequence as the internet provides access to floor plans as well as entrance or exit strategies. With today's technology such as Google Maps providing anyone with the ability to operate a computer the key element of surprise. Since they would not require a prior visit to Hotelschool The Hague to as it were 'case' the surroundings and develop a strategy their faces would also be unknown to the reception staff or anyone within the building.
- Explosives, which can take the form of incendiary devices, suicide vests, remote detonated bombs, chemical, biological or potentially even nuclear should the terrorist organisation have access to terrible resources indeed. This is of particular pertinence as the Hotelschool has various gas pipe lines running throughout as well as toxic chemicals that could exacerbate the explosion. As such specific areas should be deemed as exceptionally high risk.

1.1. Targets

There are a minimum of three groups of targets when discussing a bomb alert or a potential terrorist attack. These three 'Target Groups' are: People. Critical Infrastructure and Key resources. (Global security, 2015)

In the case a bomb alert should happen there are certain steps that would have been taken to already prevent but also to respond accurately and appropriately to the situation. The five safety and security steps are: Prepare, Prevent, Detect, Assess, Respond and review so as to not perpetuate the mistakes that were made. (Global security, 2015)

1.1.1. People

As the security team of Hotelschool The Hague we see the most important factor of safety and security as being human life and to ensure that all human life is provided with safety and security. Without safety and security a human cannot express past the first stage of Maslow's hierarchy of needs, (see app. 1)

To protect the people inside the Hotelschool The Hague we must first determine which different groups of people are in the building. Hotelschool The Hague is not only the working place or even as some consider their home of the many students and staff members like other schools, the school also houses various guests, guest speakers and outsourced staff every day.

Non-Outsourced Staff members

The first group is the group of the non-outsourced staff members. In other words, the staff members who are directly hired by the school. For these staff members a list is taken into a registry in the school's system. This list is managed by the front office staff and shows which staff members are present and in which location. By this way, for a potential evacuation, the safety and security staff knows where the staff members are and if everybody has been evacuated and whether or not they have reached the evacuation assembly point.

Guests

Hotelschool The Hague has two restaurants where guests can enjoy a delicious meal for lunch or dinner prepared by in house staff and students. Furthermore, the staff members of Hotelschool The Hague welcome guests into their offices for private consultations or meetings. On top of this, multiple events are organized yearly such as Open Days, Selection Days and charity events.

In all cases mentioned above the guests have to be signed in so that the school knows how many people are in the building at any one time. Guests in the offices are written down in a lists at the front office and entered into the system, for the events the guests sign for themselves and their entourage should they bring one. The guests of the restaurants are accounted for in the reservations book and as such a record of anyone on the premise is always maintained.

Students

The Hotelschool The Hague houses approximately 1000 students. Not all these students are in the building at the same time but on a particularly busy schedule with a combined visit from the Amsterdam Campus it is more than possible. On an average day about 500 to 600 students are accounted for in the building at any one time. The students are not signed in to any list and also do not have to check in. The only list that would confirm their presence or absence is the signature list in every classroom that marks down which students is present and absent. By this way the lecturer knows how many students are in his classroom. This information is only seen by the lecturer and is put in the system after the lecture.

Outsourced staff

The outsourced staff are also not accounted for in any list at the front desk, within the system or by any other means. The only thing that could be monitored would be the schedules of the various employees that are working on a base of outsource for The Hotelschool The Hague.

1.1.2. Critical Infrastructure

In the situation of a bomb alert and possible terrorist threat the critical infrastructure of The Hotelschool The Hague is a big potential target. Critical infrastructure includes the assets, systems, and networks, whether physical or virtual, so vital to the Hotelschool the Hague that their incapacitation or destruction would have a debilitating effect on the security, health, status or symbols. (Global Security, 2015)

Critical infrastructure in Hotelschool The Hague would be the main building at Brusselselaan 2. Inside this building there are various targets, the network of the school, symbols and assets that are vital to the school. Furthermore, there are electrical conduits, toxic chemicals and gas and water pipes all of which could exacerbate an incident.

1.1.3. Key Resources

Key resources are the resources that are essential to the minimal operations of the Hotelschool The Hague. (Global Security, 2015). One of the key resources in the Hotelschool The Hague is electricity. If for instance there would be a bomb attack on the buildings power supply the daily operating of Hotelschool The Hague would not be able to continue. Therefore it is of great importance that the key resources are protected and there is a back-up plan if one of the resources should go down. Furthermore, any of the aforementioned dangers to the infrastructure could react with the explosive material and compound the issue.

2. Safety and Security plan

In the situation described below the security team of the Hotelschool The Hague is informed with the fact there is a group of 20 VIP's consisting of rappers with an entourage.

