



Emergency Message for U.S. Citizens: Turks and Caicos Crime Levels

Crime

Western Hemisphere > Bahamas > Nassau

3/25/2014

The U.S. Embassy in Nassau, Bahamas is sending this message to U.S. citizens residing and traveling in the Turks and Caicos Islands (TCI) to remind you of the risk of crime as outlined in our Country Specific Information for Turks and Caicos, excerpted here:

"The overall crime rate in the Turks and Caicos Islands is relatively low. Crimes typically involve opportunistic petty theft. However, more serious robberies have been reported... The crime level is highest on Providenciales, the territory's economic hub and larger city. The U.S. Embassy has received a few reports of more serious crimes, including vacation home invasions, armed robberies, assaults and boat thefts."

Within the last few weeks, the Embassy has received increased reports of armed robberies of U.S. citizens in Providenciales. In light of these reports, we advise you to remain cautious and vigilant with regard to your personal safety and security.

At about 2:15 a.m. on March 12, three armed men broke into the rental villa of a vacationing couple in the Long Bay Hills area of Providenciales by throwing a rock through the glass door.

The armed assailants robbed the victims of cash and personal items and hit one victim over the head with a gun before fleeing.

On March 8, at around 9:00 p.m., a couple was walking along the Grace Bay main road in Providenciales to their resort when they were approached by a man who came out of nearby bushes and attempted to rob the woman of her purse. Shortly thereafter, another couple was walking along the Grace Bay main road, when a gunman robbed the woman of her purse, cell phone, credit cards, camera, and \$300 cash.

Additionally, according to the TCI police website, at about 3:00 a.m. on March 19, a man and his family were held at gunpoint in their villa by two masked intruders. One of the assailants struck the man on his head with a gun and demanded cash. Both suspects then fled the scene with a computer, a cell phone, and the victims' rented car.

Armed robbery continues to be the primary criminal threat facing U.S. citizens in the Turks and Caicos Islands. According to TCI police crime statistics, crime increased by 24% in

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2013. In their annual crime report presentation on February 26, 2014, police cited 3,337 reported crimes in 2013, up significantly from the 2,692 reported in 2012. There was a 76% increase in robberies (from 45 to 79). The U.S. Embassy alerted U.S. citizens to the dangers posed by armed robbery in Turks and Caicos in March 2013.

If you are the victim of a crime abroad, you should contact the local police and the nearest U.S. Embassy or Consulate. Although the investigation and prosecution of a crime are solely the responsibility of local authorities, consular officers can help you to understand the local criminal justice process and to find an attorney if needed. In the Turks and Caicos Islands, an Embassy Consular Agent can be reached at (649) 232-5713 or via email at SimonsTJ@state.gov.

Updated information on travel and security in the Turks and Caicos Islands and throughout the Caribbean may also be obtained from the Department of State by calling 1-888-407-4747 within the United States or by calling 1-202-501-4444 outside the United States. The local equivalent to the "911" emergency line in the Turks and Caicos Islands is 919 or 911.

We strongly recommend that U.S. citizens traveling to or residing in the Turks and Caicos Islands enroll in the Department of State's Smart Traveler Enrollment Program (STEP). STEP enrollment gives you the latest security updates, and makes it easier for the U.S. embassy or nearest U.S. consulate to contact you in an emergency. If you don't have Internet access, you can enroll directly with the nearest U.S. embassy or consulate.

Regularly monitor the State Department's website, where you can find current Travel Warnings, Travel Alerts, and the Worldwide Caution. Read the Country Specific Information For the Turks and Caicos Islands. For additional information, refer to the "Traveler's Checklist" on the State Department's website.

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