Chaos and Order: Tourism and the Media in Global Crises

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This thesis is presented for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, Murdoch University,
August 2012
Researcher’s Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own account of my research and contains as its main content work which has not previously been submitted for a degree at any tertiary education institution.

........................................................................................................................................

David W. Maguire
Abstract

The chronicle of crises is added to regularly as major natural disasters and man-made conflicts hit populations from the wealthy West to the poorest quarters of the world’s most remote regions. The resulting disruption generates fear and panic with repercussions that have far-reaching implications for everyday life and the modern systems that support it. Within these crises, tourism is a major casualty and its plight is exacerbated by the vector of media coverage of the event. This thesis studies the crisis relationship between tourism and media when news coverage is at its peak and holiday regions and business operators lose control over their immediate destiny.

The research analyses through four case studies significant disasters that were of such magnitude that their impact was global: the UK’s foot and mouth disease outbreak of 2001, terrorist attacks in the United States in September 2001, the Bali bombings in 2002 and the SARS contagion of 2003. Each disaster dominated the world’s media from the outset and had far-reaching implications for global tourism systems. They are assessed within the dual industry context of media and tourism using qualitative analysis methods including ethnographic inquiry, media content analysis and case study analysis. An underpinning supplementary series of four vignettes outlines a contextual range of media and tourism operating activities, starting with a study of “normal” news coverage and ending with an ethnographic study of a newsroom during a developing crisis.
While there has been much study of crisis management in tourism, and many models proposed, this research identifies stages in the assessed crises that conform to the principles of Chaos Theory. That is, when the intensity of a crisis is such that the contextual system of known order is destroyed. By comparing media and tourism actions during the case studies against Chaos Theory principals, a defining theoretical adjunct is provided to the findings.

The research finds that the media is a constant force of stability in the non-linear dynamics of chaos unleashed by the case study disasters. The findings are used to develop a chaos-themed Protocol of Media Response for Tourism from which industry can develop strategies for earlier recovery from crisis, including acting within the chaotic environment to enhance post-crisis recovery prospects.
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Abbreviations

AAP: Australian Associated Press
ABC: Australian Broadcasting Corporation
ADB: Asia Development Bank
AFP: Agence France-Presse
AIDS: Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
AP: Associated Press
APEC: Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
ASEAN: Association of Southeast Asian Nations
ATA: Air Transport Association (USA)
ATC: Australian Tourism Commission
ATILD: Australian Tourism Industry Leaders Dialogue
BBC: British Broadcasting Corporation
BTA: British Tourism Authority
BTA: Bali Tourism Authority
CACVB: Charleston Area Convention and Visitors’ Bureau
CBC: Canadian Broadcasting Corporation
CDNN: Cyber Diver News Network
CMSC: Culture, Media and Sport Committee
CNN: Cable News Network
CNS: Cybercast News Service
CNTA: China National Tourism Administration
CSIRO: Australian Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
DCMS: Department of Culture, Media and Sport (UK)
DFAT: Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade
DNA: Deoxyribonucleic acid
DOH: Philippines Department of Health
ENews: Africa ENews Agency
ETC: English Tourist Council
ETN: ETurbo News
EU: European Union
FAA: Federal Aviation Administration
FBI: Federal Bureau of Investigation
FCO: Foreign and Commonwealth Office (UK)
FMD: Foot and Mouth Disease
GDP: Gross Domestic Product
HKHA: Hong Kong Hotels Association
HKTB: Hong Kong Tourist Board
IATA: International Air Transport Association
IBM: International Business Machines Corporation
ICTA: Indonesian Culture and Tourism Agency
ITIJ: International Travel Insurance Journal
MAFF: Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (UK)
MICE: Meetings, Incentives, Conventions and Exhibitions
MoFAC: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China
NASA: American National Aeronautics and Space Administration
NFO/Plog: National Family Opinion - Plog Research Incorporated
9/11: September 11, 2001
9/11 Commission: National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States
NPR: National Public Radio
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<tr>
<td>OECD</td>
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<td>PANPA</td>
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David Maguire
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CHAPTER 1
A NEW ORDER OF GLOBAL CRISIS

1.1 The Research

The chronicle of crisis is added to almost daily around the world as major new and developing incidents indiscriminately plunge into chaos people from the planet’s rich West to its poorest regions. The crises are both natural and human induced and include war, terrorism, plague, earthquakes, cyclones and typhoons, political revolts, mining disasters, systemic crashes in the financial arena and quality control and corruption crises in food supply. Their severity is measured in terms of lives lost, property destroyed, societal capacity reduced and cultures dismantled. At any one time there are hundreds of crises listed in aid agency information data banks and while we live in a technology savvy media age with communication satellite signals spanning the globe there are far more crises than can be featured on the nightly news and too many to absorb in our daily lives. The media’s commoditisation of news and capacity to disseminate it 24/7 has homogenised what was once the extraordinary – given the glut of crises, the exceptional has become ordinary as media audiences are overwhelmed by events from around the world.

Some crises are so significant in a global context, however, that it is not possible to regard them as routine because their repercussions generate widespread fear and anxiety and have far-reaching implications and consequences. Crises in themselves
are the immediate aftermath of a disaster and result in post-event destruction of landscapes, built environments and societal systems. They disrupt normal activities and force a readjustment in the comfort levels of thinking and living. The media’s bridging role as society’s 4th Estate1 is brought into higher relief in these times as it labours on, gaining access to ravaged physical environments, overcoming disabled utilities such as power, telecommunication links and transport, and trying to get responses from representatives of the 2nd Estate (executive government) to publish details of the severity of a crisis or the continuing risks to its broad constituency, the public.

The aim of the thesis is to undertake a forensic examination of the interaction between the media and the tourism industry during times of extreme crisis. It is hoped that such an examination will make it possible for industry to plan more effective media strategies for times of disruption in order to minimize collateral damage to business. Its objectives are to develop a picture of the lifecycle of a crisis through the lens of media activity and, through a series of case studies, identify weaknesses that exist in existing tourism media management protocols during times of crisis. Based on this analysis, it will develop crisis protocols that the tourism industry can deploy to ensure better interaction with the media.

1 The term 4th Estate refers to the press, both in its explicit capacity of reporting events and advocacy and in its implicit ability to frame political issues. The term was coined by the British politician Edmund Burke (Carlyle, 1841) and the press, without constitutional or statutory powers, is today grouped with the first three estates of the parliament, the executive (government) and the judiciary.
This study examines four significant disasters that were of such magnitude that they had global repercussions. They happened within a relatively short time span and two were linked by common cause. Occurring at the start of the 21st century, they abruptly changed the way contemporary society looks at itself and have affected how everyday activities are carried out and attitudes are formed. The analysis focuses on two inter-linked industries, the media and tourism, and finds their normal activities were severely disrupted in the immediacy of the crises played out. Both are affected regularly by disasters and their aftermath: we can reasonably conclude that media reports of Californian wildfires, a Sri Lankan conflict, an earthquake in China, a dispute in Kashmir, Caribbean floods, and earthquake in New Zealand or meningitis in Europe can change the travel plans of tourists and reduce the tourism system’s income en route to, and at, those destinations. These types of crises are relatively localised however, unlike the four disasters under scrutiny: the UK’s foot and mouth disease outbreak of 2001, the terrorist attacks in the United States in September 2001, the Bali bombings in 2002 and the SARS contagion of 2003. Each dominated the world’s media from the outset and had far-reaching implications for world tourism whose customers’ discretionary dollar remained pocketed out of safety concerns for personal well-being.

By their nature, the four disasters were sensational. In the UK, 2,030 Foot and Mouth disease outbreaks were recorded and 4,078,000 rural farmyard animals were destroyed in public pyres to eradicate the disease. In the United States, terrorist attacks killed 2,819 people by destroying iconic buildings in the most
unforgettable manner. In Bali, 202 tourists were killed in nightclub bombings. The SARS crisis seemed to pose an insidious threat to the civilised world and generated widespread fear. The four disasters occurred so closely together that their effects were felt for a sustained period by the tourism industry which relies on people making travel plans well in advance of their holidays. By their nature, the disasters had global implications for tourism economies, affecting perceptions of the security of air travel, the safety of popular destinations and the plague-free conditions of regions.

The research shows the media became active from the onset of these events. In terms of the four cases studied, their worldwide links ran hot to provide extensive coverage to audiences hungry for information. There seemed to be no limit to the many hours of television coverage and pages of newspapers devoted to supplying updated information. This incessant delivery of news, images, commentary, headlines and analysis precipitated a parallel concurrent crisis for the tourism industry. The disasters penetrated into the heart of their immediately affected communities but because of the magnitude and wider implications for humanity they also attracted a universal interest. If you were involved anywhere in the world in the tourism industry, however – selling the allure of travel modes and destination pleasures – the emerging images of the rolling hills of UK countryside engulfed by smoke from burning animal carcass destroyed the idyll for intending travellers and impacted on your livelihood (Sharpley & Craven, 2001). The sight of passenger jets flying into buildings in New York caused an extensive reassessment of that form of travel everywhere (Beirman, 2003b). Bombed
nightclubs in Indonesia’s premier tourism precinct, Bali, decimated the travel industry of the normally peaceful idyllic destination (AFP, 2002a). And iconic photos of populations wearing gauze face-masks to guard against catching SARS (Zeng et al., 2005) virtually crippled the tourism industries of a number of nations until it was contained (Mason et al., 2005).

The tourism industry had dealt with crises in the past but never before in such a globalised media environment. The media’s reach had grown in the mid 1990s to early 2000s from the traditional pillars of radio, television and newspapers to include the new platforms of desktop, laptop and hand-held computers and cell phones. Television and internet news websites were now capable of screening e-mailed film and photos taken on digital cameras and cell phones, courtesy of the extended pool of “citizen reporters” willing to offer information from remote locations that the traditional media could not reach in time. The media’s capacity was thus enhanced to previously inestimable proportions to deal with the disasters of 2001-2003, the full might of which confronted the tourism industry when disaster struck four times in a sensational manner during this period.

This research started in 2001 with the simple aim of analysing how the tourism industry dealt with the media in times of crisis. The focus was on natural disasters such as cyclones and the objective was to create protocols for the industry to deal better with the media to minimise long-term destination profile damage and assist recovery. As the four case study events occurred the severity of challenges besetting the industry increased and the research focus changed. These relatively
cataclysmic events posed threats of a wider dimension to global tourism and warranted deeper and broader analysis. The research became richer and the final longitudinal study looks at the most sustained delineated period of disruption of global travel in many decades.

A defining outcome of the research is evidence of the role of chaos, a dynamic, disruptive condition lacking order or predictability. To develop a common structure to allow for cross-case analysis, the disaster narratives were organised into a six phase format covering the duration of each event. They start with the Pre-crisis, or normal operational, phase and conclude with the Recovery phase so there is a pre- and post- non-crisis context. The four intermediate phases – Outbreak, Consolidation, Acceleration and End – cover the periods in which the disaster effects are strongest and the magnitude of the crisis plays out. The characteristics of chaotic change – a condition quite different to common notions of the term – were identified within these four phases at the peak of the crisis. The dynamic effects of chaos caused a radical alteration, or permanent change, in the character of accepted societal and organisational conditions within the disaster environment.

The events were unprecedented, therefore creating a vacuum in which the normal order of things no longer existed. It was, however, quickly replaced by a new order. Essential services expertise, for example, such as in rescue, recovery, communications, prevention, etc. that had been aggregated from previous crises and normally would be activated according to a standard operational template in a
disaster period, didn’t fit. So a new order emerged.

The case study findings of an emerging new order present an earlier opportunity than has been previously recognised for tourism to act during a crisis rather than waiting for it to finish to implement recovery strategies.

1.2 The Researcher

The researcher has nearly 40 years experience in media as a journalist, editor, author, academic and CEO in Australia, Hong Kong and China. He has directed the news coverage of crises and knows that as reporters and section editors scramble to collate the “live” facts to compile stories for the next news bulletin or publication, low priority, if any, is given to their effect on the tourism industry.

The media’s primary role is to give as broad coverage as possible to satisfy the general public’s need to know what’s going on. This is predicated on its 4th estate role to serve the public and guided by criteria that influence which events are covered and how they are presented.

The genesis for this study came from the researcher’s newspaper experience of the tourism sector in Australia’s Far North Queensland region when a local government community consultative committee was formed to minimise perceived “negative” media coverage of street violence in a nightclub precinct. Its ambit was later expanded to monitor and minimise the damage from similarly judged “unfavourable” media stories surrounding tourism, an industry subject to tropical
cyclones and economic downturns. The national media’s treatment of cyclones and weather bureau warnings accompanied by library footage of previous tropical storms raised the hackles of the local industry which indirectly blamed irresponsible reporting for affecting tourist numbers. Editors factor into daily professional life criticism of their angles on stories, their headlines and story placement in newspapers, TV and radio news, but the researcher’s Cairns experience exposed the gulf between tourism and the media in times of crisis. It noticeably, albeit temporarily, altered the “normal” non-crisis working relationship in which businesses anticipated “soft” editorial mentions for hotels, theme parks, reef trips, etc, in return for advertising support.

The researcher’s preparation for the PhD included studying tourism industry theory and structure through a postgraduate degree in international tourism management and building on it during a post-media career as manager of a regional economic development organisation. This work involved marketing the region’s attributes, including tourism, and dealing with the media as an industry outsider. The experience has provided a richer perspective.

1.3 Structure of the Thesis

An assessment of the literature is dealt with in Chapter 2 – “The Written Word”. The research pertaining to tourism systems, examples of crisis, its effects on tourism, the role of the media and news selection strategies is discussed ahead of looking in more detail at the links between tourism and media, general crisis management and tourism crisis management models. The evolution and principles
of Chaos Theory are studied and key terms and definitions relating to the research field are outlined.

Chapter 3 – “Research Approach and Methodology” describes the philosophical traditions underpinning this research and outlines the methods used for data gathering and analysis for the four case studies. Using an interpretivist paradigm, qualitative methods have been applied, including content analysis, surveys and participant observation. The chapter also describes the rationale, data capture and analysis processes utilised in compilation of four supportive minor case studies called vignettes which are included to provide an inside look at how the media operate in both normal and abnormal situations.

Chapter 4 – “The Research Environment” sets the scene for this study by using four vignettes to provide a benchmark against which to understand the operations of the media in times of disaster. The media and tourism environment is explained through a range of scenarios of varying magnitude: a “typical” news climate based on a content analysis of all major media in a capital city; a mildly heightened news climate in the context of a localised dengue fever outbreak; and the significantly heightened news climates of reporting the devastating Cyclone Larry in Far North Queensland; and a first-hand account of publishing the deadly crackdown on students in Tiananmen Square in 1989.

The purpose of the vignettes is to provide deeper insight into how the media operate during normal conditions and when under the stress of crisis. This will
assist with understanding the interaction of media and tourism in the later case studies.

Chapter 5 – “Case Studies 1-4: Media & Tourism Reactions” includes an overview of the Case Study structure. Definitions for key terms used in the studies and in the analysis process are provided. The four cases are summarised in terms of tourism and media actions in chronological order – Foot and Mouth Disease (2001), September 11 (2001), Bali Bombings (2002), Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (2003). The full case study narratives are in the appendices.

Chapter 6 – “The Research Findings” presents and discusses the key findings that relate specifically to media and tourism, showing the connectivity between crisis, media and tourism activity through the phases of the events studied and the patterns common to the cases. The chapter also identifies the presence of Chaos Theory conditions within the cases and how they are manifested. It then assesses what the findings mean.

Chapter 7 – “Conclusions: Isolating Chaos in Crisis – A Guide for Tourism and Media” puts the findings in context for tourism and highlights indicators for future tourism-media interaction. It assesses the media “order” within chaos and how, by identifying it, tourism can enhance its interaction with media at an earlier stage in crisis instead of waiting for it to subside. A nine-point protocol provides a guide for industry dealings with the media in times of chaos. The chapter concludes with a reflective summary of the research, its findings and the future.
CHAPTER 2
THE WRITTEN WORD –
AN ASSESSMENT OF THE LITERATURE

Many pilgrims to the Holy Lands in the Middle Ages travelled in fear of their lives and belongings. Indeed, the origin of the word ‘travel’, to travail, to overcome adversity and hardship, gives evidence of the difficulties which many travellers faced. However, the overt connection between tourism and political violence is clearly a phenomenon of the late twentieth century.

- Hall, 1994, p. 92.

2.1. Introduction

A review of the literature in the fields of tourism and media, the disaster environments they co-habit and chaos theory sets the context for this cross-disciplinary project. The research analyses a contemporary series of disasters at the start of the new media savvy 21st century that had considerable effect on travel methods and destination choices. Its core focus is the response of the media and tourism industries to the complexities of crisis. The events surrounding the four disasters analysed and the interaction between tourism and the media as they unfolded are dealt with in later chapters. The literature review assesses the tourism system, a model of the nature of the flow of travellers from departure to destination. It looks at research into the effects of crisis on tourism, before assessing the role of the media in general and in the context of tourism. It
examines general crisis management and its models in the tourism industry and brings the principals of Chaos Theory into contention for tourism crisis management planning.

2.2 The Tourism System

The nature of the tourism system *per se* is relevant to the research because the case studies demonstrate how the industry is subjected to a wide range of different dynamics during crisis which stop tourists travelling. Leiper (1995) identified and reviewed nine meanings of tourism and distilled a definition of tourism as “the theories and practices of tourists, persons on trips away from their home region seeking leisure-related experiences” (p. 31). The Encyclopedia of Tourism (Jafari, 2000) defined it as “the study of man (the tourist) away from his usual habitat, of the touristic apparatus and networks responding to his various needs, and of the ordinary (where the tourist is coming from) and non-ordinary (where the tourist goes to) worlds and their dialectic relationships” (p. 585). Since 1963, official statistical data about international tourists has been channelled via the United Nations’ agency, the World Tourism Organisation (WTO), and published in line with standard definitions. The WTO’s (1997, p. 3) definition of the term “visitor” describes any person visiting a country or place other than their usual place of residence, “but outside their usual environment, for a period not exceeding 12 months and whose main purpose of visit is other than the exercise of activity remunerated from within the country visited”.

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Much work has been done to develop a systems approach to the study of tourism, notably by Cuervo (1967) who is possibly the first person to apply general systems models to tourism research, Getz (1987) developing it as a concept in tourism planning, Mill et al. (1992) who used a systems approach to study tourism and its effects, noting the importance of conceiving tourism as consisting of interrelated parts, and Laws (1995, 2003) who used a systems’ framework to explain complex tourism service systems. Leiper (1995, 2003) defined a “basic whole tourism system” as consisting of five elements: (1) tourists, (2) a traveller generating region, (3) transit routes, (4) tourist destination regions, and (5) a travel and tourism industry and presented it in an ideographic form for the first time (Figure 1).

![Figure 1: A Basic Whole Tourism System (Leiper, 1995; 2003, p. 25)](image)

Leiper noted (1995, p. 24) that around the five elements which formed the system are a range of different environments – social, cultural, physical, etc. – and about which certain tourist interactions could be inferred. He further noted that the number of actual “whole tourism systems is huge, because every itinerary route followed by one or more tourists represents, and usually recreates, another case”
(Ibid., p. 27). Potentially the number of sub-systems is even greater. He added that most countries’ tourism systems could be categorised into three different patterns: (1) domestic, (2) outbound and, (3) inbound.

Throughout the history of tourism, from pilgrimages to the Holy Land in the fourth and fifth centuries, to the Egyptians’ religious festivals of the sixth century, to Marco Polo’s odysseys, to Daniel Defoe popularising travel in 1726 in the landmark book *A Tour Through the Whole Island of Britain*, to the Grand Tour concept of the late 16th to early 19th centuries, and to the modern era, tourists choose to visit places. The reasons for their choices are influenced by a number of factors, balancing leisure needs and the destination’s features and characteristics (Leiper, 1995 p. 11). Conversely, they can choose not to visit places, a decision also influenced by a number of factors linked to perceptions of appeal, comfort, risk, danger and fear. But, as Leiper observes,

“…nobody ever set out on a touristic trip, or set out to visit a particular destination during a trip, if they perceived the experiences as probably unpleasant and the destination to lack attractions” (1995, p. 11).

It is not within the scope of this research to analyse and compare the influences of what causes people to travel or what stops them from doing so during the normal course of events. However, the crises under study in this research are of such magnitude and their consequences for the tourism industry so far-reaching that the tourism sectors in the affected destination regions were forced to deal with
situations that far exceeded “the normal course of events”. The crisis elements at play stopped tourists wanting to travel and therefore virtually shut down the system that the affected destination regions relied on for visitor supplies. The activities of the media in reporting the crises, in effect disseminating information which influenced tourists to reconsider or stop travelling, were a major factor in this outcome and are further analysed in the following chapters.

2.3. Tourism Disaster Environment

Though it be honest, it is never good to bring bad news. Give to a gracious message an host of tongues, but let ill tidings tell themselves when they be felt.

- Shakespeare, Antony and Cleopatra (Cleopatra, act II, v)

Events such as the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the subsequent war in Iraq, the SARS epidemic, foot and mouth disease, bombings in Bali, bushfires in Canberra, the 2004 tsunami, terrorist attacks in India and Pakistan’s involvement with the war in Afghanistan are part of the tapestry of relatively recent disruptions which have affected the decisions of intending tourists to limit or change their holiday plans or, indeed, to stay at home instead. The Asian Disaster Management News (2001, p. 1) reported that graphic media portrayals of disasters reduced tourist numbers and damaged the image of a destination. The Secretary-General of the World Tourism Organisation, Francesco Frangialli, pointed to the difficulty tourism operators have in thinking about crisis management when they predominantly deal with the pleasant and beautiful things in life. He noted this often-neglected subject was
mostly considered a task to be looked at only when a crisis actually occurred. Crisis management needed to be designed, he said, with deep knowledge of the different mechanisms that are triggered by negative events. The terrorist attacks of September 11 proved, he said, the need to thoroughly analyse crises in tourism to be able to prevent them or, failing that, to deal with them as effectively as possible (Frangialli, 2003, p. xi).

The relationship between tourism and the dangerous consequences of disaster and crisis has been a priority concern of the industry since the September 11 events. However, the first academic papers on the matter, as discussed in the following paragraphs, emerged in the 1970s and late 1980s as a result of incidents in various parts of the world. These studies assessed the impact of events in tourist-generating regions and destination markets and studied the manner in which the crises were handled. With the benefit of hindsight, the papers presented early warnings of what the modern tourism industry needed to prepare for, however there is no evidence of early recognition turning into later action that lead to an actual paradigm shift. This endorses Frangialli’s point about the need for advance preparation.

The incident that inspired the first stream of academic studies on crisis was the Arab oil embargo imposed on the United States in 1973. The ensuing fuel shortage spawned a number of articles and conference papers by, among others, Humphries and Joselyn (1973), Ditmars (1974), Feller (1974), Solomon (1974), Solomon and George (1976), Corsi and Harvey (1979), Williams and Burke (1979) and
Dickinson (1981). They looked at the travel consequences of the fuel shortage and increased costs on motorists, the cruise ship industry, airline travel and the accommodation sector, noting (Montague, 1974) that the long- and medium-haul rail sector benefited by 51 and 31 per cent during the term of the crisis.

A confluence of events disrupted travel between the USA and Europe in the northern summer of 1986, leading Brady and Widdows (1988) to analyse the negative impact on the tourism industry. Ordinary travellers had been attacked in European airports, signalling a shift in focus down from the previously targeted higher profile diplomats and businessmen (Koepp, 1986). Fears that USA citizens might be singled out by terrorist groups were prompted by the hijacking of the *Achille Lauro* cruise ship by Libyan terrorists, during which an elderly American tourist was shot and thrown overboard, and were fuelled further by the threats of Libyan and other Middle Eastern officials in response to a raid on Libya by USA war planes. To further shake the tourism environment, the Chernobyl reactor accident in April 1986 sent a cloud of nuclear fallout across Eastern and Western Europe which caused travellers to re-think their destination plans. Brady and Widdows’ (1988) study found that in 1986, in comparison to 1985 statistics, USA tourist numbers to England fell by nearly 40 per cent, to West Germany by nearly 30 per cent, and to Greece by more than 60 per cent.

During the 1990s, the tourism industry grew stronger, benefiting from a liberated mood following the end of the Cold War and dismantling of the Iron Curtain, a globally competitive airline environment, freer border restrictions within a more
cohesive European Community, the emergence of the “tiger economies” of east and south-east Asia and the marshalling mass of travel-oriented baby boomers. However the growing strength of the industry also enhanced its vulnerability to economic losses as the number of disruptive occurrences affecting tourism increased, such as the first Gulf War in 1991 and conflicts in Bosnia in 1995 and Kosovo in 1999. Practitioners and industry leaders, therefore, had compelling reasons to address every aspect of business, bureaucratic and systemic practices to ensure sustainability against the damage that might be caused in the event of disaster and crisis. But there was limited government and industry-wide focus on sustainability issues and, as noted above, events of September 11 provided the “wake up” call.

In the post-9/11 period, a growing and important body of work by leading researchers is coalescing as the knowledge gained from past crises and disasters is used to inform debate, encouraged by governments which place greater value on the benefits that tourism brings to economies. Joan Henderson, C. Michael Hall, Abraham Pizam, Yoel Mansfeld, Sevil Sonmez, Yiorgos Apostolopoulos, Bruce Prideaux, Bill Faulkner and Brent Ritchie have been among researchers to assess organisational consequences of crisis and disaster in the tourism industry. Henderson wrote extensively (1999a, 1999b, 1999c, 2002) on “crisis and disaster” as it affected the East Asian tourism industry, with a series of papers that focused on the economic disruption generated by the Asian financial crisis of the late 1990s. Through case study methodology, she compared the criteria of the disaster or crisis to established models to illustrate the impact on tourism. She found (2002)
that the consequences for tourism from the monetary crisis were compounded by a chain of disruptions besetting the region that included social and political disturbances plus environmental pollution from forest fires in Indonesia. She added that the complexity, long-term duration and dynamic nature of the financial crisis made it an uneasy fit into the models proposed by other scholars. Fink (1986), for example, described the pattern of crisis in terms of four conditions made up of a prodromal warning – acute at its peak and chronic in its aftermath. Meyers (1986) condensed the evolution of a crisis into three stages – pre-crisis, crisis and post crisis. Henderson settled on the model of Pauchant and Mitroff (1992), incorporating five elements of crisis evolution and management, as a framework to interpret the complexities of the financial crisis.

Henderson had earlier (1999a) examined the impact of the monetary crisis on Singapore tourist attractions and found that non-government businesses had recognised a need for more aggressive promotion as tourism operators dealt with its consequences. She used crisis management theory to determine how tourism managers coped, and referred to Barton’s (1994) model that focuses on ideal responses to crisis, such as the necessity of establishing a task force, recognising potential areas of crisis and formulating coping strategies for when crisis occurs. She noted (1999c) that the number of crisis management studies related to tourism and travel were limited, an “unexpected situation” given the characteristics of the industry, its vulnerability to change and exposure to potential shocks. Her analysis of the wider economic crisis in the region noted the lack of crisis management plans, highlighted the need for effective communications and media management,
and maintained crisis management planning in the travel industry needed to be flexible to reflect the sector’s complexities.

Prideaux (1999a, 1999b) concurred with other researchers in his assessments of the Asian financial crisis that an “assurance of political stability” (1999a, p. 289) was essential for maintaining inbound tourism. Also required in the recovery phase, he said, was a rapid reassessment of promotional priorities to stimulate inbound tourism from countries not affected by the crisis. Hall’s predominant area of research was the effect of crisis inspired by violence and political unrest and the resulting implications for tourism. He focused on political instability and civil disruption globally (1995b), in the Pacific Ocean region (1996), in Indonesia (2000a) and Southeast Asia (2000b). The underlying premise through his research was that political stability is a fundamental precondition to the successful establishment of a tourist industry “not only for the development of the infrastructure that is required for tourism but also because of the central role that images play in tourism marketing and promotion” (1995a, p. 93).

He used case studies to illustrate the effects of political instability on tourism numbers, citing the 1989 Tiananmen Square crackdown in China (the subject of a vignette in a later chapter), the 1987 coups in Fiji and the 1992 coup in Thailand, and warned of the need for a more sophisticated approach by tourism to crisis management. With O’Sullivan (1996), Hall reinforced the notion of safety as an essential element of the attractiveness of destinations and discussed the important role of the media in influencing tourists’ perceptions of a destination. The authors
developed a flow chart of their understanding of the relationship between political instability, violence and the image-making process, identifying three elements as leading to the creation of destination images: i) returning tourists’ [anecdotal] accounts, ii) government policy, and iii) the media (Figure 2). However, they viewed the media as exerting the greatest influence. Hall devoted three papers (1996, 2000a and 2000b) to case studies of the effects of violence in tourist destination regions, further developing one of his core themes that perception of the destination is vital to the tourism industry. In referring to the media as an image filter between the destination and tourist generating region and the media depiction of places, he argued that it was “the portrayal of political instability, rather than political instability itself, which becomes uppermost as a factor in tourist destination choice behaviour” (1996, p. 86).

![Figure 2: The image-making process (Hall and O’Sullivan, 1996, p112)](image-url)
In contrast to Hall, Mansfeld (1994), whose focus was on the Middle East, noted that despite that region’s long history of intensive terrorism, warfare and political instability, these conditions appeared to have no quantifiable effect on travel and tourism, based on analysis of arrivals and peak seasons in the region at times of conflict, such as the Six-Day War in 1967. Other researchers have focused on specific events that impact on tourism. Pizam (1999) and, variously, with Tarlow and Bloom (1997), Smith (2000) and Fleischer (2002), concentrated on the safety of tourists within destinations as well as the effect of terrorism on their travel habits, and reinforced the evidence of researchers already discussed that safety and security are necessary conditions for a “prosperous” tourism industry (Pizam, 1999, p. 23). Prideaux (1995) analysed crime in popular tourism precincts in Australia to assess the correlation between increasing tourism numbers and increasing incidents of crime, finding the occurrence of crime higher than average. Ryan (1993) also devised a useful crime-tourism matrix from typologies of criminal activities. While noting that media coverage of crime can cause panic, Pizam et al.’s (1997) collaborative study of three police law enforcement agencies showed their members were committed to preventing and reducing crime against tourists. The study found the agencies had increased efforts to prevent crimes against tourists however co-operation was required with the industry to ensure safety of guests within their properties.

In line with the personal safety theme, Pizam (1999) surveyed 300 acts of crime reported in newspapers and periodicals over a 10-year span at tourist destinations around the world and created a typology to analyse the effects on tourism demand.
The study revealed 640 types of criminal/violent acts, however found no suitable model available to give a clear indication of the differential effects of each type of crime on tourism numbers. It further identified seven entities – law enforcement, community at large, tourism industry, tourists, general business, government and the international community – with responsibility for crime prevention in tourism destinations. Pizam further worked with Smith (2000) on a quantifiable analysis of international terrorism incidents at tourist destinations from 1985 to 1998, again using public domain sources, i.e. newspapers and news agency wire reports. This period included Palestinian terrorist attacks on airports in Rome and Vienna, the seizure of the cruise ship *Achille Lauro*, the hijacking of TWA Flight 847 in Athens, “the troubles” in Northern Ireland, the massacre of 58 tourists at a temple in Luxor, Egypt, and truck bombings at USA embassies. The study found 70 acts that resulted in 830 deaths and 1,465 injury victims, a majority of whom were tourists (p. 132). Drawing a conclusion that terrorism and tourism have become “inextricably linked” (p. 136), the researchers found that 79 per cent of the incidents caused a significant decline in tourism demand which lasted up to six months.

Pizam collaborated with Fleischer (2002) following the September 11 attacks to study the correlation over a 10-year period – 1991-2001 – between declining tourism numbers and either the severity or frequency of acts of terrorism at a destination region, finding the frequency of acts was the major deterrent. They concluded that destinations could recover from severe acts of terrorism as long as they were not repeated. Sonmez, with Bachmann and Allen (1994) and
Apostolopoulos and Tarlow (1999), has been another advocate for tourism crisis management planning, offering solutions including establishment in regions of a crisis management task force, partnering with law enforcement officials, and developing a crisis management guidebook. Tarlow (2002) advocated the merits of security provisioning and strong policing and, with Sonmez and Apostolopoulos (1999), argued that a symbiotic relationship existed between terrorists and journalists, in that a terrorist action was staged as a performance to get media attention.

In summary, this section has shown how existing literature deals with the framework of the tourism system and the effects on it of disaster and associated crisis, a core factor which runs through the rest of this thesis. The review has outlined how the events surrounding terrorist attacks in New York on September 11, 2001 triggered an awakening by the tourism industry of the need for disaster and crisis management to mitigate the industry’s economic losses. Further, it looked at the increasing awareness among tourism researchers of the need for improved planning and industry preparation to offset the effects of crisis through their assessment of damaging events such as natural disasters, terrorist attacks, financial crisis and crime. The tourism/crisis/media relationship was not addressed in the literature however that gap is being addressed by this research. It touched on the power of the media in influencing travellers’ destination decisions, an aspect which is dealt with in detail in the following two sections and which is the main theme running through the four case studies that are the subject of this research.
2.4. The Media System

Media are permanent institutions subject to all the normal constraints which are relevant to them and constitute ‘their world’. For them the disaster is a piece of news and to a large extent must conform to their normal criteria of what is and is not newsworthy. These criteria include drama, human interest, the exotic, proximity, and ‘importance’ (in terms of assumed impact on readers or numbers killed and wounded). It is not hard for disaster authorities to work out guidelines for media reporting... It is very hard to work out any which will change media behaviour.

- Henry Mayer in Tiffin, 1994, p. 143

The prime role of the media – newspapers, radio, television and internet – is to convey new information that is judged to be of interest to readers, listeners, viewers or subscribers. The nature of this information and its presentation varies according to the medium’s audience. In order to reach a maximum number of potential customers, each form of the media will give priority treatment to items of universal interest. Wars, international and national crises directly or indirectly affecting mass numbers of people, high profile political and business assassinations, changes of government, major local crimes and natural disasters are among items that fit the general criteria of having universal appeal.

The media deal principally in the commodity of news of which there are a number of definitions and interpretations. Communities have been preoccupied by news
through the ages. Greek orator Demosthenes observed in his *First Philippic* oration in 351 BC that his fellow Athenians were obsessed with news by word of mouth – “Thus we all go about framing our several tales” – and asking them “Do you want to go around asking one another ‘Is there any news?’ Could there be any stranger news than that a man of Macedonia is defeating Athenians in war…” (Demosthenes, 351 BC). In more recent times, Stephens (1988, p. 14) noted a 19th century missionary in Africa observing that Zulu men spend “much of their time telling and hearing some new thing.”

While a reliable rule or definition about what constitutes news is not easily framed, there are many interpretations. Former Washington Post owner Philip Graham described it as “the first rough draft of history” (Hough, 1984, p. 60), British publisher Lord Northcliffe said it was “what somebody somewhere wants to suppress, all the rest is advertising” (Lord Northcliffe, n.d.) and the hard-bitten hack Corker in Evenly Waugh’s famous novel *Scoop* explains “News is what a chap who doesn’t care much about anything wants to read. And it’s only news until he’s read it. After that it’s dead” (Waugh, 1943, p. 66). Journalism academic Melvin Mencher offers two definitions, seeing it first as “information about a break from the normal flow of events, an interruption in the expected” and second as “information people need to make sound decisions about their lives” (Mencher, 1997, p. 58). Noting that news satisfies a basic human impulse, a need or instinct to know what is occurring beyond people’s direct experience, Kovach and Rosenstiel (2007) cited one writer’s view of it being “a hunger for human awareness” (Stephens, 1988, p.18, cited on p.9).
The mediator between the news and the consumer is the journalist who is part of the system that has evolved within society to generate supply of news. As our everyday lives ebb and flow to the beat of different forms of media – newspapers, radio, television, websites, tweets and blogs – the journalist is critical as a supplier of information, much of which is news, to these platforms. While the nature of “what is news?” is rarely codified by news organisations, the answer is part of a journalist’s tacit professional knowledge as he goes about the daily task, mediated by his subjectivity, of collecting information. The ground rules of this subjectivity are limited by the equally ephemeral “news values” that guide the selection of stories proposed for publication. An answer to the question of “what is news?” is elusively linked to the daily development of events, few of which can be anticipated and many that are “stranger than fiction” (Byron, 1823) but there is an unwritten convention of the sorts of stories that pique journalistic, and therefore consumer, interest. Craig (2004, p. 81) believes that while events are not intrinsically newsworthy, they become news by fitting “news values” that are “informed by cultural ideas about the way the world works and by the way journalists process the news” into a series of “frames” through which the “chaos of the events of the day can be organised and interpreted.”

Shiraev and Sobel (2005) have defined at least four categories of news: *available news*, constituting easily obtainable information such as sport scores and weather; *discovered news* which is the result of journalistic investigation; *practical news* serving an individual’s pragmatic needs, and *entertaining news* which provides
enjoyment. White (1991, p.10) observed “in essence, news divides into two branches: the matters of consequence, relevance or impact and the matters of interest.” The characteristics of news have been the subject of research by journalists and academics who have broadly identified factors which determine “news value,” a phrase that White (1991, p. 10) ascribes to Julian Ralph, a revered US reporter of his era, who first used the term in 1892.

The news media is universally accepted as an important conduit of information for the public (Gans, 1979) and since its identification as gatekeeper – judging which stories to report each day – in the 1950s (White, 1950; Lewin, 1951) there has been sustained interest in how media decide what constitutes news. Research using interviews, case studies, ethnographies, and content analyses has resulted in numerous lists of news values likely to determine if an issue or event will be covered by the media.

In Galtung and Ruge’s (1965) seminal study their central question was “How do ‘events’ become news?” and they set out to develop a taxonomy of selection criteria, or “news values,” which influenced the flow of news. The news values (Table 1) they determined drew on principles of human behaviour research in the belief that journalists’ perceptions of what is newsworthy are in line with the general population’s (Watson, 1998). Based on their research, decisions about the news worthiness of an event would recur regardless of situation or actors. News values would be exercised at various stages throughout the identification, selection and publication of news and Galtung and Ruge (1965) proposed five hypotheses
to explain their impact. According to the selection hypothesis, the presence of certain values increases the likelihood of an event being selected as news. They found news values are also seized on in crafting content (the distortion hypothesis) and are further emphasised throughout ongoing stages of the production process (the replication hypothesis). News values can also have a compounding effect with more values increasing the probability of an event becoming news and, should it lack one news value, it can be strong in another value (the “complementarity” hypothesis). However Galtung and Ruge (1965) contend that a single, defining list of news values does not exist.

Masterton’s (1998, p. 91) survey of journalists and journalism educators in 69 countries identified six major news values that were universally nominated: consequence, proximity, conflict, human interest, novelty and prominence. The study also showed that most journalists, through experience, develop a common understanding of these values and often apply them without really being aware of their existence (Richards, 2005, pp. 34-35). The latter is seen as a reason why journalists would be more likely to report certain issues ahead of others and to emphasise certain aspects of events over others.
Table 1: News Values (adapted from Galtung & Ruge, 1965)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Events that unfold conveniently within the production cycle of a news outlet are more likely to be reported.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Frequency</td>
<td>The larger the event, the more people it affects, the more likely it is to be reported. Events can meet the threshold criterion either by being large in absolute terms, or by marking an increase in the intensity of an ongoing issue.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Threshold</td>
<td>The fewer ways there are of interpreting an event, the more likely it is to be reported.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Unambiguity</td>
<td>The more culturally proximate and/or relevant an event is, the more likely it is to be reported.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Meaningfulness</td>
<td>If a journalist has a mental pre-image of an event, if it’s expected to happen, then it is more likely to be reported. This is even truer if the event is something the journalist desires to happen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Consonance</td>
<td>If an event is unexpected, it is more likely to be considered newsworthy and to be reported.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Unexpectedness</td>
<td>Once an issue has made the news once, future events related to it are more likely to be reported.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Continuity</td>
<td>News editors will attempt to present their audience with a “balanced diet” of news. An event that contributes to the diversity of topics reported is more likely to be covered than one that adds to a pile of similar news items.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Compositional Balance</td>
<td>Events that involve elite nations are more likely to be reported than those that do not.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Elite Nations</td>
<td>Events that involve elite people are more likely to be reported than those that do not.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Elite People</td>
<td>Events that can be discussed in terms of the actions of individual actors are more likely to be reported than those that are the outcome of abstract social forces. By the same token, social forces are more likely to be discussed in the news if they can be illustrated by way of reference to individuals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Personification</td>
<td>An event with a negative outcome is more likely to be reported than one with a positive outcome.</td>
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The concept of news values is inextricably linked to the news gathering process (Tunstall, 1971; McQuail, 2000). McQuail (2000) says real-world events are generally complex and have characteristics that meet several, and more often many, news values and this constantly changing flow of equally complicated information affects assessment of its value. Researchers have been aware of the potential of news values to obscure the ideological assumptions that permeate a media organisation. According to S. Hall (1973), although news values can appear
as “a set of neutral, routine practices” they are also important to be aware of for “the ideological rules that underlie news values and influence the operationalisation of news” (p. 182). Galtung and Ruge (1965) acknowledged the influence of journalists’ own values but hoped that journalists might apply their own judgment on top of news values. However much of the literature assumes that the characteristics of an event exist independently of the ideology of the news organisation (McQuail, 2000, p. 279). This does not discount the impact of environmental or cultural factors underpinning decisions about what makes the news.

It is difficult to assess in practice what influences a decision about relevance and it is difficult to glean from finished news texts the underlying motivations of media decision-makers. Hetherington (1985) believed “most journalists, in my experience, will resist formalised ‘news values,’ lest these cramp their freedom of decision….Obviously journalists working at speed against edition times or programme ‘on-air’ times do not go through a mental checklist of factors such as Galtung and Ruge have listed” (p. 7).

Other research has approached news values as a construct that operates beneath the level of consciousness (Bell, 1991). S. Hall et al (1978) write “although they are nowhere written down, formally transmitted, or codified, news values seem to be widely shared …and form a core element in the professional socialisation, practice and ideology [of media]” (p. 54). Elsewhere, S. Hall notes:
“News values” are one of the most opaque structures of meaning in modern society. All ‘true journalists’ are supposed to possess it: few can or are willing to identify and define it. Journalists speak of ‘the news’ as if events select themselves. ... We appear to be dealing, then, with a ‘deep structure’ whose function as a selective device is untransparent even to those who professionally most know how to operate it.

- S. Hall, 1973, p. 181

Golding and Elliott (1999) go further to suggest that, even as conscious thoughts, news values have little to do with “deciding what’s news” (pp.118-119) and far more to do with rationalising news decisions. The nature of the media and news environment is such that it is difficult to investigate and record what happens at the moment of decision. Tunstall (1971) adds that news values are highly dependent on context and therefore open to discretion. At best, an understanding of news values may offer broad perspective but be less predictive or explanatory about individual cases. Gans (1979) believes the values that underlie news stories are not “necessarily distinctive to journalists,” but frequently begin with the sources on which journalists rely (p. 39). Bell (1991) similarly observes that news values are not unique to journalism but emanate from “ideologies and priorities held in society” (p. 156), a view pioneered most influentially by S. Hall (1973; see also S. Hall et al, 1978). The view of news workers as socialised to think in identical patterns (Gans, 1979) has been countered by a recent more balanced view which appreciates the role of the individual without ignoring the influence of the social structures in which they operate: “What is news to one journalist or editor is not news to another. … [W]hat is worth reporting to one editor may be of no interest
to another. … News selection, though, is a group activity. No one person actually exercises inordinate control over the news, because all the way back along the news chain the checks and balances of those involved work very successfully” (Herbert, 2000, pp. 63-64).

Following Herbert (2000), it stands to reason that some aspects of news decisions are indeed unique to the professional culture, economics, and political situation of mainstream journalism, while – as Galtung and Ruge originally suggested – others may be far less specific to the news. Several scholars have highlighted the oppositional nature that many news values present. Tuchman (1978), Hetherington (1985), and McQuail (2000) note that truly unexpected (i.e., not consonant) events are often prominent news items, while other authors, like Watson (1998), simply state that consonance and unexpectedness coexist in unresolved opposition. News values can also appear to overlap and are particularly susceptible to cultural influences. The situation becomes more complex when considering all news values that have been suggested in the literature. At the end of the day, virtually any event meets one criterion or another. Tensions between groups of news values have led to claims that hard news wins out over human interest (Hetherington, 1985), and yet more conclusions suggest that, ultimately, news values cannot take into account the commercial drive that influences news production (McQuail, 1992).

Once news values are embedded in an organisation’s editorial psyche, the mass media is “stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about” (Cohen, 1963, p. 13). In selecting issues and events to cover, the media set the agenda for
what information people will get, acting as gatekeepers to the medium’s content. This “agenda setting” capacity of the media has been investigated by a number of scholars. The theoretical premise for agenda setting is in attitude accessibility – the ease with which attitudes can be retrieved from memory - and the mediating effect of salience in terms of enhancing recall (Scheufele, 2000). Some researchers suggest agenda setting extends beyond just accessibility and can be susceptible to the influence of both perceived relevance and uncertainty (Weaver 1991; Takeshita, 2006). Nelson et al (1997) found a measure of perceived importance to be more theoretically valuable than a measure of accessibility. In whatever form, the agenda setting capability of the media has been linked to audience interpretations and evaluations (Weaver et al, 1975; Iyengar & Kinder, 1987). Links between agenda setting and “priming” – the cognitive psychology construct concerning how obvious attributes enhance accessibility – strengthens the theoretical underpinnings of agenda setting and its impact on behaviour (Willnat, 1997).

Early empirical studies have found correlations that suggest audiences tend to share the media’s composite definition of what is important, thus supporting the media’s agenda setting capability (Cohen, 1963). Although, as Cohen points out, such correlations could also indicate the mass media is the best approximation to the realities playing out and may also simply represent a successful match of news messages to audience interests. Despite the changes to media platforms, and the belief that “the gate-keeping monopoly once enjoyed by editors and broadcasters is waning” (Gurevitch, et al, 2009, p. 167), such a role still exists for the media.
While it may be easy to perceive the audience to have become their own gatekeeper of sorts, the “traditional” news media gatekeeper is still in place internal to the media organisation and controls the release of information. Gurevitch et. al. (2009) offer a potentially important observation when they suggest that the growing media space actually leads to a loosening of control previously held by significant non-media actors in the system (e.g., government departments) because of the proliferation of mediums that need to be covered. This in turn forces them to adopt an increasingly responsive mode rather than the proactive, agenda-involved role they may prefer.

But selection of “what” issues and events to cover is often only part of the news and information transaction process. The media also have the capacity to convey “how” the public thinks on issues and events which is where the concept of framing comes in.

Agenda setting and framing research both focus on the relationship between issues presented in the news and public perceptions of the news (Semetko & Valkenburg, 2000). As Fuller (1996) rightly observes, the definition of news differs across media organisations because they have different interpretations of the audiences they serve and differing judgments about what is significant. There is little doubt that the media influence the public perceptions of events. They have the power to set the agenda, to promote certain stories over others (priming) and to frame issues in various ways, each with a different impact (Callaghan and Schnell, 2001). Weaver (1997) recognises agenda setting pursued through gatekeeper actions as
being interconnected with framing, the former reflecting what is reported and the latter more concerned with how it is reported.

Goffman (1974) conceptualised the idea of frames as schemata of interpretation that would guide the classification and organisation of information. More than 20 years later, Nelson, et al (1997, p. 567) defined framing as “the process by which a communication source…defines and constructs [an issue].” According to Reese (2001), framing refers to “the way events and issues are organised and made sense of, especially by media, media professionals and their audiences” (p. 7). For Tankard et al, the media frame is: “The central organising idea for news content that supplies a context and suggests what the issue is through the use of selection, emphasis, exclusion and elaboration” (1991, p. 3).

News frames are the “conceptual tools news media and individuals use to convey, interpret and evaluate information” (Neuman, et al 1992, p. 60). They help the recipient of information “locate, perceive, identify, and label” the flow of information (Goffman, 1974, p. 21). In his work on news narratives on an issue or event, Kuypers (2009) notes how frames make some information more salient than other information. He outlines how the process of framing involves communicators, consciously or unconsciously, constructing a point of view that encourages the facts to be interpreted by others in a particular manner. Research into framing assumes that the media, subject to limitations on time and space together with a need to reach a large audience, unavoidably frame stories to simplify and give meaning to information (Valkenburg, et al 1999). They identify
four ways of framing that are common to news media: a conflict frame which emphasises conflict between parties; a human interest frame which emphasises human emotion; a responsibility frame which seeks to attribute responsibility; and, an economic consequences frame (Valkenburg et al., 1999).

There is contradictory evidence for the degree of influence that different frames have on audiences. For example, in a content analysis of political news, Semetko and Valkenburg (2000) found most significant differences in framing practices were between serious news media and sensationalist news media outlets. The sensational outlets would more often apply a human interest frame to stories while the more serious news media used responsibility and conflict frames. In times of crisis, dominance of certain frames – by necessity, as dictated by the crisis conditions – affects the thoughts of readers. But the media are arguably in less of a position to control framing practices when events are more apparent to the public eye and the media are less able to influence them. Valkenburg et al (1999) found news framed in terms of human interest, often done to enhance interest and make an issue compelling, may not necessarily enhance recall of the event but can instead limit recollection. This has potentially significant implications when considering reactions to the media in times of crisis. The emotionally charged nature of news coverage in times of crisis could be interfering with audience processing and recollection of factual information. The common claim that the media may not be reporting truthfully at such times could possibly be a reaction influenced by the information-receiver’s incomplete recognition and retention of facts and preoccupation with emotional aspects of the story.
For example, an isolated, geographically-removed plane crash has the potential to resonate emotionally with the audience, who in turn could alter their propensity to travel, even if the media correctly reported the one-off nature of the incident. If such a response is multiplied across a wider audience, affected industries may hold the media responsible for “unduly” influencing the audience’s perceptions with its coverage. In times of great crisis, it is hard for the media to manufacture a frame graver than the reality that is often clearly apparent.

2.5 Media Operations During Crisis

In terms of a crisis, there is no set start-to-finish timeline for a news organisation’s coverage of the event. The level of attention it gets from editors, reporters and photographers is judged within media organisation management on the amount of interest they gauge it will sustain with the reader/viewer/listener. It becomes old news when it loses appeal to the masses or if another event pushes it out of the news. It is assessed for its suitability against the previously discussed news values.

Disaster is a category of news which competes with a range of other newsworthy items for placement in a newspaper edition, a radio bulletin, a TV programme and on a website. Tourism academic Beirman (2003a, p. 12) identifies favourite media coverage categories as: crime, crisis, conflict, conquest, corruption, catharsis, cataclysm, rescue, scandal and triumph over adversity. Within these categories journalists will look for the added dimensions of human interest, drama, importance and relevance (to the media organisation’s reach or circulation area).
He contends that a disaster contains these four dimensions and so can be expected to receive better than ordinary coverage in terms of profile and number of stories and pictures within the newspaper or broadcast proportionate to the disaster’s size. Adams (1986) examined the way television covered natural disasters and found that it wasn’t as much the magnitude of the disaster that generated the scale of the coverage but the number of deaths. In measuring the mean network TV news time devoted to earthquakes in six countries in 1976 in relation to the early estimate of deaths, he found that the death of one Western European equalled three Eastern Europeans equalled nine Latin Americans equalled 11 Middle Easterners equalled 12 Asians. He also found that a third of the variation in network news coverage of disasters could be accounted for by a country’s popularity with USA tourists.

The daily media offer the first version of history and it is inevitably an imperfect account because of the conditions of disruption, panic, disorganisation and the knowledge vacuum created by a disaster under which journalists, photographers and editors operate to gather stories. Anderson (2004) provided a practitioner’s view of the nature of news to a World Tourism Organisation conference, noting that, almost inevitably, anything that threatens people’s peace, prosperity or wellbeing is news and is likely to make headlines, and that news is often about events which are – at best – sad or gloomy for a country and its people or – at worst – disastrous.

The authorities responsible for controlling or rectifying the conditions radiating from crisis or disaster are invariably unable to satisfy the quantum of “hard facts”
demanded by journalists because, a) they don’t always know the answers to the questions and, b) they are not authorised officially to report them. With information not being available fast enough to meet the journalist’s deadline, there is professional recourse to unofficial sources and cross-checked rumour. The media have an innate suspicion of the “official” line on all matters and attempt to source the non-official and more easily attainable, such as eye-witness accounts and non-primary facts. Scanlon (1998) noted that organisations have more trouble responding effectively to the media because disasters overload or destroy communications and disrupt transportation. They have difficulty finding out what happened and then responding. Even when they can respond, they have to make difficult choices because there is too much to do. He added that during disasters no-one knows the entire story and the real problem isn’t that information is not available immediately; it’s that it may never be available.

Smallman (1997) and Scanlon (1998) noted the media are a key, if sometimes misguided, part of risk communication. They are an asset in a disaster as possibly the main source of information, are important in assisting effective disaster education and crucial to delivering effective warnings. But the same media which can assist the tourism industry in the normal course of events can also turn hostile. The tourism research literature in the area of disaster and crisis includes a wide selection of case studies of destinations that have suffered massive disruptions to business and image as a result of such incidents. Analysis of media treatment of major crises is covered in few papers but media influence is discussed in the context of the wider activity associated with the effect of crisis on destination
recovery. Media coverage of the UK foot and mouth disease of 2001 (dealt with in
detail as a case study) was the subject of papers by Frisby (2002) and Baxter and
Bowen (2004) which analysed post-crisis media management and stressed the
crucial role of the media in tackling crisis if they were harnessed as a key element
of tourism contingency planning. The SARS outbreak of 2003 (also dealt with in
detail as a case study) and its impact on tourism was discussed by Mason et al.
(2005) who discovered the “power of the media” (p. 20) in “the sheer volume of
coverage and the often sensationalist and alarmist tones” (p. 15) which contributed
to the overall SARS media phenomenon.

Stanbury et al. (2005) examined the role of the media in crisis affecting UK
adventure tour operators through qualitative analysis of newspaper articles and
concluded that companies must employ crisis techniques that incorporated a media
handling strategy. Different views of the American National Aeronautics and
Space Administration (NASA) agency’s crisis communications and subsequent
media coverage were given by Kauffman (2005) and Martin and Boynton (2005)
who compared the handling of two disasters through analysis of newspaper
coverage and highlighted errors that showed systemic flaws in organisational
communication culture.

The research displays a tendency towards blaming the media for the tourism
industry’s plight in either establishing or rehabilitating a destination’s image. In
presenting the case for sub-Saharan Africa to be better appreciated by international
tourists, Ankomah and Crompton (1990) attributed the region’s negative image as
an inhibitor to tourism development to “most news media [which] feature bad news” (p. 16) and unfavourably depict poverty and malnutrition. These messages were compounded by globally televised images of starving Africans. The authors regretted that horrendous human tragedy, not the beautiful settings, have become the modern-day symbols of sub-Saharan Africa.

Following breakdown of a peace process in 2000, national tourism organisations in the Middle East were forced into a position of “crisis marketing” as opposed to “post-crisis recovery marketing” (Beirman, 2002, p. 167). Beirman asserted that there was a short but intense period of media scrutiny for a natural crisis but media coverage could be sustained for a longer period when the destination was experiencing political stand-offs, riots and killings. He examined how Israel and Jordan marketed during a “perceived crisis” against an image inimical to attracting discretionary tourism (Ibid, p. 167). His paper is replete with phrases such as “nature of media reporting of events…especially damaging to tourism” (p. 169), “intensive and at times distorted coverage by the international media” (p. 168), “the media’s pre-disposition to cover conflict and crisis and its tendency to magnify them” (p. 170), and “the media coverage placed pressure on Western governments to advise their citizens either to defer travel to Israel entirely or to adopt extreme caution” (p. 170). He gave no indication of an implemented media-management strategy.

Conversely, despite long warning periods of impending, separate natural disasters that gave time to spread information and make contingency plans, the two tourism
industries of Mount St Helens in Washington State and East Kootenay in British Columbia experienced problems as a result of “sensationalistic media coverage” (Murphy and Bayley, 1989, p. 45). “Television images that were shocking or looked spectacular were broadcast internationally…both experiences demonstrated a need for balanced news coverage, possibly channelled through a designated, accessible government agency” (Ibid).

The community of Little Rock, Arkansas, took matters into its own hands to head off unfavourable coverage following a flash flood that engulfed the town and threatened a successful start to the traditional tourist season (Mitchell, 1993). Residents didn’t wait for the media to begin reporting the recovery, instead hiring satellite services and video news release companies to disseminate positive recovery images to the public and provide human interest stories to radio and other media outlets. The proactive communications strategy resulted in record visitor numbers.

The tourism industry of South Carolina also took a pro-active approach to recovering from the devastation of Hurricane Hugo which caused estimated damage of US$5 billion in 1989 (Liming, 1990). This case study is a valuable guide for a media interaction template but is worth noting here as a point of comparison with the methods used by other destinations experiencing similar troubles. In anticipation of the approaching tempest, the tourism authority developed a media call list for use after the impact to limit the “public relations nightmare” (p. 352). It also prepared for the media’s worst questions on the
presumption that a reporter half way across the country might misunderstand or exaggerate the situation. To ensure there was a credible source of information available, the industry established an “official tourism advisory” and throughout the period built up a “playing fair” reputation with the media. Despite all preparations, the authority reported the professional media were “among the worst in carelessly over-inflating damage reports” (p. 352).

In summary, this section has set out the media’s normal operating style for reporting stories and outlined how they deal with crisis and the effect of their coverage on tourism destinations during the course of a crisis. It looked at the blame accorded to the media by tourism authorities for perceived biased reporting and gave examples of how some tourism bodies worked to balance, or counteract, media coverage in their region. Having outlined the separate operating environments for tourism and the media in times of crisis the following section assesses how the two are unavoidably thrown together during crisis and how antagonism and distrust are part of their relationship.

2.6. Tourism and the Media

It is accepted that the media have a central role in influencing public opinion which extends to consumers’ images of destinations and impressions of whether or not a place is safe and secure (C.M. Hall, 2002). The life-cycle of an issue in the media – during which it generates great interest which then declines over time – has been argued by Downs (1972) to be parallel with the public’s attention to the
issue. This process has been termed by C. M. Hall (2002, p. 459) “the issue-attention cycle”, which he found almost always had five sequences: 1. pre-problem stage; 2. alarmed discovery and possibly euphoria; 3. realising the cost of significant progress; 4. gradual decline of intense public interest; 5. post-problem stage.

C.M. Hall and O’Sullivan’s (1996) paper about the relationships between tourism and political stability highlighted the role of the media in influencing tourists’ perceptions of the relative safety of destinations. They acknowledged the substantial influence of the media, through books, magazines and newspapers, on images of destination areas and the immediacy – unmatched in human history – as a result of satellite transmission which make the media a major force in creating images of safety and political stability in a destination region. While hallmark tourist events aim to use the media to promote certain images, they observed the media are not passive portrayers of events, but instead select particular representations and interpretations from a plethora of options. Bar-On (1996), Sonmez et al. (1999), Mikacic et al. (1999), Pizam and Smith (2000) and Soemodinoto et al. (2001) highlighted the many negative impacts of crisis and disaster on tourism destinations generally and cited examples of effects on the Gili Islands northeast of Indonesia, the western Mediterranean, and Israel respectively.

A disaster mismanaged in the media could easily destroy a destination’s image of safety while evolving into a long-term crisis for the local tourism industry. Negative media coverage of human suffering, loss of life, public and private
property damage and economic and social disruption in a disaster only makes a bad situation worse for the afflicted area and its residents. This is exemplified by the coverage following the first Gulf War. Though terrorist incidents actually dropped to 361 by 1992 media coverage may have unintentionally frightened or discouraged the public from international travel by magnifying the already volatile relationship between terrorism and tourism and clouding actual probabilities of travellers being targeted by a terrorism act (Pizam & Smith, 2000, p. 125 citing Aziz (1995)).

Researchers have focused on the role of the media in destinations experiencing crisis and disaster. Prideaux and Witt (1999) commented generally on the lack of analytical literature about the Asian monetary crisis, saying it had been largely restricted to the popular and business press and an increasing number of books but was largely ignored by tourism academics. They said the attention given by the press “contained a sense of drama and a dearth of balanced analysis” (p. 385). Leslie (1999) analysed tourism to Northern Ireland, which he said had been hiding behind a veil of terrorism to justify the decline in tourism arrivals. Industry development had been hampered by a backdrop of violence in the province and “exacerbated by media attention and sensationalisation” (p. 37). In studying the devastation and subsequent efforts to stimulate tourism industry recovery after the 1999 Taiwan earthquake, Huang and Min (2002), commenting on the level of accuracy of media coverage in times of disaster, stated it “is often the exception rather than the rule” (p. 146) and “news organizations may exaggerate the situation to attract attention to their media and publications”. Sonmez et al. (1999) argued
that a symbiotic relationship existed between terrorists and journalists, converging “to aid each other in the effort to communicate to the audience; the media achieves higher ratings and terrorists achieve their goal of publicity… media coverage of violence involving travellers is likely to be extremely gratifying to terrorist groups. The time and attention afforded to terrorists clearly benefit both their organizations and media. The losers include society as well as destinations which suffer as a result of negative images such coverage spawns (p. 14)”.

The tourism industry approaches the media with an open, self-interested bias and often attempts to control engagement. An Asia Media Summit in Kuala Lumpur in 2004 (Sulaiman, 2004) aimed to address the non-Muslim world’s media-driven perception of Islam and security for newsmen – on the war front and home turf – and seek greater understanding of the religion and its culture among media professionals. At a conference in Dar es Salaam in 2003, the African tourism industry sought positive reporting on its industry and “fair play” by the American media, urging the media of both regions to work closely to boost tourism on the continent (Tairo, 2003). The leader of tourism in Nepal, Tek Bahadur Dangi, blamed, in part, negative print and electronic international media coverage of crime and terrorism incidents for the plight of his industry, saying the issues were misinterpreted in an improper, untimely and inaccurate fashion (Poudel, 2005).

Miller and Ritchie (2003) assessed the media’s role in the 2001 outbreak of foot and mouth disease in the United Kingdom and argued that rather than reporting on a single catastrophic event and returning for the clean-up operation and
implications, the media played an investigative role as the size of the problem became known and the reaction of other countries grew in significance. As a result, valuable time – implying questionably it could have been used for far better purposes – had to be allocated to provide the media with information and its scrutiny influenced the way the disaster was managed! A House of Commons (2001) inquiry into the outbreak and its effect on tourism found that inadequate measures used to combat the disease as well as media reporting inflicted serious damage on the tourism industry.

The leader of the World Tourism Organisation, Secretary-General Francesco Frangialli, kept a balanced view of the media in an interview about the consequences to the industry of the SARS outbreak (Heyer, 2003). He said that the impact of the epidemic was being compounded by intense media coverage. However, he didn’t accord all the blame to journalists, saying the strong negative impacts on tourism came from a combination of factors related to hesitancy to report all cases and the responses from travellers, which ranged from under-estimation to over-reaction. He urged the media to dispense with generalisations and inappropriate exaggerations and approach the issue more critically. Two years later, Frangialli took a different tack on media coverage of the post-tsunami situation in the Indian Ocean region, urging the media to look hard at its saturation coverage of humanitarian relief to afflicted destinations to avoid causing misunderstanding among potential travellers and thereby slowing the recovery of tourism to areas that had not been devastated (Travel Wire News, 2005). He asked the media to avoid the “infodemic” associated with the SARS crisis and called on
the press to “issue honest and balanced information on events and situations that could influence the flow of tourists”. He stressed the WTO was not trying to intervene in editorial policies.

In summary, this section has shown how the media’s central role in influencing public opinion is particularly powerful during times of crisis. The literature review showed how the routines of reporting lead to the highlighting of the negative aspects of the story, leading to the perceptions in the tourism industry that they are simply exacerbating the crisis. This has lead to rancour within the tourism industry towards the media at times of crisis, a theme that is developed in the next section dealing with the media’s global reach.

2.7. Globalisation and Influence of Media Coverage

Most crisis events generate explosions of data and communications. Reports from the scene are often sketchy, ambivalent and need to be verified. Rumours emerge and may serve to mislead crisis management activities. The mass media and the public clamour for information. In this hectic information context, small groups of key decision makers need adequate staffing and clear information-processing and monitoring strategy; one that is often absent.

- Deutsch, 1982, p.6

Researchers (Robinson, 2001; Glaesser, 2003; Beirman 2003a) have highlighted the globalisation of media as presenting a challenge for tourism at the same time as the industry benefits from faster and cheaper travel options which make
destinations seem closer and the world smaller. Glaesser (p. 26) stated the obvious, that media generate awareness and exert influence on public debate, but claimed that negative events have an increased communication probability and a quicker dissemination process because they deviate from daily routine. Such is news. The globalisation of communication services gives these events a potentially unlimited audience and once they occur, they are difficult to hide. Robinson (2001, p. 941) noted that the proliferation of portable satellite dishes and electronic news-gathering equipment appeared to increase the immediacy of “distant events”, reducing the scope for calm deliberation and forcing a response to issues under pressure from journalists. International news reporting thus delivers the world’s disasters to our TV living rooms, mobile phones, office desktop computers, netbooks and public screens, a reach the tourism industry now has to match when crisis strikes.

Writing extensively on this aspect of media, Beirman (2003a, pp. 12-13) noted that the globalised media’s enhanced ability to report events as they occurred – as opposed to a lesser capability to do so before the advent of satellite transmission and digital media – posed a mixture of benefits and problems for tourism authorities. Beirman posited that media relations was one of the most critical elements of crisis management and “supervision” of the media’s coverage of both the crisis and its management was a core issue for tourism authorities and tour operators. In this context, Beirman said the role of effective public relations management was critical to ensure that recovery and restoration efforts were reported at all, let alone in proportion to coverage of the actual crisis. He noted
media relations extended beyond developing a network of contacts with local media and usually required the development of global contacts.

According to Beirman, failure to prepare for a crisis scenario placed a tourist authority on the defensive when responding to reporters’ questions at media conferences. He counselled players to exercise maximum control during interviews and to initiate the agenda of the media’s coverage of a crisis. He advised (p. 21) that by muting the response to a situation, it was possible to limit the attention drawn to it as a crisis. He found that the level of media exposure influenced the distinction between a tourist hazard and a crisis. For instance, terrorist attacks in the Middle East were routinely reported internationally but in Sri Lanka terrorism got little global media coverage unless occurring near the capital, Colombo, or directly affecting tourists. The global media thrived on the 9/11 and foot and mouth disease crises because of the open information culture of the host societies, he argued, claiming questionably that an incident of the scale of 9/11 would not have attracted extensive coverage had it occurred in any large city elsewhere in the world. He warned that magnification of a problem was the oldest trick in the news media's book, especially if the publication or program was heavily sales driven. He observed (p.25) it was a natural emotional inclination of destination authorities to treat the media as adversaries but it was essential to be as honest and open with them as circumstances permitted. However in circumstances where national or tourist security might be compromised, it was appropriate to be selective about what was revealed to the media. Conversely, Luhrman (2004) proposed an “honest and transparent approach…in order to maintain credibility”.

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Tarlow (2002) warned the new climate of violence that followed the terrorist attacks in New York warranted the tourism industry and travel professionals to develop a code for dealing with the media, saying the lack of a policy, particularly in the case of emergencies such as 9/11, could prove “fatal”. He cited a list of basic principles and methods to follow to develop an honest and trusting relationship with the media. Faulkner (2001, p. 145) incorporated media and monitoring activities into his disaster management framework, noting it was essential that a media communication strategy with a centralised source be established early to stop the release of misleading and contradictory information and to co-ordinate responses. He acknowledged the central role of media in tourism disaster situations to provide public information during an emergency, and in the recovery stage to provide information to broader industry and community stakeholders about restoration of services.

In summary, this section has explored the ramifications within tourism of the global media environment. The popular categories of news reporting are identified and the nuances of what is reported and why are assessed. The inter-dependence of tourism and media, their operating environments and interaction during crisis have been demonstrated revealing the importance to the tourism industry of developing an honest, trusting relationship with the media alongside a dedicated media management strategy to be implemented in times of crisis. In the next section we look at chaos theory and its relevance to general crisis management as a prelude to introducing disaster management models specific to tourism.
2.8. Chaos Theory

*Every little thing counts in a crisis.*
- Jawaharlal Nehru (1889-1964)

In its scientific context, the word *chaos* has a different meaning than it does in its general usage as *a state of confusion, lacking any order*. Chaos, with reference to *Chaos Theory*, refers to nonlinear complex systems, the behaviour of which exhibit an apparent lack of order. It is thus not a descriptor but rather a characterisation of unpredictable, albeit evolving, behaviour that leads to a new state of order (TechTarget, 2007).

It is not difficult to see that complexity in the shape of dynamic irregularity characterises many real-world situations. Chaos-based ideas have been influential in the social sciences realm for some time, with models for business cycles, voting and financial markets all demonstrating the potential for chaos and raising the possibility that well-understood theoretical models may contain a hidden rich, dynamic structure (LeBaron, 1998). It has been observed that “based on theoretical principles of chaos theory, customary social science goals of ‘prediction’ and ‘control’ of systems’ behaviour are sometimes, if not usually, unobtainable” (Gregersen and Sailer, 1993, p. 177). As a complex system, Chaos Theory lends itself well to understanding crises which exhibit complex and nonlinear behaviour (Sellnow et al., 2002). Butz (1997) characterised crisis events as being not predictable, subject to small variances and with the chance of a multitude of outcomes. Thietart and Forgues (1997) suggest that crises, as systems of inter-
organisational relations, are chaotic situations, created by the numerous transactions between actors as they attempt to find a satisfactory “outcome”.

Applied to social situations such as crisis management and intervention, the theory takes on an evolutionary aspect, seeing systems as dynamic and changing, with new systems emerging out of crisis (Butz, 1997). Postrel (1998, p. xv) noted the “emergent complex messiness” that characterised chaotic situations would evolve in a self-organising manner even if patterns could not be identified or pre-planning could not be applied to solve the crisis. The principles of Chaos Theory encourage a view of the world as an elaborate system of flux and change (Kiel, 1994). What the actors in a crisis may perceive as unpredictable and spontaneous events in fact result from the interplay of numerous uncoordinated independent factors that form an ever-shifting pattern, which can actually help them to make sense of the crisis (James, 2007). While the evolution of a system cannot be fully predicted due to the possibility of one of an infinite number of variables acting upon the system, the overall system behaviour can be predicted in that the system will continue to evolve past the point of disturbance (Ibid). This is illustrated by the periods of renewal that follow times of crisis.

