



# How to Close Risk Management Loopholes

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In partnership with:



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## Research Objectives and the Purpose of this Whitepaper

Whether an organization has an entire department overseeing traveler safety and security or a department of one, the duty of care obligation is the same. This research aims to explore the ways in which traveler safety protocols are established and executed, including the extent to which technology is utilized and integrated into the greater travel program. By identifying gaps in current practices, travel managers can better understand how or if their travelers are open to potential risk as well as ways to modify their policies and initiate or expand technological support to provide greater safety and security.

## Methodology

This study is based on an online survey fielded from April 12<sup>th</sup> to April 21<sup>st</sup>, 2017, to 1,238 travel managers in the United States. In total, 148 participated in the survey, yielding a response rate of 12%.

Due to rounding, percentages displayed in charts may add to more or less than 100%. Additionally, figures displayed in a chart may not always equal the exact figures in the report's narrative for this same reason.



## Step 1. Identify Risk Management Vulnerabilities

It is the responsibility of every organization to ensure the safety and security of their employees whether they are in the office, a remote employee, or on work travel. However, maintaining this duty of care becomes increasingly challenging due to the variety of different problems that can arise when traveling, from run-of-the-mill cancelled flights to catastrophic events requiring evacuation. Nearly all business travelers (87%) have experienced air travel mishaps in the previous 12 months, one-quarter (24%) report needing to evacuate or return early, and another one-quarter (24%) report having a medical mishap.<sup>1</sup>

Despite the frequency of incidents when traveling, travel managers are often more reactive than proactive, with three in ten (29%) saying they don't know how long it would take to locate all their travelers should an incident occur. For years, travel managers have relied on travelers to book through preferred channels so data is captured by the GDS. However, an increase in booking channel options and threats to security have resulted in significant safety and security gaps, largely driven by outdated or entirely absent risk management protocols and procedures, automated data capture, and effective communication methods. Failing to establish and execute safety and security measures leaves travelers and organizations vulnerable when the unforeseen happens.

### Business Travelers' First Phone Call



Three in five travel managers (60%) rely on travelers to reach out if they need help if they haven't booked through proper channels



More than one-half of travelers (58%) say they would call their supervisor if they were in need of support or assistance due to an emergency or safety and security situation when on business travel, not their company's travel security department (36%), their travel manager (29%), their company's third-party security firm (26%), or their TMC (25%)<sup>2</sup>



One-third of travelers (31%) say their companies do not offer travel insurance or travel assistance services<sup>3</sup> despite roughly one-half offering in-house support (60%), direct contact with a security/medical partner (58%), assistance services provided by insurance policies (53%), and services offered via TMCs (46%)

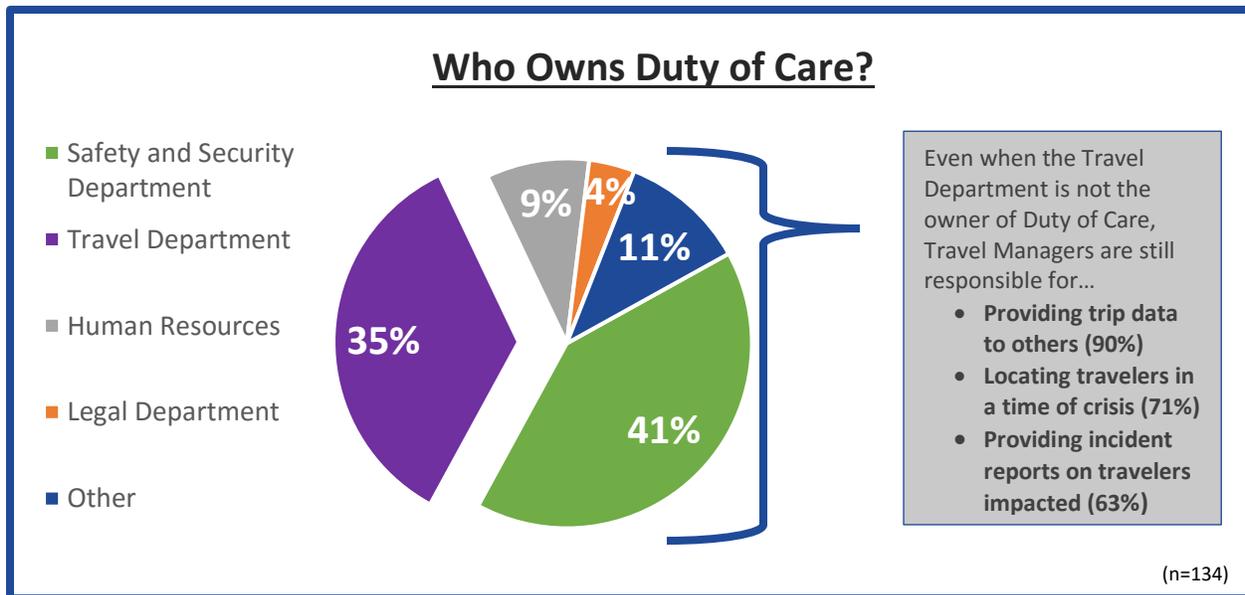
<sup>1</sup> [Business Traveler Study 2014: The Cost of Mishaps](#), GBTA Foundation, in partnership with AIG. September 2014.

