

**NEW ZEALAND'S HOTEL INDUSTRY'S SECURITY
READINESS: STAKEHOLDERS' PERSPECTIVES**

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ABSTRACT

This unique study, comprising of information from three distinct groups; ten hotel managers, ten hotel employees and ten hotel guests, explored 'New Zealand's Hotel Industry's Security Readiness: Stakeholders' Perspectives'. This appears to be the only time all three distinct voices (triangulation) were included whilst studying hospitality security in New Zealand. The aim of this research is to understand how prepared hotels in New Zealand are in case of a security breach and to also understand what the three stakeholder groups expect in terms of security. Overall, New Zealand hotels appear to be quite relaxed about security requirements. Hence, the reason for this research.

Responses to a total of 300 questions were carefully collated and analysed to answer the research questions. Each participant separately discussed and answered ten questions. Over 300 sources of secondary literature were consulted and included in this study to provide either background information for the thesis or support for various findings and discussion topics. An interpretivist approach was adopted for this research.

The specific research questions for this study were:

1. To what extent are hotels in New Zealand security-ready to meet guest's security expectations, needs and wants?
2. What kind of security training are the staff provided with to prepare them to discharge their duties professionally?
3. How important is security to guests?

The findings showed that all three stakeholder groups (managers, employees, and guests) considered security to be extremely important, even though they considered New Zealand to be safe. All three groups also believed that it was the hospitality properties' responsibility to look after their guests and protect them. It should not be left up to the individuals to take care of themselves. Knowing their own properties well, and their own security efforts, the group of managers mainly rated security as being between medium to low. They acknowledged that their security was not at the desired level, but they mitigated that with New Zealand being a safe destination. They also agreed that not enough was being done in terms of staff security training. These findings will be useful for individual hotel properties when making security decisions, government when working on policy issues and guests when making travel plans.

One very significant and interesting finding that came out of the research was that guests were willing to pay extra just so that they can stay in a property with better security. This is in total agreement with the literature.

It is important to emphasise here that this study was designed and conducted prior to the March 15th, 2019, Christchurch terrorist attack.

APPROVAL

I certify that I have supervised / read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in quality and scope, as a thesis for the fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis submitted in fulfilment of the PhD degree is my own work and that all contributions from any other persons or sources are properly and duly cited. I further declare that the material has not been submitted either in whole or in part, for a degree at this or any other university. In making this declaration, I understand and acknowledge any breaches in this declaration constitute academic misconduct, which may result in my expulsion from the programme and/or exclusion from the award of the degree.

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So, while this PhD is essentially in my name, so many others had a hand in it.

“Ehara taku toa, he takitahi, he toa takitini”

*(My success should not be bestowed onto me alone,
as it was not individual success, but success of a collective)*

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CHAPTER 1.0 INTRODUCTION

**“He aha te mea nui o te ao
He tangata, he tangata, he tangata”**
(Te Ahukaramu Charles Royal, 2007)

1.1 Introduction

The popular Maori proverb above emphasises the critical importance of people. We should make every possible effort to protect them. This research is fundamentally about providing safety and security for people, providing care and concern. It is not enough just to provide food and water. Hospitality encompasses all of that, and much more. Hospitality is about how we treat and take care of our visitors and guests.

Hospitality and tourism is a high growth industry for many countries, including New Zealand, but it has, in the past decade or so become very attractive to terrorist elements as a potential soft target. This is due to the fact that military camps, embassies and government offices and buildings have become more difficult to penetrate. These establishments have the financial means to ensure that they are well fortified and prepared for terrorist attacks and other disasters. So, terrorists are constantly searching for ‘softer’ targets. Terrorists basically want a target where the yield will be high with very little investment on their part; meaning with very little effort, they will be able to kill or injure a large group of people. The bigger the terrorist incident, the bigger the ensuing media coverage, which is what terrorist groups are after. Terrorists want worldwide media coverage that will last a long time. Rohner and Frey (2007) state that terrorists and the media have co-existed for a long time and have formed a dependent relationship. The article claims that the two parties feed off each other, and both parties need each other to exist.

One possible target terrorists have identified is the hospitality industry. Attacking a hospitality operation (e.g. hotel) occupied by foreigners would attract international

attention with extensive media coverage. Attacking a hotel with guests from several different countries will get prime media coverage the world over. With occupants from all over the world, a single attack will attract the attention of several countries. Terrorism thrives on media attention, in order to highlight their grievances, plight and predicament. Unlike criminal activity, terrorism is about an under-lying political message. When groups find it impossible to direct attention to their plight through conventional means, they resort to terrorism.