Murphy (1996) supports the relevance of Chaos Theory as a good model for crisis situations as, typically, a crisis forms as a series of events that seem, over time, to gather volume and complexity with increasing speed. The crisis’s dynamic resembles, therefore, that of a chaotic system as it iterates through increasingly complex phases towards a disordered state. At the onset of a crisis an organisation
may have the power to influence the situation, but after a certain point it often loses this capacity. The multiplication of voices and solutions follows a dynamic similar to a chaotic system where, during the initial few phases, some order remains, but subsequently complexity overruns the system and it passes beyond control. At that point, Chaos Theory suggests that an organisation cannot manage an outcome but must allow events to sort it themselves out while trying to fit into the emerging aftermath.

In their examination of turbulence in tourism systems, Faulkner and Russell (2001, p. 332) looked at the role of disasters, crises and entrepreneurial activity as three types of events that tended to inflict turbulence. They proposed that these events exhibited characteristics that aligned with concepts of a chaos perspective as opposed to the steady state characteristics of order and equilibrium. Events were deemed to exhibit sensitive dependence on initial conditions as well as concepts of “edge of chaos” and “phase shift”. Edge of chaos is where a system is in a state of tenuous equilibrium and phase shift is the movement from stasis to change that occurs in response to significant events such as crises and disasters.

They noted both the feasibility of a single event to precipitate major change across a system, as well as the accompanying evolutionary change leading to a new, more complex order. In light of these findings, it was suggested that the predisposition to research tourism in the context of stable systems provided an incomplete picture of turbulent phases in tourism development (C. M. Hall, 1995a; Laws et al., 1998) and that understanding tourism systems from a chaos perspective may enable
change to be better anticipated and managed. The following discussion outlines how the main components of chaos theory can be applied to the analysis of crises.

Edward Lorenz, credited as being the first experimenter in the area of chaos in the early 1960s, described the phenomenon whereby small changes in a recursive system can drastically change the results of running that system (Gleick, 1998). As a result of this sensitivity, the behaviour of chaotic systems appears to be random because of an exponential growth of errors in the initial conditions. Very simple, or small, systems and events can influence very complex behaviours or events. This is known as sensitive dependence on initial conditions. Lorenz’s butterfly effect vividly illustrates this essential idea of Chaos Theory (see Figure 3 below).

He drew on the example of a single flap of a butterfly’s wings in Brazil as being enough to set off a tornado in Texas by way of disruption to the atmosphere system (TechTarget, 2007). The example of such a small condition as a flapping butterfly being responsible for creating such a large and distant outcome as a tornado in Texas illustrated the impossibility of making predictions for complex systems. Despite the fact that system behaviour is influenced by underlying conditions, precisely what those conditions are can never be sufficiently articulated to allow long-range predictions.
It is not too difficult to recognise that a small, insignificant factor can trigger a crisis. Conversely, it is at times difficult to identify one single cause of a crisis. What often exists is the interweaving of a number of factors and/or variables, any one of which has the potential to alter the course of events. There are many examples of crises that were propagated by this sensitive dependence on initial conditions whereby the slightest change in initial conditions might have resulted in drastically different outcomes. It is therefore deemed impossible to exactly predict the state of a system; however it is generally quite possible to model the overall behaviour of a system. Herein lies another key characteristic of chaos, that of unpredictability. Specifically, long-term projections become problematic because
of the multiple variables that may act upon a system as it evolves, yet short term predictions based on anticipation of system behaviour are possible. Further, it also becomes apparent a system could never return precisely to its original state, but instead a new form of order is formed out of chaos.

Moving through a crisis, there are an infinite number of possible decisions, actions or events that could alter long-term outcomes, as well as a myriad of variables subsequent to, and possibly unrelated to, the crisis that may serve to alter the trajectory of a system. While some level of preparation can be accomplished by anticipating behaviour or planning for it, the long-term outcome remains unpredictable.

Changes in the qualitative dynamics of the system, or bifurcations, result as the parameters of a system change, thus leading to system evolution (Rich, 1997, p. 28). In considering the implications of Chaos Theory for public relations, Murphy (1996) saw crises themselves as acting as bifurcation points, leading to organisational change. For a crisis itself, bifurcations can be identified as the defining moments, those points in the life of a crisis when events escalate or alter the course of events, bringing about changes to the system, or shifts in phases (Crandall, et al 2009). It is possible that the changes lead to a new arrangement within the system very different from that preceding the moment of change. The nature of this new order cannot be predicted, however recognising that these defining moments exist to be found can be of great benefit to operators enduring crisis.
Attractors are defined as points within a nonlinear system around which other system points oscillate (Rich, 1997, p. 28). When the behaviour of a nonlinear system is plotted, patterns exhibited by attractors can be found. The strange attractor is a complicated pattern that emerges when a nonlinear system is in chaos (Crandall, et al, 2009). Within a chaotic system, such attractors do not operate in a linear way or from a fixed point. They move unpredictably but still provide some sense of structure to the system. Such attractors therefore have the capacity to create seemingly contradictory and paradoxical forces and outcomes (Seeger, 2002). Various descriptions have been applied to attractors in the social sciences field with examples including styles of management and an organisation’s values or culture (Murphy, 1996). They are fundamentally aspects that may serve as a binding point or be instrumental in bringing some form of stability to a situation that is in chaos. Murphy (1996) suggested that major crises marked the loss of an organisation’s attractor – whether it be management competence, social responsibility or technological skill – and were followed by a period of disorder until a new attractor emerged. She suggested that media coverage after such disasters typically reflected this groping for a new attractor, with conflicting coverage of facts and competing interpretations of the event’s meaning that eventually settled around a new attractor. By looking at the lifecycle of a crisis, this research will be suggesting that media operations may function as an attractor, a point within the system that provides stability for other system points.

The identification of attractors within complex systems is a useful task and helps to interpret the multiple trajectories of change within the evolving new order. An
attractor is comprised of the elements it governs, with the potential to bifurcate into new systems and to mediate the expansion of new systems (Seeger, 2002). The capacity to identify attractors is affected by the scale of the system but the complexity inherent in chaotic systems makes it impossible to identify patterns of behaviour from an isolated point. Awareness of the phase space, in which all possible states of a system are represented, is needed to discern behavioural patterns as they occur throughout the evolution of the system. Understanding the whole of the system helps to identify and understand the parts, although it must be remembered that chaos is not a single isolated event but rather a system of events (Crandall, et al., 2009).

Crises are complex systems and thus are in need of more sophisticated methods of analysis. Recent attempts have looked at the application of Chaos Theory principles to both crisis and tourism systems (McKercher, 1999). By recognising the potential for industry systems to operate in nonlinear ways, and for a crisis to act as a system exhibiting chaotic behaviour, this opens the door for deeper exploration of the ramifications for industry, such as tourism. Inherent in the analysis of real world systems is that they operate as dynamic disequilibrium systems and that their evolution cannot occur in isolation. Therefore models which interpret systems as closed must only be considered as a basis for understanding, something to be compared to in order to comprehend real world systems (Rich, 1997, p. 32).
In many cases, simple, well-understood models have also been shown to exhibit chaotic dynamics (LeBaron, 1998), putting into question the accuracy and reasonableness of original models. LeBaron (1998) observes that theory has left us with many possible roles for chaos in social systems, but none of these has been rigorously demonstrated to offer a good picture of how they may enhance understanding of system behaviour. In the very least, Chaos Theory offers practical perspectives that are useful in managing crises: little things matter; long term predictions are not feasible; key turning points and opportunities can be identified and capitalised upon; hidden patterns exist; and, ultimately the process can lead to learning, growth and adaptability which all contribute to organisational strength. Chaos research indicates that despite the multiple components of the theatre of crisis during its height of intensity, order exists within the chaos. It will be concluded from the findings of this research that tourism needs to understand this order inherent in the chaos. Only then can it realistically influence the chaotic environment in its favour and better influence the post crisis environment. Gleick (1998, p. 43) notes that students of chaotic dynamics discovered that the disorderly behaviour of simple systems acted as a creative process. It generated complexity: richly organised patterns, sometimes stable and sometimes unstable, sometimes finite and sometimes infinite, but always with the fascination of living things.

Chaos Theory suggests that chaos “may be the necessary precursor of a higher level of [system] order” (Kiel, 1994, p. 7). The argument that disorder is necessary for order, decay a precursor to renewal, decline a step in growth, and collapse a prelude to rebuilding is one of the most attractive and optimistic features of Chaos
Theory, despite the immediate, un-planned, tragic outcomes. This is again consistent with the notion of organisations as ever-changing, continually presented with and capitalising on opportunities for learning and growth.

In summary, this section has introduced the concept of chaos as a component of crisis conditions. Tourism researchers have recognised that this concept may enable change to be better anticipated and managed. The literature outlines that a new order is found out of chaos and it is in the period of development of this new order that tourism’s opportunities to minimise the effects of crisis may be found. While chaos appears to be a lack of order in a system, there is capacity to find an underlying order within apparently random conditions. The literature further shows that richly organised patterns, some stable and some unstable, are developed. The purpose of this research is to show through an analysis of crisis case studies, with an explicit focus on media operations and the interaction between media and tourism, that an understanding of the role of chaos can offer a useful perspective for tourism managers, a perspective that will help tourism managers, whether business, NGO or government agencies, to more effectively deal with the crisis.

2.9. Crisis Management

General crisis management literature covers a wide scope across industries and although it is particularly relevant to modern tourism it is under-investigated by tourism researchers. The crisis management literature covers both generic issues and a broad range of industry-specific examples of how to deal with crisis
situations. It is a comprehensive, multi-disciplinary field that covers all aspects of business, from operations, manufacturing, and distribution through to legal issues, and media and marketing. Crisis research is undertaken in the areas of economics, sociology, psychology, political science, public administration, public relations, environmental science, and communication and computer science, among others. The literature offers a range of terms to discuss crisis management, including business continuity and recovery, emergency planning, disaster or emergency response, and emergency preparedness.

Preble (1997) explored how integrating the crisis management perspective into a strategic management process can provide organisations with a defensive capability for preventing the development of crisis or decreasing the effect of its impact. Definitions that have not been referred to in the tourism literature but have been adapted for use to describe similar conditions in other disciplines include, for crisis:

*Any incident that can focus negative attention on a company and have an adverse effect on its overall financial condition, its relationships with its audiences or its reputation in the marketplace*

- Reid, 2000, p. 2

and

...a low-probability, high-impact situation that is perceived by critical stakeholders to threaten the viability of the organization and that is subjectively experienced by these individuals as personally and socially threatening

- Pearson and Clair, 1998, p. 63
For crisis management:

...a systematic process by which an organization attempts to predict or identify potential crises that an organization may encounter, take precautions to prevent the crises, or minimise the effects of the crises

- Wilson, 1992, p. 8

and

...a systematic approach that engages the whole organization in efforts to avert crises that may affect the firm and to effectively manage those that do occur.

- Pearson, 2002, p. 70

Crisis studies propose several definitions, concepts, typologies, taxonomies, models and frameworks for analytical purposes (O’Connor, 1987; Mitroff et al., 1988). Pauchant and Mitroff (1992) maintained that crisis management was strategic in nature, and Smith (1992) proposed there is an inexorable link that binds crisis management and strategic management. Thart et al. (1993) offered that, under conditions of crisis, administrative decision-making becomes centralised. Smith and Sipika (1993) explored the wider ramifications of including turnaround strategies within the planning process rather than limiting their use to the marketing and financial elements of a company’s strategy. They proposed a 7Cs model of crisis management which regulates the flow and format of information to the media, made up of Culture, Communication, Contingency planning, Control, Configuration, Cost, and systems Coupling and Complexity.

Mitroff et al. (1989) suggested that crisis-free and crisis-prone firms differed in
their structures and activities to prevent and minimise the damage from potential crises. Shrivastava (1993) and Reilly (1993) found that the structures associated with crisis-free firms included formal crisis management actions, audits and policies to forecast potential crisis occurrence, and a well-developed crisis-sensing-and-diagnosis structural component to ensure that potential problems did not escalate into more harmful outcomes. Their responses included managing internal and external information flows, including communication with the media and stakeholders. Pauchant and Mitroff (1992) proposed that crisis-prone firms tended to develop a series of faulty organizational assumptions and defence mechanisms concerning their vulnerability to crisis situations. These included the fallacy that the firm’s size would protect it, another firm would rescue it, well-managed companies did not have crises, crisis management cost too much, it was not possible to prepare for crises and crises only happened to others. A range of denial mechanisms accompanied these assumptions. Much of the crisis literature (for example, Thart et al. (1993), Campbell (1999), Arpan and Pompper (2003), Tyler (2005) and Kersten (2005)), suggests systematic, multi-discipline and polyvocal organizational response methods and models to deal with crises, and offer potentially valuable tools for examining tourism crises.

2.10. Crisis Management: Models for Tourism

As noted earlier, Faulkner (above, page 52) wrote extensively about disaster and crisis in tourism. In 2001, with Russell, he published a simple model to distinguish between the two conditions. They argued that, together, disaster and crisis
epitomised chaos phenomena, in which systems are inherently complex and unstable, a phenomenon dealt with earlier in this chapter. They further posited that the link between the two conditions and entrepreneurial behaviour “can be described in terms of a two-fold relationship involving opportunities and changes” (2001, p. 337). As the former USA President, John F. Kennedy (1959), noted, the Chinese use two brush strokes to write the word “crisis” – one stroke represents danger, the other opportunity. “In a crisis, be aware of the danger – but recognise the opportunity,” he said.

Faulkner’s generic model for disaster management had been in development for some time (Faulkner, 1999) and when published as “Towards a framework for tourism disaster management” in *Tourism Management* in 2001, two years after submission, was timely in the context of the events of September 11. The framework established three points: 1, tourism destinations everywhere are certain to experience a disaster at some point; 2, few destinations have properly developed disaster management plans to cope, and 3, a limited amount of systematic research has been undertaken in this field. The paper set definitive, tourism-specific distinctions between disaster and crisis and assessed through the literature generic crises management strategies and models and community stages of response to a disaster. Faulkner examined a range of insights from disaster events, adapted key considerations used by practiced disaster plans in real events and analysed plans that had been developed by other researchers (for example, Young & Montgomery, 1998). His tourism disaster management framework (*Figure 4*) is the result of this investigation and continues to be a touchstone in this area of research.
The definitions applied in his paper were adapted from other articles.
Faulkner’s tourism disaster management framework identifies six phases within which he proposed a set of responses and associated strategies. His first reference to the media is in what he termed the prodromal stage, a preliminary stage when it is apparent that a disaster is imminent. It was at this point that the media were to be warned by industry of a disaster. His next reference to any media activity is in the post-crisis recovery response which recommends a media communication strategy, so avoiding any interaction at all with the media during the periods in between, a gap which this research finds provides an opportunity for tourism to act. In the same issue of *Tourism Management*, Faulkner and Vikulov (2001) published a case study post-mortem of a tourism disaster in the Australian regional town of Katherine, thereby illustrating the potential contribution the plan could make to disaster preparedness and to assist in testing and refining the generic disaster management model.

Ritchie (2004, p. 674) proposes three stages of disaster management (*Figure 5*) to help destinations limit the severity of change induced by crises, namely:

1. Prevention and planning: proactive planning and strategy formulation and scanning to planning;

2. Strategic implementation: strategic evaluation and strategic control, crisis communication and control, resource management, understanding and collaborating with stakeholders; and

3. Resolution, evaluation and feedback: resolution and normality; organisation learning and feedback
Ritchie applies the same disaster phases as Faulkner’s model, but is more explicit in recommending crisis communication and control in the emergency and intermediate phases when a crisis is in its full stages. He advocates control over crisis communication, development of short and long term strategies and the appointment of a spokesperson.

The World Tourism Organisation [WTO] developed a media-focused crisis guide for the tourism industry which is distilled into three stages: before, during and...
immediately after (WTO, 2001). The first stage is in anticipation of the crisis, common with stages discussed by Faulkner (2001) and Ritchie (2004). The second advises that the first 24-hours of a crisis are crucial for the travel industry and proposes a comprehensive information management and media liaison “to do” list for tourism operators. The third proposes a detailed recovery strategy utilising the media. The three models discussed identify the crucial phases of a crisis in which tourism needs to engage with the media.

The Pacific Asia Travel Association [PATA] devised a four-stage crisis management plan called The Four Rs of Crisis Management (*Figure 6*), the first two stages of which advocate preparation and the second two deal with response and recovery (PATA, 2003a). A media communications strategy is included in the post-event response stage which is to address the immediate aftermath of the event “when everything is at its most chaotic” (p. 10). The plan recognises that a destination attracts increased media coverage as a result of a crisis: “If handled properly this publicity is good publicity and will ensure a shorter recovery phase by instilling confidence in all stakeholders and customers” (p. 12).

*Figure 6: The Four R’s of Crisis Management (PATA, 2003a)*
Further advice for tourism came from Beirman (2003c, p. 1) who singled out the International Air Transport Association’s [IATA] “well honed set of crisis management contingency plans and a highly professional and skilled team of crisis management experts available to assist all its airline members”. Its media application was minimal, however it focused on safety and security aspects as well as involving stakeholders during a crisis.

Gurtner (2006) observes that the tourism industry has been shown through history to be fickle, and that no destination is immune to crisis conditions (p. 65). Risk management strategies may not always be able to prevent the negative consequences associated with a hazard and immediate response efforts are more effective when deliberate and calculated, rather than purely reactive. She noted that afflicted destinations appeared to recover faster when there was cooperation and integration between government, industry, media and the host community. Baxter and Bowen (2004, p. 72) commented that a good crisis contingency plan closely linked with the media was vital for the tourism industry, saying that bemoaning sensational media responses was inadequate “because that is how the media covers its commercial obligations. A sharp, accurate, timely and responsive counter…may at least partly balance the equation before the fires of sensationalism cause unnecessary damage to domestic and international tourism markets”. They noted that tourism is faced with the threat of the growth of instant news and global media. The above models depict an orderly, systemic approach to the plight of the tourism industry and its management of media in times of crisis. They compartmentalise tourism’s media actions in the context of crisis.
Fink (1986), however, sees the crisis environment as a less linear system. His model suggested a four-phase anatomy (Figure 7), but also noted that, due to the nature of crises, “chaos” may be a more accurate depiction of a crisis from an individual perspective. In distilling the essential nature of crisis situations, Fink (p. 20) recognised they were characterised by “fluid, unstable, dynamic” situations, more closely in tune with Chaos Theory dimensions. His model (Figure 8) depicted crisis cycles in a manner similar to Lorenz’s attractor model. He added that the role of the media in crisis management strategies can be crucial to such an extent that it might make the difference between whether or not a difficult situation evolves into a crisis.

**Figure 7: What one crisis cycle may look like (Fink, 1986)**

**Figure 8: What crisis cycles often look or feel like to the individual (Fink, 1986)**
The models discussed identify generic crisis conditions for tourism that develop with a disaster and set out logical strategies in phases to deal with the resulting conditions. Elements from each were pertinent to the four case studies in this research – such as in Faulkner’s (2001) Emergency and Intermediate phases, aspects of Ritchie’s (2004) Strategic Implementation phase and in PATA’s (2003a) holistic four-stages approach – but the conditions of the case study crises, particularly their abrupt initial impact, did not fit the models’ parameters and the media’s role was only minimally factored into the models. So aspects of the phases of crisis development applied by these modellers have been adapted to form the six phases into which the case study crises have been analysed. As the research focuses on the role of chaos within the continuum of a crisis, Fink’s (1986) modelling of a dynamic, fluid situation represents the less linear nature of that phase.

2.11. Key Terms of Discussion

As already noted, the field of disaster and crisis research within the tourism discipline is relatively recent and there is, therefore, a developing stream of meanings for the key terms of “crisis” and “disaster” in the literature, indeed they are often used interchangeably. Generically, tourism is a modern term describing everything connected with travel and in 1994 its then peak bodies, the World Tourism Organisation and the United Nations, collaborated on a definition for it as “the activities of persons travelling to, and staying, in places outside of their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other
purposes” (WTO-UN, 1994, p. 5). This was later revised (WTO, 1997, p. 3) to define the tourist as “visitor” as mentioned earlier in this chapter.

According to the Chief of Communications of the World Tourism Organisation,

...we define a crisis as any unexpected event that affects traveller confidence in a destination and interferes with its ability to continue operating normally

- Luhrman, 2004, p. 1

The literature shows that crises are understood in the general business environment as cyclical economic problems, a process that negatively influences the development of a company to a considerable extent, either endangering the affected company or making its survival impossible (Krystek, 1987; Schulten, 1995; Glaesser, 2003). The assessment of a crisis situation should focus on whether the organisation still has the ability to achieve important corporate goals, significantly those that exert considerable influence over the future survival of the company.

Pauchant and Mitroff (1992, p. 15) believe that a crisis is a:

...disruption that physically affects a system as a whole and threatens its basic assumptions, its subjective sense of self, its existential core.

Selbst (1978, cited in Faulkner, 2001, p. 136) defines a crisis as:
...any action or failure to act that interferes with an organisation’s ongoing functions, the acceptable attainment of its objectives, its viability or survival, or that has a detrimental personal effect as perceived by the majority of its employees, clients or constituents.

Gee and Gain (1986, p. 3) extend a wider definition of crisis beyond organisations in the tourism industry to the whole destination:

*The term ‘tourism crisis’ is now being used with increasing frequency by destinations whose economy has suffered from an immediate drop in visitor arrivals...*

Sonmez et al. (1994, p. 2.2) define it in more concrete terms:

...any occurrence which can threaten the normal operations and conduct of tourism related businesses; damage a tourist destination’s overall reputation for safety, attractiveness and comfort by negatively affecting visitors’ perceptions of that destination; and, in turn, cause downturn in the local travel and tourism economy, and interrupt the continuity of business operations for the local travel and tourism industry, by the reduction in tourist arrivals and expenditures.

Faulkner (2001, p. 136) considers the principal distinction between what can be termed a “crisis” and a “disaster” to be the extent to which the situation is
attributable to the organisation itself, or can be described as originating outside the organisation. Thus, he says, a “crisis” describes a situation:

...where the root cause of an event is, to some extent, self-inflicted through such problems as inept management structures and practices or a failure to adapt to change.

while he suggests a “disaster” can be defined as:

...where an enterprise . . . is confronted with sudden unpredictable catastrophic changes over which it has little control

Miller and Ritchie (2003 p. 151) point out that the implication of whether a situation can be described as a crisis or a disaster is crucial in designing response options and also the ability to reflect on the situation and make changes subsequent to negative events. Their distinction between the two is that a crisis implies the need for change to prevent the situation occurring again, while a disaster requires responses to limit the impacts should there be a repeat occurrence.

For the purposes of this thesis, a disaster is an event which triggers a negative outcome, the conditions of which constitute a crisis. Within the life of the crisis is a period of chaos.

There is a range of definitions of the term “crisis management” and while no
standard one gets universal support, there is acceptance of its subdivision into two main activities, crisis prevention and crisis coping (Glaesser, 2003, p. 12). Crisis prevention should be understood as preparation for uncertain future damage or negative events. In contrast to crisis coping, Glaesser writes, crisis prevention is characterised by continual occupation with the subject in two activities, crisis precaution and crisis avoidance, which don’t necessarily temporally succeed each other. Crisis coping has connotations of acceptance of a condition and is suddenly initiated; it portrays an active and intended exertion of influence over the situation that can be carried out by the affected organisation or others (Ibid., p. 14). The critical conditions to cause “crisis management” to be implemented can be traced back to the onset of certain “negative events” such as those cited at the start of this chapter. These events are so described for their potential to interfere with the normal flow of the organisation’s environment, Glaesser notes (Ibid., p. 23).

2.12. Summary

This review has separately assessed the literature on the core subjects of the research: tourism, the media, chaos theory, disaster and crisis. It has reviewed the operating environments of the two relevant industries and then analysed the research on how their operational inter-dependency is affected by disaster conditions. The literature review sets the theoretical context for the research by connecting the prevailing themes and, in particular, the susceptibility of tourism to crisis and to negative media reporting as a result of the crisis. While the role of the media in tourism is clearly highlighted, the literature reveals a paucity of research
into the effective interplay between the two industries in times of crisis. There is less discussion of the reporting or publishing environment – in terms of situational difficulties for reporters and editors – during times of crisis, just as there is little first-hand analysis of the crisis environment as experienced by the tourism operator within a crisis-affected region. The literature review found no academic study from the media perspective of the effects of its reportage on the tourism industry. With some exceptions, the literature carries a reflective perspective that is expected when researchers are removed in both time and place from the crisis location and have little if any experience of the realities of contemporary, on-the-spot media coverage. This study, which brings the media perspective more fully into the frame, will hopefully cast further light on the crucial interdependency of media and tourism and offer ways of improving the often fractious relationship in times of crisis.

In essence, the review has set the scene for the ensuing chapters. It has established the tourism industry as a set of systems made up of tourists, their generating region, the destination region and the methods of travel they use to get there. It has outlined the paradigm for crisis management that has emerged from the analysis of how the tourism industry has acted during natural disasters, terrorist attacks, financial crisis and crime in the past few decades up to now. The news routines of the media have been described, illustrating the process of story selection, story development and distribution in a digitally-enhanced global media system. Crisis and crisis management definitions and models have been canvassed and the concept of Chaos Theory has been introduced as a means of developing a deeper
understanding of the environment in which both the media and tourism operate when a crisis strikes. The review has shown that the relationship between media and tourism in these circumstances is characterised by antagonism and mistrust and underscores the need for a better working relationship based on transparency and honesty. The four case studies that examine the evolution of four crises in forensic detail will illustrate this relationship in action. The next chapter outlines the research approach and methodology used for the case studies.
CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH APPROACH AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. The Research Approach

The philosophical basis for this thesis is the researcher’s quest to understand the core reality of a problem so solutions can be proposed. To do this, he has gathered and analysed data and information to build knowledge which can be applied to the solution. The guiding epistemology is interpretivism, the methodological framework is predominantly qualitative and the research strategies are case studies and ethnography involving participant observation. The analysis provides a deeper understanding of the way the media and tourism interact during times of crisis which hopefully can lead to an improved and more effective relationship in the future.

In order to fully understand the conditions affecting media and tourism during crisis, the study begins with four mini-studies, or vignettes, which illustrate the typical operations of the sectors. Then four significant global disasters are used as case studies in which the operating practices of the two industries were transformed from the normal give-and-take information exchange into a more dangerous dynamic of implied cause and effect. In other words, the tourism industry sees the media’s coverage as amplifying the profile of a disaster in the minds of the public thereby having a negative impact on their plans to travel.
This project started some months before any of the events that became the case studies happened. But in a comparatively short space of history, foot and mouth disease broke out in the United Kingdom, the terrorist attacks occurred in the United States, bombs devastated the Indonesian resort centre of Bali and the SARS epidemic broke out in China and spread to dozens of nations. All four events generated wide media coverage and all had a negative influence on the tourism industry. In order to assess media and tourism and the role of the former in damaging the business of the latter during crisis, if in fact it did, the data pertaining to the dynamics of each of the four cases was collected. The continuum of each of the cases needed to be understood so that the complete picture of the nature of the incidents could be described. The media instinctively knew these were good stories – consistent with the news values criteria outlined in the literature review – so they published, broadcast and televised them to feed every form of their traditional and new information channels. The nature of the confluence of the media and tourism industries in each of the four incidents is the theme of the case studies. Case study research methodology was chosen for this project because its parameters allow wide research of a subject to include people, critical incidents and various settings (Patton, 2002, p. 439).

3.2. Philosophical traditions

The considerable breadth and depth of the fact-finding exercise involved in building the four case studies resulted in two disparate discipline streams – journalism and tourism – being investigated under the canopy of a crisis. As
discussed earlier, the two disciplines and their respective industries co-exist inter-dependently in normal times so they are not strangers to each other. However, in times of crisis their alliances are strained if not broken altogether. It was necessary to seek a research methodology to understand: (1) in a crisis, (2) the operating practices of the media, and (3) the resulting effects on tourism. The two industry dynamics, tourism and media, at play within the third dynamic of the crisis posed considerable challenges in information gathering, collation, sorting, assessing and reassembling. However, the rich nature and amount of accessible data ultimately guided the final choice to use case study methodology with specific use of documentary evidence and rich ethnographic narratives.

The two major traditions of research in the social sciences are the positivist – where research methods used in the natural sciences are applied to social sciences – and the interpretivist – where the actions of people are interpreted in the context of their world. Quantitative approaches to research are linked to positivism and qualitative approaches to interpretivism (Williamson et al., 2000). Positivist case study research involves controlled observations, measurement of quantitative data, deductions and replicability (Lee, 1989). Interpretivist, ethnographic case study research emphasises natural settings and how individual participants perceive events and interactions within those settings (Williamson et al., 2000), with inquirers focusing on the evolution of rich, complex descriptions in order to understand social phenomena and their interaction within the context of the research. Both the interpretivist and positivist forms of ethnographic study are used to “elucidate aspects of people’s
lives and make sense of social and/or cultural phenomena” (Saule, 2000, p. 159). Where the positivist ethnographer will develop experimental conditions to study behaviour, culture, community and identity, the interpretivist will analyse the actions and behaviour of people in their natural environment.

In the positivist mode, the link between cause and effect is searched for within the practice of scientific research, with the resulting knowledge based on empirical evidence derived from what can be objectively observed and experienced (Dick, 1991, p. 232). In the interpretivist mode, Darke and Shanks (2000) note that the value of an explanation is judged by the extent to which it allows others to understand the phenomena and to what degree it makes sense of that being studied. Positivists see the world in terms of observable events and facts which can be measured. Interpretivists see themselves as dealing with multiple realities which are socially and individually constructed. The interpretivist approach was adopted for this research so that the wide range of influencing factors could be incorporated into the case studies.

3.3. Guided by Qualitative Inquiry

“Thick” and “rich” are the qualities of description deemed to be the foundation for qualitative analysis and reporting, taking the reader into the setting being described (Geertz, 1973; Denzin, 2001; Patton, 2002). Patton says classic qualitative studies share the capacity to open up a world to the reader through rich, detailed, and concrete descriptions of people and places to help understand
the phenomenon studied and to enable them to make their own interpretations about meanings and significance (2002, p. 438). Qualitative findings grow out of three kinds of data collection, summarised by Patton as interviews, observations and documents (Patton 2002, p. 4). “Observations” include:

Field work descriptions of activities, behaviours, actions, conversations, interpersonal interactions, organisational or community processes or any other aspect of observable human experience. Data consist of field notes: rich, detailed descriptions, including the context within which the observations were made.

The fieldwork undertaken for this study and contained in the four vignettes represents descriptions of activities, behaviours and actions, organisational and community processes and aspects of observable human experience. It includes data made up of rich detailed descriptions drawn from the context in which the observations were made.

Patton lists under his definition of “documents”:

Written materials and other documents from organisational, clinical or programs records; memoranda and correspondence; official publications and reports; personal diaries, letters, artistic works, photographs and memorabilia; and written responses to open-ended surveys, newspapers and other media. Data consist of excerpts from
documents captured in a way that records and preserves context.

The content analysis for this study draws from the data sources documents category as outlined by Patton, mainly newspapers and other media, official publications and reports and photographs.

3.4 The Vignettes

The four vignettes provided in Chapter 4 use content analysis and participant observation to look at media practice in order to benchmark “normal” operating procedures. The first two vignettes present the results of surveys initiated by the researcher to demonstrate how the media goes about its work. In the first example of media practice, a typical month of news broadcast and published in a single market (Perth, Western Australia) was collected and then coded and analysed to compare levels of “alarming” or “non-alarming” news in a “normal” news environment. In the second example, coverage by all forms of media of two outbreak of dengue fever in the tourism city of Cairns in Far North Queensland was recorded, tracking the extent of coverage and the negative and positive nature of stories. Both surveys were devised for this research and used similar methodologies.

The researcher’s key words and parameters were used to search metropolitan and regional media databases. The search results are summaries and/or full articles of the stories that relate to the search terms – who said what, when,
where and how. For the Perth news survey assessing the spread of content in a “normal” news environment, the search was for a list of programmed matter (stories covered) in chronological order drawing on major Perth television, radio and print media. For the Dengue Fever media analysis, the media database search process was two-fold: first, a chronological list of print and electronic media coverage of Dengue Fever (i.e., mentions in the media), and, second, a detailed breakdown of this media in terms of spokespeople, key messages, tone and focus of comment. The full report prepared for this second task is in Appendix 10.

The final two vignettes take a different approach. The first involves the researcher as a resident observer consuming the media coverage in the tourism city of Cairns in 2006 during Cyclone Larry, one of the largest and most destructive tropical weather systems to hit the Australian east coast in the first decades of the 21st century. The second, which outlines the newspaper editing environment in Hong Kong in the lead up to the Tiananmen Square demonstrations in 1989 and the events of the military crackdown on the night of June 3-4, is included to demonstrate the dynamics of a newsroom as the editor (the researcher) and staff deal with the many uncertainties involved in covering a “real time” crisis. Both focus on media operations over condensed periods of time.

Patton (2002, p. 265) points out that the first and most fundamental distinction that differentiates observational strategies concerns the extent to which the
observer will be a participant in the setting being studied. “The extent of participation is a continuum that varies from complete immersion in the setting as full participant to complete separation from the setting as spectator, with a great deal of variation along the continuum between these two end points” (p. 265). Both vignettes involve the researcher in variations of the participant observation approach. As Denzin (1978, p. 183) notes, full participant observation constitutes an omnibus field strategy which “simultaneously combines document analysis, interviewing of respondents and informants, direct participation and observation, and introspection”. In the Cyclone Larry vignette, the researcher was a media-experienced observer caught in the full extent of a devastating cyclone in situ as a resident and observing the full continuum of the media’s coverage as the storm hit and in the aftermath. As participant observer he was “fully engaged in experiencing the setting while at the same time observing and talking with other participants about whatever is happening” (Patton, 2002, p. 266). In the Tiananmen Square vignette, the researcher was a full and direct participant and observer as the newspaper editor directing his staff as a major political crisis unfolded.

As a participant observer in both incidents the researcher is able to deliver rich and detailed descriptions based on proximity to the incident, as a media operative in the case of Tiananmen Square and as a link between media and tourism in the case of Cyclone Larry. This involvement enabled descriptions in extensive detail, providing a rare insider’s account of the events.
3.5. Adoption of a Case Study Research Approach

Case study research is extensively used in many fields of social inquiry because, compared with other methods, the strategy is open to providing insights and rich understanding about the event being studied (Rowley, 2002) and as a means of developing an understanding of social phenomena in their natural setting (Darke and Shanks, 2000).

As Stake (1975, p. 5) stated:

*It is widely believed that case studies are useful in the study of human affairs because they are down-to-earth and attention-holding.*

But Hamel, et al. (1993, p.1) have questions:

*But is the case study a method? Or is it an approach? Case studies employ various methods. These can include interviews, participant observation and field studies. Their goals are to reconstruct and analyse a case from a sociological perspective. It would thus be more appropriate to define the case study as an approach, although the term case method suggests that it is indeed a method.*
This interpretation is rejected by Stake (2000, p. 435):

*Case study is not a methodological choice but a choice of what is to be studied... We could study it analytically or holistically, entirely by repeated measures or hermeneutically, organically or culturally, and by mixed methods – but we concentrate, at least for the time being, on the case.*

In other terms, a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident (Yin, 1994, p.13) and the method is most often connected primarily with qualitative data (Darke and Shanks, 2000) using multiple sources of evidence. Data collection techniques typically used include interviews, observations, questionnaires and document and text analysis.

Case studies are units of analysis and when well constructed are holistic and context sensitive, two of the primary strategic themes of qualitative inquiry, with data organised by specific cases for in-depth study and comparison (Patton, 2002). Case studies can be undertaken of a variety of subjects ranging from individuals, groups, neighbourhoods, programs, organisations, cultures, regions, or nation-states, indeed anything that can be defined as a “specific, unique, bounded system” (Stake, 2000, p. 436). The purpose is to gather comprehensive, systematic and in-depth information about each case of interest.
and the analysis process results in a product: a case study, which can refer to either the process of analysis or the product of analysis, or both. “Though a scholarly or evaluation project may consist of several cases and include cross-case comparisons, the analyst’s first and foremost responsibility consists of doing justice to each individual case and all else depends on that,” (Patton, 2002, p. 449). Case data consists of all the information the researcher has about each case: interview data, observations, the documentary data (e.g. program records or files, newspaper clippings), impressions and statements of others about the case and contextual information – in effect all the information one has accumulated about each particular case goes into that case study. These diverse sources make up the raw data for case analysis and can amount to a large accumulation of material (Patton, 2002, p. 449).

3.6. Designing a Case Study Research Approach

A case study is expected to catch the complexity of a single case. The single leaf, even a single toothpick, has unique complexities – but rarely will we care enough to submit it to case study. We study a case when it itself is of very special interest. We look for the detail of interaction with its context. Case study is the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case…coming to understand its activity within important circumstances.

- Stake, 1995, p.xi.

Darke and Shanks (2000, p. 96) propose a comprehensive literature analysis to
allow understanding of the existing body of research, to position the proposed research within the context of that literature and to frame the research question/s accordingly. Case study research also requires selection of suitable data collection methods and data analysis strategies to ensure that the reliability and veracity of the evidence collected is established, that the process by which results are arrived at is clear and that the validity of the findings can be determined. Yin (1994) proposed that case study findings are strengthened by the convergence of information from a variety of sources, providing multiple measures of the same phenomenon.

The case study approach adopted for this research was structured to collect and organise data from the critical incidents in the four cited events in order of when they happened. A wide range of sources was used, including academic papers, tourism industry publications and press releases, newspapers and global news sources such as CNN and the British Broadcasting Corporation [BBC]. Daily monitoring of tourism industry news sites and subscription to tourism industry e-mail news services provided additional data. Implementation of a longitudinal method of primary and secondary data gathering further strengthened the depth and breadth of information used in the research. The chronological approach is also reflected in the narrative order for each case study, the story told from beginning to end, enabling focus on the development of each aspect in context. A qualitative study also allows for individual case analysis and cross-case analyses. Each critical incident has been thus analysed and subsequent comparative analysis enables identification of common or diverse perspectives.
3.7. Use of a Single-Case and Multiple-Case Design

In order to analyse the effects of media coverage on the tourism industry, a single event, or case, was not considered wide-reaching enough to generate a body of information from which to draw meaningful conclusions. Yin (1994) says single-case designs are usually appropriate where the case represents a critical event, where it is extreme or unique, where it is a revelatory case or where the research is exploratory. But as Darke and Shanks (2000) believe, the advantage of multiple-case designs is to allow cross-case analysis and comparison, and the investigation of a particular phenomenon in diverse settings.

Multiple cases open the spectrum of information to yield similar results, i.e. through literal replication, or to produce contrasting results for predictable reasons, i.e. through theoretical replication (Yin, 1994). Eisenhardt (1989) suggests that between four and 10 cases are desirable for theory building and both single and multiple case designs can be adopted for exploratory research. The tourism-media study has opted for four major case studies.

3.8. Construction of the Case Studies

Yin (1994) noted that a major practical difficulty of analysis of case study evidence is dealing with the amount and variety of data collected and that a general data analysis strategy is an important part of case study design. The
initial focus for this research drew on a wide range of sources and the voluminous case data was sorted into comprehensive, primary resource packages. The collection of data had an initial broad focus on crises with an impact on the tourism industry and involved an extensive search through the crisis literature, with search parameters refining results to target tourism. The temporal focus was wide ranging at the start and was predicated on a big picture outlook to encompass a variety of crises. The period that the research finally focused on was defined by the four cases because, unexpectedly during the course of the early stages of research, the crises included in the study occurred. The presence and evolution of these crises was impossible to ignore, as was the magnitude of their impact on tourism and current global issues. As concurrent events to the research, the focus and collection of data became an evolving and real-time event resulting in collection of a vast bank of information, giving the data a fresh currency.

For each case study, the respective domestic media sources were combed for relevant news stories that depicted tourism and media activity and effect. For example, in the case of Foot and Mouth Disease, UK media outlets were targeted, ranging from the prominent media, such as BBC and The Guardian, to the populist media such as The Sun. Extensive multi-media website archives provided rich audio, video and text sources that enriched the case study narrative. Once an information bank had been developed based on the domestic media outlets, the data mining shifted to the international realm to draw in further information, with a heavy reliance on special report sections built up by
the likes of CNN and the BBC. Tourism industry news sites were subscribed to for the three years in which the case study crises occurred and media monitoring services were employed.

As each crisis concluded with the start of recovery activity, the case records were closed and final case study narratives were written for each of the four events. Research and data discovery could have continued but it was necessary owing to time constraints to limit the focus to the crisis period and immediate after-effects. As this study supports, and Darke and Shanks (2000, p. 101) acknowledge, case study research can be difficult to write up due to the volume of data collected and problems with analysing evidence. Regardless, it is widely believed narratives should be presented as an interesting and convincing story, engagingly composed and able to entice the reader’s interest.

As Patton (2002, p. 450) notes, the basic unit of analysis of a comparative study remains the distinct cases, and the credibility of the overall findings is linked to the quality of the individual cases. Each of the case studies in this research stands alone, allowing the reader to understand it as a unique, holistic event. The case study chapters use the same structure and framework for presenting the data. At a later point in the analysis, it was then possible to compare and contrast cases; however, initially each case is represented and interpreted as an idiosyncratic manifestation of the phenomenon of interest.
3.9. Analysis of the Case Study Data

The goal of analysis in interpretivist studies is to produce an understanding of the contexts of the phenomena and the interactions between them. The interpretive researcher presents an assessment of the actions of others and the strength of the ensuing analysis comes from how the available data is interpreted (Darke and Shanks, 2000, p.100). Myers (1998) discusses some modes of analysis associated with interpretive research, including hermeneutics, narrative (a tale or recital of facts) and metaphor (a way of understanding or experiencing one thing in terms of another). Statistical generalisation is not the goal of case study research as cases, by their disparate nature, are not sampling units. Rather, theoretical or analytical generalisation is appropriate where case study results are used to develop theory or to test previously developed theory (Yin, 1994; Cavaye, 1996). Interpretive case study research is useful for four types of generalisations: development of concepts; generation of theory; drawing of specific implications; and contribution of rich insight (Walsham, 1995). This research focuses on the latter two outcomes.

Researcher bias can be an issue in the collection and analysis of data. Two types of bias are: the impact of the researcher’s presence on-site and the researcher’s own beliefs, values and prior assumptions which may unduly influence the analysis of case study evidence (Darke and Shanks, 2000, p. 100). Interpretive researchers acknowledge the subjectivity of their analysis in that their predispositions, beliefs, values and interests shape their investigations. This
subjectivity is seen as a positive in providing the rich narratives, particularly when the perspective of the researcher is understood and accounted for. Effects of bias can be counteracted by using multiple sources of evidence to provide multiple instances from multiple sources.

In this research, a wide range of sources was used including books, periodicals, journals, newspapers, websites and industry commentary. Through a process of inductive analysis, the researcher sought answers through interactions with the data that were not based on a pre-determined framework of investigation. In devising strategies to analyse, compare and interpret the case studies, it was decided to utilise qualitative content analysis to identify patterns and themes.

Content analysis sometimes refers to searching text for recurring words or themes. More generally, however, content analysis is used to refer to any qualitative data reduction and sense-making effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings, patterns and relationships (Patton, 2002, p. 453). The core meanings found through content analysis are often called patterns (descriptive findings) or themes (a more categorical form). Alternatively, the process of searching for patterns or themes may be distinguished respectively as pattern analysis or theme analysis. The analytical process is meant to organise and elucidate the story revealed by the data. Indeed a skilled analyst is able to allow the data to tell its story (Ibid).

Amidst the wealth of data collected, the focus remained on telling the story of
each case. Through this approach, the timeline of each crisis emerged and was refined to add structure to the data and to aid the ultimate goal of analysis, that is, to identify what the crisis did, what the media did and what tourism did during the crisis.

Guba (1978) recognises the difficulty of the task of converting field notes and observations into systematic categories and admits that no infallible procedure exists. Guba (p. 53) argues that by adopting a sequential approach to analysis, looking at points of convergence and divergence for observations will allow for:

a) recurring patterns and themes to be identified to show both similarities and differences within the case studies; and,

b) these patterns and themes to then be fleshed out to connect with other existing or new information.

Patton (2002, p. 467) notes that qualitative analysis requires both creative and critical faculties to make considered judgments about what is significant and meaningful in the data. He further observes that qualitative analysts do not have statistical tests to advise when an observation or pattern is significant, so they need to draw on intelligence, experience and judgment, taking seriously responses from the studied environment. In the words of Scriven (1993, p.71) :

*If we are interested in real significance, we ignore little differences...We ignore them because, although they are very likely real, they are very unlikely to hold up in replications. Fred Mosteller, the great applied*
statistician, was fond of saying that he did not care much for statistically significant differences, he was more interested in interocular differences, the differences that hit us between the eyes.

In lieu of statistical significance, qualitative findings are judged by their substantive significance. The analyst makes an argument for substantive significance in presenting findings and conclusions, but readers and users of the analysis will make their own value judgements about significance (Patton, 2002, p. 467).

3.10. Interpretation of the Research Findings

Much qualitative inquiry stops with the presentation of case data and cross-case descriptive comparisons aimed at enhancing understanding rather than explaining “why?” (Patton, 2002, p. 478). In this study, the researcher interprets the descriptive findings of the case studies in order to investigate the wider ramifications of the media-tourism relationship during times of crisis. Within-case analysis allowed for the identification of salient characteristics pertaining to actions of media and tourism during crisis. Subsequent cross-case analysis provided for shared and different characteristics between media and tourism to be recognised. Together, these two stages of analysis allowed for identification of the ranges of interaction between the two. But importantly, interpretation involved going beyond the descriptive data in order to attach significance to findings, offer explanations and extrapolate lessons and thereby contribute
wider understanding of the chaotic environment developed.

Patton (2002) considers the challenge of qualitative inquiry to be the portrayal of a holistic picture of what the phenomenon is like and to understand the fundamental nature of activities in a specific context. The objective of this research is to gain insight into crisis events on a holistic level in order to put forward a best-practice model of engagement between tourism and media on a holistic level. The pursuit of this objective however, heeds the words of Smith (2000, p.46): Seek models of the world that make sense and whose consequences can be worked out, for “to replace a world you do not understand by a model of a world you do not understand is no advance”. 
CHAPTER 4

THE RESEARCH ENVIRONMENT – MEDIA & TOURISM

The research involves two industries – media and tourism – and in normal circumstances the latter is dependent on the former to convey information about its products and activity to mass audiences, primarily through advertising and special editorial sections. The key role of mainstream media is to report news events, not to act even in good times as a public relations arm of tourism, although there is a co-dependent commercial relationship between them for promotion of tourism destinations and ancillary services. Newspapers, television and online platforms devote regular sections and entire supplements, many in weekend editions, to tourism and travel in which they feature in-depth coverage of destinations, accommodation, transport and attractions as well as monitoring travel trends. These sections are heavily supported by tourism industry advertising and are positive contributors to media revenue as well as being attractors of readership/audience support. But in times of crisis, as noted below, the interdependence is often not favourable to tourism as the media’s priority shifts to cover the nature of an event, the plight of those directly caught up in it and the short to medium term consequences for the affected sector, city or region:

*The media that you have tried to pitch ideas for news stories, the media that toss “perfect” news releases in the trash, the media that never return phone calls. THAT MEDIA will call on you in a crisis. They will probably not telephone in advance. They will show up on your premises - “in your face”.*

*The media, seeing themselves as advocates for the people, can be the principle adversaries in a crisis.*

- Fearn-Banks, 1996, p. 3
The popular media industry’s scope is to serve the full spectrum of its general audience and with rare exception it publishes to reach out to the masses, despite the consequences for industry sectors. Tourism is one of the most vulnerable industries in times of crisis and Lerbinger’s (1997) categorisation (Table 2), adapted to include the case study events, illustrates the levels of exposure.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Specific Environment</th>
<th>Type of Crisis</th>
<th>Example of Crisis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical environment</td>
<td>Natural disaster</td>
<td>Earthquakes; tsunamis; volcano eruption; hurricanes, cyclones and typhoons; floods, fire and tempest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(External)</td>
<td>Technology failure</td>
<td>Rail, sea and air accidents; oil spills; infrastructure faults; venue disaster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Human/social environment</td>
<td>Confrontation</td>
<td>War; labour strikes; environmental and political protests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(External)</td>
<td>Epidemic</td>
<td>Mad cow disease and foot and mouth disease raise concerns of food safety and health problems; SARS epidemic spreads through human contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Malevolence</td>
<td>Terrorist attacks e.g. September 11, Bali Bombing; product tampering; extortion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>War/political conflict</td>
<td>War zones; general or political crime, i.e. government overthrow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management failure</td>
<td>Procedural flaws</td>
<td>Misguided marketing programmes; indifference to customers; tired property and staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Internal)</td>
<td>Skewed values</td>
<td>Prioritisation of economic value over concern for other values (e.g. the environment, etc)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Deception</td>
<td>Reality doesn’t match the marketing message; not value for money; exorbitant “extras” charges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Misconduct</td>
<td>Embezzlement; fraud</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The events in this research fit into the category of human/social environment and are external in nature, fitting into the typology of epidemic and malevolence.
4.1. The Media Operating Environment

In order to set the scene for the case studies that follow, four vignettes are used to illustrate aspects of media coverage from different perspectives. Employing a range of methods including content analysis (vignettes 1 and 2) and participant observation (vignettes 3 and 4) the aim of the vignettes is to be descriptive narratives of the operations of media in normal and abnormal circumstances. They are ethnographic illustrations, not data, and their purpose in the thesis is therefore different. With the demonstration of media coverage as a focus, they do not include the intense factual content that is presented in the four case studies which are the basis for this thesis. They serve as both supplementary and complimentary studies to the major cases and are illustrations of the researcher’s own professional experience of the way in which the media and the news cycle works. They also show the theory of news values in action.

The first vignette is a content analysis of radio, television and newspaper news stories and general items published in a typical, or ordinary, month in Perth, a state capital city in Australia. In comparison to the nature of media activity in reporting the four case studies, the news items in the vignette are pedestrian and non-exceptional but are typical of everyday reporting. The second vignette is a content analysis of the treatment by Australian media of an abnormal situation, namely the outbreak of dengue fever affecting the tourism region of Far North Queensland. This comes under the Epidemic heading in Table 2 above. The analysis reveals
that there was strong media interest in the outbreak in far off tourism generating regions which had implications for the holiday destination.

Vignettes 3 and 4 use participant observation to provide an insider’s view of media’s operations drawn from the researcher’s own professional experience as a media practitioner. In vignette 3, the researcher describes his own experience of the media coverage during Cyclone Larry, the most severe cyclone to hit the Australian mainland in the first decade of the 21st century (this would come under the heading of Natural Disaster in the typology of Table 2). The fourth vignette is the researcher’s first-hand description of newsroom activity during the unfolding of the Tiananmen Square massacre in China, when the researcher was editor of a newspaper in Hong Kong (an event coming under the category of Malevolence in the typology of Table 2). The vignette recounts the reporting and newspaper production challenges of publishing an edition as a major crisis unfolds. The descriptive, first-person study is included because it demonstrates all the elements at play in producing a media product during a crisis.


A look at media coverage from a typical, or ordinary, time can provide insight into everyday media activity and operations. The researcher conducted a media summary analysis for the month of November 2000 with data sourced from the media environment of Perth, Australia, to identify the main news stories featured in major newspapers and broadcast media: The Australian (the national daily), The
Weekend Australian (national Saturday), The West Australian (Perth’s only daily) and The Sunday Times (weekly Sunday); radio 720 ABC (national broadcaster’s Perth outlet) news bulletins and morning shows and 6PR (local commercial outlet) news bulletins and morning shows; and television, Channel 9’s National Nine News and Channel 7’s Seven News. Daily records were accumulated from November 6 to December 1, 2000, the four full working weeks of November, a period selected as being “typical” in light of the absence of major local, national or international incidents or crises that could influence, or skew, the news content.

The purpose of the survey was to categorise the nature of typical media items, thus enabling identification of the degree and pattern of “alarming” reporting. Of a total 26 daily records, data was analysed by categorising headlines and the nature of stories as “alarming” and “non-alarming”. This categorisation was guided by searches for words, or a combination of words, defined as “alarming” in tone. For example, words such as “murder”, “attack” and “danger” were deemed as “alarming”.

Key findings:

- A total of 1609 media stories were recorded for the period with, on average, 61 stories recorded each day.
- Of the 1609 stories, 388 were categorised as “alarming”.
- On average, of 61 stories recorded each day, 15 (25%) were deemed as “alarming” and the remaining 47 (75%) “non-alarming”. 

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An obvious pattern of reporting either “alarming” or “non-alarming” content was not apparent during the monitored period (*Figure 9*). Similarly, no peak or excessively prolonged periods of either “alarming” or “non-alarming” coverage were apparent. The most extended period of constantly higher than average “non-alarming” news was followed by the most extended period of constantly higher than average “alarming” news. No one day of the week regularly recorded higher than average “alarming” stories with only one of the 26 daily records (Friday, 17/11/2000) indicating excessively disparate results with more than 90% “non-alarming” stories. No news item during the period amounted to a “significant incident” of “crisis” magnitude or warranted heavy or saturation coverage, indicating the absence of influence by any one item or theme and further justifying the period as reflecting “typical” reporting.

*Figure 9: Number of alarming v non-alarming stories generated each day in the Perth media, November 2000.*
Even in a period classified as “typical” and devoid of any sizable incidents or crises, the coverage indicated 25% of news content was “alarming”, compared to 75% “non-alarming”. The purpose of this vignette is to illustrate what makes “news” in a “normal” operating environment devoid of major critical events. It shows that ordinary news already has a definite focus on “alarming” stories, and therefore, during periods of crisis, the levels of alarming news will increase even further. Therefore, it could be suggested that during periods in which alarming content increases, i.e. crises, the alarming nature of news coverage also increases and adds to an already substantial proportion of alarming content.


The preceding survey focused on a normal period and this second survey covers a period of crisis in a tourism-sensitive region. The outbreak of dengue fever in Cairns, Australia, between October 2002 and March 2003 generated more than 1100 mentions in electronic media and newspapers around Australia, according to a media study overseen by the researcher (Advance Cairns, 2003a). The methodology involved the researcher submitting key words or phrases to be found in print and electronic media searches of major Australian metropolitan and regional media published during the designated term. The analysis scrutinised how the media handled the dengue fever outbreak in North Queensland with a detailed breakdown of all spokespeople, how often they were quoted, dissemination of key messages, and an indication of how the media received them. Editorial comment was also studied, reviewing how the print and electronic media handled the issue,
with differences and similarities highlighted. The report (see Appendix 10) includes the tone (positive/negative/neutral) with which each comment was made, where it originated, when the issue was raised in the media and how favourably it was received. Radio and TV programs featured the dengue outbreak 845 times and the print media 264 times between October 1 and May 5. The bulk of the coverage centred on the rising toll of infected people with many radio bulletins containing little else on the issue. Coverage was at its peak during the March 7-14 period and progressively diminished. A small number of media items focused on the effects on the tourism industry of Cairns, a renowned tourist destination. It is notable in terms of the volume of mentions it received that the dengue fever outbreak and subsequent coverage occurred concurrent with the second Iraq war and the early stages of the SARS epidemic media coverage.

Figure 10: Media treatment of Dengue Fever outbreak between October 1 and May 5, 2003 showing the range of normal through to negative (Advance Cairns, 2003a).
The report highlights:

- the speed with which the disease seemed to spread caused alarm in certain sections of the media with several reports claiming the outbreak was likely to spread beyond Cairns;
- the predominantly neutral nature of media coverage (Figure 10);
- spokesman Dr Jeffrey Hanna (Tropical Public Health Unit [TPHU]) was highly prominent and provided numerous updates to media on the number of people being infected. He was quoted a total of 71 times during the monitored period;
- TPHU had nine spokespeople generating comment on the issue;
- media coverage peaked on March 12 with 71 electronic and 10 print media mentions;
- the highest numbers of mentions in electronic media were Cairns local radio’s John Mackenzie (36 times), national television program Sky News (22), Cairns ABC Radio’s Richard Dinnen (18) and national television program The Today Show (10); and,
- the highest numbers of mentions in the print media were Townsville Bulletin (65), The Cairns Post (25), The Age (19), The Australian (8), Border Watch (8), and The Courier-Mail (8).

The analysis reveals who said what and where they were quoted, across most first and second tier media outlets in Australia. It is not possible to quantify the flow-on effects of this media coverage on tourism destination decision-making without
further research. However, only a small number of media items focused on tourism in Cairns: several such items expressed a negative position only to have it countered by either Tropical Tourism North Queensland’s spokesman Bill Calderwood or the Tropical Public Health Unit’s (TPHU) Dr Ross Spark who both played down the severity of the outbreak’s effect on tourism. It is notable that the TPHU – an organization involved with managing and treating a tropical disease whose spread has the potential to create public anxiety – allowed nine spokespeople to be so prolifically quoted on the issue instead of a single spokesperson presenting their case.

Figure 11: Media coverage for the first Dengue Fever outbreak October 2002 – May 2003 shows a sharp, significant peak in coverage (in both print and electronic items) coinciding with the peak in cases (March 2003), followed by an equally significant drop in coverage as the outbreak began to resolve itself and the worst was over. (Advance Cairns, 2003b)
Figure 12: Media coverage for the second Dengue Fever outbreak, October 2003 – May 2003, again shows a sharp, significant peak in coverage (print and electronic media items combined) coinciding with the peak in cases (November 2003), followed by an equally significant drop in coverage as the outbreak began to resolve itself and the worst was over. (Advance Cairns, 2003b)

A recurrence of the outbreak later in 2003 (October to December) again led to increased media coverage (Advance Cairns, 2003b), Figure 12 illustrating the pattern of coverage for this latter outbreak. A significant spike in number of media items is seen to clearly coincide with the peak time period of the outbreak, similar to the concentrated peak period of coverage found in the analysis of the previous outbreak.

In summary, the incidence of new disease cases was the single influencing factor on media coverage of the dengue fever outbreak and is reflected in the dramatic spike in Figure 11 and Figure 12. Similar peaks are apparent in the incidence of
“alarming” stories in the Perth media analysis (Figure 9) although they are not as acute as in the dengue outbreak because the study included a range of “alarming” stories rather than a single or dominant “alarming” story in the period surveyed. The dengue fever media coverage during this period was more national than in previous seasonal outbreaks because of the severity and number of cases. The study underscores the intensity of media coverage linked to the intensity of the developing news story as it peaks, ebbs and flows to a conclusion and then peters out.

4.1.3. Media Operations during Cyclone Larry, 2006

The third vignette, like the second, focuses on the tourism environment of Cairns when it bore the brunt of Cyclone Larry in March 2006. The researcher provides an account of the evolution of the story as he experienced it as a resident of Cairns at that time. This region of Far North Queensland is a cyclone-prone tourism destination, located in the north-eastern Australian tropics. The cyclone season starts in November-December each year and there are institutional warnings to residents about securing roofs and guttering and not leaving debris around public and private buildings that can be swept up by storm winds to become lethal projectiles. There is no set “build-up” period for a cyclone as they can form slowly and peter out or take shape quickly and become devastating. The researcher was dependant on media coverage for information and the following participant observer account depicts how news is received by the public during a crisis in which a population is facing a common threat. In contrast to the four later case
studies in which the extent and ferocity of the disaster incidents were unexpected, deadly and had paradigm-changing repercussions, this cyclone was tracked and measured before it hit and its power and ability to inflict destruction was anticipated. The media’s agenda leading into its arrival was to warn residents and in the immediate 24-hours after it hit was to switch into a record-of-destruction role and eventually to deal with its effects on the economy and industry, such as tourism. As seen in later chapters, the media strived to continue publishing despite barriers posed by the cyclone’s disruption, such as the cessation of essential services.

Cyclone Larry had formed at sea on March 14 and was designated as a cyclone by 4am on March 18. The Cairns Post’s Page 2 lead on March 18 was headlined “Larry set to blow – Region prepares for possible cyclone” (The Cairns Post, 2006a, p. 2) and quoted a weather forecaster saying it was too early to judge how intense the cyclone would be or how wide, both crucial pieces of information for disaster managers. Four computer-models used by the weather bureau showed a slow-moving low pressure system that was expected to cross the Far Northern coastline on Monday, although its landfall was undetermined.

“It’s a long way out now but once that system develops, we expect it to start moving west at about 30kmh so it will cover quite a large distance very quickly,” the weather forecaster said. “In a 40-50 hour period, that’s 1500km, so in just over two days it could be sitting on our
doorstep,” (Ibid.). He urged residents to stay tuned for weather updates over the weekend and make their final cyclone preparations. Ironically, the weather bureau’s official forecast in that same edition of the paper (Ibid., p. 175) gave no warnings and for Sunday said there would be developing showers and freshening southeast winds.

The situation changed rapidly during Saturday and a single-column map on Page 2 of the next day’s The Sunday Mail (2006, p. 2) featured a left-direction arrow coming out of a “bullseye” headed straight for the coastline between Cairns and Townsville. Under the heading “Cyclone Larry set to storm in”, the story reported North Queenslanders as being warned to “prepare for the worst” as the cyclone moved swiftly towards the coast.

“Larry” had advanced to about 1,000km off the coast of Cairns and was moving at 25kph, likely to be upgraded to Category 3 intensity/severity by Sunday morning and a cyclone warning had been issued overnight for an extensive strip of coast north from Mackay to Cape Tribulation. A weather forecaster said “Larry” would “bring very strong winds and heavy rain…and is likely to have an impact inland as it continues to move quickly west across to the Northern Territory” (Ibid.). The Department of Emergency Services urged north Queenslanders to prepare for the deluge and advised residents to have emergency kits at hand and to: “Regularly listen to the radio for weather updates, clear
your properties of rubbish, clean out gutters, prepare an emergency kit with emergency phone numbers, medication, tinned food, portable radio, spare batteries and first aid kit” (Ibid.).

Residents also were urged to shelter vehicles, secure doors and windows, disconnect electrical items and secure pets in solid sections of buildings before the cyclone hits. The weather bureau’s official forecast in that day’s paper (Ibid, p. 79) listed a storm warning from Cooktown to Mackay, strong wind warnings between Cape Tribulation and Cooktown and Mackay to Double Island Point. Cyclone warnings were listed for the north tropical coast and Tablelands and the Herbert and Lower Burdekin.

By the time Cyclone Larry hit the mainland early on the morning of Monday, March 20, the only immediate media available was the morning’s edition of The Cairns Post, and radio for those with portable receivers. All power had been cut and television signal transmission towers were knocked out of commission by the severity of the storm. The Cairns Post front page was designed and published on Sunday night before the cyclone hit and could not be delivered the next morning to most areas and homes by its normal pre-6am time which was in the midst of the cyclone fury. At 10pm that Sunday night, it had become a Category 4 cyclone and was destined not to deviate from its path until well after hitting landfall.
Nevertheless the newspaper’s splash headline “EVACUATE – Hundreds told to leave their homes” (*The Cairns Post*, 2006b, p. 1) superimposed over an official weather bureau satellite image of the storm clouds with the eye of the cyclone closing in on the Cairns coastline, foretold a dramatic enough notion of what might be in store for the region on the day (*Figure 13*). The first four pages inside the paper reported towns “battening down” (Ibid., p.2-3), of the Queensland Premier declaring the area a disaster zone, district and supreme court sittings cancelled, schools and university closed (Ibid., p. 3), of tourist resorts and islands evacuated (Ibid., p. 4), air travel in turmoil (Ibid., p. 2), petrol stations and supermarket aisles jammed with “frenzied” customers queuing for fuel and essential items (Ibid., p. 5)
and urban residents fleeing to outlying communities for “safer” harbour
(Ibid., p. 4). All this activity took place before the storm hit.

Comparative information about the intensity of “Larry” indicated the
possible consequences. It was described as twice as large as Cyclone
Tracy which destroyed the city of Darwin, but smaller than America’s
destructive Hurricane Katrina. Larry had a 100km stretch of destructive
winds reaching up to 280kmh with a 300-400km wide front of gale
force winds outside that, reaching up to 75kmh. Larry was labelled as a
“high Category 4, almost a 5” while Tracy was a Category 5, but its
destructive winds covered a lesser area of 50km. Hurricane Katrina was
about 300-400km across. And the arrival of Larry coincided almost 20
years to the month after Category 3 Cyclone Winifred bore down on
the nearby southern townships of Innisfail and Tully, and almost
exactly 88 years after the worst, but unnamed, cyclone flattened
Innisfail and caused a number of deaths.

As the region’s residents prepared for bed that Sunday night they
expected to wake to a Category 4 storm in the morning. As it neared
the coastline, fierce winds of up to 300kmh swirled along a 100km
front and, huddled around radios and unable to sleep, residents taped
windows and prepared for the worst as the eerie calm settled before the
storm. The wind picked up around 4am and, with the power failing and
the sun not yet risen, the pitch black of many houses was invaded by
the intensifying wind gusts which rattled iron rooves and tore gutters from their ties. Cairns radio stations stayed on air throughout the storm providing instant coverage of the conditions, proving to be essential services in their own right in providing information once power and television coverage had failed.

Cyclone Larry blew its way into the city of Cairns and surrounding region about 5am on March 20, reaching a crescendo of destruction about 8.30am and disappearing westwards inland by about 9.30am. Radio announcers stayed on air throughout the night in the lead up and during the cyclone hitting, continuing through the morning to report on the post-event destruction. While the storm had gone, the winds were still up, the rain pelted down and powerlines swayed between their posts. Nevertheless, thrill-seeking residents roamed the city streets in cars and tempted bridges flooded by the swelling river system.

Radio and fixed-line phones were the sole media of communication and there was no shortage of reports phoned into programs from listeners all around the region. The Mayor of Cairns and Premier of Queensland were among those interviewed by Cairns radio announcers, as well as emergency services personnel and rescue organisation leaders. Channel 7’s Sunrise breakfast program seized on the magnitude of the story and carried dramatic coverage filled with “emotion-packed eyewitness accounts phoned in by terrified storm victims huddled in their shelters
in hard-hit Innisfail” (Stone, 2007, p. 283). The program was extended into the mid-morning past its normal finish and kept flashing continuous updates. It included live crosses to its weather reporter who had been flown into Townsville in anticipation of the cyclone’s arrival. Channel 9 was unable to immediately cover the devastation as its facility for live broadcasting from the region had been closed and a satellite dish that could have been flown in to transmit reports had been diverted to Sydney to cover for an unrelated technical glitch.

With many thousands of homes in the region deprived of power, TV coverage of the cyclone was irrelevant whether it went to air or not. But local newspapers and radio provided the news coverage expected by the local population. “What a mess” was The Cairns Post’s Page 1 headline on Tuesday, March 21 (The Cairns Post, 2006c). Larry left more than 1,000 buildings damaged and destroyed about $300 million worth of sugar cane and banana crops as it crossed the coast between Innisfail and Mission Beach and then turned back up the range to the southern Atherton Tablelands. Power supplies were cut to 121,500 customers as Larry’s 300kmh winds blew through the affected areas.

Emergency Services workers were building a tent city for displaced residents at Innisfail airport as the Federal Government mobilised military aircraft and Black Hawk helicopters to deploy medical aid, soldiers and military equipment to help in the massive clean-up. Efforts
to provide aid to affected residents were hampered because arterial roads north and south of Innisfail were blocked by debris. As the damage assessment process got underway, it was clear that from as far south as Kurrimine Beach, west up the range across the Atherton Tablelands and north to Cairns, Larry had cut a swathe through townships, farms and rainforest. Homes and businesses were destroyed, whole forests were stripped of foliage and hundreds of hectares of bushland were flattened. Nearly every cane paddock and banana crop was destroyed, and lychee and avocado crops fared just as poorly. Sugar mills remained twisted reminders of the storm’s fury.

At Cairns airport, light planes were flipped over like pancakes (Figure 14) while stately and historic trees at Flecker Botanic Gardens and the Esplanade toppled in sodden soil. The Cairns International Airport was back in action about five hours after Larry crossed the coast, starting to reduce the backlog of hundreds of passengers from 40 delayed international and domestic services.
Figure 14: Light planes were flipped by ferocious winds
(Ergon Energy, 2006)

The Innisfail Advocate and The (Atherton) Tablelander did not miss an edition, despite being in towns most devastated by Cyclone Larry (PANPA Bulletin, 2006). With power lines cut, there was no radio, TV or internet to outlying communities and the only communication available was from the old traditional media of newspapers, which still managed to hit the streets on their usual publishing day, Tuesday, following the storm. The results of Larry were graphically portrayed in a 32-page picture supplement headlined “Oh, My God” in the March 21 edition of The Cairns Post (2006c). The magnitude of the destruction put Larry on newspaper front pages and at the front of TV news bulletins around the nation and overseas (Figure 15). “Cyclone like A-bomb” reported the Northern Territory News (NT News, 2006), while the BBC (2006), CNN (2006a) and the Taipei Times (2006) were among overseas news services that covered the event.
Perhaps it wasn’t as bad as an “a-bomb”, but it was a local disaster of epic proportions and a flat-earth landscape to the horizon was evident in many areas for all to see. One in three buildings were destroyed in townships outside and surrounding Cairns (Figure 16). Power, sewerage and water supplies were cut off or compromised. House after house in the township of Innisfail had been “smashed by the wrecking ball of the wind”, The Cairns Post (2006c, p.24) reported, and stairs led to nowhere in houses whose twisted corrugated iron roofing shared the front lawn with fallen trees, splintered furniture and strewn personal belongings.
Cane paddocks had been flattened and entire banana plantations sheared off at waist height while in the hills the trees of the rainforest had been stripped of foliage and branches and stood like sticks in stark black earth clumps. A raft of disaster relief appeals started dominating the news pages and TV bulletins two days after Cyclone Larry hit and to reaffirm the destruction and hardship caused, pages of survivor stories and scores of devastation and clean-up photos dominated the newspapers. Schools started to re-open, power and telecommunication links were reconnected and contractors and suppliers were preparing for the massive reconstruction needed to restore homes and infrastructure.
Primary producers started counting the cost of the devastation as it became apparent that 4000 banana plantation workers could lose their jobs, growers faced eight months without income until the next crop and consumers around the country counted the cost of bananas at $6 a kg, double the pre-Larry retail price as a result of 80 per cent of the nation’s crop being wiped out.

