UNIT 10: SECURITY

Security

Security as a condition is the degree of resistance to, or protection from, harm. It applies to any vulnerable and valuable asset, such as a person, dwelling, community, nation, or organization. Establishing or maintaining a sufficient degree of security is the aim of the work, structures, and processes called "security."

Concept in Hotel

It is the moral and legal responsibility of a hotel to protect its guests and their property against threats posed by human beings with a conscious intent to harm them. The security department of the hotel is responsible for the overall security of the building, in-house guests, visitors, day users, and employees of the hotel.

Security? Why?

Hotel guests want to feel safe and secure in their temporary home. Hotels have a duty to protect them. After all, the business depends upon them. Apart from the possibility of death or injury and destruction, the adverse publicity from an incident, can result in ruined reputations, failing business and knock-on effects to tourism in the country or region. Hotel staff may not even become aware of risks that some guests may bring with them. Consequently, a hotel must be vigilant at all times.

What are the risks?

Examples of Risk

- Terrorism
- Kidnapping
- Robbery by organized crime
- Opportunist robbery
- Burglary from rooms
- Baggage theft
- Invasion of guest privacy, by locals, press, interest groups
- Blackmail of staff

Poor Hotel Security

The use of technology, has greatly impacted how criminals can target hotels.

For instance, instead of visiting a hotel to collect many pieces of information, a criminal can now scan the Internet pulling up specifics about room numbers, location to other areas of interest, the leadership team and photos of critical areas in the property. Using applications like Google Earth, a criminal can diagram the structure and their escape routes.

Consequences

- Possibility of death
- Injury
- Destruction
- The adverse publicity from an incident
- Result in ruined reputations
- Failing business and knock-on
- Effects to tourism in the country or region.
- The risk to hotels can also increase because of the identity of an individual guest or his or her family.
- VIP's, celebrities or the infamous can present special difficulties.
- Easy terrorist attacks

Effective Hotel Security

Now since we know what could be the consequences, it is always better to prevent it than curing it. Sometimes some things may be irreplaceable and it is always preferable to avoid such circumstances. In order to avoid such circumstances, an effective hotel security program is formulated in the hotel organization.

Effective Hotel Security Programs

An effective hotel security programs enables the hotel to avoid preventable incidents and react to a quick, appropriate manner. Three basic elements should be included in the program.

1. People
2. Procedure
3. Equipments

People

No matter which department or post everyone can contribute in making the hotel a safe place for all. This is not only the concern of the security department.

Procedure

Every property needs to have procedures for the staff to follow. The staffs should be well informed about the emergency procedures as well as any unusual events.

Equipments

Simple safety equipments to state-of-the-art security surveillance system all help make today's hotels a safer and better place to be.

Types of Security Providers

Depending upon the various factors such as the company profile, structure, capacity, location, safety requirements as well as feasibility and economy of the hotel, a hotel chooses one of the following types of security service providers:

1. Proprietary/ In- House Security
2. Contract Security

Proprietary security and contract security companies are responsible for protecting companies and businesses and ensuring the safety of employees and consumers. A proprietary security company is controlled entirely by a particular company (hotel itself in this case) and is responsible for the hiring, firing and management of personnel.

A contract security company is operated by a professional security company and contracts its services to different companies.

Cost

Proprietary security is more expensive because your company is in charge of paying for benefits and higher wages for experienced personnel. Because the status of proprietary security is considered higher, it usually attracts a higher quality of guard. The wages tend to be lower with a contract security company because uniforms, sick leave and training benefits are all covered by the service.

Control

Proprietary security employees often feel more loyal to a particular company, because they feel a camaraderie with fellow employees and have an opportunity for growth and promotions. There may be periods of time when a company may have to add or lay off workers, which can create a security problem within a company.

By using a contract security service, companies have the opportunity to deal with staffing problems easily and quickly

Categories of Security Equipments

They can be broadly divided into 5 categories:

1. Equipment for Physical Security and perimeter control.
2. Equipment for Surveillance
3. Communication System
4. Alarm System
5. Equipments for Guest Room Security

Physical Security and Perimeter Control

Physical security involves the protection of the hotel buildings, its ground and the assets within the building. Perimeter control is concerned with restricting access to a property. What are the equipments used in physical security and perimeter control?

