

26 March 2009

For the attention of the Secretariat of ISO TC 228
And all participants in the work of ISO TC 228

HOTREC position on point 14
of the agenda for the ISO TC 228 meeting in Cappadocia
20-21 April 2009

Although HOTREC* enjoys only a liaison status with ISO Technical Committee 228, without voting right, we would like to express our views on the following point of the agenda:

Point 14 – New project on “Management of safety and security in the tourism industry” – TC 223 Societal security

HOTREC thanks the secretariat of TC 228 for having brought to the attention of TC 228 members the proposal made by the Serbian Institute for Standardisation (ISS) for a new project on the “Management of safety and security in the tourism industry”, within TC 223 Societal security.

After having examined the Serbian proposal, HOTREC would like to make the following remarks.

1. General remarks

The scope of the project is extremely broad and vague as:

- it would cover, “*all sizes of public or private organizations (entities) engaged in providing tourism products and services*”; and
- it would establish a common set of criteria and procedures for crisis management and preparedness, applicable “*in case of any incident that has the capacity to impact the*

* HOTREC represents the hotel, restaurant and café industry at European level. It counts 1.6 million businesses, with 92% of them being micro enterprises employing less than 10 people. The micro and small enterprises (having less than 50 employees) in the hospitality industry representing 99% of businesses make up some 62% of value added. The industry provides some 9 million jobs in the EU alone. HOTREC brings together 40 National Associations representing the interest of the industry in 25 different European countries.

tourism industry”, such as “terrorist attacks, war, disease outbreaks, natural disasters, technical accidents and other negative events”.

However, despite the fact that the project itself claims to be applicable to the “tourism industry” (all tourism providers - public as well private operators), the text *de facto* establishes a common set of criteria and procedures for crisis management and preparedness which are horizontal and not sector-specific.

Although the word “tourism” is mentioned 80 times in the text, the methods and principles recommended for the management of safety and security are not tailored to the specificities of the tourism sector. For example, the vast majority of tourism-related enterprises are SMEs. 99% of the European hospitality businesses employ less than 50 persons.

For these reasons, HOTREC believes that this project should not be sector-specific and should not pretend to be applicable across the “tourism industry”. A horizontal standard, non-sector-specific, is probably most appropriate with regard to crisis management and preparedness in case of emergencies such as the ones indicated in the scope, which can affect all sectors and communities, i.e.: *“terrorist attacks, war, disease outbreaks, natural disasters, technical accidents and other negative events”.*

In addition, it would be extremely difficult (if not impossible) to standardise at international level the “management of safety and security in the tourism industry”, since very different cultural, climatic, geographical, dimensional and technical conditions are involved. This exercise could only lead to the lowest common denominator, without bringing any added value.

Moreover, the tourism industry has already in place crisis management tools tailored to a number of situations and specific countries and it collaborates closely with national authorities and various stakeholders involved in crisis management. Therefore, HOTREC is of the opinion that such a project would only duplicate existing tools on crisis management.

2. Specific remarks of the European hospitality industry

In addition, HOTREC stresses that there is currently no support from the European hospitality industry for the development of any international standard that would touch upon the services provided by its enterprises.

Since years, HOTREC has been repeating over and over that standardisation in relation to hospitality services should remain fully market-driven and that official standardisation bodies should not take any initiatives which are not fully supported by the users and the industry concerned. Therefore any standard directly applicable by hospitality services should only be put forward if widely supported by the industry itself. It should not be proposed unilaterally by other stakeholders (e.g. security experts and providers, certifiers, consultants, etc.).

In this respect, we refer to the TC 228 business plan:

“It is also a strategic principle of ISO/TC 228 to follow Resolution 14/2007 adopted by the ISO body governing the Technical Committees’ work, the ISO/TMB” which requests to cover “only those work items where there is a known support among the stakeholders”.

3. Conclusions

In the light of the above mentioned considerations, HOTREC invites the members of TC 228 to consider the adoption of the following resolution on the occasion of its 4th plenary meeting in Cappadocia:

Resolution XX/2009 on point 14

The members of TC 228:

- Thank the secretariat for having informed the participants of the project “Management of safety and security in the tourism industry” proposed by ISS within TC 223 Societal security.
- Take note of the total lack of support and opposition by the tourism industry to the development of such a project;
- Invite the secretariat not to give further consideration to the Serbian proposal within TC 228 and to communicate this position to TC 223;
- Kindly invite TC 223 to avoid the development of any project specifically focusing on tourism services.

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We would appreciate if the position of HOTREC could be circulated to all participants in the work of ISO TC 228.

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