<sup>2</sup> [Risk on the Road: Safety and Security Concerns Lead to Traveler Behavior Change](#), GBTA Foundation. March 2017

<sup>3</sup> [Business Traveler Study 2014: The Cost of Mishaps](#)

## Step 2. Establish Appropriate Protocols

Regardless of which department formally oversees the Duty of Care program, travel managers still play a key role in supporting travelers should disaster strike, which is why the vast majority (85%) of travel programs include risk management protocols.



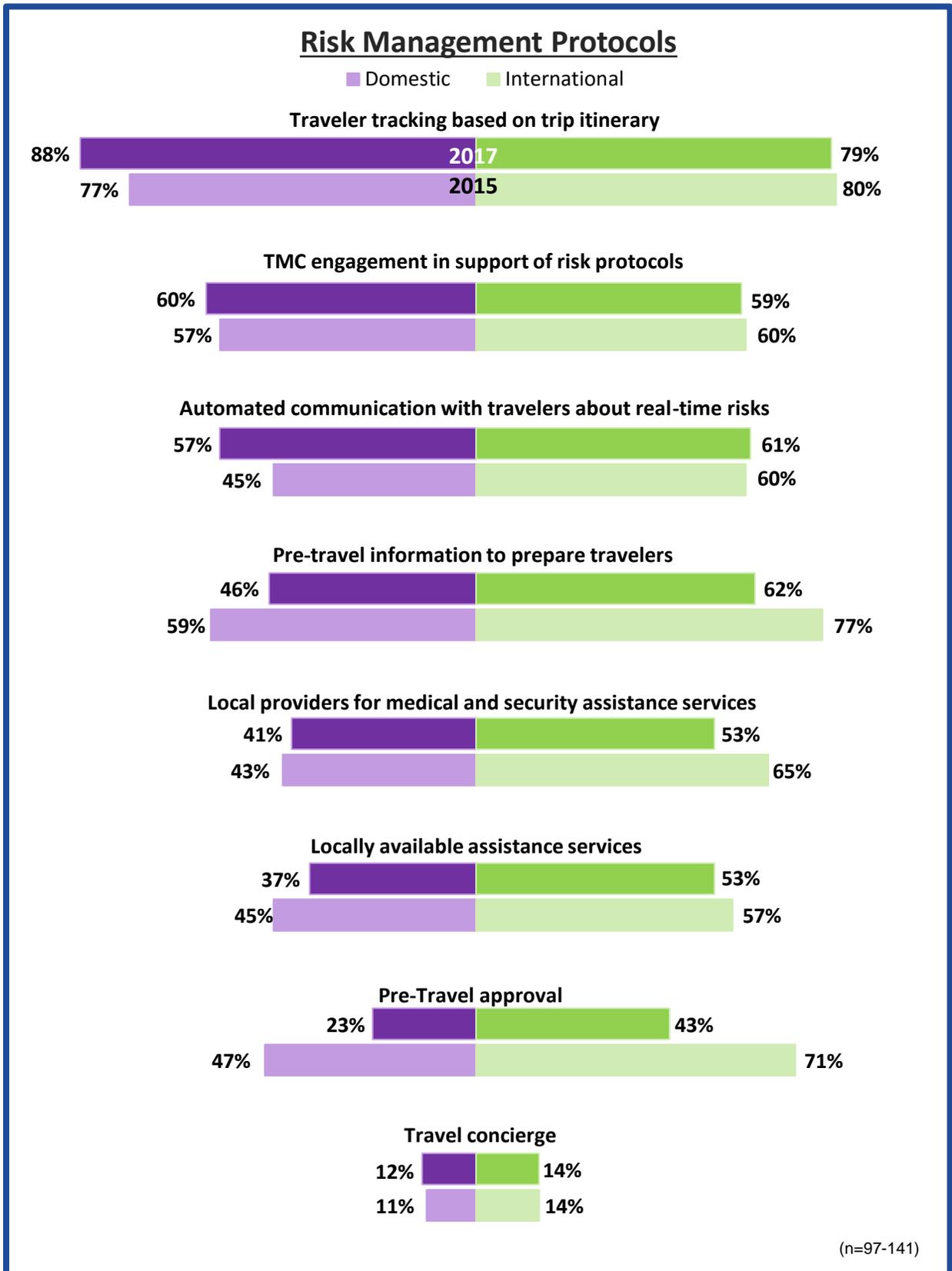
Among those who do not have domestic or international risk management protocols in place, employee safety issues are handled in an ad hoc manner. Some travel managers express a strong desire to implement risk management protocols but cite difficulty securing C-suite level buy-in, while others seem satisfied with handling issues on a case-by-case basis.

