

Data-Driven Travel Security for the Modern Global Workforce

Leveraging AI and real-time intelligence to transform how organizations protect traveling employees.

Executive Summary

Post-pandemic business travel has rebounded significantly, with projections indicating that 2025 will surpass pre-2019 levels. This surge comes amid an increasingly complex global risk environment where traditional national threat assessments no longer suffice. Organizations face unprecedented challenges in fulfilling their duty of care obligations to traveling employees — from executives to field workers — across a landscape marked by geopolitical tensions, natural disasters, and regional instability. To stay ahead of these challenges, organizations must prioritize and expedite the modernization of their travel security.

This white paper from Dataminr, a global leader in real-time information discovery and risk management, examines the evolving challenges of travel security and explores how intelligence and integrated risk management solutions can help organizations protect their traveling workforce while maintaining operational efficiency.

Dataminr real-time alerting solutions, powered by artificial intelligence (AI), can now analyze millions of data points across text, audio, video, and sensor data in over 150 languages, providing security teams with unprecedented visibility into potential risks. When combined with automated travel management integration and two-way notification capabilities, Dataminr enables security teams to detect, assess, and respond to threats within minutes rather than hours, helping organizations fulfill their employee security obligations more effectively than ever before.

The Evolving Travel Security Landscape

Business travel has undergone a fundamental transformation in recent years. While remote work and virtual meetings became the norm during the pandemic, they've ironically driven the recent unprecedented surge in business travel. Organizations have discovered that distributed teams require regular in-person gatherings to maintain team building and company culture and to foster innovation. These on-site meetings, coupled with the challenges of building and maintaining client relationships virtually, have created new patterns of corporate travel that differ from pre-pandemic norms.

[Industry forecasts](#) now predict that business travel in 2025 will surpass 2019 levels, but with a crucial difference: Instead of the conventional model of frequent individual trips, companies are increasingly organizing larger group movements for conferences, team meetings, and client events. This shift presents unique challenges for corporate security teams, who must now manage the complexities of protecting larger groups of employees traveling to the same location while also maintaining visibility of numerous smaller trips across multiple time zones and regions. The expanded travel footprint, combined with evolving global risks, requires security teams to fundamentally rethink their approach to traveler protection.

The Duty of Care Imperative

Organizations have a legal and moral obligation to protect employees from foreseeable risks, particularly during business travel. This duty of care has become increasingly complex as work patterns evolve and travel increases. Security teams must now consider protection for employees across multiple time zones and jurisdictions, each with its own unique challenges and requirements.

The scope of duty of care varies significantly based on industry, role, and destination. Energy sector employees working in remote locations face different risks than financial services professionals attending urban conferences. Security teams must develop comprehensive protocols that address these varying risk levels while maintaining consistent protection standards across the organization.

Major Challenges Facing Corporate Travel Security Teams

The challenge of today's business travel extends far beyond traditional security concerns. Organizations must now navigate an intricate web of risks that can change rapidly based on location, timing, and circumstances. Regional political instability might affect specific neighborhoods or districts while leaving others untouched. Extreme weather events and natural disasters can require rapid evacuation with little warning. Public disorder incidents can quickly escalate from peaceful demonstrations to dangerous situations.



Navigating Logistical and Cultural Complexity

Organizations must navigate an array of logistical and cultural challenges that can impact traveler safety. Infrastructure disruptions have become increasingly common, from transportation delays to accommodation issues, forcing security teams to constantly monitor and adapt their plans. These challenges are further complicated by varying health and safety standards across regions, where access to medical care and emergency services can differ dramatically. Adding another layer of complexity are the cultural and language barriers that travelers face in unfamiliar locations, where misunderstandings about local customs and social norms can inadvertently create risk situations that might not be immediately apparent to security teams.



Communication Challenges and System Fragmentation

The intricacy of travel security is compounded by communication challenges, particularly in regions with limited connectivity or restricted internet access. Security teams must maintain contact with travelers across various communication channels, often implementing redundant systems that can function even in low-bandwidth environments. This challenge is further complicated when organizations rely on multiple disconnected platforms — one system for travel booking, another for risk intelligence, and yet another for emergency communications. Security teams frequently find themselves switching between various dashboards and interfaces, manually cross-referencing traveler locations with emerging threats — a process that's not only time-consuming but also prone to human error.



The Need for Unified Analysis and Response

As a result, the need for unified analysis and communication has become paramount. When a crisis occurs, security teams can't afford to waste precious minutes logging into different systems or manually transferring data between platforms. They need seamless integration between travel management systems, alert platforms, and communication tools. This integration must support both routine operations and crisis scenarios, ensuring that protection measures enhance rather than hinder operational efficiency. For instance, when an incident occurs near a company facility, security teams need to instantly identify which travelers might be affected, assess the threat level, and initiate appropriate communication protocols, all from a single, unified interface.



Building Rapid Response Capabilities

Furthermore, rapid response capabilities have become essential in this environment, requiring not just well-documented procedures and clear chains of command, but also technology that can automate critical aspects of the response process. Security operations need the ability to simultaneously monitor global events, analyze potential impacts, locate affected travelers, and initiate two-way communication — capabilities that are only possible with properly integrated systems and streamlined workflows.