Hospitality and tourism, is a broad grouping including, amongst others, accommodation properties (hotels, motels, backpackers, resorts), food and beverage outlets (restaurants, cafes, coffee shops, fast food outlets, pubs and bars), food manufacturers, sport events (Olympics Games, FIFA World Cup, Rugby World Cup) and other event management (exhibitions, conferences, weddings), cruise and maritime related activities and also travel agencies and tour organisers. Hospitality and tourism is an umbrella term spanning quite a few lucrative sub-industries. This research will focus on the hotel industry in New Zealand specifically, but it will have an impact over hospitality and tourism in general.

Pizam (2010) argues that the violent terrorist acts provide terrorists groups with a voice; a voice that was previously ignored. He also goes on to state that terrorists want easy targets where they are almost certainly guaranteed success. The bigger the carnage created, the bigger the message sent. The louder the message, the higher the chance of getting the right people to take notice.

The aim of this research is to understand how prepared hotels in New Zealand are in case of a security breach and to also understand what the three stakeholder groups expect in terms of security. It will look at terrorism and how it can negatively affect

the hospitality/tourism industry in New Zealand. This research will give a more holistic view of the impacts of terrorism on the hospitality industry. It will provide an indication of the industry's preparedness and also the stakeholder's risk perceptions. While this study is about New Zealand and utilises New Zealand data, the findings will be useful when studying the hospitality industries in other similar countries.

Chapter one starts off by introducing the indigenous people of Aotearoa, Maori. Te reo words and phrases have been included throughout this thesis as a testament to the original people of this land, their culture and their part of the tourism & hospitality industry. This chapter also provides a background to the study, discussion around crisis management, explains the research topic, research gap, research objectives and the overall scope of the study. It's a comprehensive starting point for this thesis which aims to understand how prepared hotels in New Zealand are in case of a security breach and to also understand what the three stakeholder groups expect in terms of security.

1.2 Manaakitanga and Whanaungtanga

Manaakitanga is one of many Maori philosophies and values that shape their thinking and demonstrates the special way that Maori go about their everyday life. In many ways this has been passed onto the rest of New Zealand. New Zealand has often been cited as being very warm and welcoming. Perhaps *manaakitanga* explains why New Zealand behaves in this manner. McDowell (2009) describes *manaakitanga* as caring; the act of caring for others. This philosophy is important and closely related to hospitality and how we look after and care for our guests. Anybody that is invited into our house, should be taken care of. They should be fed, watered and provided with anything else they may require, within reason. They must feel safe.

Whanaungatanga, according to Lyford and Cook (2005) refer to family or extended family. Their paper, about care for patients in the health sector, explains that when you look after someone, the caregivers are often considered to be like family. It is possible that this patient care model can extend to all others who provide care, such as the hospitality industry. Often hospitality staff provide care for guests beyond the basic requirement.

So it would be safe to conclude that manaakitanga and whanaungatanga both underpin hospitality and tourism in New Zealand with respect to the care component that is given to visitors of the country.

1.3 Background of the study

Commenced working on the research proposal in early 2017. It was approved in January 2018. Data collection, analysis and the writing of the thesis started in 2018. All this took place before the unfortunate March 15th 2019 Christchurch attack. That fateful day New Zealand blotted her copybook. It is important to set the timing straight from the onset so that readers and users of this study can understand the research design and purpose. Any study in this area post-Christchurch would have a distinctly different design.

The purpose of this study was to explore whether the New Zealand hospitality industry was prepared to deal with a terrorist attack in the event one occurred. At the time this study commenced, there wasn't any information in the public domain that an attack was possible or imminent. At the time of this study, there weren't any major terrorist events in New Zealand's history.

New Zealand has always been peaceful, known for not participating in wars not of her making, and for her sensible foreign policies. While it is a small country at the

edge of the world, it is a major contributor in many areas in the international arena. New Zealand is a sports focused country, where sports is akin to a religion. Regardless of age or gender, people either played sports or watched sports. The three main, popular sports in New Zealand are rugby, cricket and netball. They have put New Zealand on the world map time and time again.

