



Thailand Security Report

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Section 800 - Intelligence

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Thailand Report

Over the summer months Allmode Intelligence will be issuing a number of 'Security Reports' that will cover the regions of Southeast Asia. They will outline security based information on different locations across these regions. The purpose of these reports are to aid vessels and their crews with up to date information that will help them build better knowledge of an area and thus improve their situational awareness.

Situational Awareness (SA) is all about having the information you need to make effective decisions. There will always be occasions when people are required to make critical choices – sometimes at a fast pace – and the vast majority of errors that can occur are as a direct result of failure in situational awareness.

For the majority of vessels and crew visiting Southeast Asia, it will be a very familiar sight, however for some it may be their first time and often, as with many locations across the globe, looks can be deceiving and can lull people into a false sense of security.

Intelligence is more than information and news gathering. It is the process by which information is collated, verified, analysed and used to respond effectively to time critical information. Current, historical and creditable intelligence not only tells you what the risks are but projects possible hot spots of criminal activity.

At Allmode we do not outsource intelligence but gain real time situational awareness and speed of reporting by continually developing our product, and getting the time critical information out to our teams and clients. These reports will look into areas such as crime, corruption and political issues within certain areas and offer advice on how to stay safe and in some cases advice on areas to avoid. It will also offer advice on any relevant health advisories to be aware of and travel information for those wishing to travel and tour certain areas or regions.

Thailand Overview



The weather in Thailand is distinctly tropical and classified as hot and humid, with a long monsoon season. Thailand has three official seasons – hot, cool, and wet. The hot season runs from March through to June, with April and May the hottest months of the year. The cool season normally runs from November thru February and will still feel hot to most visitors, but much of the country does experience a short cold snap for a week or so in December, especially in the north and northeast where it can get quite cold. In most parts of Thailand the rainy season is from May to October. September and October are the height of the monsoon season. The rainy season in Koh Samui and the south east of the Thai peninsula is from November to March.

Heavy storms during the monsoon can result in floods and landslides. This was the case in 2011 (between the end of July and the middle of January 2012). The flooding affected the provinces of northern, north-eastern and central Thailand along the Mekong and Chao Phraya river basins, and also parts of Bangkok and resulted in 813 casualties.

At the end of July 2013, floods in Thailand began, mainly in the north and north-eastern provinces. Then, in late September, tropical storms led to heavy rainfall in many provinces throughout the country. By early October, 45 provinces were affected by floods. 61 people were killed. Finally, in September 2013, 76 people died due to the floods that hit 47 provinces.

Thailand is also prone to earthquakes that may bring about tsunamis. In December 2004, Thailand was hit by a tsunami caused by the Indian Ocean earthquake. It killed more than 5,000 people, including many foreign tourists.

In May 2014, the earthquake in northern Thailand, near Chiang Rai, damaged buildings and roads. At least one person was killed and several dozen were hurt.

The political situation in Thailand is currently unstable. On 21 March 2014, the Constitutional Court annulled the general election held in February by the Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra in response to the anti-government demonstrations in Bangkok. Protesters demanded her removal and boycotted the election. Anti-government protesters had been trying to get rid of Ms. Yingluck for four months due to her amnesty bill that was supposed to grant an amnesty to and restore the confiscated fortunes of a single individual for whom the bill was originally crafted: Thaksin Shinawatra, the Prime Minister's elder brother, ousted in a coup in 2006. After the CC decision, protests started again in Bangkok.

At the beginning of April 2014, the CC accepted a case against Ms. Yingluck – 27 senators claimed she had abused power while transferring the National Security Chief, Thawil Pliensri, in 2011. On 5 April 2014, supporters of the Prime Minister, the Red Shirts, demonstrated on the outskirts of Bangkok. They wanted to show their strength and make people realise that they will not accept Yingluck's removal.

Finally, on 7 May 2014, the CC ordered Ms. Yingluck Shinawatra to step down with all members of her cabinet who were there at the time of the transfer. She was replaced by an acting prime minister, Niwattumrong Boonsongpaisan. The CC's decision did not stop protests. On 14 May 2014, as a result of explosions and shooting during the anti-government demonstrations, at least two people were killed. According to Bangkok's emergency medical services centre, twenty-one people were wounded.

On 22 May 2014, the Chief of the Royal Thai Army announced that the military had taken control of government. A curfew was introduced and then lifted in all parts of the country on 13 June 2014.

On 17 June 2014, Thailand adopted a temporary constitution, which is the first step to return the electoral democracy.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) warn against visiting the provinces of Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat and Songkhla on the Thai-Malaysia border as on 10 April 2014 the Australian authorities indicated that Muslim extremists may want to target westerners in the southern border provinces. They also advise not to travel to the Preah Vihear (Khaoi Pra Viharn in Thai) temple area and the Ta Krabey/Ta Moan temple area on the Thai-Cambodian border due to the presence of troops in the area and the risk of fighting.

People planning to visit Thailand should make sure that their insurance covers claims arising from the country's current situation. While selecting insurance coverage, travellers should consider the following aspects:

- Emergency Flights Home – it may happen that visitors will have to come back home earlier due to some injury or illness; there are also severe cases when a doctor is required to accompany the person, which may cost thousands of dollars
- Personal Liability – protecting from legal claims made against travellers
- Baggage/Personal Belongings – particularly important if you travel with valuable things
- Sports/Activities – recommended if you are going to do more extreme activities, e.g. elephant trekking.

Remember to read the insurance terms and conditions thoroughly and if you have any doubts, contact your insurer immediately before you start your journey to avoid unpleasant situations, disappointment and expenses.

There is a high threat from terrorism in Thailand, which is mostly caused by the insurgency in South Thailand probably started by the Muslim separatist movement in Yala and Hat Yai – bombings in 2012 killed thirteen people and left more than 300 people wounded.

The violent attacks started twenty years ago. The conflict intensified in 2001 when Thai authority symbols (police, military and schools) were attacked. Real terrorist attacks began in 2004 in southern, mainly Muslim, provinces – due to the fact that Thailand is a Buddhist-majority country, Muslims complain that they are treated as second-class citizens. Since then, over 5000 people have been killed. Insurgent attacks target mainly ethnic Thai Buddhists and ethnic Malay Muslims in the provinces of Pattani, Narathiwat and Yala. To calm the southern region, Thailand's military junta put new security measures in place on 22 June 2014.

