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Visitor Safety and Security Survey

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Section 1: INTRODUCTION

Data collection for the Visitor Safety and Security (VSS) survey for Q1-2012 was conducted during the week of 25th-31st March 2012. The survey targeted departing visitors at the international airport through a self administered questionnaire. Out of the 4,390 visitors departing Seychelles during that week, a total of 938 visitors were canvassed. A total of 442 questionnaires were returned with an average of 2 to 3 persons per questionnaire.

The majority of the visitors who responded to the questionnaire were from Europe with 28% from France, 17% from Germany and 15% from Italy while the rest of Europe constituted 20% of the respondents. Visitors coming from Africa (South Africa, Ivory Coast, Burundi, Mauritius, Malawi and Morocco) altogether constituted 7% of respondents, visitors from the Middle East (UAE, Iran, Qatar) constituted 10% of the respondents while those coming from Asia made up 1 % of respondents.

An analysis of the respondents' purpose of visit showed that the majority of visitors were on holiday (75%), while 10% came for business purposes, 7% came specifically for honeymoon and 5 % for both wedding and honeymoon. The rest of the respondents were in transit or visited Seychelles for other purposes. On the whole, it can be said that about 90% of visitors had come for a holiday, if the 'honeymoon' and 'wedding and honeymoon' categories are also considered as holiday.

In Q1-2012 the questionnaire included questions on 'witnessed attacks' and more questions about visitors' reports to the police. Unlike in the previous surveys (2008 and 2010) where the safety and security questions and questions on expenditure were administered at the same time but on separate forms, during this quarter, the questions for both surveys featured as different sections on the same form. This resulted in an increase in response rate from 80.1 % in 2010 to 99.3% in Q1 2012 (Table1).

Table 1: Response rates of surveys conducted in Quarter 1 (2008, 2010 and 2012)

Year	Quarter	No. of visitors in the survey week		Forms returned		Response
		Total number of visitors departing during the survey week	Number of departing visitors who participated in the survey	Visitors' Expenditure Survey section completed	Visitor Security Section completed	Percentage of Safety and Security Survey Section completed
2008	Q1	4,135	1,029	620	421	67.9
2010	Q1	3,927	1,376	644	516	80.1
2012	Q1	4,390	943	445	442	99.3

Source: NBS Visitor Safety and Security surveys

Note: One questionnaire may include more than one person

Section 2: RESULTS

1. Personal safety

The percentage of the visitors who felt concerned about their personal safety was 3.9%, which shows that fewer visitors were worried about their personal safety, than in the first quarters of 2008 and 2010. The percentage of visitors who reported having been attacked in the first quarter of 2012 was 0.5% (Table 2). This reflects a decrease compared to the years 2008 and 2010 where 1.5% and 1.4% (respectively) of visitors reported being attacked during their stay in the Seychelles.

Table 2: Percentage of visitors, who felt concerned, felt threatened, was attacked or witnessed an attack during their stay in the Seychelles, Quarter 1, (2008, 2010 and 2012)

	(Percentage)		
	Q1- 2008	Q1- 2010	Q1-2012
Concerned	4.5	5.0	3.9
Threatened	4.0	2.0	2.7
Attacked	1.5	1.4	0.5
Witnessed serious attack	N/A	N/A	0.5

Source: NBS Visitor Safety and Security surveys

Note: The 2008 and 2010 surveys did not capture information about witnessing attacks