The first indication of the impact on tourism came the first weekend after Larry when south of Cairns, a Mission Beach tourism operator said the cost to the localised industry could be as high as $45 million, measured in weeks to months of lost business and repairs to infrastructure. The tourism industry weighed in on March 22 (ABC, 2006) by urging domestic and international visitors not to cancel trips to the Far North, saying the last thing the region needed was further economic damage caused by visitor cancellations in the wake of Cyclone Larry. Daniel Gschwind, from the Queensland Tourism Industry Council, said a crisis management plan had been activated to assess damage to tourism operators in the region. "North Queensland is a very big place and the areas north of Innisfail - Cairns, Port Douglas the northern beaches and indeed south of the impact area towards Townsville and the Whitsundays - they're basically open for business,” he said (Ibid.).
The ABC noted that tourism marketing plans for the region had been put on hold as images of devastation continued to be published with *The Weekend Australian* featuring a broadsheet full page on April 1 carrying graphic photos of Cyclone Larry’s devastation above a joint message from the Prime Minister John Howard and Premier Peter Beattie about why Far North Queensland needed the nation’s financial help (2006, p. 11).

Unrelated to media coverage, it is notable that the first tourism recovery initiative was instigated on April 6 when the national tourism industry started to encourage tourists back to the Cyclone Larry-devastated region, almost three weeks after the tragedy. Federal Tourism Minister Fran Bailey (*The Cairns Post*, 2006d. p.10) announced that North Queensland was ready and open for business as she launched a 12-day, 2079km tourist drive aimed primarily at overseas visitors. The weight of community heartbreak, devastation and recovery stories had dominated the media so much that the all-important tourism sector and dominant industry, worth more than $2 billion a year to the local economy, had received scant coverage other than that about the brief closure of airports. The Regional Tourism Organisation [RTO] leader, Rob Giason, said the best support tourists could give the battered region (*Figure 17*) was to holiday in North Queensland (*Ibid.*).
Visitor demand had declined since the cyclone, with lower than usual bookings for the June school holiday period. Tourism industry operators reported this was caused by the perception that there was nothing to do in the region owing to the closure of attractions such as Dunk Island and other National Parks. The economic impact on the tourism sector was expected to extend over some time. This was to be exacerbated by the seasons required for the natural environment to recover, and for the repair of accommodation infrastructure, as well as the ability to market the region to overcome public perception that it could not host visitors. The damage to the natural environment and the ongoing repair of infrastructure would serve as continuing visual reminders of the predicament the tourism industry was in.
In November, Prideaux et al. (2006) released a two-field study of the impacts of Cyclone Larry on tourism in the affected region, surveying on-site visitor perceptions of the cyclone’s impact and off-site perceptions in major tourism source markets. Of the on-site visitors, a majority were satisfied with their holiday, a majority said the cyclone had little or no impact on their satisfaction, 90 per cent said they would recommend the region and 71 per cent said they would revisit if there were no rainforests in the region. Of the source market respondents, 99 per cent said they would still consider the region for a holiday after the cyclone and 67 percent had been previous visitors.

The study showed (p. 54) that the media was the key informant of the impacts of the cyclone, with TV, radio and newspapers being the key sources, however it also showed that friend/relatives in North Queensland also played a key role in informing mainly domestic visitors. The majority of off-site visitors heard about Cyclone Larry through the same forms of media, however the advice of friends/relatives had little bearing on decisions to travel to the region. The survey revealed that the majority of potential visitors were not aware of the “open for business” promotional campaign.

A member of the Cyclone Larry Taskforce, Sandy Hollway, told an Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation [APEC] Tourism Forum about the insight he gained from the recovery process after Cyclone Larry in
2006 and the Canberra bushfires in 2003 (APEC, 2007). His 10 key lessons learnt included the need for alliances to get the job of recovery done, engagement with the community is essential and good public communications is an integral part of recovery. A point later reiterated to the forum was that crisis-affected areas should not just build back but build back better than before. Ian Kean, Executive Director, APEC International Centre for Sustainable Tourism, told the forum that industry and government collaboration in times of crisis was crucial for successful recovery. He indicated that involvement from all tourism stakeholders would make future tourism destination planning and development more complex, but it was necessary.

The vignette provides a first-hand in situ experience of a natural disaster as it hits a tourism-based region. It highlights the complexity of maintaining media coverage when physical infrastructure is damaged and communication links are destroyed. It also demonstrates how important the media are in providing basic information about potential dangers and giving progress reports on disabled services and broadcasting official warnings. Tourism’s post-crisis activity is notable for the period of time after the event that it waited to begin re-marketing the region.

4.1.4. Tiananmen Square incident Newsroom Management, 1989

The fourth and final vignette aims to illustrate how the media themselves operate in times of crisis. Against the background of the Tiananmen Square protest in 1989
it offers an inside view of the internal workings of the newsroom of Hong Kong’s
*Sunday Morning Post* as it attempted to cover a major political crisis (a
Confrontation according to the typology of Table 2).

The researcher was editor of the newspaper at that time and the following
participant observer account illustrates from inside the publishing environment
what happens when a big story develops and how newspaper accounts are
compiled in the confusion and uncertainty of a developing situation. The news
values applied were instinctive and despite the “charged” environment of
threatened confrontation, the ferocity of the Chinese Government’s response was
unexpected and demanded coverage elevated in size, depth and extent to match its
importance.

The result of the night’s news was the world waking on a Sunday morning to
carnage in Beijing after China's political leadership ordered soldiers and tanks to
use force on pro-democracy demonstrators in Tiananmen Square. The *Sunday
Morning Post*, a broadsheet Hong Kong newspaper, was the first English-language
newspaper published in the world to give a detailed account of the events of that
night in the Chinese capital’s historic square. The account is contextualised with
events that lead up to the night of publication.

The northern spring of 1989 provided extraordinary news events for a
Hong Kong Sunday newspaper to cover. The daily papers had their
share of it during the week but there was a succession of Saturday
developments during this period that allowed the Sundays to set the agenda for the following week. There is a definable beginning and end to this period that was triggered by a single death and concluded with many more. The start of the pro-democracy campaign that culminated in the fatal congregation of thousands of students in Beijing's Tiananmen Square began with the death on Saturday, April 15, of former Communist Party chief, Mr Hu Yaobang. Sacked as a general secretary of the party in January 1987 after being blamed for not taking strong enough action against student demonstrations, he was hailed in death as a champion of the pro-democracy reform movement. The report of Mr Hu's demise however, although planned to lead the next day's edition, became the secondary story in the early hours of publication day as the news section was redesigned to record the deaths of 95 fans crushed in the viewing stands at an FA Cup semi-final match at Hillsborough Soccer stadium in the United Kingdom.

Figure 18: Protestors gather in Tiananmen Square (The My Hero Project, 2008)
To the people of China, however, that one hero's death eventually triggered a greater toll than at the football stadium and lead a nation to believe it was reverting to the bad old days of repression and recrimination. His passing became a new line in the sand, a symbol of the loss of opportunity for democracy and freedom.

A student protest crowd built up throughout April in Tiananmen Square as the young protestors pressed for a fuller explanation from the central government of the reasons for Mr Hu’s 1987 dismissal (*Figure 18*). They also sought more freedom of speech, additional funds for education and an easing of street demonstration restrictions in Beijing. Ironically, the protest eventually reached the level of those in December 1986 that lead to the dismissal of Mr Hu and a crackdown on "bourgeois liberalisation", a phrase usually referring to Western influences. When asked how long this time they were prepared to stay in the square, one 21-year-old history student told reporters: "Generally speaking, political problems in China take a long time to resolve."

Communist Party chief Zhao Ziyang unsuccessfully appealed for calm as Beijing prepared for the historic first visit of Russian leader Mikhail Gorbachev starting on May 16. A new blueprint for the future of Sino-Soviet relations was drawn up to heal a 30-year rift between the two once-great Communist nations and toasting glasses were clinked at a state banquet in the Great Hall of the People as outside the students continued a hunger strike.
The situation had now passed the point of rational return with a million protesters in Beijing by mid-May and demonstrations reported in 24 other cities. China's Prime Minister Li Peng joined with President Yang Shangkun in promising "firm measures" to stop the rot. More importantly now, however, share prices had started to plunge on the Hong Kong stock exchange as the territory moved from that of concerned observer to disaffected player in the stand-off. The Sunday Morning Post headline of May 21 screamed BEIJING BLOCKADE GROWS as the square demonstrators anticipated and prepared for troops to apply force to break them up. In Hong Kong, a crowd estimated at more than 50,000 braved Typhoon Brenda’s wind gusts up to 101kph to protest outside China's unofficial consulate, the New China News Agency. Tiananmen Square-related stories dominated the front page of the paper with a large demonstration photo snapped by a photographer braving the dangerous weather featured on the front page. The typhoon, which killed three, injured 62 and brought Hong Kong to a standstill, normally would have been splashed all over page one yet it barely rated a mention on the front.

Subsequent rallies of 600,000 people in Hong Kong started to support the students' stand as Gorbachev left China, supreme leader Deng Xiaoping called Mr Zhao a traitor, the tension grew, the Hang Seng Index plunged and the world looked on and waited for the inevitable. Senior staff at media outlets in the British territory lived with the
additional daily deadline pressure of what was building up in Beijing and the impact it was having on confidence in Hong Kong. They were operating in a permanent climate of expectation, believing anything was possible from the explosive environment of Tiananmen Square - it was a matter of when it happened and on which editor’s “watch”. Accepting that as the mood, the morning of Saturday, June 3 was like any other in the old *South China Morning Post* building in Quarry Bay. We started at about 8.30am to finalise features sections, which printed after lunch. Reporters and sub-editors wrote and polished stories for final sections containing the day’s general news, finance and sport and we worked into the night finishing non-news pages.

The China editor of the group’s papers sat at his desk on the second-floor newsroom monitoring the news wires, TV and radio. He wrote a column on Sunday but could not bring himself to stay at home and therefore be out of touch during this troubling time. He was a Chinese national who loved China but hated the hardship communism imposed on its people. He always feared the worst when soldiers were pitted against the people. To be proved correct in his assessment of this situation and its outcomes never gave him any satisfaction. He was in constant contact with the two Beijing bureau reporters, both Americans who spoke impeccable Mandarin, were steeped in Chinese culture and maintained the highest professional and ethical standards in their reporting. Through his many years at the Post, the China editor had
built an impressive network of contacts in diplomatic and political areas. As the evening dragged on and nothing moved in the square, he “read” instinctively through the lines, through the quietness and through the mood that tonight was the night.

And it was, as all news sources – our bureau, the news wires, radio and TV – confirmed around 11pm that the tanks were indeed rolling down the Boulevard of Eternal Peace towards the square (Figure 19), the troops were firing on unarmed students and ordinary citizens, and the blood flowed freely. Our newspaper’s managing director entered the editorial floor shortly after the news spread through Hong Kong. The first Chinese to hold the senior position at paper and a man with wide television and film experience, he occasionally visited the office late on Saturday but there was more of a reason this night. The Editor-in-Chief arrived at the same time. The cacophony of noise from the other media rose as receiver volumes were turned up, the phones from Beijing rang continually, and the pace quickened as the clock ticked towards deadline when we needed to have newspapers printed for delivery to far outlying areas.
Off-duty journalists came from homes, parties and bars throughout Hong Kong to pitch-in as the pent-up expectancy of the previous weeks exploded. I and the deputy editor welcomed the influx of extra numbers but we simply didn't know if communication links to Beijing would be sustained long enough for stories or pictures to be transmitted. American television had managed to stay connected to the satellite during Gorbachev's visit but only by bluff and even then a Chinese official eventually pulled the plug on all links to end the telecasts. The *Sunday Morning Post* should have been in production by 1.30am and we patched up a “holding” front page report based on little factual detail and no photos that would allow us to get a 2pm start. As I assessed what to do next for a second edition, stories and pictures started to flood out of Beijing, literally choking the news wires. The copy lacked nothing in detail or length and the pictures were graphic in
their depiction of the mayhem wrought by tanks ploughing through demonstrators. Our bureau and the news agencies were operating at full speed, the supply of information at total odds with what normally would be allowed by the censors out of China in these circumstances. The question everyone asked was when would the plug be pulled?

With what stories and black and white and colour photos that were already at hand, I was confident about adding an 8-page Beijing Special broadsheet colour section to the paper. It would be filled by as much copy as we could get from staff and the news wires, the best of the many pictures, some in colour, that were running and as many "perspective" pieces as the experts such as the China editor and a visiting veteran foreign commentator, now also in the office, could write. So I stopped the presses, knowing there was too little time available and a lot to do to get the next edition out with the full story of the night’s events. The editor-in-chief was delegated to edit the 8-page "special" with a cell of dedicated sub-editor volunteers who operated separately from the day-staff responsible for Page 1 and the main news section. The hours between 2am and 5am were full of activity as first edition pages were cleared of all previous stories and advertisements, pictures were sized and colour-processed, stories were tasted, prioritised and edited, BBC and Radio Hong Kong were monitored as television continued its relentless telecast of the tragedy unfolding in Tiananmen Square.
The *South China Morning Post* group was the technological showpiece of Asian newspapers and everything needed was available to do the job, from resources to technology, in the tight time span. News vendors on the street were alerted to prepare for late papers. I watched the “spirit” leave the normally ebullient managing director and his tall frame slump as the brutal realisation hit home of what Chinese were doing to Chinese. In the production process, we started to run out of night as the final pages were whisked off the "stone" to the plate-making room and the press. There were conflicting fatality figures being reported by the news wires and the death count was fluctuating wildly from different news agencies. The Circulation department was getting anxious because it could see that we might have a great newspaper but it would be too late off the press to be delivered to households and the street market.

The *United Press International* reporter in Beijing had been consistent in his count of the deaths and when his “57 fatalities” figure was corroborated by another report I wrote the front page heading BEIJING BLOODBATH: 57 KILLED BY TROOPS (*Sunday Morning Post*, 1989, p. 1), fixed the detail in the story and went with it. We were back on the press in time to shout “print it” for a 6am edition. It was pointless trying to do any more updates because the newspaper would have missed the morning buyers, but we tidied it up for an 8am edition and went home. Some of us left the office exactly 24 hours after we had
arrived. Needless to say, you can’t print enough papers in these circumstances and both editions sold out. The frantic pace of the hours after midnight, the sheer achievement of re-making the front news pages and, from a standing-start, of adding an 8-page colour broadsheet to a paper that should have been on the streets many hours before, and the smooth flow of it all, was a stunning outcome in newspaper terms, thanks to the desk-top computer technology of the day and the company’s cutting-edge printing technology. I felt we had matched the magnitude of the story with a mighty effort. In context, however, we had merely risen to the occasion to publish the first story of an event that had wider ramifications for the newly-emerging China.

This vignette highlights the fluid nature of the publishing environment during the development of a disaster and the editor’s objective to get the best possible coverage of the story into print for morning sales. The uncertainties of being able to get enough facts to sustain news coverage are redolent through the Tiananmen Square description and are germane to the difficulties of information control in China by central authorities in the 1980s. As well as any systemic strictures to the flow of information, there were also physical difficulties posed to reporters and photographers on site in gathering information and finding “live” communications channels through which to transmit. The practicalities of media coverage of a disaster vary from case to case, however the ultimate objective of reporting and collating news is to package it for public consumption. The principles of publishing, whether through the mediums of newspaper, radio, television, internet
or cell-phone, remain the same and apply in a disaster period as much to the four case studies examined in this research as they did in the vignette of Tiananmen Square. The complexity of a disaster dictates the success or not of gathering information.

4.2 Summary

The vignettes illustrate distinct characteristics, similarities and differences in media operations depending on the nature of the news environment. Media examined in “ordinary” times in Perth revealed no overwhelming agenda-setting predisposition to reporting stories of an alarming nature. In other words, and perhaps contrary to widespread perception, there was not an overwhelming inclination by the media to overload content with alarming messages, although the “natural” level of alarming content was 26 percent of total content. However, the nature of coverage altered according to the importance of events, as evidenced in the Dengue Fever and Cyclone Larry vignettes.

Further, and as expected, sustained coverage reflected the magnitude of an event. For example, the localised outbreak of Dengue Fever stimulated a substantial peak of national media coverage followed by a rapid decrease as it abated. Conversely, the more devastating Cyclone Larry story led to a substantial increase in local coverage that was sustained as further information became known and the storm’s effects became clearer. In all of the vignettes, it is clear that the media expanded its coverage of an event when its magnitude was understood. The ability to increase
coverage was directly related to the better availability of information. This pattern will be evident throughout the case studies to come. Media operations displayed a flexibility to adapt to an event’s characteristics, as seen in the Tiananmen Square vignette, by being primed for the unexpected, a reflection of professional agility.

The Perth news example hints at the routine, or predictability, of media. The news was reported each and every day and concerned itself with whatever local issues were pertinent, showing unexceptional variations in “alarming” or “non-alarming” coverage. Media operations during the Dengue Fever outbreak show how coverage alters as a function of event magnitude. Outbreaks of dengue fever were not novel to the geographic location under study; however as an event, the outbreak received coverage external to the local area that both peaked and subsided in line with the outbreak itself.

Cyclone Larry shows how various forms of media work to cover a story, how the extent of coverage is influenced by event magnitude and how the tenor of critical incident stories is conveyed. The story met Galtung and Ruge’s (1965) news values criteria of frequency, threshold, unambiguity, meaningfulness, unexpectedness, continuity, personification and negativity. The vignette also shows how media served as the important sole source of information during pre- and post-event conditions. A key aspect for tourism from the Cyclone Larry vignette is the reliance of intending travellers to the region on the media and the tourism industry’s apparent delayed action to have its voice heard, waiting until well after the extent of damage was known. The Tiananmen Square vignette illustrates the
critical role the media can play in disseminating information globally and how the dynamics of a news provider deal with the many uncertainties involved in covering a “real time” incident. The story met Galtung and Ruge’s (1965) news values criteria of threshold, unambiguity, meaningfulness, unexpectedness, continuity, elite nations, elite people, personification and negativity.

The vignettes are included to describe “normal” media working situations. The Perth news study and Dengue Fever analysis show media response to moderately enhanced situations while the Cyclone Larry and Tiananmen Square vignettes offer rich insight into media operations and coverage during heightened incidents. In concert, the vignettes illustrate the working environment range of media operations’ coverage and effects and offer a perspective useful for reading the major case studies. Germaine to the case studies that follow is that media continue to publish during a crisis, adapting its news judgements to fit the event’s size and importance and adjusting its framing accordingly.

They also show how the media is exposed to the same conditions as other actors within a crisis-affected system. Their routine operational parameters have been affected just as much as other actors and agencies and they similarly need to adjust according to crisis conditions. Agenda-setting practices change, becoming dictated more by the crisis as opposed to any real “choice” of agenda options. They are faced with a supply of random facts to make sense of, thus also working inside a modified (chaos) system. Framing is dictated by available information and photos. The shaping of the story and coverage is reactive by nature and instinct with little
time to think between multi-edition deadlines and is dependent on what comes in from the field. News values remain paramount. The idea of the purest form of news triumphs and idealised news values apply, i.e. what’s newest and what the public needs/wants to know. The importance of media’s relationships with sources is exemplified as reporters in the field try to find out what’s going on in a chaotic situation. The social role that media has is amplified as the link between the event and the consumer, the classic 4th Estate role.

This chapter has provided the final bridge to the four case studies which form the substantive part of this research. The early chapters have set out the aims of the research thesis and its parameters, assessing prior studies in the literature and detailing the research methodology. The vignettes show the media in everyday practice and in crisis-heightened operations to assist understanding of the conditions of the operating environments of tourism and the media into which crisis is introduced.
CHAPTER 5

CASE STUDIES #1-4

5.1 Overview of Case Study Structure and Analysis

The four case studies that form the heart of this study are presented in summary form in this chapter (the full case studies are included as Appendices 1, 3, 5 and 7) and the findings are reported in Chapter 6. The cases are presented in chronological order: Foot and Mouth Disease (2001), September 11 (2001), Bali Bombings (2002) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (2003). Each of the case study narratives is divided into the six phases defined below to map progression of the crisis. The phases allow for comparison of actions and effects within stages, enabling clearer cross-case analysis, and the stage format has been developed using relevant elements from a number of extant tourism crisis models, as noted in the literature review.

5.2 Criteria for each Phase

Structuring the case studies by phases allows for specific identification of key themes within each case and within each phase of the case. The phases were identified to represent the evolution of each crisis and to allow isolation of the chaos period within each one. The phases have been adapted from Faulkner’s (2001) Tourism Disaster Management Framework and Ritchie’s (2004) Strategic Management Framework. The major modification introduces the extant Pre-Crisis stage which describes the operating, or “normal”, environment before crisis. It replaces the Pre-Event stage which in both
models assesses action taken by the tourism sector to mitigate disaster. The subsequent stages in the research broadly align with those delineated in the two models, however the research stages differentiate from the models by not describing what tourism should do (reflecting the models’ advisory aims), but what tourism and media actions actually take place. In summary, the model adopted for the research is the result of a major reconceptualisation of those other models.

1. The *Pre-Crisis* phase sets out the profile of the destination before the crisis, a period in which media and tourism operations and interactions are conducted in the absence of any knowledge of impending crisis.

2. The *Outbreak* phase assesses the first notice of the start of crisis and is the phase in which the presence of media is high. The profile of tourism in this phase is dependent on tourism’s relationship to, or involvement in, the crisis.

3. The *Consolidation* phase outlines the period immediately following the Outbreak phase, during which the event that has occurred consolidates and escalates, and the role of the media and effects on tourism are manifest.

4. The *Acceleration* phase is the period where reaction to the crisis is fully underway. Media involvement continues from the preceding phase, accelerating in a manner linked to the nature of the crisis. Tourism’s involvement heightens in accordance with the magnitude of the crisis and the degree of impact it has on tourism.

5. The *End* phase is the period at which the crisis is deemed to be over. For media, this phase reflects a decrease in attention. For tourism, this phase signals a shift from crisis- to post-crisis mode.
6. *Recovery* is the phase of activity following the declaration of an end to the crisis.

For media, coverage shifts to related post-crisis stories. For tourism, this phase involves dealing with the effects of the crisis and rehabilitation.

At the conclusion of each case study, data was filtered and distilled to arrive at key findings in relation to media and tourism operations. Inductive analysis principles and the retention of rich description were the core and guiding factors in the process. A summary of the resulting data is presented in a table at the end of each case. This information is critical as the basis for a further comparison across all the case studies. A first level of analysis and distillation of the case study data involved within-case analysis, with each analysed independently of the others to identify key terms, actions and impacts. A second level of analysis and distillation involved collating the findings in a format to allow for cross-case analysis, specifically a uniform arrangement of the findings for each case study. Again, the findings are structured according to the crisis phases to enable analysis of the findings within phases. Two final levels and the methods of further analysing the data are addressed in greater detail in the research findings, Chapter 6. The third level involved assigning the findings to theme and pattern categories. Grouping the findings according to categories offers a finer view of the data and transfers the data into a form amenable to cross-case analysis. A final fourth level is where the now categorised data is analysed to identify key concepts, actions and impacts through cross-case analysis. A summary of the cases highlighting relevant tourism and media reactions in phases during the crises follows.
5.3 Case Study #1 Foot and Mouth Disease, 2001

5.3.1 Pre-Crisis Phase: pre February 20, 2001

Tourism was the fourth largest industry in the United Kingdom at the start of 2001, employing approximately two million people and cited as responsible for one in four new jobs in the country (Culture, Media and Sport Committee [CMSC], 2001). Its value to the economy was estimated at approximately £74 billion, representing 4.5 percent of GDP (Frisby, 2002). A relatively junior economic sector in terms of status, the 2001 tourism industry was in a formative phase of building identity and profile, and hadn’t yet started leveraging its importance as a contributor to the economy at large.

5.3.2 Outbreak Phase: February 20-27, 2001

On February 20, 2001, the British Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food [MAFF] confirmed that pigs at an abattoir in Essex, south-east England, were infected with Foot and Mouth Disease [FMD], “signalling not only the first major outbreak of the disease in Britain since 1967, but also the onset of one of the most serious economic and social crises to face rural communities in recent years” (Sharpley & Craven, 2001, p. 527). Foot and Mouth Disease is an animal virus and considered one of the most contagious of all animal diseases (Baxter & Bowen, 2004). It is transmitted through contact with infected animals, animal products, contaminated people or equipment, or on the wind (Sharpley & Craven, 2001) with different strains resulting in different spread and severity effects (Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food [MAFF], 1969). The 2001
outbreak would emerge as a national epidemic, stimulated by outbreaks in tourism zones including Cumbria and Cornwall (Baxter & Bowen, 2004).

Identification of the disease in 2001 did not occur until infected pigs had gone to slaughter. The time lapse between infection and detection allowed for the disease to spread unchecked by other animal movements from the infected farm. The European Union identified the potential threats of the outbreak and from Brussels urged the UK to ensure against the disease spreading across Europe. A spokesman said the European Union [EU] was in the early stages “satisfied with measures taken” (Associated Press [AP], 2001) although the then UK Agriculture Minister said that the ongoing discovery of cases was a “serious development” and that the full extent of the problem was not yet known. The 2001 outbreak hit prior to the start of the main UK tourism season and would carry through the summer months.

**Tourism Response:** Industry boards called for government assistance and the national tourism authority took steps to reassure visitors that despite the outbreak the UK remained a safe destination to visit (Day, 2001e). Frisby (2002) noted that at the onset of the outbreak the British Tourism Authority [BTA], “quickly realised the serious impact” it would wreak on tourism and “recognised its [BTA] responsibility to take action” (p.90). However, he said the industry faced an immediate battle against “worldwide sensationalist and frequently inaccurate media reporting of the crisis,” (p. 90) which caused “widespread concern on an almost global scale about visiting Britain.”
Media Coverage: Much of the British press carried front-page graphics of burning pyres of cattle – some alight for many days – with reports detailing step-by-step the process of slaughter and the destruction and havoc being wrought on the farming industry (AP, 2001). These reports rapidly spread through global media affiliates. CNN’s coverage in the first week of the crisis reviewed the 1967 outbreak, recalling a devastating six-month nightmare inflicted on the farming industry and speculating that the current crisis could be comparatively worse (Sussman, 2001). Immediate impacts on tourism did not go unnoticed by the media, with The Guardian (Day, 2001e) reporting cancellation of bookings and forewarning of business closures should the crisis persist through to Easter, the season’s unofficial start.

5.3.3 Consolidation Phase: February 27 – mid-March, 2001

The immediate response by government authorities to the outbreak was guided by European Union directives which set out procedures to be adopted for its control. Supplementary controls were imposed locally to minimise risk to the general public and tourists, including closure of footpaths, tourist attractions, some national parks and passive recreation parks in south-west London. In effect, “the government’s initial response to the outbreak, in addition to specific controls on the farming sector, was to place the entire British countryside under quarantine, with immediate and inevitable consequences for the rural tourism industry” (Sharpley and Craven, 2001, p. 529).

Tourism Response: Government restrictions on access attracted public criticism for being over-reactive and detrimental to tourism by favouring the agriculture sector. The
industry also believed (Sharpley & Craven, 2001) that published media images showing outbreak stock controls were sensationalist and negative. The government’s policy mandated the slaughter and burning of animals in infected areas as well as neighbouring precincts, effectively stripping areas of livestock altogether. Tourism judged the subsequent images of a barren countryside dominated by piles of burning carcasses as a deterrent to potential visitors.

Media Coverage: Media coverage gathered momentum both in the UK and overseas. A programming initiative by national and international BBC networks to include Foot and Mouth crisis specials in schedules was indicative of saturation coverage (Hodgson, 2001a). Other UK and international media reports detailing government moves to curtail the spread of FMD included appeals to the public to steer clear of off-limits countryside (Cowell, 2001a). At the core of criticisms published in the media was the issue of lack of available information, each circumstance that reinforced this sentiment adding fuel to the media fire. While authorities grappled with their primary objective of identifying the true parameters of the outbreak, the media latched onto the only information that was available. Broadly this indicated that the United Kingdom was being shut down because of a communicable animal disease and the countryside was on fire. The media was responding to the story through the prism of Galtung and Ruge’s (1965) news values of frequency, threshold, unambiguity, meaningfulness, unexpectedness, continuity, elite nations, elite people, personification and negativity and these would be applicable through the crisis.
5.3.4 Acceleration Phase: March – September, 2001

Accommodation bookings for March were reported down by over 50 percent on the previous year in some of the worst hit areas with non-accommodation tourist facilities also experiencing a fall in business (CMSC, 2001). Sporting and cultural events were cancelled and significant job losses were occurring throughout industry (CMSC, 2001; English Tourist Council [ETC], 2001c; The Guardian, 2001b). The tourism industry attributed these impacts to two major factors: restricted access and sensationalised media (Frisby, 2002).

**Media Coverage:** The UK media provided extensive detail, keeping the crisis as the lead story in newspapers and on television and radio by covering a myriad of topics including disease facts, movement restrictions and impacts on the economy (Baxter and Bowen, 2004). Television news coverage tracked the spiralling numbers of new cases. International media coverage reported the increasing checks being done on travellers arriving from the UK and Europe, authorities implementing dog sniffing inspections of luggage (CNN, 2001ad). Coverage continued in the domestic market with special television reports, newspapers and trade publications counting the costs (The Economist, 2001a; The Economist 2001b), loss of expenditure (Travel Trade Gazette [TTG], 2001), employment effects (Treonor, 2001) and airline passenger reductions (Osborne, 2001) among others. International media coverage would follow a similar pattern, with the New York Times (an important source for the large USA inbound market), treating the crisis as both a foreign news and travel news issue (Hoge, 2001). Images broadcast on international television of slaughtered cattle, burning pyres and distressed farmers
resulted in confusion about the true extent of risk to travellers (Mintel Leisure Intelligence, 2001). The use of emotive and vivid reporting language further enhanced the public’s anxiety (Yeoman et al., 2005). Baxter and Bowen (2004) found that the modern media approach to instant, breaking news exaggerated the crisis compared to the more passive, understated reporting style used in the 1967-68 outbreak. The growth in global communications had fostered an increased contingent of foreign correspondents and this group was blamed by the tourism industry as the source of inaccurate and exaggerated stories. However the tourism industry interaction with this media group appears to have been non-existent or at least uncoordinated and the press offices of tourism authorities were seen to be “impenetrable and unaccountable”, with luck determining if someone would communicate on the situation, thus fostering an atmosphere of “institutional rudeness” (Hole, 2001).

**Tourism Response:** The high media profile generated by British and foreign press was blamed by tourism for causing holiday cancellations within the first few months of the outbreak, leading to major impacts on domestic and international tourism markets (Baxter & Bowen, 2004). The UK Department of Culture, Media and Sport [DCMS] agreed, noting that “the widespread and often unbalanced media coverage … left many potential visitors uncertain about the extent to which the British countryside and its attractions were open” (CMSC, 2001, p. 3). Uncertainty prevailed as it became apparent that a universal message was not reaching international markets. The tourism industry “appeared largely powerless to prevent the release of disparaging press articles” (Baxter & Bowen, 2004, p. 269), however when the impact on tourism was recognised, industry associations issued specific media releases in Britain and overseas in an attempt to
counter negative reports (ETC, 2001a). The BTA, as the leading tourism stakeholder, initiated an emergency response in the early stages of the crisis, providing up-to-date facts, reassurance and rebuttals to stakeholders, using all methods available including its website, bulletins and newsletters to limit the damage and assert tourists’ safety against media-inspired misconceptions (Frisby, 2002). Regular media briefings were instigated in UK and overseas markets and London correspondents of international media were tapped. The magnitude of the impact of the crisis on agriculture also hindered the tourism industry’s efforts to get support to mitigate its problems.

Two months into the crisis, survey results confirmed the on-going cancellation of holiday trips (BBC Radio 4, 2001d). The emergence of new FMD cases in previously unaffected areas, although downplayed by the government (BBC Radio 4, 2001d), did little for tourism as the Easter season arrived. Post-Easter, FMD case numbers appeared to be stabilising although there were sporadic new outbreaks. The Prime Minister declared the battle against FMD to be “entering the home straight” with "the scale of combating foot-and-mouth disease having far exceeded the logistical demands even of the Gulf War" (CNN, 2001ba). The tourism industry started assessing the cost of the crisis with many business said to be facing “financial ruin” amid considerable job losses even though the “worst was over” (CNN, 2001o; The Guardian, 2001f). Reports that the UK economy was heading for a downturn did little to keep the mood optimistic (BBC, 2001c). In May 2001, some three months after the outbreak, the UK Department of Culture, Media and Sport [DCMS] – also responsible for tourism – issued its own strategy to provide a consistent and comprehensive picture of what was open, as well as a clear “do and don’t” list for visitors.
5.3.5 End Phase: September, 2001

The last FMD case was registered on September 30, 2002, although deceleration of the crisis had been underway for some time.

**Media Coverage:** Media interest waned as reporting of new cases diminished and existing cases came under control and by August 2001 negative media coverage had subsided, allowing recovery campaigns to operate unencumbered by conflicting messages (Hopper, 2002).

**Tourism Response:** The British Tourist Authority [BTA] started to receive reports from its international offices at the end of August that tourism activity was showing signs of improving (Frisby, 2001). FMD was still making international headlines in September 2001, with reports of new cases contradicting official assertions that it was being wiped out (Cowell, 2001d), yet some tourism areas were beginning to perform well – some as a result of the desertion from other areas (BBC, 2001b).

5.3.6 Recovery Phase: September, 2001

**Tourism Response:** The recovery phase planned by BTA focused on image development, involving continuing previous activities and supporting markets. The range of public relations tools was extended to overseas offices and journalists in the form of photographs, editorial material, campaign-adaptable press folders, presentations and CDs. Online media areas were also created to increase traffic and allow for data
collection of journalists’ details to assist future engagement. The BTA also sought to strengthen its relationship with foreign correspondents in order to increase the positive reporting of tourism stories overseas (Frisby, 2002). The main message the BTA focused on communicating was that Britain was safe and fully open to visit. It was also cognizant of a need to “keep a close watch on the international media to react quickly to any stories which may emerge” (Frisby, 2002, p. 98) about new FMD cases and this included issuing statements on a couple of suspected cases which were eventually proven not to be FMD. Frisby (2002) praises the role of the BTA, seeing it as “succeeding in placing an overwhelmingly positive picture of Britain in the overseas media to counteract and overwhelm the residue of negative publicity elicited by the FMD crisis” (p. 99).

Media Coverage: The media focus was expected to move on from FMD, however the government needed the media to remain involved in covering the destiny of tourism and to also play a part in promoting domestic tourism, recognising that “for many businesses, the free publicity from media coverage is the only promotional activity they will be able to afford in the foreseeable future” (Department of Culture, Media and Sport [DCMS], 2001, section 92). Their concluding comments about the ongoing relationship between the media and the tourism industry asked that in response to the “great deal of vivid copy and large number of human interest stories” provided to the press by the crisis, the press “might now usefully consider, without in any way jeopardising its right to freedom of expression, whether it should now repay that debt by publishing positive stories that could attract tourists” (DCMS, 2001, section 92).
5.3.7 Summary

In summary, Figure 20 depicts the timeline of the FMD crisis, the main period of infection spreading a little over 7 months, but, critical to tourism recovery efforts, also overlapping with the events of September 11, 2001. Table 3 presents key data arising from the case study. Recurring and salient data in relation to the crisis, media and tourism characteristics, actions and responses is structured according to the phases of the crisis applied throughout the case study. This data forms the basis of the within-case and cross-case analyses dealt with in the findings in Chapter 6. The 2001 FMD outbreak was the largest crisis that the UK tourism industry had experienced for many years. Initial conditions of relative stability were disrupted by the crisis, resulting in complex outcomes which changed the operational landscape for tourism. Tourism industry boards called for government assistance and took steps to reassure the public however, the substantial and graphic media coverage of the crisis compounded the havoc already inflicted on the tourism industry by the disease alone. While the peak agency for tourism, the British Tourism Authority [BTA], recognised both the seriousness of the crisis and its responsibility to take action on behalf of the tourism industry, the momentum of media coverage was not countered by tourism industry actions and the
media wielded significant influence over public opinion and perception. Intermittently, the tourism industry was successful in using the media to relay its message and its gains increased over time. However it appeared that, on the whole, the tourism failed to suitably engage with the media to assist the industry’s plight.

Table 3: Summary of Case Study data – FMD, 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRISIS PHASE</th>
<th>DATA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Crisis</td>
<td>• Strong performance of tourism sector&lt;br&gt;• Tourism a main economy component but economic contribution not fully recognised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outbreak</td>
<td><strong>CRISIS</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Gradual build-up to outbreak&lt;br&gt;• National epidemic with outbreaks in tourism zones; just prior to main tourism season&lt;br&gt;• History of outbreaks&lt;br&gt;• Lapse between infection and detection allowed unchecked spread&lt;br&gt;<strong>MEDIA</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Front page news&lt;br&gt;• Coverage quickly spread globally&lt;br&gt;• Perceptions of media: immediate sensationalist and inaccurate reporting; negative media compounded the havoc&lt;br&gt;<strong>TOURISM</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Tourism recognised it would be impacted; called for government assistance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consolidation</td>
<td><strong>CRISIS</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Atmosphere of uncertainty&lt;br&gt;• Reality invisible&lt;br&gt;<strong>MEDIA</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Lack of information to use; forthcoming official messages were sketchy&lt;br&gt;<strong>TOURISM</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Response based on history of events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceleration</td>
<td><strong>CRISIS</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Atmosphere: uncertainty, confusion and fear, (national) panic, despair; no one could forecast change/end&lt;br&gt;<strong>MEDIA</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Media coverage: global, saturation, priority topic; increased as crisis developed&lt;br&gt;• Media content: graphic, emotive, personal; tourism covered; cause celebre&lt;br&gt;• Perception of Media: widespread negative effects; unbalanced; sensationalised; inaccurate; exaggerated; distorted; global circulation of damaging images; tone and accuracy varied; modern media approach exaggerated the crisis and enhanced public anxiety; foreign correspondents most responsible for negative coverage&lt;br&gt;• Authorities impenetrable, unaccountable; institutional rudeness; poor communication&lt;br&gt;<strong>TOURISM</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Crisis impacted key tourist activities; coincided with peak season&lt;br&gt;• Domestic and international markets affected&lt;br&gt;• Tourism saw they were largely powerless to prevent media; negative doors-closed message reached public easier&lt;br&gt;• Politicization of the crisis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End</td>
<td>CRISIS</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sporadic new cases emerged</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Consumer confidence building but uncertainty remained</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>MEDIA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coverage of new cases</td>
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<tr>
<td>Media coverage waned as new cases diminished</td>
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<tr>
<td>Perceptions: ongoing negative coverage; battle for positive coverage</td>
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<tr>
<th>TOURISM</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tourism remained in crisis mode - September 11 stalled recovery</td>
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<tr>
<td>Leadership: government announced ‘end’</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tourism planned to start recovery; initiatives to relaunch destination</td>
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<tr>
<th>Recovery</th>
<th>CRISIS</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Largest crisis for many years</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Uncertainty remained</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Consumer confidence issues remained, related to 9/11</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Normality of pre-crisis not returned to</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEDIA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coverage: human interest stories; plight of tourism; reiteration of crisis</td>
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<tr>
<td>Important role of the media recognised by tourism</td>
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<tr>
<td>Media called on by tourism to “repay debt” by publishing positive stories for tourism; free publicity for afflicted industry sought by tourism</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOURISM</th>
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<tr>
<td>Agreed for recovery to take years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Close watch kept on media; strengthen foreign correspondents relationship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Image development key task for tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Messages: safety and openness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications to be proactive and connected to all relevant stakeholders; sharp, accurate, timely and responsive; importance of informed leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impacts: lack of government understanding and policy regarding tourism; inadequate scale of support for tourism; urgent and compelling need for support/acknowledgement of tourism identified; coordinated thinking of Government, media and public on the role of tourism needed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.4 Case Study #2 September 11, 2001

5.4.1 Pre-Crisis Phase: pre September 11, 2001

Tourism figures for 2000 show a record 36.2 million visitors to New York, with 6.8 million coming from foreign shores (Dobnik, 2003). Although a major destination, New York, like the rest of the United States, was being hit hard early in 2001 by an economic downturn, and the tourism industry was not immune (Reuters, 2003).

5.4.2 Outbreak Phase: September 11, 2001

On the morning of September 11, 2001, four United States commercial airplanes were hijacked by 19 suicide terrorists. At the same time, workers filed into the World Trade Center in New York, a precinct consisting of several buildings with Twin Towers as the centrepiece, each 110 storeys high and capable of accommodating 20,000 workers. At 8.46am, as workers were arriving to start their day, American Airlines flight 11 bound for Los Angeles from Boston crashed into the North Tower of the World Trade Center between the 94th and 98th floor.

**Media Coverage:** Morning news programs interrupted schedules to cross to vivid images of a smouldering building, the cause of the crash leading to speculation ranging from a flight path gone wrong to a terrorist attack. The crash was a crisis enough in itself to dominate the media. But there was more to come and it was captured by cameras glued to the burning North Tower when, 17 minutes later at 9:03am, the next
unimaginable stage showed a second plane come into the shot and crash into the other Twin Tower between the 78th and 84th floors. Fire and smoke billowed from the scene as workers remained trapped in each building on the floors above the impact levels. TV news hosts scrambled to comprehend the live situation in order to inform millions of shocked viewers. The disaster was to escalate even further as reports came in at 9.43am of a plane crashing into the Pentagon, the USA defence headquarters in the nation’s capital of Washington, D.C., destroying one of the structure’s five sides. A crisis of such magnitude – although at this early stage inexplicable amidst the shock – generated instantaneous and saturation media coverage with a plethora of random information broadcast through major television, radio and online networks in the USA and overseas. A day of terror – just after 5.00pm building seven of the World Trade Center complex would collapse after suffering indirect damage – was unfolding. The nature of the catastrophe was immeasurable and inexplicable and no-one had answers: a Washington Post reporter asked an official at the National Security Council to explain what was happening, and was told: “We don’t know anything here. We’re watching CNN, too” (Vossoughian, 2003).

The electronic media moved to centre stage to satisfy the public’s need for information by attempting to unravel what had happened. The coverage underscored the fact that when there is real news, as opposed to media-fuelled, national melodramas, the public can’t get enough of it (Kohut, 2002). Kohut (2002) noted the American public’s strongly positive reaction to news coverage of September 11 was an important lesson about the relationship between the people and the press: that the public’s need to know trumps everything else, drives attentiveness and shapes evaluations of the media.
Wiggins (2001) saw that the immediate response of the media on September 11 was “to seek and to deliver desperately wanted information about the lives lost and damage inflicted by the attacks.” The media thus became, as it often does in times of crisis, the conduit between the crisis and the public, opening up a strong, immediate and much relied on forum of communication. Galtung and Ruge’s (1965) news values of frequency, threshold, unambiguity, meaningfulness, unexpectedness, continuity, elite nations, elite people, personification and negativity would be relevant through the crisis.

**Tourism Response:** There is no evidence of industry response in this phase.

**5.4.3 Consolidation Phase: September 12 – end September, 2001**

**Media Coverage:** There was an extreme sense of urgency in the immediate aftermath as people tried to understand the real nature and magnitude of the attacks. Communication was initially impeded by wide-scale telecommunications failures and people resorted to e-mail, Blackberries and wireless connections (Ferris, 2002). As difficult as communications were proving, there was immense demand for real-time news. The vivid immediacy of the live events, with the images of planes flying into the side of the World Trade Center as the centrepiece, was broadcast widely and repeatedly, generating a strong sense of crisis. Uninterrupted media coverage became the world’s window to the horror being played out.

Reports of people “screaming, running, crying through war zones” (Borger et al., 2001a) portrayed an image of the USA in a state of siege. Stories from the frontline
rapidly circulated the globe, with office workers recounting how they scrambled for their lives, getting outside only to find “an apocalypse” of trauma, determination and ghostly silence (Ellison et al., 2001). Described as “everything Pearl Harbour was and more” (Borger & Campbell, 2001), the press portrayed warlike scenes of aircraft carriers and battleships being hastily deployed and police roaming streets shouting at pedestrians. “Three hours of terror and chaos [had] brought a nation to a halt” (Borger et al., 2001b) as America began pulling up the drawbridges, putting forces on high alert, closing all airports and rerouting aircraft to other countries. Panic set in.

Stories were plentiful and covered many fronts, including the drama unfolding at crash sites, the nature of terrorism and the global ramifications of the crisis, crossing the boundaries between nationalities and countries, somehow supporting the notion that the “defining characteristic of terrorism is … its ability to blur distinctions: between military and civilian, combatant and non-combatant, domestic and foreign, here and there” (Vossoughian, 2003). International media saw “towers too irresistible for terrorists” (Tran, 2001), with the New York attacks hitting the symbolic heart of America’s economic might and the attack on the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., striking “the symbolic centre of USA military power” (Borger & Campbell, 2001). The Guardian editorial recognised the attacks as “the sum of all our fears” (The Guardian, 2001i) plunging America into a state of war with two likely results: American unilateralism or American over-reaction.

CNN was equally quick to amass what would become the best collection of audio and video from the disaster scenes, including film of the first American Airlines plane
striking the World Trade Center, sourced from a tourist’s video camera that happened to swing upward from the sidewalk in response to the airplane noise overhead (CNN, 2001r). The attacks would come to be seen as an event that reshaped the face of the nation and the course of history, changing life not just in America but around the globe (Pataki, 2006). It would be difficult to find a facet of life unaffected.

**Tourism Response:** For the tourism industry, security was high, movement was limited, and the stench and the drifting smoke of destruction was constant. These were the images being broadcast; these were the images that would prove to deconstruct the tourism industry. The aviation sector had experienced hijackings before, however the two airlines directly involved in the crisis – through the use of their planes to mount the attacks – had never faced such situations (Greer and Moreland, 2003). The immediate grounding of aircraft led to a commensurate halt in passenger movements and the heightened sense of threat led to an almost instant standstill in other tourism and travel activities. What was labelled “the worst single terrorist attack in recent history” (Beirman, 2003b) would have an immediate and long-lasting impact on tourism worldwide due to the use of aircraft. Safety and security concerns would plague the industry from now on.

**5.4.4 Acceleration Phase: September – November, 2001**

**Media Coverage:** September 11, 2001, has been described as “a media operation if ever there was one” (Vossoughian, 2003). In the immediate wake of the attacks, millions of people around the world wanted to know all about it and began searching for
news-related content wherever they could find it: television, radio, the Web, newspaper sites. Google activity on September 11, 2001, showed a substantial increase of searches for the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, Osama bin Laden, American Airlines, the Federal Bureau of Investigation [FBI] and CNN, with some 6,000 users per minute searching for CNN alone (Wiggins, 2001). The popularity of CNN as a news source emerged as a result of the first Gulf War coverage and many now turned to it instinctively for the big stories. Online news is often thought to be always accessible, however the Internet, being a narrowcast medium, was inadequately equipped at this time to handle millions of people trying to access sites at once. Hence, the role of traditional broadcast media proved pivotal during the September 11 crisis, both in terms of access and immediacy. The saturation media coverage kept millions intensely focused on television screens for hours, with many channels replacing usual programming with continuous news bulletins. In New York, the CBS-TV broadcast affiliate saw “a surge in ratings, not only because of the nature of its saturation coverage, but also because its in-town rivals had lost their broadcast towers on the World Trade Center” (Wiggins, 2001).

The repercussions of the event were being felt worldwide and there were reports of resource-stretched newsrooms, even in Africa. Other international broadcasters took USA blanket network coverage but, in the case of Africa, some USA networks lost viewers to British broadcasts because of alleged bias. The global hunger for information was just as strong as in the USA, with reports of Web users abandoning chat sites, turning instead to news sites and official government announcements (Gibson, 2001). Web traffic for the Arab news site al-Jazeera also soared, with the site “seen by the
West as a window into the Muslim world” (Hodgson, 2001c). The rise of 24/7 global news resulted in pressure on government analysts to produce fresh reports at a faster pace while also trying to add context to supplement the media’s central angles (National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States [9/11 Commission], 2004). This was suggested as a reason for perceived inaccurate reporting or misinformation, with official responses often needing to answer or correct media stories. Pew’s national survey in the US in November 2001 (Kohut, 2002) found that the public image of the news media actually improved for the first time in 16 years in response to the way the terror attacks were reported, and that Americans held more favourable opinions of the press’s professionalism, patriotism, and morality than before September 11.

**Tourism Response:** The major impact of September 11 on the tourism industry was an immediate and significant reduction in demand for air travel and journeys by both domestic and international travellers (Blake & Sinclair, 2003). Economic impacts of the crisis – particularly costs to the tourism industry – were included in news reports on September 13 focusing on costs to the airline industry of grounded aircraft (Jones, 2001). The psychological impact of the USA as a target and the use of commercial aircraft in acts of terror was expected to have a much bigger impact on tourism than the Gulf War from which, according to the World Travel and Tourism Council, the tourism industry had taken three years to recover (Bogdanowicz, 2001; US National Tour Association [NTA], 2001). The prevailing uncertain atmosphere led the NTA to declare the tourism industry’s short term future as “survival of the fittest” (NTA, 2001). In fact, the NTA’s advice was that focus would have to be rerouted to short-term solutions with longer-term projects and long-haul products put on hold. Marketing plans written just
weeks before the attacks had to be “thrown out and replaced by plans that look more like they should be written for 1992, not 2002” (NTA, 2001, p. 11).

Assessments of the financial sting of the attacks followed on from the emotional fallout as travellers cancelled trips en masse and airlines were forced to announce massive staff cutbacks, some closing operations altogether (Hovind, 2001). Airlines sought to implement other measures to offset financial impacts, with American Airlines ceasing its in-flight meal service to save money. Although insisting that “passengers on some flights won’t go hungry”, the measure also affected services to Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean, and some flights to Central and South America (CNN, 2001c). The Los Angeles Convention and Visitors Bureau suffered from the cancellation of several large conventions, affecting many tourism sectors. In an effort to attract customers, Las Vegas hotels and casinos cut prices; however, this resulted in a different clientele – a more frugal one.

Most US airports resumed operations on Thursday, two days after the attacks, but not without a host of cancellations and anxious passengers. Washington’s airport remained closed due to its proximity to government facilities. Although airspace had reopened, international flights were not allowed entry apart from those diverted to Canada for screening. Airports that did reopen struggled to meet new, tighter security guidelines including a ban on all knives, the elimination of curb side and off-airport check-ins, the introduction of federal air marshals, and a prohibition of all but ticketed passengers beyond airport metal detectors (CNN, 2001w). The measures at the time were a big departure for Americans from the relaxed conditions of air travel pre-9/11. Together
with the new restrictions, the public was told security measures would continue to slow operations at airports and lead to longer lines for passengers (CNN, 2001an).

The tourism industry was helped immeasurably by the “showering of sympathy” on New York and an appeal by Mayor Rudy Giuliani for visitors to “flock back to the city” was generating results (Thome, 2003). For some international markets, however, information was causing damage. Suffering their own collateral negative effects, countries dependent on travellers from the West were further hit by the US issuing travel advisories for its own citizens, instructing them to avoid certain countries for safety reasons. Moves by the US Government to declare that it was not so much America that was unsafe, but rather countries that were either linked directly or indirectly to the terrorist attacks, led to other Western governments following suit with their own advisories (Opanga, 2003). Increasingly, media coverage was focusing on the September 11 crisis as an external issue, reinforced by business-as-usual messages. International media commentators observed that the USA “never advised tourists to stay away from its shores because of the events of September 11 or in the face of heightened security alerts” (Opanga, 2003). US leaders encouraged Americans to return to normality, yet there was a morose mood in restaurants, diners and other public areas (CNN, 2001aj). International leaders were taken on tours of Ground Zero by the New York Governor and Mayor (CNN, 2001av), gaining considerable media attention. Big city life was portrayed as returning and Mayor Giuliani used an appearance on popular television show Saturday Night Live to declare the city open for business. The reopening of the Empire State Building, now New York’s tallest, attracted scores of people in queues stretching around the block.
5.4.5 End Phase: late November, 2001

Tourism Response: The crisis was not entirely over for the tourism industry with activity improving but still considerably down (Blake & Sinclair, 2003). Importantly however, consumer confidence seemed to be rebuilding after a dramatic impact on willingness to travel amid fears for safety; although the industry also had to contend with the emergence of other economic situations that would impede recovery efforts (McKercher & Hui, 2004). Security measures remained topical with recovery efforts hinging on the travelling public’s perception of them as adequate and necessary.

New York Mayor Giuliani – declared the hero of the New York response to the attacks and attributing his success to not allowing newspaper editorial boards to guide his actions – would also stand tall as Time magazine’s Person of the Year for 2001, adding the accolade to an honorary knighthood from Queen Elizabeth II (CNN, 2001ab; CNN, 2001z). New York City had also begun to build public viewing platforms around the World Trade Center disaster site to give visitors a vantage point, in an obvious move from aftermath to recovery (CNN, 2001ar). Although the impacts of the crisis were considered so severe that thoughts of a quick resolution were dismissed (Blake & Sinclair, 2003), the growing perception of the crisis as an exogenous event assisted the tourism industry in moving toward recovery by shifting the source of fear to outside the US.

Media Coverage: Two months on from September 11, two of the three major American networks chose not to play a national broadcast by President Bush – NBC instead
choosing to show an episode of popular TV sitcom Friends (Silverstone, 2002). As the media started being able to put a face to the terrorists, links and ties became the terms of choice by which government and media connected Iraq to the September 11 attacks. The crisis morphed into the war on Afghanistan and Iraq, ensuring ongoing media coverage, but further shifting the effects of the crisis away from the USA. Indeed, through the shift in media coverage of September 11 from incident to recollection, together with the reinforced messages of the crisis as an exogenous event, the tourism industry was finally liberated to look toward recovery. The shift in coverage was not the only shift happening; Pew Research Center surveys found that as the public’s worries and fears declined, so did extremely positive ratings of the media’s terrorism coverage (Kohut, 2002).

5.4.6 Recovery Phase: November, 2001

Tourism Response: Tourism marketers had experience in enticing tourists back into travel following the first Gulf War; however the impacts on domestic and international markets following September 11 called for recovery skills of a superior nature given the increased severity of the crisis (Chen & Noriega, 2004). The number of people visiting the United States had dropped significantly, with normal activity not expected to return until 2006 (Pucci’s, 2003). The Travel Industry Recovery Coalition [TIRC], comprising tourism organisations, was formed in late September, following passing by the Federal Government of the Air Transportation Safety and System Stabilization Act, to lobby government in response to September 11.
By establishing itself quickly within the media as an integral component of the economic framework of New York City and, by extension, the USA, the tourism industry was able to capitalise on the ongoing media coverage directed at the impacts of the crisis, gaining profile for tourism activity and also for broader issues of fiscal and social policy. Media reports covered the descent of tourism officials on Washington, D.C., to highlight their plight and seek federal help. Financial assistance aside, the need to get people travelling again was paramount, with the CEO of Marriott International insisting that it was urgent to “get Americans going again. Get America on the move again. Fly, take a vacation, stay in a hotel, go to a theme park, rent a car. But get out, doing what you were doing before, otherwise, we will really be giving the victory to the terrorist,” Marriott said (Mesidor, 2001).

One government measure involved introducing a tourism tax break to promote tourism activity by allowing those who visited New York to deduct the cost from their federal income tax. The move was a benefit for New York tourism but did little for the industry at large. Recovery efforts across America were disparate: while the Hawaiian Tourism Authority was regarded as doing an outstanding job, other states suffered by not emulating such standards. Certain to attract media attention, “celebrities pitch[ed] in to help” (CNN, 2001g) in the aftermath, hosting telethons and other benefits to raise money – some even donating considerable sums of their own – in moves considered the norm in times of national and international distress. The Travel Industry Association launched “SeeAmerica”, a major television ad campaign urging the public to return to travel (Travel Industry Association [TIA], 2001) and financial support was also received
from the daily newspaper *USA Today*, which donated US$1 million in media value to TIA to promote the campaign in print and online.

The UK, suffering from the double-punch of foot and mouth disease and September 11, launched a £20m TV ad campaign in early 2002 to lure back foreign tourists (Cozens, 2002c). France launched a campaign featuring celebrities including Woody Allen, Julio Iglesias and Roger Moore talking of their love for the country under the slogan “I love France” (Cozens, 2002c). Thailand launched an advertising campaign called “Be My Guest” to promote natural attractions so that foreign visitors would infuse capital into the tourist orientated country (Mahopa, 2002).

**Media Coverage:** As the 9/11 crisis made way for war in Iraq, broadcasters scrambled to book space on satellites so that they could get footage onto screens if and when war erupted. *The Guardian* (2002a) reported a surge in global demand for satellite access with the BBC, CNN and Reuters among those seeking as much access as possible: “Normally people book satellite time in 15-minute slots, but when you need mass coverage it becomes more economic to block-book [hours and days] at a time, which is what’s happening,” said Mark Smith, managing director of a satellite broadcast service. The tourism industry had some idea of the impact of a war in Iraq. What wasn’t anticipated was the ongoing development of terrorism as happened in the popular tourist destination of Bali in 2002 and the outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) across 30 countries in 2003.
5.4.7 Summary

![Timeline of the September 11 crisis, 2001]

Figure 21: Timeline of the September 11 crisis, 2001

In summary, Figure 21 depicts the timeline of the September 11, 2001 crisis, an incident with a relatively short span of critical events but with long-lasting ramifications. Table 4 presents key data arising from the Case Study. Recurring and salient data in relation to the crisis, media and tourism characteristics, actions and responses is structured according to the phases of the crisis applied throughout the case study. This data forms the basis of the within-case and cross-case analyses dealt with in the findings in Chapter 6. The September 11 crisis was rightly recognised as being large and long-lasting in its unquantifiable impact on the tourism industry. The direct involvement of the aviation industry immediately turned the event into one with international ramifications and an unavoidable link to travel and tourism activity. The unique attributes of the September 11, 2001 crisis in terms of the pivotal role of the media are perhaps best captured in the statement from an official in the early stages of the crisis: “We’re watching CNN, too”, (Vossoughian, 2003). The media immediately after the attacks became a prime source of information and a powerful platform. Just over one week after the attacks, the media was already reporting the economic impacts and the tourism industry’s suffering had become global. Profiling tourism’s plight early
on in the crisis was of great benefit to its ability to endure and recover. In the wake of the September 11 attacks, the tourism industry utilised the media quite successfully to promote its plight in the first instance and assist its recovery efforts further down the track. The government’s prolific role in the crisis helped to support the tourism industry’s efforts for recognition and assistance. It also helped to eventually steer media coverage toward an increasingly political focus and therefore lessened the impact of the crisis could have had on tourism activity. Politics infused public sentiment and the US’s response to the attacks became a bigger story and issue than the attacks themselves. Media coverage increasingly focused on the root of the crisis as an external issue which helped to offset damaging reporting of tourism activity. However, safety and security measures earned much continuing coverage and had to be dealt with by the tourism industry as recovery efforts continued. As a media event, the attacks exposed the vulnerabilities of the global tourism industry to everlasting changes in perception of safety and security (Valentin, 2003).

Table 4: Summary of Case Study Media & Tourism data – September 11, 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRISIS PHASE</th>
<th>DATA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Pre-Crisis   | • Strong and enduring tourism profile  
• Destination not immune to pressures – e.g. economic downturn  
• History of threats and incidents |
| Outbreak     | CRISIS  
• Immediately came to attention of media  
• Wealth of random information  
• Previous warnings  
• Atmosphere: chaos, escalating; shock; inexplicable; no-one had answers  
MEDIA  
• Media coverage: instantaneous; saturation; domination; vivid images; speculation; lack of comprehension; drama unfolded on television; fed the public demand and need to know  
• Media was a conduit between crisis and public  
• Everyone left to seek answers from media  
• Perceptions of media uniformed  
TOURISM |
### Consolidation

**CRISIS**
- Impact: immediate; global; dramatic; reality visible
- Extreme sense of urgency to know information; public demand for news
- Perceptions of safety shattered; heightened threat; security a priority
- Official sketchy messages
- Speculation of prior knowledge continued

**MEDIA**
- Media became the world’s window; provided for desperate public
- Media coverage: immediate; global; saturation; vivid; continuous; limited information
- Perception that media created a lasting impression on public; crisis exacerbated by global transmission of emotional stories

**TOURISM**
- Leadership: government
- Response: swift; high security; movements limited; instant tourism impact

### Acceleration

**CRISIS**
- Global repercussions; threat spread globally; escalated event and coverage
- Subsequent (minor) attacks – anthrax; security violations
- Atmosphere: chaos; shock; uncertainty; protection impossible; false sense of security; unsavoury post-events; resilience gone; despair about future safety and security; escalation of hate crimes

**MEDIA**
- Media coverage: global; saturation; proliferation; imagery; speculation; personal stories; economy and tourism covered; security infringements; thin reporting due to lack of information; international media critical stance.
- Crisis portrayed as an external issue (danger is outside USA)
- Security systems attacked: “Swiss cheese”; inferior to other destinations
- Uncooperative relationship between authorities and media
- Perception of media: USA media biased; human emotional response lasted longer than one expects from professional journalists; afflicted by hysteria, paranoia, amnesia and myopia; inaccurate; misinformation; generalised; fostered discrimination; patriotic; deceptive

**TOURISM**
- Leadership: government; international monitoring (WTO, IATA, PATA, etc); little conflict
- Immediate global tourism impact; domestic and international markets
- Short term tourism future was survival of the fittest
- “Showering of sympathy” on USA; aided by Mayor’s appeal
- Immediate priority of restoring consumer confidence but official message of there is very little that you can do to protect
- Activities: discounts, drive markets, reactive short-term responses
- Responses contended with: fear; uncertainty, civil precautionary measures
- Travel advisories on other countries (but none issued against USA)
- New global security measures: tight guidelines; costs of security; civil libertarian concerns
- Renewed patriotism; increased discrimination; hostile to foreigners; anti-USA

### End

**CRISIS**
- Consumer confidence rebuilding although threat remained
- Security not considered infallible
- Other economic situations emerging

**MEDIA**
- Media coverage: ‘life had to go on’; security remained topical; coverage in USA of risk and anxiety waned; shifted to Iraq war; shifting crisis effects away from USA; exogenous; Time’s Person of the Year for 2001 Giuliani

**TOURISM**
- Leadership: government (government couldn’t agree on economic support)
- Quick resolution dismissed; recovery hinged on security as adequate
- Perception as exogenous event assisted tourism
- World Trade Center viewing platforms: recollection; attraction (sensationalism vs. solace)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Recovery</th>
<th>CRISIS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• War climate previously known to tourism (Gulf War)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Illusion of control emerged; confidence to manage risks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Atmosphere: uncertainty remained; terrorism in psyche; recession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Pre-crisis scene not returned to – nothing the same</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEDIA</td>
<td>• Media coverage: media played significant role; created and fostered images; sinister side portrayed; tourism covered; influenced perceptions of safety; reiteration of the story; terrorism coverage ballooned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Media called on to play a role in recovery; help promotion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOURISM</td>
<td>• Aims: re-launch of destination; image recovery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Messages: safety; directed at seasoned travellers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Activities: campaigns; celebrities; Ground Zero; media attention sought</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Steady, wait-and-see pace to tourism responses; disparate efforts in areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Reliance on financial aid, but weak government commitment to overall tourism marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Impacts: travel advisories; discouragement of potential travellers an impediment; cautiousness, safety concerns and perceived risk prevailed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.5 Case Study #3 Bali Bombings, 2002

5.5.1 Pre-Crisis Phase: pre October 12, 2002

Under Dutch rule, Bali became “a living museum” or “the last paradise” and, in the nation-building processes after Indonesia’s independence, it emerged as “the show window of Indonesia”, an archipelago of 17,000 islands (Yamashita, 1999). It developed strongly, with the number of foreign visitors rising from 6,000 in 1969 (when the international airport opened) to well in excess of a million at the turn of the century (Yamashita, 1999). Primarily seen as a cheap “downmarket” destination, the island’s tourism industry had also put considerable effort into developing its luxury offerings through major hotels and private, high-end accommodation. Internal pressures have plagued the island, driven by political, social and religious conflict, and at times opposition to the perceived commercialization of aspects of local culture and building of tourist facilities (Ramstedt, 2001). However, even during times of rioting on mainland Indonesia, it had generally remained tranquil and popular (Templeton, 2002).
5.5.2 Outbreak Phase: October 12-13, 2002

On October 12, 2002, the idyllic tropical paradise was rocked by the bombings of popular tourist locations. Around 10.30pm an explosion destroyed Paddy’s Bar, an entertainment venue for tourists. As streams of injured and distraught patrons fled on to the street, a larger explosion shattered the Sari Club, a similarly venue on the same block and also heavily patronised by tourists. Witness reports described a “procession of people covered in blood, covered in glass, glass embedded in people, people’s backs which have obviously been on fire” (CNN, 2002a). The blasts and subsequent fire would destroy an entire city block.

Eyewitness reports told of both venues bursting at the seams with hundreds of patrons, only to become infernos seconds later, those surviving the initial blast trapped by collapsed structures and flames (Cornford et al., 2002). In the immediate aftermath, it was clear the tragedy had affected many nationalities and became the most serious problem “confronting any destination in the modern history of world tourism” (Australian Tourism Industry Leaders Dialogue [ATILD], 2003). Bali’s most loyal visitors, Australians, were strongly among the casualties but the cosmopolitan market attracted by the destination begged questions over whether the attack was against the western world in general (AAP, 2002a). Whatever the motivation, the image of Bali as a safe destination and a peaceful paradise was instantly shattered, sending intense reverberations throughout the tourism industry. The island was in crisis.
Media Coverage: The news broke almost immediately, with international media picking up the story of death and destruction within a few hours of the incident, coverage in the southern hemisphere greeting much of the public as they woke on Sunday morning, October 13. While there was an obvious sense of confusion, the initial facts were clear: major explosions had ripped through two popular tourist locations in Bali. Headlines like “Holiday haven turns to hell on earth” appeared above descriptions of charred and limbless bodies strewn across the road and terrified foreign tourists, some on fire and drenched in blood, stumbling through the carnage (AFP, 2002a). The same set of news values (Galtung and Ruge, 1965) consistent with earlier case study crises applied: frequency, threshold, unambiguity, meaningfulness, unexpectedness, continuity, elite nations, elite people, personification and negativity.

Tourism response: There is no evidence of industry response in this phase.

5.5.3 Consolidation Phase: October 14 – end October, 2002

Media Coverage: Confusion and panic characterised the immediate aftermath of the blasts. Impressions of death, destruction and adversity were exacerbated by poorly balanced media images and emotional stories transmitted to a global audience (Gurtner, 2006). Early statements by police to the media stopped short of labelling the event as a terrorist act, however the media didn’t hesitate to declare it to have all the hallmarks of one, with it being just a matter of time before the police and the government confirmed it as such (CNN, 2002c; AAP, 2002b). Labelled by the media as “by far the worst terrorist attack Indonesia has ever seen” and “the worst single terrorist attack since
September 11” (; CNN, 2002a; CNN, 2002b; CNN, 2002f), the scene painted was one of emotional and horrific tragedy, with hundreds dead and injured, bodies burned to the point of no recognisable physical characteristics and a lack of medical personnel to treat the injured. The venue that bore the larger blast, the Sari Club, was gutted by fire. Media reports highlighted the club and its precincts were popular with tourists, often packed with Americans, French, Britons and Australians. It was not long before reports confirmed that many of the dead and injured were from these cohorts and at least 20 other countries including Indonesia, Germany, Sweden and Greece (CNN, 2002a; AFP, 2002d). The global impact of the attacks was immediately clear. For the hardest hit nation, Australia, terror was seen to have struck home (Moore & Riley, 2002). The evacuation and repatriation for medical treatment of hundreds of injured Australians in hours after the attacks by the Royal Australian Air Force received much attention (CNN, 2002d), the coverage serving to highlight the number of Australians involved but also the negatives of staying in Bali and the quality of medical treatment. Television portrayed hospital scenes as chaotic, lacking medical staff or facilities to handle the casualties (Ibid.).

Coverage of the Bali bombings was already far more extensive than that given to earlier incidents in the region as the impact on tourism became clearer. Global reports prefixed the name Bali with words such as “holiday” and “haven”. It seemed the world knew little else about Bali, including that it was part of Indonesia. Early reports determined that tourists were the target and that, even though earlier there had been other blasts around Indonesia, the attacks on friendly Bali were an unexpected shock (CNN, 2002g). Headlines in the UK declared “Australia’s utopian view destroyed” (BBC, 2002a) in a
“lively area (that) is to Australians what Spain and its tourist nightlife are to the British” *(Guardian Unlimited, 2002b)*. The US media headlined the bombings as “Australia’s day of mourning” *(CNN, 2002f)*. There was an outpouring of worldwide support, with media reports carrying messages from government leaders in Britain, Germany, France, the European Union, South Africa, Malaysia, Pakistan and India, all vowing to support Indonesia with an urgent and thorough investigation into the incident *(CNN, 2002g; AFP, 2002e)*.

**Tourism Response:** International governments were equally quick to warn citizens to avoid travelling to Indonesia *(CNN, 2002g)*. Amidst early reports of one American fatality, the US was firm in its condemnation of the attacks, with a message that it was taking the political step of “re-evaluating the extent of its presence in Indonesia”, at the same time advising Americans visiting or residing in Indonesia to “examine the necessity of continuing to remain” in the country *(CNN, 2002a)*. Of note, the US State Department had issued a travel warning for Indonesia more than a year before. But, perhaps echoing worldwide sentiment driven by perceptions of its tranquillity, Bali had been widely considered insulated from troubles plaguing the rest of the archipelago *(CNN, 2002a)*. Australians were simply urged to “go [home] now” *(Allard, 2002)*, “leave now” *(Hewett & Allard, 2002)* and “come home” *(Sydney Morning Herald [SMH], 2002)*. In the days following the attacks, images of fear, tragedy and confusion would be reiterated to media audiences. The searchers described only finding “chaos” and were bewildered by a lack of official support *(Hewett & Mercer, 2002)*. “Ice duty” at the hospital mortuary was a daily occurrence for more than a fortnight as the blasts killed more victims than the morgue’s refrigerators could handle *(Watts, 2002)*.
As the community struggled to react, it became apparent that local authorities and relevant tourism stakeholders also lacked the necessary management capabilities, flexibility and confidence to effectively deal with unexpected, complex or critical situations. Rather, their approaches and responses were unrefined, confused and generally lacking public credibility. It was also clear that as the travellers turned away, Bali was in for a hard time ahead (O’Rourke & Needham, 2002).