Since January 2009, eleven British people have been murdered in Thailand. Since 2004, there have been frequent attacks – arson, bombings and shootings – in the far south of the country. Over 5,000 people have been killed and several thousand more injured. More recent incidents include:

- 25 July 2014 – a car bomb exploded outside a hotel in southern Thailand; three people were killed, over 30 others were wounded; Muslim insurgents are suspected
- May 2014 – bombing attacks in the south of Thailand (in Pattani, Yala and Narathiwat provinces) killed at least three and injured 55 people; Islamic insurgents in the Muslim-majority region are suspected
- April 2014 – three policemen were killed and 17 people were wounded due to an explosion during a fishing competition in southern Thailand; according to Police Col. Panya Karawanun, Muslim separatist insurgents are suspected of detonating a homemade bomb
- 21 March 2014 – bomb attacks in Chiang Mai: at a PTT Petrol station in Tambon Nong Hoi Muang district; at Boonrawd Brewery in Tambon Yang Nerng of Sarapee district; and at the Andamon Seafood restaurant in Tambon Pa Dad, Muang Chiang Mai district. 4 people were injured
- February 2014 – during a general election, suspected Muslim rebels in southern Thailand killed three soldiers and a district election official in a bomb attack; Pattani chief of police Phot Suaysuwan told Reuters “The attack was related to ongoing violence in the southern provinces and unrelated to the election.”
- 18 September 2013, Thailand convicted Atris Hussein (49), a Hizballah operative detained by Thai authorities in January 2012 when he was arrested at Bangkok's airport after a US signal of a possible terrorist threat; he led them to the warehouse in Bangkok where over 3,000 kg of ammonium nitrate were hidden; Hussein was accused of having links to Hizballah – a Shia Islamist movement based in Lebanon considered a terrorist organisation by the US; according to the Thai media, one of his targets was once the Israeli Embassy in Bangkok
- March 2012 – attacks in Songkhla, Yala and Pattani provinces in southern Thailand. In two car bombs in Yala's town centre at least nine people were killed and over 100 injured
- 14 February 2012 – five people were wounded in three explosions in the centre of Bangkok
- June 2010 – bomb attacks at two night markets in Chiang Mai resulted in property damage, nobody was injured.

As far as criminal offences are concerned, there are also a few things visitors need to bear in mind and be aware of.

Attacks by gangs in Koh Phangan have been reported at night near bars in Haad Rin on Koh Phangan, especially around the time of the Full Moon parties (an all-night beach party that originated in Haad Rin on the island of Ko Pha Ngan on the night of, before or after every full moon). In January 2013, a British national was killed in a shooting incident at a beach party in Haad Rin.

There have also been violent assaults and robberies. In February 2014, David Evans (33) was arrested and accused of petty theft – he stole six brass vases, a bronze monk statue and a black suitcase from Mandalay Bar.

In May 2014, a burglar – Wutthipong Yaworn (23) broke into the bungalow of two Chinese tourists (26) on Chaweng beach on Koh Samui island and stole their money (100,000 baht), iPhone and iPad. He slashed them with a knife and caused severe injuries.

Besides, there are also sexual assaults against foreign men and women, especially in the Koh Samui archipelago and Krabi province. In February 2013, a Scottish student (20) reported she had been dragged off the street by a gang in a vehicle and raped.

At the beginning of July 2014, an employee Wanchai Saengkhaio (22) confessed to raping and murdering Nong Kaem (13). He also admitted to raping two women co-workers. Remember not to bring visitors to your hotel room as you can be robbed.

On 15 July, it was reported that a disabled woman (72) had been raped by a waiter from a karaoke shop in a house in Toongkru district, Bangkok.

There are also cases of putting drugs to tourists' drinks (particularly in Koh Samui, Pattaya and at the Full Moon party on Koh Phangan). Never accept drinks from strangers and when you are at a club or party. Alcohol reduces your consciousness, which may result in becoming a victim of a crime. To avoid it, control yourself and do not overuse it.

There is also the possibility of credit card fraud and ATM skimming. When you want to withdraw some cash, try to select a safe place and protect your PIN. In February 2014, three Malaysian nationals, Tee Hock Peng (50), Tan Cheng Hock (57) and Lee Jian Tyng (24), were arrested and accused of being members of a counterfeit credit card ring.

In May 2014, fourteen Thai and Chinese nationals were arrested for operating a large-scale credit card fraud ring. The gang stole credit card numbers and produced fake cards.

Pay attention to demarcation lines between shops and stalls, especially at markets and Suvarnabhumi Airport. This is because taking things from one shop's area to another may be regarded as theft.

Thailand is not free from pickpockets and bag snatchers. There have been cases of snatching bags/backpacks by motorbike thieves. In February 2013, Ungjo Lungsaw (18), Lho Lungta (19), Jang (19), Ong (19) and Tongkam Jongjam (16) were arrested after attacking and robbing Australian tourist, Louise Amy Thompson. They slashed her with knives and ran off with her bag which contained her telephone.

In December 2013, Ken Duenpen (31) robbed a woman – he kicked her motorcycle with her son (6) and stole her gold necklace. He was arrested in January 2014 and had to apologise to his two victims. In March 2014, Police arrested Siriwet Sithiwet (27). He spiked a nurse's

drink and then robbed her of Honda Civic, a 1-baht gold necklace, an iPhone 5 and 4,000 baht in cash.

In January 2013, the Chiang Mai Police arrested two teenagers: Sakda Manore (19) and “Ray” (17), who robbed the donation boxes at the temple Wat Duang Dee on Phra Pokklao Road. In April 2014, Phuping Police arrested Kritsada Wansri (25) and Sirakoon Moonkuan (25) for snatching one woman’s purse at Toony Shop.

In May 2014, another robber was arrested. Thanawat Chaiyaya (18) robbed tourists and expats in Chiang Mai. In June 2014, the police stopped two Burmese men, Janmee Toesang (30) and Mac (18), accused of stealing money and mobile phones.

