

# VIP protection and the travelling executive

By Kyle Condon.

In the complex and often misty arena of private VIP protection, the requirements for the travelling principal pose the most challenges. When the principal travels within zones that the CPO (close protection officer) is familiar with, the same day-to-day guidelines generally apply. However, when the principal embarks on travels which require him/her to cross provincial and/or international borders, protection strategies and techniques need urgent tweaking.

There are far too many horror stories of poorly trained and unprofessional protection operatives getting lost in the mist and glamour of travel. The problem grows further when this travel happens to be for leisure.

The world of the CPO is governed by methodical planning and back-up planning. Here are five cornerstone principles that should always be covered when planning the security strategy for a travelling executive/principal:

## Risk assessment

A detailed and extensive analysis must be conducted prior to any extraordinary travel arrangements of the executive. CPOs will require a risk profile, including all potential risks, such as medical conditions and related concerns, political stability of foreign destinations, terrorist/criminal trends, media attention, etc.

## Laws and regulations

Much of VIP protection assignment is the ability to keep the principal from potential damage to his/her reputation or embarrassment. Therefore, special attention is needed with regard to local laws and customs of the destination. An example of a potential pitfall would be firearm and weapon laws. Another would be the ensuring of all required

documentation. You don't want to embarrass or delay the principal because someone in the travelling party doesn't have the correct paperwork.

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## Advance intelligence

A well-orchestrated security advance is critical in managing risk. Aspects such as, hospitals, hotels and police stations need to be taken into account. Adequate route planning and vehicle checks should definitely form part of the overall advance.

### 1. Considering the other members in the party

Special consideration must be given to all other members travelling with the principal, especially if they are family or close acquaintances. For the most part, principals don't want to be separated or treated differently from the other people travelling

in the group, therefore, keep this mind when doing your planning.

### 2. Transportation

Research into how the principal will be travelling upon arrival at the destination is critical to the overall success of the plan. It's important to establish who is going to be driving the vehicle. Consideration must also be given to time scheduled appointments, traffic congestion, etc.

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