However, the mere existence of a risk management program is not enough; protocols must address the needs and risks travelers face when they leave the office, be it to go across town or across the globe. Perhaps in response to an increasingly unstable world where threats to safety are omnipresent, over the past two years, prevalence of domestic travel risk management protocols have increased to rival those of international travel. While there is still needed improvements on both fronts, it is encouraging to see travel managers and other duty of care managers modifying protocols to meet the current climate.

Despite the observed progress, only three in five international travelers (62%) are given pre-travel information and even fewer (53%) are given information on local providers for medical and security assistance services before leaving the country. As both security threats and technology evolve, even the most robust protocols that once served companies well may now have weaknesses requiring immediate attention and modification.

For both domestic and international travel, pre-trip approval requirements plummeted from 2015 rates. This may be a result of companies loosening the reigns on business travel due to a stronger economy or an increase in technology adoption, thus reducing the need for using pre-trip approval as a means of tracking travelers.

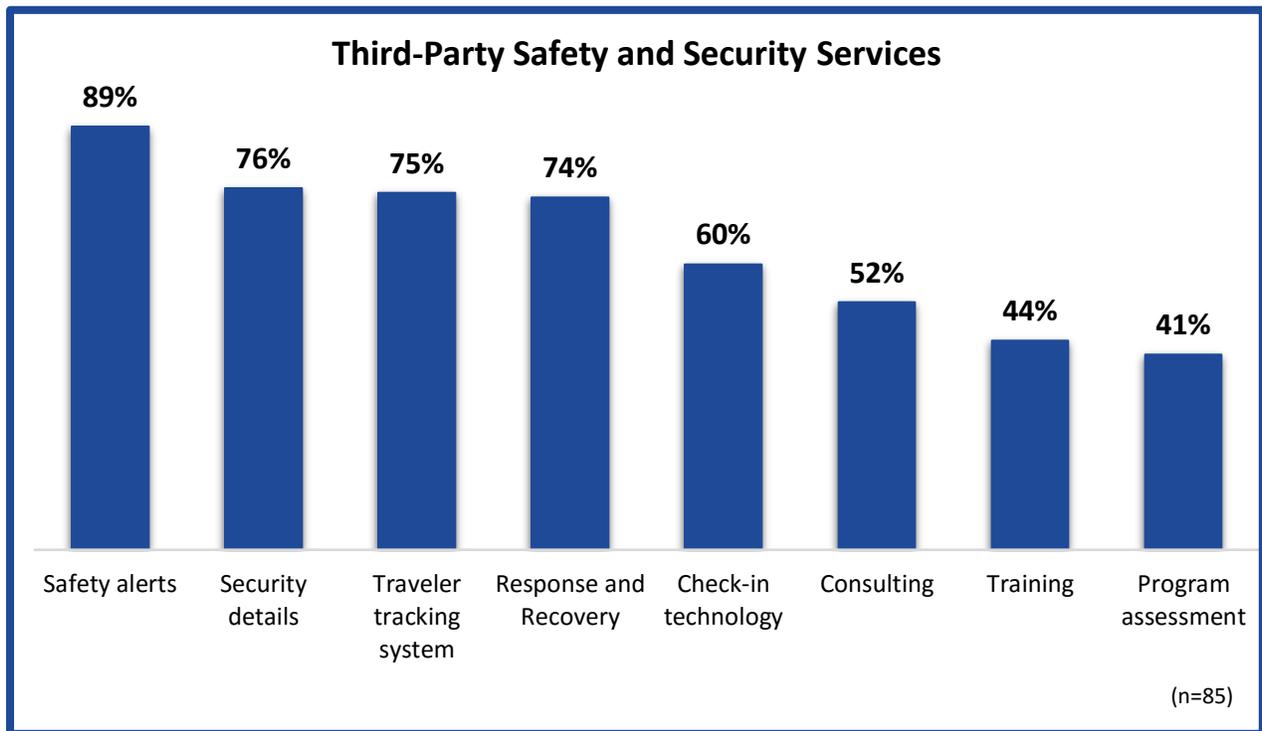




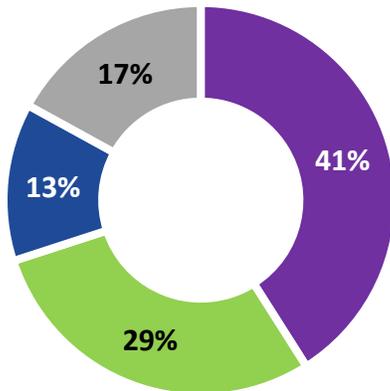
## Step 3. Support Your Protocols with Integrated Data and Expert Service Providers

To manage the complexity that comes with building and maintaining a robust Duty of Care program, some travel managers enlist services from a safety and security company while others work to integrate safety and security features into existing technology platforms. Travel managers should assess the needs of their programs and determine the best way to allocate resources in order to provide the greatest level of security for their travelers.