Moreover, while travelling by bus, secure your money and other belongings against stealing. In January 2014, a young German tourist couple, travelling on the bus from Samui were robbed of their wallet (8,000 baht and credit cards). Do not choose cheaper and non-government buses. In the event of being robbed, do not agree to leave the bus and call the police.

Gem scams are extremely common in Thailand. The best solution is not to buy gems at all. Beware of shops recommended by a ‘government official’, ‘student’, ‘businessperson’ or ‘tuk-tuk driver’ that start talking to you on the street. Remember that there are no government jewellery shops, no special government promotions or sales on gems. You will always pay much more than the gem is worth.

According to the World Health Organization, Thailand has one of the highest rates of road deaths, per capita, in the world. Most road traffic accidents in Thailand involve motorcycles (about 70% of all road deaths) as they are very common means of transport, but there are also accidents involving cars, coaches and mini-buses. Travelling at night is more risky – in June 2011, 3 British nationals travelling by coach were killed in an accident, in July 2012, 2, and in February 2013, 3 British nationals travelling by coach were injured.

Travellers are advised to avoid any contact with drugs. People found guilty of possessing marijuana may receive a long prison sentence and a high fine. Possession of amphetamines and ecstasy results in the same penalty as possession of heroin. Having 20 grams of them while leaving Thailand will probably result in death sentence. Several imprisoned Americans were arrested for trafficking illicit drugs.

You can import maximally 200 cigarettes per person into Thailand. Otherwise, there may be the fine ten times the value of the goods and the cigarettes may be confiscated.

Remember not to criticise or make slanderous comments about the King or any member of the Thai Royal family as the Thais hold their royal family in high regard. This offence is called Lèse Majesté and regarded a criminal offence – you can get a prison sentence of 3 to 15 years, or even longer.

Thai people are very friendly and polite, it is considered extremely bad manners to lose your temper or display frustration so it is advised to be patient and considerate when dealing with Thai nationals.

The Thai law requires that you always have your passport with you. When you do not have it when necessary, you can be arrested.

You should report any incidents of crime to the Thai police before leaving the country.

The main marinas in Thailand include:

- **Ao Po Grand Marina** – at the gateway to Phang Nga Bay, on the north-east coast of Phuket; this is a modern marina with good facilities (pontoon access and transportation with golf buggies and hand trolleys); it can be approached at all tides and has 24-hour security as well as firefighting stations; when visiting the marina for the first time, it is recommended to stay east of Koh Naka Yai Island until you can head west for the entrance at the south-east corner of the marina; the minimum depth is from 3 metres on the inside of the marina to 7 metres on the seaward side of the outer docks
- **Krabi Boat Lagoon Marina** – the first Krabi's premier marina complex that ensures good shelter and a lot of services; it is the sister marina of the Phuket Boat Lagoon; it is close to the Krabi Airport and the wonderful islands of the Andaman Sea; it employs 24-hour security and has berths for up to 80 vessels, a 50 ton travel lift and a hard stand for up to 100 boats; its facilities include, among others, boat ramp, fork lift, electricity, water and fuel dock; the lowest tide depth is 1,5 meters
- **Ocean Marina** – on the end of Jomtien beach, in the Province of Chonburi, nearby Bangkok; the marina is surrounded by mountains, beach and ocean; it accommodates vessels up to 60 metres long and has a Marine Travelift that can lift vessels up to 20 tonnes; indoor and outdoor storage facilities provide security; outside the marina there are two buoys leading to the marina entrance – during the day they are a green and a red buoy, at night – green and red lights that flash on for two seconds and off for one second
- **Phuket Boat Lagoon Marina** – on the east coast of Phuket Island; it was the island's first marina complex; the marina is well protected, has good facilities (e.g. 3 travel lifts, fork lift up to 7 tonnes, fuel delivery, accommodation, swimming pool, restaurant, supermarket), 20 dry stacks and hard standing for 140 boats and ensures 24-hour security
- **Royal Phuket Marina** – along the centre of Phuket's eastern seaboard, at the entrance of Phang Nga Bay; the marina offers berths for 81 vessels, hard standing for more than 35 vessels, forklift services, fuel dock, trolleys, haul out services, pressure wash service, service dock for temporary berthing, sewage pump out service and 24-hour security; there are also leisure and shopping facilities
- **Siam Royal Marina** – on the northwest corner of Koh Chang, on the Klong Son River; the marina was opened in 2012 and has mooring for up to 75 boats (8-27 metres); the dry berth facilities offer hard stands for over 40 boats and dry stack storage for up to 48 boats (9,1 metres long); there are also 60 rack places for small boats; super yachts can use mooring services of the 110-metres private pier; the dry berth provides a trailer ramp and a fork lift
- **Yacht Haven Marina** – in Laem Phrao on the north-east coast of the island; the minimum depth on approach at low tide is around 2,5 metres; it accommodates more than 200 vessels; it overlooks Phang Nga Bay; its facilities include, among others, electricity and water, fuel delivery, accommodation, swimming pool, restaurant and 24-hour security.

Bangkok



Bangkok is the capital city of Thailand, located on the delta of the Chao Phraya River in Central Thailand, about 40 km from the Gulf of Thailand. It is known as Krung Thep Maha Nakhon and its area is around 1,500 square metres.

Bangkok is Thailand's most populous city – over eight million people. Ethnic Thais prevail. The largest minority are the Chinese (mainly in the commercial area of Sam Peng), but there are also communities of other Asians, North Americans, Europeans, Indians (concentrating around mosques in the Wang Burapha section), and the Western and Japanese communities (in modern eastern part of the city).

The most often used language in Bangkok is the Thai language. Nevertheless, due to the fact that there are a lot of immigrants there, other languages are also spoken, including English – most signs are in Thai and English.

As far as industry is concerned, predominant sectors include food processing, textiles, the assembly of electronic equipment and the production of building materials. Smaller factories are present in the metropolitan area, whereas larger plants are near the port and the warehouses that store imported materials.

Tourism constitutes a major source of revenue in Bangkok as it is one of the top tourist destinations in Thailand. Although Bangkok has a moderate crime rate, it is a crowded and busy place, which is why tourists need to familiarise themselves with some dangers and threats they may face there.