- Access control systems allow authorized personnel and material to move through normal access routes while detecting and delaying movement of unauthorized personnel and material.
- Access control adds little, if any, enhancement to a structure's physical barriers. The use of electrically operated locks and strikes with access control systems may actually reduce penetration delay times for doors.
- Thus, access control systems must be integrated with other components of the overall physical security system to be effective. This will ensure that personnel seeking entry to the protected area are queued at the control point(s).
- There are many different types of access control systems and they vary extensively in their complexity and capabilities.

Equipments for Physical Security and Perimeter Control

- Computer security equipment
- Locks
- Safes
- Safety deposit centres
- Security doors
- Security fencing
- X-ray machines, free standing metal detectors, hand held metal detector
- Shutters and grilles
- Explosive detectors
- Steel office storage and furniture
- Vacant property protection: concrete, temporary fencing, barb wire

<u>Equipments for Surveillance</u>

Surveillance is the monitoring of the behaviour, activities, or other changing information, usually of people for the purpose of influencing, managing, directing, or protecting. The word surveillance is the French word for "watching over"; "sur" means "from above" and "veiller" means "to watch". In simple terms it can be defined as the "careful watching of someone or something.

Apart from other sophisticated surveillance equipments such as Biometric Reader- retina recognition, voice recognition, finger print recognition or the surveillance from the satellite, hotel surveillance is done either personally or by the help of Closed Circuit Television Cameras which not only helps us to see what is going on but also record it at the same time on your PC, Laptops or smart phones as well.

HOW HOTEL VIDEO SURVEILLANCE CAN BE BENEFICIAL

1. Security – Hotel video surveillance can help keep your guests safe from theft and other criminals by helping you track your visitors and prevent break-ins on your property.

2. Prevent theft – Hotel security cameras can help keep intruders out of exclusive hotel areas like swimming pools and gyms, where theft is common. A surveillance system in your store room and other maintenance areas can uncover potential employee theft.

3. Remain competitive – Along with providing security, a professional video surveillance system gives your guests peace of mind while staying at your hotel, and can help you increase your return business and remain competitive in an aggressive market.

4. Flexible – Modern security cameras are easy to install and can be adjusted at any time to fit your needs. Unlike analog CCTV cameras, wireless IP cameras don't require technicians, power tools, or miles of wiring. All you do is mount the cameras and start recording.

5. Remote monitoring – Adding an NVR (Network Video Recorder) to your security camera system gives you the ability to broadcast your surveillance footage over the internet. This breakthrough in surveillance technology allows

you to monitor any of your cameras at any time from any internet connection, giving you instant security updates

Alarm System

A burglar alarm is a system designed to detect intrusion – unauthorized entry – into a building or area. They are also called security alarms, security systems, alarm systems, intrusion detection systems, perimeter detection systems, and similar terms. Burglar alarms are used in residential, commercial, industrial, and military properties for protection against burglary (theft) or property damage, as well as personal protection against intruders. Car alarms likewise protect vehicles and their contents. Prisons also use security systems for control of inmates.

Types of Sensors on alarm

In hotel alarm systems are often used for monitor the many entrances and emergency exits found throughout a hotel. There is various type of sensors used in the alarm according to its different functions – fire, burglary, heat, smoke etc.

Equipments for Guest Room Security

When we travel to different places, the main reason that we choose a good hotel is the assurance of a safe, clean and comfortable room. Different security equipments installed in the room makes the guest feel safe and comfortable even when they are travelling away from their own safe dwellings. Hotel guest room security may be enhanced by the use of security equipment such as hotel/motel function locks, safety chains, and similar devices. Secondary access limiting devices on sliding glass, balcony, and connecting room doors, access limiting devices for operational windows, a guestroom telephone or other communication device available for use 24 hours a day, a peephole in or window next to the guestroom door etc.

