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Basic Training

PACES: Preparedness for Appropriate Accommodation in Emergency Shelters

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Types of Disaster

There can be a range of disasters, natural or man made which can affect the destination

- Earthquakes
- Tsunami
- Extreme Weather Events (Hurricane, floods etc)
- Pandemics
- Terrorist attack
- Unprecedented movement of people from neighbouring country due to war etc.



Role of Malta Tourism Authority

- In the case of any national emergency, MTA is not expected to be the leading organisation to manage the crisis.
- However, MTA has a very important role to play by acting as a major contributor to a Rapid Intervention Structure administered by Central Government.



MTA's strengths

MTA possesses a number of strengths which can be harnessed in the case of a national disaster:

- It possesses inventory lists of accommodation and other hospitality stock in the country
- It enjoys a healthy working relationship with tourism stakeholders who recognise MTA as a leader in times of crisis
- It runs an international network of Public Relations agencies which can help communicate news, updates and messages to the international community
- It administers the portal visitmalta.com which is an instantly recognisable and heavily used mode of communication with the outside world
- It can harness the experience and resources of the World Tourism Organisation which has broad experience in the field of disaster management.



The Role of MTA in case of a National Disaster

- Assist tourists who are currently in the destination by providing them with means to extend their stay and obtain any emergency assistance they may need.
- Contribute to an emergency international communications effort by extending the availability of its overseas public relations network.
- Liaise with all relevant stakeholders including hotels, airlines, tour operators to calm clients and repatriate them as soon as possible.
- Safeguard the Destination's image and name from long term damage to ensure a return to normality within the minimum time possible.



Possible areas of MTA responsibility within a Rapid Intervention Unit structure

- Create Standard Operations Procedures for Disaster Contingency Planning
- Have a team structure in place so that responsibilities can be immediately activated
- Create a plan on how to treat tourists to minimise the trauma and have least repercussions possible
- Deal with media, especially international
- Communication with Ministry for Foreign Affairs
- Create a helpline for tourists



Concluding Remarks

- While international studies place Malta at a very low risk of a wide range of disasters, these can still happen.
- In such occurrence, the country needs to be prepared for all eventualities.
- Due to tourism's high impact and presence, the industry is bound to be heavily affected and involved in any type of disaster.
- Therefore MTA needs to play a major contributing role in managing such crises.
- Excluding MTA from any contingency plan for such matters risks ignoring the needs of the substantial tourism volumes on the island which at peak can account for around one in every five people in the Maltese Islands.