The Royal Thai Police have published 10 most dangerous areas in Bangkok where tourists should not book a room:

1. Soi Lat Phrao 101
2. Soi Lat Phrao 107
3. Soi Sukhumvit 105
4. Soi Phaholyothin 52

5. Soi Suphaphong
6. Soi On Nut
7. Soi Chalermprakiat 14
8. Victory Monument
9. Sanam Luang
10. Ramintra Market

Visitors should be aware that scams are very common. They include precious gems, tours, and entertainment events. Avoid any suspected sale of precious gems and/or jewellery.

Common crimes that occur in Bangkok are pickpocketing, purse-snatching and credit card fraud. Handbags can be stolen, snatched or cut, also by little kids at the market, so it is better to hide money in a trousers or shirt pocket. Visitors must remember to secure their passports, documents, and valuable things – a good idea is not to carry them with you. Strangers appearing all of a sudden may also be a sign of troubles. They may want to steal or rob you so do not talk to them.

Beware of “snatch-and-grab” incidents, which means the thief rides as a passenger on a motorcycle or scooter and grabs a purse.

Bangkok suffers from heavy traffic. There are lots of different kinds of vehicles, such as motorcycles, cars, trucks, buses and tuk-tuks (three-wheeled taxis). It is recommended to use overhead walkways or pedestrian bridges. Always be careful while crossing the street. Motorcycle accidents in Bangkok occur practically every day. Therefore, it is advised to avoid motorcycle taxis, mopeds and tuk-tuks.

Taxis and tuk-tuks are relatively safe, but you can be charged too much for this service. Therefore, when you decide to take a taxi, you should pay attention the driver turns on the meter. Moreover, do not get into a taxi with a passenger sitting next to the driver. In the event the driver picks up someone else, you should leave the taxi straightaway. When at Bangkok’s airports, take taxis from the airport’s taxi stand, cars from the airport limousine counters or airport buses. Main hotels in Bangkok can also arrange for a car for their guests.

If taking a tuk-tuk, you should state your destination and agree the price before you get in. If you feel that language pronunciation is a barrier then get the hotel reception to write the destination in Thai and show that to the tuk-tuk driver. It is sometimes possible to bargaining the price down by 10-20%.

On 1 March 2014, Morten Krogsholm (25) was robbed by a Tuk-Tuk driver and two other people in a dark alley between Sukhumvit Soi 25 and Soi 55. They stole around 10,000 baht, a mobile phone and a camera. After that, they threw him out of the vehicle and kicked him in the ribs.

There are serious bus crashes, especially at night. Another option is the over ground Skytrain and underground subway (MRT) – a clean, safe and time-saving way of travelling in Bangkok.

Tourist zones in Bangkok are under constant video surveillance managed by the Royal Thai Police (RTP). Cameras record images used by the RTP to investigate crimes. Many restaurants, bar rooms and night clubs also have video surveillance packages.

Cases of violent crime are rather rare in Bangkok, but it does not mean travellers can feel completely safe. Most violent incidents occur at night. Do not drink too much alcohol – criminals target drunk tourists.

There have been political demonstrations and protests in Bangkok and other cities. Some of them were quite violent. In December 2013, at least two people were killed and dozens injured during protests between supporters and opponents of the government.

In February 2014, two children (4 and 6) died in a grenade attack during their weekend trip to a mall in the centre of Bangkok

In May 2014, three anti-government protesters were killed in explosions and a shooting attack. This is a result of removing the Prime Minister, Yingluck Shinawatra, and nine cabinet ministers for nepotism. You should avoid any protests, political gatherings, demonstrations or marches. If you encounter such do not get drawn in just turn around and head in other direction.

Unfortunately, murders do occur in Bangkok like anywhere else. In April 2014, the Homchong family – Wichai Homchong (63), his wife Wanida (57) and their eldest son Tammanat (24) – in Bangkok's Bang Khae district was killed by Sirichai Phermpoonsak, who shot all the victims dead with a gun.

In July 2013, a Bangkok taxi driver stabbed to death a foreigner (American) during an argument.



Chiang Mai



Chiang Mai, called "the rose of the north", is located in Northern Thailand, 700 km north of Bangkok. The province's area is about 20,000 square kilometres. Mountains and forests constitute major part of Chiang Mai (around 82%). This is where Thailand's highest mountain, Inthanon Mountain, is situated. Although its population amounts to about 200,000, it is the second largest city in Thailand and a popular tourist destination, chosen also by the Thai people.

Communication is not a problem as the residents of Chiang Mai have an acceptable command of English.

Tourists coming to Chiang Mai in the hot season have to be aware of and get used to very hot weather and high temperatures, even at night. During the rainy season in turn, there is heavy rainfall that may result in accidents and local floods.

People who have chest and breathing problems and are sensitive to smoke should avoid visiting Chiang Mai in the slash and burn season (February-April). It contributes to the increase in the pollution in the city.

Due to the size of Chiang Mai, there are lots of traffic jams there. Traffic is very heavy and you can be hit by vehicles when you walk, ride your bike or motorcycle and drive a car. Moreover, public transport is not very efficient. Some parts of Chiang Mai do not have sidewalks. Local drivers do not care about pedestrians. To stay safe, always pay attention and look both ways.

As Chiang Mai depends heavily on tourism, prices are quite high.

Chiang Mai is quite safe, but some crimes do occur. Pickpocketing (around Tapae Gate and Chiang Mai Night market), petty thefts and purse snatching are becoming more frequent, particularly in such places as hotels, tourist areas, public parks or Walking Street. Take care of your bag/backpack – if you leave it on the bus/boat and later want to have it back, it may turn out that it was stolen or that some valuables are missing.

Be careful of credit Card Skimming at ATMs near Warorot Market Kad Luang.

Unfortunately, Chiang Mai is not free from gem scams either. Be careful when a stranger starts a friendly and nice conversation as you may later be asked to carry some gems to the place you are going to, which is dangerous.

Avoid unlit backstreets around the Night Bazaar as a few women have reported attacks and robberies.

On 18 May 2014, a Danish tourist woman, Michelle Broding Lorsglas (20), was robbed by a European-looking man at a Chiang Mai shopping mall after she had withdrawn money from a cash machine.

