



SECURITY BRIEFING FOR MAJOR SPORTING EVENTS IN RIO DE JANEIRO

This summer the greatest sporting event in the world will shift the world’s focus to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. The games will take place from 5–21 August and 7–18 September. In addition to the events taking place in Rio, the football tournament will also be held in five other cities: Manaus, Belo Horizonte, Brasília, Salvador and São Paulo. Participating athletes from 206 countries will compete in a total of 665 events that up to 500,000 international spectators are expected to attend—as well as a considerable number of domestic tourists.

Businesses and visiting personnel will face a number of logistical and security challenges in all cities hosting the football tournament and especially in Rio de Janeiro for the duration of the tournament. Crime and public safety will be the most pressing concerns, though significant disruption to travel and logistics is also anticipated due to protests. Demand for hotel accommodation, air travel and other travel-related services will also increase, posing additional logistical challenges for visitors.

Figure 1: Homicide rates (per 100,000 inhabitants)

CITY	HOMICIDE RATE	YEAR
Caracas (Venezuela)	134	2013
Rio de Janeiro (Brazil)	19	2013
Bogotá (Colombia)	16.7	2013
São Paulo (Brazil)	14.2	2013
Mexico City (Mexico)	8.4	2013
Buenos Aires (Argentina)	6.9	2013
New York City (USA)	5.1	2012
Moscow (Russia)	3.8	2011
Paris (France)	1.8	2012

Source: 2013 Global Study on Homicide (UNODC) and Rio de Janeiro Public Security Institute

What are the main security concerns?

Crime mitigation will be of primary importance to visitors and businesses; a particularly troubling characteristic of Brazil is the high level of violence associated with criminal activity. Furthermore, crime rates in most Brazilian cities—including Rio de Janeiro—remain high even by Latin American standards. The primary risk to visitors will be from common and opportunistic crime, particularly given that criminals are often armed, and any attempt at resistance can lead them to resort to violence. Express kidnapping—in which the victim is forced to withdraw money from

ATMs—is also a major concern. Road safety will pose an additional threat: Brazil has the third highest incidence of road deaths globally. The urban road network in Rio de Janeiro is also subject to high levels of vehicular crime, including “smash and grab” incidents at stop signs and traffic lights; meanwhile, cargo theft continues to pose a serious risk for businesses, particularly in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro states. Although security threats are higher in low-income areas and shantytowns (favelas), no area of Rio de Janeiro is immune from such risk. Personnel should exercise caution at all times and adopt basic security precautions to avoid falling victim to crime.

Will there be a spike in crime during the major sporting event in Rio?

The games are expected to attract as many as 500,000 foreign tourists to Brazil. While this influx would certainly provide attractive targets for local criminals, Brazil has set up its largest security operation in history to address the unique challenges surrounding the event. The Brazilian government is deploying 47,000 Brazilian security professionals. Added to this will be 38,000 members of the armed services as well as security forces to patrol the five football host cities, including members of the army and federal and state police forces. As a result, the threat of a significant uptick in crime is unlikely.

Will there be protests during the sporting events?

Yes. Tensions in many urban centres—including Rio de Janeiro—remain elevated as a result of Brazil’s on-going political and economic crisis. Although impeachment proceedings against President Dilma Rousseff (temporarily removed from office) are based on alleged breaches of the fiscal law, the corruption scandal in Petrobras and the Workers’ Party’s (PT) involvement in it became a central driver in the process, denting Rousseff’s approval ratings and fuelling large-scale street protests. The interim administration will face heightened opposition by supporters of Rousseff and PT, along with demonstrations held by labour movements opposing adopted austerity measures. All available evidence indicates that a