5.5.4 Acceleration Phase: October – November, 2002

Media Coverage: The high number of foreign casualties ensured continuing international media attention which was further enhanced by outlets keen to show the best of an abundance of supplied amateur visual footage and photographs of the bombings. In addition to the sustained blanket coverage in the immediate aftermath, the new wave of images and explanatory stories helped build the collective fear of terrorism which, among others, was blamed for unbalanced and sensationalist media reporting (Gurtner, 2006). Emerging clearly from the chaos was that terror had struck “Indonesia’s tourist jewel” (Guardian Unlimited, 2002b) and a “tourism Mecca” had been “shaken to foundations” (AFP, 2002b). The international media attention and widespread concern about personal safety and security resulted in reports of a mass exodus of tourists, with countries’ moves to evacuate their citizens creating a visible flood of people off the island (Gurtner, 2006). Widespread cancellations and holiday substitutions promptly resulted.
Australian media played a prominent role in the immediate aftermath with news coverage easier and cheaper to arrange due to Indonesia’s geographic proximity. In many instances, Australian stories were picked up by international affiliates. The initial media coverage focused on Australian efforts to protect its injured citizens, with the first aircraft carrying medical personnel taking to the air within six hours of the blasts – half the normal time for a military medical evacuation – and all critically injured patients moved to Australia within 48 hours.

Tourism Response: Although the media focus on Bali rapidly took on a more political flavour, it was nonetheless forewarning of severe impacts that would affect the tourism industry, not only in Bali but also internationally. Many countries issued travel advisories in the aftermath of the bombings although they generally lacked sufficient detail, failing to define the actual extent of the situation and any specific risks to personal safety (Gurtner, 2006). Reports out of London two days after the attacks labelled the event as a “Devastating blow to Bali tourism” (CNN, 2002e), with predictions of thousands of Europeans, Australians and Americans cancelling upcoming trips. For British travellers, the UK Foreign Office issued a prompt advisory not to travel to Bali. Media indicated British tour operators were heeding the advice and it was expected that tour operations in Bali would be scaled down immediately. Initial reports out of Europe indicated a tourism industry uncertain what the full impact of the bombings would be. Its biggest travel group, Touristik International GmbH & Co [TUI] of Germany, decided not to send any clients to Bali as a precautionary measure, preferring to wait for foreign ministry guidance (CNN, 2002e).
The tourism industry was relieved that the bombings didn’t involve aircraft, drawing parallels with the September 11 attacks (Hotelier, 2003). Inevitably though, the attacks did lead to an immediate backlash against the commercial airline sector for both inbound and outbound movements through Bali. Although airlines cut back services to Bali and Indonesia, they responded by promoting alternative destinations throughout the Asia-Pacific region such as Thailand, Vietnam, Fiji and the Maldives. The island, and Indonesia, knew the importance of tourism and were therefore in no doubt the ramifications of the bombings would hurt business. Internationally, the same conclusions were drawn – Bali’s reputation as a safe destination had been shattered and the tourism industry anticipated it could take years to recover (CNN, 2002e).

Despite criticism levelled at the Indonesian Government over its handling of the crisis, the support of local authorities for the destination’s restoration was commended. Bali’s politicians and opinion leaders “appreciated the potential volatility of the situation and called for restraint using all available media and Bali’s network of village councils and urban wards” (Hitchcock & Putra, 2005 p.62). Leaders of the Muslim community closed ranks in their condemnation of the bombings, and the prominent local newspaper, the Bali Post, took care to avoid apportioning blame, aware that further conflict could prolong recovery time for tourism. The growing sentiment was that local stakeholders should control the recovery efforts and as Bali’s sadness was articulated through newspapers and other local media, the voice of Bali began to be heard.

The Balinese adopted cultural and religious strategies to promote harmony and these rituals – comprehended or otherwise – were widely publicised in the international
media: reports told of “ghosts and gods coming calling out of the darkness” (Hewett, 2002). References to the bombings peppered cultural shows and events as the use of culture as a weapon to counter the crisis was implemented with “Bring Back My Bali To Me”, a popular song in previous decades, played almost continuously on television and radio. Indonesia was being seen to “weep for its neighbour”… and an “uncertain future” (Moore, 2002a). Pleas were circulated through the media for the world to recognise that the “Balinese are innocent” (Stevenson & O’Rourke, 2002). The reactions of the Bali people were reported extensively by local and international media, especially images of plentiful ritual ceremonies to chase away the bad spirits, to prevent evil spirits lashing out again, to rid streets of danger and to cleanse the ground on which people were killed. This coverage presented a reminder to the world of the Balinese culture that was a core attraction for visitors.

The “Bali model of crisis management – a widespread desire for peace, joint prayers, media restraint and the vocal involvement of opinion leaders” – was believed to be having an impact (Hitchcock & Putra, 2005, p.75). However to many, the government and the tourism industry appeared to operate largely as separate entities (Gurtner, 2006). Numerous websites, slogans, promotional trips and re-branding efforts were initiated by tourism businesses yet most only served to facilitate competitive discounting and lead to greater consumer ambiguity. Rates for accommodation options varied across the industry but were on average 50 percent less than standard rates and at times up to 80 percent down (Indo.com, 2002b). The Baliguide, which promotes itself as a one-stop-shop of information for foreigners, was carrying no terror status report one month on from the bombings, although a news link was provided. As did other sites, Baliguide
made a special feature of Bali as a family-friendly destination. Strong travel warnings issued by foreign governments, many of whom had significantly softened their stances by mid-November, were starting to take effect as the number of packaged tours fell. The Indonesian Government and local tourism associations responded to the crisis with a variety of short term measures focused on boosting the domestic market coupled with long term strategies planned to rebalance the economy to be less dependent on unsustainable mass tourism (Entus, 2002). But, the road to recovery remained plagued by the effect of travel advisories.

5.5.5 End Phase: late November, 2002

**Media Coverage:** In November, 2002, the media reported the Indonesian Tourism Minister declaring that the worst was over for Bali, citing the return of foreign tourists, positive results from domestic campaigns and increasing hotel occupancy rates (AFP, 2002c). That month, the Indonesian press was also reporting tour operators had begun to receive bookings from partners in Germany, Japan, the USA, France, Canada and Greece (Entus, 2002). An end had come to “the worst tragedy the island has experienced,” said the Governor of Bali (Bali Tourism Authority [BTA], 2002).

**Tourism Response:** What helped the tourism industry greatly in terms of delivering an end to the crisis was the continuing public return to Bali of survivors and victims’ families. Acknowledging Bali’s unique characteristics that had first drawn tourists to the destination, the returnees – and more importantly the strong media reports of their
recoveries – helped to convey a message that the island would survive as a tourism destination.

5.5.6 Recovery Phase: November 2002 →

Tourism Responses: The Governor of Bali told a special summit that the bombings had attracted incredible international sympathy with dozens of high-ranking government officials from around the world visiting the island to express sympathy (BTA, 2002). The intensive international media coverage was also noted. The main thrust of the Governor’s words however was to assure the international community that the government of Bali and the Balinese community had made a commitment to use the unfortunate tragedy as a cornerstone to develop the destination in a better way. In looking to give meaning to the bombings, Bali was judged to have been too relaxed on security measures and the terrorist attacks were a sign for it to return to genuine cultural tourism, based on Hindu religion (Ibid.). As observed by the Governor, the beach was still there, the culture was still there and the friendliness of the people was still there. What Bali had lost was its image. Noting that tourism depended significantly on the image, the first step to recovery for Bali had to be the recovery of image. The concerted effort by authorities to catch the perpetrators was instrumental in the initial steps of returning the image of Bali to one of safety and security, conditions further improved by tighter security checks at points of arrival to the island, encouragement of villages to conduct their own security checks in the general community and at public events and an increase in the number of Tourist Police (BTA, 2002). What remained missing from Bali’s recovery efforts – the endorsement of foreign governments – came in 2004 when
the UK Foreign Office removed its warning against travel to Indonesia and the tourism industry was reported as “Cheering loudly” (Aglionby, 2004). Recovery efforts could now proceed unencumbered.

Media Coverage: Attempts to reach an end to the crisis were being hampered by intermittent reports of renewed attacks, thus exacerbating the fear factor. Australian media outlets carried stories in late December 2002 reporting that Australians in Bali and across Indonesia were once again being warned to come home after “fresh information of a possible terrorist attack” to occur on Christmas Eve, with the information revealing Australians could be specifically targeted (Maguire, 2002). In the New Year, Australian media shifted slightly from reports advising against travel to Indonesia, profiling instead the nation’s plans to lure international tennis star Anna Kournikova to endorse Bali’s recovery with a lucrative offer to participate in a WTA Tour event that was scheduled for September 2003. It was hoped the player’s presence would stimulate interest in Bali as a tourism destination, especially for Australians. The tournament coordinator said “You watch CNN and it’s all doom and gloom. What we are trying to do is send a message to the world to say here, listen, Bali is still on the map and it’s still in business” (News.com.au, 2003). Also boosting recovery was prominent media coverage of holiday deals throughout 2003, signifying that not only were operators prepared to promote the destination but that consumers were again considering a visit. While the tried and true globally recognised images of Bali are not necessarily closely linked to the original Bali and often exist independently of the island (Hitchcock, 2000), recovery efforts targeted the perceptions and recollections of
tourists, urging them to celebrate the paradise that Bali once represented to them and to try it again.

5.5.7 Summary

![Timeline of the Bali bombings crisis, 2002](image)

In summary, Figure 22 depicts the timeline of the 2002 Bali bombings crisis. Brought on by a sudden impact, events were contained to a relatively short time span but undoubtedly influenced by the September 11 attacks a year prior. Table 5 presents key data arising from the Case Study. Recurring and salient data in relation to the crisis, media and tourism characteristics, actions and responses is structured according to the phases of the crisis applied throughout the case study. This data forms the basis of the within-case and cross-case analyses dealt with in the findings in Chapter 6. The immediate bombing aftermath was characterised by shock, confusion, loss, uncertainty, fear and panic. Those responsible and their intended targets were initially unknown and the subject of early speculation. Links to the September 11, 2001 attacks heightened an already charged international atmosphere and intensified the impact on tourism. Dealing with the crisis became a priority and in a little over a month later Indonesia’s leaders were declaring the time of crisis to be over. However, recovery actions would continue
for some time, especially in the wake of the outbreaks of SARS only a few months later.

The international media had a central role in covering the attacks because of the many different foreign nationals who were either killed or injured as well as the destination’s global reputation. The world wanted to know what had happened and why as well as who was involved and the media sought to deliver those answers.

While the media and tourism appeared to operate independently in initial stages, a supportive relationship between the two based on previous engagements eventually developed in the crisis aftermath. An early lack of clear industry leadership, conflict between stakeholders and uncertain courses of action made way for the emergence of local stakeholders to stabilise and control recovery responses. The core thrust of Bali’s tourist image as a haven of peace had been shattered however the industry held firm to the Bali model of crisis management by encouraging a widespread desire for peace, joint prayers, media restraint and the vocal involvement of opinion leaders. The tourism industry moved quickly and explicitly to discuss travel concerns and provide information. While it took some time for tourism activity to be restored to pre-crisis levels, recovery efforts were largely successful with media support, although the strength of the destination’s pre-crisis profile and the unique relationship between the destination and its visitors cannot be overlooked.

Table 5: Summary of Case Study data – Bali Bombings, 2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRISIS PHASE</th>
<th>DATA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Crisis</td>
<td>• Strong, enduring profile of tourism with aesthetic, cultural appeal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Critical economy component</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Plagued by pressures but generally able to insulate destination</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Outbreak

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRISIS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Immediate news</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worldwide impact; visible impact on tourism; exposed vulnerabilities of global tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Image instantly shattered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atmosphere: chaos; shock; confusion; inexplicable; no-one had answers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEDIA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coverage: instant; saturation; domination; vivid images; speculation; uncomprehended</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public demand / need for information</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOURISM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Response: military; evacuation; shut down</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tourism recognised need to act</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Consolidation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRISIS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Immediate, visible, global impact; soft western/tourists targeted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official sketchy messages; mixed messages; speculation of prior knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government failed to counter threats; assistance chaotic, insufficient; Australian involvement conveyed message that Bali/Indonesia incapable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atmosphere: chaotic; unexpected shock; uncertainty; perceptions of safety shattered; despair and distrust of authorities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEDIA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Media coverage: immediate; global; labelled as terrorism, another September 11; web of terror widened; haven image shattered; images of fear, tragedy and confusion; attack on Australia; attack on tourists; limited to what information was available</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceptions of media: exacerbated crisis with poorly balanced media images and global transmission of emotional stories; concealed the threat through “unreality TV” pre-crisis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOURISM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Response: slow; incongruent and inept (govt); unrefined; confused; lacked credibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indonesian authorities initially refrained from making comment to the press</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of official support; breakdown of bureaucratic order</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vulnerability, operational inadequacies exposed; lacked capabilities, flexibility, confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Movements cautioned globally; tourism aware of impacts</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Acceleration

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRISIS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Global tourism impact; threat to West; threat to tourism; short term tourism future unclear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Atmosphere: chaos, uncertainty, fear; link to 9/11; despair about safety; growing unease; speculation; tourists as targets; incomplete knowledge; distrust of official advice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEDIA – COVERAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Media coverage: global; imagery; humanistic; culture; economic and tourism impacts; perpetrators; safety and security; different viewpoints created confusion; Australia gave prominent coverage due to proximity; international markets did little to encourage travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perception of media: unbalanced; sensationalist; incongruent, incorrect, out of context</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOURISM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>International and domestic impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership: some collaboration: govt/tourism/media but appeared to operate separately; international monitoring; “needed a Mayor Giuliani”; conflict intra-government; local stakeholders emerged to control recovery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Public motivation to protect tourism; called for restraint; avoided apportioning blame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usual immediate action by tourism to separate Bali from Indonesia not possible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Bali model of crisis management – a widespread desire for peace, joint prayers, media restraint and the vocal involvement of opinion leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priorities: image restoration; security/safety (investigation results off-set fear)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short term measures focused on boosting the domestic market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long term strategies planned to rebalance economy; be less dependent on tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Messages: peace; reassurance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications: cultural and religious strategies; individually through websites; incorporated news</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Activities: price wars; celebrities; overseas promotion; families targeted; encouraged travel to aid recovery; reactive short term responses; not adequately communicated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impacts: government created visible exodus; travel advisories lacked detail; Bali the victim of over-zealous governments; international response not comparable to 9/11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.6 Case Study #4 SARS, 2003

5.6.1 Pre-Crisis Phase: pre March 11, 2003

The World Travel and Tourism Council [WTTC] reported that in 2002 Asia ranked second in visitor numbers and lead the world in tourism growth potential (Travel Wire News, 2004). Several of the major cities in Asia – Hong Kong and Singapore in particular – had considerable tourism reputations born over many years of image-building as being safe, cosmopolitan and with distinctive regional flavours of the Orient.
Despite success, the pan-regional tourism industry had been buffeted by crises and prior to 2003 several had made an impact: the Asian Financial Crisis, September 11, Bali bombings, Iraq wars and associated downturns.

5.6.2 Outbreak Phase: March 11 – April 21, 2003

Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) emerged in November 2002 in China’s Guangdong Province, however what became known as SARS initially was diagnosed as atypical pneumonia. On February 21, 2003, Liu Jianlun, a doctor who had treated patients with atypical pneumonia in Guangdong, and who was now suffering from the disease himself, checked into the Metropole Hotel in Hong Kong. While he was there at least a dozen other people contracted the disease, including some who would travel on to other parts of China and to destinations such as Hanoi, Singapore and Toronto. The first official report of atypical pneumonia was not made to the World Health Organisation [WHO] until February 11, 2003 and it would not be until late February that the disease was identified by a WHO epidemiologist as SARS (Mason et al., 2005).

Media Coverage: On March 11, 2003 the WHO issued a worldwide alert about the appearance of several cases of severe atypical pneumonia following mounting reports of infections from Hanoi and Hong Kong hospitals (Pine and McKercher, 2004). Although cases of atypical pneumonia had been reported since November 2002, newspapers and other media were not notably covering the increasing number of cases occurring in Hong Kong and China’s Guangdong Province. Instead, much of the media joined the rest of the world in reporting the ongoing war in Iraq (Dombey, 2003). From its origin
in China, the disease quickly spread to create “hot zones” in Hong Kong, Singapore, Hanoi and Toronto (Mason et al., 2005). In terms of managing the outbreak, the sudden announcement of a serious, contagious medical crisis and the lack of clarity about its nature pre-empted any pre-crisis stages in which authorities could control the disease or manage consequences such as subsequent impacts on the broader economy and industries such as tourism (Henderson and Ng, 2004). The lack of knowledge and limited understanding about the disease created many unanswered questions. This uncertainty added to anxieties and, with many unsure how to respond to the outbreak, the decision-making process was complicated, a situation only exacerbated by the transnational characteristics of the crisis. Yet based on what cases had emerged, an almost immediate connection was made between the spread of the disease and the movement of people and this understanding would create significant problems for tourism industries in both affected and unaffected countries.

Tourism Response: There is no evidence of industry response in this phase.

5.6.3 Consolidation Phase: April 21 – May, 2003

Media Coverage: Media across the globe – with one exception – were soon reporting on the new, virulent epidemic that was being spread by returning tourists (McKercher and Chon, 2004). In China, however, the outbreak received little mention in the national or regional media. When the silence was broken and SARS was acknowledged, the official line from Beijing was that conditions in the capital were normal and safe. A senior tourism official (People’s Daily, 2003b) announced on April 5 that SARS was
under control and “tourism is safe in the country, tourism activities were continuing as normal” and co-operation would be extended to health authorities to eliminate any possibility of infection. While 136,000 tourists had cancelled bookings to Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou, the official said “these abrogations would not severely affect China's tourism industry”. The mood changed on April 9 when China premier Wen Jiabao described the situation as grave, but the real turning point came dramatically on April 20 when Ministry of Health Vice Minister Gao Qiang revealed that Beijing had 346 confirmed SARS cases and 18 deaths, a direct contradiction of earlier official reports of 37 cases and four deaths. As the real toll in China – 2,317 infected and 102 dead – became public knowledge, the country’s print and electronic media devoted more space and airtime to the battle against the new killer.

Daily reporting across a host of international media sources would track infections and deaths (Cole, 2003) and ensuing extensive media coverage continued to consolidate the connection of the disease with travel, especially air travel, amidst reports of airline passengers falling ill (Frith, 2003). The immediate responses from government and industry, as portrayed in the media, appeared disjointed and ultimately confusing due to continuing uncertainty surrounding the nature of the disease and how it spread. All reports and actions seemed to escalate the perception of fear and panic as fundamental elements of the crisis. The WHO took a key role as an information source, providing news about where SARS outbreaks were occurring and warning against visits to affected regions. It also recommended a series of measures targeted at screening travellers for the disease and produced guidelines for how the disease should be
handled, particularly with regard to international travel, but also extending to road, rail and sea passenger movements (Ibid.).

**Tourism Responses:** While tourism is recognised by the medical profession to be a vector for disease dissemination, the outbreak of SARS represented a clear connection between travel and the spread of disease (McKercher & Chon, 2004), bringing the tourism industry into the crisis in a direct way, much the same as September 11, 2001 had an immediate impact on the aviation industry. In fact, the Metropole in Hong Kong was labelled by the media as “ground zero” in a throwback to the preceding 9/11 crisis, and significant stigmatic publicity went the hotel’s way as a result (CNN, 2003a; Fox, 2003). Worldwide anxiety increased about the unknown, mysterious disease working its way around the globe, particularly what it would mean for both health services and tourism industries in the affected regions (Henderson, 2003). Government agencies began to distribute advisories warning travellers away from countries cited by the WHO as SARS affected. Several companies and organisations with international operations also prohibited employees from international business travel. For those who did travel, insurance companies withdrew cover. For the tourism industry, with the diffusion of the disease now firmly linked to travel, it would prove difficult to define the crisis as exogenous, instead placing tourism livelihoods at the mercy of an unknown threat.

**5.6.4 Acceleration Phase: May – June, 2003**

**Media Coverage:** The impact of the SARS outbreak on the tourism industry was widely blamed on the considerable attention given to the crisis by the media, in
particular the nature of the media coverage, with its sheer volume and often sensationalist and alarmist tones (McKercher, 2003; Mason et al., 2005). The news values (Galtung and Ruge, 1965) common to earlier case studies also applied here: frequency, threshold, unambiguity, meaningfulness, unexpectedness, continuity, elite nations, elite people, personification and negativity. While the media were important in raising awareness of SARS, they were also blamed for creating a level of panic that many saw as unjust and unjustified. From the first appearance of the disease in November 2002 to its identification in February 2003, only a limited number of medical professionals and WHO experts possessed knowledge of the potential nature and effects of SARS. Media contained very little SARS information, a direct result of the absence of verifiable information. This would be portrayed by authorities and media alike as a result of Chinese authorities lacking systems to collect, and predispositions to not share, such information. Moreover, for western media, the Iraq war was taking precedence (Mason et al., 2005).

Mason et al. (2005) observed a cyclical attention pattern along the lines of Downs’ (1972) issue-attention cycle to the SARS outbreak, with the alarmed discovery and possible euphoria stage as starting in mid-February 2003. While SARS was now identified, the lack of clarity of the nature of the disease contributed to alarm, panic and sensationalist media coverage. The world’s press, radio, television and the Web closely tracked its emergence, announcing each new outbreak and covering developments in medical information and government action in substantial detail, but broadcasting little in the way of good news about the crisis. For good reason, though, as at this stage there was none. Defining images circulated through global media of masked people in
hospitals, at airports, in streets, fuelling the panic that had begun to grip society (Zeng et al., 2005). Fears of infection were increasingly widespread and seen to be aggravated by intense general and specialist media coverage (Henderson and Ng, 2004).

In Hong Kong, the outbreak was revealed on March 10 through a government media release when 11 health care staff in the Prince of Wales hospital were reported to be on sick leave (Radio Television Hong Kong [RTHK], 2003). The statement was carried in a 30-second late evening TV news bulletin and then the impending crisis was all but ignored. The Hong Kong media’s focus remained on the Iraq War and a domestic political crisis through to March 26, but changed when hundreds of people were evacuated from the Hong Kong Central Library because of a suspected SARS case among staff and a separate incident in which 15 SARS cases were admitted to hospital from seven homes in a housing estate. The crisis then dominated the media for the following two to four months. A fear of contagion gripped the city, with every sector of the community affected: schooling was suspended, economic momentum stalled, shops and restaurants were empty, and tourism ground to a halt.

The main SARS international media attention period was between March and May 2003, the height of the outbreak. The UK and US media placed particular emphasis on the crisis, with UK broadsheet *The Independent* reporting almost nothing but SARS-linked stories on its first four pages on April 25, 2003 and a further three articles on later pages indicative of the volume and extent of coverage (Mason et al., 2005). The UK tabloids were less focused on the issue and when they did feature it, the stories were angled toward how it was affecting holiday makers. More serious emphasis was applied
in the USA with the global travellers’ international newspaper the International Herald Tribune focusing heavily on SARS reports throughout April.

A contentious stage of the crisis was reached with an unprecedented move by the WHO to issue a global health alert on 15 March, 2003: “This syndrome, SARS, is now a worldwide health threat,” said the agency’s director general in the emergency travel advisory. “The world needs to work together to find its cause, cure the sick, and stop its spread” (World Health Organisation [WHO], 2003b). The primary aim of the alert was to warn travellers and provide information to doctors and medical services. While the release was necessary, the WHO faced the dilemma of needing to use global media to disseminate messages about SARS and travel but being unable to control the tone or precise nature of subsequent media treatment. The various ways that the media reported the WHO’s messages contributed to panic, especially in tourism. Just as the WHO used the media to talk to the international community, the community used the media to strike back at the WHO. Canadians were outraged when, in April 2003, the WHO officially advised people not to visit Toronto, putting it on the same footing as Beijing although it was seen to be on the way to recovery.

**Tourism Response:** The impacts of SARS stretched across the world with many countries dealt sharp reductions in tourism flows and tourist activity. General trends included immediate declines in inbound and outbound tourism activity due to fear of catching SARS when flying and declines in domestic activity as people chose to stay indoors amidst the uncertainty and fear. The reduction of movements led to many knock-on effects including significant decreases in hotel occupancy rates, the
cancellation of events, poor attendances at attractions and reduced retail sales. The magnitude of these impacts severely threatened the livelihoods of operators, especially the abundance of small scale operations involved in the industry throughout Asia.

The air travel sector, already suffering from post September 11 and the 2003 Iraq War, was the most immediately affected, with flight seen as facilitating the diffusion of the disease. Around the world, reports circulated of decreased bookings, suspension and cancellation of services, financial losses, salary reductions, job losses and capital expenditure delays (Pine & McKercher, 2004, p. 142). In late April 2003, The Observer’s Travel Supplement in the UK reported that British Airways was offering refunds in relation to some flights to China with travel operators “rushing to get customers out of China” and the Federation of Tour Operators suspending trips to affected areas (Templeton, 2003a). Hong Kong-based carrier Cathay Pacific responded to fears that SARS was spread through air travel by placing newspaper advertisements in which it pledged to do “everything in its power to safeguard the health of passengers and staff” (Pine and McKercher, 2004) but patronage continued to plummet.

As well as dealing with the effects on their businesses’ bottom lines, airlines also had to implement stringent measures regarding the cleaning and screening of passengers in accordance with WHO guidelines. International tourism to China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Vietnam declined more than 50 percent in the first quarter of 2003 (Henderson & Ng, 2004). Destinations where SARS cases were present would suffer similar downturns in tourism activity. The International Labour Organisation calculated that countries where SARS had been present could see reductions of 30 percent in travel and
tourism employment while neighbouring destinations were set to forfeit 15 percent. Infection control took precedence although in some destinations, such as Singapore, awareness of the economic havoc being wrought by SARS was revealed in official statements and pledges to help the tourism industry. Throughout China, the government decided to close many attractions and rural areas based on the belief that, as they had poor epidemic controls, a shutdown was the only way to prevent an outbreak that ultimately could not be handled. China’s National Tourism Administration [CNTA], in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, issued procedures guidelines for all tourism industry businesses for the prevention of the virus, with all measures to be implemented immediately. The CNTA continued to act as a source of information, advising travellers to avoid SARS-affected areas and crowded indoor activities and suggesting that people stay indoors and undertake keep-fit exercises. Tourists were also recommended to stay away from rural areas and tours to and from affected areas were banned (Dombey, 2003).

Hong Kong was a major “hot zone” and the destination was indelibly linked to the disease due to the high media coverage of its spread by a hotel guest after which the outbreak escalated into a global epidemic. The performance of Hong Kong’s tourism industry declined as the number of cases of SARS in the territory increased, suggesting a correlation between the perception of the destination as a major SARS zone and reluctance to travel. Singapore became another SARS hot zone, however within weeks of the detection of the disease’s presence in the country, swift control and prevention measures had been enacted (Henderson, 2003). The war in Iraq and the outbreak of SARS dealt a double blow to the Canadian tourism industry. Sharp drops in inbound
and outbound passenger movements (Canadian Press Agency, 2003a) were compounded by the war starting in Iraq on March 19 just as SARS was emerging as a threat. Although not impacted to the same magnitude as some Asian destinations, Toronto emerged as the western hot spot of SARS and it could be argued that the detection of SARS in Canada shifted the media focus from an Asian crisis to a global crisis.

Cases of SARS were reported in 30 countries across the world (WHO, 2003c), however the impacts of the crisis were not restricted to affected areas. Due mainly to the impact on travel movements, source markets that were SARS-free were not immune to the crisis and suffered downturn in activity as well. This meant that destinations, despite their responses, were largely unable to manage the SARS crisis on their own and were instead subject to being merely a piece of the puzzle, dependent on other destinations in their pursuit of recovery (Henderson & Ng, 2004). The tourism industry was also subject to the impacts of actions taken by governments and authorities, particularly the WHO given the central role it played in the crisis.

### 5.6.5 End Phase: July 5, 2003

**Tourism Response:** As cases dwindled, there was growing confidence that the war on SARS was being won. It was difficult to find a tourism industry untouched by the crisis in terms of revenue or reputation. The World Travel and Tourism Council [WTTC] estimated that approximately three million tourism industry jobs were lost in the hot zones of China, Hong Kong, Singapore and Vietnam alone (McKercher and Chon,
2004). Countries around the world cautiously began to move on, cognisant of the threat of re-infection – as happened in Canada and China – and the uncertainty that would shadow recovery efforts.

**Media Coverage:** Media reports of sporadic outbreaks would continue as isolated cases appeared in Singapore, Taiwan and China, confirming the belief that SARS was not gone completely (Mason et al., 2005). Continued focus on SARS by the health profession – no cure had been found and there was still much to learn about the disease – also fuelled perceptions that the return of the disease was a probability not a possibility (Henderson and Ng, 2004).

### 5.6.6 Recovery Phase: July, 2003 →

**Media Coverage:** News reports in June 2003 focused on recovery and collaboration with Asian nations “pulling together celebrities, advertising gurus and anyone with the necessary brain power and charisma to market Asia as a SARS-safe tourism spot” (Rekhi, 2003). In a June 2003 interview with ETurbo News [ETN], the Secretary General of the World Tourism Organisation [WTO], Francesco Frangialli, warned the negative impact on many destinations was greater than the terrorist attack on Bali and the impact on civil aviation more pronounced than that from the war in Iraq (Heyer, 2003). He said SARS, together with all of its media activities, was a completely unexpected event while terrorist threats are something that the public has learned to live with and adapt to. While observing it was difficult to predict when recovery would take place, especially when dealing with uncertainty and fear in source markets, Frangialli
maintained that the industry proceeded with cautious optimism to restore consumer confidence. As for the media’s role in covering the SARS crisis, Frangialli said that “as much as SARS related media activities were exhaustive, we hope that the confidence will grow consequently with a decline in SARS media coverage” (Ibid.). He believed “the reality of the epidemic was compounded by intense coverage by the media, leading to a veritable wave in paranoia in certain tourism-generating markets” (Ibid.). However, he stopped short of apportioning complete blame to the media, citing the strong negative impact resulting from a combination of factors, including hesitancy to report all cases of SARS and the variety of reactions by decision-makers and potential travellers, which ranged from underestimation to overreaction. He said the media “should more critically approach the issue and not speak about SARS in Asia in general or with inappropriate exaggerations” and cooperate with industry to restore consumer confidence (Ibid.).

**Tourism Response:** Individual governments supported recovery by offering loans to tourism operators and waiving taxes but there were exceptions. The resources needed to fund tourism recovery in Vietnam taxed the government’s resources; in Indonesia, the government was preoccupied with conflict issues in Aceh and the need to support tourism at the same time tested the finances. Conversely, other Asian countries that had plenty of support and were minimally affected by SARS – such as Japan, South Korea and Malaysia – moved ahead quickly with aggressive marketing activities in domestic and international markets. In one of the first clear public signals of recovery, representatives from Asia-Pacific countries gathered in July 2003 for a conference on International Cooperation for Tourism Development under a New Paradigm. They issued a Hong Kong Declaration on the Revitalisation of the Asian Tourism Industry,
pledging to reassure travellers of their safety and invite them to resume travel. The declaration called for enhanced international coordination and monitoring systems and the promotion of crisis management plans adopting best practices. In addition, countries vowed to promote inter-governmental cooperation in addressing issues of travel advisories and facilitation of travel (Xinhua, 2003). The conference used its ensuing media coverage to promote recovery with a number of attendees taking the opportunity to launch new tourism packages (Xinhua, 2003). Tourism operators focused on marketing, with advertising and promotion complemented in many destinations by industry collaboration. Progress was measured through an upturn in room occupancy, revenue and reservations and a slowdown in the decline of tourist arrivals (Henderson & Ng, 2004).

Writing at the end of 2003, Alcantara (2003b) observed that “it is hard to believe that, six months ago, SARS was as ubiquitous as news can come.” He said the tourism industry “could have done without the unprecedented travel advisory that the World Health Organisation issued, the media circus that followed, and the loss in revenue, which to this day are still not back to pre-SARS level” (Ibid.). Regarding the role of the media, though, he offered simple advice: “Those who complain about the media’s sensational take on news stories should be cognisant of the simple logic – if precise information is available, the media wouldn’t have to speculate” (Ibid.).
5.6.7 Summary

In summary, Figure 23 depicts the timeline of the SARS crisis, a crisis that rapidly reached across the globe throughout the relatively contained duration of approximately 4 months. SARS can be characterised as a global crisis, hindered by slow release of information and a lack of communication between the numerous authorities involved in dealing with the crisis. Once the true extent of the crisis was known, or rather revealed, numerous actions were taken in attempt to contain the crisis including prevention and control groups, screening of travellers and implementation of reporting systems. However, true recovery hinged on eradicating the disease as opposed to restoring an image of safety and many destinations were left to wait for this to happen before recovery efforts could be pursued effectively. The SARS outbreak affected tourism activity rapidly but tourism was seen to recover quickly once the crisis had abated. As for the media’s role in covering the SARS crisis, the tourism industry saw that a decline in media coverage of the crisis, in line with a decline in the outbreak, aided the restoration of consumer confidence. Table 6 presents key data arising from the Case Study. Recurring and salient data in relation to the crisis, media and tourism characteristics, actions and responses is structured according to the phases of the crisis.
applied throughout the case study. This data forms the basis of the within-case and cross-case analyses dealt with in the findings in Chapter 6.

Table 6: Summary of Case Study Media & Tourism data – SARS, 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRISIS PHASE</th>
<th>DATA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Crisis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strong tourism performance and potential; strong competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Economic contribution generally recognised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Series of crises endured by the region and individual countries</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outbreak</td>
<td>CRISIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gradual build-up then sudden announcement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Worldwide impact (hot zones; trans-national); immediate link to tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Atmosphere: lack of clarity, knowledge and answers; uncertainty; anxiety; drastic change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MEDIA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Media coverage: none / minimal coverage extended to the increasing cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TOURISM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Response: slow; secrecy; sinister motivations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Eventual actions of government would demonstrate seriousness and pro-active intentions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consolidation</td>
<td>CRISIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Global epidemic; global anxiety; an “invisible” crisis; tourism a “vector”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reality contradicted official messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Atmosphere: crisis unknown; fear; uncertainty; ‘Ground Zero’ mentality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MEDIA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Media coverage: global (except China – little mention); gathered momentum; general and specialist news; heroism; linked disease with travel; faced with slow release of information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Perceptions of media: coverage escalated the perception of fear and panic; stigmatic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TOURISM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leadership: complex; WHO took a key role</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Responses initially disjointed and confusing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Travel advisories implemented (movements restricted)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceleration</td>
<td>CRISIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Numerous destinations; global but with epicentre (China); destinations linked to disease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fluctuations; resurgences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Limited knowledge; delays in communication; estimations and exaggerations circulated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Atmosphere: chaos, alarm, panic, fear, uncertainty; absence of verifiable information and facts; lack of clarity; despair about safety; no one could forecast change/end</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MEDIA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Powerful; fulfilled functions of surveillance, interpretation, social link, education &amp; entertainment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Media coverage: Iraq war initially took precedence; impending crisis initially ignored but changed when magnitude increased; global; vigilant; exposure; saturation; images; blend of global and local reporting; emphasis varied in destinations; “epidemic of the century”; an “open scar”; an “Asian contagion”; greater than Iraq war; economic and tourism impacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Decline in disease spread saw attention wane</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Perceptions of media: sensationalist; alarmist; exaggerated; ill-informed; clouded fact; amplified a containable, localised problem into a major global problem; contributed to creation of panic and fear; costless and rapid transmission of information by technologies; negative; caused impact on tourism; need politically independent, sensible reporting; need to be geographically specific</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TOURISM</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International and domestic impact; impacts not restricted to affected destinations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Leadership: complex; WHO, governments and tourism; international monitoring; conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sought collaboration, interaction, openness, pro-activity between stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Responses generally swift and decisive, although variances in gaining control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dual and at times conflicting tasks of combating the disease and protecting tourism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Short term future for tourism unclear; assessment difficult; image damaged; travel linked to diffusion; coincided with main tourism seasons
• Travel restrictions and civil precautionary measures implemented; political dimension
• Unprecedented WHO travel advisory almost eradicated Asian tourism; heavy-handed
• Activities: refunds; cost-cutting; training; staff leave; campaigns cancelled; anti-SARS campaigns started; tourism ‘couldn’t market its way out’, ‘wasting money on Asian markets’, forced to simply wait; global PR campaigns linked destinations and agencies; domestic focus; discounts; festivals (reactive, short-term); used media for attention and dialogue but unable to control media treatment; differing efficiency in areas
• Financial aid and official statements helped; govt and tourism bodies issued guidelines; govt support varied across destinations
• Destinations largely unable to self-manage the crisis
• Impacts: accurate assessment difficult; unaffected countries promoted safety; increased competition; ongoing warnings; incomplete information; Iraq war; economic damage

End

CRISIS
• Sporadic outbreaks continued; no cure had been found; uncertainty shadowed recovery
• Atmosphere: growing confidence with less cases; threat of re-infection; recurrence a probability

MEDIA
• Media coverage: decreased as cases cleared
• Perceptions of media: ongoing negativity; ‘media circus’

TOURISM
• Leadership: WHO; governments and national tourism bodies also involved
• WHO declaration allowed recovery to really start

Recovery

CRISIS
• Unexpected; more widespread than initially acknowledged; greater than Bali and Iraq
• Atmosphere: uncertainty; reduced confidence; paranoia; recovery difficult to predict; reality compounded by coverage; lack of coordination; performance under pressure; external issues; normality was not pre-crisis normality; cautious optimism

MEDIA
• Media coverage: accurately quoted officials; technically correct; recovery; collaboration; reiteration of crisis; coverage decline saw consumer confidence grow
• Perceptions of media: alarming; negative; inaccurately generalised; shaped perceptions; generated perceived risks and dangers; should have approached crisis more critically; ‘Herd Mentality’
• Called on to help recovery and restore consumer confidence

TOURISM
• Called for international coordination, cooperation between government and tourism
• Financial aid, public & private; limited financial resources
• Aims: restoration of consumer confidence; image repair; re-launch of reputation
• Activities: global; advertising; marketing; domestic targeted; counter negative media; use media to promote recovery; new campaigns; discounts; refurbishments; new products; events; celebrities; incentives; corporate projects; research
• Impacts: misinformation; disparate responses; ongoing threats; increased competition

5.7 Summary

The case studies have described each disaster from the viewpoint of the associated crisis conditions, media and tourism actions and responses. Content analysis both within-case and across cases isolates the key elements which affect media coverage to identify the main pressure points for the tourism industry. By applying within-case and cross-case
analysis techniques, the data in each individual case was assessed for comparative themes, patterns and instances of convergence and divergence. Within-case analysis identified dominant and recurring conditions, actions and reactions during each of the four crises. These findings will now provide the basis for a cross-case analysis which will be dealt with in the next chapter.
CHAPTER 6

RESEARCH FINDINGS

6.1. Case Analysis

After analysing each of the case studies, the focus now shifts to a search for patterns and commonality across the phases of the crises and, in particular, in terms of media and tourism operations in order to identify trigger points that may improve future media-tourism interaction. For this purpose, the findings of the case studies were categorised as follows:

Profile: Pre-crisis tourism characteristics of affected destinations.

Notice: Indicators relating to the advent of the crisis.

Precedent: Prior knowledge or actions that may influence the treatment of, or reaction to, the crisis.

Immediate Impact: The state of the crisis.

Condition: The prevailing mood resulting from impact of the crisis.

Media Coverage: Nature and content of media coverage of the crisis.

Media Perception: Tourism perceptions of the media’s treatment of the crisis.

Response: Responses to the crisis-affected situation, separated into responses to media and general responses to the crisis.

Impacts: Key longer term impacts on tourism as a result of media coverage and responses to the crisis.

The details for the cases are in Appendices 1, 3, 5, and 7 while the tables of findings for each individual case are in corresponding Appendices 2, 4, 6 and 8. The key findings of
the analysis – the themes and patterns identified at each phase following cross-case analysis (see Appendix 9 for category findings) – are presented below.

### 6.2 Patterns Across the Phases

#### 6.2.1 Pre Crisis Phase

The characteristics of each destination prior to the onset of crisis are important in that they mitigate the effects of the crisis on the destination and qualify tourism’s responses. In addition, they shed light on any significant similarities and differences between the destinations which may have influenced actions. The tourism destinations at the centre of each of the studies were all well established rather than emerging and had a strong tourism profile. Normal interaction between media and tourism was a function of standard marketing and promotional activities such as advertising. Although the strength of profile of the destinations showed similarities, they differed to the extent to which tourism was valued by government for its economic contribution.

This affected the ability of tourism to gain funding, profile and other outcomes in critical times. If tourism is a key industry for the overall economy, governments are more likely to focus on ensuring its survival and quick recovery. The destinations had all experienced previous critical incidents or some form of disruption. This implies that while there may have been some complacency, the potential of crisis was not an alien consideration.
6.2.2 Outbreak Phase

Cross-case analysis of the Outbreak phase revealed two different processes of notification of the crises: immediate notification at the onset of the incident (9/11 and Bali) and gradual build-up to a sudden notification (FMD and SARS). In the cases of immediate notification, the media was the primary notifier. For the two incidents that gradually built up to crisis status, eventual notification was delivered by officials but picked up by the media which then became the key disseminator of information. The impact on tourism was fairly immediate in all four cases: through either the imagery within media coverage (FMD) which acted as a deterrent to travel or the negative repercussions (9/11 and air travel; Bali and tourist venues; SARS and international travel). At this phase, all the crises were characterised by shock, confusion and a lack of knowledge. Previously existing systems were no longer apparent, and actors were left struggling to find a definitive source of information or guidance. This pattern was particularly evident across the cases of 9/11, Bali and SARS. In these chaos-afflicted environments, tourism activity was stifled if not stopped.

Compared to tourism, media operations continued with vigour. Cross-case analysis of media coverage during the Outbreak phase revealed that FMD, 9/11 and Bali resulted in saturation media coverage which reflected little initial cohesive understanding of the information at hand. The coverage was in response to intense public demand and need to know and at times was the only information available on the crisis. The level of public interest and the global impacts of the crises saw media coverage rapidly spread worldwide. In contrast, coverage of SARS at its outbreak was initially non-existent or
limited due to the slow emergence of the crisis and the equally slow release of information. Although in the case of FMD initial perceptions about sensational and inaccurate reporting were emerging, strong perceptions of the media’s treatment of the crises had not formed at this stage in other cases.

Responses at the Outbreak stages of the crises reflected the immediate, severe disruption as actors in the system struggled to find a way to restore some form of order to environments that appeared to be severely disrupted. There were swift government and military responses in the cases of 9/11 and Bali in an effort to stabilise security and safety and facilitate rescue. Conversely, responses in the cases of FMD and SARS were initially slower and haphazard due to the initial time lapse in identification of the crisis and in the second instance to a reluctance to acknowledge the crisis at all. Tourism in most destinations recognised the potential impact on the industry and the need to act, however no clear tourism actions were evident.

6.2.3 Consolidation Phase

Following the Outbreak of the crises, events moved into the Consolidation phase where the crisis and its impact became entrenched. While authorities were sought for comment and had an implied responsibility to speak publicly, information at this early stage was too sketchy and they couldn’t comment with confidence. The lack of clarity of official messages in some cases incubated a despair and distrust of officials. The nature of these messages created mixed or contradictory information that added to the confusion that characterised this phase.
The issue of precedent also became significant as most of the destinations had histories of threats or disruptions so a fair degree of institutional memory could have aided tourism responses. Yet this did not prove to be the case. While there was a degree of recognition of what *should* be done, tourism was left floundering, foiled by the unique characteristics of the crises which rendered obsolete the benefits of experience. Also, revelations of prior official knowledge of the likelihood, or threat, of the very crises added to the confusion.

Minimal information, communication delays and precedent conjecture compounded the continuing shock, confusion and uncertainty. A sense of urgency underscored the public’s need to know details of the crises, fuelled in the majority of cases by the impact on human life and safety. In all cases it was clear that any sense of inherent safety or security had been shaken if not shattered. Within this environment, media continued on their rising trajectory of coverage. The immediate reports extended globally to saturation levels, fuelled by graphic representations of what had happened. The use of images was a fundamental component in media coverage across all cases, for reasons that can be attributed to both a lack of any other information and to the value of images in telling a story. Visual imagery was widely available and at times represented the most detailed portrayal of the crises. In addition to providing the media with content, the images also helped to enhance the story.

During the Consolidation phase, as the full effect of the crises became apparent, negative perceptions of the media’s coverage began to emerge. This coincided with increased coverage as more information became available. There was a perception that
the media exacerbated the crises through extensive coverage, global transmission, the prominence of images used and human interest emotions being highlighted. This was seen to directly contribute to an escalation of fear and panic and therefore generate negative consequences for tourism. The theme of leadership also started to emerge in this phase with government generally taking a lead role. However, initial official responses on the whole appeared slow, confused and disjointed. Specific differences were evident: in 9/11 political leaders assumed control; in SARS, very much a transnational crisis, the World Health Organisation (WHO) played a key role; the response to FMD was guided by not only UK government procedures but also European Union directives specific to the nature of the crisis; and Bali was characterised conversely by a lack of initial government support and a breakdown of bureaucratic order. These varying leadership responses, although not directly involving media or tourism at this point, nonetheless influenced the roles and interaction of media and tourism in each case by setting the tone of response.

6.2.4 Acceleration Phase

With the respective events now in clearly defined states of “crisis”, the Acceleration phase was characterised by ongoing uncertainty, panic, confusion and a sense of despair about lost safety and security. There was an inability to forecast or predict the course of the crises. The paucity of information and communication problems compounded the confusion. Reports varied due to a multitude of information sources distributing incomplete information. People largely lacked knowledge and expertise regarding the crises, and, where information was available, dissemination was hindered by flawed
communication processes. Delays in the release of official statements were caused by either withholding of information or by needing to wait for more corroborating details. A lack of coordination and cooperation between parties was also a factor, with for example, “impenetrable” authorities creating an atmosphere of “institutional rudeness” (FMD).

Yet the ongoing characteristics of the media prevailed. Media coverage in this phase had two main characteristics: it was increasingly global in reach and verged on saturation. Professional reporting was often supplemented by contributed amateur footage and photographs which added a raw and “real” quality to coverage. The media concentrated on emotional, personal stories with some coverage of the secondary economic and tourism impacts. To some degree, confusion was created as a result of media publishing divergent interpretations of what information was available. The media were also criticised for generalisation, especially in instances where international correspondents displayed lack of local knowledge. The coverage was characterised as inaccurate and negative (FMD), focused on the event as an exogenous incident (9/11), and as influenced by diverse opinions due to multinational involvement in crisis responses (Bali; SARS). Overall, the media assumed a powerful role in terms of surveillance, interpretation and education, often acting as the link between the various parties involved in each crisis.

During this Acceleration phase, the tourism industry perceived the media as playing a negative role, characterising the coverage as sensational, inaccurate, exaggerated, generalised and distorted. The media were seen to be afflicted by “hysteria”, “paranoia”,

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“amnesia” and “myopia”, with the coverage of the crises a “media beat up”. These characteristics, together with the technologically-enhanced nature of modern media itself, were blamed for contributing to generation of fear and panic and causing significant negative impacts on tourism. Tourism-related responses during the Acceleration phase were limited to critiquing the media and making general comment on the crisis. Generally, leadership was assumed by both government and tourism spokespeople, although in the case of 9/11 government agents appeared to advocate on tourism’s behalf. This institutional support in the case of 9/11 was a tangible reason for the lack of evident conflict in handling the crisis and was in contrast to FMD, Bali and SARS where political and tourism industry conflict was experienced.

The quality of leadership exercised during this phase had a bearing on relationships between the many stakeholders. Complex, inter-dependent systems evolved, for example the entwined activity of the World Health Organisation [WHO], World Tourism Organisation [WTO], International Air Transport Association [IATA] and Pacific Asia Travel Association [PATA], whose representatives contributed to the plethora of media responses (SARS). Although there were individual variances in each of the cases, the nature of new and multi-party systems of collaboration forged by the crises often created conflict between stakeholders. For example, the involvement of various leaders and an intricate network of dependence evident in the trans-national crisis of SARS resulted in institutional conflict involving government, tourism and the WHO.
A significant portion of responses to the crises were aimed at countering the uncertainty, alarm, panic and fear that had been generated. A common response was the implementation of civil precautionary measures and in most cases this extended to the issue of travel advisories against destinations. Although mandated by government, these warning measures attracted significant negative tourism industry reaction. Tourism-specific responses during this phase could be described as first-reaction contingency marketing and were predominantly focused on generating short-term solutions. They included the direct targeting of consumers with discounts and bonus deals in an attempt to generate immediate returns.

As the crises pushed through the Acceleration phase, there was widespread erosion of destination images both domestically and internationally. Safety and security had also been compromised, albeit to varying degrees, and in light of these factors travel plan cancellations and readjustments were common. The persistence of a state of incomplete knowledge of the crises hindered adequate assessment of the situation and appropriate planning to ameliorate the impacts. In the absence of certainty, estimates of recovery time extended to a number of years. Tourism responses to the media continued to be focused on countering perceived negativity. The media were called on directly by the tourism industry to employ restraint and to aspire to both accuracy and truth. At the same time, tourism also now sought to use the media to focus attention on tourism’s plight and to relay key messages to government. Media material was adopted by tourism through the incorporation of news content into its own communication processes with consumers, such as websites.
The disruption that characterised the respective environments up to this point in each of the crises would diminish as the crisis progressed through the Acceleration phase, as threats decreased and greater knowledge and understanding started to be more widely disseminated. The predicament of the tourism industry was exacerbated by the prevailing inability to forecast when change or an official end to the crises would come. The latter stages of the Acceleration phase were a time for reflection and assessment as authorities waited.

### 6.2.5 End Phase

The End phase to the respective crises was declared by an authority in a leadership position. In the case of SARS, the central role seized by WHO put it in a position to declare affected destinations clear based on medical assessments. Although an end to crises had been signalled and chaotic elements had subsided, tourism remained in crisis mode across the cases. This was especially so in the case of FMD, with the decline of the disease overlapped by the 9/11 attacks. The fallout extended to the UK tourism industry which remained in crisis mode although technically still dealing with a different crisis. Across the other cases, tourism remained in some state of crisis as a result of remaining threats, sporadic incidents and, in the case of SARS, no certifiable eradication of, or cure for, the disease. Despite ongoing issues, there was evidence across all cases in this phase of consumer confidence rebuilding. Media coverage, though waning as the crises abated, still continued to touch on sporadic events and ongoing issues, such as criminal prosecutions in Bali. Tourism’s attitudes toward the media became less antagonistic although the continuing coverage was still perceived to
focus on negative content to its detriment. As an end to the crises loomed, tourism-specific responses were geared to “moving on” and pursuing recovery without the nagging influence of crisis-related issues and their profile in the media.

6.2.6 Recovery Phase

Shifting into the Recovery phase, feelings of uncertainty remained, however a sense of confidence, stability and control emerged within the tourism industry. Although the crises were all but over, what now existed was not normality but rather what could be classed as “crisis afflicted normality”. There was not a return to a Pre-crisis condition, but to a new normality that had been shaped by the chaos experienced. Media coverage remained constant and involved reiteration of the crises and crisis-related events. Generally, the nature of media coverage had shifted focus to recovery angles and a move to human interest stories. Tourism’s perceptions of the media had become more reflective in the context of what had happened as coverage waned. Rather than admonish the media, authorities now encouraged positive media coverage that would aid recovery and counter the negatively-perceived crisis coverage.

Tourism was by now proactive in building its relationship with the media, re-engaging in the traditional manner by involving it in familiarisation activities to assist destination promotion and as a key platform to start rebuilding the crucial perception of safety. Restoration of consumer confidence and image rehabilitation were the key goals of tourism recovery responses. Short-term strategies tended to be focused on the domestic market in the first instance, pragmatically accepting that international market
rehabilitation would take longer. In some cases, high profile, often celebrity, endorsements were sought and in others seasoned travellers were principal targets for the campaigns.

A reliance on government to assist recovery, most notably through financial aid, was a common factor. However, the 2nd Estate’s support and involvement varied within the cases, predominantly to do with the nature of the government-tourism relationship in the respective destinations. Recovery responses also had to contend with the post-crisis involvement, both internal and external, consisting of: ongoing implementation of travel advisories; continuing and new threats; impacts on consumer confidence due to emergence of other crises; and changes, at times discouraging for travel, in safety systems such as increased security measures. In this regard, an end to recovery with a return to some sense of normality was, in a way, not entirely visible.

6.3. Identifying Chaos in the Case Studies

The first pattern to emerge from the findings was the distinct phases of the crises. As events unfolded there was a progression, or shift, through a series of stages that was evident in all four crises. This was further characterised by defining moments in each of them, with triggers altering the course of events. Although similarities were evident across the four crises, each was ultimately a unique train of events, influenced by any one of a multitude of variables. While all four crises were of significant magnitude, their characteristics and lifecycle were able to be influenced by the smallest of factors. It was also clear that a cloud of uncertainty, complexity and disorder hung over events,
particularly peaking at the most intense or critical times of the crisis. In each of the crises there was a specific time of extreme disruption. The onset or duration may have differed across the crises, but its presence was clearly apparent in all, emerging at an extremely critical juncture and yielding similar results. Events, actions and responses were also coloured by a high degree of unpredictability. The structures and behaviour that guided industry before the crises were largely absent. Despite the best laid plans or intentions, actors were reduced to wielding little control over events. The time span of the crises could only at best be estimated. However there were better powers of anticipation concerning short-term developments, both in relation to the crisis itself and intra-industry business developments. Despite this unpredictability, aspects of stability, for example in the form of media behaviour, were evident even in the most critical of times, signifying that despite appearances, an underlying order existed.

Chaos Theory posits that minor changes can cause major fluctuations based on the theory that systems, no matter how complex, rely on an underlying order, and that simple or small systems and events can cause very complex behaviours or events which disrupt that order. This behaviour is known as sensitive dependence on initial conditions and is the central tenet of the theory. Chaos is not a single, isolated event such as a crisis but a system of ensuing events. The resulting changes in the qualitative dynamics of the disturbed system are defined by bifurcations, the time when events escalate, the point at which the course of events is altered. The resulting non-linear system gives rise to a complicated pattern of attractors, points around which other system points oscillate. The attractors move unpredictably and have the capacity to create seemingly contradictory and paradoxical forces and outcomes but also provide the system with a
sense of structure. In some cases they can be typified by an organisation’s values or culture or a management style.

In the following discussion the case studies will be analysed in terms of chaos theory in order to see whether the identification of Chaos characteristics can assist the tourism industry in dealing with the media in times of crisis.

6.3.1. Chaos in the Case of FMD

Determining a trigger for the outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease is complex and the exact trigger for the change from normality to crisis has not been identified. A routine veterinary inspection at an abattoir led to discovery of the disease, a highly contagious virus spread through contact with contaminated sources by humans and also by the wind. The UK outbreak was deemed to occur as a result of a worldwide epidemic of a virulent strain called Pan Asian Type O, which had reached 60 countries by 1999. Countries are vulnerable to outbreaks because of the large increase in free trade which sees infected meat transported around the world. The UK Chief Veterinary Officer investigated and eliminated all other possible sources of infection and concluded that the likeliest source of infection was meat or meat products contaminated with the FMD virus.

It was further concluded that the virus could have been introduced to animals through the consumption of infected material in unprocessed, inadequately processed or even processed waste food. How it was actually introduced into the animals is a matter of
conjecture but at the time more than 200 consignments of illegally imported meat were intercepted on their way into Britain every month (Scudamore, 2002). A consignment of meat labelled for a restaurant was found at the farm at which the outbreak started.

Such was the sensitive dependence on initial conditions existing in a rural environment harbouring the disease and which was bifurcated by its spread through farm animals to a wider area. The accepted order broke down to a non-linear system giving rise to further bifurcations around which a complicated pattern of other system points, or attractors, started to oscillate. The major impacts were: the British countryside was quarantined; rural walks, national parks and tourist attractions were closed; there was massive slaughter and public burning of animals; uninfected neighbouring herds were destroyed, resulting in countryside stripped of livestock; and the image of rural England was spoiled for tourists. As a major crisis marks the loss of an organisation’s or system’s attractor, to be followed by a period of disorder until a new attractor emerges, the extent to which FMD precipitated systemic chaos can be thus simplified: the farming sector lost its disease-free status, the tourism sector lost the appeal of the rural idyll and the economy lost revenue because of the collateral damage.

The seemingly contradictory and paradoxical forces of attractors moving in the subsequent non-linear chaotic environment included the tourism industry seeking destination image support and restored access to rural areas, farmers seeking an end to the disease and culling, frustrated tourists wanting to book holidays and politicians looking for solutions. A further bifurcation was activated by the turbulence of the international and domestic UK media, the intensity of whose coverage increased to
levels deemed to be excessive yet which can be rationalised as groping for a new *attractor* such as a post-chaos linear system to create a new order. Thus the chaos period in this crisis can be identified as extending from the discovery of the spread of disease to the peak of cases (*Figure 24*). The chaos stage receded when the number of FMD cases fell as the disease was brought under control, the media coverage dropped back in intensity and the tourism sector looked to the media for support in rebuilding business.

*Figure 24: Chaos in the FMD crisis, 2001*

### 6.3.2. Chaos in the Case of 9/11

Various triggers for the terrorist attacks on the US have been suggested in the wake of September 11. These include the motive to strike against the American virtues of freedom and democracy. Investigation and analysis of the attacks also revealed significant support for “blowback terrorism” (Eland, 2006). That is, it has been argued that the reasons al Qaeda committed the strikes were the US’s military presence in the Middle East and support for Israel. Dialogues subsequent to September 11 have assessed the role of religion, politics, economics, psychology and culture as roots of terrorism (Neumann, 2005). Therefore, as for what triggered the September 11 attacks,
it can only be hypothesised that it was some combination of the above elements and a willing cast of actors with a plan that set in place the chain of events.

Whatever the underlying motive, the hijacking of four planes by suicide terrorists to instigate an unimaginable disaster plunged the United States into national crisis that tipped the *sensitive dependence on initial conditions* into instant chaos. By so changing the *bifurcation* parameters, the terrorists set the United States on a path of retaliation against the perpetrators that took many of its Western allies on a decade of warfare that sustained further chaos. But in the immediate aftermath of the New York attacks, the case study shows *bifurcations* in national confidence turning to fear and anger; in transport and tourism with airlines grounded, increased security imposed and air wardens installed; in emergency rescue and recovery agencies dealing with catastrophic conditions the likes of which they had never seen; and in the media finding new levels of hyperbole to describe the death and destruction at the Twin Towers. The accepted operational and psychological order of a nation broke down to a non-linear system giving rise to further *bifurcations* of the initial systemic *bifurcations*, thus generating a further complicated pattern around which other system points, or *attractors*, started to oscillate.

The early attractors became the management style of the Mayor of New York City, Rudy Giuliani, who inspired the city to dig deep to rise above the tragedy and “flock back to the city”, the pro-active security controls that were imposed on air travel to demonstrate public safety concerns and the rallying rhetoric of US President Bush against the attackers. An important *attractor* was the US’s pro-active stance to regard
the attacks as exogenous, originating externally, thus maintaining it was not so much America that was unsafe but countries linked to the terrorist attacks. These started to spread a sheaf of stability over a state of chaos whose dynamics were being played out by the still unaligned attractors beneath the surface. Thus the period of chaos here, then, was from the impact of the first plane, the consolidation period that followed and into the Acceleration period of the crisis as the reality of the event set in (Figure 25). The contradictory and paradoxical forces would continue through chaos’s most fluid periods – Outbreak, Consolidation and Acceleration – before a semblance of the new order started to form.

Figure 25: Chaos in the September 11 crisis, 2001

6.3.3. Chaos in the Case of Bali

Prior to the 2002 Bali bombings, Indonesia was not unfamiliar or unaffected by extremist or terrorist activity. However, unlike the general pattern of this activity in the past, the 2002 attack struck the central tourism precinct of Bali which historically had been immune to significant or malignant disruption. Further, tourist nightclub venues were directly hit, indicating that foreigners were the intended targets, an aim
subsequently backed by claims from the perpetrators, the Jemaah Islamiyah regional terror group. Although the event was co-opted into the global political agenda and rhetorical paradigm of the US government’s 9/11-promulgated “War on Terror”, the national and local socio-political context in which the attack took place was also recognised as unusual (Reuter, 2003).

The peaceful holiday paradise, patronised predominantly by Australians and Europeans, was rocked by the bombings late on a Saturday night when the nightclubs were busiest, turning them into flaming infernos of collapsing structures. The war on terror had heightened the sensitive dependence on initial conditions in Bali given the minority Muslim population’s links with perpetrators of attacks against the West coupled with its popularity among citizens from countries allied with the US fight back. However the bifurcation of the bombs set in train an international recovery and rescue mission for the dead and wounded and trained the focus of Australia on the regional neighbourhood threat to its north, introducing a highly politicised attractor into the newly created non-linear paradigm. In the immediate aftermath of the crisis, the media were prime attractors in seeking a new order which was slow to emerge as local government, national leaders and the tourism industry were laggard in responding to the situation. The aftermath was characterised by a shattered image in global tourism markets and Bali earned a raft of travel advisories warning tourists to stay away on safety reasons.

In the ensuing non-linear environment, seemingly contradictory and paradoxical attractors could be found in international forums where governments were accused of “taking their eye off the target” with Bali, and foreign leaders vowing to support
Indonesia in the “war on terror”. But the Balinese had their own attractors to deal with, including inadequate security infrastructure, poor medical facilities to deal with the seriously wounded and primitive morgues to store the dead. Thus the period of chaos in this crisis can be found in the immediate aftermath of the bombing and the scrambling of authorities to ascertain what had happened and to what extent (Figure 26). Post-chaos, as the authorities began to increase security throughout the tourism precinct, they embarked on a series of cultural and religious strategies to promote harmony.

![Figure 26: Chaos in the Bali Bombings crisis, 2002](image)

6.3.4. Chaos in the Case of SARS

The Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreak was triggered by a new coronavirus never before seen in humans. It activated a sensitive dependence on initial conditions that led to a series of international and regional bifurcations which promulgated out of a deadly health scare a complexity of non-aligned non-linear systems of attractors. Samples of pathogens identified in the virus looked similar to coronaviruses found in animals leading to the suggestion that the virus probably originated in animals and then jumped species through interaction to infect humans...
In 2005, two scientific teams independently identified the Chinese horseshoe bat as the host animal and as a hiding place for the virus in nature (Australian Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation [CSIRO], 2005). In Asia, many people eat bats or use bat faeces in traditional medicine for asthma, kidney ailments and general malaise.

SARS was found in China’s Guangdong Province a month after the Bali bombings and was diagnosed as atypical pneumonia. But it was not correctly identified by the WHO until February 2003, by which time it had taken a hold, tipping the *sensitive dependence on initial conditions* into the *bifurcation* of a worldwide alert. The announcement of a serious, contagious medical crisis of which little was known precipitated a Chaos Theory paradigm with associated *bifurcations* in Hong Kong, China, Singapore, Hanoi and Toronto and stimulating a wave of separate *attractors* within their health-threat disrupted non-linear systems. A common *attractor* was the connection between the spread of the disease and the movement of people, thus creating a separate *bifurcation* for airlines dealing with customer anxieties hanging over from 9/11 and newly reinforced from a terror perspective by the Bali bombings and the concurrent invasion of Iraq. Adding to the complexity of this single chaos system was the *bifurcation* in China which was lax in acknowledging it hosted the majority of SARS infected cases.

Initially reluctant to impinge on the economics of its tourism industry, China eventually came clean and its internal actions provided a major leadership *attractor* in tandem with the WHO’s rigid approach to declaring SARS infection advisories. The period of chaos here is identified as commencing one month after the first alert, once the real magnitude
of the situation was revealed. It stretched through to the peak in reported cases, with a shift away from chaotic conditions once cases appeared to recede (Figure 27). It appears that secondary systems of bifurcations in the major infection centres sustained a momentum of their own political, tourism and media attractors which developed typically contradictory and paradoxical forces and outcomes as they sought a dominant attractor to coalesce the new post-chaos paradigm. For all affected populations, this role was taken by the WHO which declared the final major infected country Taiwan SARS free in July 2003.

Figure 27: Chaos in the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) crisis, 2003

6.4. Crisis, Media and Tourism Connectivity

The research findings illustrate the effects, actions and responses in relation to media and tourism as they occurred across the phase shifts of the crises. By isolating these categories of findings, a common pattern of media coverage, perceptions of the media and tourism responses across the chaos-affected phases can be seen.
Table 7 consolidates media coverage characteristics through all the cases. It shows that media coverage was consistent with a focus on sourcing comment and images by whatever means, depending on what could be obtained. Certain media characteristics present in early phases carry through to subsequent phases (e.g., saturation coverage), illustrating a consistency in behaviour despite the turmoil inherent in the situation and the unknown elements of the crisis. The intensity of rapidly accelerating media operations coincided with the start of the chaos-afflicted environment (i.e., Outbreak-Consolidation-Acceleration) characterised by lack of information, lack of understanding and a prevailing air of uncertainty. Although similarly affected by the lack of information, media operations nonetheless became global and all-pervasive, often relying on visual information in the absence of words, drawing on both formal and informal sources in their quest for details to inform worried publics. In summary, despite the breakdown of traditional structures and systems of information dissemination, media coverage largely followed normal operating procedures with quality of coverage limited by available sources and resources.
Table 7: Media Coverage characteristics through the phases of the crisis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRISIS PHASE</th>
<th>MEDIA COVERAGE CHARACTERISTICS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Crisis</td>
<td>‘Normal’ tourism promotion (e.g., advertising)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outbreak</td>
<td>Saturation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Chaos)</td>
<td>Domination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public demand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Global spread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consolidation</td>
<td>Immediate (9/11; BALI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Chaos)</td>
<td>Gathered momentum (FMD; SARS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Global</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Saturation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Images</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Limited by knowledge of what happened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceleration</td>
<td>Global</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Chaos)</td>
<td>Saturation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amateur footage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Graphic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emotive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Human interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Economic and tourism impacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End</td>
<td>Waned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shifted to other content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Some focus still on crisis or crisis-related events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recovery</td>
<td>Emotional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Human</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Focused on recovery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reiteration of crisis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: (Chaos) indicates that elements of chaos were evident during this crisis phase

While the media behaved consistently, tourism’s attitudes toward the media changed over time. Table 8 shows that tourism’s perceptions of the media were unformed at the Outbreak phase (early Chaos stage) when the public “need to know” overshadowed the nature of information getting to them. The position of the media was such that they assumed during this phase a primary role as a source of information. Only in the FMD
case do negative perceptions appear at an early stage, influenced by prior incidents and negative media experiences. That is, the crisis-coverage dynamic between media and tourism had been witnessed before during previous FMD outbreaks. Across all cases, negative perceptions of the media were most prominent in the Acceleration phase (middle Chaos stage), the first phase where chaos began to recede as a feature of the situation. Tourism’s heightened negative perceptions of the media during the Acceleration phase were maintained across the latter phases of the crisis, though they were increasingly tempered by the growing need for tourism to collaborate with the media to help restore public confidence. The build-up of negativity toward the media likely affected the capacity of tourism to effectively later engage with the media, and is thus a focus point when trying to determine better methods of engagement and interaction.

Table 8: Tourism Perceptions of Media through Phases of the Crisis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRISIS PHASE</th>
<th>MEDIA PERCEPTION CHARACTERISTICS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Crisis ↓</td>
<td>▪ A tool for tourism promotion and profile building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outbreak (Chaos)</td>
<td>▪ Source of information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consolidation (Chaos)↓</td>
<td>▪ Escalated fear and panic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceleration (Chaos) ↓</td>
<td>▪ Exacerbated extent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Sensationalised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Exaggerated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Distorted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Generalised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Inaccurate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Modern media approach damaging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Contributing to panic and fear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Responsible for tourism impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End ↓ Recovery</td>
<td>▪ Negativity of continuing focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▪ Assessment period of media’s negativity during crisis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: (Chaos) indicates that elements of chaos were evident during this crisis phase
Table 9 shows the progression from immediate reactionary responses by tourism in the early chaos-afflicted phases to more measured and controlled responses as the situation matured, that is, as it moved past a chaos point. Responses in latter phases at times still appeared confused and disjointed, with leadership or authoritative spokespeople not emerging. Responses directed toward the media were prominent in the later phases of Acceleration and Recovery and comprised actions driven by both negative and positive influences. Tourism intuitively tried to counter perceived media negativity but also found it needed the media’s support to provide positive messages. Positive interaction between the media and tourism started to become stronger in the Recovery phase. This interaction was, of course, influenced by the quality of interaction in the preceding phases. That is, attempts and efforts made to interact in the later phases of the crisis, where conditions shifted from a chaos-afflicted environment to normality, were coloured, if not hindered, by the largely ineffective interaction between media and tourism in the chaos-laden phases of the crisis.
Table 9: Characteristics of Tourism Responses through phases of the crises

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRISIS PHASE</th>
<th>TOURISM RESPONSES CHARACTERISTICS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Crisis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>↓</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outbreak</td>
<td>- Military shut-down (9/11; BALI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Chaos)</td>
<td>- Slow (FMD; SARS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>↓</td>
<td>- Tourism recognition of need to act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consolidation</td>
<td>- Slow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Chaos)</td>
<td>- Disjointed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>↓</td>
<td>- Confused</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Emergence of leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceleration</td>
<td>- Seeking interaction with media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Chaos)</td>
<td>- Counter messages (to media)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Called for restraint, accuracy &amp; truth from media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Used news in communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Used media to relay messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Emergence of leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Conflict between stakeholders, including media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Uncertainty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Civil precautionary measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- International monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- First reaction contingency marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End</td>
<td>- Leadership played a key role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>↓</td>
<td>- Mindset shift to recollection of events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Looking to recovery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recovery</td>
<td>- Interaction with media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Counter messages to media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Called on media to play role in recovery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Used media to deliver messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Sought to strengthen media relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Sought presence in media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Involved media in recovery (e.g., familiarisations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Sought support for tourism industry</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Relyed on government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Image recovery objective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Restoration of consumer confidence objective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Short term focus on domestic market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Targeted seasoned travellers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Initiatives to stimulate profile &amp; recovery</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: (Chaos) indicates that elements of chaos were evident during this crisis phase
6.5. What the Findings Mean

The three core phases of the crisis - Outbreak, Consolidation and Acceleration - were characterised by the state of chaos and it is important to note that while media operations progressed through this period with consistency, other entities such as tourism struggled to respond in dealing with lack of order and uncertainty. In the final two phases, End and Recovery, the media’s primary reporting role subsided and refocused, particularly in the former phase as more “official” sources of information became available and institutional information providers resumed serving their regular publics, albeit through the media.