On 7 April 2014, Soontorn Taweekingphet (35) was found dead behind Sai Lom Loy Cemetery in Tambon Suthep, Chiang Mai. He was murdered and the burned.

When you come to Chiang Mai by bus or train, săwngthăew and tuk-tuk drivers are ready to help you and give you a lift to some hotel or guesthouse to collect a commission. Be careful – better-class guesthouses do not agree to pay commissions so if you allow the driver to decide for you, your accommodation conditions may be doubtful. To avoid it, you can call a guesthouse and ask them to arrange a ride for you. If you decide to choose a cheaper guesthouse, bear in mind that not using a given guesthouse's trekking/tour services or not eating regular meals there can result in being evicted.

You should remember that taxis in Chiang Mai do not want to use the meter and when asked to do so, they refuse to drive. Besides, they tend to charge too much. Try to find a cheap taxi and do not forget to bargain.

Do not drink alcohol around Tapae Gate. Tapae Gate is Chiang Mai's main entrance to the old walled city. The large area around Tapae Gate and all the areas that surround the moat are 'no alcohol zones' and people who drink alcohol there can get a fine of 1000 baht.

Phuket



Phuket is the largest island in Thailand, situated around 860 kilometres south of Bangkok in the Andaman Sea on the western coast of southern Thailand. Its area is about 570 square metres. Major part of the island (70%) is mountainous and hilly, the rest is plains and flatlands. Phuket is surrounded by small, yet wonderful, islands, such as Koh Pu, Koh Bon, Koh Lon, Maphrao and Rang Yai.

Phuket's population is about 500,000 people: Thai Buddhists, Muslims, Hokkien Chinese, Burmese, Cambodian, Laotian. It is estimated that foreigners make up about 20% of the island's residents.

Phuket has a tropical climate, high temperatures (30 degrees Celsius) are present all year round. Those who are not very keen on hot weather, can visit the island in cooler periods, accompanied by rainfall. The dry season usually lasts from November to April, whereas the rainy season runs from May to October. The heaviest rainfall months are May, September and October. Almost every year Phuket is hit by floods that often block the local roads. Fortunately, it does not last for too long.

Phuket is the wealthiest province in Thailand. A lot of income comes from tourism, rubber and palm oil plantations. Although the region's capital, Phuket Town, has a city status, visitors choose tourist areas along the western coast. The busiest and liveliest place, with rich nightlife and a wide range of activities, is Patong Beach.

Travellers need to remember that becoming a victim of a crime is possible in Phuket.

The most common criminal offence in Phuket is stealing valuables. Nevertheless, it is possible to avoid it. You should not carry valuable things, too much cash or documents you do not need while visiting the island with you. It is better to lock them in the hotel safe or room safety deposit box. If possible, do not bring anything valuable, particularly jewellery, to Phuket.

Another frequent crime visitors encounter in Patong (the beach and town on the west coast of Phuket; the main tourist resort in Phuket) is jet-ski scam. It consists in demanding money

to repair damage to a jet-ski you have rented although it was there before renting. The same scenario is used as far as renting cars is concerned. If you have to leave your passport as a deposit, always give a scanned copy of it to avoid a situation when it is treated as a bargaining tool.

Credit card fraud also occurs in Phuket. The cashier adds some money to the bill as it is very possible that the card owner will not know he/she has been charged in one currency, and the receipt is in another.

Be careful also when using ATMs. Criminals put a skimming device on the top of the card slot and have your card data copied. It is recommended to use cash machines in larger shopping malls, e.g. Jungceylon. Do not forget to check your balance regularly.

In the event a stranger in the street asks you if you speak English, he/she most probably wants to apply 'Time Share' scheme or encourage you to buy something (usually jewellery). Time Share touts offer a free scratchy card showing a prize which you are supposed to collect at their hotel, but before that you have to pay a lot of money.

Holidaymakers who will decide to taste nightlife in Patong need to beware of ladyboys. They look for tourists without company, usually under the influence of alcohol, try to go with them to their hotel and when they fall asleep, ladyboys steal whatever they find in the room. They also ride their motorbikes at night and snatch handbags, wallets and jewellery. They are quite dangerous as they tend to be on drugs and have weapon.

Tourists visiting beaches in Thuket are strongly advised to pay attention to rip tides that are dangerous, especially in the monsoon season. Since the standard of safety and lifeguard is not very high, be careful while swimming as drowning cases have been reported. Always swim in a specially designated area and never swim when a red flag is flying.

The idea of renting a motorcycle is quite risky. It has been reported that a large number of tourists have been injured or killed on Phuket highways.

Most recent crimes committed in Phuket:

- On 16 July 2014, a Chinese couple was robbed by Sommai Promboot (23) at Karon View Point; the couple reported the thief had threatened them with a knife, snatched the woman's bag and rode away on his motorbike; the criminal was arrested and charged with theft

- On 11 June 2014, two employees were robbed by two men on a motorbike while taking over 900,000 baht in cash from a gas station in Phuket to a bank; the criminals took the money and rode away

- In June 2014, 12 Phuket residences were robbed by a serial burglar Raewat Kasirak (22); he was snatched by the police on 10 June 2014; in his room the police found two laptops, two gold necklaces, two tablets, a watch, a Samsung Hero, an iPhone 3 and two other mobile phones; the iPhone 3 and gold necklace were from the robbery of a Toyota Fortuner that took place on 5 July

- On 20 April 2014, a pregnant woman (25) was riding home from her job when two men kicked her off her motorcycle, dragged her off the road, robbed and raped her in Mai Khao

- On 18 April 2014, a French tourist, Fabrice Boigeol (37), was murdered in a Phuket rental room at the Morgot Resort; the police arrested Myanmar national Shwe Oo (24) and charged with theft and murder

- On 16 February 2014, a Chinese couple - He Ting Ting (29) and Gu Jun Fang (30) – were robbed along the Baan Don-Kok Tanod Road; a man snatched their bag where they had their passports
- On 17 December 2014, a Danish tourist, Bjarke Carlsen (25), was threatened by three men; they ordered him to give them his kiteboarding equipment
- At the beginning of December 2013, Pawarisorn Sae-Ung (16) was stabbed several times and his throat was cut; then his body was dumped and burned at a wooden location in central Phuket

Krabi



Krabi province is situated on the southwest coast of Thailand in the Andaman Sea, 800 kilometres south of Bangkok. Its area is about 4709 square kilometres. The biggest cities and towns include Krabi, Ao Luk, Amphoe Kohlanta and Amphoe Ko Lanta.