In case of a bomb alert and potential terrorist attack the VIP's will be evacuated with the same urgency as other guests, students, lectures and other people that are in the building. The VIP's have brought their own entourage which will very likely include one or multiple security staff for the alone which will aid in their evacuation as well since that is what their main priority would be. Before the VIP's arrive a briefing of the security staff of the rappers will be done in order to avoid any mistakes or miscommunication in ensuring the safety and security of the group of VIP's.

2.1. Prepare

In order to be full prepared for a situation such as a bomb alert or potential terrorist attack a number of techniques need to be implemented.

Special evacuations plans have to be drawn up to empty the building in case of a bomb alert as effectively and quickly as is possible. Also everybody in the building has to be informed and special tasks have to be divided to certain staff members. In Hotelschool the Hague there are multiple staff members who at all times have a pager present in case of an emergency. When the front office sends out the number one to all pagers, all the staff members who have a pager will fulfil their specially assigned tasks and evacuate the building. On top of these preparations an emergency box is present at the front office which contains all the necessary materials to evacuate the building, such as but not limited to signs and bright vests. In case somebody gets hurt or seriously injured there is a first aid kit present at the front office and multiple staff members with a first aid degree. (See app. 2)

2.2. Prevent

A situation where a bomb threat is present is very hard to prevent in an environment such as a school. With bags everywhere it is a hassle and even detracts from securities other priorities to report every bag as suspicious. The Hotelschool The Hague has a very alert front office. Whenever somebody walks in the front office desk always greets them, should someone who appears suspicious in any kind of way the person will be stopped and asked why he/she is in the building, if they have an appointment or whether they require assistance. Furthermore the students are informed to be very alert and will report to front office whenever something or somebody seems out of place.

2.3. Detect

In order to know if a threat of a bomb is present the Hotelschool The Hague must be able to detect. Like mentioned in the paragraph above, most of the detection comes from staff and students. The only way to detect for the school is if the 'bomb' is in plain sight. Unlike Airports the Hotelschool The Hague does not have specially trained dogs or other measures to detect explosives.

2.4. Asses

When it comes to assessing the risk, the Hotelschool has a surveillance system that monitors the surrounding property around the building complex as well as the entrances to the school this can provide excellent analytical data. Aside from that it falls on the security staff and any specialists present to determine whether or not the risk or threat is real or a case of misinformation. Should the threat be real the security staff will operate in close cooperation with local police and bomb removal and disposal teams to ensure the safety and security of all present.

2.5. Respond

The security team will work together with local authorities as well as military specialists to track down the threat to national security, the Hotelschool The Hague and everyone inside the building complex. Providing all data possible to aid in the tracking down of the perpetrators of the crime.

2.6. Review

The extensive variety of techniques and methods implemented throughout the infrastructure that entails the safety and security plan will provide any and all analytical data required such as the appearance of the perpetrators, times and places. Due to the nature of the staff and students at the Hotelschool in The Hague there would be an abundance of eye witness accounts to determine the key facts surround the events that transpired. As such the security team would interpret this information and from it be able to cooperate with local authorities to provide a widespread and joint operations taskforce to eliminate past and future threats. Furthermore, additional security equipment could be installed and a greater police presence in the area arranged given the higher level of threat to a high risk target with high profile guests, lecturers and students who can be the children of prominent political or other high risk bracket professions or employments.

2.7. Appendices

App. 1.

(Wikimedia, 2014)

App. 2

(A. Wahab, 2014)

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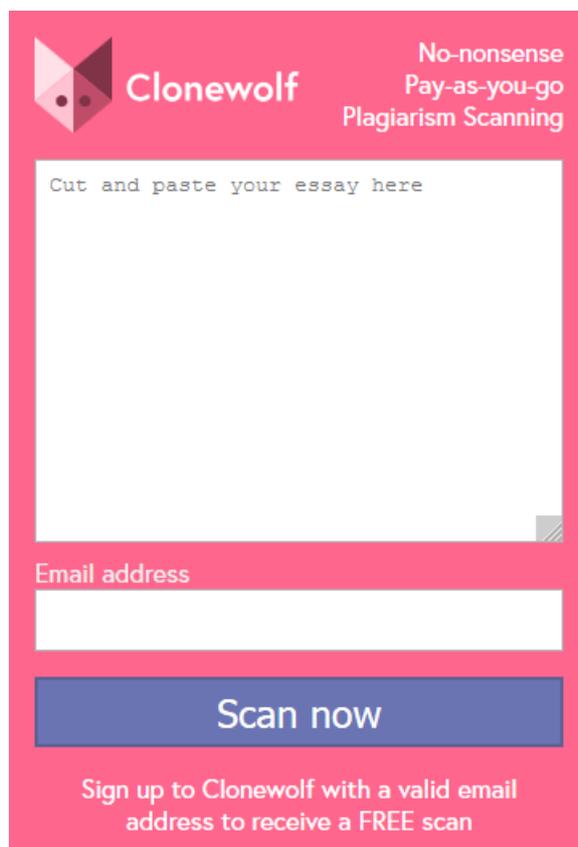
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