The case studies illustrate the pivotal role of the media in communicating what happened and how as the situations moved from order and equilibrium through chaos to settle on a new order. The media became prime attractors within the evolving turbulence of the chaos dynamic through the core stages in all cases. Immediately following the major bifurcations triggered by the disasters, the media set about trying to make sense of the situation. As the seemingly contradictory and paradoxical dynamics released by the disasters sought attractors within the disrupted, non-linear system, the media attractor started to organise an understanding of events as they were developing.

The first reported versions – because of the paucity of available information at this stage of the crisis – might have been initially ill-informed but were as accurate as possible in time for news bulletins and publishing schedules responding to the public’s need to know. In the meantime, the fluid dynamic of the crises continued, with further bifurcations and new attractors manoeuvring within the disorder – such as civic
leadership, emergency services organisation, damage control – starting to constitute a new order. The crises moved through their stages of chaos as the media *attractors* sustained coverage of developing events and conditions, working within their newsgathering routine and fixed deadline order. As the facts became clearer, the media stories changed to reflect the emerging conditions and as these consolidated into the early shape of a better informed new order, the stories became more accurate and eventually the chaotic state dissipated as a new order took control of the post-crisis situation.

The media coverage in the Outbreak phase (early Chaos stage) during which the crises hit was the first form of notice to the wider public. Its content reflected the imprecise nature of information about the crises and the lack of comprehension about their causes but reported the obvious facts enhanced with images of planes flying into buildings, incinerated nightclubs, animal carcases being burned and people wearing protective gauze face masks. The coverage was dominant in unscheduled special reports and news bulletins and saturated all forms of media. In this phase, there was a dependence on the media to inform and tell the story, driven by the public’s demand to know.

The Consolidation phase (middle Chaos stage) covers the period immediately following the impact of crisis, when the event has been recognised for its magnitude and initial perspectives of its implications are rapidly being formed. However the depth of further understanding is at its nadir. For both 9/11 and Bali, the recognition of crisis was immediate, however it was slow to gather momentum in the cases of SARS and Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD). This phase reflects the imperfect nature of the supply of available facts and understanding, and remains dominated by the initial global media
coverage’s conveyed sense of awe. In this chaotic environment, the media continued to be the source of primary information. However, they already were starting to be seen as the cause of escalating fear and panic in relation to the crises. Elsewhere, governments and their bureaucracies were struggling to assess what happened and what to do. There was evidence that tourism recognised the implications of the crises but there was no clear indication of a response.

The Acceleration phase (mature chaos stage) reflects the crises in full bloom, when there was almost complete institutional understanding of what had happened and why, and what needed to be done to restore order. The chaos that had coloured earlier stages was beginning to wane as a new order emerged and this aided the ability of governments and industry, including tourism, to act with greater intent. The case studies show the media escalating its already established operations, with global saturation coverage being sustained. This was made possible because more solid information became available, allowing media to incorporate new angles, enhanced by amateur video of the disaster, computer graphic recreations, human interest interviews with survivors and/or eye-witnesses and official spokespeople becoming more available. The case studies show the media at this stage becoming interested in reporting wider effects of the crises, including those on tourism.

The Acceleration phase signals a turning point in the crisis conditions, especially with elements of chaos eventually subsiding, and a desire to return to business as usual. Civil responses to the crises showed an emergence of leadership, continuing uncertainty about solutions and introduction of precautionary measures such as increased airport security,
health warnings and travel advisories. The incipient criticism of the media which started in the Consolidation phase gained momentum during the Acceleration phase and the case studies show the media now criticised for being sensational, prone to exaggeration and distortion of the facts, being inaccurate and too generalised and continuing to contribute to fear and panic. This had more to do with the imperfect nature of the initial information than with the carriers of the information. The media were called on to apply restraint in the nature of their coverage and to be more accurate and truthful. Also in this phase, they were blamed for the impact of the crises on tourism. On the other hand, again reflecting a return to order, institutions resumed normal dealings with the media, reverting to the known channels to issue statements aimed at countering negative messages and advising publics about new strategies. Tourism started measuring post-crisis trends and began first-reaction contingency marketing.

The End phase signifies the conclusion of the crises and the case studies show a decrease in media attention, but for tourism a shift from crisis to post-crisis mode. Despite their waning interest, the media continued to be perceived as negative. In terms of response, more political and industry leadership was evident as all systems looked toward recovery. The Recovery phase was typified in the case studies by the media shifting emphasis to human interest and reflective stories and a tourism sector moving into full recovery mode. Tourism set about restoring consumer confidence, repairing destination images, focusing on non-aviation domestic markets, targeting seasoned travellers, launching cut-price campaigns and lobbying government for support. It leaned on the media to play a role in recovery and restored communication channels with it to influence tourist populations to start travelling again.
It is possible to identify the connectivity between elements of the crises, the actions of media and the effect of these actions on tourism to see how tourism was affected by the media’s treatment of the crises. This is presented in Figure 28. This figure is a synopsis of media operations drawn from the case studies. Given the media’s propensity for a certain type of reporting there will be a period in the crisis of optimum interest capable of wreaking optimum damage to tourism – this is the flashpoint that the tourism industry needs to be able to recognise and deal with. Key elements of the crisis that had an impact on the nature or content of media coverage are inherent in the Chaos-afflicted crisis periods that characterised the Outbreak, Consolidation and Acceleration phases. The media, in turn, had an impact on tourism. The data shows how key conditions of the crises correlate with specific aspects of the media’s coverage of the crises. The conditions associated with the Chaos-afflicted phases of the crises appear to have had the largest impact on the media-tourism dynamic. It was during these critical periods that the engagement and interaction of the two either malfunctioned or failed to operate. It was also the time at which perceptions led to critical assumptions and conclusions were formed that went on to affect the media-tourism dynamic in the later, recovery-focused phases of the crisis. The veracity of tourism’s perceptions of the media is not necessarily the issue. Rather, a process of developing greater awareness needs to be the focus for the tourism industry. By breaking down the phases of the crisis to isolate the critical period, tourism stands to gain a greater insight into how the media operates at such a time, and in turn, how this influences tourism’s operations and their interaction with the media. It also allows tourism to reflect on the perceptions it forms about media operations, and how these are connected to and influenced by the chaos-afflicted crisis conditions.
Figure 28: Crisis-Media-Tourism Connectivity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chaos-afflicted crisis conditions</th>
<th>Media response</th>
<th>Tourism perception of media response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sensational events</td>
<td>Sensationalist reporting</td>
<td>· Exaggeration or exacerbation of situation to consumers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worldwide impact</td>
<td>Saturation coverage</td>
<td>· Dissemination of negative coverage to global market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extent of impact</td>
<td>Global coverage</td>
<td>· Impacts on tourism ignored</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact on safety</td>
<td>Public need to know</td>
<td>· Generation of panic and fear reduce consumer confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact on people</td>
<td>Safety and security implications</td>
<td>· Underscores difficulty of access to destination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of data</td>
<td>Use of images</td>
<td>· Heightened sense of impact among consumers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of verifiable information</td>
<td>Speculation</td>
<td>· Graphic portrayal damaged tourism image/imagery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of knowledge</td>
<td>Source of knowledge (but not necessarily expert)</td>
<td>· Inaccurate reporting of situation to consumers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complexity</td>
<td>Lack of clear leader/spokesperson</td>
<td>· Consumer reliance on media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Confused messages</td>
<td>· Required tourism to use media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Confusion/uncertainty of reaction</td>
<td>· Multiple, mixed messages confused consumers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>An end to the crisis not visible</td>
<td>· Perception of incapacity/inadequacy to handle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magnitude</td>
<td>Reiteration</td>
<td>· Recovery chances/efforts hindered and stalled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>· Ongoing presence of crisis in consumer psyche</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chaos Theory criteria are evident in the four case studies in which the *sensitive dependence on initial conditions* of stability were disturbed, resulting in subsequent complex outcomes. The assessments of the case studies demonstrate the complexity of the change agents that influenced the formerly orderly systems and lead to their disruption. In all the cases, the disasters which triggered the crises caused apparent random behaviour across the board in response to the initial *bifurcation*. The crisis conditions had not been experienced before or to such a degree of intensity. They were exacerbated by the unknown origins of the outbreaks of FMD and SARS and the surprise of the 9/11 and Bali attacks. Random behaviour was exemplified in, for example, fatal twin tower rescue attempts, eradicating neighbouring FMD unaffected beasts, excessive quarantine of air travellers during SARS and of morgue ice patrols in Bali in response to the new conditions that chaos generated. Similarly with the media, incessant and sporadic coverage appeared to be random in direction and intensity but there was an unerring order to its news gathering methods and reporting. These and other behaviours during the chaotic period were *attractors* in the new order evolving from chaos and while at the time they appeared to be random, they were explicable components in the continuum.

The start of chaos is easier to identify in the case studies than the end. It was designated with official declarations of the virtual eradication of Foot and Mouth Disease and an end to the spread of SARS. There were statements about the finality of 9/11 and Bali from political leaders urging peoples of respective countries to move on from the trauma. In reality, though, the crises had ended to give way to, in the United States, wars with Afghanistan and Iraq, and in Bali new bombing attacks on the island and national
capital, Jakarta. It is arguable that Chaos Theory conditions remained active within the case study systems beyond the declarations.

Tourism is not always going to deal directly with the crisis elements, but often has to contend with ramifications caused by others dealing with crisis elements. In this research it is the media as the filter or conduit that is under investigation, with the crises causing a crisis-induced interaction between media and tourism. Ultimately, the effects that media actions have on tourism in times of crises are coloured by the nature of the crisis itself, rather than resulting from any deliberate media agenda setting or framing. Individual crises present specific characteristics that are unique to the event and must be dealt with accordingly. However, the identification of the period of chaos which all four crises had in common may be useful in establishing media management protocols for the future. This will be the focus of the next chapter.
CHAPTER 7

CONCLUSION

A good scare is worth more to a man than good advice

- Edgar Watson Howe (1853-1937)

7.1. Outcomes

The aim of the research was to undertake a forensic examination of the interaction between the media and the tourism industry during times of extreme crisis. It was intended that such an examination would make it possible for industry to plan more effective media strategies for times of disruption to minimize collateral image damage to business. In examining the relationship between tourism and the media in times of crisis, this research has four main findings. These are:

- when disaster hits, the tourism industry becomes fragmented and confused over when and how to react;
- the media is consistent during crises in pursuing its news reporting role, but is criticised by tourism for its perceived negative impact;
- tourism lacks knowledge of how to deal with media in times of crisis and needs to be more proactive;
- using chaos theory to identify the evolution of a crisis isolates common features at the earliest stages when the relationship between tourism and media are under
greatest strain. This insight gives tourism the capacity to intervene at an earlier stage to better control current and ongoing media operations.

The research shows how the media operate in “normal” circumstances and how this applies in crisis situations. It further shows the tendency of tourism to intervene with too little, too late, and its ignorance of media operations following a disaster makes it an impotent bystander in the critical periods of the crisis.

The research identifies:

- that industry can identify opportunities for earlier intervention by isolating chaos points;
- that appropriate intervention at this period of the crisis can give tourism improved control over crisis management; and,
- that knowledge of media operations during crisis can ensure that tourism has appropriate resources to assist media at the earliest opportunity.

This chapter expands on these findings and what they mean for the tourism industry. It addresses the chaos period relationship between tourism and media and proposes a tourism/media protocol as a guide for future dealings in times of crisis.

7.2. Tourism in Crisis Confusion

The magnitude of the individual crises and their occurrence within a relatively narrow period – from 2001-2003 – consigned the global tourism industry to a persistently
changing business climate. Like the disparate theatres of four separate wars, the crises each had unique environmental conditions and influences, with their own narratives, sets of characteristics and flow-on results. But a feature all crises shared was that tourism was a victim and the effects on it became cumulative as events rolled out. Tourism managers faced a disrupted business environment with conditions they had not experienced before and that yielded a global net of sustained uncertainty, the results of which percolated through to local tours and attractions. The extent of the crises’ consequences, in terms of their global nature, transport disruptions, tourists’ reluctance to travel, safety and health fears, challenged tourism to find effective means to respond. The sector was swamped by overwhelming media coverage of each crisis and at no point, apart from the recovery period, did it successfully deal with the media.

The research shows that as each crisis situation developed, the general operating environment was initially typified by uncertainty, confusion, despair and even panic. Amidst the chaos, only the media routines remained fixed, constant and predictable. The affected tourism systems responded in haphazard ways to the challenges thrown up by the crises. Apart from Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), the perpetrators or causes in the other three studies were unknown surprise elements and the severity of their impact was shocking to people. Once the occurrence of crisis and its impact had been initially felt – but not necessarily understood – community and agency leadership emerged within the milieu of the rapidly moving, media-informed chaotic dynamic. Strong leadership, however, was not a hallmark of the tourism industry.
The findings indicate that immediately after the crisis erupted there was not a wealth of information or data available for any of the actors to construct a coherent media narrative of the event. They show the media trying to build a story from threads of details but there is no evidence of tourism trying to weigh in at this stage with any aspect of its own story. Observing the “media circus” in the SARS crisis, Alcantara (2003b) said “those who complain about the media’s sensational take on news stories should be cognisant of the simple logic – if precise information is available, the media wouldn’t have to speculate”.

The research findings partly validate the disaster protocol templates that have been applied across the “life” of a crisis in extant tourism management models, notably those of Faulkner (2001), Fink (1986) and Ritchie (2004). However, the first two stages of the models – generally termed Pre-Event and Prodromal (when it is apparent that disaster is imminent) – were found to be largely redundant in the case of sudden and unexpected crisis, such as 9/11 and Bali. Their relevance also was problematic in the case of SARS and FMD where the conditions of crisis were not entirely known until infection had taken firmer hold. The models’ criteria better matched the case study results in later stages dealing with recovery and resolution.

It is not possible to say whether either form of disaster – the shock impact of 9/11 and Bali or the slow-burning escalation of FMD and SARS – made it any easier for national and tourism leaders to respond with coherent strategies. The human dramas of September 11 and the Bali Bombings caused immediate, all-systems reactions that were not evident in FMD and SARS, where there was delayed recognition of the
ramifications. For all the complexities of the four crises, involving a range of affected community and business sectors, the strongest leadership was provided by the Mayor of New York, Rudy Giuliani, who inspired New Yorkers to get up every day and get on with their lives with his never-say-die resolve, and the World Health Organisation (WHO) which dictated health protocols that constrained travel.

Dominant or outstanding leadership was difficult to find elsewhere. In Bali, the government of Australia, which suffered the greatest number of citizens killed and injured, took the lead once it recognised the inefficiency of local systems. In the United Kingdom during Foot and Mouth Disease, a patchwork of authorities tried to lead the way while the tourism industry bunkerized down under relentless local and international media coverage. Multiple agencies issued coping strategies, disagreements developed between stakeholders, and the national tourism authority wrestled with taking a lead.

So, while models of crisis management for tourism identify pre- and post-crisis strategies to minimise the impacts of disaster on tourism (and these remain valid), a new subset of management is needed which provides opportunities for tourism to provide leadership in the initial stages through proactive engagement with the media.

7.3. Media Consistent, Tourism Floundering

_Sensational, adj, causing or seeking to cause great public interest and excitement; very impressive or attractive._

The findings paint a picture of disconnect between tourism and the media during crises. The research depicts events that were sensational in their own right and the media elevated their coverage to match the events’ significance. Being sensational, they begat sensational treatment and saturation coverage. As the research shows, tourism’s view is that this type of story treatment exaggerates the situation to consumers.

Tourism saw the global coverage of these international crises as perpetuating worldwide negativity for its industry. Reporting about victims and their families, and safety and security implications underscoring difficulty of access to destinations, was viewed as generating panic and fear and thus reducing consumer confidence. By resorting to images in the absence of harder facts to tell the story, the media were seen to be damaging destination perceptions. By resorting to extrapolation in the absence of hard facts, the media were accused of inaccurate reporting. Tourism viewed the media’s coverage of general confusion and confused official messages as being confusing to consumers. It was concerned that the entirely normal media practice of reiteration of the story in times of such significant crises sustained or perpetuated negativity in the potential traveller’s psyche. Tell it once but don’t keep repeating it, seemed to be tourism’s stance.

The industry’s reaction against sustained “sensationalist” reporting, evident throughout the research, is entirely natural in terms of self-interest but also highly subjective. The media’s primary focus is to report what is deemed to be in the public interest. The stories in the case studies neatly fitted the criteria of Galtung and Ruge’s (1965) news values of frequency, threshold, unambiguity, meaningfulness, unexpectedness,
continuity, elite nations, elite people, personification and negativity. Media stories generated by the crises took on a life of their own in synchronised parallel with the events they described. Extraordinary events naturally earn extraordinary treatment by the media. The size of the story matches the significance of the event.

Because of their unique, or sensational, nature the crises did not fit a known template. They had not happened before so no user’s handbook was available to guide players – including firemen, police, doctors and nurses, journalists and civic leaders – on how to deal with them. Coping systems to facilitate rescue and recovery are in most cases built on precedential knowledge learned in situ and structured around practice handed down over years of dealing with events. They broadly fit a certain range of conditions. In the cases of the crises cited, few disaster recovery or emergency services systems had the coping capacity to rationally administer solutions. A small example is cited by the Wall Street Journal reporter John Bussey (2001) in company with an emergency services worker during 9/11:

In the blackness, he tried his radio: “Mike! Mike! Where are you?” No answer. Again, and no answer. My hand was on his trembling back, the better to brace myself, and I thought about asking him how long these blackouts and ash clouds could last. Then I realised the full ridiculousness of the question. How would he know? How often does a 110-story building collapse to the ground?

- Bussey, J (2001)

In this context, if leaders of rational systems don’t understand the crisis conditions, they can’t convey a cogent explanation to the media. Therefore, the media themselves try to
make sense so they can deliver on their prime role which is to inform the public. In trying to report on these crisis environments, the media had to operate at the coalface of death, destruction, confusion, disorganisation, lack of knowledge, lack of understanding and panic.

Under their public information provider mandate, the media’s role is to convey the extraordinary nature of an event to a public that harbours naturally inquisitive desire and concern. The in situ journalists, photographers, editors and program managers work to understand it through the usual filters they apply to judge the importance of information to be used as news, applying the aforementioned news values criteria. But they have to first understand what has happened and this earliest rendition of conditions takes place before formal, or official, information flows commence. As the research shows, the known facts of the crises during the most chaotic period were patchy and random, at best, and non-existent at worst.

But due to the magnitude, or sensational nature, of the crises, the public’s desire to know was voracious, especially when people were being killed (Bali, 9/11) or dying (SARS) and a mass slaughter of animals (FMD) was active. And the first media stories were written from random pieces of information drawn from all the initial knowledge available to convey the story. The media take their first shot at a depiction of the crisis to convey the earliest story to their audience, making it as cogent as possible through the use of pictures and text. These initial reports take in obvious core details of building destruction, for instance, which are enhanced by bystanders’ eye-witness accounts and reporters’ own observations informed by credible emergency services personnel. If this
first-draft information begs more questions than it answers, if it doesn’t have an initial credible logic, as was found in the research, it leads to informed extrapolation in the minds of the audience based on what is being reported. Once a greater understanding of the crisis is possible, the various elements of the situation can be rationalised, thus allowing for return to a traditional template of information supply and demand.

In light of these media practices, the initial chaos milieu is an appropriate time for tourism to let its voice be heard, enabling the media to report more fully. The media can then deal with an informed body or authority which understands more of the nature of the situation, facilitating a more complete stream of facts to the public through the duration of the crisis. Secondary stakeholders such as tourism have traditionally started to get their voice heard in the media when the crisis is easing and post-chaos conditions have formed. But as discussed, instead of waiting for this stage, opportunities exist for tourism to be heard earlier in the Outbreak, Consolidation and Acceleration phases when the chaos dynamic is effective.

7.4. Tourism Opportunities in Chaos

Figure 29: Chaos in world tourism crises, 2001-2003
The underlying order in chaos highlights the operations of the media during crisis when chaotic conditions are dominant. The research shows that in the chaos period – in three crisis phases, Outbreak, Consolidation and Acceleration – the tourism system was severely affected by disaster impact as the known order of things was dismantled. The media, however, continued to operate according to their normal routines where “alarming news” is a staple of the daily news diet (see Vignette 1, p106) and escalated the intensity of their reportage to meet the challenges of covering each crisis (Figure 29).

The media reported about the chaotic situations under conditions that were making it just as difficult for them to operate as it was for other players. The media didn’t become part of the chaos, rather they adapted to operate in the chaotic environment, remaining focused and ‘riding the wave’. They constituted an underlying order. They were the constant, a common attractor found in the four non-linear chaotic environments in the research. An insight for tourism about news publishing in the peak of the chaos period can be found in the story during 9/11 of one of America’s major newspapers. The Wall Street Journal headquarters was severely damaged by the collapse of the World Trade Center just across the street (Figure 30).
Its senior editors worried that they might miss publishing an issue for the first time in the paper’s 112-year history so they relocated to a makeshift office at an editor's home. Most of the staff went to a corporate campus where emergency editorial facilities had been established soon after the 1993 World Trade Center bombing. A scaled-down Wall Street Journal appeared on September 12 and its coverage of the disaster garnered many journalism awards. The media characteristics found in the case studies during the chaos period underscore the approach of the Journal’s editors, displaying the media’s routine and professional resolve while all else appears to be in a state of disorder.

The research shows, however, that if there is a time when tourism struggles to be heard it is during the chaos period. This is the time of greatest uncertainty and instability during a crisis, the period of least understanding of where control levers can be found. But, despite the doom and gloom, the nature and, perhaps, beauty of chaos is that order can be found if tourism is prepared to find the patterns. The research shows these patterns are evident in media practices themselves. Early communication to the public
during a crisis should be the tourism industry’s first priority. It is especially required during the chaos period however the catch is that this is the hardest time to successfully engage the media. This is the dilemma that tourism faces, as the research shows, however opportunities can be developed as the new dynamic is evolving. The media are hungry for “content” at this stage and if tourism is better organised it can contribute information that is in sync with the gravity of the situation but still be effective in reaching its audiences.

An added difficulty is that conditions of chaos have made redundant the normal operating systems and distorted the usual channels. While the media remain focused on publishing and multicasting information, the access to reporters and news crews has been clogged by the crisis conditions which naturally sharpen their focus on news values. But the channels and systems are still there as the WHO showed in SARS, a crisis in which there was an equal role available to the World Tourism Organisation, but was not used.

The initial stages of the post-disaster crisis are the harshest and most dramatic, when chaos becomes the midwife by whom the new order is born from the body of the old order. To be proactive in this period, tourism needs to assess what its customers are witnessing through the many forms of media they access and to then extrapolate the effects of customer reactions on future business. With the media being a prime attractor within the disrupted system – that is, by going about its normal business as evidenced in the research – tourism would need to ride the media wave within the chaos period by ensuring its customers hear its voice. In this way, tourism would become an attractor
with a communications focus, equipped with relevant and factual details to articulate how the disaster has affected its operations, or not, and how it will work to mitigate the impact on existing and intending travellers. Thus, an earlier subset of chaos media management strategies could be integrated as a supplement to existing crisis management models.

The following Chaos Protocol of Media Response for Tourism is devised from the research findings to guide tourism so that when the disaster hits, it can act within the chaos dynamic. While the points may reflect accepted staples in crisis communication, they are tailored for tourism to use within the chaos period conditions.

7.5. Recommendations for Tourism During Chaos

The research has defined the chaos period where the tourism industry can initiate response strategies which will allow it to take a stronger, earlier, role that will ultimately facilitate post-chaos recovery. These strategies need to apply across the whole range of tourism’s influence and self-interest, including leadership, government liaison, international aid agency cooperation and tourism system communication with stakeholders in the affected destination and in generating regions. As the research shows, the relationship between tourism and media is fractured during times of crisis but, ironically for tourism, this is when it is most important. The following protocol (summarised in Table 10) is built from the primary evidence of the case studies and vignettes and isolates key elements of media operations to inform future tourism
industry responses. It is predicated on the presence of order within the chaos dynamic, when what appear to be random and fluid conditions dominate.

Table 10: Chaos Protocol of Media Response for Tourism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAOS PROTOCOL OF MEDIA RESPONSE FOR TOURISM</th>
<th>TOURISM CHAOS RESPONSES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **1** The media will report to all publics every known aspect of the crisis |  ▪ Accept the media’s role to publish  
▪ Support its understanding of the crisis by offering credible information  
▪ Facilitate its access to crisis-affected locations  
▪ Understand that media content is limited to what becomes gradually known and information will be incomplete |
| **2** The media will initially focus on what the crisis is, not the later repercussions |  ▪ Interpret and understand the overwhelming media focus  
Follow the story’s momentum so the right tourism message can be introduced for maximum effect |
| **3** The media will sustain its publishing cycle and possibly expand it |  ▪ Accept that crisis enhances the usual news cycle to meet the conditions  
▪ Increased repetition of headlines and replaying of images will persist until “new” news is found  
▪ Be alert for opportunities for tourism coverage |
| **4** The media will collate and organise random facts to build stories |  ▪ Nominate a credible industry leader as media spokesperson  
▪ Supply this person with factual information  
▪ Attempt to fill in the information gaps in the early stages of chaos  
▪ Understand that gaps will persist and tourism will need to fight for its say |
| **5** The media will rely on visual aids to enhance stories |  ▪ Accept the place of images in media coverage  
▪ Facilitate access to relevant, up-to-date images |
| **6** The media will seek comment from knowledgeable sources, such as eyewitnesses |  ▪ Assist the media to find “human interest” interview subjects  
▪ Being cooperative provides a segue for improved access to the media in different stages of crisis |
| **7** The media will seek official comment but a lack of it won’t stop the media operating |  ▪ Provide industry comment as soon as possible  
▪ Identify a media credible industry leader spokesperson  
▪ Accept that tourism may not be the priority news angle  
▪ Work to improve its priority |
| **8** The media will persist in covering the crisis as long as it remains newsworthy |  ▪ Understand the changing stages of media stories, from the hard news aspect of the initial crisis conditions, through to “human interest” victim stories  
▪ Work with the stages and provide information to suit them |
| **9** Tourism can’t control the media or the crisis |  ▪ Recognise that the news media’s activity during chaos is normal and it is one of the few constants in the disruption  
▪ Recognise that what influence can be wielded over the media in normal times is irrelevant in times of chaos |
This protocol is but part of a more expansive chaos response framework that industry should develop to integrate within existing crisis models. These are the nine salient points in detail:

1. **The media will report to all publics known facts of the crisis**

In times of crisis, information is not readily available and what is available is in raw form. The media will capture whatever is available, despite the paucity of ready facts, and will publish and transmit at will. The media only know what they see and respond through their innate news values to the simple fact that the public’s need to know trumps everything else, drives attentiveness and shapes evaluations. Tourism must understand the urgency of the media’s role to publish. It also then needs to support this understanding of the crisis with credible information and facilitate the media’s access to crisis-affected locations. Ultimately, in the early stages of the chaos period during a crisis, media content is limited to what is known and unless affected actors provide input information will be incomplete. Even though the extent of the situation is not fully known, it is timely for a tourism voice to emerge and act as interpreter of the situation and channeller of information.

2. **The media will focus on what the crisis is, not the repercussions**
The immediacy of the crisis dominates the focus of the media which deal with what they see and hear, striving to capture as much information as possible to describe the first instances of what the crisis is all about to their mainstream audience. Therefore what the event means for tourism is not front-of-mind and in this early stage of chaos tourism needs to be constantly monitoring the mood of the crisis to introduce its message.

3. The media will sustain its publishing cycle and possibly expand it

In times of crisis, the media rise to the occasion to fulfil their role to provide the full story. In an era of 24/7 news and multi-platform delivery, the media are capable of stepping up efforts to extend their focus to many aspects of a crisis. To do so, they add additional programming, supplementary sections and do more special reports – including devoting blocks of programming hours – so there is no aspect of the crisis left uncovered. Media enhance their normal coverage to accommodate the critical developments of the crises and to service the needs of a public whose thirst for information is unquenchable. Tourism must understand that crisis enhances the media’s news focus and they extend the news cycle to meet crisis conditions and satisfy public interest. The worse the crisis, the more media coverage it earns. A crisis story will dominate and will garner increased repetition in news bulletins, special newspaper supplements and magazines. Television will replay images that convey the severity of incidents and social media will weigh in with “citizen” reports and images. Tourism needs to be prepared for this wall of coverage with the view to breaking into it with salient and self-serving tourism angles where possible.
4. **The media will collate and organise random facts to build stories**

To build a narrative, the media need facts and often during times of crisis the facts are one dimensional and purely visual. So the media start constructing the story from a wide range of information that may not necessarily be remembered when the final story is told. The fact is that at the start of the continuum of a crisis no one knows the full story and no one knows whether the facts are entirely relevant or not until the substance of the story starts to emerge. The initial stages of chaos have been shown to be information-poor, however that does not prevent the media from providing incessant coverage based on what it knows. The underlying order within this chaos is that the media will find details and will judge, according to news values, what is presented and how it is presented based on what information is available. In the early stages of chaos, information gaps will persist. Tourism should nominate a credible industry leader as a media spokesperson who can access factual information to find and fill in the story gaps. It must be understood that gaps will persist and tourism will need to fight for its say.

5. **The media will rely on visual aids to enhance stories**

At the onset of chaos, when the crisis hits and the initial stages play out, almost the first understanding of the nature of the disaster will be through images. In the absence of cogent information about what has happened, these images will be used to tell the story. This follows the adage that a picture is worth a thousand words and this fact is not lost on newsmakers. Photographers and cameramen are as much a part of the reporting
process as the scribes who write stories, news scripts and blogs. The conventional media are not the only people taking pictures now as camera phones and other electronic devices can provide publishable quality images for newspapers and television. These eyewitness citizen reporters are more often on the spot than the professional media because there are more of them, particularly in remote locations. While the graphic nature of crisis-related images may have considerable negative impact on destinations, tourism needs to accept the place of images in the media narrative and facilitate access to relevant, up-to-date images.

6. The media will seek comment from knowledgeable and eyewitness sources

People are more interested in seeing other people interviewed than a reporter talk to them through a camera. A reporter will also seek to add depth and colour to the story by interviewing people who have on-site crisis knowledge. While the interviewee’s perspective of things is entirely subjective, this is the best available information at the time in absence of other details. This approach packages the crisis in human terms for the media audience, allowing them to better relate it to their own circumstances and compute the severity of the situation. It applies throughout the stages of the crisis and tourism needs to work out when it can break into the chaos reporting continuum with a tourism human interest story. When to do this is a judgment made from tracking the crisis conditions.
7. **The media prefers official comment but lack of it won’t stop coverage**

In all the case studies, governments had a major role due to the magnitude of the crises. Because of the nature of the crises and the fact that basic information was initially lacking, official comment was hard to obtain. In the absence of comments by political leaders or their spokespersons, the media will extrapolate measured conclusions to complete the story. This is not to say that the media do not seek official comment. Adding official statements to media coverage adds necessary weight and depth. It also fulfils the public’s need to hear from leaders in times of crisis. If tourism seeks to get its voice heard during the chaos period it needs to be persistent and to adopt a one-voice, single spokesperson strategy. The importance of the tourism message will depend on the profile of the industry in the chaos-affected market, the ability of its spokespersons to conceptualise and deliver a cogent, effective message, and its persistence in trying to make itself heard.

8. **The media will persist in covering the crisis as long as it remains newsworthy**

It is impossible to put a timeframe to the life of a story but as long as there are new developments and the public’s interest is sustained the media will continue their coverage. This will persist as the crisis evolves through its stages but will diminish in the latter stages of the chaos period. The media follow a proven template of “who, what, when, how, where and why” and will adapt their news frames as information flows improve and fewer answers need to be found. They will then change from the hard news aspects to victim interest stories and ultimately to the impacts of the crisis on various aspects of the economy. The priority media give to the story is determined by what
other stories might be happening. The tourism industry needs to monitor the changing phases of media coverage as it moves from the initial chaotic conditions to softer human interest and crisis impact stories. As the crisis progresses, later stages allow for tourism to more easily engage with the media to the extent that it can start to rebuild its pre-crisis media relationship.

9. Tourism can’t control the media or the crisis

The news media continue to do their job during the chaos period and form part of the stable underlying order, their role enhanced by the global media environment and new communications technology. Tourism should therefore understand the nature of the media order during chaos and develop clear strategies for dealing with them. By doing so, tourism will find that it can bring forward its interaction with media rather than wait for a post-crisis stage to develop. The realities of chaos and disruption cannot be ignored; however the new normality that is concurrently emerging offers opportunities.

7.6. Final Points

This study has examined the media-tourism dynamic in times of crisis. It has done this through the vehicle of four significant disasters that were of such magnitude they had global repercussions. The main insights have been tourism’s fragmented and confused reaction to crises, media consistency in reporting crises, tourism’s inability to deal with media in crises and the identification of a period of opportunity for tourism within the chaos period of crises. The research shows where chaotic conditions start and the points
at which they dissipate, and outlines where a sustained, underlying order of media activity exists and persists during the dynamic of chaos.

The research recognises that tourism recovery models deal adequately with pre- and post-crisis challenges presented by disasters. However, it shows that tourism could bring forward its recovery initiatives, specifically in communications, to start within a crisis’s period of chaos. The period of chaos has been identified in the four case studies and, while trying to pinpoint the trends of emerging order within chaos is challenging, the one point of consistency is the operation of the news media themselves. In the absence of evidence in the research of tourism engaging successfully with media during the period, the 9-point media chaos protocol offers tourism a guide for dealing with the media at this time.

Tourism can take many operational lessons from the research about “in-chaos” conditions. The development of strategies to deal with them is the domain of industry leaders and their marketing and public relations people. The strategising needs to be done, however, with full awareness that the operating environment for tourism after the impact of events of the magnitude of those described in the case studies has been immeasurably changed. It is one of “post-chaos” in which the new underlying order is demonstrably unlike that experienced before the disaster.

No one envisaged 9/11. No one envisaged SARS. They came and they changed the landscape. Air travel procedures have not been the same since. Safety and security conditions for the traveller have been forever altered. But there is no real precedent for such major crises. They cannot be accurately predicted, the timeline cannot be
delineated and while previous experience can inform understanding and response, it cannot be applied like a template. A crisis yesterday is different from a crisis tomorrow. And we know there will be a new crisis tomorrow, whenever that is, as the 2010-2011 earthquakes in New Zealand, floods in Queensland and earthquake, tsunami and nuclear crisis in Japan have demonstrated.

The question is no longer whether tourism wants to be global; it is and so is the reach of media. The nature of both tourism and the media is such that media-driven global connectedness is a fact of life. If a terrorist crashes a plane in New York City it will impact a beachside resort in Australia. If a disease breaks out in the heart of Asia it will cross not just borders but continents. Chaos is a defining feature of each of these case studies. Chaos has an underlying order and it is to this order that tourism needs to look in developing a media strategy for crisis and disaster.

7.7 How This Thesis Met Its Objectives

The thesis met its objectives by developing a picture of the lifecycle of a crisis through the lens of media activity. The crisis lifecycles that it tracked contain characteristics that are overlooked in existing models of crisis management relevant to the tourism industry. The models studied for this research – including Faulkner (1999), Ritchie (2004), WTO (2001), and PATA (2003a) – recognized crisis as a sequential and evolving entity, describing phases and stages through which a crisis would transition. However none dealt adequately with initial phases of the crisis when the situation is most dynamic and therefore most challenging for the tourism industry in relation to its management of the
media. Furthermore, the four crises case studies make it clear that it was at the earliest stages of the crisis, when other systems were in disarray, that the constancy and consistency of the media routines gave them a more dominant role above almost all other entities at the earliest stages of severe disruption. Thus the failure of other tourism crisis models to deal adequately with the media dynamic during these stages left a gap in coping strategies.

The study for the first time put media and tourism into the same sphere, largely ignoring other players to gain a richer understanding of the media-tourism interaction. It found that while tourism is comfortable dealing with media through a public relations/marketing lens, it is ill-prepared or caught off-guard in dealing with the media’s relentless news focus during crisis. The research findings reveal a myriad of problems and inefficiencies with the potential to cause them and these are extensively drawn out and listed in the crisis narratives (See Appendices 1-4). By holding a magnifying glass to the specific relationship between the tourism industry and the media, the findings enriched the existing literature which has not focused on this particular dynamic before. The findings reveal a consistent mode of operation for media during crisis, even at times of extreme disorder, i.e. the media is revealed as a constant force in a system otherwise in a state of extreme confusion and flux. The thesis demonstrates how the application of chaos theory helps us to understand the dynamics of a crisis and the particular role of the media as a key component (attractor) in the chaos-affected system, with a special role in providing stability as the system transitions to a new, post-crisis normality. This presents a new interpretation of the role of media that is not extant in the literature. Not only does this new insight provide opportunities
for the tourism industry in managing its media relations, but it also provides media with a new lens to apply to its behaviour under extreme pressure at times of crisis.

The findings of this study have made it possible to compile a list of recommendations for the tourism industry. Uniquely, these recommendations proffer a mindset that the tourism industry should adopt in order to enhance its interaction with the media industry during times of crisis. The resulting guidance differs from conventional recommendations that have been found in the literature: it proposes a cognitive approach that should precede action. Applying this knowledge and understanding to its planning and implementation of initiatives, the tourism industry stands to at least minimize problems and at best engender a functional, efficient relationship with the media during crisis. In building a relationship in this way with the news sections of the media, the tourism industry will start to enrich its overall engagement with the media. In a subsequent non-crisis environment this can only be beneficial. This research has opened up a new stream of inquiry into tourism crisis management that precedes the starting point that current models propose and presents an imperative that recovery strategies should be brought forward much earlier. At present, the literature is awash with post crisis recovery strategies whereas the recovery, as this research shows, needs to start in the chaos-affected period of the crisis, as the crisis matures.

In conclusion, the findings associated with each of the research objectives help to fulfil the overall aim of the research. By first ascertaining the characteristics of the environment – the crisis – it is possible to put the behaviours of tourism and the media
into context. By then isolating both the role of the media during times of crisis, and the problems that tourism encounters when dealing with the media at such times, it is possible to critique the interaction between the two industries/entities. This then results in an understanding of the interaction between the media and the tourism industry during times of extreme crisis, and the formation of recommendations that can help the tourism industry deal with media to minimize collateral image damage to business. The dual focus on tourism and media, and the crisis-specific research environment, allows this research to contribute broadly to the literature and to provide practical know-how.
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Appendix 1. CASE STUDY #1

FOOT AND MOUTH DISEASE

2001

Figure 31: Timeline of the Foot and Mouth Disease crisis, 2001

A1.1. Prologue

In a land of heritage, royalty, culture, philosophy and music legends, one of Britain’s biggest celebrities in 2001 would be a pure white calf named Phoenix. Ordinarily, beef cattle don’t register too highly on the media’s radar, yet Phoenix, born on Good Friday, April 13, was special. Destined to be slaughtered as part of the nation’s Foot and Mouth Disease eradication program, five-day-old Phoenix survived a lethal injection cull by being overlooked when lying under the dead carcass of her Belgian Blue mother on Clarence Farm near Axminster in Devon. With her father being a Charolais, an all-white breed prized for their beef, Phoenix was bred to breed, her purpose in life to give birth to other cows that would be slaughtered and eaten. But Phoenix was a charmed calf. Despite the insistence of authorities that she be put down, her owners stepped in to demand the execution order be stayed before a needle could pierce her hide. Within a matter of hours after her discovery and as a result of a highly public, national media
campaign, Phoenix literally rose from the ashes. She was cleared of disease, won the support of government and the general public and was reprieved by the most powerful man in the country, the Prime Minister. This was all good news for Phoenix…but 2001 would not prove to be as lucky for the tourism industry.

A1.2. Pre-Crisis Phase: pre February 20, 2001

The United Kingdom, motherland for many citizens throughout the world as a result of Commonwealth or ancestral ties, experiences a constant flow of tourists, the growth of which over recent decades had been made possible by the increasing affordability and frequency of international air travel. The UK visitor experience continues to be a juxtaposition of sorts, influenced by heritage, culture, and the attraction of major urban and provincial cities surrounded by the rolling green hills of the countryside.

But tourism hasn’t always been recognised as a pillar of the economy, with the livelihood of generations of workers reliant on core agriculture and manufacturing sectors. Going into 2001, tourism was the fourth largest industry in the United Kingdom, employing approximately two million people and cited as responsible for one in every four new jobs in the country (Culture, Media and Sport Committee [CMSC], 2001). Its value to the economy in 2001 was estimated at approximately £74 billion, representing 4.5 percent of GDP (Frisby, 2002). Relatively recent tracking of tourism industry trends through the collection of statistical data showed that for 30 years the United Kingdom had experienced a sustained rise in visitors in terms of both numbers and expenditure; pre-2001 figures recorded an average in excess of 25 million visits per annum from overseas and visitor expenditure of almost £13 billion (Frisby, 2002). A
relatively young economic sector in terms of recognition, the tourism industry of 2001
was in a formative phase of building identity and profile, and hadn’t yet started
leveraging its importance as a contributor to the economy at large.


On February 20, 2001, the British Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food [MAFF]
confirmed that pigs at an abattoir in Essex, south-east England, were infected with Foot
and Mouth Disease [FMD], ―signalling not only the first major outbreak of the disease
in Britain since 1967, but also the onset of one of the most serious economic and social
crises to face rural communities in recent years‖ (Sharpley & Cravern, 2001, p. 527).
Foot and Mouth Disease is an animal virus and considered one of the most contagious
of all animal diseases (Baxter & Bowen, 2004). It is known to be transmitted through
contact with infected animals, animal products, contaminated people or equipment, or
on the wind (Sharpley & Cravern, 2001) with different strains resulting in different
spread and severity effects (MAFF, 1969).

The disease is not unknown to the United Kingdom which has a long history of
outbreaks. The first recorded case of FMD was in 1839 with outbreaks of varying
degrees since. Those of 1967-68 and 2001 were the most severe. The 1967-68 outbreak
affected 2364 farms and a total of almost 440,000 animals were slaughtered. Compared
to the 2001 outbreak though, it was considered “geographically concentrated due to the
prevailing smaller scale and more localised structure of farming in the UK” (Sharpley &
Cravern, 2001, p. 537) and was classified as a regional epidemic, with the main tourist
centres of the day generally unaffected. Conversely, the 2001 outbreak would emerge as
a national epidemic, stimulated by outbreaks in tourism zones including Cumbria and Cornwall (Baxter & Bowen, 2004).

Identification of the disease in 2001 did not occur until the infected pigs had gone to slaughter. The time lapse between infection and detection allowed for the infection to spread unchecked by other animal movements from the infected farm. Thus, the disease had begun to spread well before it was identified and ahead of the introduction of an animal movement ban (Figure 32). The European Union identified the potential threats of the outbreak and from Brussels urged the UK to ensure against the disease spreading across Europe. However, a spokesman said the European Union [EU] was in the early stages “satisfied with measures taken” by UK authorities to combat the disease (Associated Press [AP], 2001). Ominously, the same news report included a statement from the then UK Agriculture Minister that the ongoing discovery of cases was a “serious development” and that the full extent of the problem was not yet known.

Figure 32: Map of the extent of the Foot and Mouth Disease outbreak, 2001 (Thompson et al., 2002).
As much as Foot and Mouth is a known disease – there are multiple strains and multiple circumstances under which it develops – most outbreaks come without warning and often lead to significant effects. History shows “rapid responses and clear implementation of culling to be the most appropriate method of impact minimization” (Yeoman et al., 2005, p. 180), with media engagement and communication important elements in public education. In the 12-month period preceding the 2001 UK outbreak, FMD was reported in Argentina, Bhutan, Brazil, Colombia, Egypt, Greece, Japan, Kuwait, Malawi, Malaysia, Namibia, Peru, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Swaziland, Taiwan, Turkey, Uruguay and Zimbabwe (Herbert, 2001). (Figure 33) Of note, however, is the differing public notice achieved by these outbreaks, especially the lesser coverage they attracted compared to that in the UK. Yeoman et al. (2005, p. 180) suggest “the severity of the UK outbreak was a partial by-product of the highly developed domestic livestock trade in the UK.”

![Figure 33: Foot & Mouth Disease (FMD) Outbreaks 1/00-2/01](North Dakota Department of Agriculture, 2001)
The 2001 outbreak hit in the month of February, just prior to the start of the main season for UK tourism and would carry through the summer months, spanning a time usually recognised as prosperous for the industry. Over the immediate days following the outbreak, much of the British press carried front-page graphics of burning pyres of cattle – some burning for many days – with reports detailing step-by-step the process of slaughter and destruction and the havoc being wrought on the farming industry (AP, 2001). These reports quickly filtered out through global media affiliates.

CNN reports in the first week of the outbreak reviewed the 1967 occurrence, recalling the devastating six-month nightmare inflicted on the farming industry and speculating that the current outbreaks could be comparatively worse (Sussman, 2001). Immediate impacts on tourism did not go unnoticed by the media in the first week after the outbreak’s announcement, with The Guardian (Day, 2001e) reporting the cancellation of bookings and forewarning of business closures should the crisis persist through to Easter, the unofficial start of the tourism season. Tourism industry boards called for government assistance and the national tourism authority took steps to reassure visitors that the UK was still a safe destination to visit (Day, 2001e). However, the ensuing media coverage of the crisis would serve to compound the havoc already inflicted on the rural tourism areas by the disease alone. Coverage of the crisis impacted on the mainstays of UK tourism imagery, that of rolling green hills of the countryside, farmers plying their trade, paddock-to-table produce, and the allure of village life.

Frisby (2002) noted that at the onset of the outbreak, the UK’s peak agency for tourism, the British Tourism Authority [BTA], “quickly realised the serious impact” the outbreak would wreak on tourism and “recognised its [BTA] responsibility to take action” (p.90).
However, he further contends that the industry faced an immediate battle against “worldwide sensationalist and frequently inaccurate media reporting of the crisis,” (p. 90) and that this coverage “started to cause widespread concern on an almost global scale about visiting Britain.” The media was responding to the story through the prism of Galtung and Ruge’s (1965) news values of frequency, threshold, unambiguity, meaningfulness, unexpectedness, continuity, elite nations, elite people, personification and negativity and these would be applicable through the crisis.


The immediate response by government authorities to the outbreak was guided by European Union directives which set out procedures to be adopted for the control of Foot and Mouth Disease. Supplementary controls were implemented locally to minimise the risk of the general public and tourists spreading the disease, including the closure of footpaths, tourist attractions, some national parks and parks in south-west London. In effect, “the government’s initial response to the outbreak, in addition to specific controls on the farming sector, was to place the entire British countryside under quarantine, with immediate and inevitable consequences for the rural tourism industry” (Sharpley & Craven, 2001, p. 529).

As the crisis consolidated its presence, media coverage gathered momentum in the UK and overseas. A programming initiative by national and internationally-syndicated broadcaster the BBC to adjust its schedule to include Foot and Mouth specials was indicative of the saturation coverage delivered (Hodgson, 2001a). Other UK and international media reports detailing the moves of government to curtail the spread of
FMD included appeals to the public to steer clear of the countryside (Cowell, 2001a). The need was recognised to effectively control the spread of the disease – and reduce uncertainty as to how far it had already reached – and prompted implementation of movement-restriction measures. However, the government’s actions did not escape public criticism, it being seen as over-reactive and detrimental to tourism by favouring the agriculture sector. One anonymous business operator, echoing the sentiments of many, said “It seems to me that the control measures…imposed have been carried too far, adding that “a more sensible application of rules would encourage co-operation and relieve some of the pressure on the tourism industry” (Anonymous, 2001, p. 3).

The government was also accused of contributing to the fallout by providing insufficient information about the disease and the size of the outbreak. Even the agricultural sector was incensed: “Facts regarding foot and mouth, what are they? Nobody knows, or so it seems. I communicate to a very large audience daily and nobody can tell me…!” (Anonymous, 2001, p. 3). Conjecture as to how the crisis could have been more effectively dealt with was rife and received much attention. The “single minded pursuit of protecting the livestock industry” (CMSC, 2001, p. xiii) grew to become a public point of contention between the government and industry and the issue would play out in the media through stakeholder communications as the crisis developed. As the outbreak was revealed to be more serious than first expected, responses by authorities to the crisis were interpreted as being politically tinged in the context of impending general elections and these sentiments provided significant fodder for the media.

The plight of the tourism industry at the mercy of this crisis accords with Hall’s (2002) account of the media’s role in influencing public opinion and perception. The direct link
between media and public perception is evident in the FMD crisis, with particular reference to the political climate at the time. With elections looming for the Government, the media was positioned in a powerful, central role in terms of message delivery. The climate put increased media attention on the government’s activities, notwithstanding the government’s own actions to adopt a strong profile in combating the crisis. The media’s focus on the government and the government’s use of the media led many within the tourism industry to believe its actions were driven by political campaign motives.

Political manoeuvring aside, the tourism industry struggled to see economic justification for the government’s actions and, although admitting that the measures adopted probably led to swift control of the outbreak, the industry was steadfast in believing they detrimentally affected tourism by compounding the problems it already faced. In particular, Sharpley & Craven (2001) report, the industry believed images carried in the media resulting from actions to address the outbreak were sensationalist and created considerable negativity.

The government’s policy to combat the disease required the slaughter and burning of animals. The subsequent images of a countryside filled with piles of burning animal carcasses were judged by tourism as a deterrent to potential visitors. And the industry worried the local effect was multiplied by transmission of the images to global audiences (Sharpley & Craven, 2001). Research later conducted by the English Tourist Council [ETC] would find 46% of respondents were put off visiting the countryside by the prospect of seeing the destruction and disposal of animals but only 38% said they would avoid visiting because of potential health risks (ETC, 2001a).
The requirement that not only diseased animals be culled but also those in neighbouring precincts compounded the image issue. Considerable herds of cattle had to be destroyed and therefore, in effect, stripped some areas of countryside of livestock altogether, significantly affecting visitors’ dreams of seeing a living, working countryside and eroding the aesthetic characteristics of many regions (CMSC, 2001). In light of tourists wanting to experience rural life, damage to the tourism industry in some areas could have been permanent if the character of the area was to remain altered (Sharpley & Cravern, 2001).

The tourism industry believed the government either did not understand or ignored the potential consequences to the sector of its actions to control the outbreak. A statement by the Minister for Tourism three weeks into the crisis, admitting that the government was “still not sure of what the effect was going to be on the tourism industry” (CMSC, 2001, p. xv), contributed to the ongoing uncertainty and mixed messages circulating in media coverage. While authorities grappled with their primary objective of identifying the true parameters of the outbreak, the media latched onto the information that was available: the United Kingdom was being shut down amidst imagery of a diseased, burning countryside.

At the core of criticisms played out in the media was the issue of lack of information, with each circumstance adding fuel to the media fire. To illustrate this point, Sharpley and Craven (2001) draw attention to the fact that “despite government assurances as early as 12 March, 2001 that the outbreak was under control, it was not until the end of that month that the daily number of new cases peaked and, even by mid-May, a small number of new cases were being confirmed each day” (p. 527).
A1.5. Acceleration Phase: March – September, 2001

The tourism industry was suffering within weeks of the outbreak as domestic movements ceased and international bookings were cancelled. Accommodation bookings for the month of March in some of the worst hit areas were reported down by over 50 percent on the previous year with non-accommodation tourist facilities also experiencing a reduction in business (CMSC, 2001). *The Daily Telegraph* reported that the leisure industry’s prominent equestrian sector was losing over £100 million a month with over 1,800 riding centres making heavy losses and some closing (Brown, 2001). Sporting and cultural events were cancelled and significant job losses were occurring throughout the industry at large (CMSC, 2001; ETC, 2001c; *The Guardian*, 2001b).

The impact on inbound tourism activity was significant with source markets in the USA, Canada, Japan, France and Germany experiencing many cancellations, even to urban UK centres (*Figure 34*). The BTA reported that its New York call centre received approximately 700 inquiries a day about travel to Britain during the peak periods of the crisis (Frisby, 2002). Domestic tourism, accounting for the largest percentage of overall visitors with many domestic holidays taken in rural locations, also experienced a significantly noticeable drop in numbers. The tourism industry attributed these impacts to two major factors: restricted access and sensationalised media (Frisby, 2002).
The UK media covered the FMD outbreak in extensive detail, keeping the crisis as the lead story on British television and radio and covering a myriad of topics including disease facts, movement restrictions and impacts on the economy (Baxter and Bowen, 2004). Television news coverage tracked the spiralling numbers of new cases, with viewers around the world subject to morbid images of the British countryside being eradicated of livestock as burning carcasses sent smoke wafting into the country air.

International media coverage also reported the increasing checks being done on travellers arriving from the UK and Europe, authorities implementing inspections with dogs sniffing luggage for animal products, and disinfections (CNN, 2001ad).

Coverage continued in the domestic market for several months with special television reports, newspapers and trade publications counting the costs (The Economist, 2001a; 2001b; 2001c; 2002a; 2002b; 2002c).
The Economist 2001b), loss of expenditure (Travel Trade Gazette [TTG], 2001), employment impacts (Treanor, 2001) and airline passenger reductions (Osborne, 2001) among others. International media coverage would follow a similar pattern, with the New York Times (a prime media source for the sizeable USA inbound market), treating the crisis as both a foreign news and travel news issue (Hoge, 2001). The destruction of livestock remained a graphic centrepiece (Figure 35) of international media coverage with reports also highlighting the closure of the British countryside (Cowell, 2001b). Images broadcast on international television of slaughtered cattle, burning pyres (Figure 36) and distressed farmers – classified as negative images by the tourism industry – resulted in confusion as to the true extent of risk and safety for travellers (Mintel Leisure Intelligence, 2001). The use of emotive and vivid reporting language further enhanced the public’s anxiety (Yeoman et al., 2005).

The high media profile given to the disease by British and foreign press was seen by the tourism industry as causing unnecessary cancellation of holidays within the first few months of the outbreak, leading to major impacts on domestic and international tourism markets (Baxter & Bowen, 2004). These sentiments were echoed by the UK Department of Culture, Media and Sport [DCMS], which noted that “the widespread and often unbalanced media coverage of the Foot and Mouth outbreak by British and overseas media left many potential visitors uncertain about the extent to which the British countryside and its attractions were open” (CMSC, 2001, p. 3). In summary, it was widely believed that inaccurate and exaggerated reporting contributed to the reduced visitor numbers to the UK.
Figure 35:

Dirty work

A digger piles up culled animals ready to be burned at Burnside Farm near Heddon on the Wall in Northumberland, believed to be the source of the outbreak of foot and mouth disease (The Guardian, 2001c)

Figure 36:

Burning pyres

Animal carcasses are burned in an attempt to halt foot-and-mouth disease (Agence France-Presse [AFP], 2001)

Of the commentary that played out during the early stages of the crisis, the BTA observed that the tone and accuracy of the coverage varied considerably (Frisby, 2002). International BTA offices in locations such as Toronto and Madrid reported increasing coverage as the outbreak accelerated, while offices in Sydney and Singapore noticed a reduction in coverage once the immediate news aspects were reported. Uncertainty prevailed as it became apparent that a universal message was not reaching international markets. The tourism industry “appeared largely powerless to prevent the release of disparaging press articles” (Baxter & Bowen, 2004, p. 269), however, when the impact on tourism was recognised, industry associations issued specific media releases in Britain and overseas in an attempt to counter the negative publicity (ETC, 2001a). The
BTA, as the leading tourism stakeholder, initiated its emergency response phase in the early stages of the crisis. This included the provision of up-to-date facts, reassurance and rebuttal to stakeholders, virtually using all methods available to try to limit the damage and assert tourism’s safety against misconceptions potential visitors were getting from the media. The BTA distributed information through its website, information bulletins and newsletters and via regular communication with UK and overseas staff (Frisby, 2002). A number of measures were also instigated to reassure the tourism industry that the BTA was working in its interests, including development of a specific website, the compilation of a database of good public relations stories and the development of usable messages for industry spokespersons. Regular media briefings were instigated in UK and overseas markets and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office’s links to London correspondents serving international media were tapped.

In one of its largest communication initiatives, the BTA appointed a global public relations agency to manage the crisis and minimise negative perceptions of Britain by monitoring media coverage and providing rebuttals and up-to-date factual information on the situation (Frisby, 2002). This initiative and the final selection of a firm itself made headlines with “Agencies lining up to say ‘UK is OK’” (Day, 2001a) and the selection of the winning agency hailed as the task was started to launch a public relations campaign across 10 countries including the USA, Canada, Germany, Australia and New Zealand (Day, 2001b). The task was formidable, with media reports perceiving the sensitivity of the USA traveller – the largest inbound market for the UK – likely to result in problems for a number of years given that the promotional funds from government were considered inadequate for the hard-pressed industry (Ward, 2001). Tourism, however, saw the promotional activities as too reactive and too late,
their implementation coming after tourists had already changed travel plans (Beirman, 2003b). They were also considered too late to counter perceptions already ingrained on the public and potential tourists by sensationalised media (Baxter and Bowen, 2004).

Baxter and Bowen (2004) found that the modern media approach to instant, breaking news exaggerated the crisis compared to the more passive, understated reporting style of the 1967-68 outbreak. The growth in global communications had given rise to an increased contingent of foreign correspondents and this group, in particular, was identified by the tourism industry as being the drivers of inaccurate, exaggerated messages and images. However, the handling of this contingent of media, although identified by the tourism industry as a critical group, appears to have been non-existent or at least uncoordinated.

The magnitude of the impact of the crisis on agriculture also hindered the tourism industry’s efforts to get support to mitigate its problems. Tourism focused in the early stages of the crisis on its scope – indicators of revenue, employment and estimated losses – highlighting the greater economic potential of impact in comparison to the agricultural sector. This approach was responsibly based on factual information but didn’t generate the required media headline treatment as the media were not yet fully focused on repercussions.
The disagreement about methods to address the disease played out in the media, with calls for vaccination rebuked on the basis that it would jeopardise the country’s disease-free status in export markets (CNN, 2001az). These robust exchanges proved frustrating for the tourism industry, with many believing its superior revenue-generating potential compared to the livestock export industry (see Figure 37) should override any hesitations, particularly in light of forecasts that the loss to tourism could be £1 billion in overseas expenditure alone (Travel Weekly, 2001).

Intermittently, the tourism industry was successful in using the media to relay the message that FMD was not an agricultural issue alone. Hotels and restaurants were facing bankruptcy as their customers were barred from the countryside (Hayward, 2001), tourism operators were forced to lay off staff due to a lack of visitors and some accommodation operators contemplated closure, particularly if the crisis persisted. Agriculture minister Nick Brown said compensation for the tourism industry had not been ruled out, but that the major concern was to tackle the disease and help farmers
(Hayward, 2001). The struggle for tourism’s plight to be recognised continued, and help eventually came from the source they had attributed their problems to – the media. Gradually, tourism’s issues began to receive a better hearing in the media where the Managing Director of the London Tourist Board was able to list the challenges: international confusion of foot and mouth disease with mad cow disease; the reporting of the UK as closed when in fact many parts were open and functioning; and the global circulation of damaging images – among them a Prime Minister clad in protective spacesuit-type gear, pyres of burning animals and signs saying “closed” (Hopper, 2002).

Many media channels created tailored online coverage of the crisis (The Guardian, 2001e; BBC Radio 4, 2001a; CNN, 2001x), collating facts, stories and images. Audio and video reports regularly appeared on internet news sites, with several focused on implications for the tourism industry as a result of the crisis (CNN, 2001q; CNN, 2001j). Protests from the tourist trade also found their way into circulation (CNN, 2001p). The personal plight of individuals and businesses received recognition, particularly through international media sources. In one such example, National Public Radio [NPR] in the USA conducted an interview with a bed-and-breakfast operator in the worst affected region of Cumbria who lamented the absence of tourists from the countryside (NPR, 2001).

Entire regions in the UK were portrayed as severely impacted under headlines such as “Foot and Mouth Damages Tourism, Too” with accounts of businesses suffering and the declaration of Britain as “off limits to walkers and outsiders” (Cowell, 2001b). Of note, however, was the obvious appearance at times of inaccurate information, cases including a New York Times correction to a previous picture caption which incorrectly
identified two areas as neighbouring where they were not (Cowell, 2001b) and the belated correction of a website address almost two weeks after its initial publication (Cowell, 2001c).

Generally categorised as a rampaging scourge, the crisis was blamed for damaging visitor experiences through its impact on key tourist activities and disrupting bucolic rambles through the countryside. Popular tourist areas were closed or severely restricted and “no one can forecast when the situation will change” (Cowell, 2001c). However, amidst the perception of devastation, international operators booking groups to the UK claimed to have experienced minimal cancellations of tours not slated to happen until later in the year and customers were biding time to see how the crisis would develop. This was at odds with the national panic prevailing in the UK where pessimistic officials were conceding that the “outbreak is going to last for a long time and the outlook is uncertain, if not disappointing” (Cowell, 2001c).

A month on from the initial outbreak, the media had established static portals of information about the crisis, some including a timeline of events and a day-by-day account of developments (Figure 38). The Guardian newspaper’s site featured morning stories from all major UK papers, as well as special sub-sections for related politics and tourism angles. The first entry directed at tourism on CNN’s site was posted on March 18, advising that economists had predicted millions of pounds in lost earnings for the industry. In the same entry, the government admitted it had no idea when the crisis would end (CNN, 2001n).
As the crisis accelerated, media coverage was increasing commensurately and the damage to tourism was being better understood – yet, uncertainty wasn’t diminishing. Despite the atmosphere of worry and doubt, the government’s plans to launch a domestic advertising blitz coincided with new initiatives for international promotion (The Guardian, 2001d). As the Easter holiday period loomed, the government’s increasing concern for the tourism industry was reflected in its media campaigns, geared toward reinforcing a message that the UK was not closed, as well as its support of a proposed global advertising campaign – not expected to start for another month – plus new press and radio notices advising of countryside access conditions. In terms of a campaign to restore the reputation of the UK as a tourist destination, peak agency the British Tourism Authority admitted effective promotion would not be viable until the crisis neared its end (Day, 2001f).
With income drying up, operators moved to another stage to encourage travel, introducing discounts to attract the available tourist market ahead of the Easter season. A headline proclaimed “Bargain Britain slashes rates to tempt tourists” (Day, 2001c). The British Hospitality Association recognised the crisis was affecting operators in cities as well as the countryside so it joined forces to pursue business, travelling with the Tourism Minister on a promotional trip to the USA (Day, 2001c). The British Prime Minister – in a CNN interview just before Easter – tackled the issue for the tourism industry, advising that although a lot of thoroughfares were initially closed, the UK had for several weeks “been in the position where there's absolutely no reason why people shouldn't come into the countryside” (CNN, 2001ay).

While the government was responding to the needs of tourism by providing financial relief with tax and property rates concessions, the compensation packages were viewed as considerably less than those extended to the agriculture industry. The core issue for the sector, though, was that no tourists were coming and many in the industry blamed the initial “no-go” response of the government for tarnishing the UK’s national and international reputation (CNN, 2001ay). Although in the early stages of the crisis, “pressure from farmers, the media and overseas governments favoured a restrictive approach to countryside access” (Scudamore & Harris, 2002, p.706), the tide had turned.

As farmers and tourism operators tried to deal with the impacts of the outbreak and its implications for their future livelihood, the UK – not helped by public bickering between stakeholders – started to come under attack, notably by one politician from the Republic of Ireland who observed that “Britain was being seen as the ‘leper of Europe’”
The Government was accused of being unprepared for an outbreak on a large scale, that the contingency plan had severe gaps, that the first response was neither fast nor effectively coordinated, that knowledge within the Government was limited, that there were gaps in managerial and logistical skills and that the quality of communication was mixed (Anderson, 2002). The political atmosphere and the undercurrents it infused into the FMD crisis response had by now been picked up by media in the UK and overseas. A *New York Times* report noted that forecasts of FMD worsening were casting doubts on then Prime Minister Blair’s re-election chances amid “officials conceding they had lost control of the spread of contagion” (Hoge, 2001).

Initially hesitant that an alteration to the election schedule would reinforce the message that the UK was in an uncertain and unstable state, April reports brought news that the Prime Minister had postponed local election polls. Speculation was rife that national elections also would be postponed as political survival was taking priority over solving the issues of hardship and suffering (CNN, 2001s).

The public role of the Prime Minister in responding to the crisis was seen to have created a perception of crisis and overplayed the significance of the outbreaks of FMD (Yeoman et al., 2005) (*Figure 39*). While governments, and particularly a Prime Minister, generate substantial media coverage in their own right for leadership during such times of crisis, their actions were deemed to have “sent out signals to the wider world that the UK was in the midst of chaos” (Ibid., p. 181). In response to media questions about the initial efforts of his government, the Prime Minister claimed it had been caught between criticism of overreacting and of under reacting. Despite the transition from a national crisis to a political crisis, he said, there was a job to be done. But the comments didn’t dispel beliefs that politicization of the crisis would stop (CNN,
2001). The battle between government and industry dragged on based on the fundamental issue that FMD was initially treated as mainly an agricultural issue and the pressures that resulted could have been more effectively handled.

![Image](https://via.placeholder.com/150)

Figure 39: Cartoon on British PM Tony Blair taking over foot and mouth (The Guardian, 2001a)

Although emergency measures were seen to be “starting to bite” (BBC Radio 4, 2001b), media coverage continued about the ongoing closure of many public attractions and the cancellation of events, including major tourist drawcards such as the Royal Show and international sporting events (The Guardian, 2001d). Yet amidst these setbacks the British Tourist Authority reported that of the UK’s 15,000 top attractions and events, 80% were open and 91% of events were going ahead (10 Downing Street, 2001). An increasingly visible effort was being made by the Prime Minister’s office to show support for the tourism industry, with statements that he “had been banging the drum for British tourism by meeting industry representatives and doing interviews with the USA media for some weeks now” (10 Downing Street, 2001).
The Prime Minister had embarked on a high profile roadshow to demonstrate that the countryside was open, meeting with French, Japanese and USA media to “hammer home the message that Britain is not closed for business” and that tourists had nothing to fear (CNN, 2001k; CNN, 2001p). Media personalities also joined the push to boost tourism, however the government’s commitment to promotional initiatives was attacked as “paltry and insulting” by the parliamentary opposition (CNN, 2001p). The politicization of the crisis continued with intra-government battles emerging over the ongoing closure of thoroughfares (BBC Radio 4, 2001c). British newspapers reported that several local authorities across the country were not prepared to take any risks in the battle to stamp out the highly contagious disease (CNN, 2001bb).

Two months into the crisis, survey results confirmed the on-going cancellation of holiday trips (BBC Radio 4, 2001d). The emergence of new FMD cases in previously unaffected areas, although downplayed by the government (BBC Radio 4, 2001d), did little for tourism as the Easter season arrived. Even the domestic market scrambled to book international holidays to leave the frustrations of FMD behind (Day, 2001d), causing the Prime Minister to make a public plea to encourage Britons to holiday at home (CNN, 2001i). International destinations were becoming appealing to travellers in light of the crisis-limited options at home, but travel firms reported no major upswing in overseas business as a result of the epidemic (Bray, 2001).

Appeals through the international media were met with criticism from the foreign press. The international media had been criticised by both government and the tourism industry as being mostly responsible for the proliferation of negative images, with the Prime Minister publicly declaring "I've seen some of the foreign news broadcasts about..."
the impact of foot and mouth disease on Britain (and) I can promise you that they paint a picture of our country which bears little relation to reality" (Hole, 2001). In response, the foreign press became vocal about lack of communication, with correspondents in the UK and abroad arguing that the government made little attempt to get its message to them. The media were dealing with strong demand for information with reports of heavy internet use demonstrating that the public was looking to sources beyond the local news (Vickers, 2001). While the scare stories blamed for damaging the tourism industry were sourced to foreign media, the press offices of tourism authorities were seen to be “impenetrable and unaccountable”, with luck determining if someone would communicate on the situation, fostering an atmosphere of “institutional rudeness” (Hole, 2001). With the foreign media bearing the blame for the international spread of unfavourable news and images, the communication stand-off that developed seemed to compound the problem of inaccurate and incomplete reportage cited by tourism.

Many tourism operators banked their recovery on heavy marketing campaigning leading into the Easter holiday season. Several media reports quoted operators saying Easter had been a positive season under the circumstances, acknowledging that trade “could have been worse” (BBC, 2001a). However despite the hope, tourism activity over Easter ultimately proved to be a false dawn with the future outlook remaining grim (Sharpley & Craven, 2001). Statistically, tourism activity was still showing negative trends, the Daily Telegraph reporting activity over Easter down on normal trends, with tourism income reduced by a third on the previous year (McSmith, 2001). Nonetheless, the charm offensive by the tourism industry continued and in efforts to counteract misconceptions overseas, contingents of international travel leaders were hosted on tours of the British countryside to see the environment for themselves and take positive
messages back to customers (CNN, 2001az). The managing director of the London Tourist Board said one of the greatest communication challenges through the crisis was “maintaining a positive, upbeat note when promoting the destinations…while the negative impact needed to be communicated through the media to reach politicians” (Hopper, 2002). He lamented that the negative doors-closed message reached the public easier than the open-for-business message (Hopper, 2002).