Krabi is a great place for tourists. Not only does it offer beautiful scenery, but also a wide range of activities, such as birdwatching, sightseeing, kayaking or snorkelling. A large part of the province is the Hat Noppharat Thara-Ko Phi Phi National Park. The biggest island is Ko Lanta Yai. The landscape is characterised by hills and mountains.

As far as industry is concerned, Krabi relies on tourism and the production of rubber, palm oils, oranges, coconuts and coffee. Fishing, shrimp and cockle farming are also quite popular.

Krabi has a tropical monsoon climate. It is warm throughout a year. The hottest time is between April and May and between September and October (these two months are also the wettest ones so do not forget your umbrella). Fortunately, there are short thundery showers that bring some relief. If you wish for cool breezes, choose to visit Krabi during the NE monsoon season, i.e. between November and March.

Although rip tides are not common in Krabi (in comparison with Phuket), between May and October the sea can be rough so swimming is not a good idea. There are no jet-skis on Krabi beaches, but mooring boats in Ton Sai Bay is dangerous.

During the busy season ferries tend to be overloaded and occasionally capsize or sink in rough seas. It is better to avoid this time to travel and not to forget life jacket locations and escape procedures.

Although Krabi has a relatively low crime rate, it is advised to stay alert and be careful.

Secure your valuable things. It is better not to carry them with you, but leave them in the hotel safe.

Due to the fact that Krabi is a perfect place for adventure activities, which take some risk at the same time, tourists are recommended to have a full insurance policy in the event of an accident or any other unpleasant events. Krabi has some good private health care facilities, but they are rather expensive and you usually have to pay prior to treatment.

Beware of strangers trying to sell gems as many visitors are scammed by fake gem dealers every year.

Overcharging also occurs in Krabi.

Pickpocketing is common in some of the major tourist resorts, such as Ao Nang, so take care of your money and valuable items.

As credit card fraud is a common offence in Krabi, pay cash whenever possible, do not lose sight of your card and check your bank statement.

To stay safe, respect local culture and religion.

The standard of healthcare and hospitals is very high. Pharmacies are mostly well stocked. If you need a doctor, it is possible to find an English speaking one.

As it is very hot in Krabi, drink a lot of water and limit alcohol consumption so not to dehydrate. Remember that it is better to drink bottled water than tap water. You should also beware of exposure to sun, particularly heavy between 11.00 AM and 3.00 PM, and apply high factor sun cream on your skin.

Pattaya



Pattaya is a city in the province of Chonburi, on the east coast of the Gulf of Thailand, around 165 kilometres southeast of Bangkok. Its area amounts to about 513 square metres.

There are around 100,000 residents in Pattaya, mostly Thais (75%). Chinese comprise 14% of the population and people of other origin – 11%.

Although the official language in Pattaya is Thai, one can easily communicate in English. Major religions include Buddhism, Islam, Christianity and Hinduism.

As far as weather conditions are concerned, three seasons can be distinguished in Pattaya. The cool season (November-March) with temperatures around 30 degrees Celsius during the day and about 20 degrees Celsius at night. Summers (April-May) are really hot – up to 40 degrees Celsius – and humid. For those who are not used to such heat, it is better not to visit the city at this time of the year. The sea and rare rain bring some relief. The rainy season (June-September) is abundant with downpours and torrential rain which usually last for about an hour.

Pattaya is a popular tourist destination as it offers beautiful beaches, activities, entertainment and nightlife. Tourism is the main source of income here.

Pattaya is quite safe, but still, there are a few safety issues travellers need to know.

Pattaya is regarded as the naughtiest city in Thailand. It is famous for nightlife and prostitution.

One can easily become a casualty on the roads in Pattaya as drivers tend to ignore signs and overtake, do not stop for pedestrians and often drive under the influence of alcohol, particularly at night.

You can also become scammed by tuk-tuk drivers. Be precise about your destination. Otherwise, they will take you to different types of shops as they get money for bringing

tourists there. It is important to settle the price at the beginning to avoid being overcharged. This is also the case with taxis – ask the driver to turn on the meter and settle the price. If they do not agree, just look for another taxi.

Pickpocketing and thefts are not uncommon – beware of Pattaya’s katoeys (lady-boys). If you react quickly and call the police, you can have your things back. Try not to invite strangers to your room and if it happens, hide your valuable items.

Although gem scams are not as frequent in Pattaya as they are in other parts of Thailand, they can occur. Do not accept cheap gems because they are probably fake and you will lose your money.

Credit card fraud is common throughout Thailand and this is also the case in Pattaya. To avoid it, just keep your credit card in a safe place, be careful when using it and pay in cash whenever you can. You should also check your account regularly.

Stay alert when you rent a jet-ski not to be scammed by jet-ski owners who accuse you of ‘damage’ when you return it. They may become violent if you refuse to pay.

Do not walk along suspicious streets after it gets dark as it can be dangerous. Do not walk far away from Walking Street – down Beach Road or Second Road – there have been cases of violent muggings. While walking Beach Road at night, you can meet lady-boys who rob tourists or take them to their hotel and rob them there.

Another threat is Thai Mafia – you will notice them as they wear scruffy clothes and have tattoos. As far as Second Road is concerned, beware of young gangsters who carry weapons and rob their opponents and tourists. It is better to choose famous nightlife places where there are a lot of tourists. Moreover, outside Walking Street, be careful not to buy any drugs as dealers can work for the police and the consequences can be really serious.

You must also realise that the police conduct drug raids in the Pattaya clubs, i.e. they close the exits, separate men from women and make urine drug tests. It is not possible to refuse such test or leave the place and proving your innocence is really difficult. Avoid drinking too much alcohol as then you may become disrespectful, loud and unpleasant, which can be dangerous for you because many locals do not like foreigners and there is a risk of being hurt or injured.