Two-thirds of organizations (65%) retain the services of third-party safety and security companies offering services addressing advanced needs for presumably high-risk areas, like security details (76%) and response and recovery (74%) services, to basic offerings from which travelers to any destination could benefit, like safety alerts via push notifications through a mobile app, text messages, and emails (89%) or a traveler tracking system (74%). At organizations using third-party safety and security companies, four out of five travel managers report travelers can be tracked anywhere (84%) at any time (81%). Importantly, even if an organization’s current travel security needs are not obviously high risk, these companies can still provide valuable consulting (52%), training (44%), and program assessments (41%) to help ensure adequate resources and protocols are in place to safely send your travelers out on the road.



**Leveraging Available Data to Communicate with Travelers**



- We use each system independently
  - We have a central system that automatically merges all data sources
  - We rely on a third party to communicate with employees
  - We rely on employees to contact us or our assistance providers when they are in need
- (n=119)

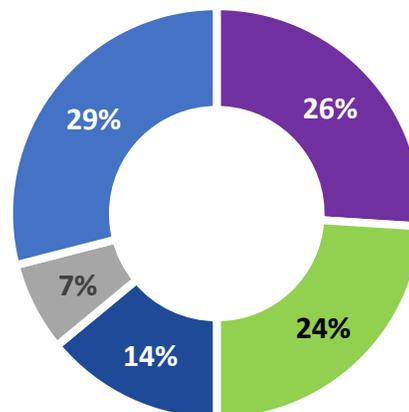
Depending on the maturity of the program, travel managers have access to many different data sources, many of which are automated (84% online booking tool; 69% expense; 52% safety and security). While automated data collection is certainly preferred to manual, the full potential of this is not reached unless the systems are integrated. Less than one-half (47%) of travel managers report their OBTs and expense tools are integrated and only one in five (21%) say their safety and security tools are integrated with their OBT and expense tools.