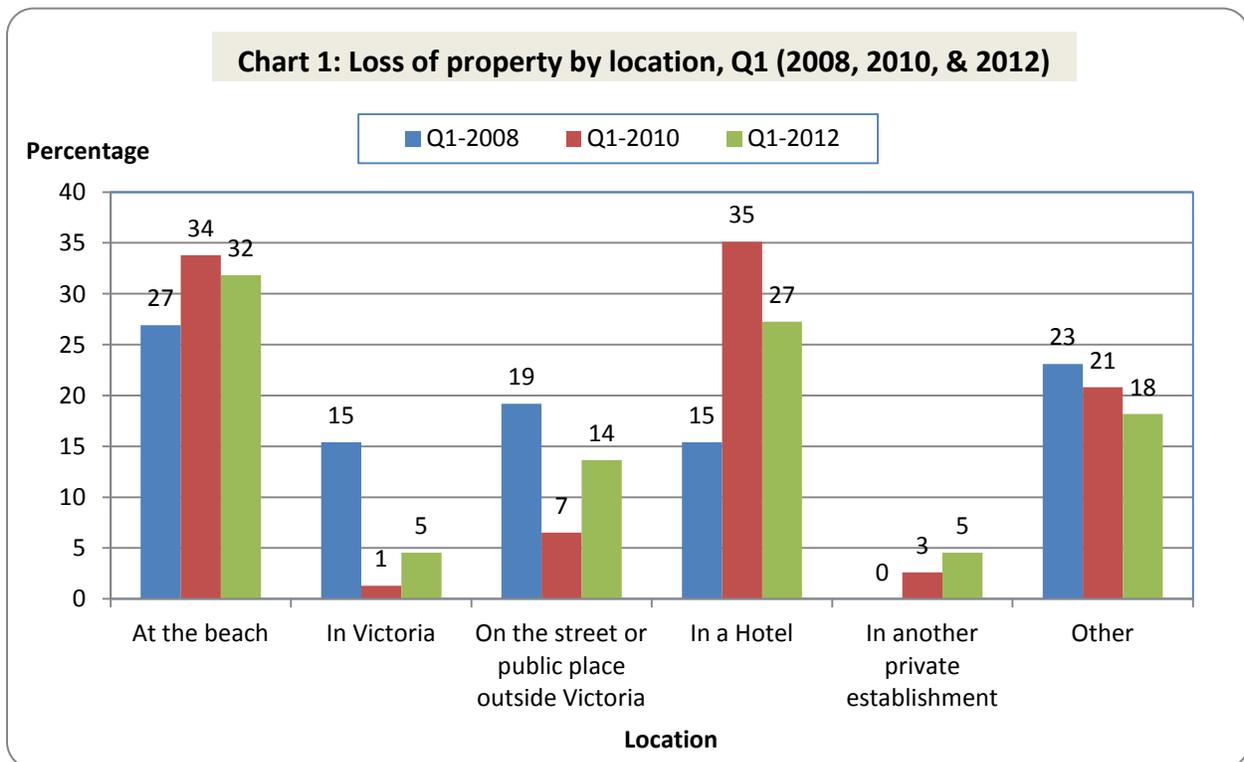
In the first quarter of 2012, 50% of the attack incidents reported by visitors took place during the day compared to 57% in 2008 and 58% in 2010. Of those who witnessed attacks, most of these occurred in Victoria and at the beach.

2. Safety of property

7% of surveyed visitors reported loss of property/belonging during their stay in the first quarter of 2012. Of those, 3% reported more than one incident. The most commonly stolen/lost items were 'clothing and glasses' (45%), followed by 'money, travelers' cheques, credit cards' (14%), 'electronics: camera, computer, CD players etc.' (10%), and 'mobile phones' (7%).

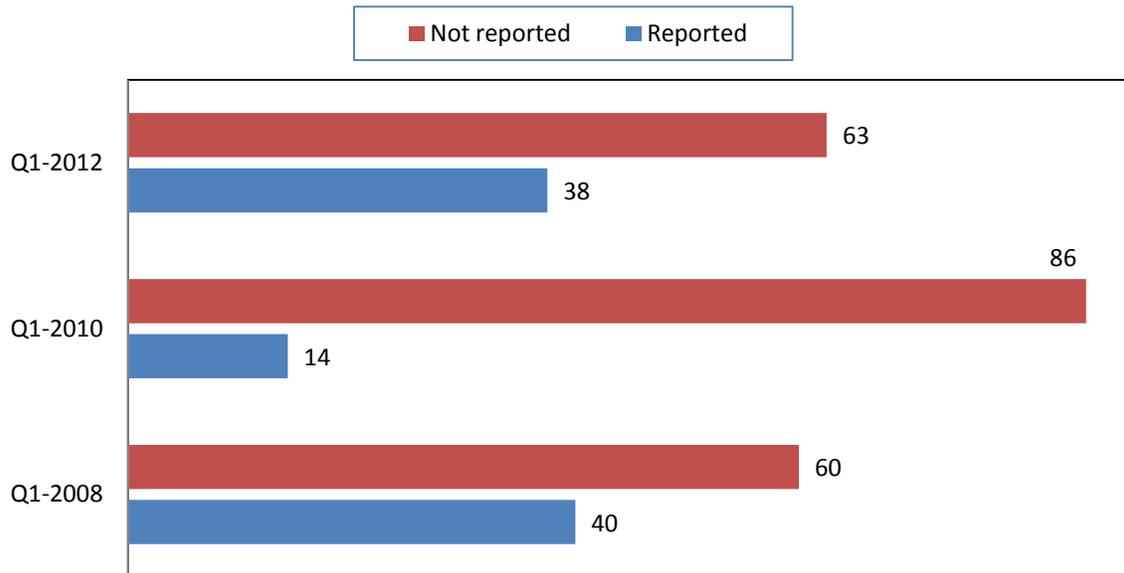
Although the percentage of visitors who lost their property/belonging at beaches and hotels dropped during the first quarter of 2012 (*beach, 32% and hotel, 27%*) compared to Q1 2010 (*beach, 34% and hotel, 35%*), beaches and hotels continued to be the most frequently reported locations where visitors lost their property/belongings.

