

Risk Assessment & Security Protocol Template

A risk assessment can help you identify and assess the range of threats and risks to you, your colleagues and contributors whilst working in hostile or dangerous environments and, in turn, can help you minimise any dangers.

The Rory Peck Trust encourages all freelancers to undertake a risk assessment before beginning any assignment. It's not only relevant for conflict or crime zones – a risk assessment is also essential where dangers are sometimes less obvious or apparent, whether the location or story is familiar to you or not.

Please save a copy of this form locally for your own reference.

RORY PECK TRUST

Title of assignment

Country/Location

Time Zone

Dialling Code

Dates of Travel/Assignment

Last Updated

If appropriate, this document should be password protected and any mobile device used to send or access it must be capable of being wiped remotely in the event of loss or theft.

Refer to the [RISK ASSESSMENT & SECURITY PROTOCOL GUIDE](#) to complete this form. Note that each journalist and assignment faces unique circumstances and this template should be modified accordingly.

1. Assignment Outline

1.1 KEY CONTACTS & EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Staff Travelling on the Assignment

Staff Job Title/Role

Full Name

Phone Number

Email

Blood Group

Personal Circumstances

Name of Partner

Address

Phone Number

Email

Next of Kin

Address

Phone Number

Email

Brief Details of Relevant Experience

(Continue in this format for all relevant personnel. You can duplicate this page to add more staff.)

Staff Conducting Check-ins

Commissioners, Editors and Other Contacts for Assignment

Local Crew

(Local journalists, translators, drivers etc.)

Emergency Contacts

Local Emergency Services

Appropriate Key Security Contact

(Appoint a designated security contact in-country, who can be kept informed of any changes to plans, movements and locations.)

Any Other Relevant Contacts

Provide a list of additional contacts in-country who can assist in case of a security incident, loss of contact with team, or any other emergency. This should include any local NGOs, embassies, local officials, local provider of legal advice or law enforcement authorities. Note if they have been pre-informed of the assignment and if any formal registration or affiliation has been made.

Insurance Provider Emergency Contacts

Medical Evacuation Provider Emergency Contacts

1.2 STORY OVERVIEW

Give a brief overview of the assignment, including story outline and proposed interviews.

1.3 LOCATIONS & BRIEF SCHEDULE

List all locations with a brief schedule for the assignment.

1.4 FLIGHTS, TRAVEL & ACCOMMODATION

List details of all flights, travel arrangements and accommodation (including contact details, addresses, etc.).

Attach any relevant documents and maps in 7. APPENDIX

1.5 PASSPORT, VISAS, PRESS ACCREDITATION & COVER STORY

Passport

Passport number

Date of issue

Expiry date

Country of issue/Nationality

Visa Information

Provide all details of visa issue numbers, date, issuing office etc.

Press Accreditation

Detail how this will be obtained and provide full details of any permissions or permits.

Cover Story

Give details of any cover story being used and justification for using it.

Attach relevant documents and correspondence in 7. APPENDIX.

2. Risk Analysis

2.1 GENERAL SAFETY & SECURITY ASSESSMENT

Give an overview of a general safety and security assessment; identifying potential safety or security risks associated with carrying out the assignment, the story and the location.

Consider the sensitivity of the topic, whether the assignment covers a high-risk location, activity or event, person or people.

2.2 PROJECT SPECIFIC GENERAL RISK ASSESSMENT

For each of the following sections, identify:

1. The potential risk associated with carrying out the assignment

2. The level of threat for the risk

(How serious it is: not very/somewhat/extremely; and how likely it is: not very/somewhat/extremely likely)

3. How it will be mitigated

(The measures being implemented to reduce the chance and severity)

Location Risks

Check the box for any of the following risks you may face:

- | | | | |
|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Attitudes of public to foreign or local crews | <input type="checkbox"/> | Cultural hostility |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Hostile authorities and attitudes of local security forces to foreign or local crews | <input type="checkbox"/> | Abusive state security forces |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Corruption (bribery) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Abduction/kidnapping |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Violent and organized crime | <input type="checkbox"/> | Riots/demonstrations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Armed conflict | <input type="checkbox"/> | Terrorist attack |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Road side bombs/IEDs/body traps | <input type="checkbox"/> | Landmines and unexploded ordinance (uxo) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Low intensity warfare/guerrilla war | <input type="checkbox"/> | Petty crime/theft |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Car-jacking | <input type="checkbox"/> | Crossing borders/checkpoints |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Political instability | <input type="checkbox"/> | Outbreak of hostilities |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Death squads | <input type="checkbox"/> | Militia |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Gangs | <input type="checkbox"/> | Natural disaster (flood, earthquake) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Extreme weather | <input type="checkbox"/> | Environmental hazards/toxins/poisons |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Physical and/or electronic surveillance | <input type="checkbox"/> | Infectious diseases |

Detail each risk identified, threat level and how it will be mitigated.