Consolidating data into a central system allows for faster retrieval of information when needed — an invaluable asset should disaster strike. Yet, less than one-third of travel managers (29%) currently have systems that automatically merge all data sources, while two in five (41%) maintain separate systems. Notably, one in six (17%) rely on employees to reach out for assistance when in need.

Overall, only one-half of travel managers (50%) say, in the event of an emergency, they can locate all employees in the affected area within two hours or less. Those with automated data merging report being able to do this significantly faster (41% less than one hour, 68% two hours or less) than those who have data housed in separate systems (22% less than one hour, 55% two hours or less).

As mentioned earlier, three in ten travel managers (29%) do not know how long it would take to locate all affected employees in a crisis, a clear demonstration of the consequences of operating without risk management protocols. This reactive posture may make communicating with travelers difficult if not impossible at times.

**Average Time Elapsing Between Security Incident and Confirmation of Every Employee's Safety**



- Less than 1 hour
  - 1- 2 hours
  - 3- 5 hours
  - 6 or more hours
  - Don't know
- (n=123)



## Close Data-Capture Gaps

Even before security threats emerge, travel managers must know where their travelers are located in order to ascertain if they are in affected areas. To do this, travel managers most often rely on the travel data captured and fed to them when travelers book through an OBT or TMC (96% air, 89% hotel, 75% car reservations, 62% rail reservations). However, this presents a problem because travelers do not always book through these channels! Only one in five travel managers (20%) report using technology to capture traveler data booked outside their travel program, despite two in five North American travelers (42%) saying booking directly on a supplier's website is a preferred channel.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, even though a majority of business travelers agree any destination could now be considered "high-risk," only one-third (31%) say when traveling to places they consider unsafe, they would book through their organization's travel agency rather than directly with the supplier.<sup>5</sup>

One-third (31%) of travel managers monitor travelers once at the destination through GPS-data, like a mobile check-in, but this is still traveler dependent. If a traveler does not check in at the appointed time or destination, the travel manager has no way of knowing if the traveler is in danger, preoccupied, or just forgetful.

**57%**

of business travelers agree, "Nowadays, any destination could be 'high-risk.'"

**31%**

of travel managers say "We are unable to support travelers who book outside our programs"

Failure to collect traveler data — for whatever reason — does not absolve an organization of their duty of care obligations. Capturing traveler data in an automated way that is non-reliant and unaffected by various booking channels and methods or human error is vital to securing travelers' full safety and security.

One-half (56%) of travelers are fine with being tracked via GPS when traveling for work<sup>6</sup> and research shows employees who feel cared about by their companies are more satisfied with their business travel experiences.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, organizations making greater investments in this area may be interpreted by travelers as less of a nuisance and more as an increased interest in their safety and security.

<sup>4</sup> [Travel Policy Communication: Understanding Disconnects and Increasing Compliance](#), GBTA Foundation, in partnership with HRS. November 2016.

