

Guest Editorial- Gabrielle Walters and David Beirman

This special edition of the Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management is an outcome of the work of CAUTHE's (Council of Australasian Tourism and Hospitality Educators) Tourism Risk, Crisis and Recovery Special Interest Group. Via CAUTHE's network of tourism scholars and this journal we issued a call for papers. This special edition which focuses on tourism risk management, crisis preparedness and contingency planning, crisis response strategy and tourism business and destination recovery strategies includes articles which address all these themes.

In February 2016, CAUTHE's Tourism Risk, Crisis and recovery special interest group held its first symposium the day after the 2016 CAUTHE conference held in Sydney. The symposium (Crisis Response and Recovery for the Tourism Industry) attracted over 35 tourism academics and travel industry leaders.

The symposium involved a meeting of minds between tourism academics and practitioners who share a common concern for dealing with the issues of tourism risk, crisis and recovery. The keynote industry presenters at that symposium included Chris Flynn Director Pacific Asia Travel Association (Pacific Region) who outlined the critical role which PATA has played in tourism risk, crisis and recovery management at a transnational level over recent years. Dr Stuart Toplis from Tourism Victoria focussed on proactive approaches to risk management (especially bushfires) in the state of Victoria. Michael Meade who is a marketing consultant and a former CEO of Tourism Fiji discussed the recovery of Vanuatu after Cyclone Pam in 2015, in which he played a major role in formulating a recovery marketing strategy. Terry Robinson CEO of Destination Gippsland (Victoria) discussed the role of regional tourism organisations in coordinating post crisis recovery following devastating bushfires in the region.

Three of the academic papers presented at that symposium have been developed for inclusion in this special edition. These include the paper by Dr Gabrielle Walters and Dr Judith Mair on sensationalist media reporting of disastrous events, Dr Yetta Gurtner's paper, Returning to Paradise: Investigating Issues of Tourism Crisis and Recovery on the island of Bali and the paper by Joanne Pyke, Terry De Lacy, Alexandra Law and Min Jiang, Building Small Destination Resilience to the Impact of Bushfire: A case Study.

While it was most pleasing that the symposium generated papers worthy of publication in the Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management, both guest editors were delighted to be inundated with high quality papers from around the world for this special edition. This special edition of JHTM is publishing nine of those papers but several other papers which were worthy of publication by the journal but could not fit into this special edition will be seen in other editions of JHTM.

The large number of papers submitted for consideration in this edition represented powerful evidence that tourism researchers are well aware of the significance of risk, crisis and recovery as a core field of tourism research. We would like to express our sincere thanks to the many tourism academics from around the world for sending your research and we sincerely hope that the readers of JHTM will gain valuable insights from the excellent papers published in this special edition. We would also like to express our sincere appreciation to Professor Margaret Deery and Thomas Bibin for helping us through the editorial process. We also thank the many academics who helped us review the papers submitted for consideration.

Global tourism is experiencing a growing confluence of interest between tourism academics, practitioners and government policy makers in the field of tourism risk, crisis and recovery. Since 2015, recent instances of tourism related crises including terrorist attacks in France, Belgium, USA, Tunisia and Turkey, some of which have specifically targeted tourists, the twin problems of Zika and crime in Brazil leading up to the 2016 Olympics and recent natural disasters in Vanuatu and Nepal have dominated news headlines in all media. However, in addition to their prominence in the media, all these incidents have had significant economic and political ramifications in each country. Tourism has become an essential part of the economy in many countries throughout the world. Events which impact negatively on tourism consequently have a far wider ripple effect on the social, political and economic stability of a country.

The papers published in this special edition cover a wide range of topics which fall within the key themes we sought in our call for papers. We briefly introduce them to readers in the order they appear.

The paper by Gabrielle Walters and Judith Mair *Sensationalist Media Reporting of Disastrous Events-Implications for Tourism* focusses on the important role media plays in influencing public perceptions of the severity and extent of tourism related crises. The paper focuses on a content analysis of media coverage of disasters and the impact of sensationalist reporting in creating a distorted view of the severity and extent of disasters which often create significant challenges to the reputation of tourism destinations.

Yetta Gurtner's paper *Returning to Paradise: Investigating Issues of Tourism Crisis and Disaster Recovery on the Island of Bali* focusses on the tourism recovery challenges Bali faced after the Bali bombing of October 2002 and the subsequent terrorist attacks of October 2005. In both cases there was a significant slump in tourism to Bali following these incidents in which large numbers of tourists were targeted by terrorist groups. The paper examines the recovery strategies of Balinese destination authorities, private tour operators and the involvement of transnational tourism associations, notably the Pacific –Asia Travel Association. The core challenge that all these groups faced was restoring tourism confidence in Bali as a safe destination.