Limitations of Traditional Risk Assessment

Conventional travel security often relies on government-released, country-level risk assessments updated quarterly or annually. While these assessments provide valuable baseline information, they fail to capture the dynamic nature of present-day risks. Security teams operating with conventional systems cannot effectively monitor rapidly evolving situations in real time, leaving travelers vulnerable to emerging threats.

In particular, the granularity of risk intelligence has become critical in today's environment. Country-level assessments often miss hyper-local events that could significantly impact traveler safety. A peaceful capital city might house neighborhoods experiencing public disorder, or a generally safe region might contain pockets of heightened risk. Long-standing assessments typically fail to capture these nuanced distinctions.

Also, conventional approaches struggle to account for sudden changes in risk profiles. A stable area can transform into a high-risk zone within hours due to natural disasters or political tensions. Generic travel advisories, while useful as a starting point, cannot provide the context-specific guidance necessary for effective risk management in today's multifaceted environment.

The Rise of Real-Time Alerting Solution

Today's travel security demands a fundamental shift from reactive to proactive threat management. Advanced security platforms now leverage artificial intelligence (AI) to process vast amounts of data from multiple sources, providing security teams with unprecedented visibility into emerging risks so they can stay abreast of and respond to threats more effectively.

The integration of AI-driven platforms with travel management systems has also revolutionized traveler tracking and protection. Security teams can now automatically keep track of key itinerary points, including flight details, hotel locations, ground transportation arrangements, and meeting venues. This integration eliminates manual data entry and reduces the risk of overlooking critical traveler movements.

The Dataminr platform can process multiple data formats, including text, audio, and video, in more than 150 languages. It can analyze information from over 1 million public sources, including regional social media, local news channels, traffic monitors, weather sensors, Internet of Things (IoT) sensors, audio transmissions, and emergency service communications. These capabilities enable security teams to identify and verify threats through multiple sources, providing a more complete and accurate picture of potential risks. And, solutions that provide continuous situation updates allow for constant situational awareness and immediate adjustment of security measures as circumstances change.

Building an Effective Travel Security Program

Building a smart and effective travel security program requires more than just implementing basic protocols; it demands partnerships with industry leaders who can provide cutting-edge technology and proven expertise. The most successful programs leverage cutting-edge platforms like Dataminr Pulse for Corporate Security, which exemplifies the capabilities necessary for travel risk management in today's environment.

Key to program effectiveness is the seamless integration of travel data with live intelligence. Rather than requiring security teams to manually track traveler locations and cross-reference potential threats, advanced platforms can automatically map employees to their itinerary points and provide instant alerts when risks emerge in proximity to these locations. This capability proved crucial during recent events like the Atlanta Four Seasons Hotel incident in October 2024, where organizations using sophisticated alert systems received warning of the emerging situation over an hour before official reports, enabling them to take protective action for guests in the area.

The incorporation of regenerative AI represents another crucial advancement in travel security. This technology, as demonstrated by Dataminr's ReGenAI capability, continuously synthesizes information from over a million sources to provide security teams with clear, up-to-the-minute situation updates. Rather than forcing analysts to monitor multiple feeds or piece together information from various sources, the system automatically generates and updates comprehensive event briefs as incidents unfold.

Success stories from various sectors illustrate the impact of thorough travel security programs. Baylor University, for instance, manages hundreds of students and faculty members traveling globally each semester. The university's use of Dataminr's real-time information enabled them to make rapid, informed decisions during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic, evacuating travelers ahead of widespread travel restrictions. This proactive approach, enabled by sophisticated technology, demonstrates how organizations can effectively fulfill their duty of care obligations.

The most effective programs also integrate mass communication capabilities directly into their risk management platforms. When threats emerge, security teams need to immediately identify potentially affected travelers and initiate two-way communication through multiple channels. Smart, integrated systems can automatically trigger these communications based on traveler proximity to emerging risks and then track responses to ensure everyone is accounted for. This automated approach eliminates the delays and potential errors inherent in manual notification processes.

Organizations building or enhancing their travel security programs should look for solutions that combine all-encompassing travel integration, AI capabilities, and sophisticated communication tools in a single platform. This will enable security teams to detect, assess, and respond to threats with unprecedented speed and efficiency while maintaining scalability as travel programs grow.

Based on a broad analysis of successful travel security programs, the following elements consistently emerge as critical success factors. When developing your organization's approach, prioritize these key components:

- Comprehensive risk assessment
- Real-time monitoring capabilities
- Clear communication protocols
- Integrated response procedures
- Regular training and updates
- Documentation and compliance
- Technology integration
- Scalable solutions

Meeting Tomorrow's Security Challenges Today

As business travel continues to increase in frequency and complexity, organizations must evolve their security approaches to meet new challenges. Organizations must take a hard look at their current travel security infrastructure and ask whether it truly meets the demands of today's rapid-paced, hyper-local threat environment.

The time to modernize travel security programs is now, while organizations can act strategically rather than reactively. Those who invest in comprehensive travel security solutions not only demonstrate their commitment to employee safety, but also position themselves to manage the challenges of today's business travel with confidence.