Include any relevant training, such as Travel Safety Awareness Course or Hostile Environment Training, completed by you and your crew with details of provider, dates and course content.

If required, complete a PROOF OF LIFE document.

Profile Risks

Identify how your profile or that of the team/contacts/contributors may cause risk.

1. Are you operating at a high or low profile and are there any risks associated?
2. Are there any potential risks identified with the individual profiles of you or your team for the location or story (gender, age, ethnicity, religious beliefs or nationality)?
3. Are there any risks in relation to you or your team's image or presence online and how might that be perceived, including any past affiliations, jobs and assignments?

Security for local contacts/contributors

Outline any potential risks related to people working or interacting with you (local journalists, translators, drivers, NGOs, sources and contributors).

What are the credentials and experience of local journalist/driver/translator that make them suitable for this assignment?

Communications

Complete a [COMMUNICATIONS PLAN](#). If necessary, reference the [DIGITAL SECURITY GUIDE](#).

List each mode of communication to be used by you/the team/contacts/contributors (local mobiles, international mobiles, satellite phones, radios, landlines, internet) considering for each any potential risk (including poor coverage, surveillance, legal or security issues with satellite phones or radios, etc.), the likelihood and severity of that risk and how it will be mitigated. Could any of these methods be compromised or compromise your safety and/or that of others?

Digital Security

Refer to the [DIGITAL SECURITY](#) resource and complete a [DIGITAL RISK ASSESSMENT](#).

Outline any digital security-specific risks (both assignment and personal) and how they will be mitigated. Consider storage and protection of data (particularly if it is a sensitive or controversial story and/or involves contacting or interviewing vulnerable people), potential surveillance or censorship, likely adversaries (intentional and unintentional), equipment, what materials will be gathered, recorded and stored, communications, research and online access, digital profiles, social media and possible psychological harm etc.

Research Risks

Outline any risks involved in conducting research interviews, filming, taking photographs, obtaining and carrying information that may have evidentiary value.

Transport

Outline risks involved in travel arrangements, to and from the destination, within country and between countries. Specifically consider road traffic accidents and other modes of transport (aircraft, boat).

Accommodation

Detail any potential risks with proposed lodgings. Consider:

1. Are there already some security measures in place (e.g. guards)?
2. Who else is staying there (e.g. diplomats, other journalists, tourists)?
3. Who knows where you are staying and can you trust the diplomacy or integrity of the owner/staff, if necessary?
4. How close is it to potential terrorist targets (e.g. embassies, tourist destination, barracks, etc.)?
5. How might the accommodation affect your profile?
6. How easy would access and egress be in the event of an emergency?
7. How able is the building to withstand attack, do windows need tape, is there a basement?
8. Does the building or area have a history of problems/incidents?

Health and Medical

Identify any health and medical risks in relation to the assignment and the location, including risk of local diseases/illnesses, local wildlife (ie. snake bite or dangerous animals.), safety of food and water, stress and fatigue.

Where appropriate, possible COVID-related risks should be specifically outlined, considering potential physical, psychological and digital risks or impact on you, contacts or the assignment. Review the [REPORTING GUIDES AND COVID](#) resource.

State precautions including:

1. Vaccinations

Detail any vaccinations required for you and your crew. List vaccines and timescale in which they are needed, including where they have been/will be administered. (If, for any reason, they are not appropriately administered, what are the subsequent risks?)

Attach copies of any vaccine records in 7. APPENDIX.

2. Medical Conditions

Detail if you (or anyone relevant on the team) have any medical condition that needs to be considered and/or poses a risk. List for each medical condition:

- a. What are the risks of travelling with the medical condition?
- b. How severe are the risks?
- c. How likely are the risks?
- d. What management strategy is in place to reduce the chance and severity of the risks?