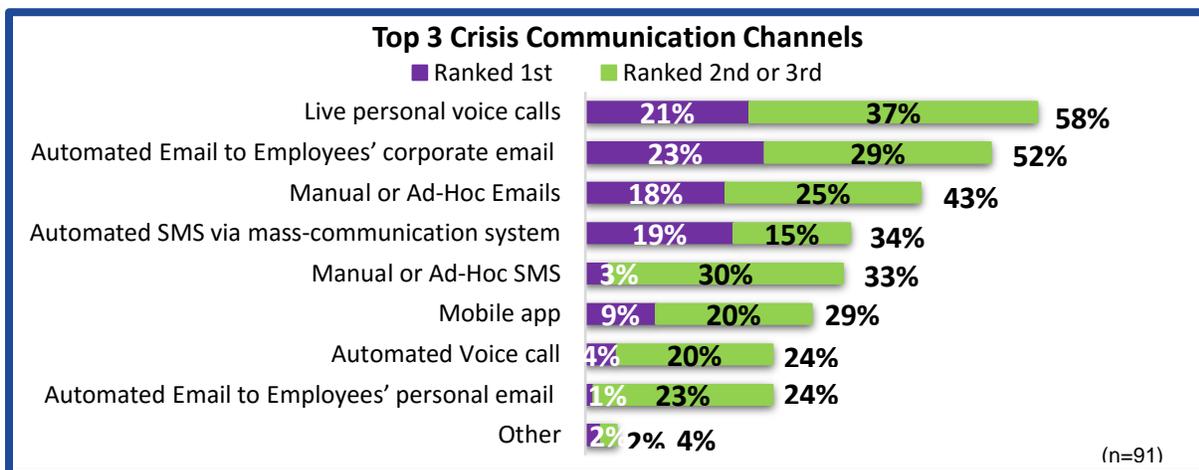
<sup>5</sup> [Risk on the Road: Safety and Security Concerns Lead to Traveler Behavior Change](#)

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> GBTA Foundation data. 2016.

## Use Effective Communication Channels

Once it has been determined travelers are in an area experiencing a security threat, every minute spent trying to get in touch could be putting them at increased risk. Live personal calls (58%) and automated emails to business addresses (52%) are the most popular methods of communicating with travelers about disruptions, emergencies, and the like. Interestingly, automated text messages, automated calls, and mobile app notifications are far less common communication strategies now than they were in 2015 (50%, 32%, and 36%, respectively in 2015; 34%, 29%, and 24%, respectively in 2017).



Previous research shows, under ordinary circumstances, travelers most prefer to learn about company travel policies via email (56%), the company intranet (43%), and in-person meetings (38%).<sup>8</sup> While communicating in a crisis is certainly different, some of the underlying reasons behind these preferences may be applicable.

While, admittedly, travelers are inundated with emails, built-in filing systems, markers for importance, and simplified search features make retrieving needed correspondence quick and easy. Whether a traveler needs to reference their travel policy to check their per diem or who to contact in an emergency, having policies and protocols at their fingertips is likely both a comfort and convenient. The same may be said for a company's intranet, depending on the ease with which it is accessed and navigated. If travelers cannot access it remotely or on mobile devices, the usefulness of this option is likely limited.

In-person meetings about general travel policies are most preferred by those newer to the work force (51%, 18-34 years old), compared to more veteran travelers (34%, 35-54; 33% 55+).<sup>9</sup> This may be because the concept of a travel policy – restrictions around which vendors and booking channels to use – is likely a foreign concept to a new business traveler. Nevertheless, these in-person meetings present a perfect opportunity to inform travelers of the resources available to them, like travel insurance and assistance services, as well as company risk management protocols and procedures.

<sup>8</sup> [Travel Policy Communication: Understanding Disconnects and Increasing Compliance](#).

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.