A media story different to those of early darker days of the crisis emerged with the discovery of a live baby calf under the carcasses of a herd of culled cattle (Figure 40). Phoenix had survived the cull by lying under the dead body of her mother. Defiant owners told officials that an order would be required before the calf could be put down, immediately turning Phoenix into a cause celebre, with the media amplifying pleas in a campaign to spare the calf’s life. The Prime Minister acted quickly and, amid rumblings about winning votes in the coming election, changed the culling policy and earned headlines such as “Tony Blair saves Phoenix” across a range of media (CNN, 2001m).

Figure 40: Phoenix risen from the ashes. Ross Board, 11, with his pet calf Phoenix, saved from slaughter after surviving the cull of the rest of her herd. The calf was reprieved on April 25 after a government change of policy on slaughter on “contiguous” farms. (The Guardian, 2001g)
Post-Easter, FMD case numbers appeared to be stabilising although there were sporadic new outbreaks. After the Phoenix affair, the Prime Minister declared the battle against FMD to be “entering the home straight” with "the scale of combating foot-and-mouth disease having far exceeded the logistical demands even of the Gulf War" (CNN, 2001ba). The tourism industry started assessing the cost of the crisis with many business said to be facing “financial ruin” amid considerable job losses even though the “worst was over” (CNN, 2001o; The Guardian, 2001f). Reports that the UK economy was heading for a downturn did little to keep the mood optimistic (BBC, 2001c).

In May 2001, some three months after the outbreak, the UK Department of Culture, Media and Sport [DCMS] – also responsible for tourism – issued its own strategy to provide a consistent and comprehensive picture of what was open, as well as a clear “do and don’t” list for visitors. This strategy celebrated the opening of attractions and walkways, provided assistance to affected businesses, and communicated a clear message to both domestic and foreign markets of the true status of FMD in the UK (Yeoman et al., 2005). BTA actions in the short term focused on the main objectives of minimising negative coverage, generating maximum positive international media support for Britain as a tourist destination and restoring its image overseas (Frisby, 2002). In the medium-term, activity focused on key markets with campaigns including television, print and radio advertising, direct mail, e-mail blasts, press visits, newspaper and consumer magazine supplements, special offers and competitions and trade promotions. Other activities included: local press events involving consumer, travel and trade press and broadcast media; media visits to the UK; promotional TV programs; special supplements in overseas publications; gala events for the public, trade and press; special local events; development of local media databases and measures to increase the
availability of press material via websites; and newsletters and regular update meetings with trade partners (Frisby, 2002).

Media monitoring and the issuing of rebuttals continued, together with the production of media-friendly material including an extranet to provide faster and richer information to both journalists and strategic partners (Frisby, 2002). Despite the ongoing implementation of these measures, the resulting effect of media coverage of the FMD crisis remained a point of issue for the tourism industry (Frisby, 2002; CMSC, 2001), inferring that communication measures did not prevent sensationalist, exaggerated and inaccurate reporting of the crisis. The Culture, Media and Sport Committee [CMSC] (CMSC, 2001) surmised that since the outbreak of Foot and Mouth Disease was first confirmed, “measures adopted to combat the disease and prevent its spread, together with the media reporting of the disease and those preventive measures, had inflicted serious damage on the tourism industry, affecting both the market for domestic visitors and the level of visitors to the United Kingdom from overseas” (p. 1).

It appeared that, despite its initiatives, the tourism industry failed to engage with the media in a manner that generated what the industry deemed as beneficial reportage. Rather, in the early stages of the crisis, the tourism industry had publicly and vocally identified the media as being largely responsible for the problems the crisis had begun to inflict on tourism, causing industry to devise ways to counter the coverage. The DCMS reported that notwithstanding the initiatives and campaigns conducted by the tourism industry, “the impression given by the media that Foot and Mouth Disease was a problem that ravaged large parts of the country, including those unaffected by the disease, undoubtedly caused tourists not to come to the UK, inflicting serious damage
on tourism through distorted and seriously exaggerated media coverage” (CMSC, 2001, p.1). However, the DCMS also pointed out that the effects of the crisis on tourism were not the result of media alone but also “were not alleviated by systemic weaknesses in the tourist industry and public sector support for that industry” (Ibid., p. 1). The crisis had exposed a failure to invest in the promotion of tourism appropriate to the structure of the industry and in proportion to the revenue benefits it brought to the public purse.


The last FMD case was registered on September 30, 2002, although the deceleration of the crisis had been underway for some time. Media interest waned as reporting of new cases diminished and existing cases came under control and by August 2001 negative media coverage had subsided (see Figure 41 below for graph of extent of coverage through the crisis), allowing recovery campaigns to operate unencumbered by conflicting messages (Hopper, 2002). The British Tourist Authority [BTA] started to receive reports from its international offices at the end of August that tourism activity was showing signs of improving (Frisby, 2001). FMD was still making international headlines in September 2001, with reports of new cases contradicting official assertions that it is was being wiped out (Cowell, 2001d), yet some tourism areas were beginning to perform well – some as a result of the desertion from other areas (BBC, 2001b). The tourism industry’s post-September 2001 plans were to move into a recovery phase, involving initiatives focused on re-launching the United Kingdom to the world and building the longer-term sustainability of the sector (Frisby, 2002). However, in terms of destination image recovery, the UK was caught in a unique post-crisis predicament: that of the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States and their impact on international
tourism. Consequently, the impacts on the UK tourism industry of the six-month FMD crisis were exacerbated by the worldwide impact on global travel, causing a continuation of substantial business losses impacting on the wider economy and an ongoing battle in terms of media coverage.

![New cases daily](image)

_**Figure 41: New cases daily (The Guardian, 2002b)**_

**A1.7. The Recovery Phase: September, 2001 →**

The FMD outbreak was the largest crisis that the UK tourism industry had experienced for many years, subsequently overshadowed by the effects of September 11, 2001. Reports at the peak of the outbreak estimated losses to the tourism industry at well over £100 million a week (*The Economist*, 2001a). Amidst the avalanche of stories of businesses suffering, some tourism enterprises were unaffected as people moved indoors or to contained environments such as the cinema or performance arenas,
providing the media a rare positive angle during the crisis (Aldrick, 2001); subsequent analysis found this situation to be a rarity (Baxter and Bowen, 2004).

The DCMS advised of “an urgent and compelling need for support of tourism nationally, regionally and locally” and a compelling case for “a fundamental reconsideration of the scale and nature of public sector support for the tourism industry in the long-term” (CMSC, 2001, p. 2). The downturn inflicted on tourism was reported widely, with newspapers estimating losses ranging from 140 to 500 million pounds a week (Brown, 2001). The reduction in tourism activity that led to these losses was judged to be the result of access restrictions (Sharpley & Cravern, 2001) and international media coverage that deterred potential visitors from travelling to the UK (CMSC, 2001).

While estimates of the costs to tourism were plentiful and varied, all agreed that many direct and indirect tourism businesses, in particular smaller enterprises, suffered significant hardship (Sharpley & Cravern, 2001). It was believed the tourism industry’s recovery process would take several years (ETC 2001b). On the other hand, the FMD crisis revealed “at governmental level, a lack of understanding, recognition and consequential policy formulation with respect to the structure, scale and value of rural tourism and its integral contribution to rural economies and societies” (Sharpley & Cravern, 2001, p. 528). This showed that although support for tourism as a rural entity throughout Europe existed, government actions to combat the disease and its approach to compensating affected parties displayed a continuing failure to effectively support what, in many regions, is the mainstay of rural economies.
The recovery phase planned by BTA focused on image development, involving continuing previous activities and supporting markets. Emphasis was put on extending the range of public relations tools available to overseas offices and journalists, and providing photographs, editorial material, campaign-adaptable press folders, presentations and CDs for distribution to the media. Online media areas were also created to increase traffic and allow for data collection of journalists’ details to assist future engagement. The BTA also sought to strengthen its relationship with foreign correspondents in order to increase the positive reporting of tourism stories overseas (Frisby, 2002).

The main message the BTA focused on communicating was that Britain was safe and fully open to visit (Figure 42). It was also cognizant of a need to “keep a close watch on the international media to react quickly to any stories which may emerge” (Frisby, 2002, p. 98) about new FMD cases and this included issuing statements on a couple of suspected cases which were eventually proven not to be FMD. Frisby (2002) praises the role of the BTA, seeing it as “succeeding in placing an overwhelmingly positive picture of Britain in the overseas media to counteract and overwhelm the residue of negative publicity elicited by the FMD crisis” (p. 99).

Figure 42: The launch of the UKOK promotional campaign (Cozens, 2002b)
An evaluation by the BTA of some of its campaigns showed that the authority had generated 600 articles and broadcast features, 151,000 square centimetres of print coverage and 2,700 seconds of broadcast coverage dedicated to Britain as a destination within the FMD outbreak timeframe, representing some 216 million positive reports. These figures do not include rebuttal comments and statements made by the BTA in numerous news articles in domestic and international media about the state of the crisis.

The BTA saw it as essential to work with overseas press officers who best understood the needs of their local media. Although believing that the BTA was successful in communicating positive messages, Frisby (2002) noted the crisis proved that “close coordination with, and targeting of, London-based foreign correspondents must take place at an early stage in any crisis affecting inbound tourism” (p.99). These journalists were seen as responsible for the perceived negative and highly exaggerated FMD news stories carried in their home countries.

On a broader scale, one of the key lessons learned was the need for collaboration to create clear messages in general. The numerous agencies involved in FMD at times led to uncoordinated communications and confused messages (Hopper, 2002). This was compounded by the differing messages being parlayed through the media by the agriculture and tourism industries, each seeking to prioritise their respective plights. Baxter and Bowen (2004) assessed through the role of media impact the effects on the UK tourism industry of both the 1967-68 and the 2001 outbreaks. Data for their research was sourced from secondary sources such as BBC archives of radio and television programmes, other media such as key newspapers as well as specialist journals and government reports. They concluded that the 1967-68 outbreak had only a limited actual effect on tourism and an even more limited effect as perceived in the
media, whereas the 2001 epidemic had a much larger effect – actual and as perceived in the media. They suggested many explanations for the differences, including the time of year of the outbreaks, the spatial spread of the disease, the amount of countryside that was deemed to have restricted access and the growth in numbers of rural tourism operators. The changed character of news reporting itself created some different effects – the media’s role in the 2001 crisis was judged to be not entirely passive. The researchers saw the media as crucial in any future such crisis and that harnessing its activity was a key element of tourism contingency planning.

Baxter and Bowen (2004, p. 271) suggest the “thinking of the government, the media and the public on the role of tourism in the rural economy was somewhat adrift from reality prior to the 2001 epidemic.” The government’s prioritization of agriculture was misguided and led to a dramatic, highly visual process of destruction that seriously tarnished the image of rural tourism to a greater extent than agriculture. They also saw benefit in minimising sensationalist media reporting of unfamiliar topics and educating the government in order to put industry contributions into perspective. The researchers recognised the important role of the print media – as detailed, for instance, in the content and story angles of even comparatively non-sensational newspapers such as the New York Times and the UK broadsheet newspapers. The graphic coverage and the sort of instant television and web images required in the new digital media era of breaking news also contributed to an initial exaggeration of the real situation – serious as it was in terms of spatial coverage and restrictions of movement. The results of their research lead to the conclusion that a good contingency plan, closely linked to the media, was clearly vital for the tourism industry. Frisby (2002) concurred, particularly emphasising
the role of the London-based foreign correspondents as being responsible for negative and highly exaggerated FMD news stories carried in their home countries.

Yeoman et al. (2005) provide an overview of Scotland’s move to create its own Foot and Mouth Disease Contingency Plan, with a key aspect of it being communication. The role of tourism within the plan is also acknowledged. Of particular note, scenario planning exercises undertaken by Scottish authorities all produced outputs focused on “systematic and standard distribution of information across all areas, proactive marketing planning and the opening of dedicated industry and public portals of information” (Yeoman et al., 2005, p. 187). Perhaps most importantly, in hindsight of the 2001 FMD crisis, Scotland emphasised the role of an informed lead participant and primary communication agency, responsible for image marketing and brand recovery, and for proactively demystifying myths and rumours and targeting the correction of misconceptions and misreporting. It recognised from a tourism perspective concerns about communication and crisis management, the need for responses to be focused and flexible, and for communications to be proactive and connected to all relevant stakeholders.

Baxter and Bowen (2004) offer however that “it is perhaps inadequate to bemoan the sensational media response” to the 2001 FMD crisis “because that is how the media covers its commercial obligations” (p.272). However, perhaps in line with the Scottish plan, they saw that a sharp, accurate, timely and responsive counter from a reputable and informed source could provide balance before media sensationalism caused unnecessary damage to domestic and international tourism markets. In a world of 24/7 instantaneous media that can spread quickly around the world, and threaten tourism,
there is a “vital need for its ongoing representation as a truly vital component in modern economies and societies”, and that “a more high-profile acknowledgement and understanding of tourism as an industry” could be of benefit to the handling of future crises (Baxter and Bowen, 2004, p. 272). In its response to the Culture, Media and Sport Committee’s [CMSC] Fourth Report into tourism and FMD, the government recognised the “media have shown some interest in the plight of tourism businesses affected by the crisis”, however believed that sensationalist reporting “contributed to the scale and severity of the crisis that now afflicts tourism” (DCMS, 2001).

The media focus was expected to move on from FMD, however the government needed the media to remain involved in covering the destiny of tourism and to also play a part in promoting domestic tourism, recognising that “for many businesses, the free publicity from media coverage is the only promotional activity they will be able to afford in the foreseeable future” (DCMS, 2001, section 92). Their concluding comments about the ongoing relationship between the media and the tourism industry asked that in response to the “great deal of vivid copy and large number of human interest stories” provided to the press by the crisis, the press “might now usefully consider, without in any way jeopardising its right to freedom of expression, whether it should now repay that debt by publishing positive stories that could attract tourists” (DCMS, 2001, section 92).


Into 2002, initiatives were still under way to woo back tourists after not only FMD but now 9/11 (BBC, 2002f). The UK was not officially declared free of Foot and Mouth until January 2002, but there were calls from the tourism industry that the UK “not go
back to business as usual” (O’Connor, 2002). Operators needed to adopt innovative initiatives to build the tourist market back up in the wake of FMD, and these strategies were seen as positive moves for an industry that still had an issue of mediocre operations damaging its reputation (O’Connor, 2002).

Although the tourism industry was left to continue operating in crisis mode at the end of the FMD crisis as a result of September 11, the procedures put in place to respond to FMD were believed to be beneficial in the response to September 11 (Frisby, 2002). The FMD crisis was perceived as helping to raise the profile of tourism, particularly in recognising its value to the economy (Hopper, 2002), and pull it into a more collaborative, cohesive entity, with several new groups of industry leaders formed to keep issues in the spotlight and develop strategies for future crisis situations. Yet some saw the consequences of 9/11 to be equally severe on tourism and that, despite the measures enacted by the industry in the aftermath of the FMD crisis, the ability of the national and regional authorities in the relevant organisations was once more found lacking in terms of generating positive messages, or at least minimising negativity (Yeoman et al., 2005).

Because of its history as a recurring event, Foot and Mouth Disease and the crisis that may occur from outbreaks of the disease remains an ongoing topic of investigation. Subsequent research has been carried out in terms of planning for a repeat of the outbreak, with the plan prepared by Scottish authorities as one example. Yet concerns remain that the UK is still not in a position to handle a similar crisis effectively (Hencke, 2005). While industry and government appear to be focused on development and implementation of appropriate crisis strategies and policies, it is still not clear how
they propose to effectively, proactively engage with the media in times of crisis. In the absence of a coherent media strategy, the media will be left to simply chase the story.

### A1.9. Summary

The outbreak of the disease was confirmed on 20 February, 2001 and within one week the momentum of its spread triggered the realisation it was not being contained and it became a national crisis. For the next month, the outbreak would escalate and it was during this period that great uncertainty and chaos, compounded by the invisible threat of the disease, coloured the atmosphere and the actions of relevant stakeholders. Tourism had recognised early the likelihood of being impacted however the industry was left lamenting the absence of a big picture perspective, offers of assistance or a clear way forward. Clear information was lacking, and a panicked industry and public alike were scrambling to find details. The media continued to do its job of reporting what limited information was available. Stories were told, pictures were captured and news was distributed around the world. Tourism considered itself largely powerless to prevent the media coverage which it deemed unbalanced, sensationalised and distorted, and subject to uncontrollable global dissemination with varying degrees of tone and accuracy.

The first responses to the crisis proved neither fast nor effective and there was strong disagreement among stakeholders. Ineffective communication between tourism and media characterised the main period of the crisis and the fluctuating involvement of government and politics also affected true and perceived leadership and control of the situation. In particular, an understanding of the plight of the broader economic fabric
was absent, resulting in a lack of policies and action plans, despite a history of outbreaks.

On a positive note, tourism recognised the potential for impact on the industry early in the crisis. Peak tourism bodies tried to assume leadership and coordination roles and agencies sought to work together, although this appeared to suffer as a result of poor communication. A commendable priority focus on image rehabilitation and proactive messages also seemed to be affected by communication and action plan deficiencies. Importantly, and despite the negative perceptions of tourism, the media played a pivotal role in the dissemination of information nationally and globally.

The total number of cases had reached their peak by late March, but new cases continued to be reported. The effects of the outbreak also persisted well into the next few months and media coverage tracked the continuing effects. As the magnitude of the crisis decreased and chaotic conditions began to dissipate, a semblance of stability returned and allowed for recovery strategies to take shape. Critically, as it appeared that the crisis resulting from the outbreak was abating, the September 11 bombings occurred, wreaking havoc on any headway the tourism industry might have been making toward full recovery. The last case of FMD was registered shortly after the September 11 attacks however the tourism industry found itself faced with a renewed, prolonged crisis mode.

In summary, the 2001 FMD outbreak was the largest crisis that the UK tourism industry had experienced for many years. Initial conditions of relative stability were disrupted by the crisis, resulting in complex outcomes which changed the operational landscape for
tourism. A history of such a crisis was present but proved of little value in efforts to manage the new crisis. Tourism industry boards called for government assistance and took steps to reassure the public however, the substantial and graphic media coverage of the crisis compounded the havoc already inflicted on the tourism industry by the disease alone. While the peak agency for tourism, the British Tourism Authority [BTA], recognised both the seriousness of the crisis and its responsibility to take action on behalf of the tourism industry, the momentum of media coverage was not countered by tourism industry actions and the media wielded significant influence over public opinion and perception. The media’s focus on government and its questionable role in the crisis, together with the competition for profile with the agriculture industry, further hindered the tourism industry’s efforts to manage, endure and recover from the crisis.

The tourism industry attributed its suffering, evident within weeks of the outbreak, to two major factors: restricted access and sensationalised media. Intermittently, the tourism industry was successful in using the media to relay the message of its plight and its gains increased over time. However it appeared that, on the whole, the tourism industry failed to suitably engage with the media to assist the industry’s suffering. This was particularly evident in the publicised attacks on the media in the early stages of the crisis, which it could be argued eroded the chance of future beneficial engagement. The tourism-media interaction during the 2001 FMD crisis is at odds with the post-crisis acknowledgement that the role of the media is crucial in any such crisis and that harnessing the activity of the media is a key element of tourism contingency planning.

Although essentially a national-scale disaster, domestic and international tourism markets were affected and it was recognised that recovery would be a process over a
number of years. The important role of the media was recognised by tourism and engaging with the media for the purpose of publishing positive tourism stories, gaining publicity and helping promotion was encouraged by the industry. Post-crisis lessons also included a need to keep a close watch on media, especially to coordinate, target and strengthen relationships between the tourism industry and foreign correspondents. Communications needed to be proactive and connected to all relevant stakeholders and be sharp, accurate, timely and responsive. The pivotal role of an informed leader or primary agency was also highlighted. Finally, the lack of government understanding and policy regarding tourism and inadequate scale of support for the industry highlighted an urgent and compelling need for coordinated thinking of Government, media and the public on the role of tourism.
Appendix 2: Table of Data from Case Study #1 Foot & Mouth Disease, 2001

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<tr>
<td><strong>PROFILE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Strong performance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Main (fourth) economy component</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Economy contribution not fully recognised</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Still forming identity and profile</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Hadn’t started leveraging its importance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRECEDENT</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ History of FMD events</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONDITION</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nil</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outbreak</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NOTICE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Gradual build-up</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Government confirmed outbreak</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Full extent of the problem not yet known</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRECEDENT</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ History of outbreaks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ History demonstrated best response (including media engagement and communication)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Other outbreaks around the world attracted lesser coverage</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EXTENT</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ National epidemic stimulated by outbreaks in tourism zones</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Impacted mainstays of tourism imagery</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONDITION</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Just prior to start of main tourism season</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MEDIA – COVERAGE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Front page news</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Coverage quickly spread globally</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Immediate impacts on tourism noticed</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MEDIA – PERCEPTION</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Compounded the havoc</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Immediate sensationalist reporting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Immediate Inaccurate reporting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RESPONSE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Lapse between infection and detection allowed unchecked spread</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Tourism called for government assistance</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ National tourism authority (BTA) quickly realised the serious impact for tourism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ National tourism authority (BTA) recognised its responsibility to act</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ National tourism authority (BTA) took steps to reassure visitors of safety</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consolidation</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NOTICE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official sketchy messages</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRECEDENT</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Chaos and Order: Tourism and the Media in Global Crises
#### Appendix: Case Study #1 – FMD, 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>History showed how to respond</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>EXTENT</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reality invisible</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONDITION</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Uncertainty</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acceleration</th>
<th>NOTICE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Clear message not reaching markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRECEDENT</strong></td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EXTENT</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Several months</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Categorised as a rampaging scourge</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Blamed for damaging visitor experiences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Impact on key tourist activities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ongoing closures</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Global tourism impact</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Uncertainty - fear</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Short term future for tourism unclear</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONDITION</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Tourism largely powerless to prevent media</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Confusion re disease</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Coverage of closed UK</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Global circulation of damaging images</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• No one could forecast change/end</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• International media most responsible for negative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• National panic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Politicization of the crisis</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Lack of communication from authorities</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Authorities impenetrable and unaccountable</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Atmosphere of institutional rudeness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Communication stand-off</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• False dawn experienced</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Economy headed for downturn</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Systemic weaknesses in the tourism industry and support for industry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Failure to invest in the promotion of tourism</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Despair about future safety and security</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Coincided with peak tourism season</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MEDIA – COVERAGE**

**HOW**

• Global
• Saturation
• Priority
• Tailored online sources
• Increased as crisis built
• Internet heavily used
• Cause celebre

**CONTENT**

• Graphic
• Emotive
• Personal plight stories
• Tourism implications
• No differentiation between regions
• Local response focused on

**DESCRIPTORS**

• Inaccurate information
| • Negative doors-closed message reached public easier |
| **MEDIA – PERCEPTION** |
| • Widespread negative effects  |
| • Often unbalanced  |
| • Sensationalised  |
| • Inaccurate  |
| • Exaggerated  |
| • Distorted  |
| • Tone and accuracy varied  |
| • Enhanced public anxiety  |
| • Modern media approach exaggerated the crisis  |
| • Foreign correspondents most responsible for negative  |
| • Ingrained (false) perceptions  |
| • Defining images  |
| • Bore little relation to reality  |
| • Counter-efforts could not prevent  |
| • Serious damage to tourism  |
| • Damaged the willingness of visitors to come  |
| **RESPONSE** |
| **RESPONSES TO THE MEDIA** |
| • Leadership: govt and BTA  |
| • Had to limit the damage caused by the media  |
| • Specific media releases to counter negative publicity  |
| • Website  |
| • Bulletins  |
| • Newsletters  |
| • Staff communications  |
| • Used media to help relay the message that not an agricultural issue alone  |
| • Media briefings  |
| • Links to London correspondents  |
| • Foreign correspondents identified as critical group  |
| • Handling of foreign correspondents non-existent or uncoordinated  |
| • Campaign/message: UK is OK  |
| • Messages contained factual information - didn’t generate attention  |
| • Media personalities used  |
| • Short term focus on minimising negative coverage, generating positive media support and restoring image  |
| • Media events/visits/famils  |
| • Development of local media databases  |
| • Increase in availability of media material  |
| • Production of media-friendly material  |
| • Aimed to provide faster and richer information to media  |
| • Tourism failed to engage with the media to deliver positive reportage  |
| • Interaction  |
| **RESPONSES TO THE CRISIS** |
| • Reassurance was main objective  |
| • Asserted safety against the misconceptions  |
| • Global PR agency engaged to manage and minimise  |
| • Inadequate government funds  |
| • Promotional activities too reactive and too late  |
| • Messages contained factual information - didn’t generate attention  |
| • Used media to help relay the message that not an agricultural issue alone  |
| • Disagreement between stakeholders  |
| • Promotion not viable until crisis neared its end  |
| **Customers biding time** |
| • Domestic advertising blitz  |
| • New press and radio initiatives launched  |
| • Discounts  |
| • Bargain Britain  |
| • Promotional trips overseas  |
**Prime Minister public role**
- Public role of the PM created a perception of crisis and overplayed the significance of the outbreaks
- Increasing recovery support from PM office
- PM roadshow
- Financial aid

**Not prepared for an outbreak**
- First response neither fast nor effectively coordinated
- Quality of communication was mixed
- Crisis wrongly treated as an agricultural issue
- Domestic market scrambled for international holidays
- Public plea to holiday at home
- Heavy marketing campaigning
- Focus on peak periods
- Charm offensive
- Hosted travel leaders

**Greatest communication challenge through the outbreak was**
- “maintaining a positive, upbeat note when promoting the destinations... while the negative impact needed to be communicated through the media to reach politicians

**Govt Dept issued strategy**
- Tourism Authority issued strategy

**Short term focus on minimising negative coverage, generating positive media support and restoring image**
- Campaigns targeted key markets
- Media events/visits/famils
- Development of local media databases
- Increase in availability of media material
- Production of media-friendly material
- Aimed to provide faster and richer information to media
- Tourism failed to engage with the media to deliver positive reportage
- Conflict with media
- Uncertainty
- Civil precautionary measures
- International monitoring
- First reaction contingency marketing
- Leadership/spokespeople: Govt and BTA

**IMPACT**
- Suffering within weeks
- International impact
- Domestic impact
- Cancellations of travel
- Cancellation of events
- Closures
- Job losses
- Confusion as to the true extent of risk and safety
- Visitors uncertain about the extent of openness
- Key markets sensitive
- Market rehabilitation likely to be a number of years – recovery time
- Gradually tourism received a better hearing in the media
- Tourism blamed government ‘no-go’ response for tarnishing reputation
- Assessment of cost of crisis
- Incomplete knowledge
- Image problems

**End**

**EXTENT**
- Sporadic new cases emerged
- Tourism remained in crisis mode

**CONDITION**
- September 11 stalled recovery
- Consumer confidence building but uncertainty
### Chaos and Order: Tourism and the Media in Global Crises
Appendix: Case Study #1 – FMD, 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEDIA – COVERAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Waned as new cases diminished</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Waned as came under control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sporadic new cases still made headlines, contradicting official lines</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEDIA – PERCEPTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Continuous battle to generate positive coverage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Ongoing negativity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESPONSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Leadership: govt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Tourism was to start recovery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Initiatives to relaunch destination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Initiatives to build sustainability</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMPACT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Nil</td>
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</table>

**Recovery**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXTENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Largest crisis for many years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONDITION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Lack of government understanding and policy re tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Inadequate scale of support for tourism - Reconsideration of the scale support for tourism needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Uncertainty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Chaos afflicted normality</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEDIA – COVERAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Extensive vivid copy of crisis X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Human interest stories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Interest in the plight of tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Tourism downturn reported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Free publicity for afflicted tourism sought by tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Called on by tourism to “repay debt” by publishing positive stories for tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Called on to play recovery role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Recovery period still involved reiteration of the crisis in the media</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEDIA – PERCEPTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Foreign correspondents most responsible for negative</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESPONSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RESPONSE TO MEDIA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Strengthened relationship with foreign correspondents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Message of safety and openness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Close watch on media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Success in countering media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sought media to continue coverage of tourism fate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sought media to help promote</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESPONSE TO CRISIS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Urgent and compelling need for support of tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Agreed recovery to take years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Image development key task</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Extension of PR tools</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMPACT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Consumer confidence issues related to 9/11 rather than FMD</td>
</tr>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LESSONS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Close coordination and targeting of foreign correspondents must take place at an early stage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix: Case Study #1 – FMD, 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A need for collaboration</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coordinated thinking of Government, media and public on the role of tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaboration to help minimise sensationalist media reporting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important role of the print media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Important for an informed lead participant and primary communication agency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responses to be focused and flexible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications to be proactive and connected to all relevant stakeholders.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communications to be sharp, accurate, timely and responsive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need for ongoing representation of tourism as a component of economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Need high-profile acknowledgement of tourism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Epilogue

- Initiatives were still under way
- Calls from the tourism industry that the UK not go back to business as usual
- Crisis forced tourism to adopt innovative initiatives and this approach should continue
- Tourism perceived an issue in mediocre operations damaging the reputation of tourism
- Tourism left to continue operating in crisis mode
- Crisis was seen to raise the profile of tourism
- Crisis pulled the tourism industry in to a more collaborative, cohesive entity
- Re September 11, despite the measures enacted by the industry in the aftermath of the FMD crisis, the ability of the national and regional authorities was once more found lacking in terms of generating positive messages or at least minimising negativity
- Disease remains an ongoing topic of investigation
A3.1. Prologue

After eight years as Mayor of New York City and counting down the weeks to handing over to his successor, Rudy Giuliani could rightly claim to have done it all. With a pro-development stance towards business and a focus on quality of life issues, he had overseen a sharp decrease in crime, reduced welfare rolls by half and built more parks and courthouses during his administration. He was riding high in the popularity polls and could have continued as Mayor if not for the mandatory retirement rule after two terms. But Rudy’s finest hours were ahead of him as he looked into the twilight of his career. Because on the morning of September 11, the lives of New Yorkers and the skyline of their beloved city were to change forever … and Rudy Giuliani would dig deep within himself to lead his people through the worst of traumas and rally them to recovery to emerge triumphant in the aftermath of disaster. Giuliani needed courage in
the face of extreme adversity and drew on superhuman strengths at a time when the entire country was being tested. He provided the emotional armour for New Yorkers to get up every day and get on with their lives. He led by emotion, rather than with words or actions. Giuliani said he simply tried to be optimistic, a major achievement in the face of what was delivered that morning on America.

A3.2. Pre-Crisis Phase: pre September 11, 2001

The United States of America has long been one of the world’s great destinations with the city of New York arguably one of the nation’s biggest draw cards. Although the grand capital of Washington, D.C., is the seat of politics, New York is the seat of power. From baseball and hot dogs to monuments of freedom to the heady world of business and finance, New York in many ways defines all that is America – and the locals are proud to tell you so, with patriotism evident in all modes of media and communication from flashing billboards to perky TV anchors to small national flags that hang from nondescript residential windows. New York is also seen as a metaphor for global capitalism, a serious contender to be the world’s capital were it to have one.

Americans love America. The international tourism market loves America too. Tourism figures for 2000 reached a record 36.2 million visitors to New York, with 6.8 million coming from foreign shores (Dobnik, 2003). Although a major destination, New York, like the rest of the United States however, was being hit hard early in 2001 by a downturn in the economy, and the tourism industry was not immune (Reuters, 2003). It
would not be the economic downturn, though, that would sink the tourism industry into crisis in 2001.

![Figure 44: Prior to September 11, the Twin Towers of the World Trade Center dominated the New York skyline (National Taiwan University, n.d.)](image)

A3.3. Outbreak Phase: September 11, 2001

On the morning of September 11, 2001, four United States commercial airplanes were hijacked by 19 suicide terrorists. At the same time, workers filed into the World Trade Center in New York, a precinct consisting of several buildings with Twin Towers as the centrepiece, each 110 storeys high and capable of accommodating 20,000 workers. At 8.46am, as workers were arriving to start their day, American Airlines flight 11 bound for Los Angeles from Boston crashed into the North Tower of the World Trade Center between the 94th and 98th floor.
The New York media was immediately alerted and morning news programs interrupted schedules to cross to vivid images of a smouldering building, the cause of the crash the subject of speculation ranging from a flight path gone wrong to a terrorist attack. The crash was a crisis enough in itself to dominate the media. But there was more to come and it was captured by cameras glued to the burning North Tower when, 17 minutes later at 9:03am, the next unimaginable stage showed a second plane come into the shot and crash into the other Twin Tower between the 78th and 84th floors.

Fire and smoke billowed from the scene (Figure 45) as workers remained trapped in each building on the floors above the impact levels. TV news hosts scrambled to comprehend the live situation in order to inform millions of shocked viewers. The chaos was to escalate even further as reports came in at 9.43am of a plane crashing into the Pentagon, the USA defence headquarters in the nation’s capital of Washington, D.C., destroying one of the structure’s five sides (Figure 46).
Back in New York, the damage to the levels struck by the planes weakened the structure of the towers. This caused the higher floors to collapse onto the levels below but the weight was too great for the undamaged rest of the structures to hold up. The south tower of the World Trade Center – the second of the towers hit – completely collapsed at 9.59am. By this time, the White House, centre of executive power, had been evacuated. USA forces worldwide were ordered on to high alert status, air space was taken over by the military, every airport was closed and all flights in USA airspace were ordered to land. International flights that were en route to the USA were diverted to Canada. Almost half an hour later, at 10.28am, the north tower also fell in. Authorities and emergency crews who had been trying to rescue workers in the buildings were trapped in the rubble; lower Manhattan was covered in the debris of the two monolith structures.
As the public was absorbing the shock of the second collapse, a plane scheduled to travel from New Jersey to San Francisco crashed at 10.30am into a field outside Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; its obscure landing place was the result of passengers fighting back against the on-board hijackers after having received mobile phone calls from people watching the Twin Towers drama unfold on television.

A crisis of such magnitude – although at this early stage inexplicable amidst the chaos and shock – generated instantaneous and saturation media coverage with a plethora of random information broadcast through major television, radio and online networks in the USA and overseas. A day of terror – just after 5.00pm building seven of the World Trade Center complex would collapse after suffering indirect damage – was unfolding. The nature of the catastrophe was immeasurable and inexplicable and no-one had answers: a Washington Post reporter asked an official at the National Security Council to explain what was happening, and was told: “We don’t know anything here. We’re watching CNN, too” (Vossoughian, 2003).

The terror now faced by the USA was, for some, tainted with a sense of regret, with reports emerging that America had been warned. The United States Commission on National Security had attempted to alert the nation that America was at risk of terrorism, even going so far as to say that “much of the world will resent and oppose us, if not for the simple fact of our pre-eminence, then for the fact that others often perceive the United States as exercising its power with arrogance and self-absorption” (Evans, 2001). The report was a “devastating indictment of the ‘fragmented and inadequate’ structures and strategies” that were applied to protect Americans yet “passed under the
radar”, untouched by television and ignored by the press (Ibid. 2001). Unsurprisingly, the September 11 attacks revealed a sense of frustration among the authors of the report that “the marriage of two inertias – one in the serious press, the other in the administration – delayed the taking of action” (Ibid. 2001). Inertia was not now present.

The electronic media moved to centre stage to satisfy the public’s need for information by attempting to unravel what had happened. The coverage underscored the fact that when there is real news, as opposed to media-fuelled, national melodramas, the public can’t get enough of it (Kohut, 2002). Kohut (2002) noted the American public’s strongly positive reaction to news coverage of September 11 was an important lesson about the relationship between the people and the press: that the public’s need to know trumps everything else, drives attentiveness and shapes evaluations of the media. Wiggins (2001) saw that the immediate response of the media on September 11 was “to seek and to deliver desperately wanted information about the lives lost and damage inflicted by the attacks.” The media thus became, as it often does in times of crisis, the conduit between the crisis and the public, opening up a strong, immediate and much relied on forum of communication. Galtung and Ruge’s (1965) news values of frequency, threshold, unambiguity, meaningfulness, unexpectedness, continuity, elite nations, elite people, personification and negativity would be relevant through the crisis.

Vossoughian (2003) observed “the events of September 11 were not just events but were media events” and the media was always destined to play a prominent role as “the people who flew the airplanes into those buildings did it in order to get on TV, counting on the camcorders, the live coverage, the cell phones and the Internet to make this event
happen, and happen around the world in real-time: they aimed not just at the buildings, but at our television screens.” As an event, the attacks of September 11, 2001 not only changed the skyscape of New York but the political and emotional landscape of the United States, and arguably the world (Wiggins, 2001). As a media event, the attacks would serve to expose the vulnerabilities of the global tourism industry to everlasting changes in perception of safety and security (Valentin, 2003).

A3.4. Consolidation Phase: September 12 – end September, 2001

US film critic and theorist Patricia Mellencamp suggested that “something becomes a catastrophe when reports of its occurrence are allowed to interrupt the otherwise seamless schedules of broadcast radio and television” (Silverstone, 2002, p. 4). September 11 impacted globally and dramatically with a reality hard to contain and a continuity of engagement between the media and the public, “an always on-ness and infinite presence and availability of images and sounds of broadcasting” (ibid, p. 4).

There was an extreme sense of urgency in the immediate aftermath as people tried to understand the real nature and magnitude of the attack. Communication was initially impeded by wide-scale telecommunications failures and, with traditional channels unavailable, people resorted to e-mail, Blackberries and wireless connections (Ferris, 2002). As difficult as communications were proving, there was immense demand by millions for real-time news. The vivid immediacy of the live events, with the blatant graphic of a plane flying into the side of the World Trade Center as the centrepiece, was broadcast widely and continually, generating a strong sense of crisis. Uninterrupted
media coverage was becoming the world’s window to the horror being played out. The attacks brought the USA to an immediate standstill, particularly in tourism, with the rapid grounding of all aircraft causing instant decline in passengers.

The media’s immediate and extensive coverage of the crisis (Figure 47) and the initial replaying of images of the attacks with dust-covered workers trying to exit the site, led to quick formation in the minds of the global public of a chaos of indelible sounds, images and voices that would create a lasting impression. Reports of people “screaming, running, crying through war zones” (Borger et al., 2001a) portrayed an image of the USA in a state of siege. Stories from the frontline rapidly circulated the globe, with office workers recounting how they scrambled for their lives (Figure 48), getting outside only to find “an apocalypse” of trauma, determination and ghostly silence (Ellison et al., 2001). Described as “everything Pearl Harbour was and more” (Borger & Campbell, 2001), the press portrayed warlike scenes of aircraft carriers and battleships.
being hastily deployed and police roaming streets shouting at pedestrians. “Three hours of terror and chaos [had] brought a nation to a halt” (Borger et al., 2001b) as America began pulling up the drawbridges, putting forces on high alert, closing all airports and rerouting aircraft to other countries. Panic set in.

By the time I’d gotten to the ninth floor of the Journal building and taken a position at a window in the northeast corner, diagonally across an intersection from the World Trade Center, the conflagration was well underway. Great clouds of smoke pushed skyward. Intense flames were consuming higher floors above the crash site. Debris was falling onto the streets – huge chunks of metal that echoed blocks away when they hit. Office papers littered the ground. Cars in a nearby parking lot – a full two city blocks from the explosion – were aflame. I called our partner, CNBC, the business news television service, and began reporting the scene from inside our offices, beneath the burning structure. Then suddenly – as suddenly as the first explosion – I saw the second tower erupt in flame, sending more flame and debris crashing southward. This time, the television cameras, located in midtown Manhattan and pointed south, caught the image of a commercial jet veering into the second tower.

- Bussey, J (2001)

Figure 48: Images of dust covered workers making their way through the destruction were transmitted around the world (Crossing Wall Street, 2001).
The media were hard at work translating and interpreting what was known for a public desperate for information. Stories were plentiful and covered many fronts, including the drama unfolding at crash sites, the nature of terrorism and the global ramifications of the crisis, crossing the boundaries between nationalities and countries, somehow supporting the notion that the “defining characteristic of terrorism is … its ability to blur distinctions: between military and civilian, combatant and non-combatant, domestic and foreign, here and there” (Vossoughian, 2003).

International media saw “towers too irresistible for terrorists” (Tran, 2001), with the New York attacks hitting the symbolic heart of America’s economic might and the attack on the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. striking “the symbolic centre of USA military power” (Borger & Campbell, 2001). The Guardian editorial recognised the attacks as “the sum of all our fears” (The Guardian, 2001i) plunging America into a state of war with two likely results: American unilateralism or American over-reaction. Recognising the global ramifications early, international commentators were quick to urge the United States to stay cool.

CNN was equally quick to amass what would become the best collection of audio and video from the disaster scenes, including film of the first American Airlines plane striking the World Trade Center, sourced from a tourist’s video camera that happened to swing upward from the sidewalk in response to the airplane noise overhead (CNN, 2001r). The attacks would come to be seen as an event that reshaped the face of the nation and the course of history, changing life not just in America but around the globe (Pataki, 2006). It would be difficult to find a facet of life that would not be altered.
For the tourism industry, there were immediate, public truths to the crisis that could not be avoided: security was high, movement was limited, and the stench and the drifting smoke of destruction was constant. These were the images being broadcast; these were the images that would prove to deconstruct the tourism industry. The aviation sector had experienced hijackings before, however the two airlines directly involved in the crisis – through the use of their planes to mount the attacks – had never faced such situations before (Greer & Moreland, 2003). The immediate grounding of aircraft led to a commensurate halt in passenger movements and the heightened sense of threat led to an almost instant standstill in other tourism and travel activities. What was labelled “the worst single terrorist attack in recent history” (Beirman, 2003b) would have an immediate and long-lasting impact on tourism worldwide due to the use of aircraft. Safety and security concerns would plague the industry from now on.

A3.5. The Acceleration Phase: September – November, 2001

September 11, 2001, has been described as “a media operation if ever there was one” (Vossoughian, 2003). In the immediate wake of the attacks, millions of people around the world wanted to know all about it and began searching for news-related content wherever they could find it: television, radio, the Web, newspaper sites. But there was another, smaller public for whom the search was more urgent: the friends or family of those possibly involved.

An analysis of activity on Google on September 11, 2001, showed a substantial increase of searches for the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, Osama bin Laden, American
Airlines, the Federal Bureau of Investigation [FBI] and CNN, with some 6,000 users per minute searching for CNN alone (Wiggins, 2001). The popularity of CNN as a news source emerged as a result of the first Gulf War coverage and many now turned to it instinctively for the big stories. Online news is often thought to be always accessible, however the Internet, being a narrowcast medium, was inadequately equipped to handle millions of people trying to access sites at once. Hence, the role of traditional broadcast media proved pivotal during the September 11 crisis, both in terms of access and currency.

The saturation coverage of the crisis kept millions intensely focused on television screens for hours, with many channels replacing usual programming with continuous news bulletins. In New York, the CBS-TV broadcast affiliate saw “a surge in ratings, not only because of the nature of its saturation coverage, but also because its in-town rivals had lost their broadcast towers on the World Trade Center” (Wiggins, 2001). When terror struck, *The Seattle Times*, like many media outlets, had to balance the need-to-know aspect with availability of resources. With no national correspondents on staff, the paper relied on wire copy but soon faced a need to put it all into context and sought to create a package to cover all facets of the event (*Figure 49*). “We were going through titles like mad: ‘Terror in America,’ ‘America at War’,” said Joy Jernigan, producer for SeattleTimes.com. Like many, the publication proceeded with a multi-page, special print section and an accompanying, enriched Web version which would become a “living project” (Lipton & Giuffo, 2002). (See for example *The Seattle Times*, 2001; CNN, 2001af; *The Guardian*, 2001h.)
The repercussions of the event were being felt worldwide and there were reports of resource-stretched newsrooms, even in Africa, with many broadcasters relying on enterprising methods to bring in and push out the news. Like many international media outlets, Africa’s Enews Agency, ENEWS, dispatched its own reporter to Manhattan to get a first-hand perspective (CNN, 2001ah). Many international broadcasters took USA blanket network coverage but, in the case of Africa, some USA networks lost viewers to British broadcasts because of alleged bias. The Deputy Editor of the Mail & Guardian thought the American networks “fared miserably”, with the “human emotional response lasting far longer than one expects from professional journalists” (CNN, 2001ah). The international hunger for information was just as strong as in the USA, with reports of Web users abandoning chat sites, turning instead to news sites and official government
announcements (Gibson, 2001). Web traffic for the Arab news site al-Jazeera also soared, with the site “seen by the west as a window into the Muslim world” (Hodgson, 2001c).

British newspapers responded to the attacks as strongly as their American counterparts: with saturation coverage and outrage (Kennedy, 2002). It was, however, not long before the different perspectives of the international and US media became apparent in matters of style and substance. The unanimous and unquestioning support of the international media would not last long, to be replaced by a critical stance and an inclination to question (Kennedy, 2002). The rise of 24/7 global news, together with the competition driven by instantaneous coverage of events, resulted in pressure on government analysts to produce fresh reports at a faster pace while also trying to add context to supplement messages the public was getting from the media (National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States [9/11 Commission], 2004). This was suggested as a reason for the circulation of perceived inaccurate reporting or misinformation, with official counter messages often needing to be delivered in response to media stories.

Considerable speculation was also circulating in the media, especially as a result of the proliferation of personal accounts of survivors. This influenced the move by investigating authorities to conduct witness interviews in a manner that would avoid the chance of the media affecting accounts and recollections. Conversely, in a show of working with the media as opposed to having to contend with it, the FBI took steps to use the media to promote its investigations, representing a detour from practices prior to September 11. However, the relationship between authorities and the media was on the
whole not entirely cooperative, culminating in later instances of the media taking the Attorney-General to court over the closure of hearings and secrecy of case details regarding the international terrorism threat now faced (9/11 Commission, 2004).

This threat of terror spread through the world. In Britain, Prime Minister Tony Blair declared that “the events should not be seen as a battle between the USA and terrorism, but between the free and democratic world and terrorism” (Borger & Campbell, 2001). Britain and other countries that would make similar declarations became deeply involved in the crisis, contributing to the escalation of the event and its coverage as a global affair. Media coverage had already picked up on the USA’s plans for retaliation to “hunt down and punish those responsible for these attacks” (Campbell, 2001), and commentators were keen to ponder whether the USA would behave in a dignified and statesmanlike way or bow to the more extreme rhetoric already filtering out of Washington. Economic uncertainty was compounded worldwide, with media classifying the terrorist attacks as “a direct strike at the very heart of global capitalism” and business had immediately assumed operations under the “wholly plausible assumption…that George Bush would retaliate first and ask questions later” (Elliott, 2001).

America’s actions were quick to come under fire from the international marketplace. Reporting for the UK’s The Guardian, Engel (2001) observed a day of disaster that would “end a certain amount of smug self-satisfaction” in that, despite images in TV and films of the USA as a land of lawlessness, everyday life in America had seemed wholly invincible. President Bush’s address to the nation in the aftermath also met with
suspicion, his statement that “we have taken all appropriate security precautions to protect the American people” described by the reporter as sounding “ludicrously hollow” and suggesting that the US was incapable of offering total security.

The image of America was not helped as the media reported less palatable news in the aftermath: fraudulent donation Web sites were extracting money from an unsuspecting and malleable public; pranksters had populated some of the self-reporting “I’m okay” sites with bogus information; and scam e-mails were in circulation. Various items of disinformation and misinformation began circulating by e-mail, in chat rooms, and other means, creating an issue in terms of the dissemination of accurate messages and information. The atmosphere was made even more unsavoury by a number of false bomb threats and other hoaxes in New York reaching an all-time high on days immediately following the attacks (Ferris, 2002). The series of real anthrax attacks weeks after September 11 further exacerbated the climate of paranoia and reinforced the element of fear that was becoming ingrained.

The media highlighted personal plight stories (*Figure 50*), often generated by employment issues due to job loss or changes to company structures in the wake of the crisis. The media’s focus also broadened to look at economic issues such as flexibility in wages, shifts in productivity, changing levels of capacity and income and employment generation. Economic impacts of the crisis – particularly costs to the tourism industry – were quick to be reported with news reports on September 13 focusing on costs to the airline industry for grounded aircraft (Jones, 2001). The major impact of September 11 on the tourism industry was clearly understood to be an
immediate and significant reduction in demand for air travel and journeys by both domestic and international travellers (Blake & Sinclair, 2003).

The psychological impact of the USA as a target and the use of commercial aircraft in acts of terror was expected to have a much bigger impact than the Gulf War from which, according to the World Travel and Tourism Council, it had taken the tourism industry three years to recover (Bogdanowicz, 2001; US National Tour Association [NTA], 2001). The prevailing uncertain atmosphere led the NTA to declare the tourism industry’s short term future as “survival of the fittest” (NTA, 2001). In fact, the NTA’s advice was that focus would have to be rerouted to short-term solutions with longer-term projects and long-haul products put on hold. Marketing plans written just weeks before the attacks had to be “thrown out and replaced by plans that look more like they should be written for 1992, not 2002” (NTA, 2001, p. 11). As well as a fear of flying, travellers wanted to be at home when the United States responded to the attacks, leading
the tourism industry to believe that international travel would not revive until that response was over (Bogdanowicz, 2001).

Assessments of the financial sting of the attacks followed on from the emotional fallout as travellers cancelled trips en masse and airlines were forced to announce massive staff cutbacks, some closing operations altogether (Hovind, 2001). Airlines sought to implement other measures to offset financial impacts, with American Airlines ceasing its in-flight meal service to save money. Although insisting that “passengers on some flights won’t go hungry”, the measure was to also affect services to Canada, Mexico and the Caribbean, and some flights to Central and South America (CNN, 2001c).

The negative impact was most visible in the United States and in those markets that depended on USA visitors, although the International Air Transport Association [IATA] noted international travel was in decline already due to economic conditions (OECD, 2001). At a meeting of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD] after the attacks, while it was observed that government representatives were much more optimistic than tourism industry leaders, both groups agreed on an immediate priority of restoring consumer confidence (OECD, 2001).

The US domestic tourism market experienced a dramatic drop in activity and just over one week on from the attacks, the media was already reporting “USA tourism suffers in attacks’ aftermath” (Clinton, 2001). Press reports detailed the damage to New York’s tourism, with occupancy rates down and a raft of productions closing on the drawcard Broadway strip. In Washington, D.C., struggles were particularly compounded by the
extended closure of the airport. The newest tourist spot in the Washington area was emerging on a hill next to a highway, offering a view of the damaged Pentagon to tourists who “wanted to see what it really looked like, instead of just in the news and the newspapers” (Kast, 2001). In the aftermath of the terrorist attack on the Pentagon, visitors to the nation’s capital lost access to some of the high-profile attractions with tours of the White House, the Capitol building, the FBI and the Mint all suspended (CNN, 2001bd). While museums and nearly all memorials were open, they were missing the hordes of tourists. The small group of people travelling, much like in New York, did so as some form of pilgrimage (Kast, 2001). 

On the other side of the country, the Los Angeles Convention and Visitors Bureau was not spared, with the cancellation of several large conventions affecting many tourism sectors. At Universal Studios in Los Angeles, tourists Bob and Marlene McVay and their children drove in from Reno, Nevada. Asked if they would be afraid to fly on future vacations, Bob replied “no”, before his wife quickly weighed in to say “I definitely think so, airline travel is completely out of the question these days” (Clinton, 2001). In other popular locations such as Las Vegas, job losses prevailed as the destination struggled to cope with the immediate loss of the 50 percent of visitors who usually arrived by air. In an effort to attract customers, the hotels and casinos cut prices; however, this resulted in a different clientele – a more frugal one. The impact on the bottom line rippled down to workers and many lost jobs and, consequently, benefits such as healthcare. One industry worker who remained employed noted that “we [who remain] work harder… the workload is much harder for us – and it’s not the same as it
was before‖ (CNN, 2001i). Staff were tired and struggled to make the visitor experience an enjoyable one.

While all 50 states of America depend in some way on tourism, the hot spots of Florida and Hawaii were expected to be hurt the most given their major dependence on tourism and the international market (Clinton, 2001). In Orlando, which lives and dies on tourist dollars and, like Las Vegas, receives the majority of visitors by air, theme parks like Disney and Sea World were completely empty, with no waiting lines. Hundreds of conventions and meetings were cancelled or postponed. Until Americans were again comfortable with flying, tourism officials admitted their attention could only be on the segment of the population that could easily drive to destinations – people from within state and from neighbouring states (CNN, 2001h).

The effects were not expected to hit the US only, with the world tourism industry reported to be “fearing an extended slump” (Bogdanowicz, 2001). A substantial slowdown in business was expected, with the World Tourism Organization having already reduced its forecast for growth by an immediate one-third. Travellers cancelled tour arrangements or switched to destinations away from the United States. The lack of outbound travellers from the US also warned of possible future impacts, with Americans recognised as the world’s biggest spenders and accounting for some 13 percent of the trillion dollars international tourists spend every year (Bogdanowicz, 2001).
The British tourism industry counted the USA as its number one source of inbound visitors and was hard hit. The terrorism crisis decimated UK tourism, a sector already weakened by the effects of the foot and mouth crisis earlier in 2001 with the British Tourist Authority reporting the latest blow to have “a far deeper and long-lasting effect than foot and mouth” (Day, 2001g). Marketing drives that had been prepared were now held over for a more appropriate time. Other popular destinations for American travellers – such as the Caribbean – also suffered with reports of the attacks “hitting Jamaica in the pocketbook, leaving the destination reeling” as a result of cancelled travel and a decline in forward bookings (CNN, 2001d). Short term survival hinged on maintaining flows from other international markets, yet with the impacts widespread, the outlook was bleak (Ishmael, 2001). The effects even spread to Arabian countries with tourists immediately avoiding Middle East attractions, hitting Egypt and its prominent tourism industry particularly hard (Mahopa, 2002). The tourism industry as a whole was instantly and significantly affected, but the aviation sector would take the biggest hit.

The US Government’s priorities after the attacks were in law enforcement, disaster relief and security, and while the responses were heavily geared toward keeping operations going, safety measures in particular were designed to try to instil a sense of assurance about air travel and avoid the complete devastation of the aviation sector (Blake & Sinclair; 2003). However the battle ahead was considerable. An immediate result of the attacks was reduced rates of domestic and international passenger enplanements at USA airports, with volumes worsening in October to indicate a deepening of the crisis (Ibid. 2003). In terms of global impacts, US, Canadian and
European airlines with substantial North Atlantic exposure were severely affected, with the key transatlantic route (Europe/UK) experiencing a dramatic reduction in flights. Asia Pacific airlines also experienced reduced passenger loads, with most reporting postponement of travel to the US and other markets (Tourism Queensland, 2006). Airlines around the world immediately tightened security measures. Amidst cancelled flights, security stood guard over planes on the tarmac and all bags had to be claimed, even between connecting flights (CNN, 2001u). European officials considered installing bullet-proof glass in cockpit doors and implementing extra baggage checks (CNN, 2001u).

Media reports out of the key aviation hub of Hong Kong estimated the loss to global airlines to be as great as US$10 billion, three times worse than initially expected, and leading the head of the International Air Transport Association to predict the industry would take at least a full year to bounce back (Barron, 2001). Intercontinental carriers such as Lufthansa and British Airways were sharply restrained by the downturn in passenger numbers, a situation compounded by the additional costs for security and higher insurance premiums. Unlike USA carriers, the Europeans did not receive government assistance, and Swissair would eventually descend into insolvency (Mahopac, 2002). Airlines in Asia struggled to cope for the same reasons. Major Asia-Pacific carriers Singapore Airlines, Air New Zealand and Qantas all cut services and sought to reduce administration costs.

Domestic airlines in the US faced a “cash crunch” (Isadora, 2001) with the industry’s trade group saying the companies had only enough cash to survive for about 30 days
because of public fear of flying in the wake of the attacks. The US Air Transport Association [ATA] reported that airlines were selling no new tickets, with flights only carrying passengers who already had a ticket and wanted to get home. The situation was dire: “In the past, things have been incredibly resilient. This is completely different. Do you want to fly? Ask your 10 neighbours if they want to fly. If nine say no, you may have your answer,” said an ATA spokesperson (Isadora, 2001).

The day after the attacks, online chat rooms were bombarded by people seeking answers from aviation safety experts. Questions on a CNN discussion covered the previous security violations of the involved airlines, the use of sky marshals, and the threat required before a plane could be shot down (CNN, 2001ak). In response to the question on how Americans could ever feel safe about flying again, Michael Barr, director of the aviation program at the University of Southern California, said: “I think passengers will have to show patience with the increased security requirements. That will be the best way passengers can help. And it will take time for passengers to return to the feeling of security that they possessed before this event. They will have to have confidence in government actions to prevent this from happening again” (Ibid., 2001ak).

Most US airports resumed operations on Thursday, two days after the attacks, but not without a host of cancellations, arrests and anxious passengers. Making the news was the arrest of at least eight people at New York airports for false identification, including a fake pilot’s license, leading to the closure of all New York airports again (CNN, 2001w). Washington’s airport remained closed due to its proximity to government facilities. Although airspace had reopened, international flights were not allowed entry
apart from those diverted to Canada for screening. Airports that did reopen struggled to meet new, tighter security guidelines including a ban on all knives, the elimination of curbside and off-airport check-ins, the introduction of federal air marshals, and a prohibition of all but ticketed passengers beyond airport metal detectors (CNN, 2001w). The measures at the time were a big departure for Americans from the relaxed conditions of air travel pre-9/11. Apart from learning to deal with new security measures, the public was unsure of what was operating, with disparate information for different airports and different airlines.

Together with the new restrictions – ending the almost laissez-faire approach to American air travel – the public was told security measures had started and would continue to slow operations at airports and lead to longer lines for passengers (CNN, 2001an). The increased security would be a key feature of airports, with scores of federal marshals, customs and border patrol agents on duty. As the week drew to a close, the air industry sought to return to normal operations, yet terminals were all but empty, Los Angeles airport on the other side of the country only recording 100 arrivals and departures in an 18 hour period (CNN, 2001a) in comparison to the previous year’s average for September of more than 2,200 per day. Travellers who did show up were met by several obstacles including longer check-in times and waiting due to fewer flights and extensive security checks.

As well as dealing with economic and logistical crises, the aviation sector also had to contend with the emotional crisis. An analysis (Greer and Moreland, 2003) of the Web sites of the directly involved airline operators – United Airlines and American Airlines
– found the sites changed to create a portal of information for the diverse publics seeking information, including the media. The task of communicating with a variety of publics was now important for tourism as a whole. Through the internet, the airline operators were able to provide immediate responses, frequent updates and general communication to various publics simultaneously. A broader look at the responses of businesses following the September 11 attacks found that various forms of online communications were used to disseminate information, with the Web facilitating easier and faster communication with the media and providing a means of responding to critics and correcting information (Ibid.).

The tourism industry was helped immeasurably by the “showering of sympathy” on New York and an appeal by Mayor Rudy Giuliani for visitors to “flock back to the city” was generating results (Thome, 2003). For some international markets, however, information was causing damage. Suffering their own collateral negative effects, countries dependent on travellers from the West were further hit by the US issuing travel advisories for its own citizens, instructing them to avoid certain countries for safety reasons. Moves by the US Government to declare that it was not so much America that was unsafe, but rather countries that were either linked directly or indirectly to the terrorist attacks, led to other Western governments following suit with their own advisories, essentially denying outbound travel from sizable Western sources of tourists (Opanga, 2003). Increasingly, media coverage was focusing on the September 11 crisis as an external issue, reinforced by business-as-usual messages. International media commentators observed that the USA “never advised tourists to stay
away from its shores because of the events of September 11 or in the face of heightened security alerts” (Opanga, 2003).

Reports continued to flow about security infringements, not just in the violated destinations but across the country: a passenger’s joke misinterpreted as a threat resulted in his removal from a plane in New Jersey; Chicago airport was closed after authorities’ detained two people; and, an intruder was arrested in the grounds of San Francisco’s airport (CNN, 2001a). Critics started to attack the security systems, likening “the front line of defence at airports (the passenger screening system) to Swiss cheese” (Davis, 2001) and being far inferior to systems in other parts of the world. Ongoing reports of the failed detection of dangerous items such as corkscrews and pocket-knives – in Los Angeles 5,000 illegal items were confiscated in one day (Vause, 2001) – also did little to instil confidence. The media reminded the world of the permeability of airline security, of how “nineteen men, armed with plastic scissors, cardboard cutters and a burning hatred of the United States” (Vause, 2001) turned commercial aircraft into weapons of mass destruction. The aviation industry realised that measures had to be implemented but were in no position to suggest compromise.

The experiences of the everyday person made headlines, as the media sought to portray the impact the security measures were having: the Schragis family from New York hit the headlines when tightened security prevented their 16-year-old daughter from taking her knitting needles on board. Airline staff grabbed attention by admitting “the presence of security, state police, armed marshals and bomb dogs is incredible, but [is] a false sense of security. If somebody wants to bring down an aircraft, they can. Nothing has
changed that” (Vause, 2001). The widespread imposition of new levels of safety had never been seen before and would be felt by every air traveller around the world as complacency was no longer an option (Figure 51).

Figure 51: Heightened security spread across all airports (MSNBC, 2001)

CNN’s on-going in-depth analysis focused on three themes of the airport security system in the United States: previous warnings about lax security, a comparison of the system in the USA to that in Western Europe, and, finally, a look at various solutions being proposed to improve airport security (CNN, 2001ag). A report into aviation security in America found it relied on low paid employees and, under Federal Aviation Administration [FAA] guidelines, airlines outsourced to private security firms, leading one US Senator to observe that America had “dumbed down the security system” (Fish, 2001a) with airlines’ security interests driven by a need to cut costs, especially during times of hardship. This was compounded by personnel – claimed to be the last line of defence – being poorly paid, inadequately trained, and with teams routinely turned over at least once a year.
Security assessments also found that Logan International Airport in Boston, Dulles in Virginia and Newark International – the originating points for the terrorist hijackings – had some of the lowest numbers of weapons found by airline screeners and that American Airlines, one of the carriers whose planes were hijacked on September 11, was cited for the most security incidents in the decade. United Airlines, the other carrier hijacked, was third (Fish, 2001a). The lax attitude was put down to several reasons, among them pressure and politics. An aviation security consultant advised that in peak times “security screeners feel the pressure to move people along”, while a former FAA security chief saw “collegial partnerships” superseding enforcement and regulatory responsibilities (Fish, 2001a). Lax security measures aside, just as big a story were the many warnings over poor airport security preceding the attacks. The watchdogs were reported to have “howled over and over again” that airport security in the US was vulnerable, yet it took September 11 for the government to look seriously at the issue (Fish, 2001c). Contrary to restoring faith in American air travel, CNN reported under the headline “Outside the US, a different approach to air security: Tighter standards, better pay in Europe” (Fish, 2001d) a comparison of safety and security between American and European air travel, declaring the latter far superior. Although illustrating measures that the US should think about implementing, the focus again worked to increase doubt in the mind of the traveller.

As well as employing its own security measures, the international aviation industry was also subject to new measures by the US Government. Airlines flying international routes into the United States were ordered to submit passenger lists electronically or the US Customs Service would subject all passengers to hand searches of both their
checked luggage and carry-on bags. The Customs service was “…concerned about the security of our country…and, before people come into the United States, there is a need to know who people are, run checks and have a higher level of comfort that terrorists are not entering this country” (CNN, 2001b). Most international airlines already submitted electronic lists.

Debate raged over how best to plug holes in airport security. The government had already indicated support for federal marshals on planes, more secure cockpits and greater law enforcement presence at airports. However, security experts thought more could be done. Despite the public moves by the federal government to tighten aviation security – limiting carry-on bags to one item, banning knives and cutting instruments, and allowing only ticketed passengers beyond screening checkpoints – airport safety was still criticised as being inconsistent and inadequate. Some airports adhered to new standards better than others, but this created a sporadic response that left the airline industry at risk (Koch, 2001a). The US transport secretary acknowledged that “Deficiencies exist…someone may undergo strict screening in Kansas City, while someone else can slip a pistol by screeners in New Orleans” (Ibid), comments doing little to bolster consumer confidence. Security measures such as identification procedures were seen as flawed, flight attendants claimed to be untrained to handle intruders and most checked bags and cargo were reported as inadequately screened due to slow, underused or absent machinery.

Despite the raft of security measures, Rudy Kapustin, former chief investigator for the National Transportation Safety Board was pragmatic: “The bottom line is if you have
highly trained and sophisticated people pulling off something like this, there is very little that you can do” (Fish, 2001b). The reality of the situation was equally summed up by the president of one of the airline unions: “You can’t be Sky King and Wyatt Earp at the same time” (CNN, 2001as). The pragmatism did not stop American interest in stepping up to fight the fight, with CNN reporting that over 100,000 people had volunteered to be federal air marshals in response to the FAA’s advertising campaign in the aftermath of the attacks (CNN, 2001bc).

The public debate over the standard of aviation security took a shift as more measures came into effect. As lawmakers continued to present new security measures and the government worked on a package of anti-terrorism laws, civil libertarians became concerned especially with measures proposing authority to conduct roving wiretaps, the use of wiretap information from other governments, and allowing law enforcement agents to seize suspected terrorists’ voice mail and e-mail without a search warrant (CNN, 2001as). In particular, the security measure of passenger profiling found itself in the headlines. The President of the Air Transport Association thought it essential to look at individuals and determine who was a potential threat to all other passengers, the USA Transportation Secretary claiming the system did not factor in ethnicity to avoid discrimination, yet the debate ensued.

Some security experts, such as Neil Livingstone of Washington-based GlobalOptions, claimed that “we are concerned about people from a particular region of the world…and we ought to spend most of our time looking for them”; yet civil liberties advocates reported an increasing number of complaints from passengers who said they had been
unfairly targeted, and claimed profiles to be notoriously under-inclusive (Koch, 2001b). Senior CNN political correspondent Judy Woodruff observed Attorney General John Ashcroft’s most newsworthy statement to be his belief that the people who may be affected under new justice procedures “would not be Americans”, thereby making a distinction between citizens of the US and foreigners and in effect saying that if you were not an American citizen, then different rules would apply (CNN, 2001ai). While the arguments about balancing the protection of US citizens with the protection of the civil rights of those suspected of terrorism continued, so too did the impacts on travel.

There was no denying the attacks had caused a fear of flying, in people directly and indirectly involved in the attacks and in America and internationally (Mahopa, 2002). The fear was relatively common before the attacks, but mental health experts expected the number of sufferers to grow. Although professional advice was to deal with the fear by flying and tolerate the anxiety – with increased airport security seen as an imperative to combating fear – people worldwide dealt with it by avoiding the skies (Rowland, 2001). A CNN bureau chief (Sesno, 2001) gave a personal account of a flying experience in the week after the attacks. Flying between two of the three involved airports, Frank Sesno (2001) likened the experience to “stepping through the looking glass into a suddenly suspicious world so distorted it was barely recognizable”, the fear echoing through the empty airport and airplane “a manifestation of how far America has to travel before it gets going again”. To Sesno (2001), the whole trip acted as “a metaphor for where America finds itself right now – a nation hunkered down, as confused as it is determined; wounded and proud”.
America did remain proud. Not long after the attack, the media reported the tragedy had prompted “renewed patriotism” and an always proud America had become even prouder as “American flags fly from car antennas and hang in offices and stores and Irving Berlin’s ‘God Bless America’ [is] back in vogue” (CNN, 2001ax). New York had emerged as the centre of patriotism, with “calls to consumerism now competing with calls to patriotism” displaying a sentiment echoed across the country (Ibid.). In Chicago, army veteran Maurice Perkins told the Associated Press [AP] “U.S. means us”; while in the US South, American flags had replaced Confederate flags with Pat Robinson, owner of Savannah Sails and Rails flag shop in Savannah, Georgia, commenting that “since Tuesday, anybody who thinks about anything other than the American flag or the USA is crazy” (Ibid).

With a “nation united as never before”, President Bush made clear that while he “wept and mourned with America,” the resolve was steady and strong about winning the war that had been declared on America (CNN, 2001f). Believed to be a new kind of war, and perhaps foretelling of the international engagement that would come, it was expected that the government would call on others to join the fight to make accountable those responsible for the attacks and those who harboured them. Recognition was also made of the Arab-Americans in America who “love their flag just as much” and the need for them and Muslims to be treated with the respect they deserve, not be subjected to the generalization that one who is a Muslim is responsible for an act of terror (Ibid.). However, with the growing sense of patriotism came the manifestation of a growing fear of non-Americans.
Perhaps one of the most silent impacts on the tourism industry was the blurred lines between patriotism and discrimination. Just one week on from the attacks, media reports detailed the extreme escalation of hate crimes in the wake of September 11, predominantly against Muslims and southeast Asians (CNN, 2001ae). The incidents started a political backlash, with international governments calling on the American government to ensure the safety of all peoples. The Council on American-Islamic Relations reported receiving over 300 reports of abuse over the three days following the attacks, nearly half the number it received all the previous year, with cases ranging from “families being spat and yelled at ‘Go back to your country’, to assaults on people and businesses” (Ibid.).

In California, a mother of two from Iraq awoke to find the hallway in her apartment smeared with faeces (Lipton and Giuffo, 2002). In Arizona, murder charges were laid against an Indian national for an attack believed to be a racially-motivated response to the terrorist attacks (CNN, 2001ae). Afflicted minorities pleaded that while their “appearance looks like Osama bin Laden and those of Afghanistan,” alluding to the US’s prime suspect for the attacks, they were “different people from Muslim people, with different beliefs and a different religion” (Ibid). Leaders of the Indian community claimed the media didn’t help to dispel bias when they repeatedly broadcast the arrest of a Sikh aboard an Amtrak train, who was charged with carrying a knife, but was later cleared of any connection to the attacks.

Muslim community leaders apportioned blame to the media, observing that the acts of small anti-American groups received wide publicity with all Muslims “branded with the
same iron‖ (Ishmael, 2001). In one of the more notable cases of the blurred distinction between patriotism and discrimination, a pilot barred an Arab-American Secret Service agent from boarding a flight to Texas, where the agent was to join the security detail at President Bush’s ranch (CNN, 2001ap). Domestic carrier Northwest Airlines ejected three Arab-American men off a flight from Minneapolis to Philadelphia because other passengers refused to fly on the same plane with them. The airline defended the actions claiming that security rules gave it permission to “reaccommodate” passengers (Cave and Mieszkowski, 2001).