It was the first country to provide women with the opportunity/responsibility to vote. This happened way back in 1893 (Houkamau and Boxall, 2015). Today it is on to its third female Prime Minister and they were all successful in their own right (Knight, 2018). It is fastidious about its clean, green and pure image. It is not just about branding, it is genuinely concerned about the environment and climate change. It is now a part of the country's culture.

Given the above introduction, New Zealand is not exactly a target for terrorists. But one did. New Zealand's geography and foreign policies gave it that comfort that it was safe from terrorism. So, this study was about studying that comfort and understanding the attitude towards security and how it permeates throughout society.

In its counterterrorism country report for 2005, the National Counterterrorism Center defines terrorism as "premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against non-combatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine agents" (National Counterterrorism Center, 2006).

According to Ruby (2002) and Bergesen (2006), terrorist acts (e.g. kidnappings, suicide bombings, biological contamination) are carried out to create fear in the witnesses and the wider audience. The physical victims themselves are merely collateral damage. They are sacrificed to achieve a much bigger, higher goal.

In recent times, governments of most countries have been steadfast in not giving in to terrorists groups and paying any ransom (Sridharan, 2016) in cases of kidnappings. So, we have seen the beheading and killing of several hostages (MacLaughlin, 2016). It is difficult for governments to turn down assisting their own citizens. However, if a particular country gives in to terrorists, then all their citizens are at risk of being kidnapped because terrorists will think that that particular country will give in and surrender. If the country refuses to give in to terrorists, then the government may suffer at the polls when it comes to election time. Difficult choices for politicians who depend on the ballot box.

History shows that terrorists have a variety of ways of causing harm to the intended targets. These include suicide bombing, food terrorism (poisoning of food supply), close quarter attacks amongst others. These can cause chaos in an otherwise stable community and the damage to the economy can be devastating and long lasting. Several journal articles explaining the availability of funding and human resources to carry out various terrorist attacks exist (Yoon & Shanklin, 2007b; Wu, et al., 2009; Palermo, 2006; Atran, 2003; Post, Ali, Henderson, Shanfield, Victoroff, & Weine, 2009). This is extremely disturbing. The articles go on to detail the usage of each method of attacks as well.

Al-Qaeda's interest in attacking food supply, including research on animal and plant diseases have been documented. These information was located post 9/11 (Dalziel, 2009; Peters, 2003). Poisoning of the food or water supply will be an effective way to attack a particular population (Khan, Swerdlow and Juranek, 2001). These journal articles demonstrate that terrorist groups have been studying these different modes of attacks while the hospitality industry itself has not appeared to have made any preparation to protect itself (Yoon and Shanklin, 2007c). The industry as a whole

does not appear to be taking the threat seriously. Given the current conditions we live in, one would reasonably expect more studies in this field to have been carried out.

Terrorists have been attacking military installations, foreign embassies, government buildings and establishments for a long time. These have now become harder to attack and penetrate because these organisations have spent a lot of money fortifying and protecting their assets and people. Attacking these conventional targets have become obsolete. Terrorists want to ensure their limited resources are used productively. They cannot afford to waste resources or opportunities. Besides attacking the targets listed above will generally only upset a single country. The investment to return yield, is minimal.

More recent media reports and academic literature indicate that terrorists are looking towards easier 'soft targets' to attack (Beňová, Hošková - Mayerová, & Navrátil, 2019; Anzalone, 2016; Masraff, Drevon, & Villard, 2017; Wee, 2017). One of those targets is the hospitality and tourism industry. It is hoped that attacking such an important aspect of a country's economy will affect that particular country's foreign affairs policies. Paralyzing a country's economy will have a longer-term impact on how countries will behave in the international arena. Countries are more likely to succumb when their economy is negatively impacted. Corbet, O'Connell, Efthymiou, Guiomard, & Lucey (2019) and Khazai, Mahdavian, & Platt (2018) published research shows that terrorism directly impacts on tourism.

Not effectively managing an attack will lead to an unwanted crisis. A crisis will occur only when it is least expected. If for instance, a hotel is prepared and has readied itself for a variety of scenarios, they will not be attacked and if they were to be attacked, they will be prepared to manage that attack. Crisis management itself requires several strategies to be implemented with a view to minimising damage and negative impact.

So, the ideal will be to have crisis management strategies at the ready to be deployed; but more importantly hotels should be prepared in such a way that attacks will not occur or be discouraged. Terrorists only look for soft, easy targets.