Biometrics

A new and highly technical access control system involves biometrics. Such a system utilizes human characteristics which are unique to a specific individual. No two Fingerprints are same anywhere in the world, the retina or iris of an eye, and the size, shape, and even the print of a hand.

In Future biometric applications there would be the possibility to include a person's voice being recorded at check-in and immediately being transmitted to the door accessing a restricted guestroom corridor, guestroom, health club, point-of-sales locations throughout the premises which is only limited to guest access.

View ports

Consider the need for the guest to be able to identify a caller before opening the door. A view port [door viewer or peephole] is one device that can serve this purpose. A wide-angle view port maximizes the view of the corridor adjacent to the guestroom door.

Other Necessary Equipments

Smoke Detectors Smoke or heat detection units are required by an increasing number of local jurisdictions. Regulations vary from those only requiring smoke and/or heat detectors in corridors, storerooms, and under stairways to those requiring full systems that provide protection in every guestroom, guest bathroom, public area, and back-of-the-house location.

Carbon Monoxide Detectors: Carbon monoxide is a dangerous by-product of a malfunctioning water heater, kerosene heater, coal boiler, or any other wood, coal, or petroleum product unit. (It is also the most critical toxic gas generated in any structural fire). There have been tragic incidents in which carbon monoxide from such units has resulted in the death of a guest or staff. Since carbon monoxide is invisible and has no smell, it cannot be detected by natural means.

Accident Prevention Signs:

OSHA (Occupational Safety and Health Administration) classifies accident prevention signs into three categories:

1) Danger signs. 2) Caution signs and, 3) Safety instruction signs.

Danger signs: which indicate immediate danger, should be posted to warn of specific dangers and to warn that special precautions may be necessary. Red should be the basic color for identification of all danger signs, which include restricted area, in case of fire, do not enter, and emergency exit signs.

Accident Prevention Signs:

Caution signs:

should only be used to warn against potential hazards or to caution against unsafe practices. The color yellow has been used to advantage for marking physical hazards on stairs in both back-of-the-house stairways and fire stairwells. Areas of construction or remodelling should have caution signs. Floor stand signs could warn guests of wet floors and to watch their step. Safety instruction signs: should be used only where there is a need for general instructions relative to safety measures. These signs are typically green with white lettering. Signs with green arrows, for example, could be used to note the path to follow between buildings or on trails.

Security Procedures

A hotel may be subject to numerous amounts of threats. Some are foreseeable and some are not. It is always wise to be prepared and have a set of procedures laid down so that at the time of emergency, with appropriate in advance training, such procedures may not only help but reduce the risk level and casualties at emergency situations. Nowadays, almost every hotel has a set of security procedures laid down for such emergency situations. Some of them are discussed in this chapter.

Surveillance and Access control

It is important that hotel security should know who are in the building and the purpose of their visit. If the public is invited to patronize certain areas, such as bars, restaurant, banquet room, etc, it does not mean that other areas which are designated for guests, are also available to the public. Anybody disguised as guest can get into the hotel property and remember always to keep on eye on suspected behaviour.

Precautions

There are certain precautions that are needed to be considered in monitoring access through non- public areas:

- Supervision of entrances E.g employee entrance, delivery entrances and service entrances.
- The hotel will have many different entrances which have to be taken special care of.

- Back-gate entrance of employee should be practiced.
- Delivery entrance scanning, proper checking and proper time allocation should be kept in mind while receiving deliveries like food material, maintenance parts, guest room supplies.

Routine Patrolling of guest corridor

Security personnel, guards or even elevator operators should have an eye on the corridors as these are accessible to only guest and any suspicious person with bags, or harmful arms, or equipments should be immediately informed or taken required action. Apart from CCTV surveillance, patrolling from time to time will help increase the security perimeters as well as stop crime on time.

Conclusion

Safety and Security is, thus seen to be a critical issue for the guest comfort and secured stay. Guest must be able to have a secured stay and the employees should have a tension free working environment.