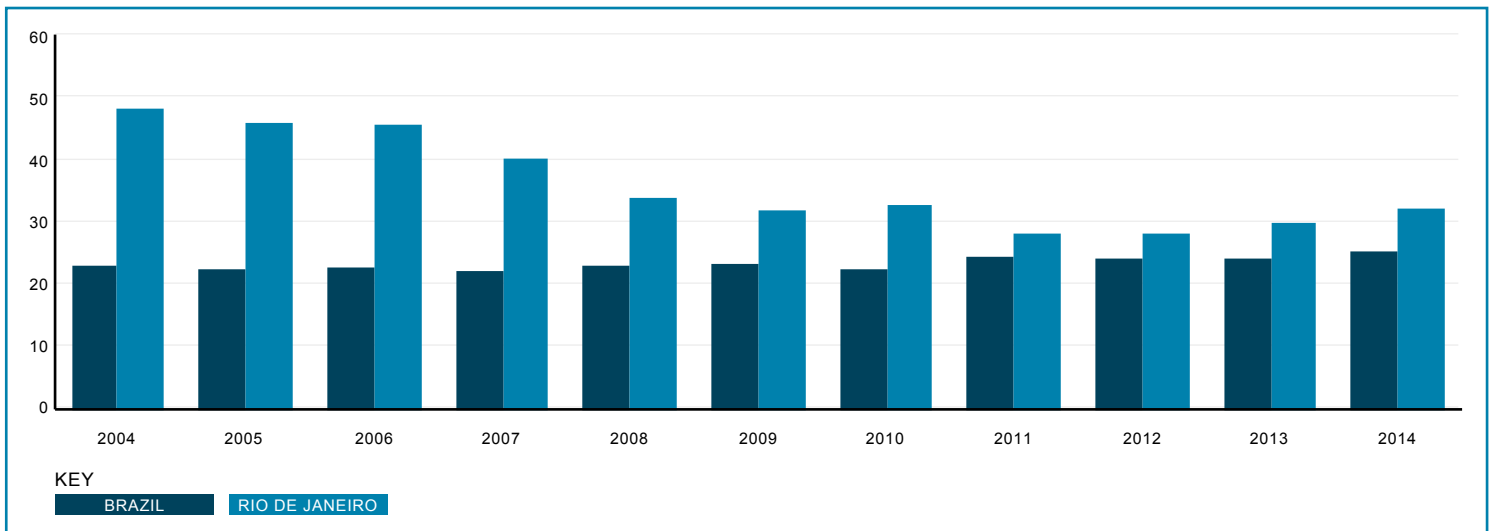
renewed wave of protests is likely to take place during the event in Rio de Janeiro, though their size and frequency will depend on a range of factors, including the government and the security forces’ reaction to the demonstrations. Furthermore, several civil society organisations are trying to capitalise on the momentum, including trade unions and grassroots movements. Lastly, major sporting events are often used as a platform for activists in order to attract the world’s attention to their causes, meaning that single-issue activism is also a concern.

While most demonstrations are likely to be peaceful, there is a credible risk of clashes between security forces and protesters, particularly if the security forces adopt a heavy-handed approach. Furthermore, anarchist groups using “black bloc” tactics are known to have infiltrated some past protests and often engage in acts of vandalism, mainly against storefronts and bank branches. Companies are therefore advised to monitor the situation closely, consulting reliable local media sources and monitoring our travel security alerts for details on the location and timing of any further demonstrations, bearing in mind that many protests are only announced at short notice, often through social media channels.

Is there a terrorism threat during the major sporting events in Rio?

The Brazilian Intelligence Agency (ABIN) on 13 April confirmed that a credible threat was made in November 2015 by Maxime Hauchard, a French national who has featured as an executioner in Islamic State propaganda material. The confirmation is not indicative of an imminent threat of a terrorist attack, which Control Risks continues to assess as LOW. There is no history of transnational terrorism in Brazil, and the country continues to rely heavily on its foreign policy—which is based on principles of multilateralism, peaceful settlement of disputes and non-interventionism—as a main source of protection. Nonetheless, a major global event offers terrorist groups a worldwide audience for spectacular attacks. Furthermore, Brazil’s security forces will also be responsible for the safety of the delegations brought to participate. Lastly, motivations for terrorist acts are numerous and

Figure 2: Homicide rate in Brazil and in Rio de Janeiro state



Source: Rio de Janeiro Public Security Institute



go well beyond international affairs, including domestic politics, ideologies, racism, and religious reasons, and can be perpetrated by lone wolves (individuals without significant ties with large terrorist organisations).

Brazil's counter-terrorism strategy for the major sporting events will be built on the lessons learned from the country's successful experience in hosting the 2014 World Cup. The Special Secretary for the Security of Major Events (SESGE), under the Ministry of Justice, is responsible for co-coordinating the interaction between local security forces, federal police agents, the Ministry of Defence and the Brazilian Intelligence Agency (Abin). The country is also relying on foreign expertise to address the unique challenges related to major sporting events. In 2015, Brazil sent around 100 police officers abroad to learn about best practices for managing large international events, including the Boston and Berlin marathons, the Tour de France, the IAAF World Athletics Championships in Beijing and the Baku 2015 European games.