When on Pattaya beach, you may be tempted to have a cheap massage. They take you to the massage centre, ask you to take off your clothes and put them on a mat lying on the floor. Then they ask you if you want to go to the toilet and if you do, they steal your money. If you refuse to use the toilet, they massage you and the third person (sitting under the bed) robs you of your money and other valuable items you have with you.

Some recent crimes include:

On 8 August 2014, a Cambodian national, Mr Putra, was arrested and suspected of sexually assaulting a girl (5) at a construction site in North Pattaya on 6 August 2014. He is waiting for trial.

On 6 August 2014, Daniel O’Neill (52) was cycling when he was struck by Khun Prasit’s motorbike. The bike was not damaged, but angry words appeared and Mr Prasi took the knife and attacked Mr O’Neill – due to slash wounds, he lost a lot of blood and was taken to hospital.

On 29 July 2014, Khun Jackrapong (23), who sells food on the street, was asked by Khun Atsadawut (25) to sell him some drugs. He refused and then Atsadawut took two knives and attacked the vendor, injuring his hand.

On 20 July 2014, Miss Nadezda Bokova (31) and her boyfriend were robbed by two Cambodians on a motorbike on Pattaya Beach Road. The thieves snatched her bag which contained mobile phones, purse and some other items.

On 23 June 2014, a construction worker Khun Kittisak was shot in the back while driving to work in North Pattaya.

On 7 June 2014, a PVC Pipe-Bomb was found on a North Pattaya street. It is believed that the device was left there to cause some disruption by a person or group in opposition to the Coup.

On 15 May 2014, Mr Narasimaiah Sanjay Kumar (32) and his friend rented two jet skis on Pattaya Beach. When they returned the vessels, the operator accused them of causing damage to the jet skis and told them to pay compensation. They refused and then they were surrounded by five men who began to assault them. The tourists escaped and reported the incident to the police.

On 2 May 2014, four Indian tourists were robbed of four gold necklaces by Ladyboys on Pattaya Beach. It happened when they were coming back to their hotel. Ladyboys suggested joining them at the hotel, embraced the tourists and it was probably when they took the necklaces.

On 26 April 2014, Khun Wiwatchai (27) and another 17-year-old were shot and injured by a bike passenger while travelling on a motorbike to Jomtien. It happened on the South Pattaya Road.

On 21 March 2014, a motorbike passenger shot in the direction of a group of 6 young people sitting on the side of the road and injured one boy (15) who was taken to hospital. Fortunately, he was released home after a few hours.

On 14 February 2014, Khun Pontaerp (18) and Khun Surachai (19) on a motorbike snatched a bag of Russian tourist, Natalie Zelentcova. She identified the criminals and the police arrested them.

On 16 January 2014, a Russian national (25) reported the theft of 5,000 Russian Rubels from the hotel room (the Welcome Plaza Hotel). A hotel cleaner, Khun Kwunpilon (37), was taken to the police station and confessed to the crime. A few moments later, another Russian reported the theft of 300 US Dollars from the room at the Eastiny Residence in Soi 10 off Pattaya Beach Road.

Allmode Summary and Advice

The 1st edition of the Southeast Asia Report concentrated on the news on Indonesia. This edition focuses on Thailand and aims to create better Situational Awareness (SA) and highlight the risks of visiting a particular location.

According to the World Travel and Tourism Council, travel and tourism contributed 2.4 trillion baht (\$73.8 billion) to Thailand's GDP in 2013, about 20% of the total GDP.

Although Thailand's political instability has led to the decrease in the number of incoming tourists, it has not discouraged all travellers, who still choose this country as their holiday destination.

As the British Behaviour Abroad Report shows, Thailand is among top 20 countries where British nationals required the most Consular assistance from 1 April 2013-31 March 2014. Total number of deaths was 362, which is the second highest number following Spain (856 cases). There were 11 rapes and 6 sexual assaults. During that period of time, 1,164 Britons required assistance.

Moreover, the report findings show that British nationals are most likely to be hospitalised in Thailand (285 cases) followed by the Philippines. The number of hospitalisation cases in Thailand increased by around a third (31%) to 285 cases.

No matter where and when and you decide to spend your time in Thailand, try to find out as much information as possible about the country, its political, economic and social situation as well as possible dangers you are exposed to. Read through the report carefully and remember to take precautions not to become a victim of a crime you could avoid.

The report provides valuable information and hints also for vessel owners. Since the number of officially and unofficially reported cases of boat robberies in Thailand is increasing, it is recommended to stay alert and secure your boats/yachts.

Health Advisory

Travellers planning to visit Thailand should find out whether there are any health risks and what to pay attention to.

First of all, you must remember that although the standard of private hospitals is high, they are expensive. Conditions in public hospitals, especially outside Bangkok and the islands, are not always good and you often have to pay in advance to receive help and treatment. It is very important to have appropriate health insurance and enough money to pay for medical assistance you may need.

Avoid buying medications of unknown origin on the street, without consulting a doctor because it can result in serious health problems.

Hot weather can be dangerous for as you can quickly lose body fluids through perspiration, which leads to dehydration. Drink a lot of water, but it is not advised to use tap water, buying bottled water is much safer. Beware of ice from street vendors as the source of water may not be hygienic.

Air pollution, particularly in March and April, can be a nuisance for people who have breathing and chest problems or suffer from asthma.

There are many snakes in Thailand. Some of them are venomous, some are not. Nevertheless, it is safer to assume that all snakes are harmful and not to touch or try to catch them. While walking in the area where snakes are possible, wear boots and long trousers. Step onto fallen logs not over them. If you are bitten by a snake, wrap a bandage around your leg and seek medical assistance.

Too much exposure to the sun can result in sunburn. Limit your time spent in the sun, use high-factor sun cream, wear sunglasses and drink a lot of water.

Visitors often complain about diarrhoea. It can be caused by a new diet, food poisoning or even by eating too much chilli. Be careful what you eat and drink and wash your hands before eating.