As shown in Chart 1, there was an increase in the percentage of incidents in Victoria, on the street or in public places outside Victoria. The percentage of incidents in Victoria increased from 1% in Q1 2010 to 5% in Q1 2012 and the percentage of incidents taking place on the street or in public places outside Victoria increased from 7% in Q1 2010 to 14% in Q1 2012. Other places where visitors lost their property/belongings included in rented cars, and on bus stops.



Of those who reported loss of property/belonging, 36% believed their property/belonging had been stolen. Of those who believed their property/belongings were stolen, 38% reported the incident(s) to police. Chart 2 shows an increase in the percentage of those who reported in Q1 2012, compared to Q1 2010 where only 14% of visitors reported loss of property to the police.

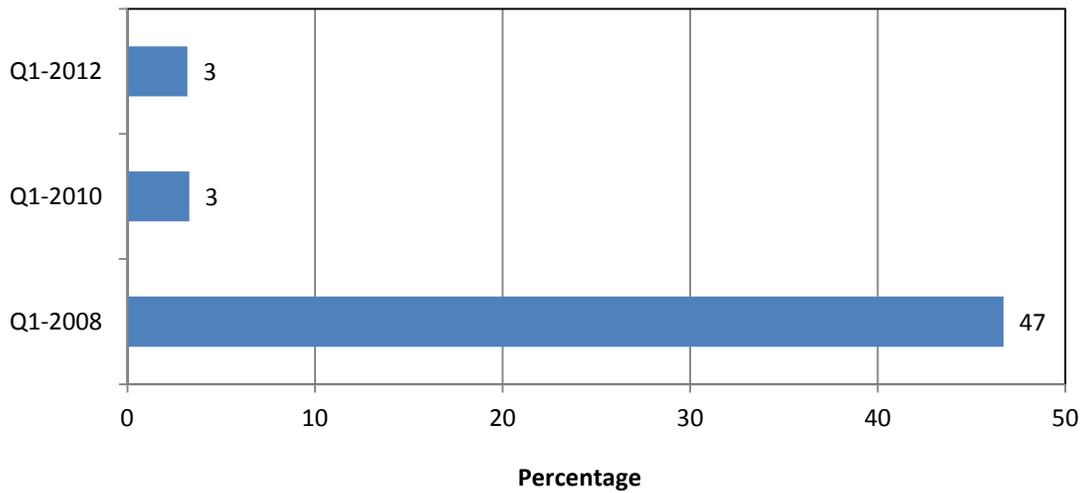
Chart 2: Percentage of visitors who believed property was stolen and whether or not they reported to police - Q1 (2008, 2010 & 2012)