3. Prescription Medication

List any prescription medication you or your crew must take, including:

- a. Medication name:
- b. Dosage amount and frequency

Attach copies of prescription information and/or related medical details, plus copies of letters from issuing doctor (if required) in 7. APPENDIX.

4. First Aid Training

State the level of first aid training/knowledge for you and your crew, and detail any medical kit to be carried. Note crew's blood types.

Attach full medical kit list in 7. APPENDIX.

5. Hospitals

For each location, state if access to a hospital with international standards is possible, including:

- a. How far and difficult would it be to reach this hospital?
- b. Provide details of the nearest hospital, contacts, level of standard and facilities available.
- c. Any language issues with doctors or hospital staff and how they will be addressed.

6) Emergency Evacuation

Detail emergency evacuation plans, including for each location:

- a. From where to where, by whom and at what cost?
- b. Any insurance cover provision

Environment and Weather

Identify any potential environmental or weather issues, including temperatures, humidity, season and any implications for health, security or assignment.

Lone Working

Identify any risks to your personal safety and security, and detail emergency and medical emergency plans.

2.3 DETAILED ASSIGNMENT PLANS

Provide a detailed filming/reporting schedule, including any interviews planned and any safety or security specific issues for each item, ie. if security is threatened by talking to specific people (if they are potentially under surveillance, etc.) or visiting/working in specific areas. Include the level of threat or risk, its likelihood and how it will be mitigated (and, if necessary, for any of the items, an emergency evacuation plan). Include:

1. Date
2. Location
3. Sequence/story item & interviews
4. Safety & security issues

2.4 RUSHES/RECORDINGS/NOTES & MATERIALS

Outline how rushes/information/material will be stored and managed, including data wrangling and backup. Specify measures to protect sensitive information.

Identify any potential risks, the severity and likelihood of those risks, and detail measures being taken to reduce the chances and severity, including:

1. Would loss, unauthorised access or confiscation of any information put you or other people at risk?
2. How will information be protected on devices for gathering and storing?
3. How will your material be transported out of the country/location (across borders or checkpoints)?
4. What data-wrangling and back-up regime will you be operating?

2.5 EQUIPMENT & CARNET

List any professional kit being taken on the assignment. (Consider and adapt kit to the specific needs of the project and potential risks, including those posed by security (i.e. crossing borders, checkpoints, hostile authorities, etc.), weather or climatic conditions, profile, perception, story, etc.).

1. Identify any potential risks related to equipment (include the level of threat or risk, its likelihood and how it will be mitigated):
2. Detail any import regulations/restrictions in the destination country (or transit country, if relevant).
3. Do you require a carnet?

Provide a detailed equipment list with serial numbers and attach any other relevant paperwork in 7. APPENDIX.

2.6 PERSONAL PROTECTION EQUIPMENT (PPE)

Outline any potential PPE required for the assignment, considering:

1. How it will be obtained.
2. How the equipment will be transported to the location and any risks of travelling with it. Detail the level and likelihood of risk and how it will be mitigated.
3. If the equipment is to be obtained at the location, how likely is it that any problems will arise and how will they be mitigated?

2.7 COVER STORY

If a cover story is being used, outline the implications and protocol if cover is compromised. Identify the risk scenarios, the severity and likelihood of the threats and the measures in place to minimise them.

2.8 PSYCHOLOGICAL SECURITY

Identify any potential psychological security risks for you, the crew or contributors in relation to the story, location, contributors or working undercover.

Be aware of how physical and digital risks may influence your psychological risks and, if appropriate, cross-reference with those sections. For example, don't forget to consider how social media can impact your mental health, or burnout from excessive hours online or in the field.

If it is possible the story or any element of carrying out the assignment may cause any adverse psychological effects or trauma, outline full details of the risk, the potential severity and likelihood of it, and how it will be minimised. Detail psychological help on offer during and after the assignment and broadcast/publication.

Consider how confidentiality of any personal mental health information will be managed.

Review the [PSYCHOLOGICAL RISK](#) resource.

2.9 DYNAMIC RISK ASSESSMENT & RELIABILITY OF INFORMATION

Detail access to up-to-date security assessments for the assignment area and story. Outline what and who will be the main sources for the risk analysis and if it will be limited or outdated.

Include plans to assess changes in the situation and communicate them to safety contact(s).