In Thailand, mosquitoes are a big problem throughout a year, particularly during and just after the rainy season (June-October), in the early morning and late afternoon. There is a risk of catching dengue fever and Japanese B encephalitis. Dengue fever is a mosquito-borne disease caused by four different, but related, serotypes of the virus (DEN-1, DEN-2, DEN-3 and DEN-4). The symptoms of dengue fever include high temperature, headache, pain behind the eyes, joint and muscle ache, metallic taste in the mouth, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea. Japanese B Encephalitis is another viral disease transmitted by the bite of an infected female culex mosquito. There are usually mild symptoms or no symptoms at all. In the case of severe disease, the symptoms are: fever, chills, headache, fatigue, nausea and vomiting. To avoid being bitten by mosquitoes, wear lightweight, light-coloured and baggy clothes, use mosquito repellents, close windows and doors during morning and evening hours and sleep under mosquito netting.

Another health threat is Hand, Foot, and Mouth Disease (HFMD). This is a contagious viral illness caused by different viruses. HFMD mostly affects infants and children younger than 5 years old. However, people of any age can be infected. The initial symptoms are usually fever, reduced appetite, sore throat and a feeling of being unwell. A day or two days later painful sores can develop in the mouth, itchy skin rash with flat red spots on the palms of the

hands, the soles of the feet, the knees, elbows and buttocks may occur. To reduce the risk of being infected, follow good hygiene practice and often wash your hands. On 29 July 2014, the Bangkok Metropolitan Administration (BMA) reported that the number of patients infected with HFMD have doubled since last year. 85% of the patients were children under age 5. Dr Wongwat Liewlak, director of the Communicable Disease Control Division in the BMA Department of Health said the number of infected people in Bangkok is 4,695 (from the beginning of the year until July).

A common disease in Thailand is rabies, i.e. a virus transmitted in the saliva of infected animals through bites or licking open cuts and wounds. Early symptoms include fever, headache, nausea, itching or burning around the wound, tiredness, sore throat and increased saliva. Try not to approach dogs, cat and other animals.

Hepatitis A is a viral disease of the liver, transmitted through eating contaminated food or drinking contaminated water. Symptoms include jaundice, fatigue, nausea, diarrhoea and stomach pain. A good way of prevention is vaccination. Moreover, avoid contact with people who may be infected.

Hepatitis B is a viral disease of the liver, transmitted via blood, blood products or bodily fluids. Vaccination is recommended for people who may be exposed to the disease through sexual contact, medical treatment, sharing needles, tattooing or acupuncture.

Typhoid is caused by a bacteria found in contaminated food and water. Symptoms include high fever, headache, dry cough and stomach pain. If you are going to spend more than a week in Thailand, it is advised to consider vaccination and be careful what you eat and drink.

Yachting News

In June 2014, ReCAAP (the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia) confirmed that the Thai-flagged Orapin 4 had been hijacked by pirates. The vessel arrived at Sriracha port, Chon Buri, Thailand. The criminals boarded the ship and stole the cargo. They also damaged communications equipment.

At the beginning of May 2014, it was reported that the police were searching for the captain of a small oil tanker, the Thai-registered vessel, Ocean 4. He probably killed two members of his crew and stole cargo money. The tanker was caught by the police off the Koh Kood island. Three other crew members were arrested.

On 15 February 2014, two local Phang Nga people boarded the yacht "Piping Shrike" at Koh Hong, Phang Nga, Thailand. They stole computer and electronic equipment, money, wallets, purses, backpack, bum bags, phone and passports. One of the National Park assistants saw the robbers but they managed to escape. Nevertheless, a chase was organised, the thieves panicked and left the stolen items on the west side of Phang Nga Bay. There were no passports, credit cards and cash.

In June 2013, it was also reported that Thai fishing boats deliberately tried to ram yachts. One of these incidents took place around Phuket on the way to Langkawi. The crew had to do their best to avoid collision. The fishing boats did not react to yelling, signalling or sounding the horn.

In June 2013, two yachts anchored in the north east bay of Choeng Mon. The crew left their vessels on the beach and went ashore. When they came back, they noticed one yacht had been rammed by a jet ski whose operator told us they had been responsible for the incident because they had left it there. Finally, when they were putting the yachts in the water, they were attacked by three jet ski operators.

In April 2013, on Chalong Bay, Capt. Bruce Issell was informed that robbers had boarded the Davinci catamaran. He raced to Chalong Pier, boarded Sunseeker 50 and headed for the Davinci catamaran. The intruders attacked the Sunseeker and tried to board it and capture Capt. Issell. There were at least two shots fired. The police arrived and arrested the thieves, who stole just some children's foam paddle boards, a set of binoculars, some flashlights and other small items.

On 12 February 2013, the crew of the yacht Haven Marina locked up the boat and went to visit the hong at Koh Roi. They were then informed that there had been three strangers on board in their cockpit. When they came back, they found out that the yacht had been broken into. The thieves stole money, passport with work visa, wallet, phones and MP3 player. A few women's items were also missing. The robbers managed to escape.

Security Awareness Training

Are your crew compliant with the mandatory STCW 95 modules?


STCW Regulation VI/6 became mandatory on 1st January 2014. This regulation requires all seafarers on ships subject to the ISPS Code to have received security related training and instruction relevant to their assigned duties on-board.

- **Proficiency in Security Awareness**

ALL seafarers who **do not** have specific security-related duties on board are required to hold a Proficiency in Security Awareness Certificate ([PSA](#)) and will need to take an approved course approx. 4 hours in length.

- **Proficiency in Designated Security Duties**

All seafarers with **designated** security duties stipulated in the ship security plan will be required to hold a certificate of Proficiency in Designated Security Duties ([PDSD](#)) and will need to take an approved course approximately 10 hours in length.



Are your Crew prepared?

New STCW 95 – proficiency in security awareness & for seafarers with designated security duties.

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- Reporting a security incident
- Security threat procedures
- Enhancement of maritime security through heightened awareness
- Recognition of security risks and threats
- Maintaining security awareness and vigilance
- Maintaining conditions set out in a Ship Security Plan.
- Vessel Security Inspections
- Security equipment and systems.

On 1st January 2014, security training required for seafarers will change.




STCW Regulation VI/6 will enter into force. This regulation requires all seafarers on ships subject to the ISPS Code to have received security related training and instruction relevant to their assigned duties on-board.






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