The international media were also attacked for their role in fostering discrimination, the UK publication *The Daily Express* eventually cleared of a racial slur after appearing to imply that Muslims were wife beaters who supported Osama Bin Laden; the paper pointed out in defence that the article was clearly labelled as a comment piece so the charges of inaccuracy didn’t apply (Gibson, 2002). A damning European Union report would also warn the media to avoid demonising immigrants and asylum seekers, warning of mounting anti-Muslim prejudice across the continent (Black, 2002). The report accused the UK media of using negative stereotypes of Muslims and portraying them as the enemy within, but mixed messages from the government also were seen to be legitimising racist debate. The report showed Britain had seen a significant increase in violent assault, abuse and attacks on Muslim property, with rises also reported across Europe in Denmark, the Netherlands and Sweden.

Pew’s national survey in the US in November 2001 (Kohut, 2002) found that the public image of the news media had actually improved for the first time in 16 years in response
to the way the terror attacks were reported, and that Americans held more favourable opinions of the press’s professionalism, patriotism, and morality than before September 11. However, internationally, perceptions of the media — especially the American TV networks — as afflicted by “hysteria, paranoia, amnesia and myopia” were ever-present (Guru, 2001). A less vitriolic assessment saw that, even with the surge of coverage, many stories remained thinly reported mainly for the simple fact that “few of us understand” (Parks, 2002). This perception was not solely directed at the USA: a former politician in Britain claimed the Arab TV station al-Jazeera highlighted the deficiencies of the British media by covering stories in more depth than the BBC’s Newsnight and the British tabloid newspapers which published obvious propaganda (Hodgson, 2001b). While the media often sought to demonstrate positive value in its coverage – such as the launch of a pictorial book by Reuters aimed at raising money for charity (Cassy, 2001) – it did not prevent them from becoming targets themselves, with the Taliban reportedly offering £30,000 a head for the murder of western journalists (Traynor, 2001).

The uneasy balance between patriotism and discrimination, together with the intense security measures, undermined efforts to portray a positive tourism environment. Travel industry leaders saw the steep and persistent decline in visitors to be heavily influenced by authorities treating tourists like terrorists, with a widespread perception that US hostility to foreigners damaged the country’s reputation. “International travellers will tell you they are treated like criminals…they are barked at by US officials, they simply feel unwelcome and that is leading them to choose other countries,” said Geoffrey Freeman of the Discover America Partnership (Meserve & Ahlers, 2007).
Not only was America being by-passed, but the combination of perceived hostility and inappropriateness was leading to a rise of a worldwide sentiment of anti-Americanism (Figure 52). The sentiment did not go unnoticed by Americans, with responses to leaders’ calls to press on eliciting various responses: “...is it not our foreign policies in the first place which help set in motion these horrible events on 9/11? ...isn’t it a bit hypocritical to be describing other foreign government factions as tyrannous, when we invaded Iraq and killed and continue killing hundreds – if not thousands – of innocent civilians?” asked one American (Pataki, 2006). Others believed that the US was attacked solely because of the government’s foreign policy and that the “government is an out of control monster, taking our taxes and doing illegal things all over the world without it’s citizen’s knowledge, much less their approval” (Ibid.). The popular rhetoric to “remember that we were attacked not for what we do wrong but for what we do right” was seen to be “ignorant” and “stereotypically American” (Ibid.). The rise in anti-American sentiment would have long-lasting effects on its image and reputation, affecting both the willingness of people to visit and also the appeal to Americans of travelling abroad, thereby adding to the hurdles that had to be overcome in attempting to display a positive image.

Although encouraged to try to return to their daily lives, New York – and America – was a different place. “Somber Manhattan” headlines accompanied images of masked workers making their way through hazy streets filled with twisted metal and broken concrete as smoke still rose above the skyline (CNN, 2001at). Checkpoints delayed and restricted access and almost 5,000 troops patrolled the streets. Rescue operations continued, but with body parts rather than bodies being found, and the public called on
to provide DNA samples for identification. US leaders encouraged Americans to return to normality, yet there was a morose mood in restaurants, diners and other public areas (CNN, 2001aj). International leaders were taken on tours of Ground Zero by the New York Governor and Mayor (CNN, 2001av) to show the true extent of devastation and the visits gained considerable media attention in America and overseas.

Figure 52: In the immediate aftermath of the attacks, many around the world were quick to identify that “we are all Americans”, however the sentiment would change as the fallout progressed (Le Temps, 2001).

Big city life was portrayed as returning and the Mayor Giuliani used an appearance on popular television show Saturday Night Live to declare the city open for business and many institutions starting to trade again sent a positive message. The reopening of the Empire State Building, now New York’s tallest skyscraper, attracted scores of people in queues stretching around the block. The activity demonstrated Americans’ resolve not to be stopped or to live in fear and was described by the Mayor as “very typical” (CNN,
2001aa). Unfortunately, the same confidence did not extend to either the rest of America or the outside world.

In the immediate wake of September 11, the government’s consideration of terrorism as the top national security priority received the media’s and public’s full support. Further, it was understood that achievements in the war on terror needed to be visible and understandable to stakeholders such as the media (9/11 Commission, 2004). However, as events unfolded so too did conjecture regarding what had happened or, more importantly, how it was allowed to happen and how it could have been prevented. This created a new wave of media reportage that would assist in prolonging the coverage the crisis was receiving.

In its report on the circumstances surrounding September 11, the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (also known as the 9/11 Commission) observed that the media had shown substantial interest in the investigation into the background of the September 11 attacks despite showing little attention to the issue of terrorism in 2000 and in 2001 in the months leading up to September (9/11 Commission, 2004). For Fox News host Bill O’Reilly, the media’s deception rather than ignorance was the issue: “Cheney (US Vice President) has a right to be angry, and so does every American who wants a truthful media,” he explained, “…Anti-Bush zealots are hurting the fight against terror by misleading Americans about what’s actually happening. That puts all of our lives in danger”, (Fairness and Accuracy In Reporting, 2004).

For many, the September 11 crisis has not had – and probably never will have – an end. Operationally however, business had to continue and indeed had to move toward trying to re-establish a sense of normality. Analysis of the Web sites of the two airlines involved in the crisis found that few changes were being made to them after September 19 and by early October their content had returned to normal (Greer & Moreland, 2003). Most businesses, even those who did not have obvious crisis contingency plans, had stabilised four weeks on from the crisis (Ferris, 2002). Life had to go on – that was the political message, the driving rhetoric of resistance and survival. Television also had to go on and two months on from September 11, two of the three major American networks chose not to relay a national broadcast by President Bush – NBC instead choosing to show an episode of popular TV sitcom Friends (Silverstone, 2002).

This did not, however, indicate that the crisis was entirely over for the tourism industry with activity improving but still considerably down (Blake & Sinclair, 2003). Importantly however, consumer confidence seemed to be rebuilding after a dramatic impact on willingness to travel amid fears for safety; although the industry also had to contend with the emergence of other economic situations that would impede recovery efforts (McKercher & Hui, 2004). As the year drew to a close, terror – from the skies, the mail and “non-specific” origins – remained the focus and federal officials extended the official security threat into the New Year (CNN, 2001al). Security measures remained topical with recovery efforts hinging on the travelling public’s perception of them as adequate and necessary. The introduction of such measures had significant
impact on the American market although several of these measures were already in place worldwide (CNN, 2001v). In December, shoe checks were introduced in the US following an incident in which a passenger on an American Airlines flight en route from Paris to Miami attempted to set afire his sneakers containing explosives (CNN, 2001ar). The move would highlight that the threat remained and reaffirm that security was not infallible.

On the economic front, the US government could not agree on details of a proposed economic stimulus package, designed to ease financial impacts and job losses, and the matter was deferred to 2002 (CNN, 2001t). The government also declined to characterise the stimulus bill as a top priority (CNN, 2001ar). Unlike the government, New York Mayor Giuliani was moving onwards and in a farewell speech observed that “that city that used to be the rotting apple ... that city is now a very strong and it’s a confident city...It’s a city that has withstood the worst attack of any city in America ... and people are standing up as tall and as strong and as straight as this church” (CNN, 2001z). Giuliani – declared the hero of the New York response to the attacks and attributing his success to not allowing newspaper editorial boards to guide his actions – would also stand tall as Time magazine’s Person of the Year for 2001, adding the accolade to an honorary knighthood from Queen Elizabeth II (CNN, 2001ab; CNN, 2001z). Giuliani’s recognition by Time was somewhat ironic – stories earlier in the year reported the magazine to have little option but to put Bin Laden on the cover (Vulliamy, 2001).
New York City had also begun to build public viewing platforms around the World Trade Center disaster site to give visitors a vantage point, in an obvious move from aftermath to recovery (CNN, 2001ar). The platforms attracted thousands of people to line up for a look. City officials justified their actions as being in response to public interest and said the platforms would provide a safe and secure location without impeding recovery efforts and also preserving the site’s sanctity (CNN, 2001aq). In fact, the Ground Zero site would grow to become one of the most popular attractions in the USA for reasons running the spectrum between sensationalism and solace. Although the impacts of the crisis were considered so severe that thoughts of a quick resolution were dismissed (Blake & Sinclair, 2003), the growing perception of the crisis as an exogenous event assisted the tourism industry in moving toward recovery by shifting the source of fear to outside the US. Moves to turn the concept of fear of America into one of fear of America’s enemies were to prove beneficial. A study of popular USA travel magazines for several months after September 11 for the presence and prevalence of stories about risk and anxiety found little mention of the tragedy on magazine covers, in photographs, or articles (Kingsbury and Brunn, 2004).

As the media started being able to put a face to the terrorists, links and ties became the terms of choice by which government and media connected Iraq to the September 11 attacks. The crisis morphed into the war on Afghanistan and Iraq, ensuring ongoing media coverage, but further shifting the effects of the crisis away from the USA. Indeed, through the shift in media coverage of September 11 from incident to recollection, together with the reinforced messages of the crisis as an exogenous event, the tourism industry was finally liberated to look toward recovery. The shift in coverage was not the
only shift happening; Pew Research Center surveys found that as the public’s worries 
and fears declined, so did extremely positive ratings of the media’s terrorism coverage 
(Kohut, 2002).


The Director of the Center for Anxiety and Related Disorders at Boston University, 
David Barlow, observed that “it has never succeeded that a terrorist group or any group 
could change the course of events in a country simply by activities that were meant to 
paralyse the population by inducing fear or anxiety,” citing the Blitz of World War II, 
when England endured daily bombing raids by the Germans that eventually saw the 
British soon begin going about their business again (Hatcher, 2001). Parallels to the 
September 11 situation were drawn, where, in the wake of the attacks and the ongoing 
anthrax scare, Americans began to regain “an illusion of control” with the population 
moving from anxiety and becoming more confident that they could manage the risks 
(Ibid.).

Tourism marketers had experience in enticing tourists back into travel following the 
first Gulf War; however the impacts on domestic and international markets following 
September 11 called for recovery skills of a superior nature given the increased severity 
of the crisis (Chen & Noriega, 2004). The number of people visiting the United States 
had dropped significantly, with normal activity not expected to return until 2006 
(Pucci’s, 2003). The September 11 crisis was rightly recognised as being large and 
long-lasting in its unquantifiable impact on the tourism industry. While there was
conjecture as to what actions and policies to implement, the resulting swift action nonetheless aided in generating a perception of activity and of moving forward to rectify the problems.

Historically, in times of downturns, industry relies on government to lobby for the implementation of compensatory and off-setting measures (Blake & Sinclair, 2003). The Travel Industry Recovery Coalition [TIRC], comprising tourism organisations, was formed in late September, following passing by the Federal Government of the Air Transportation Safety and System Stabilization Act, to lobby government in response to September 11. The Coalition proposed a Six-Point Plan aimed at restoring levels of activity in the US industry to those existing prior to the September events with a series of measures of tax credits, loan programs, allowances for net operating losses, and government and private sector funding for advertising and marketing to stimulate travel to and in the United States (Ibid.). The main aim of the TIRC plan was to focus the government on not just the airlines but the tourism industry as a whole.

By establishing itself quickly within the media as an integral component of the economic framework of New York City and, by extension, the USA, the tourism industry was able to capitalise on the ongoing media coverage directed at the impacts of the crisis, gaining profile for tourism activity and also for broader issues of fiscal and social policy. Media reports covered the descent of tourism officials on Washington, D.C., to highlight their plight and seek federal help. Financial assistance aside, the need to get people travelling again was paramount, with the CEO of Marriott International insisting that it was urgent to “get Americans going again. Get America on the move
again. Fly, take a vacation, stay in a hotel, go to a theme park, rent a car. But get out, doing what you were doing before, otherwise, we will really be giving the victory to the terrorist,” Marriott said (Mesidor, 2001). It was also important, he believed, for America to tell the world that its air travel was safe.

Government response to the monetary crisis was swift, with particular emphasis on plans for economic and fiscal measures to stimulate general economic activity, a focus which would continue for many years well into the recovery period. Defence and homeland security spending was also prominent, which served a dual purpose of reinforcing commitment to safety and portrayal of the crisis as an exogenous event. The focus on economic issues benefited the tourism industry. One government measure involved introducing a tourism tax break to promote tourism activity by allowing those who visited New York to deduct the cost from their federal income tax. The move was a benefit for New York tourism but did little for the industry at large. Although it was acknowledged that tourism throughout the country was suffering, New York was deemed to deserve special help due to the pain, loss and devastation it had suffered (CNN, 2001aw).

However, Beirman (2003b) observed a weak federal government commitment to overall tourism destination recovery marketing in that, by leaving US branding to the private sector, the US was the only major country in the world in which the government had no major tourism marketing role. Further, the efforts across America were disparate: while the Hawaiian Tourism Authority was regarded as doing an outstanding job, other states suffered by not emulating such standards. Certain to attract media attention, “celebrities
pitch[ed] in to help” (CNN, 2001g) in the aftermath, hosting telethons and other benefits to raise money – some even donating considerable sums of their own – in moves considered the norm in times of national and international distress.

For the media and public alike, “Ground Zero” also proved to be “an irresistible draw” (CNN, 2001ae) with thousands of New Yorkers and tourists beginning to make a pilgrimage of sorts to visit the ruins (Figure 53). The media watched as, amidst buildings scrawled with graffiti declaring “United we stand” and “God bless America”, signs asked people to refrain from taking photographs for security reasons – but many couldn’t resist the urge (Ibid.). Visitor impressions were captured in media stories with an Army captain feeling “obligated to come here and see what damage they did to us” and another tourist admitting that “you see it on television and then to come down here and really see it firsthand is just unbelievable…the crane looked like a little Tonka toy compared to the rubble it was sitting on” (Ibid.).
The growing mood of remembrance and unity led one reporter to ask “Are New Yorkers acting nicer?” (Moos, 2001). Less honking of car horns, greetings from shop owners and displays of affection between strangers indicated that “it’s not the New York of old”, once stereotyped as “a population of angry Joes” (Ibid.). However, a more sinister side to Ground Zero remembrance also began to emerge, with media reports of confidence men leading to calls from Mayor Giuliani urging the public not to buy from people offering mementos claimed as originating from the site “because they’re probably almost certainly defrauding you” (CNN, 2001y). Charities collecting donations for the families of people affected by the disaster were also urged to agree among themselves on a process to ensure the funds were fairly distributed amid growing media reports of obstacles and ill-practices (Ibid.). The financial response had been astounding; however the subsequent actions of charities were described as “good intentions, mixed results” with growing disquiet as to the use of the money, the timing of disbursements, and procedures for distribution (Oglesby, 2001).

Despite best intentions to kick-start travel, many in the tourism industry believed the USA was instituting policies which essentially made it harder to visit. Visas were more difficult to obtain, with some applicants required to have a face-to-face interview with US officials in their respective countries. Machine readable passports were also required – it was estimated that only 50 percent of French passports would comply and that most Spanish paperwork would need to be reissued (Pucci’s, 2003). Some of these measures generated concern in the tourism industry in recognition of the fact that the US’s biggest source markets would be unprepared for the new regulations. This discouragement was seen to be a major impediment to recovery efforts. A survey conducted in November
2001 by Washington-based Business Roundtable (CNN, 2001au) indicated that the tourism industry had its work cut out in persuading travellers to move again. Results showed people were travelling less despite efforts to enhance security (still considered by many to be insufficient) and the promotions offered by the industry. The survey also found that people were working to discourage family and friends from travelling.

It was only several weeks after the attacks that Giuliani observed “we are coming out of it…there were a lot more people in the streets today, more tourists today than yesterday, and more yesterday than the day before” (CNN, 2001aa) and this steady, wait-and-see pace would characterise the recovery phase. Months on from the attacks, most economists agreed that the economy was in full recession (Jackson, 2001). But amidst the turmoil, optimism was emerging. The Travel Industry Association launched “SeeAmerica”, a major television ad campaign urging the public to return to travel. The campaign generated wide national and international news media coverage, creating substantial free air time for the message (USA Travel Industry Association [TIA], 2001). Financial support was also received from the daily newspaper USA Today, which donated US$1 million in media value to TIA to promote the campaign in print and online. The “Keep America Flying” public service campaign was also launched to restore confidence in commercial aviation. Recognising airports as “economic engines” that bring in “thousands of jobs for shops, stores, advertising agencies, travel agencies, baggage handlers and many others on whom depends the livelihood of the region,” the campaign aimed to “send a message to the world, first on a human side ... and then on an economic side.” (CNN, 2001ao).
Reports from New York were optimistic, and a local tourism advertising campaign, with celebrities and personalities “saluting the spirit of New York” in a series of television commercials, encouraged people to travel during the upcoming holiday season (CNN, 2001am). Media reports also promoted people who were beginning to get mobile again with New York resident George Leung and his family, feeling that they “can’t always be hiding”, flying to Florida for vacation (Zarella, 2001). New York Tourism authorities were praised for their moves to re-launch New York (Figure 54) as a destination, with the subliminal message of “we have endured, but we’re still going strong” enticing travellers to come and see for themselves (Beirman, 2003b).

Unlike New York, the other directly attacked destination of Washington, D.C. struggled as a result of more stringent measures to protect the government presence. The restoration of consumer confidence was also hampered by reports into the vulnerability of the city’s major tourist draw cards – national monuments – with a lack of security exposing them as terrorist targets (Meserve, 2001). Tourism operators did, however, launch aggressive public relations campaigns employing various media relations and publicity strategies, as well as working closely with local, state and federal governments to encourage people to travel (Stafford & Armoo, 2002).
Las Vegas, which suffered greatly in the immediate aftermath, started reporting occupancy rates nearing 100 percent (Jackson, 2001). Fears of fuel price increases had proven unfounded, and now acted as an incentive to the drive tourism market. Indicative of many approaches around the country, the Charleston Area Convention and Visitors’ Bureau [CACVB] employed several special strategies to meet the needs forced on its tourism sector (Litvin & Anderson, 2002). Managers focused on attracting travellers from the drive-market and expanded their “reach” from a six-hour drive radius to a 10-hour radius. As well, they reallocated advertising expenditure from the international travel market to the drive market concurrent with advertising copy changes to stress the city’s drive accessibility and launched special holiday period advertising. Florida had also been successful through strategies targeting the drive market. Although “getting better” and “looking up” were the most used phrases by tourism officials, lack of numbers was hurting regions dependent on tourism (Zarella, 2001). Short-term marketing plans in many destinations across the country were successful at gradually enticing the domestic market back – many of whom still travelled by road – however the international market was still severely lagging.

It was not just the USA which was trying to attract visitors. International markets were implementing a range of strategies to revive their own respective tourism industries. The UK, suffering from the double-punch of foot and mouth disease and September 11, launched a £20m TV ad campaign in early 2002 to lure back foreign tourists (Cozens, 2002c). A series of priorities were addressed, including boosting domestic marketing, improving training and skills, developing e-tourism and improving data and quality. A major development would be the establishment of a new national peak body, combining
the resources and strengths of the existing English Tourism Council and the BTA to better market Britain to both the overseas and domestic markets (DCMS, 2002). France was also working to attract the foreign tourist, launching a campaign featuring celebrities including Woody Allen, Julio Iglesias and Roger Moore talking of their love for the country under the slogan “I love France” (Cozens, 2002c). Thailand launched an advertising campaign called “Be My Guest” to promote natural attractions so that foreign visitors would infuse capital into the tourist orientated country (Mahopa, 2002). Beirman (2003b) observes that the role of the media in democratic countries results in public relations being used by the tourism industry to report recovery efforts, and many in the aftermath of September 11 reflected this, with advertising activities making way for public relations activities (Fall, 2004). The expenditure on campaigns to attract visitors was deemed by some to be misplaced in light of the absence of markets willing to travel immediately. Instead, activities focused on delivering positive messages about the destination, notably that it was proceeding with getting back on its feet.

Efforts to move on also had to contend with recurring “Chilling Reminders of September 11” (CNN, 2006b) from the media hyperbole surrounding new video tapes of al Qaeda planning the attacks (Whitaker, 2002), to the ongoing propaganda war against Bin Laden (Hodgson, 2001d), to the media circus surrounding the transmission of new discoveries (Cozens, 2002a) and other events that put the pieces of the puzzle together. An added obstacle was the impending one year anniversary of the attacks which was guaranteed to dominate and bring the crisis back into the forefront of the public’s psyche. The anniversary, deemed to be one of the most extraordinary marketing events in history, was seen as an exercise in “Selling America back to the Americans
(through) reaffirmation of American-ness in all its patriotic, indomitable, powerful and fervent strength” (Hatfield, 2002).

Tourism started to pick up to a greater extent in late 2002, with the US Department of Commerce’s release of arrival figures indicating that six of the top source markets had returned to, or surpassed, pre-September 11 levels (ITA, 2002). It would not be until 2003 that tourists were once again visiting New York in near-record numbers with flow-on effects reaching many sectors of the industry (Dobnik, 2003). Although a discernible security presence remained, the mood was deemed optimistic. Tourists were lured by discounts and deals and wooed by campaigns “extolling traditional New York sites from pretzels to the Statue of Liberty” with select groups such as families targeted (Ibid.). The city’s tourism agency continued to deliver the message that New York is the safest large city in America; a reference back to the pre-2001 image makeover that resulted from the Mayor’s zero tolerance policy on crime and a reinforcement of the message that New York City is safe. As 2003 progressed, total sales in the tourism industry were reported to be near 2000 figures with air transportation and accommodation leading the growth (Reuters, 2003). However, although recovery in domestic tourism was emerging, the foreign visitor sector as a whole continued to be less than pre-attack levels (Dobbin, 2003; McCarthy, 2005). In addition to factors of fear of safety, the 9/11 Commission reported that the demonization of some countries, nationalities and religions in the media had led many who once travelled to the US to now go elsewhere (9/11 Commission, 2004).
Behrman (2003c) believes travellers need to be advised of the safest way to enjoy destinations when there are perception and image problems as a result of terrorism. In the case of 9/11, he said that by keeping the issue of safety in the spotlight with airlines and airports around the world continuing to implement security measures designed to ensure the safety of travellers, consumer confidence was restored. Of note, however, is that, despite increased aviation security measures in the wake of September 11, there was still complacency. A survey of the US Hospitality Industry found that most hotels made few, if any, changes to safety and security arrangements in the two years following September 11 (McCarthy, 2005). Ironically though, reporting of an unsafe international travel environment helped to reignite the US domestic tourism market with many people choosing not to travel abroad, based on their feelings of risk no doubt linked in part to government travel advisories.

Increasingly, the world was turning against the US’s unilateral response to the attacks. International observers increasingly saw progression of time to have “demonstrated the USA administration’s resolve to confirm itself unilaterally as the authority in world politics … abusing discretionary powers with confidence and impunity … (while) … neutralising and incorporating criticism through partial, self-serving investigations and inquiries” (Scranton, 2002). American public relations campaigns to get the world behind the next stage of its war on terror, which would include the release of staged news stories, were reported by the New York Times, (Hodgson, 2002b), however plans for the so-called “black” propaganda campaign were scrapped following a backlash in America and elsewhere (Hodgson, 2002a). Worldwide legislative responses to terrorism – such as the USA Patriot Act and amendments to the UK Terrorism Act – continued to
draw international anger with many seeing them to “threaten the very democracy they are meant to protect” (Thomas, 2002). Anti-war sentiment was also growing in many countries with public protests (Figure 55) becoming regular occurrences in the US and the UK as well as in Italy, Spain and Brazil, against perceived propaganda wars (Schofield, 2002).

![Figure 55: Anti-war protesters gather (The Stanford Daily, 2002)](image)

With the hard road that was ahead, many tourism industry recovery efforts remained targeted at seasoned travellers who were believed more likely to continue to travel. However, the ongoing suffering of tourism in places which remained listed as risky for Americans highlighted ongoing issues for the global tourism industry, including the role that travel advisories started to play in determining the decisions of travellers. As tourism moved through its recovery phase, a sense of cautiousness among travellers was still evident: “there is confidence until, all of a sudden, something happens again and there are jitters” (Puce’s, 2003).
Studies of the effect of the perception of risk on travel intentions following September 11 found that decisions were affected by safety concerns and perceived risk (Floyd et al., 2004). In fact, it remained apparent in the aftermath of September 11 that safety issues were crucial elements in travel decisions, with perceived risk having considerable effect on international movement. The events of September 11 and subsequent policy measures confirmed that an act of terrorism could have a substantial impact on a destination’s image. Just as significant was the role of the media in reporting the event, in creating or fostering the image, and thereby influencing perceptions of the safety of destinations.

The issue attention cycle (Downs, 1972) was also used to explain travel behaviour in the post September 11 environment (Hall, 2002). In contrast to 2001 findings, survey respondents in 2002 appeared less concerned about terrorist attacks and their impact on future travel plans, with likely influences on the trends being the progression of time and decreasing media reports. Analysis of newspaper coverage of the crisis showed similar cyclical patterns of attention (Ibid.). Based on the premise that coverage of a crisis followed cyclical attention patterns in the media, Valentine (2003) suggested the assumption was validated that the media should not be underestimated in influencing tourist behaviour and the image of a destination.

Silverstone (2002) believes the repetition of images and the reiteration of the story have actually cemented the crisis in everyday life to the extent that the representation of it in the media will become a bigger issue for tourism than 9/11 itself. Years on from the attacks, media coverage of terrorism has ballooned since 9/11, despite the fact that the
number of incidents and victims were the lowest for years. Parks (2002) noted that American newspapers carried more stories about Afghanistan on page one in the four months after the September 11 attacks than in the previous four decades and news magazines, which for years had hesitated to put a foreign story on the cover for fear of poor sales, ran cover stories week after week on the attacks. The attacks put terrorism at the top of the news agenda where it remains. From terrorist incidents, arrests, political warnings or coverage of actions carried out in the name of the war on terror, Lewis (2004) believes the world has seen more sustained coverage of the issue than at any other time in the modern era. Terrorism is now in the psyche.

As the 9/11 crisis made way for war in Iraq, broadcasters scrambled to book space on satellites so that they could get footage onto screens if and when war erupted. The Guardian (2002a) reported a surge in global demand for satellite access with the BBC, CNN and Reuters among those seeking as much access as possible: “Normally people book satellite time in 15-minute slots, but when you need mass coverage it becomes more economic to block-book [hours and days] at a time, which is what’s happening,” said Mark Smith, managing director of a satellite broadcast service. The tourism industry had some idea of the impact of a war in Iraq. What wasn’t anticipated was the ongoing development of terrorism as happened in the popular tourist destination of Bali in 2002 and the outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) across 30 countries in 2003.

In his opening address to the World Tourism Organisation’s [WTO] inaugural conference on tourism communications in 2004, WTO Secretary General Francesco Frangialli, quoting the WTO Code of Ethics, said: “The direct, non-mediatised contacts tourism engenders between men and women of different cultures and different lifestyles, represents a vital force for peace, friendship and understanding” (Frangialli, 2004). The act of engaging with new ideas, new values, and different religions, defines tourism as a process of liberation, he said. Tourism, therefore, could be seen to be responsible for the promotion of liberation, of freedom, of exchange; promoting the crossing of borders and the equality of all who choose to do so. These notions, of course, are at odds with those that underlie terrorist thought. The suggestion that tourism builds a target for terrorism is supported by the selection of New York City as an attack site over a nondescript town in Middle America. While New York City and the other targets of the September 11 attacks represented more than just a destination, the profile of the respective destinations could not have been overlooked in the selection process. A strike against these targets was a strike against everything these destinations represented. The tourism industry had in a way contributed in attracting both tourists and terrorists.

September 11 remains locked into the minds of millions of people almost a decade later, fuelled by the sheer magnitude of the crisis, the multiple strikes, the use of commercial aircraft and the complete destruction of the World Trade Center, once a shining landmark of the New York skyline (Thome, 2003). Investigations into September 11
continued unabated for many months with the focus of media coverage becoming increasingly political and, while the issue remained in the news, coverage had little effect on tourism activity. A “pent-up desire to travel started to push aside fears about terrorism, fallout from the war in Iraq and anti-American sentiment abroad” (Pucci’s, 2003) and demand was expected to continue to pick up. However, the uncertainty of world politics and terrorism continued to hang over the travel industry. In this ambiguous environment, almost all sectors of the tourism industry were continuing to take measures to capture the tourist market – with hot deals in abundance – and Travel Confidence Surveys conducted by TIA since the September 11 attacks confirmed consumers’ ongoing interest in travel discounts (TIA, 2001). The industry is aware though, that it is not sustainable on discounting. Five years on from the attacks, a 2006 survey of travel agents (Meserve and Ahlers, 2007) showed US tourism continued to face a confluence of issues, with tourists more concerned with entry policies than foreign policy, and declining visitation the result of increased competition, backups from under-funded border checkpoints, and a perception that the United States does not welcome visitors.

A3.9. Summary

The September 11 attacks were shockingly instant events compared to crises such as FMD and SARS and the implications of the crisis were immediately obvious. Consisting of a four-aircraft attack, the first plane struck before 9am on September 11 and the fourth had hit mere hours later. The atrocity that was the collapse of the
monolith towers of the World Trade Centre occurred before the fourth attack. In less than 24 hours, the triggering events had ended and the crisis was entrenched.

What followed was an immediate chaotic period. Information was scarce, disbelief was rampant and carnage was omnipresent. While devastation was clearly visible, coherent details were hard to come by and this uncertainty amidst the hysteria coloured the outbreak and consolidation periods of the crisis throughout the months of September and October. The chaotic atmosphere would not abate until the end of October and November with civic leaders declaring the crisis period over in late November, 2001.

The immediate descent into chaos had everyone, including the government, relying on the media to make sense of the real-time images and sketchy reports. Initial miscommunication between emergency services exacerbated the trauma and an uncooperative relationship between authorities and media emerged amidst the tense circumstances. Economic support for industry, including tourism, was hampered by intra-government disagreement about details of assistance packages. Tourism and other industries were put in a position of reliance on financial aid despite weak government commitment to overall tourism marketing. Government-issued travel advisories and clear articulation of safety and security measures plagued tourism responses. Positive attitudes began to emerge in key centres; however these spread slowly and at times were overshadowed by energised patriotism morphing into discrimination against races and cultures.
Leadership throughout the 9/11 crisis appeared strong and reasonably coordinated. Government and international monitoring agencies assumed a visible role that was largely without conflict. Immediate responses focused on security and restricting movement and although these had an instant impact on tourism and caused some confusion, the swift nature of the responses was beneficial in the long term. Similarly, while a focus on security exposed shortcomings, the ultimate improvements in security had later benefits to images of safety. The immediate tourism priority was to restore consumer confidence however the reality was acknowledged that there was little that could be done to ensure full protection. A steady, wait-and-see pace characterised tourism responses, although these varied across regions. As well as consumer interaction, tourism successfully appealed to government for support and the media was recruited to assist recovery efforts. The showering of sympathy that was bestowed on the USA, together with the portrayal of the event as an external issue, aided the transition through the crisis.

The September 11 crisis was rightly recognised as being large and long-lasting in its unquantifiable impact on the tourism industry. The direct involvement of the aviation industry immediately turned the event into one with international ramifications and an unavoidable link to travel and tourism activity. The unique attributes of the September 11, 2001 crisis in terms of the pivotal role of the media are perhaps best captured in the statement from an official in the early stages of the crisis: “We’re watching CNN, too”, (Vossoughian, 2003). The media immediately after the attacks became a prime source of information and a powerful platform. Just over one week after the attacks, the media was already reporting the economic impacts and the tourism industry’s suffering had
become global. Profiling tourism’s plight early on in the crisis was of great benefit to its ability to endure and recover from the crisis. Beirman (2003b) observed that the role of the media in democratic countries results in public relations being used by the tourism industry to report recovery efforts. In the wake of the September 11 attacks, the tourism industry utilised the media quite successfully to promote its plight in the first instance and assist its recovery efforts further down the track.

Prior to the crisis, the US had a significant amount of patriotism and domestic mobility as well as longstanding appeal as a tourism destination patronised by a broad section of world communities and demographics and this profile assisted recovery efforts. International markets also implemented a range of strategies to revive their respective tourism industries, giving momentum to a broad recovery campaign to restore global travel activity. The tourism industry also marshalled forces to lobby the government and media reports covered the descent of tourism officials on Washington, D.C., to highlight their plight and seek federal help. The government’s prolific role in the crisis helped to support the tourism industry’s efforts for recognition and assistance. It also helped to eventually steer media coverage toward an increasingly political focus and therefore lessened the impact coverage of the crisis could have had on tourism activity. Politics infused public sentiment and the US’s response to the attacks became a bigger story and issue than the attacks themselves.

Media coverage increasingly focused on the root of the crisis as an external issue which helped to offset damaging reporting of tourism activity. However, safety and security measures earned much continuing coverage and had to be dealt with by the tourism
industry as recovery efforts continued. As a media event, the attacks exposed the vulnerabilities of the global tourism industry to everlasting changes in perception of safety and security (Valentin, 2003). Years on from the crisis, a permanent cloud of concern about safety still hangs over the head of the travelling public.
### Appendix 4: Table of Data from Case Study #2 – September 11, 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PHASE OF CRISIS</th>
<th>DATA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pre-Crisis</strong></td>
<td><strong>PROFILE</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Strong&lt;br&gt;• Long-standing&lt;br&gt;• Not immune to pressures – e.g. economic downturn&lt;br&gt;<strong>PRECEDENT</strong>&lt;br&gt;• History of threats and incidents&lt;br&gt;<strong>CONDITION</strong>&lt;br&gt;Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outbreak</strong></td>
<td><strong>NOTICE</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Immediately came to attention of NY media&lt;br&gt;• Wealth of random information&lt;br&gt;<strong>PRECEDENT</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Previous warnings&lt;br&gt;<strong>EXTENT</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Worldwide impact&lt;br&gt;• Impact on tourism&lt;br&gt;<strong>CONDITION</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Chaos; escalating&lt;br&gt;• Shock&lt;br&gt;• Inexplicable&lt;br&gt;• Immeasurable&lt;br&gt;• No-one had answers&lt;br&gt;• Everyone left to seek answers from media&lt;br&gt;• Exposed vulnerabilities of global tourism&lt;br&gt;<strong>MEDIA – COVERAGE</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Instantaneous&lt;br&gt;• Saturation&lt;br&gt;• Domination&lt;br&gt;• Vivid images&lt;br&gt;• Lack of comprehension&lt;br&gt;• Speculation&lt;br&gt;• Drama unfolded on television&lt;br&gt;• Public demand / need&lt;br&gt;• Conduit between crisis and public&lt;br&gt;• Events were media events&lt;br&gt;• Attackers aimed at buildings and media&lt;br&gt;<strong>MEDIA - PERCEPTION</strong>&lt;br&gt;Nil&lt;br&gt;<strong>RESPONSE</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Military response&lt;br&gt;• Air space / airports / air activity shut down&lt;br&gt;<strong>QUALIFIERS</strong>&lt;br&gt;• When there is real news, as opposed to media-fuelled, national melodramas, the public can’t get enough of it</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Consolidation

**NOTICE**
- Official sketchy messages

**PRECEDENT**
- Speculation of prior knowledge

**EXTENT**
- Immediate impact
- Global
- Dramatic
- Reality visible
- Standstill
- Safety and security took priority

**CONDITION**
- Extreme sense of urgency
- Public demand for news
- Media became the world’s window
- Reality could not be avoided
- Heightened sense of threat
- Sounds and smells etched in the public’s consciousness
- Perceptions of insulation/safety shattered

**MEDIA – COVERAGE**
- Immediate
- Global
- Saturation
- Vivid
- Continuous
- Replaying of images
- Continuity of engagement
- Media hard at work
- Dealing with what was known
- Providing for desperate public
- Quick to amass collection of audio and video

**MEDIA – PERCEPTION**
- Created lasting impression
- Exacerbated by global transmission of emotional stories

**RESPONSE**
- Swift
- High security
- Confused
- Movements limited
- Global support offered
- Government leadership

### Acceleration

**NOTICE**
- Nil

**PRECEDENT**
- Previous security violations

**EXTENT**
- Global repercussions
- Threat spread globally
- Escalation of the event and its coverage
Anthrax threats/attacks
Immediate tourism impact
Global tourism impact
Psychological impact
Uncertain atmosphere
Short term tourism future was survival of the fittest
Belief that international travel would not revive until response was over
Security infringements ongoing
Short term future for tourism unclear

CONDITION
- Uncooperative relationship between authorities and media
- America no longer invincible
- Protection not possible
- Atmosphere unsavoury through negative events
- Dependence on tourism
- Past resilience gone
- A false sense of security
- Despair about future safety and security
- Initial assessment and reflection

MEDIA – COVERAGE
HOW
- Global
- A media operation
- Saturation
- Proliferation
- In-depth analysis
- Internet facilitated easier and faster communication
- Thin reporting due to lack of understanding
- New waves of media as situation progressed
- Amateur footage and photographs

CONTENT
- Speculation
- Covered less palatable stories
- Personal plight stories
- Economic and tourism impacts
- Security infringements and arrests
- Conjecture covered

DESCRIPTORS
- USA lost audiences to British due to alleged bias Critical stance from international media
- Crisis as an external issue
- Critics attacked security systems – “Swiss cheese”
- Security systems deemed inferior to other destinations
- Impact of security measures
- Extreme escalation of hate crimes

MEDIA – PERCEPTION
- USA media fared miserably
- Human emotional response lasted longer than one expects from professional journalists
- Afflicted by hysteria, paranoia, amnesia and myopia
- Inaccurate
- Misinformation
- Biased
- Generalised
- Fostered discrimination
- Americans held favourable opinions of the media’s professionalism, patriotism, and morality
- Deceptive in relation to truth
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESPONSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>RESPONSES TO THE MEDIA</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Counter messages required</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Internet a means of responding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RESPONSES TO THE CRISIS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Focus on short-term solutions with longer-term projects put on hold</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Government more optimistic than tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Agreed immediate priority of restoring consumer confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Prices cut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Different (less valuable) clientele attracted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Focus on markets not requiring air travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Global tightened airport security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Aided by “showing of sympathy”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Aided by Mayor’s appeal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ USA never advised tourists to stay away from its shores</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Travel advisories issued against other destinations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Other governments issued similar advisories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Debate re handling of impacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Leadership: government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ No conflict</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Fear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Uncertainty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Civil precautionary measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ International monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ First reaction contingency marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Leadership/spokespeople: Govt, airlines</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IMPACT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>▪ Domestic impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ International impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ World tourism impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Job losses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Workload harder on less staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Cancellations of travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Destinations switched</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Lack of outbound USA travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Short term survival hinged on maintaining flows from other international markets, yet widespread impacts made outlook bleak – recovery time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Predicted long recovery – recovery time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Compounded by additional security costs and higher insurance premiums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Passengers needing to show patience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Passengers will have to have confidence in government actions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Will take time for feeling of security to return</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Anxious passengers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Struggled to meet new tighter security guidelines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Security measures slowed operations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Travel advisories shut down outbound Western travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Airport safety criticised as inconsistent and inadequate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Official message: there is very little that you can do</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Civil libertarians concern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Fear of flying manifest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Tourism and America confused and determined; wounded and proud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Renewed patriotism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Discrimination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Intense security measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Efforts to portray a positive tourism environment undermined</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Widespread perception of hostility to foreigners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Visitors felt unwelcome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Anti-Americanism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>▪ Long-lasting effects on image and reputation – recovery time</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Chaos and Order: Tourism and the Media in Global Crises
#### Appendix: Case Study #2 – September 11, 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sombre Manhattan</th>
<th>Delayed and restricted access</th>
<th>Ground Zero</th>
<th>Confident NY attitude not reaching the rest of America and world</th>
<th>National security priority received the full support of media and public</th>
<th>Safety and security compromised</th>
<th>Image problems</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**End**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXTENT</th>
<th>Nil</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CONDITION</td>
<td>Consumer confidence rebuilding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threat remained</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Security not considered infallible</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other economic situations emerged</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MEDIA – COVERAGE**

- Life had to go on; Television had to go on too
- Security remained topical
- Time magazine’s Person of the Year for 2001
- Stories about risk and anxiety found little mention USA - waned
- Shifted to Iraq war, ensuring ongoing media coverage, but further shifting the effects of the crisis away from USA
- Shift to war, to recollection and reinforcement of exogenous: allowed tourism to look to recovery

**MEDIA – PERCEPTION**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nil</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**RESPONSE**

- Leadership: govt
- Quick resolution dismissed
- Government disagreed about economic support
- Public viewing platforms erected around the World Trade Center – incident over, recollection time
- Ground Zero emerged as popular attraction (spectrum between sensationalism and solace)
- Recovery hinged on perception of security as adequate and necessary
- Perception as exogenous event assisted tourism

**IMPACT**

| Nil |

### Recovery

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXTENT</th>
<th>War climate previously known</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CONDITION</td>
<td>Illusion of control</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confident to manage risks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terrorism in the psyche</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Economy in full recession</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regaining confidence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regaining control</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertainty</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chaos afflicted normality</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MEDIA – COVERAGE**

- Significant role of the media
- Created and fostered images
- Sinister side portrayed
- Influenced perceptions of safety
### Appendix: Case Study #2 – September 11, 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Issue attention cycle</strong></th>
<th><strong>Endless repetition of images</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reiteration of the story</strong></td>
<td><strong>Terrorism coverage ballooned</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Called on to play recovery role</strong></td>
<td><strong>Recovery period still involved reiteration of the crisis in the media</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**MEDIA – PERCEPTION**

| Nil |

**RESPONSE**

**RESPONSE TO MEDIA**

- Presence in media as economy component
- Message of safety
- Media attention for campaigns

**RESPONSE TO CRISIS**

- Gulf War experience not enough
- Swift action
- Steady, wait-and-see pace
- Perception of activity
- Reliance on government
- Weak government commitment to overall tourism marketing
- Financial aid
- Funding for marketing / advertising
- Whole of tourism focus
- Benefits narrowed to destinations
- Disparate efforts across America
- Re-launch of destination
- Image recovery
- Major new campaigns
- Celebrities used
- Ground Zero a drawcard
- Nicer people
- Policies made it harder to visit
- Messages targeted seasoned travellers

**IMPACT**

- Large
- Long-lasting
- Travel advisories
- Discouragement of potential travellers an impediment
- Sense of cautiousness among travellers
- Intentions to travel affected by safety concerns and perceived risk

**LESSON**

| Nil |

**Epilogue**

- The tourism industry had in a way contributed in attracting both tourists and terrorists.
- Media coverage becoming increasingly political and, while the issue remained in the news, coverage had little effect on tourism activity
- Pent-up desire to travel started to push aside fears
- Uncertainty of world politics and terrorism continued to hang over
- With hot deals
- Sales initiatives
- Consumers' ongoing interest in travel discounts
- Not sustainable on discounting
- Tourists were concerned more with entry policies than foreign policy
- Declining visitation likely to be due to increased competition, under-funded border checkpoints that create backups, and a perception that the United States does not welcome visitors

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Appendix 5

CASE STUDY #3

BALI BOMBINGS

2002

Figure 56: Timeline of the Bali bombings crisis, 2002

A5.1. Prologue

Some special international travel destinations have a broad appeal that attracts a myriad of types: from the young to the old, the seasoned to the green, and the wealthy to the budget-conscious and Bali is one of them. Its appeal is particularly strong as a leisure oasis in the southern hemisphere and it was for this reason that Maria Elfes from Australia chose the island as the destination for her honeymoon. Coming from a large family, expecting an equally large wedding, Maria and her new husband Kosta sought to retreat to Bali’s sun and sand. They were joined by Maria’s four bridesmaids, two of whom were her sisters. While the newlyweds had clear intentions for what their nights held, the four accompanying women were looking to celebrate and so it was, after a group dinner on Saturday night, they headed off to the popular entertainment venues on
the island. What was meant to be a week of bliss, however, would turn into tragedy that night and instead of looking into the eyes of the women as they recounted their night of entertainment, Maria and Kosta would instead be looking for their bodies.

A5.2. Pre-Crisis Phase: pre October 12, 2002

Under Dutch colonization, Bali became “a living museum” or “the last paradise” and, in the nation-building processes after Indonesia’s independence, it emerged as “the show window of Indonesia”, an archipelago of 17,000 islands (Yamashita, 1999). Far from being a destination that emerged with ease on the strength of its natural assets, the promotion of Bali as a tourism centre has long been a focus of the Indonesian Government. The adoption in the early 1970s of cultural tourism as a regional development policy signalled a future core component of Bali’s economic structure amid ongoing intense efforts to increase Indonesian awareness of the benefits of tourism (Ibid.).

Bali emerged as the country’s most important tourist destination and consequently had a stronger image than the nation (Nuryanti, 2001). The success of the tourism industry also placed Bali in a much better economic position than most of Indonesia and to a degree put a reliance on it to deliver much needed investment and trade. Consequently, the performance of Bali’s tourism industry rippled through the Indonesian economy. It developed strongly, with the number of foreign visitors rising from 6,000 in 1969 (the year the international airport opened) to well in excess of a million at the turn of the century (Yamashita, 1999). The growth in tourism’s value has been difficult to gauge
due to lack of reliable data, but it is estimated that about 80 percent of Bali’s income stems from tourism (Templeton, 2002). The continuing appeal of the island as an international destination is such that key tourism generating markets have been established in Europe, the USA, Japan and Australia, with the mix of Western and Eastern visitors indicative of Bali’s simultaneous appeal as both an exotic and nostalgic destination, memorialised in many films.

Bali has had to continue to forge an identity in terms of market appeal. Primarily seen as a cheap “downmarket” destination, the island’s tourism industry has also put considerable effort into developing its luxury offerings through the establishment of major hotels and private, high-end accommodation. As a result, the customer demographic has expanded. But at the same time the industry is recognised as “fragile and highly susceptible to the effects of recessions, to downturns in the world economy, to over-building and over-development, to political instability and social unrest and to other external events – as are many travel destination areas” (Bell, 1992). Internal pressures have plagued the island, driven by political, social and religious conflict, and at times opposition to the perceived commercialization of aspects of local culture and building of tourist facilities (Ramstedt, 2001). However, even during times of rioting on mainland Indonesia, Bali has generally remained a tranquil and popular destination (Templeton, 2002).

External pressures have also been faced, including the impacts of the Gulf War in the early 1990s, recessions in key markets, the Asian financial crisis, September 11 and the Iraq War. These events also affected the destination, particularly leading to a reduction
in tourist numbers and consequent price wars between accommodation venues. Yet Bali
was able to insulate its tourism industry to a degree from such external pressures
through preservation of its image and friendly reputation.

The characteristics of the tourism industry have come to be synonymous with the
“Balinese identity” and visitors’ admiration of Balinese culture has reaffirmed the
population’s sense of identity and pride in being Balinese (Yamashita, 1999). The
importance of tourism to the economy and the dependence on visitor expenditure is also
well recognised with much motivation to protect the image to support restructuring of
traditional livelihoods to cater to traveller demands (Gurtner, 2006).

A5.3. Outbreak Phase: October 12-13, 2002

On October 12, 2002, the idyllic tropical paradise was rocked by the bombings of
popular tourist locations. Around 10.30pm an explosion destroyed Paddy’s Bar, an
entertainment venue for tourists. As streams of injured and distraught patrons fled on to
the street, a larger explosion would shatter the Sari Club, a similarly venue on the same
block and also heavily patronised by tourists. Witness reports would describe a
“procession of people covered in blood, covered in glass, glass embedded in people,
people's backs which have obviously been on fire” (CNN, 2002a). The blasts and
subsequent fire would destroy an entire city block (Figure 57).
The news would break almost immediately, with international media picking up the story of chaos and destruction (Figure 58) within several hours of the incident, coverage in the southern hemisphere greeting much of the public as they woke on Sunday morning, October 13. While there was an obvious sense of confusion, the initial facts were clear: major explosions had ripped through two popular tourist locations in Bali. Headlines like “Holiday haven turns to hell on earth” appeared above descriptions of charred and limbless bodies strewn across the road and terrified foreign tourists, some on fire and drenched in blood, stumbling through the carnage (AFP, 2002a). The same set of news values (Galtung and Ruge, 1965) consistent with earlier case study crises applied: frequency, threshold, unambiguity, meaningfulness, unexpectedness, continuity, elite nations, elite people, personification and negativity.
Eyewitness reports told of both venues bursting at the seams with hundreds of patrons, only to become infernos seconds later, those surviving the initial blast trapped by collapsed structures and flames (Cornford et al., 2002). In the immediate aftermath, it was clear the tragedy had affected many nationalities and presented itself as the most serious problem “confronting any destination in the modern history of world tourism” (Australian Tourism Industry Leaders Dialogue [ATILD], 2003). There was no surprise that Bali’s most loyal visitors, Australians, were among the casualties but the cosmopolitan market attracted by the destination begged questions over whether the attack was against the western world in general (AAP, 2002a). Whatever the motivation, the image of Bali as a safe destination and a peaceful paradise was instantly shattered, sending intense reverberations throughout the tourism industry.

Figure 58: Chaos ensued in attempts to rescue survivors (Cyber Diver News Network [CDNN], 2002).

Less than twelve hours after the attacks, on the morning of October 13, the Governor of Bali released a statement that would be among the first official messages on the crisis:
With the explosions in several places in Kuta and Denpasar, We, the Governor of Bali and Bali House Speaker, release a statement:

1. Condemning the bombing of Bali on October 12, 2002, at around 23.30 local time.
2. Expressing our deepest sympathy and condolences to victims and their family members.
3. Bali Government and all Bali people are ready to assist the victims.
4. Requesting people to remain calm, alert and maintain our unity.
5. Calling on all community to pray for the victims according to their religion and or belief.
6. May God the Almighty save us.

- Beratha, 2002

Lives had been lost, safety and security shattered and the tourism industry was in crisis.

A5.4. Consolidation Phase: October 14 – end October, 2002

The immediate aftermath of the blasts proved chaotic. Impressions of death, destruction and adversity (Figure 59) were exacerbated by poorly balanced media images and emotional stories transmitted to a global audience (Gurtner, 2006). Early statements by the police to the media stopped short of labelling the event as a terrorist act, however the media didn’t hesitate to declare it to have all the appearances of one, with it being just a matter of time before the police and the government confirmed it as such (CNN, 2002c; AAP, 2002b). Labelled by the media as “by far the worst terrorist attack Indonesia has ever seen” and “the worst single terrorist attack since September 11” (CNN, 2002f; CNN, 2002a; CNN, 2002b), the scene painted was one of emotional and
horrific tragedy, with hundreds dead and injured, bodies burned to the point of no recognisable physical characteristics and a lack of medical personnel to treat the injured.

The venue that bore the larger blast, the Sari Club, was gutted by fire. Media reports highlighted the club and precinct were popular with tourists and often packed with Americans, French, Britons and Australians. It was not be long before reports confirmed that many of the dead and injured were from these and at least 20 other countries including Indonesia, Germany, Sweden and Greece (CNN, 2002a; AFP, 2002d). The global impact of the attacks was immediately clear. For the hardest hit nation, Australia, terror was seen to have struck home (Moore & Riley, 2002). The evacuation and repatriation for medical treatment of hundreds of injured Australians in the hours after the attacks by the Royal Australian Air Force received much attention (CNN, 2002d), the coverage serving to highlight the number of Australians involved but also the negatives of staying in Bali and the quality of medical treatment. Television portrayed hospital scenes as chaotic, lacking medical staff or facilities to handle the casualties (Ibid.).

Figure 59: Smoke rises from the debris at the site of the bomb blast the morning after the attacks (ABC News, 2002).
Early reports also reminded the public that it was the seventh major bombing in the region over the course of three weeks, including an explosion outside the Philippine consulate in Manado, the capital of Indonesia’s North Sulawesi province, a grenade attack outside a US Embassy warehouse in Jakarta and a blast at a bar in the southern Philippines (CNN, 2002c). Coverage of the Bali bombings was already far more extensive than that given to the earlier incidents as the impact on tourism became clearer. Global reports prefixed the name Bali with words such as holiday and haven, its reputation as a tourist destination well known. It could be surmised that the world knew little else about Bali, including that it was part of Indonesia. The bombs not only shattered the landscape of Bali, they shattered its reputation as a tourism destination. Having endured five years of uncertain times, the tourism industry was acutely aware that now, “spurned by visitors”, it was bracing for lean times (O’Rourke, 2002).

Initially there were mixed messages regarding the suspected perpetrators of the attacks. Media speculation was rife that it was a terrorist assault perpetrated by Jemaah Islamiyah or al Qaeda – the group responsible for the September 11 attacks. International media questioned the initial reaction and “the confidence of faraway leaders in identifying the culprits even before the investigation had started” (Witoelar, 2002). Early comments by Australian Foreign Minister Alexander Downer were couched in softer language - "preliminary indications suggested that an Islamic radical group could be behind the blasts” (CNN, 2002c). Still, Australia didn’t hesitate in dispatching an investigative team to Indonesia to work with local authorities on piecing the drama together.
It was soon to be concluded, however, that the Jemaah Islamiyah regional terror group had staged an attack on “soft” Western frequented targets to avenge perceived injustice to Muslims worldwide (AFP, 2003; Norton-Taylor, 2002a). Under headlines prefaced with words such as “the Al Qaeda connection”, evidence continued to mount that the terrorist group was behind the bombing. News coverage also shifted to look at Bali in the context of the war on terror that had started after September 11, 2001 (BBC, 2002c; CNN, 2002c), the attacks illustrating that terrorist groups still posed a major threat (BBC, 2002e). Following September 11, the USA had declared there was a “Southeast Asian terror front” and the bombings gave veracity to these claims at the same time acting as “proof” that Al Qaeda was growing (Malveaux, 2002). It also served to fuel the US rhetoric for the war on terror, particularly amidst reports of “Bali suspects Al-Qaeda links” (Ressa, 2002a). The war on terror that started post-September 11 had met with disparate levels of support but the now tangible evidence of a “Southeast Asia front” would serve a two-fold purpose: it would widen the web of terror and fear to other parts of the world and it would also act to recruit more widespread support for the USA’s plans (Malveaux, 2002).

The international press, though, started to apportion some of the blame to Western political leaders, claiming that, while intelligence agencies had been warning of, and trying to track, the movements of terror cells, governments had been preoccupied by another matter – Iraq (Norton-Taylor, 2002a; Moore, 2002b). Speculation grew about the existence of prior knowledge of the impending threat in the Southeast Asia region, with reports that the Australian and American governments had made “general expressions” to the Indonesian Government (Holloway, 2002). The country’s failure to
counter the threat of terrorism was also singled out, claiming Jakarta as being torn between its support for the USA as foreign aid provider and domestic opposition to US foreign policy (Norton-Taylor, 2002a). The emerging picture was one of a confused international political climate consisting of inept governments which had failed to heed warnings (Allard et al, 2002). One international media source would even accuse the media of not heeding the warnings and not showing westerners that Indonesia had become a dangerous place for them to visit, instead concealing the threat through “unreality TV” (Monbiot, 2002).

Governments were also accused of “taking their eye off the target” with Bali an indication that the promises of governments after September 11 were hollow (Freedland, 2002). In turn, the world was told that it had every right to feel angry with governments whose vow to wage a “war on terror” was meant to prevent attacks like Bali. Observing that the Bali bombings were being assimilated into the rhetoric of the war on terror, the international press made a call for truth, fearing the same old script was being prepared for Desert Storm Two (Preston, 2002). Although at first responding to political moves to link the Bali bombings with the war on terror, the media’s attention to the issue, including headlines of “Bali proves that America’s war on terror isn’t working” (Freedland, 2002), firmed up the perception of them as a global, as opposed to localised, terror incident.

Early reports determined that tourists were the target and that, even though earlier there had been other blasts around Indonesia, the attacks on friendly Bali were an unexpected shock (CNN, 2002g). Although perceiving the attacks to be anti-Western, the Australian
Prime Minister denied suggestions they were aimed at Australians because of its support for the US and the war on terror. However the media didn’t fall in line behind him. Headlines in the UK declared “Australia’s utopian view destroyed” (BBC, 2002a) in a “lively area (that) is to Australians what Spain and its tourist nightlife are to the British” (Guardian Unlimited, 2002b). The US media headlined the bombings as “Australia’s day of mourning” (CNN, 2002f). Ironically, under police questioning, lead bombing suspect Amrozi admitted the attacks to be aimed at Americans (Ressa, 2002b) and said he would be “unhappy” that many Australians were killed in the Bali blasts instead of the group's main target of Americans, although not regretting the deaths (Ressa, 2002a). The focus on the crisis as an Australian one could, on one hand, isolate the threat away from other countries. However on the other hand, the perception of Australia, a relaxed society previously spared such attacks, now becoming a terrorism target would spread further fear throughout a world on the cusp of another Gulf War: if Australians weren’t safe, who was? To answer the question, many looked to the responses of their political leaders.

The day after the attacks, Indonesian President Megawati Sukarnoputri visited the hospital (Figure 60) and blast site but refrained from making any public comment before heading back to Jakarta the same night (CNN, 2002a; CNN, 2002b). A statement was issued by Indonesia’s chief security minister and the national police chief who condemned the attacks as acts of terrorism which the government would take firm action against (CNN, 2002b). There was also instant worldwide support, with media reports carrying messages from government leaders in Britain, Germany, France, the European Union, South Africa, Malaysia, Pakistan and India, all vowing to support
Indonesia with an urgent and thorough investigation into the incident (CNN, 2002g; AFP, 2002e).

![Figure 60: A line of flowers stand beside bodies of bomb blast victims in a corridor at the hospital (ABC News, 2002).](image)

International governments were equally quick to warn citizens to avoid travelling to Indonesia (CNN, 2002g). Amidst early reports of one American fatality, the USA was firm in its condemnation of the attacks, with a message that it was taking the political step of “re-evaluating the extent of its presence in Indonesia”, at the same time advising Americans visiting or residing in Indonesia to “examine the necessity of continuing to remain” in the country (CNN, 2002a). Of note, the US State Department had issued a travel warning for Indonesia more than a year before. But, perhaps echoing worldwide sentiment driven by perceptions of its tranquillity, Bali was widely considered insulated from troubles plaguing the rest of the archipelago (CNN, 2002a).
World leaders also called on Indonesia to recognise its essential role in the global fight against terrorism (CNN, 2002f). The Australian Prime Minister called on the Indonesian Government to let other nations help with the investigation (AFP, 2002d) as his military and federal police authorities oversaw responses to the tragedy (Figure 61). Australians were simply urged to “go now” (Allard, 2002), “leave now” (Hewett & Allard, 2002) and “come home” (Sydney Morning Herald [SMH], 2002). In one of his responses to the bombings, the Prime Minister would tell Australia’s Channel 9 television the night after the attacks that what Australia wanted was a “measured, sensible but powerful reaction” (Holloway, 2002) and promised “justice over the death of innocent young” (Howard, 2002). A memorandum of understanding on terrorism established with Indonesia earlier in 2002 paved the way for intense Australian involvement in the investigations. While this brought a considerable degree of comfort to Australians seeking answers, the high presence of international forces sent a message that Bali and Indonesia authorities needed help to handle the situation.
In the days following the attacks, images of fear, tragedy and confusion would be reiterated to media audiences. The searchers described only finding “chaos” and were bewildered by a lack of official support (Hewett & Mercer, 2002). “Ice duty” at the hospital mortuary was a daily occurrence for more than a fortnight as the blasts killed more victims than the morgue’s refrigerators could handle (Watts, 2002). This would see tourist volunteers forming a human chain to shift blocks of ice from trucks to long rows of black body bags that were laid out in the crematory garden. Volunteers also assisted (Figure 62) in searching bodies for identifying marks, taking photographs of body remains and arranging storage of the dead. The process became harder with a breakdown of bureaucratic order at the morgue in the first days after the blasts, leading Australian authorities to insist on international identification standards (Figure 58).

Figure 62: In the confusing aftermath, lists of people who are injured, missing or confirmed dead are posted on a bulletin board at Bali’s hospitals (ABC News, 2002).
The despair and distrust did not stop with the Indonesian government. Neither Britain nor Australia had enough manpower to assist victims and families, a plight picked up by the media who portrayed “anger over the failings of officials sent to Bali, who were overwhelmed by the scale of the disaster” (BBC, 2002d) and labelling the “slow response to the crisis as shameful” (Hewett, 2002). Well intentioned volunteers had nowhere to turn for guidance. The hospital appeared to be unaware of Interpol regulations for identification of the dead as well as different cultural sensitivities required to tend the corpses of different nationalities (Watts, 2002) – all feeding negative media portrayals.

The chaos revealed Bali’s vulnerability and operational inadequacies and despite initial efforts, facilities and resources remained inefficient (Gurtner, 2006). As the community struggled to react, it became apparent that local authorities and relevant tourism stakeholders also lacked the necessary management capabilities, flexibility and confidence to effectively deal with unexpected, complex or critical situations. Rather, their approaches and responses were unrefined, confused and generally lacking public
credibility. It was also clear that as the travellers turned away, Bali was in for a hard time ahead (O’Rourke & Needham, 2002).

A5.5. Acceleration Phase: October – November, 2002

Bali had attracted an international focus for reasons other than those portrayed in tourism advertising images of a lush tropical paradise. The high number of foreign casualties ensured international media attention continued and it was further exacerbated by outlets keen to show the best of an abundance of supplied amateur visual footage and photographs of the bombings. In addition to the sustained blanket coverage in the immediate aftermath, the new wave of images and explanatory stories helped build the collective fear of terrorism which, among others, was blamed for unbalanced and sensationalist media reporting (Gurtner, 2006). Emerging clearly from the chaos was that terror had struck “Indonesia’s tourist jewel” (Guardian Unlimited, 2002b) and a “tourism Mecca” had been “shaken to foundations” (AFP, 2002b). The international media attention and widespread concern about personal safety and security resulted in reports of a mass exodus of tourists (Figures 64 & 65), with countries’ moves to evacuate their citizens creating a visible flood of people off the island (Gurtner, 2006). Widespread cancellations and holiday substitutions promptly resulted.

There was a growing belief that the October 12 bombings were part of the widening web of terrorism being uncovered in the wake of the 9/11 attacks and which ultimately would lead to a coalition of nations launching an offensive in Iraq the following year. One thing was clear; the threat of terrorism was beginning to significantly alter the
strategic actions of many countries. Consequently Australia took on a pivotal role, underwritten by the Memorandum of Understanding signed with Indonesia in early 2002, in which a joint force investigated the bombings. It acknowledged that the collaboration was to ensure that regional governments took the terrorism threat seriously and acted with the necessary firmness and coordination to effectively deal with it (Hill, 2002; Moore, 2002b).

Figures 64 & 65: Tourists wait at Bali’s airport for flights home (ABC News, 2002).

The Australian Government outlined its priority to ensure survivors and victims’ families received support and that the bombing perpetrators were brought to justice. Media commentary focused on awareness of the existence of active extremist Islamic organisations before September 11 and the mixed success of governments in South East Asia to deal with the problems (Hill, 2002). The rhetoric of the Australian Government echoed international sentiments that the Bali bombings and September 11 were closely linked, touching a critical nerve in the public psyche. The bombings were also used to an extent to build a case for an escalation in the war on terrorism, emphasising the need for an international coalition and efforts to maintain the security of Australians.
Although the media focus on Bali rapidly took on a more political flavour, it was nonetheless forewarning of severe impacts that would affect the tourism industry, not only in Bali but also internationally. The threat to Western interests and civilians was now underscored by both September 11 and the Bali bombings, with either the threat or affects of global terrorism, instability and extremism influencing attitudes, particularly of the travelling public.

Attempts were made to paint Indonesia as much as a target and a victim of the Bali attacks as other countries and their citizens who were killed or injured (Ibid.). Many countries issued travel advisories in the aftermath of the bombings although they generally lacked sufficient detail, failing to define the actual extent of the situation and any specific risks to personal safety (Gurtner, 2006). Advisories had been issued in the recent past by several countries in response to conflict between ethnic groups in Indonesia (Hall, 2000b). In the wake of the bombings they had significant effect on the number of international visitors, with figures plummeting.

Australian media played a prominent role in the immediate aftermath with news coverage easier and cheaper to arrange due to Indonesia’s geographic proximity. In many instances, Australian stories were picked up by international affiliates. The initial media coverage focused on Australian efforts to protect its injured citizens, with the first aircraft carrying medical personnel taking to the air within six hours of the blasts – half the normal time for a military medical evacuation – and all critically injured patients moved to Australia within 48 hours. Other foreign governments decided to evacuate their injured to higher-quality care facilities in Australia and Singapore (Watts, 2002).
These immediate actions by international governments in leading a mass exodus of people would serve to compound the impact on the tourism industry. Reports out of London two days after the attacks labelled the event as a “Devastating blow to Bali tourism” (CNN, 2002e). The exodus was reported with predictions of thousands of Europeans, Australians and Americans cancelling upcoming trips. For British travellers, the UK Foreign Office issued a prompt advisory not to travel to Bali. Media indicated British tour operators were heeding the advice and it was expected that tour operations in Bali would be scaled down immediately.

A travel writer for the UK *Independent* newspaper reported on hearing that October 12 was the new September 11, and asked, and answered: “…if tourists are targets for terrorists in places like Bali, then where in the world is safe? The short answer is these days nobody can be sure” (CNN, 2002e). Initial reports out of Europe indicated a tourism industry uncertain what the full impact of the bombings would be. Its biggest travel group, Touristik International GmbH & Co [TUI] of Germany, decided not to send any clients to Bali as a precautionary measure, preferring to wait for foreign ministry guidance (CNN, 2002e). Major UK operator Thomas Cook reported in the bombings’ immediate aftermath it didn’t have a wave of customers wanting to leave Bali. Sweden’s Kuoni kept Bali on its destination list but offered travellers no-penalty cancellations and early returns (Ibid.).

Amidst all the drama, the image of Bali was shattered. European reports touted “Bali loses its innocence” with observers saying “I was sure, in Bali, people would not do anything like this” (BBC, 2002b). A few days after the attacks, the Australian
Government upgraded its travel advisory, urging its citizens to leave Indonesia, saying it had uncovered “disturbing new information” about further terrorist threats against western people and interests there (Guardian Unlimited, 2002a). Australians also were warned that they faced security risks in six other south-east Asian countries – Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, the Philippines and Singapore. The emergence of multiple advisories in Britain would rile the tourism trade with operators claiming they did not identify specific threats and only served to frighten people (The Observer, 2002). Hours after the Australian advice, Britain would further upgrade its travel advice, urging citizens to leave Indonesia and warning that “no one should visit the country” (Guardian Unlimited, 2002a).

The attacks had come just three days after the US State Department issued a worldwide alert warning Americans they may be targeted by terrorists, and the US Government also now called for Americans to leave Indonesia and avoid travelling there (Malveaux, 2002). One commentator noted that Bali had become the victim of over-zealous governments, there being no comparably harsh response in the aftermath of September 11. The US was seen to have been “showered in sympathy and support” with no governments issuing travel advisories against visiting America after 9/11 (Thome, 2003). The response “raining down” on Bali exacerbated the impact of the attacks and caused the island to “suffer the proverbial insults of governments” who cautioned citizens to avoid Bali and Indonesia (Ibid.). One international media commentator observed in the week after the attacks that Bali was in “dire need of a Mayor Giuliani right now” and urged the public to “keep Bali on the wish list” (Hyde, 2002).
Despite his government’s travel advisory, the Australian Prime Minister attended a memorial service in Bali, reinforcing in his address that Australia would never be broken by the attack, but would remain “strong, free, open and tolerant” (Guardian Unlimited, 2002a). He emphasised that Australia would do everything in its power to ensure the perpetrators were brought to justice. The Indonesians had reported on developments with their bombing investigations, including the identification of suspects to be questioned. Although the travel advisories worked to deter visitors, the prompt investigation indicating the matter was being dealt with served to mitigate the palpable element of fear. But the growing unease about who knew what and when (Norton-Taylor, 2002b) and ongoing speculation in the media generated a distrust of official advice. Although the UK Prime Minister was among those to claim if the government acted on every piece of intelligence “no one would go anywhere” (Ibid.), the public’s incomplete knowledge was creating an atmosphere of uncertainty which would disrupt travel intentions. Portraits were painted of an “uncertain world” with the Bali bombings highlighting the “uncomfortable truth about the random nature of terrorism and the vulnerability of tourists as potential targets” (Balmer, 2002).

The tourism industry believed it fortunate that the bombings didn’t involve aircraft – drawing parallels with the September 11 attacks – and saw this as a relief for the industry (Hotelier, 2003). Inevitably though, the attacks did lead to an immediate backlash against the commercial airline sector in terms of both inbound and outbound movements through Bali. Of an average of five million visitors to Indonesia a year, Bali attracts 1.5 million including around 300,000 Australians, numerous Asian travellers and countless Europeans who use the destination as a stopover (Mathews, 2002).
Ordinarily, Australian carrier Qantas operated 13 weekly flights to Bali. Immediately after the October 12 bombing Qantas dispatched extra flights to Bali’s gateway city of Denpasar – but only to carry out fleeing Australians (Mathews, 2002; Thompson, 2002). While the airline had not announced that its schedule would be modified, an adjustment was likely. The airline’s CEO observed that after the blasts domestic bookings surged by 15-20% as Australians headed into their summer holidays but stayed onshore (Mathews, 2002). Other airlines also saw a wave of cancellations from all markets with analysts predicting that all carriers would scale back their services as a result (Ibid.).