Are there any health-related risks of concern?

At International SOS and Control Risks, we recommend that visitors take steps to understand the medical risks involved generically with travel, and specifically with those associated with the six cities that will be visited during the sporting events. As such, we have created a global risk rating tool, which combines the risks associated with health, security and mobility/airport considerations. From our research, the cities of Rio de Janeiro, São Paulo and Belo Horizonte each earned a low risk rating, while Brasilia and Salvador are medium and Manaus has a medium/high rating.

While the Brazil government, as well as private medical facilities, are taking steps to prepare for the sporting events, it can be expected in any major global venue, that there may be limited access to medical care, manifesting as delays in appointments, over-crowding in urgent care clinics and hospitals, and limitations in language capabilities of medical support staff. For these reasons, it is critical that visitors come with their medical needs sorted ahead of time. For visitors with chronic medical conditions, these conditions should be well-controlled. Any chronic medications should be hand-carried through airports, so as not to

get lost with luggage, and should have documentation from primary doctors, indicating the nature of the medications and their use. Likewise, visitors will want to have all their basic immunisations up to date.

Of special consideration, are infectious diseases such as dengue, malaria, yellow fever, rabies and the Zika virus. For the vast majority of people, if proper preventative measures are taken, the risk can be minimal. The most significant risks apply towards the population of visitors who are pregnant, or who have a partner that is planning on getting pregnant in the next eight weeks to six months. For this population, we recommend that they speak with their primary doctor about their decision to travel. For everyone else, we recommend that they take standard proactive measures to prevent mosquito bites. This is a prudent measure to decrease the likelihood of acquiring Zika, and other mosquito-borne infections.

What are the main logistical challenges to bear in mind?

The government has launched major projects to enhance the country's infrastructure ahead of the major sporting events in Rio, including improved roads, subways, trams (VLT) and bus rapid transit (BRT) systems. Unfortunately, many urban mobility projects are delayed or have been scaled back, meaning that their impact will be limited, and the public transport system will remain unreliable and inadequate because of severe under-investment. Despite significant private investment in the country's major airports, significant bottlenecks in passenger terminals and plane berths remain. As a result, the huge influx of visitors will inevitably cause delays in flights, as well as crowded boarding areas. Lastly, telephone and internet coverage is widely available in all host cities; however, telecommunication infrastructure is below par, resulting in spotty coverage and frequent drop-outs.

Security recommendations

- Don't be complacent about security—the perceived sense of safety can be misleading.
- Personal identification is normally only needed for flights, long-distance bus trips or formal meetings with offices or state authorities; for routine work or travel around big cities, a photocopy of your ID is a safe way to reduce the risks of passport loss.
- Use ATMs only in safe locations such as hotels and bank establishments—and only during business hours.
- Credit card “skimming” and other types of financial fraud schemes are on the rise in Brazil. Be mindful and ensure you have back-ups in place prior to your arrival. Ensure your financial institution is aware of your travel.
- Dress appropriately to keep a low profile in your daily travels—this includes avoiding wearing jewellery or carrying tablets, smartphones, luxury branded handbags, etc. If carrying a laptop, do not make it obvious by using a laptop bag.
- Lock your valuables in your hotel safe, including cameras, laptops and passports, when not in use.
- Travel in groups and limit movements at night. Avoid walking alone at night.
- Pedestrians do not have the right of way in Brazil. Remain extra vigilant and assume the driver will not stop and will not obey customary traffic signals.
- Use only licenced taxis.
- Always ride in vehicles with the windows fully rolled up and doors locked. Handbags, wallets or mobile (cell) phones should not be visible or left lying around in the vehicle.
- Do not take drinks offered by strangers, and never leave yours unattended. Spiking of drinks, a crime known in Brazil as “Boa noite, Cinderela” or “Good night, Cinderella”, is relatively common in nightlife areas.
- If you become the target of a crime, do not resist. Valuables should be handed over to avoid escalation of violence. Victims of violent crime in Brazil who resist armed criminals should expect a violent outcome.