3. Foreign exchange

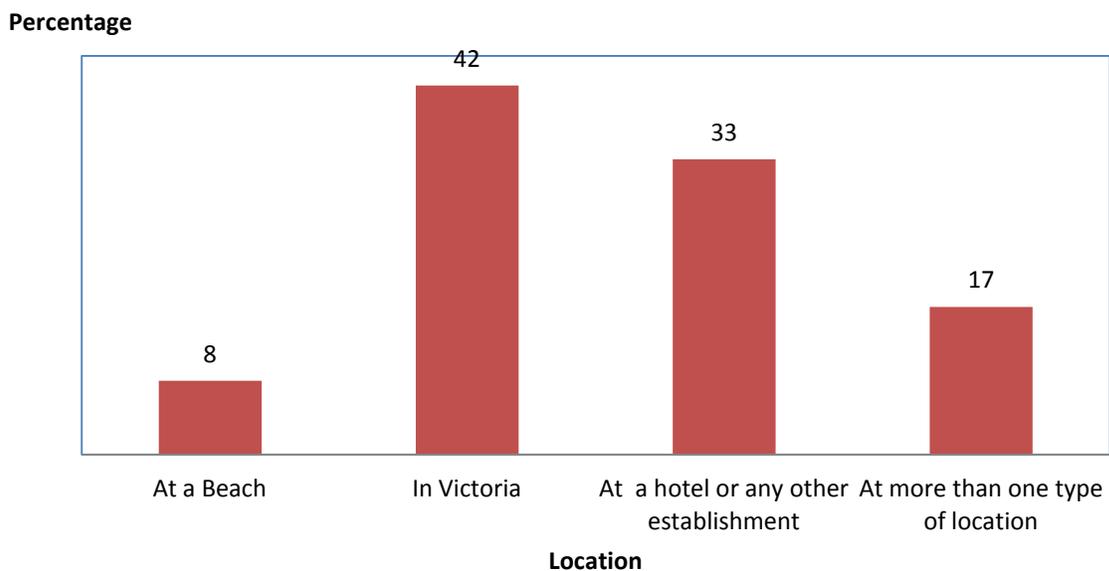
In the first quarter of 2012, the percentage of visitors who were approached to exchange foreign currency other than at a bank or official currency exchange facility was 3% which is at the same level as in Q1 2010 (Chart 3). This reflects a significant drop compared to Q1 2008, where 47% of visitors were approached for such transactions. The sharp decrease over the four years can be explained by the implementation of economic reforms in 2008. In terms of comments regarding foreign exchange, visitors complained about the unattractive rates of exchange.

Chart 3: Percentage of visitors approached to exchange foreign currency, Q1 (2008, 2010 & 2012)



Of the 3% of visitors who reported being approached to exchange foreign currency, Victoria was the most common location (42%) whereas only 8% reported being approached at a beach (Chart 4).

Chart 4: Exchange of foreign currency by location, Q1-2012



4. Visitors' comments

a) Safety and Security

Most of the visitors reported feeling *safe* at all times and on all islands as there were regular police officers on patrol who offered advice on security. However, visitors raised several “*safety and security*” concerns which included:

- Ferries overloaded (with passengers having to stand) and visitors felt unsafe
- Lack of lighting at Beau Vallon beach which left visitors feeling unsafe at night
- Dangerous and unlit roads
- Lack of pedestrian footpaths outside of Victoria

b) Customer service

The majority of visitors described the Seychellois people as hospitable and reported having enjoyed their stay. However, there was a general feeling that services were very expensive. Taxis on La Digue and snorkeling facilities were specifically mentioned as being very expensive. Some of the visitors also had reservations about customer service in some places, where they felt that service providers were unfriendly.

There were a number of comments made about the service at Mahe airport which included complaints about slow check in processes, rude staff and the lack of coordination with other services. They gave examples of local travel (ferry schedules) not being well coordinated with departures from Mahe.

Although most visitors commended the culture and the food, some visitors were not satisfied about the quality of the food and some complained about the lack of Asian / Chinese cuisine.

c) Environment

Almost all the canvassed visitors appreciated the beauty of the islands and reported that Seychelles is a great place for holidays. This notwithstanding the fact that many visitors emphasised the need to focus on preservation of the environment by avoiding littering, and over developing the islands with the building of big hotels, for example at Beau Vallon.

Furthermore, quite a number of visitors were concerned about the increasing pollution on the islands as well as in the ocean.

d) Recommendations by visitors

- Shops should stay open beyond 5 pm
- The islands should be kept as natural as possible
- There should be a wider variety of handicrafts for shopping
- Refrain from building too many big hotels (like in Beau Vallon), otherwise the advantage and uniqueness of a beautiful natural island will be lost
- There should be more street lights at Beau Vallon beach
- There should be changing/wash rooms at Beau Vallon beach
- There should be more parking spaces at the beaches
- Beaches should be regularly cleaned up
- Buses at late evening are required
- Refrain from selling islands to foreigners
- Sensitise the population to recycle paper, plastic and glass instead of throwing them all around the island
- Organise and advertise more activities which will attract visitors
- Road signs and signs indicating tourist attractions are required
- Tourism offices should provide the right information, especially information on Praslin-La Digue ferry schedules
- La Digue-Praslin ferry timings could be matched with Praslin-Mahe flights/ferry