

Risk 2: Safety and Security



Risk Definition

There is a risk that external events (malicious actions or natural disasters) may endanger employees (CBS or LES), foreign dignitaries on Canadian property, Canadian-owned property, or IT systems.

DFAIT is responsible for maintaining the safety and security of staff and foreign guests, as well as physical and information assets.

This risk has the potential to obstruct the organization from achieving its strategic outcomes of *Government of Canada is Served Abroad* and *Canadians are Served Abroad*.

Sources of Risk

Inherent High-Risk Nature of the Mandate

DFAIT's mandate itself, and several of the services Canadians demand hold the potential for placing DFAIT staff at risk. For example, the evacuation of Canadians from Lebanon in the summer of 2006 required staff to be placed in a high-risk environment. Events such as acts of terrorism, war, natural disasters, civil unrest, can put people and assets in danger. Furthermore, there are perpetual gaps between intelligence information and the input required to make decisions to ensure security.

Some Canadian policies, such as the foreign policy position taken with respect to the Middle East, and the government's principle of disclosure increase the inherent exposure to this risk.

Reliance on a Foreign Environment

DFAIT relies on foreign infrastructure (including IT networks) in certain areas. Not having control over the infrastructure, the level of security and controls in place to gain access are not always adequate. DFAIT also relies on foreign and local contractors. In some cases it is not possible to get reliable security checks on these contractors.

Health and safety conditions overseas may expose staff to higher risk. For example, in some locations, disease is more prevalent