3. Security Check-In Procedure

Outline the security check-in procedure:

a) Regularity and times of check-in

State a regular check-in time that is sensible for the location and appointed check-in contact. Identify any locations or events during the assignment that require varying check-in times or intervals; ie. multiple locations with different threat levels, long distance travel, etc. If necessary, specify the time at the assignment location and where the security check-in person is based.

b) Method of Check-In

Phone, email, text, message, etc.

c) Security Contact

Responsible for receiving check-in (consider if different people are appropriate for each location or parts of the assignment, perhaps due to languages or specific expertise).

d) Protocol

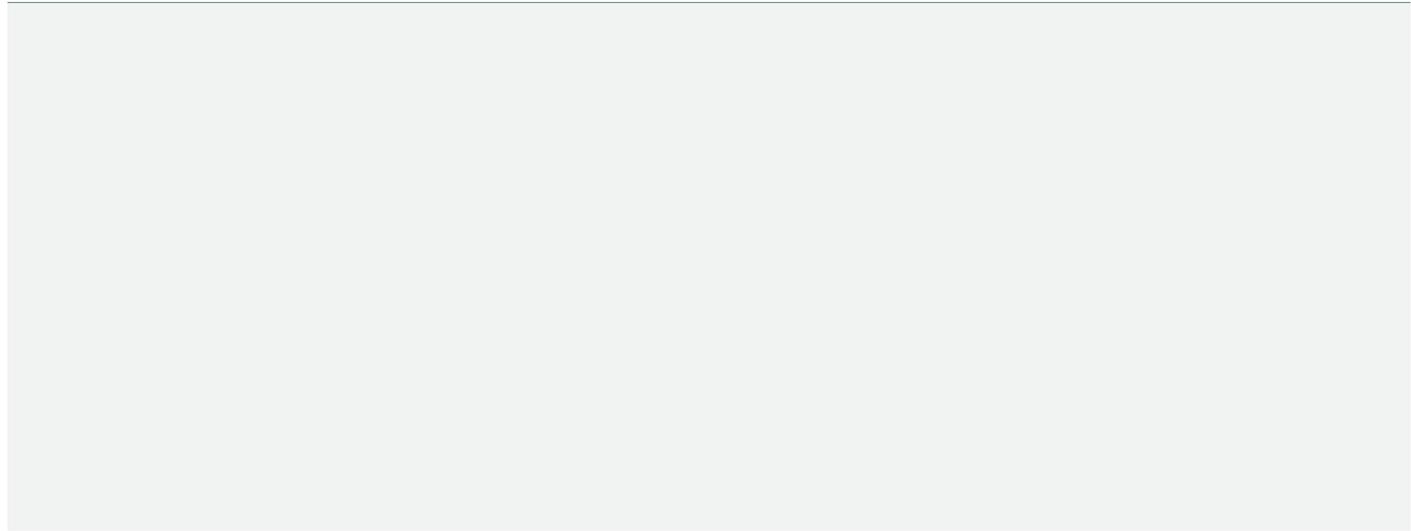
To be followed in the event of a failed check-in, emergency or if crew are in a compromised or hostile situation:

- Specify at what point a more senior or supervising contact should be notified.
- State if and when the security contact or commissioning organisation should attempt to reach security contacts on the ground.
- What further action should be taken (ie. contacting local authorities, embassies, relatives, other media, etc.)?
- Ensure an emergency evacuation plan has been agreed. (This may also be detailed for appropriate items in section 2.3 DETAILED ASSIGNMENT PLANS)
- Ensure clear instructions and action plans are with named contacts in the case of injury, kidnap or death in the field.

e) Other Precautions/Potential Issues

List any other issues that may need to be considered prior to or during the assignment, such as:

- Compliance and legal issues (ie. working with children or criminals, access, trespass issues, etc.)
- Local customs (any relevant events, such as strikes, public or religious holidays or celebrations)
- Release forms and Right to Reply