Hospitality and tourism industry includes accommodation, food and beverage and also events amongst others. The industry is huge and has many facets to it. A strike on a particular hotel for instance, could potentially affect citizens of several countries and this is what terrorists groups want. Terrorists thrive on media coverage and such attacks on hospitality will provide them with the level of exposure they desire. On the other hand, attacking for instance a particular country's embassy will only affect that one country. It will be an isolated attack yielding very little to the terrorist organisation. So, to get their message across, terrorists will continue to pursue hospitality and tourism targets.

The negative impacts and implications of terrorism on hospitality and tourism can be devastating. It can be economically crippling for a destination and even a country and region. Tourists will stay away from regions or destinations that are deemed dangerous. Terrorism thrives on media coverage. Terrorists tend to strike, create chaos and mayhem which in turn deters tourists from destinations and/or activities. They kill a few but create lasting fear in rest of the world. This is and has been their strategy.

With many countries highly dependent on tourism, there is a need to, as an industry, prepare and protect guests and assets alike. Once hospitality properties can demonstrate that they are doing everything possible to provide the required level of security, it will serve as a deterrent, and it could perhaps also become a competitive advantage when compared to other properties in the vicinity that do not bother with

security. Guests may be willing to pay for additional security, if it means that it will be safer for them.

1.4 New Zealand Tourism statistics

Table 1.1: Excerpt from Fitch Solutions (2019)

Key Forecasts (New Zealand 2016 – 2023)								
Indicator	2016	2017	2018e	2019f	2020f	2021f	2022f	2023f
Total arrivals '000	3,494.34	3,723.34	3,857.72	4,026.86	4,178.76	4,304.22	4,426.52	4,547.31
Total arrivals '000, %	11.7	6.6	3.6	4.4	3.8	3.0	2.8	2.7
International Tourism Receipts, NZDbn	16.34	16.36	18.43	19.75	20.06	21.52	22.26	22.55
International Tourism Receipts, NZDbn, %	19.34	0.1	12.7	7.2	1.6	7.3	3.4	1.3

e/f = estimate/forecast

Table 1.1 contains excerpts from the data collated by Fitch Solutions (Fitch Solutions, 2019). The 2018 column lists the closing estimates. The exact figures were not known but it is reasonable to expect that the data presented will be close to the final figures. 2018 tourist arrivals had increased by 3.6% when compared to the 2017 data. The 2020 figures and a few years after 2020, will be a bit off, due to Covid and the borders/airports being largely closed.

Projections for 2019 show a further increase 4.4%. This is healthy especially since the March 2019 Christchurch terrorist attacks. The projection is that in 2023, 4.5 million would visit New Zealand. That is roughly the population of New Zealand. This data was projected way before the Covid pandemic. We live in a different world today. Until a vaccine is produced and distributed, international tourism cannot be expected to occur.

Another important figure to take note of is the international tourism receipts which in essence means the amount of money spent by international tourists in the country. This is 'new' money introduced into the New Zealand economy. 2018

international tourism receipts are expected to close at 18.43 billion dollars. In 2019 the amount is expected to increase by 7.2% to 19.75 billion dollars and in 2023 that spending is expected to reach 22.55 billion dollars. This is a significant amount given the size of the New Zealand economy. So, it is definitely worthwhile to make the effort to protect this industry. In fact, it is important to safeguard the tourism and hospitality industry.

The full effect and implication of the March 2019 Christchurch attack will not be known till the figures for 2019 are tabulated and finalised. As long as the country and the industry is seen to be making serious efforts to remedy the situation and protect international guests, the impact may be minimal.

The New Zealand Prime Minister, Jacinda Ardern's passionate response to the attack captured worldwide attention and it is largely seen as a positive (Fifield, 2019). World leaders, including leaders from the Muslim countries have praised her for the way in which she handled the situation. Her genuine compassion has enamoured the world. How this translates or positively affects tourism in New Zealand is not known yet. It was the first time a tragedy of this size or nature had occurred in New Zealand. How the government responded was always going to be critical. Not doing anything was not an option. So the Prime Minister and the government, opted to immediately enact new gun laws, demonstrate genuine care and concern, and stand shoulder to shoulder with the survivors and the wider New Zealand community as they journeyed through these uncharted waters. Shock, disbelief and grief covered the entire nation. Anger was obvious. The condolence messages from around the world helped ease that pain. New Zealand had friends internationally willing to help in her hour of need.

Along the way, many hard and difficult questions were being asked. How was this individual that took away a nation's innocence, able to enter and live in the