The paper by Valerie Sheppard and Peter Williams *Factors that Strengthen Tourism Resort Resilience*, focuses on the important issue of how resort communities adapt to change, especially those changes which result from shocks and stresses. The focus of this research is Mt Whistler in Canada and the paper develops a resilience model which focuses on governance and proactive responses to risk. The involvement of local communities in tourism destinations is a key consideration in risk management and especially in response to natural disasters.

Thomas Jones has focussed his attention on tourism crisis management in geological unstable regions. His paper *Evolving Approaches to Volcanic Tourism Crisis Management: An Investigation of Long Term Recovery Models at Toya-Utsu Geopark*, focuses on proactive risk management in a leading national park located on the island of Hokkaido in Japan. The Japanese are highly advanced in dealing with risk management issues related to seismological and volcanic events. This paper examines the long- term recovery strategies in the event of a volcanic eruption at popular Japanese national park.

Eli Avraham focuses his attention on destination recovery and image repair. His paper *Destination Marketing and Image Repair During Tourism Crises –The Case of Egypt*, explores the ongoing challenges destination Egypt has and continues to face since the February 2011 “Arab Spring” demonstrations which led to the overthrow of former Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak. The challenge for Egypt’s tourism recovery has been complicated by the continuing political instability including the brief rise and fall of the Muslim Brotherhood government led by Mohammed Morsi (2011-13), the imposition of military rule since 2013 and the rise of Islamist groups, some of which have staged attacks targeting tourists. Under these circumstances, image repair strategies for destination Egypt have been severely compromised. Dr Avraham discusses the strategies which have been employed by Egypt to enhance a damaged image. The broader relevance of the problems that Egypt has faced in restoring its destination image since 2011 is that they are shared by many of its neighbouring countries, notably Libya and Tunisia.

Joanne Pike, Terry De Lacy, Alexandra Law and Min Jiang undertake a case study on destination resilience a small town in Victoria (Australia) in their paper *Building small destination resilience to the impact of Bushfire: A case Study*. Rural and regional Victoria has been subjected to many bushfires which have wrought destruction on small communities. This case study deals with the challenges to community resilience of the town of Harrietville, normally a popular tourist destination in Victoria’s alpine region. However the town was cut off the outside world due to road closures for 55 days in 2013 due to nearby fires and subsequent floods. The isolation of a small community in which the economy is largely based on tourism visitation threatens community resilience in communities threatened by the consequences of climate change.

Isaac Mizrachi examines the role of social media in tourism risk management. His paper, *Should we Cancel ? An Examination of Risk Handling in Travel Social Media before Visiting Ebola-Free Destinations* deals with the role that Trip Advisor plays in identifying the level of risk which applies to destinations. During the 2014 Ebola outbreak in West Africa (largely confined to Liberia, Guinea, Senegal, Sierra Leone and parts of Nigeria aroused fears among prospective travellers to many African countries which were unaffected by Ebola. Social media provided a low cost and timely means to communicate to prospective travel the extent of the Ebola threat and identify the distinction between those parts of Africa affected and unaffected by Ebola.

The April 25, 2015 earthquake in Nepal which killed over 9,000 people was by far the most deadly natural disaster of 2015. The timing of the quake, in the midst of Nepal’s peak climbing and trekking season, ensured it’s impact on Nepal’s tourism industry was severe. Eran Ketter’s paper, *Destination Image Restoration on Facebook: The Case Study of Nepal’s Gurkha Earthquake* highlights the growing significance of Facebook and other social media platforms in destination marketing and also in crisis and post crisis management. The Nepal Tourism Board, the Ministry of Tourism, the Nepalese tourism industry and PATA collectively embraced Facebook as a key strategic tool in advancing the recovery of tourism to Nepal after the earthquake.

The final paper in this edition is by Steven Pike. Dr Pike’s paper, *Destinations, Disaster and Public Relations. Stakeholder Engagement in Multi-Phase Disaster Management* examines the role of multiple stakeholders in tourism related crises and disasters. As the paper demonstrates, stakeholder alliances are integral to all phases of tourism related crisis management and recovery.

This especially applies to the messaging and the balance of media employed in the crisis management and post- crisis recovery phase.

It is our hope that the papers included in this special edition will be of value to tourism students, academics and practitioners alike. It is worth noting that the authors of the articles in this special edition include higher degree candidates, early and mid-career academics and some very senior academics. For those who have special interest in the field of tourism risk, crisis and recovery we trust that this special edition should be a useful teaching and learning resource. The issues covered in this edition offer the promise of many further research opportunities.

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