

## **Safety and Security within the Tourism and Hospitality Sector In collaboration with the Ministry of Home Affairs**

By its very nature, tourism is a global and intensely competitive industry.

Although inherently vulnerable to economic crises, terrorist activities and natural disasters, international tourism has shown remarkable resilience in recovering from the adverse effects of such negative, but short-term, factors. However, not only does the consumer have to spend relatively large amount of his/her disposable income to buy the tourism product, he also perceives it in a subjective and experiential manner. As a result, tourism is highly sensitive to perceptions of danger and lack of safety and security. It is in this context that lack of safety and security and incidences of crime represent a more serious threat to travel

### **Safety and Security: Regional and National Perspectives**

The Caribbean Tourism Organization (CTO) estimates that tourism generates about 750,000

direct and indirect jobs in the region, and that in some countries tourism's share of the GDP is as high as 70 per cent. Though today that number could be much higher,

Safety and security are vital to providing quality in tourism. More than any other economic activity, the success or failure of a tourism destination depends on being able to provide a safe and secure environment for visitors.

Regionally, the initiatives of the Association of Caribbean Commissioners of Police (ACCP) to focus discussion on the subject of safety and security, in the tourism industry, are a commendable step in the right direction. However, if the ACCP initiatives and actions are to have a positive and lasting impact, they must benefit from effective co-ordination and co-operation, including the sharing of information and harmonizing of strategies. They must also be fully supported by other principal partners, including the governments, the tourism industry and the community at large.

At the national level, all stakeholders must be involved in ensuring tourism surety by combating crime and protecting residents and visitors, as well as destination's reputation.

### **Public –Private Sector Partnership**

In 2010, THAG made a commitment to improving the quality of tourism, safety standards and security of all visitors to the destination and expanding the level of awareness.

Today we are pleased that this initiative will come to fruition through the endorsement of the Honourable Minister Rohee and the Ministry of Home Affairs.

The Signing of the MOU between the Tourism and Hospitality Association of Guyana and the Ministry of Home Affairs is a positive step for the destination. This initiative will facilitate the sharing of information, capacity building for all related parties and most importantly address the issues relating to safety and security affecting the sector. It is anticipated that this will be a continuous programme that will be reviewed annually for improvement and greater facilitation where necessary.

We envisage that this partnership will aid and improve the efforts of both sectors in their respective mandates.