## Conclusions and Recommendations

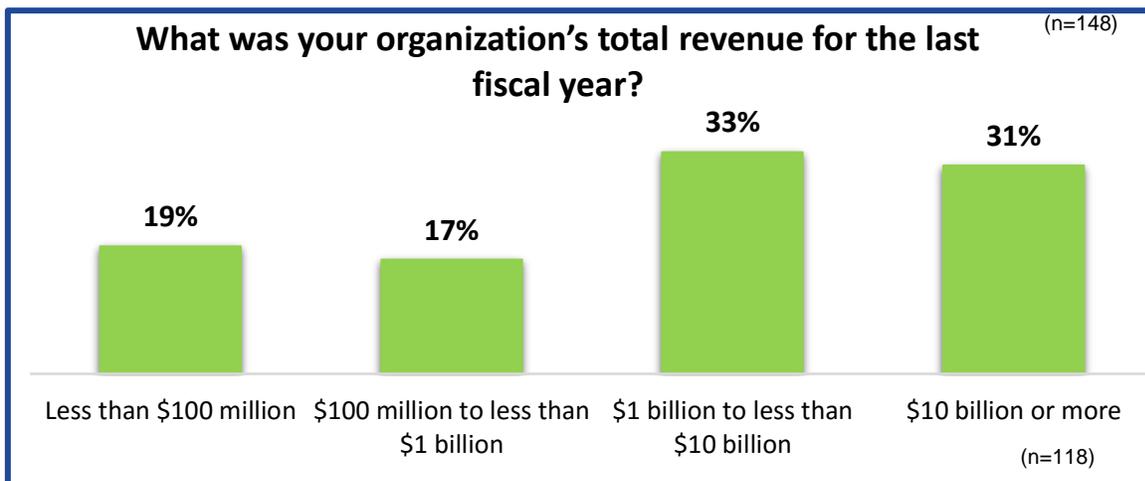
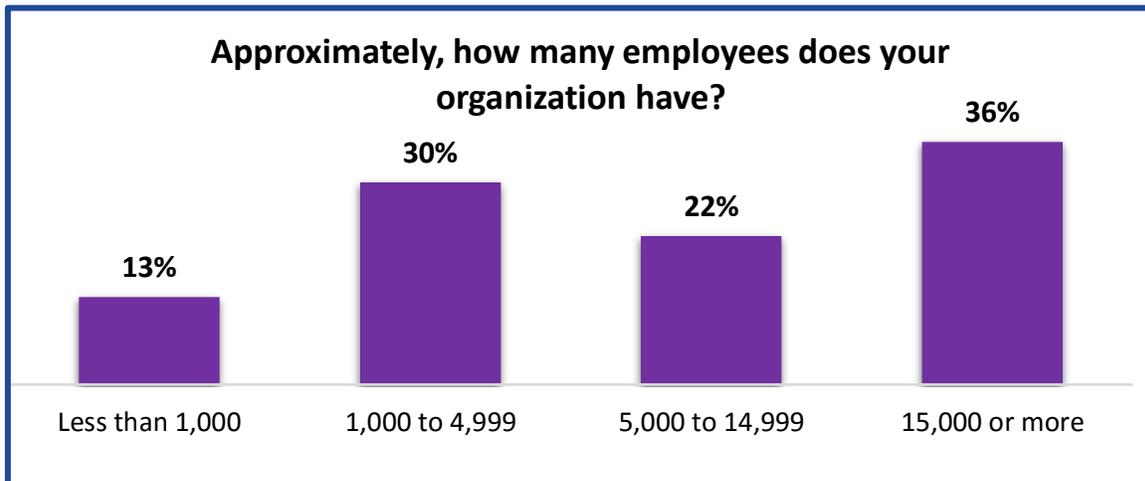
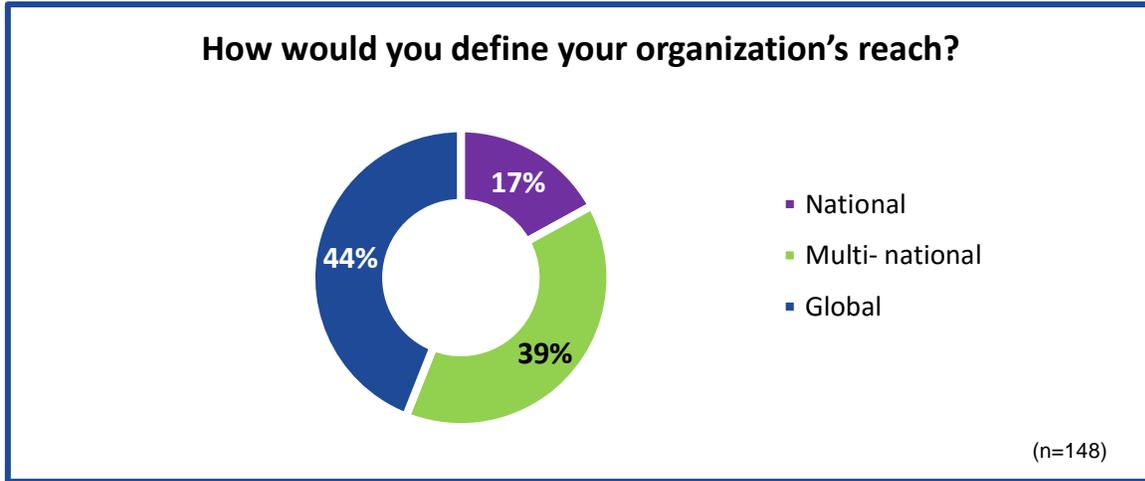
Regardless if there is one or one million traveling employees, an organization has an obligation to equip each of them with the information, resources, and support to return home safely no matter what they encounter along the way.