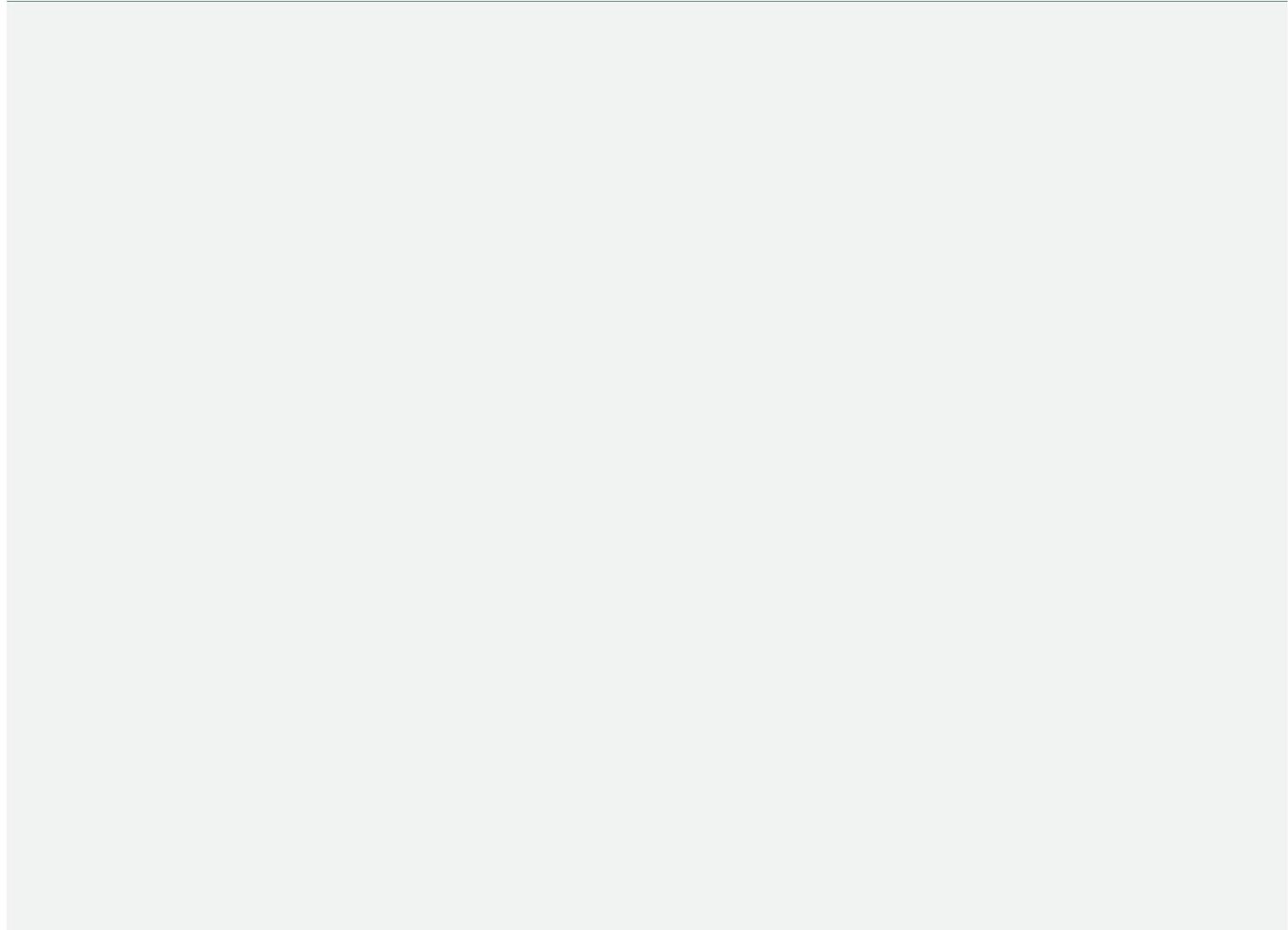


6. Insurance

Detail any insurance cover while on assignment, including the type of insurance cover, the policy provider, name, contact details and address, and a description of what each policy covers.

Attach copies of relevant insurance papers in 7. APPENDIX.

Consult the [INSURANCE](#) resource, if required.



7. Appendix

Attach all relevant documents referenced throughout the risk assessment:

- Visa, accreditation, permits & permissions letters
- Travel details
- Maps
- Equipment list:
 1. Item
 2. Make and model:
 3. Serial number:
- Full Medical Kit List
- Any other relevant information

EMERGENCY FILE

The RISK ASSESSMENT & SECURITY PROTOCOL, DIGITAL RISK ASSESSMENT, COMMUNICATIONS PLAN and PROOF OF LIFE are key documents for the EMERGENCY FILE. This folder should also contain important personal safety information, like copies of your passport, visa and vaccination records.

This should be kept with reliable a contact(s) who will be available to you at all times.