To truly protect travelers, travel managers and other duty of care personnel should establish and explain risk management processes and protocols before anyone leaves the office. Organizations must identify their safety and security needs and investigate the best ways to meet them — be it retaining the services of a third-party supplier or investing in more advanced technology tools. Travel managers also need to clearly explain the actions expected of travelers should disaster strike as well as outline the steps the organization will take in order to facilitate traveler security through communication or support. A fully automated risk management program and a well-informed traveler are the best weapons an organization can use to combat global threats to security and safety.

- 1) Create a proactive, not reactive, traveler safety and security program.** Traveler safety should begin before a single step is taken out the office door. Organizations should establish protocols and procedures to ensure duty of care responsibilities are fulfilled and investments in automated technology can help close data capture gaps before a traveler leaves, alert them to potential issues while on location or en route, and provide information on getting to safety when it matters most. At the same time, travelers should clearly understand the prescribed procedures and resources available to them so there is no question in their mind of how to react when faced with a threat to their safety or security.
- 2) Do not rely on the traveler to make the correct move.** While usually well-intentioned, be it booking through the preferred channels or calling the right person in an emergency, travelers' decisions should not be the difference between secured and failed safety. Automated data capture and aggregation systems that cull travel data from multiple sources or integrate expense management with security tools can help close loopholes in security processes caused by human error. New or improved technology enters the market nearly every quarter — be sure duty of care needs are met with the best solution for your program.
- 3) Investigate the value a third-party safety and security company could bring to your program.** Even if it is just to evaluate and offer suggestions for how to improve existing protocols, consider bringing in experts to help ensure your duty of care program is airtight. If you have significant numbers of travelers routinely traveling to “high-risk” locations, weigh the pros and cons — both from a cost and duty of care standpoint — of outsourcing these responsibilities to professionals with the resources and capacity to provide greater safety and security for your travelers. These professionals are up-to-date on the latest technologies available, so even if you decide to not retain their services, they can likely advise which investments in technology tools will make the biggest difference for your risk management program.



## Demographics



## About Concur

For more than two decades, Concur, an SAP company, has taken companies of all sizes and stages beyond automation to a completely connected spend management solution encompassing travel, expense, invoice, compliance and risk. Our global expertise and industry-leading innovation keep our customers a step ahead with time-saving tools, leading-edge technology and connected data, in a dynamic ecosystem of diverse partners and applications. User-friendly and business-ready, Concur unlocks powerful insights that help businesses reduce complexity and see spending clearly, so they can manage it proactively.



## About GBTA Foundation

The GBTA Foundation is the education and research arm of the Global Business Travel Association (GBTA), the world's premier business travel and corporate meetings organization. Collectively, GBTA's 9,000-plus members manage over \$345 billion of global business travel and meetings expenditures annually. GBTA provides its network of 21,000 business and government travel and meetings managers, as well as travel service providers, with networking events, news, education & professional development, research, and advocacy. The foundation was established in 1997 to support GBTA's members and the industry as a whole. As the leading education and research foundation in the business travel industry, the GBTA Foundation seeks to fund initiatives to advance the business travel profession. The GBTA Foundation is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. For more information, see [gbta.org](http://gbta.org) and [gbta.org/foundation](http://gbta.org/foundation).

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