For foreign carriers, the Indonesian market is significant but not critical, and although airlines cut back services to Bali and Indonesia, they responded by emphasising alternative destinations throughout the Asia-Pacific region such as Thailand, Vietnam, Fiji and the Maldives (Ibid.). Destinations in the Asia Pacific region were also quick to reaffirm their differentiation from Bali, in an attempt to minimise any knock-on effects to their own tourism industries. In a way, the tourism industry – through changes to air routes and offering alternative “safe” destination changes – acted to shift the tourism market away from Bali to competitor locations. Given the island’s strong reputation as a leisure destination, the consequent detrimental impact on the tourism industry was expected. The island, and Indonesia, knew the importance of tourism and were therefore in no doubt the ramifications of the bombings would hurt business. Internationally, the same conclusions were drawn – Bali’s reputation as a safe destination had been shattered and the tourism industry anticipated it could take years to recover (CNN, 2002e).
During past crises, particularly those involving political instability and social unrest in the region, the local tourism industry had tried to “distance” Bali from the rest of Indonesia. The Bali Tourism Office would distribute messages to its hotels and foreign consulates that the island remained peaceful and calm, that business would operate as normal and, more importantly, that Bali’s many tourists and visitors had not been involved. However this strategic route had been cut off and there was nowhere to hide. Given that approximately 75% of international travel to Indonesia is for holidays (Hall, 2000b), there was a limited business sector – which often comprises seasoned travellers less likely to be influenced by perceptions of risk – to fall back on. As had happened in the past, competition resulted in price wars between accommodation venues with hotels of 3, 4, and 5-star rating all competing for what tourist dollars remained and, as a result, differentiation between products became difficult. This resulted in confusion as travel agents tried to match competing prices with quality of services and facilities (Bell, 1992).

Despite criticism levelled at the Indonesian Government over its handling of the crisis, the support of authorities for the destination’s restoration was commended. Bali’s politicians and opinion leaders “appreciated the potential volatility of the situation and called for restraint using all available media and Bali’s network of village councils and urban wards” (Hitchcock & Putra, 2005 p.62). Leaders of the Muslim community closed ranks in their condemnation of the bombings, and the most prominent local newspaper, the Bali Post, took care to avoid apportioning blame, aware that further conflict could prolong the recovery time for tourism. Banners and signs were posted prominently throughout tourism areas with the slogan “Bali for the world” in an effort
to maintain peace; however the programme was rejected by the Balinese who saw it as a response from Jakarta and out of touch with local perspectives. The growing sentiment was that local stakeholders should emerge to control the recovery efforts and as Bali’s sadness was articulated through newspapers and other local media, the voice of Bali began to be heard. To alleviate visitor concerns, tourism authorities gave security top priority in an effort to remove anything that detracted from the image of the destination as a safe haven. Even the police chief responsible for rounding up the bombing suspects had a clear mandate to do all in his power to look after the safety of visitors.

Figure 66: Interfaith religious ceremonies marked the aftermath (Bali Blog, 2004).

The Balinese adopted cultural and religious strategies to promote harmony (Figure 66) and these rituals – comprehended or otherwise – were widely publicised in the international media: reports told of “ghosts and gods coming calling out of the darkness” (Hewett, 2002). References to the bombings peppered cultural shows and
events as the use of culture as a weapon to counter the crisis was implemented with “Bring Back My Bali to Me”, a popular song in previous decades, played almost continuously on television and radio. Indonesia was being seen to “weep for its neighbour”… and an “uncertain future” (Moore, 2002a). Pleas were circulated through the media for the world to recognise that the “Balinese are innocent” (Stevenson & O’Rourke, 2002). The reactions of the Bali people were reported extensively by local and international media, especially images of plentiful ritual ceremonies to chase away the bad spirits, to prevent evil spirits lashing out again, to rid streets of danger and to cleanse the ground on which people were killed (Figure 67). This coverage of local Hindu practices served to distance Bali from the perpetrators, who were of Muslim faith, but more importantly it presented a humanistic element that was a reminder to the world of the Balinese culture that was a core attraction for visitors.

![Figure 67: Cleansing ceremonies in Bali following the October 12 bombings (Klub Kokos, 2002)](image-url)
Political leaders and media commentators closed ranks to stave off demand for retribution and their message was readily received by the population at large whose willingness was seen to be motivated by protecting the tourism industry and ensuring positive media coverage (Hitchcock & Putra, 2005). The “Bali model of crisis management – a widespread desire for peace, joint prayers, media restraint and the vocal involvement of opinion leaders” was believed to be having an impact (Hitchcock & Putra, 2005, p.75). However to many, the government and the tourism industry appeared to operate largely as separate entities (Gurtner, 2006). Numerous websites, slogans, promotional trips and re-branding efforts were initiated by tourism businesses yet most only served to facilitate competitive discounting and lead to greater consumer ambiguity. Additionally, there was little evidence that these measures were adequately communicated to the wider public. As a consequence, while the restoration of amenities proceeded relatively quickly, Bali continued to be jeopardised by continued negative perceptions and wavering consumer confidence.

Operators in the tourism industry essentially controlled their own corporate communications through websites. Their general approach was to either import news media reports into product and price updates or present their own perspective on the status of tourism activity. Media in the past had been blamed for declining trends in tourism activity through negative portrayal of crises such as the forest fires and monetary crisis and again were seen to be compounding the problems now faced by the sector. To counter this, many in tourism also took to the Web to communicate their messages. Singapore operator Resort Condominiums International Ltd [RCI] Asia-Pacific prominently displayed information under the headline “For Information On
Travellers In Bali”, directing the public to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (RCI, 2002). Guardian Unlimited Travel, a UK-based company, took reports from *The Observer* newspaper to advise its public of conditions for travellers. Intending tourists were told that all holidaymakers due to travel to Bali during October were being offered full refunds or alternative holidays in the wake of the crisis (Templeton, 2002). A generous offer, perhaps, but for the Bali tourism industry it was the beginning of a wave of moves that undermined the industry. The offer to return all monies, together with an emphasis on selecting alternative destinations, encouraged travellers to stay away from Bali. It was simultaneously reinforced by ongoing advice from many governments to avoid all travel to Bali.

Although the response of UK operators was influenced by advice from the UK’s Foreign Office [FCO], they did not see staying away as viable for the broader industry or Bali. One operator hoped “the FCO advice will be lifted in a few weeks”, but observed that “this will have a devastating impact for Bali for several months” (Templeton, 2002). Conversely one operator affiliated with the UK market advised that only 20 of 406 clients in Bali at the time of the bombings opted to return home early and that of total British holidaymakers, 50% stayed put. Nonetheless, it was anticipated that the slump in tourism would lead to a significant reduction in prices, the timing of which would coincide with the boon New Year travel period (Ibid.).

Indonesia Holidays incorporated news reports from sources such as Reuters into its corporate website. A November 15 report on the ceremony for “cleaning island of the evil” served as a reminder that Bali was an “island of peace” (Indonesia Hotels, 2002a).
Tourism operators also utilised the endorsements of renowned figures to call on foreign governments to lift any travel bans, urging the international community to make sure Indonesia did not suffer (Indonesia Hotels, 2002b). News items also addressed how, from an economic point of view, the tourism industry was affected by the bombings. Under headlines such as “Terror attack sets back Bali tourism by 75%” (Indonesia Hotels, 2002c), reports focused on efforts to encourage visitors to return, with the Culture Minister also touring European capitals to rehabilitate the destination’s image.

The police pursuit of the Bali bombers received considerable local media coverage with operators keen to give clients information regarding the progress of investigations. These actions – widely posted on websites ahead of operators’ own interpretations – were intended to help restore consumer confidence about safety. The hunt for the bombers attracted strong international media attention, with a news report out of Hong Kong profiling the perpetrators and, referring to a *Time* magazine report, focusing on the “real mastermind” of the bombings to be a senior al Qaeda operative from Yemen (Sapa-AFP, 2002). The report reiterated that the Indonesian and foreign governments had apportioned blame to al Qaeda. Gradually, the identity of the perpetrators was becoming a story in its own right, relegating the terror attacks down the news agenda and giving the tourism industry space to restore its image.

Tourism operators blatantly asked the questions “Should I still travel to Bali?” (Indo.com, 2002a) and “Is Bali Safe After The Terrorist Bombings?” (Austin, 2002). The responses to these questions at times differed, creating confusion in the marketplace. One company encouraged tourists to travel, claiming that “otherwise the
terrorists win”, “security in Bali has been massively improved” and there were now “deals of a lifetime” (Indo.com, 2002a). Rates for accommodation options varied across the industry but were on average 50 percent less than standard rates and at times up to 80 percent down (Indo.com, 2002b). While the majority of operators delivered positive messages there were isolated cases of disagreement, one site claiming “no-one can honestly say that Bali is safe” (Austin, 2002). Security was observed to be severely lacking, many foreign schools remained closed and the latest intelligence warnings indicated there was still a risk (Austin, 2002). While the tour site believed delivering the truth would attract clients out of honesty, messages such as this acted to create an element of confusion among potential customers.

One UK-based tourism operator maintained its promotion of Bali as a holiday destination, however inserted into the top of the marketing page that the UK Foreign Office was currently recommending that all non-urgent travel to Indonesia be avoided, with a link to the Foreign Office’s site containing further information (Iglu Tropical, 2002). Other travel websites had minimal information regarding the crisis. One website, Bali For You, heavily promoted available accommodation with a small reference to developments in investigations of the attack (Bali for You, 2002). The Bali Hilton, a well-known, high-end accommodation establishment on the island, also promoted special offers on its homepage. Information to address the question ‘Is Bali Safe?’ was provided and whilst acknowledging that many travel advisories had been issued, guests were assured that the hotel was fully operational and ready to welcome guests (Bali Hilton, 2002).
The Baliguide, which promotes itself as a one-stop-shop of information for foreigners, was carrying no terror status report one month on from the bombings, although a news link was provided. As did other sites, Baliguide made special promotion of Bali as a family-friendly destination. It focused on the fact that the tourist industry had endured many cancellations and negative responses since the October attacks; however the operator’s sole reassurance to travellers in reference to further security breaches was that the company “would not let this happen!” (Baliguide.com, 2002). Much of the tourism industry was quick to target families in their immediate post-crisis marketing activities, emphasising the destination’s safety and the Balinese love of, and protective nature toward, all children (Bali Paradise, 2002).

Some operators appealed to tourists to travel to Bali to help it survive with, for example, the Bali Holidays website reading “Help Bali to be born again” (Bali Holidays, 2002). This desperation marketing emerged as foreign media reported that Bali tourism had essentially dried up and international markets were doing little to encourage visits with, for example, the Australian travel booking site Flight Centre in December 2002 offering inflated airfare prices (Flight Centre, 2002). Advice from individuals was also surfacing in numerous forum-style websites and was circulated by email, adding to the mixed messages that were both confirming and downplaying the threat. Yet on-the-ground reports surfacing toward the end of 2002 from Bali residents were at odds with reports in the international media with assurances that “tourism has not yet essentially dried up here” (Entus, 2002). While not discounting the short term effects of reduced tourist activity, the various press quotes regarding volume of arrivals and occupancy levels
were seen to be incongruent, incorrect and out of context with the actual number of new tourists arriving after the bombings.

Strong travel warnings issued by foreign governments, many of whom had significantly softened their stances by mid-November, were starting to take effect as the number of packaged tours fell. The Indonesian Government and local tourism associations responded to the crisis with a variety of short term measures focused on boosting the domestic market coupled with long term strategies planned to rebalance the economy to be less dependent on unsustainable mass tourism (Entus, 2002). But, the road to recovery remained plagued by the effect of travel advisories. While immediately after the attack Australia had issued a separate travel advice for Bali, it was integrated with that for all of Indonesia by early November. The tenor of the advice remained clear: stay away.

*We continue to advise Australians to defer non-essential travel to Indonesia, including Bali. Threats against Australians and Australian interests in Indonesia remain high given possible terrorist action and civil disorder. Our advice also remains that Australians in Indonesia who are concerned about their security should consider departure. We continue to caution Australians about ‘sweeping’ operations (raids) by militant Islamic groups against bars, nightclubs and other public places. These groups may seek to specifically identify Australians in their ‘sweep’. Australians in Indonesia should continue to exercise extreme caution in commercial and public places frequented by foreigners such as clubs, restaurants, bars, hotels, schools, places of worship, outdoor recreation events and tourist areas, including resorts outside major cities and historical and cultural locations including Borobodur. We have received reports that certain upmarket entertainment areas may also be targeted.*

- Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade [DFAT], November 2002
Even as the arrest of suspects started, the Australian Government pointed out that “in these circumstances, there may be a strong reaction from their supporters, including possible demonstrations” (DFAT, 2002). The listing by the United Nations of Jemaah Islamiyah as a terrorist organisation was also seen as a possible precursor to potential retaliation. Much of the world took Australia’s lead in maintaining warnings.

**A5.6. The End Phase: late November, 2002**

“Bali’s nightmare” killed 202 people – most of them young Australians – and injured more than 300 (CNN, 2002f). Dozens of victims were burned beyond recognition or simply blown to pieces by the power of massive blasts that touched many nations in terms of fatalities and injury and many more in terms of contributing to the already pregnant climate of global fear.

In November, 2002, the media reported the Indonesian Tourism Minister declaring that the worst was over for Bali, citing the return of foreign tourists, positive results from domestic campaigns and increasing hotel occupancy rates (AFP, 2002c). That month, the Indonesian press was also reporting tour operators had begun to receive bookings from partners in Germany, Japan, the USA, France, Canada and Greece (Entus, 2002). An end had come to “the worst tragedy the island has experienced,” said the Governor of Bali (Bali Tourism Authority [BTA], 2002). What helped the tourism industry greatly in terms of delivering an end to the crisis was the continuing public return to Bali of survivors and victims’ families. Acknowledging Bali’s unique characteristics that had first drawn tourists to the destination, the returnees – and more importantly the
strong media reports of their recoveries – helped to convey a message that the island would survive as a tourism destination.

The Australian Government spoke for many countries in saying that there was no higher priority than national security but acknowledging “it is the world we live in” (Hill, 2002). In November 2002 it was reported that the case to identify the bombing perpetrators had been solved and for the Bali investigators it was “time to go home” (Davies & Miller, 2002).

Political fragility, demonstrated through events with a political undercurrent or motive, is picked up quickly by the foreign press even if order is seen to be restored quickly (Bell, 1992, p. 28). As political stability and perceptions of visitor safety are vital to tourism (Hall, 2000b) the resulting media coverage of the instability in Bali served to decimate perceptions of safety and security. Although a figurative end to the crisis had been declared, the tourism industry would remain in abeyance for some time, plagued by the presence of travel advisories and their determination of Bali as unsafe.

A5.7. The Recovery Phase: November 2002 ➔

In a report to a special summit in December 2002, the Governor of Bali expressed confidence in the improvements made to Bali’s security and safety procedures and observed that life had returned to normal: “religious activities proceeded as if there had been no incident, the traditional markets were open, various tourism events will proceed and there is no feeling of fear or being threatened among the people” (BTA, 2002).
However, the ensuing media coverage of the investigation and of court proceedings against the bombers kept the crisis in the spotlight. Publicity of the legal aspects also opened the window of opportunity for emotional stories to be revisited, reminding tourists of the tragedy. At the same time, governments concerned about the possibility of retaliation from supporters of the bombers during the trial process continued to caution their nationals from travelling to Indonesia (DFAT, 2003).

The Governor of Bali noted that the incident had attracted incredible international sympathy with dozens of high-ranking government officials from around the world visiting the island to express their sympathy (BTA, 2002). The intensive international media coverage was also noted. The main thrust of the Governor’s words however was to assure the international community that the Government of Bali and the Balinese community had made a commitment to use the unfortunate tragedy as a cornerstone to develop Bali in a better way. In looking to give meaning to the bombings, Bali was judged to have been too relaxed on security measures and also that the terrorist attacks were a sign for it to return back to the genuine implementation of cultural tourism, based on Hindu religion (Ibid.). As observed by the Governor, the beach was still there, the culture was still there and the friendliness of the people was still there. What Bali had lost was its image. Noting that tourism depended significantly on the image, the first step to recovery for Bali had to be the recovery of image (Figure 68).

These messages by officials would help the tourism industry guide its recovery process by emphasising key aspects to potential travellers: first, that Bali had been complacent about safety but had now rectified the situation, and second that Bali was a peaceful
Hindu destination. The concerted effort by authorities to catch the perpetrators was clearly instrumental in the initial steps of returning the image of Bali to one of safety and security, conditions further improved by tighter security checks at points of arrival to the island, encouragement of villages to conduct their own security checks in the general community and at public events and an increase in the number of Tourist Police (BTA, 2002).

Figure 68: Indonesia’s tourism recovery efforts focused on restoring a reputation as a peaceful destination (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, Republic of Indonesia, 2002)

While these localised efforts to demonstrate safety and security were commendable, the international community remained unconvinced due to lack of assurance from their respective governments. Other incidents external to the Bali Bombings would also impede the recovery process. The efforts to promote peace were rocked on December 4,
2002, when a bomb exploded in a McDonald’s restaurant in Jakarta, killing three including one of the bombers. The anguish of October was revisited.

Attempts to reach an end to the crisis were being hampered by intermittent reports of renewed attacks, thus exacerbating the fear factor. Australian media outlets carried stories in late December 2002 reporting that Australians in Bali and across Indonesia were once again being warned to come home after “fresh information of a possible terrorist attack” to occur on Christmas Eve, with the information revealing Australians could be specifically targeted (Maguire, 2002). Statements from the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade reminded citizens that threats to Australians and their government interests in Indonesia remained high and nationals concerned about their safety should go home. The US and Britain delivered similar warnings. The Jakarta Post reported that although Indonesian police repeatedly guarantee the safety of foreigners, several bombs had been found in recent weeks (Ibid.).

In the new year, Australian media shifted slightly from reports advising against travel to Indonesia, profiling instead the nation’s plans to lure international tennis star Anna Kournikova to endorse Bali’s recovery with a lucrative offer to participate in a WTA Tour event that was scheduled for September 2003. It was thought the tennis player would stimulate interest in Bali as a tourism destination, especially for Australians. The tournament coordinator said “You watch CNN and it’s all doom and gloom. What we are trying to do is send a message to the world to say here, listen, Bali is still on the map and it’s still in business” (News.com.au, 2003). The use of events to stimulate recovery would remain a key activity. The Government extended two major year-end religious
holidays and reorganised other official breaks throughout 2003 to create long weekends and promote domestic tourism after the blast (AFP, 2002c). It planned other major international conferences and events for 2003 to show the world was regaining confidence in Bali.

Also boosting recovery was prominent media coverage of holiday deals throughout 2003, signifying that not only were operators prepared to promote the destination but that consumers were again considering a visit. Australian newspapers ran colour advertisements promoting the deals on offer (The Sunday Times, 2003b) and travel writers gave firsthand accounts of familiarisation visits (Tobin, 2003). While the tried and true globally recognised images of Bali are not necessarily closely linked to the original Bali and often exist independently of the island (Hitchcock, 2000), recovery efforts targeted the perceptions and recollections of tourists, urging them to celebrate the paradise that Bali once represented to them and to try it again. Culture remained the image by which Bali was differentiated in the international marketplace (Figure 69).

Figure 69: One of the more creative ways that the message of Bali as a safe haven was delivered (National Museum of Australia, 2003).
Tourism-specific strategies included discounting, re-branding and event promotion with a short term focus on the domestic market. Promotion and marketing efforts – predominantly geared around heavy discounting and incentives – were effective in increasing domestic and regional markets. The pursuit of new niche markets, including spa and health products, was developed as a recovery initiative (Gurtner, 2006). While the initiatives seemed to have some success, the uncertainty caused by other factors remained a deterrent to travel. The tourism industry financed familiarisations for trade representatives and journalists and staged trade shows; however these were not supported by effective associated communication strategies to ease travellers overhanging fears about safety.

In efforts to restore Australian confidence, the Indonesian Culture and Tourism Agency [ICTA] convened the Australian Tourism Industry Leaders Dialogue [ATILD] in Bali to discuss initiatives to increase visitor numbers, demonstrate improvements to safety and security and for delegates to experience the current socio-political climate (ATILD, 2003). It was acknowledged that Bali remained a very sensitive issue in Australia, yet it was believed that the Australian public’s overriding fondness for the destination would aid recovery. The contingent expressed full confidence in the Bali market and indicated that significant marketing of the destination would commence in the near future. While the effort appeared to yield positive outcomes, news reports circulated that major holiday wholesaler Qantas had put a “stop-sell” notice on packages to Bali until at least the end of October 2003 (Hotelier, 2003), hampering recovery of the Australian market.
The prevailing mood about travelling to Bali was not universally shared by the media. In the UK, reports circulated in early 2003 questioning the continued edict by the British Government against travel to Bali. Australians were asking the same questions of their government (Moore et al., 2002). With official warnings still in place, the international media began to promote Bali extensively under headlines including “Bali good time to be had” (Brace, 2003) and “Why put the boot into Bali?” (Hyde, 2003). Reports conveyed that “the Island of the Gods is making a comeback” with the efforts to kick-start the industry delivering excellent deals. While the UK Foreign Office would continue to warn against travel to Indonesia the media would counter the government’s stance, claiming “Britons ignore Bali safety alert” (Templeton, 2003b) and French and Germans also headed back (Aglionby, 2003).

Pleas to governments to rescind advisories became louder from the media, the tourism industry and from Indonesia, with the Tourism Minister pointing out that if it was safe enough for USA President George Bush to visit – on a multi-stop Asia tour on October 22, 2003 – it was safe enough for travellers (Bowes, 2003). Bali operators also had to deal with a step-up in efforts by neighbouring competitor destinations to capitalise on its market misfortunes. As well as media encouraging a return to Bali, they also portrayed other destinations in almost the same voice as “what Bali was like” (Tobin, 2003). Although a lot of media focused on rediscovering Bali, asking “What’s it like to be a tourist in Kuta now?” (Brown, 2003), reports would persist throughout the year still evaluating the question of whether it was safe to travel (Carter, 2004; Buckley, 2004). While the question of safety remained in the media, most reports were overall positive in declaring Bali open for business.
However, in advance of any full restoration of confidence, the economic outlook remained grim and added another burden to the recovery process. A UN report on the economic suffering Bali was enduring predicted the economy to rebound in 2004 but criticised Indonesia’s response to the crisis, citing a high dependency on quick-fix measures such as international conferences (Eturbo News [ETN], 2003a). Indonesia’s reliance on Bali as a tourism destination meant that the terrorism-related downturn had rippled throughout the economy: unemployment was reported up by almost a third, income levels were falling as much as 40 percent and school drop-outs, the result of poverty, were as high as 60 percent (Ibid.). These figures signalled that the tourism industry needed to look at longer-term measures for recovery and sustainability.

The trials of the bombing suspects started toward mid 2003, refreshing the still healing memories of the attacks in the media after months of quiet. Terror and its indiscriminate threat would again hit the headlines with Indonesian prosecutors describing the bombings as a “crime against humanity” (AFP, 2003). Senses would also be heightened by the drama and theatrics of the trials. Anti-terror laws that had been rushed through a week after the October 2002 attack and made retroactive to cover the crime were challenged and caused delays as their validity was investigated (AFP, 2003). The suspects were also beginning to achieve personality status in the media. Australia generated much media coverage of the trials. Channel Nine television news coverage of the first suspect Amrozi painted the picture of a man who was “happy with the attacks and was ready for the death penalty” (Ibid.). Outraged Australian media dubbed him the “laughing bomber” when he was filmed giggling and joking during an interview in late 2002 with the Indonesian police chief. Much of the trial coverage focused on the
motivation and planning of the attacks with Amrozi emerging as the main feature: “How can I feel sorry? I am very happy because they attack Muslims and are inhumane. You can see from their attitude...they come here, people such as Americans, the Jews and their allies. They want to colonise, not just to play. They want to control Muslim people...There will be more bombs until the Westerners are finished...and all of them who attack Muslims and who attack humanity” (Ibid.).

While this coverage served to keep fear in the forefront of the western traveller’s mind it also simultaneously distanced the Hindu-based Bali from the attacks and aided efforts to restore the island’s reputation as a peaceful paradise. The Vice-Governor of Bali would use the ASEAN Regional Forum in Australia in 2003 to further appeal to the Australian Government to lift its travel warning, claiming security to be better than ever (Alcantara, 2003a). It was clear that Bali’s tourism-driven economy was struggling without its regular visitors and the Balinese claimed there was no longer reason for Australians to stay away from what they once considered a second home (Ibid.). Despite the travel advisories, tourism activity was showing signs of improvement.

Australian interest in Bali as a holiday destination was re-emerging, confirmed by notice from the three key airlines servicing the market of planned increased capacity in ensuring months (ATILD, 2003). Garuda Indonesia had planned more services to Bali than it had in operation prior to October 2002 (Ibid.). Tourism operators reported increased Australian interest in travel to Bali again and this translated into plans for marketing campaigns to be rolled out by the Australian tourism industry in cooperation with the Government and tourism industry of Indonesia. Their target in the first instance
was seasoned travellers and those who had previously visited Bali (Ibid.). Despite the
signs of improvements, sporadic bombings and attacks and narcotics incidents in the
region, although unrelated to the October 2002 crisis, led to continuing negative reports
in international media about the destination’s internal stability. External factors,
including the ongoing war in Iraq and the outbreak of Severe Acute Respiratory
Syndrome (SARS), were also receiving media coverage and casting a shadow over
international tourism (ETN, 2003a). These internal and external burdens weighed on the
tourism industry’s restoration efforts and saw Bali’s recovery develop less successfully
than the USA’s in the aftermath of September 11.

The Balinese population as a whole has always been mindful of the critical nature that
peace plays in maintaining a successful tourism industry and the Bali Bombings crisis
reinforced this belief (Hitchcock & Putra, 2005). Moves by Balinese and Indonesian
political leaders and media commentators to proactively stave off demand for
retribution allowed the “Bali model of crisis management – a widespread desire for
peace, joint prayers, media restraint, involvement of opinion leaders” to play out
(Hitchcock & Putra, 2005, p.75).

One report encouraged Bali to be treated like the US after 9/11 – that the public travel in
the knowledge of the positive impact tourism can have on restoring economies like Bali
(Thome, 2003), a point widely shared. The first anniversary of the bombings ensured
the return of the destination to the headlines with coverage firmly emphasising the loss
and devastation. The Australian media was particularly strong in its reporting, although
in direct contrast to American reports which seemed to lack awareness of the
significance (The Courier Mail, 2003c). Headlines such as “Nation haunted by terror blast” (Hedge, 2003) would lead stories of survivors’ journeys and their attempts to get on with life (The Courier Mail, 2003b). One year on and the media reported that political leaders of all persuasions “behaved as we would have hoped” (Hedge, 2003) with the Australian Prime Minister said to have delivered his “most statesman-like performance” (Ibid.) at the commemoration.

Anniversary coverage also profiled the ongoing plight of the tourism industry with the impacts on Bali now exacerbated by the second Iraq war and the outbreak of SARS (Herde, 2003). Local tourism operators were reporting the industry still to be suffering, compounded by the ongoing bombing incidents which served to remind tourists that trouble remained in paradise (The Courier Mail, 2003a). Of those visiting the island, many repeat travellers were being joined by first-timers, including family members of victims trying to connect to the tragedy (Figure 70).

Many tourists had also remained in Bali to help with recovery efforts. However, the continuing overall reduction in Australian visitors was seen as an ongoing burden, with operators observing that tours from other countries, while bringing visitors, would patronise foreign hotels and stores unlike the Australian tourists who were known to spread their money widely through the community and thus deliver broader benefits. Though the road to recovery was painted as difficult, media reports did observe that Bali was slowly rising out of the hollows and that the majority of tourist generating markets were expected to be in positive territory by the end of 2004 (Herde, 2003).
Although anniversary coverage also revisited the plotting and execution of the attacks (The Courier Mail, 2003d), it equally focused on the recovery of the Balinese people, separating the two issues in a move that would assist the rebuilding of relationships (Figure 71).

Australia-Indonesia ties were enhanced by the publicity surrounding ongoing efforts to remain engaged through goodwill projects, including multi-million dollar donations to build an intensive care centre for the hospital, an eye treatment centre and a raft of medical and health scholarships (The Courier Mail, 2003c).

What remained missing from Bali’s recovery efforts – the endorsement of foreign governments – came in 2004 when the UK Foreign Office removed its warning against travel to Indonesia and the tourism industry was reported as “Cheering loudly” (Aglionby, 2004). Recovery efforts could now proceed unencumbered.
A5.8. Epilogue: 2003

Bali Tourism Board figures reported in 2005 showed that the tourism sector had recovered to pre-bombing levels. However the recovery was predominantly from domestic and regional visitors with the destination still unable to regain long-haul markets (Gurtner, 2006).

On October 1, 2005, Bali was once again the victim of a terrorist attack with bombings in the tourist centres of Jimberan Bay and Kuta Square. While the destruction and devastation were not as acute as in the 2002 attacks, the re-emergence of fear and media attention plunged the destination back into crisis with tourist numbers once again declining while the world admitted that they “didn’t think it would happen again” (The Guardian, 2005) and would forever think that travellers would be haunted by the undercurrent of terror that now seemed part of paradise (Nowicka, 2005). The combination of the Iraq war, SARS and the 2005 bombings brought about an acute decline in tourism and the destination’s recovery would continue to remain threatened.
by the emergence of competitor countries in Southeast Asia such as Thailand, Malaysia and the Philippines which successfully projected a peaceful image in the major tourism markets of Europe, North America and the Asia Pacific.

A5.9. Summary

A sudden attack signalled the start of the crisis that was the Bali Bombings on October 12, 2002. Hitting close to midnight, the neighbouring region woke to the full extent of the blasts the following morning and the magnitude of the crisis was shockingly apparent. The immediate bombing aftermath was characterised by chaotic aspects related to shock, confusion, loss, uncertainty, fear and panic. Those responsible and their intended targets were initially unknown and the subject of early speculation. Official messages were short on detail and at times conflicting. Links to the September 11 attacks of the preceding year heightened an already charged international atmosphere and intensified the impact on tourism. Dealing with the crisis became a priority and within the space of a few weeks fuller understanding of its causes became apparent. A month later Indonesia’s leaders were declaring the time of crisis to be over. However, recovery actions would continue for some time, especially in the wake of the outbreaks of SARS only a few months later.

The international media had a central role in covering the attacks because of the many different foreign nationals who were either killed or injured as well as the destination’s global reputation. The world wanted to know what had happened and why as well as who was involved and the media sought to deliver those answers. Information was
scarce and operational inadequacies led to the capacity and credibility of government and industry being questioned by initial media reports. While the media and tourism appeared to operate independently in initial stages, a supportive relationship between the two based on previous engagements eventually developed in the crisis aftermath. An early lack of clear government and industry leadership, conflict between stakeholders and uncertain courses of action made way for the emergence of local stakeholders to stabilise and control recovery responses. The impact on tourism was undeniable from the onset of the crisis and tourism recognised the tough road ahead. The core thrust of Bali’s tourist image as a haven of peace had been shattered however the industry held firm to the Bali model of crisis management by encouraging a widespread desire for peace, joint prayers, media restraint and the vocal involvement of opinion leaders.

Bali’s image was shattered as a result of the bombings and the livelihood of the tourism industry hinged on its restoration. The pivotal role of the tourism industry in the broader economy fuelled immediate reports of its suffering and downfall. The industry moved quickly and explicitly to air and discuss traveller concerns, providing information to counter questions such as “should I still travel to Bali?” and “is Bali safe?” Culture remained the image by which Bali is differentiated in the international marketplace and tourism industry recovery efforts took a humanistic approach exploiting this, encouraging those with a love and affinity for the destination to return and actively play a role to help rehabilitate its image. Many tourists had remained in Bali to help with recovery efforts. There was also a strong emphasis on Bali as a family-friendly destination, drawing on the destination’s pre-crisis profile as a place of peace and friendship.
Given the importance of tourism to the economy, the Indonesian government’s role in the crisis was critical. International government involvement caused confusion at times, especially in the immediate aftermath, but it is evident that foreign ties largely helped Bali’s tourism industry maintain its profile in the global market and utilise resources of other countries to enhance recovery efforts. Despite the mostly helpful role of governments, long standing travel advisories provided obstacles, a situation perhaps inflamed by the recency of the September 11 attacks the previous year. However, the worries expressed about travelling to Bali were not universally shared by the media and, despite official warnings, they began to promote Bali extensively. Commemoration of the event kept the crisis in the public’s eye but also helped to provide a form of closure. While it took some time for tourism activity to be restored to pre-crisis levels, recovery efforts were largely successful with media support, although the strength of the destination’s pre-crisis profile and the unique relationship between the destination and its visitors cannot be overlooked.
Appendix 6: Table of Data from Case Study #3 – Bali Bombings, 2002

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PHASE OF CRISIS</th>
<th>DATA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pre-Crisis</strong></td>
<td><strong>PROFILE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Long-standing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Broad market appeal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Mass tourism patronage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Aesthetic appeal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Cultural appeal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Generally remained immune from disruptions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Able to insulate from disruption through image and reputation strength</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRECEDENT</strong></td>
<td>• Internal/external pressures incessantly plagued</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Performance influenced economy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONDITION</strong></td>
<td>• Fragile</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Highly susceptible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Motivation to protect the destination’s image</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outbreak</strong></td>
<td><strong>NOTICE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Immediate news</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Governor first official message</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRECEDENT</strong></td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EXTENT</strong></td>
<td>• Worldwide impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Visible impact on tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Image instantly shattered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONDITION</strong></td>
<td>• Chaos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Shock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Confusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Inexplicable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• No-one had answers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Exposed vulnerabilities of global tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MEDIA – COVERAGE</strong></td>
<td>• Instantaneous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Saturation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Domination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Vivid images</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Lack of comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Speculation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Public demand / need</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MEDIA – PERCEPTION</strong></td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RESPONSE</strong></td>
<td>• Military response</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Appendix: Case Study #3 – Bali Bombings, 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Consolidation</strong></th>
<th><strong>Notice</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Evacuation</td>
<td>Official sketchy messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shut down</td>
<td>Mixed messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tourism recognition of need to act</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Precedent</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Earlier bombings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertain times for five years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speculation of prior knowledge</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Extent</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Immediate impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soft Western targets / tourists attacked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inflamed unsafe global climate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visible</td>
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</tbody>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Condition</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chaotic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unexpected shock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistance chaotic, insufficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government failure to counter the threats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>As well as a need to know, it was seen that someone needed to tell</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terror threat perceived</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No one safe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceptions of insulation/safety shattered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian government involvement brought comfort to Australians</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian government involvement conveyed message that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bali/Indonesia unable to handle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Despair and distrust of authorities</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Media – Coverage</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Immediate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Global</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No hesitation in labelling it as terrorism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Another September 11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bali link to holiday, haven played</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media scepticism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Placed in context of war on terror</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Web of terror – and fear – widened to other parts of the world</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertainty conveyed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Doubt conveyed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determined tourists were target</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attack on Australia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Images of fear, tragedy and confusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dealing with what was known – knew what had happened</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Media – Perception</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Exacerbated by poorly balanced media images</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exacerbated by global transmission of emotional stories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Media accused of not heeding warnings; of not showing that Indonesia had become a dangerous place to visit; instead concealing the threat through “unreality TV”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Response</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Slow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incongruent (govt)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inept (govt)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All accused of taking eye off target</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indo authorities initially refrained from making comment to the press</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix: Case Study #3 – Bali Bombings, 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acceleration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>NOTICE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PRECEDENT</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forewarning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EXTENT</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Global</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Threat to West</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Global tourism impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Uncertainty - fear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Short term future for tourism unclear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONDITION</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- No destination safe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Uncertain as to full impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Despair about future safety and security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Initial assessment and reflection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MEDIA – COVERAGE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HOW</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Global</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Amateur footage and photographs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CONTENT</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Humanistic elements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Focus on culture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Economic and tourism impacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Perpetrators</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Different viewpoints, creating confusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DESCRIPTORS</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Personal safety and security</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Australia played a prominent role with coverage easier and cheaper due to proximity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Mixed messages that were both confirming and downplaying the threat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Tourism had dried up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- International markets doing little to encourage travel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MEDIA – PERCEPTION</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Unbalanced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Sensationalist</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Emphasised the disaster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Information incongruent, incorrect and out of context</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Issues overlooked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RESPONSE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RESPONSES TO THE MEDIA</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Govt/tourism called for restraint using all available media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESPONSES TO THE CRISIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Govt and media closed ranks to stave off demand for retribution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Authorities appeared to operate as separate entities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Tourism controlled individual communications through websites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Incorporated news into websites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Interaction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RESPONSES TO THE CRISIS**

- Degree of collaborative leadership govt/tourism/media
- Political debate
- Industry impact collateral damage
- Linked to September 11, affecting public’s psyche
- Travel advisories implemented widely
- Travel advisories lacked sufficient detail
- Tourism took lead from government
- Tourism implemented precautionary measures
- A wait and see approach adopted
- No-penalty travel changes offered
- In dire need of a Mayor Giuliani
- Public urged to keep Bali on the list
- Aust PM message that Aust Australia would never be broken by the attack
- Prompt investigation results off-set the element of fear
- Perception of action
- Alternative destinations promoted
- Destinations reaffirmed differentiation from Bali to minimise knock-on effects
- Tourism changes shifted the market away from Bali to competitors
- Usual immediate action by tourism to separate Bali from Indonesia not possible
- Tourism messages distributed within industry
- Competition increased
- Price wars
- Limited differentiation between products
- Initial actions deemed conducive to restoration
- Closed ranks
- Took care to avoid apportioning blame
- Emphasis on peace
- Local stakeholders emerged to control recovery efforts
- Security/safety top priority
- Adopted cultural and religious strategies to promote harmony
- Public appeal to recognise innocence of destination
- Govt message received by public
- Motivation to protect tourism
- The Bali model of crisis management – a widespread desire for peace, joint prayers, media restraint and the vocal involvement of opinion leaders
- Authorities appeared to operate as separate entities
- Lack of collaboration
- Tourism controlled individual communications through websites
- Full refunds offered
- Alternative holidays provided
- Measures failed to sustain the industry
- Reduction in prices coincided with peak period
- Incorporated news into websites
- Used endorsements of renowned figures
- Toured overseas
- Delivered positive messages
- Isolated cases of disagreement
- Maintained promotion of Bali
- Special offers
- Reassurance of guests
- Promotion as family-friendly
- Encouraged travel to help recovery
- Govt and tourism used variety of measures
### Case Study #3 – Bali Bombings, 2003

#### Short term measures focused on boosting the domestic market
- Long term strategies planned to rebalance economy in order to be less dependent on unsustainable mass tourism
- Conflict: intra-government
- Uncertainty
- Civil precautionary measures
- International monitoring
- First reaction contingency marketing
- Leadership/spokespeople:

#### Impact
- International impact
- Domestic/regional impact
- Collective fear of terrorism
- Visible flood of tourists
- Widespread cancellations
- Destination substitution
- Trends of global terrorism, instability and extremism
- Indonesia a target and victim
- Government actions created exodus
- Predictions of cancellations / ongoing – recovery time
- Tour operations scaled down
- Image shattered
- Safety and security compromised
- Multiple advisories would rile tourism - did not identify specific threats and only served to scared people
- Bali the victim of over-zealous governments
- International response not comparable to September 11
- Growing unease
- Ongoing speculation
- Distrust of official advice
- Incomplete knowledge
- Atmosphere of uncertainty
- Tourists as targets
- People travelled domestically
- Consumer ambiguity
- Recovery measures not adequately communicated to public
- Warnings maintained – threat of retaliation etc
- Image problems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Extent</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>End</td>
<td>Leadership: govt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Indonesian Tourism Minister declared the worst was over</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Governor of Bali played role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public return of survivors and families helped signal an end</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Return of visitors helped to convey message that still a destination</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Extent
- Sporadic events
- Tourism remained in crisis mode

#### Condition
- The world we live in
- Threat remained
- Confidence building but slower than others

#### Media – Coverage
- New bookings (Indo media)
- Ongoing instability

#### Media – Perception
- Coverage of instability decimated perceptions of safety and security
- Ongoing negativity
### IMPACT
- Travel advisories deemed Bali unsafe

### MEDIA – COVERAGE
- Spotlight
- Overall positive
- Emotional stories revisited
- Generated international sympathy
- Threats continued despite assurances of safety
- Extensive promotion of Bali
- Pleas to recall advisories
- Distanced Hindu-Bali from attacks
- Negative coverage of instability
- Terrorism remained in headlines
- Kept fear in the forefront
- Anniversary

### MEDIA – PERCEPTION
- All doom and gloom negative
- Cast shadow over tourism

### RESPONSE TO MEDIA
- Trade and media familiarisations
- Lobbied against travel advisories
- Message of safety

### RESPONSE TO CRISIS
- Governor of Bali expressed confidence in security/safety
- Government and community commitment to develop better
- Observed lax security measures
- Image recovery was first step
- Official messages helped tourism
- Key aspects emphasised: complacency rectified and peaceful
- Rapid effort to catch perpetrators
- Tight security checks
- Village security
- Increase in police
- Localised efforts
- Lack of assurance from international governments
- Short term focus on domestic
- Collaborative marketing campaigns
- Culture remained the image
- Celebrities used
- Events used
- Held special event for key market
- Holiday deals
- Discounting
- Re-branding
- New niche markets pursued
- Trade show exhibitions
- Targeted memories
### Case Study #3 – Bali Bombings, 2003

- Focused on ‘people’
- Mindful of critical nature of peace
- Targeted seasoned travellers and repeat visitors
- Public called to travel to help
- Not supported by effective communication strategies
- Longer-term, sustainable measures still needed
- Airlines increased capacity
- Government goodwill projects
- Efforts less successful than 9/11
- Increased competition from neighbours
- Different clientele attracted
- Travel advisories finally eased
- Recovery could proceed unencumbered

**IMPACT**
- Sporadic bombings, attacks and narcotics incidents
- New threats
- Uncertainty by external factors
- Grim economic outlook
- Reliance on tourism hurt whole economy
- Struggled without regular visitors

**LESSON**

Nil

### Epilogue

- Recovery was predominantly from domestic and regional visitors with the destination still unable to regain long-haul markets
- 2005, Bali was once again the victim of a terrorist attack
- Re-emergence of fear and media attention plunged the destination back into crisis
- The undercurrent of terror that now seemed part of paradise
- Remain threatened by the emergence of competitor countries
Appendix 7  

CASE STUDY #4  

SEVERE ACUTE RESPIRATORY SYNDROME (SARS)  

2003  

Figure 72: Timeline of the SARS crisis, 2003  

A7.1. Prologue  

The tale of two health professionals, an Italian doctor and a Chinese medical professor, in different parts of Asia in 2003 is characteristic of the story of SARS, an epidemic which spread around the world, induced a media frenzy which created panic, killed hundreds of people and brought the tourism industry to a standstill. At the pinnacle of the epidemic, 65 new cases were announced in a single day in Taiwan. Two hundred cases were reported in one Hong Kong residential block alone. And China threatened to execute anyone who breached quarantine orders. But at the start of it all were the two experts. One was Carlo Urbani, 46, a World Health Organisation [WHO] officer living with his wife and three young children in Hanoi where he was advising on the control of communicable diseases. He worried that SARS was a danger to healthcare workers and
told the WHO that precautions were needed to prevent them from being infected. His
detection of SARS meant that many new cases were identified and isolated. The disease
had been carried from Hong Kong to Vietnam by a Chinese-American businessman
named Johnny Cheng who is believed to have contracted it when he stayed on the 9th
floor of the island city’s Metropole Hotel. The second expert was a Chinese professor
named Liu Jianlun, who had been treating patients in Guangdong, southern China, and
is believed to have infected guests in the Metropole who then spread the disease to
several countries. Urbani first treated Cheng on February 28, two days after he had
been admitted to a hospital in Hanoi. Even as the situation was becoming dangerous,
Urbani visited the hospital every day, collecting samples and tracing the paths of
infection. He wore a mask but no protective clothing or goggles. Eventually he
contracted the disease himself and died on March 29.

A7.2. Pre-Crisis Phase: pre March 11, 2003

The World Travel and Tourism Council [WTTC] reported that in 2002 Asia ranked
second in visitor numbers and lead the world in tourism growth potential (TWN, 2004).
Several of the major cities in Asia – Hong Kong and Singapore in particular – had
considerable success as tourist destinations born over many years of image-building as
being safe, cosmopolitan and with distinctive regional flavours of the Orient. The
success of these and associated tourism sectors was due in part to their appeal to the
medium-to-long-haul markets of Europe, the USA and Australia, but equally due to the
movement of travellers within Asia.
Despite this success, the pan-regional tourism industry had been buffeted by crises and prior to 2003 several had made an impact: the Asian Financial Crisis, September 11, Bali bombings, Iraq wars and associated downturns. The major destinations were also challenged by strong competitors – China, Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam and the Philippines – which all targeted similar markets. Singapore had long been a staging point for Southeast Asian markets – thanks in part to its strategic importance as a long-haul flight hub between London and Australia. In China, tourism was not a primary contributor to economic activity until the late 1970s but then it quickly experienced substantial growth with international visitor arrivals increasing from 1.81 million in 1978 to 97.91 million in 2002 and domestic tourism numbers multiplying almost four-fold, hitting 878 million in 2002 (Zeng et al., 2005).

Several countries throughout Asia had recognised tourism as a vital part of their respective economies and capable of earning development and marketing support from government, industry and the public. Conversely, other emerging markets were yet to harness the earning potential of tourism to their respective economies and as such a degree of unco-ordination was evident, particularly in terms of collaboration between stakeholders. These disparate scenarios also underscored the importance of the relationship between the media and the tourism industry in various destinations, with media recognition and support of the tourism industry often correlating to the strength of the role played by the industry in city and regional economies.
A7.3. Outbreak Phase: March 11 – April 21, 2003

Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) emerged in November 2002 in China’s Guangdong Province, however what became known as SARS initially was diagnosed as atypical pneumonia. On February 21, 2003 the aforementioned Liu Jianlun, a doctor who had treated patients with atypical pneumonia in Guangdong, and who was now suffering from the disease himself, checked into the Metropole Hotel in Hong Kong and while there passed the disease on to at least a dozen other people, including some who would travel on to other parts of China and to overseas destinations such as Hanoi, Singapore and Toronto. The first official report of atypical pneumonia was not made to the World Health Organisation [WHO] until 11 February, 2003 and it would not be until late February that the disease was identified by a WHO epidemiologist as SARS (Mason et al., 2005).

On March 11, 2003 the WHO issued a worldwide alert about the appearance of several cases of severe atypical pneumonia following mounting reports of cases from Hanoi and Hong Kong hospitals (Pine & McKercher, 2004). Although cases of atypical pneumonia had been reported since November 2002, newspapers and other media were not particularly giving coverage to the increasing number of cases occurring in Hong Kong and Guangdong Province in China. Instead, much of China’s media joined the rest of the world in the focus on the ongoing war in Iraq (Dombey, 2003).

From its origin in China, the disease quickly spread to create “hot zones” in Hong Kong, Singapore, Hanoi and Toronto (Mason et al., 2005). In terms of managing the
outbreak, the sudden announcement of a serious, contagious medical crisis and the lack of clarity about its nature pre-empted any pre-crisis stages in which authorities could control the disease or manage the consequences such as its subsequent impact on the broader economy and industries such as tourism (Henderson & Ng, 2004). The lack of knowledge and limited understanding about the disease created many unanswered questions. This uncertainty added to anxieties and, with many unsure how to respond to the outbreak, the decision-making process was complicated, a situation only exacerbated by the trans-national characteristics of the crisis. Yet, based on what cases had emerged, an almost immediate connection was made between the spread of the disease and the movement of people and this understanding would create significant problems for tourism industries in both affected and unaffected countries.

**A7.4. Consolidation Phase: April 21 – May, 2003**

On Monday, April 21, 2003 a series of actions in China would change the situation drastically. In a country not known for openness in public acknowledgement of negative issues, the Mayor of Beijing and the Health Minister were sacked. This was in response to a belief that a slow response by Beijing officials to the situation had contributed to the spread of the disease, although it was implied that secrecy of a more sinister nature had underscored Beijing’s actions with officials reticent to release details of a destabilising event (Dombey, 2003).

The sackings demonstrated the Chinese Government was responding to increasing calls to address the spread of the disease - China’s recent entry to the World Trade
Organisation [WTO] was another possible motivation (Ibid.) – by stepping up to play a more pro-active role. As a result, scores of workers fled Beijing for their regional and provincial home towns in a move that increased the chances of the disease spreading throughout a country with a population in excess of 1.3 billion people (Ibid).

In March 2003, SARS entered the global vernacular with the disease now present in a number of places around the world. Media right across the globe – with one exception – were soon reporting on the new, virulent epidemic that was being disseminated by returning tourists (McKercher & Chon, 2004). In China, however, the outbreak received little mention in the national or regional media. When the silence was broken and SARS was acknowledged, the official line from Beijing was that conditions in the capital were normal and safe. A senior tourism official (*People's Daily*, 2003b) announced on April 5 that SARS was under control and “tourism is safe in the country, tourism activities were continuing as normal” and co-operation would be extended to health authorities to eliminate any possibility of infection. While 136,000 tourists had cancelled bookings to Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou, the official said “these abrogations would not severely affect China's tourism industry”. He said Chinese tourism sectors would try their best to arrange the upcoming Golden Week, the country’s week-long holiday.

The mood changed on April 9 when China premier Wen Jiabao described the situation as grave, but the real turning point came dramatically on April 20 when Ministry of Health Vice Minister Gao Qiang revealed that Beijing had 346 confirmed SARS cases and 18 deaths, a direct contradiction of earlier official reports of 37 cases and four deaths. As the real toll in China – 2,317 infected and 102 dead – became public
knowledge, the country’s print and electronic media devoted more space and airtime to the battle against the new killer. Underscored by the grim statistics, the coverage

“...ranged from news items on governmental and grassroots efforts to contain the spread of the disease in various parts of China, to reports on medical research into the nature of the virus and hunt for a vaccine. Stories of heroic medical workers saving lives also [became] a common news item in the Chinese print and broadcast media [while] talk shows and newspaper features focused on how to prevent the disease.”

- Xu and Lei, 2003.

While tourism is recognised by the medical profession to be a vector for disease dissemination, the outbreak of SARS represented a clear connection between travel and the spread of disease (McKercher & Chon, 2004), bringing the tourism industry into the crisis in a direct way, much the same as September 11, 2001 had an immediate impact on the aviation industry. In fact, the Metropole in Hong Kong was labelled by the media as “ground zero” in a throwback to the preceding 9/11 crisis, and significant stigmatic publicity went the hotel’s way as a result (CNN, 2003a; Fox, 2003). Daily reporting across a host of international media sources would track infections and deaths (Cole, 2003) and ensuing extensive media coverage (Figure 73) continued to consolidate the connection of the disease with travel, especially air travel, amidst reports of airline passengers falling ill (Frith, 2003). Worldwide anxiety was quick to emerge about the unknown, mysterious disease working its way around the globe. It was also rapidly
realised the disease would create a crisis for both health services and tourism industries in the affected regions (Henderson, 2003).

Figure 73: SARS quickly made international headlines, with much conjecture regarding the true nature of the disease (Tesla Society, 2003).

The immediate responses from government and industry, as portrayed in the media, appeared disjointed and ultimately confusing due to continuing uncertainty surrounding the nature of the disease and how it spread. All reports and actions seemed to escalate the perception of fear and panic as fundamental elements of the crisis. The WHO took a key role as an information source, providing news about where SARS outbreaks were occurring and warning against visits to affected regions. It also recommended a series of measures targeted at screening travellers for the disease and produced guidelines for how the disease should be handled, particularly with regard to international travel, but also extending to road, rail and sea passenger movements (Ibid.).
Government agencies also began to distribute advisories warning travellers away from countries cited by the WHO as SARS affected (Ibid.). Several companies and organisations with international operations also prohibited employees from engaging in international business travel. For those who did travel, insurance companies withdrew their cover. For the tourism industry, with the diffusion of the disease now firmly linked to travel, it would prove difficult to define the crisis as exogenous, instead placing tourism livelihoods at the mercy of an unknown threat. SARS could not have come at a worse time for the industry, already trying to recover from a series of preceding crises and with the war in Iraq concurrently underway. The fear and uncertainty that already existed would only be exponentially compounded.


A7.5.1 Media Coverage

The impact of the SARS outbreak on the tourism industry was widely blamed on the considerable attention given to the crisis by the media, in particular the nature of the media coverage, with its sheer volume and often sensationalist and alarmist tones (McKercher, 2003; Mason et al., 2005). The news values (Galtung and Ruge, 1965) common to earlier cases studies applied: frequency, threshold, unambiguity, meaningfulness, unexpectedness, continuity, elite nations, elite people, personification and negativity. While the media were important in raising awareness of SARS, they were also blamed for creating a level of panic that many saw as unjust and unjustified. From the first appearance of the disease in November 2002 to its identification in
February 2003, only a limited number of medical professionals and WHO experts possessed knowledge of the potential nature and effects of SARS. Media contained very little SARS information, a direct result of the absence of verifiable information. This would be portrayed by authorities and media alike as a result of Chinese authorities lacking systems to collect, and predispositions to not share, such information. Moreover, for western media, the Iraq war was taking precedence (Mason et al., 2005).

Mason et al. (2005) observed a cyclical attention pattern along the lines of Downs’ (1972) issue-attention cycle to the SARS outbreak, with the *alarmed discovery and possible euphoria stage* as starting in mid-February 2003. While SARS was now identified, the lack of clarity of the nature of the disease contributed to alarm, panic and sensationalist media coverage. The world’s press, radio, television and the Web closely tracked the emergence of SARS, announcing each new outbreak and covering developments in medical information and government action in substantial detail, but broadcasting little in the way of good news about the crisis. For good reason, though, as at this stage there was none. Defining images circulated through global media of masked people (*Figure 74*) in hospitals, at airports, in streets, fuelling the panic that had begun to grip society (Zeng et al., 2005). Fears of infection were increasingly widespread and seen to be aggravated by intense general and specialist media coverage (Henderson and Ng, 2004).
In Hong Kong, the outbreak was revealed on March 10 through a government media release when 11 health care staff in the Prince of Wales hospital were reported to be on sick leave (Radio Television Hong Kong [RTHK], 2003). The statement was carried in a 30-second late evening TV news bulletin and then the impending crisis was all but ignored. The Hong Kong media’s focus remained on the Iraq War and a domestic political crisis through to March 26, but changed when hundreds of people were evacuated from the Hong Kong Central Library because of a suspected SARS case among staff and a separate incident in which 15 SARS cases were admitted to hospital from seven homes in a housing estate. The crisis then started dominating the media for the following two to four months. The fear of contagion gripped the city, with every sector of the community affected: schooling was suspended, economic momentum stalled, shops and restaurants were empty, and tourism ground to a halt. Labelled by local media as the epidemic of the century and the “open scar” of Hong Kong (Lo,
2003), international media described SARS as a “greater threat than the war in Iraq”  
(Apple Daily, 2003)

Beijing-based reporters for Worldpress.org, Xu and Lei (2003), reported that the day after China fully acknowledged the crisis, the April 21 edition of the Beijing Daily devoted a full page to tips on home disinfecting and the importance of wearing a surgical mask. On April 23, Beijing Evening News, a popular tabloid with a circulation of nearly two million, devoted more than a third of its 16-page first section to coverage of the war against SARS, coloured by the experience of a nurse from a local hospital who had recovered from the disease. Wen Hui Bao, a high-brow Shanghai newspaper, gave nearly half of its issue to coverage of SARS. The electronic media also contributed, with Beijing Public Radio launching a four-hour special daily program on the “People’s War Against SARS” and Beijing TV’s Channel 3 telecasting a nightly, 150-minute program in which viewers were encouraged to call medical experts with their questions.

The Beijing newspaper People’s Daily (2003c) reported on its English-language website that the Vietnam Youth newspaper said the country’s tourism sector was in a SARS crisis with hotel occupancy rates down to 40-50 percent from 95-98 percent in the most seriously affected cities of Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City. The newspaper further reported (People’s Daily, 2003a) that the Thailand tourism sector faced a bleak outlook, predicted to be worse than during the 1991 Gulf War, the 1997 monetary crisis and 9/11 terrorist attacks. Fifty tourism operators were expected to go out of business while 500 others would be forced to scale down activities and close for half the month.
The crisis consolidated as an Asian contagion when Asian tourists were denied visas and declined entry to trade shows, hotels and cruise ships (McKercher & Chon, 2004), with an eventual total of 110 countries imposing travel restrictions on Chinese tourists (Doran et al., 2003). The Chinese tradition of sharing dishes was criticised by the media as one of the causes of the spread of the disease and habits such as expectorating in public were also identified as human practices that could lead to infection (Dombey, 2003). As it turned out, simple and minor invasive strategies were found to be effective in stopping the spread of the virus; yet, the lack of certainty and information in the initial phase of the crisis saw panic spread faster than the disease itself (McKercher & Chon, 2004).

The main SARS international media attention period was between March and May 2003, the height of the outbreak. The UK and US media placed particular emphasis on the crisis, with UK broadsheet The Independent reporting almost nothing but SARS-linked stories on its first four pages on April 25, 2003 and a further three articles on later pages indicative of the volume and extent of coverage (Mason et al., 2005). The UK tabloids were less focused on the issue and when they did feature it, the stories were angled toward how it was affecting holiday makers. More serious emphasis was applied in the USA with the global travellers’ international newspaper the International Herald Tribune focusing heavily on SARS reports throughout April. By comparison, however, European newspapers such as Le Monde, Le Figaro, De Volksrant, Die Welt and Die Sueddeutsche Zeitung devoted less space to the outbreak. As the Iraq War reached a conclusion with the claimed declaration of victory just prior to the last week in April, the US and UK media shifted focus to the new global issue of SARS.
Whatever the angle adopted by the media, panic and alarm were present in full doses. Mildly affected regions were not differentiated from the hot zones (The Sunday Times, 2003a), evident in a television report that portrayed similarly depressing situations in the Chongqing and Kunming regions of China (Mackie, 2003) – even though Kunming was SARS free. Such reportage fuelled claims that the global media was not interested in accuracy but rather sensationalism in the pursuit of commercial objectives (McKercher, 2003). At the height of the outbreak, SARS had spread to numerous destinations (Figure 75), with the reporting of new cases fluctuating as destinations varied in terms of gaining control over the disease. Media reports increased their focus on the impact of SARS on various tourism industry sectors including events and
business tourism. Further, although China was seen as the epicentre of the crisis, the impacts on destinations outside of China were now being reported with equal if not greater attention. *The Economist* (2003b) reported in late April 2003 that hotel occupancy levels in Hong Kong were below 10% and other media carried reports from the Hong Kong Restaurant Association and the Travel Industry Council that 5000 restaurants could go out of business and 300 Hong Kong travel agents would be bankrupted (McKercher, 2003).

Despite authorities appearing to be winning the battle, the media vigilance continued and in May 2003 the US Health Secretary publicly stated that people were likely to die from SARS in Europe and the USA later that year – even though no SARS deaths had been recorded in either region to date. Questioned by reporters as to how certain he was, the US official said there were indications that SARS would not go away but rather come back in all or a lot of continents (Jang, 2003). He observed that enough people were still travelling to make the spread of SARS inevitable and that the public could assume someone would pick it up and bring it back. US travel advisories remained in place but the Health Secretary apologised to the airlines, saying that “my job is to protect the public health of Americans,” adding that, ultimately, efforts to prevent the spread of SARS would benefit airlines with people ultimately able to travel safely (Jang, 2003). His final message was that the US would not hesitate to add more countries to the travel advisory warning list.

A study of online news treatment (*Figure 76*) of the crisis shows the majority of sites blended global reporting with local reporting. In the worst hit regions, “online news
media were in crisis mode and engaged in a kind of traumatic reporting”, however the news sites in the USA and the UK had a global appeal to online users and “informed the world about the global development of the epidemic and imposed international pressure on China” (Lee, 2005). Lee found the online news media “played an excellent complimentary role to television and radio” in functions of surveillance, interpretation, social linkage, education and entertainment (human interest). He concludes that during the SARS outbreak the online news media were “rooted in the local but facing the global” in the breadth of coverage (Ibid.).

The Sunday Times (2003a) reported effects on events, namely the cancellation of an Elton John concert in Toronto and a Craig David concert in Singapore and other Southeast Asian states. The cancellation and postponement of sports events also made news, as did the International Olympic Committee’s decision to postpone the May launch of the 2008 Beijing Olympics marketing campaign and logo. The Sunday Telegraph (2003) reported the cancellation of a number of trade fairs and mentioned the poor numbers at fairs that did proceed, highlighting the eminent China Export Commodities Fair in Guangzhou (Canton Trade Fair) attracting only one-third of expected attendance.
Figure 76: Just as the impacts reached out to the entire world, so too did the media, with packages available in numerous outlets (CNN, 2003b; Canadian Broadcasting Corporation [CBC] News Canada, 2003b; SMH, 2003c).

Costs of the downturn in tourism also made world headlines: The Economist (2003b) reported the negative impact on Canada’s economic growth; The Times (2003) reported Hong Kong’s forecast for growth to be zero and the cost to Australia of SARS to be in terms of millions of dollars; and the BBC (2003a) ran Asian Development Bank reports predicting the cost of SARS could be up to US$20 million to Asia countries. By the end of April 2003, after more than 4500 cases of SARS had been reported in 25 countries and with 300 deaths so far recorded (International Travel Insurance Journal [ITIJ],
2003), it appeared that the outbreak had reached its peak and a few weeks into May the spread of disease showed signs of being brought under control (Pine & McKercher, 2004).

The power of the media had revealed itself at an early stage of the crisis when, by late February 2003, amidst mounting public concern and media interest, China changed its stance and allowed WHO staff access to work in affected areas (Mason et al., 2005). Recognising that their own systems had prevented an accurate assessment of the crisis and that as a consequence foreign assistance was needed to combat the outbreak, the Chinese authorities went on to use the international media to focus attention on their plight. This more open approach demonstrated a new level of pro-activity by Chinese authorities and proved a turning point.

Singapore’s response to SARS was swift and decisive in implementing scanning procedures and quarantine measures. The Singapore Tourist Board [STB] was commended by both general media and specialist travel media for adopting a number of precautionary measures including establishing a SARS taskforce, collaboration with the Ministry of Health to produce response guidelines, informing local industry, and maintaining a SARS website with up-to-date information. At the same time however, Western media criticised Singapore measures relating to detection and prevention as infringing on human rights and consequently opened up debate on civil liberties (Mason et al., 2005). Despite its vigilance, Singapore was dealt a severe blow in May one day ahead of being declared SARS-free when a new case was found. The inability to rid the
island state of the disease was having a considerable impact on a small population highly dependent on tourism (Jang, 2003).

In the Philippines, the Department of Health [DOH] issued guidelines for media and advertisers to enhance publishing effectiveness in dealing with the complicated issues surrounding the crisis. “While sensationalism might attract public attention in the short term…it can cause many unwanted problems” (DOH, n.d.) it said, noting that the “blown up picture of the SARS epidemic here” had resulted in its overseas workers being banned from Libya and “our tourism has declined markedly”.

A contentious stage of the crisis had been reached with an unprecedented move by the WHO to issue a global health alert on 15 March, 2003: “This syndrome, SARS, is now a worldwide health threat,” said the agency’s director general in the emergency travel advisory. “The world needs to work together to find its cause, cure the sick, and stop its spread” (WHO, 2003b). The primary aim of the alert was to warn travellers and provide information to doctors and medical services. While the release was necessary, the WHO faced the dilemma of needing to use global media to disseminate messages about SARS and travel but being unable to control the tone or precise nature of subsequent media treatment. The various ways that the media reported the WHO’s messages contributed to panic, especially in tourism.

**DON'T GO TO TORONTO WARN SARS EXPERTS**


*Figure 77: The travel advisories by the WHO reached international audiences (CBC News Canada, 2003a)*
Just as the WHO used the media to talk to the international community, the community used the media to strike back at the WHO. Canadians were outraged when, in April 2003, the WHO officially advised people not to visit Toronto (Figure 77), putting it on the same footing as Beijing although it was seen to be on the way to recovery. The Mayor of Toronto appeared on local and national television denouncing the WHO’s decision and attempting to allay potential tourists’ fears, with industry joining the campaign against advice that was deemed “regrettable” by the Guild of Business Travel Agents (Travel Trade Gazette [TTG], 2003).

The media were also brought into the fray. A former President of the Travel Media Association of Canada said the tourism industry had been harmed by media “coverage in the USA and overseas when sound-bites are used on radio and TV, and ill-informed print reporters look at sensationalist words or exaggerated angles” (Appelbe, 2003). As Appelbe reported on the Cybercast News Service [CNS] CNSNews website (2003), another commentator noted that "Toronto [in the eyes of the foreign media] seems to have replaced the war in Iraq – CNN was at Union [train] Station earlier this week – that is unheard of here," while the New York Post headline “Uh-oh, Canada” was featured under the heading “Toronto the Bad” in the Toronto Star. The reaction from Canada highlighted the stand-off between the tourism industry and the WHO but also was indicative of panic surrounding the impact of the crisis on the tourism industry and economy at large (Figure 78).
The “delicate relationship” between governments and the WHO was also obvious (Mason et al., 2005). While some viewed the WHO positively in light of it being responsible for opening up communications with the Chinese, others criticised the organisation for the detrimental effect of its actions on industry, for wasting resources and failing to address the real issues that governments were facing (The Sunday Telegraph, 2003). Tourism industry leaders weighed in to the media circus, suggesting that travel advisories – which had great influence on travel intentions – were being used as political footballs by national governments (Mason et al., 2005). The controversy surrounding the relationship between the WHO and affected countries culminated in a call – and subsequent debate – by individuals, politicians and the media for extension of the powers of WHO staff to access crisis sites and be responsible for coordinating activities to ensure politically independent reporting procedures. Tourism leaders also offered advice to the media, with the peak regional body PATA [Pacific Asia Travel Association] calling for “accurate, restrained and sensible travel advice and media reporting” and urging all media outlets covering the SARS story to “be as geographically specific as possible, and not make alarmist general statements about the region” (PATA, 2003b).
Over the course of May 2003, new cases in Beijing – an original hot zone and the hardest hit area in the world – plummeted from over 100 a day to single digits. However, WHO officials remained sceptical about the decline in cases, sharing with the media their continuing doubts about the collection of data and claiming China continued to have a credibility problem (Goh, 2003). US health officials countered the claim, reporting they had seen no evidence of unreported cases while working in China. Despite the increasingly positive outlook, an international symposium on SARS involving health representatives from ASEAN and other major countries provided a forum for the Chinese Executive Vice-Minister for Health to declare that the fight against SARS was far from over with ongoing vigilance and prevention initiatives crucial (Goh, 2003).

The positive emerging trend gave the media and the tourism industry the chance to look beyond SARS, with reports that the focus was “Now To Woo Back Tourists” (Rekhi, 2003). Asian destinations were teaming up to regain business with low fares, discounts, special festivals and other enticing offers. In response to the damage done to Asia’s brand image, and in an effort to put together a global public relations campaign to “get the right message across”, several initiatives were launched, including a promotional campaign from tourism industry giants PATA and International Air Transport Association [IATA], industry players across Asia-Pacific working together and the national campaigns of Hong Kong, Malaysia and Singapore being linked. Such initiatives were tailored to correct perceptions generated through the media during the crisis of disparate approaches to handling the damage to tourism in which some countries were quick to act and others too slow.
By June, the number of SARS patients reported in the outbreak epicentre of China had fallen below 100 (AP, 2003). The *People’s Daily* reported the government was ready to lift a ban on travel within China, originally imposed to prevent an outbreak in regions deemed not able to respond adequately to an outbreak (Ibid.). Vietnam had become the first country to stop local transmission of SARS (WHO, 2003c) and gradually other countries were declared SARS-free. A minor resurgence of the disease occurred in Toronto in June, but by early July 2003, reports of new cases were only coming from China (BBC, 2003b). At this point, intense public interest gradually declined as SARS appeared to be losing momentum as an issue and the cessation of the spread to other countries saw international media attention wane (Mason et al., 2005).

It has been suggested that the media played a role in the SARS crisis by amplifying a largely containable, localised problem into a major global crisis during which it was often difficult to separate fact from media hyperbole (McKercher, 2003; Mason et al., 2005). However, the combined power of the global media also contributed to the SARS control campaign by pressuring governments to cooperate, and subsequent outbreaks in China in 2004 were reported more quickly. The lack of factual information regarding the disease, leading to delays in communication of the situation, created an environment where estimations, and exaggerations, were allowed to circulate through the media. The media were perceived to contribute to the creation of a climate of panic and fear, with limited information available to counter such perceptions. In this climate, consumer confidence in the global tourism industry suffered drastically.
The Asia Development Bank [ADB] assessed the outbreak as a threat to short-term growth prospects in Asia that, although serious, would cause only a temporary shock to economic growth (Fan, 2003). It exerted a disproportionately large psychological impact, Fan observed, in relation to relatively low death rates, but its pronounced impact could be attributed, in part, to costless and rapid transmission of information due to modern media technologies, acknowledging there had been, perhaps, a degree of overreaction (Ibid.).

A7.5.2. Government/Authority Actions

There was widespread belief that the challenges being faced by tourism worldwide were the result of the reactions by governments to the perceived threat of the disease as opposed to its medical impacts, with overreaction, uncoordination and misguided responses cited (McKercher & Chon, 2004). Conversely, the actions of government were seen to be of benefit in some countries, primarily in terms of the swift implementation of eradication measures, although this perception was more prevalent in countries where the government was in strong control.

Regardless of the system and style of government, it was universally accepted that authorities were faced with dual and at times conflicting tasks of combating the disease and protecting the tourism industry (Henderson, 2003). However, several governments, fearing prolonged economic downturns, prioritised eradication of the disease at the expense of industry protection. Restrictions on movements within countries were both a core prevention measure and a tourism impact and were compounded by the
simultaneous actions of other governments in issuing advisories warning against travel and implementing stringent controls on visitors.

Tourists travelling from affected areas to Thailand were forced to wear face masks and to stay in their hotel for the first 10 days of the visit with non-compliance punishable by fines and jail (Henderson, 2003; McKercher & Chon, 2004). In Hong Kong, the government invoked a law dating back to colonial days and moved residents to a camp to control the spread of the disease (Alcantara, 2003c). Authorities in Taiwan and Singapore required anyone returning from a SARS infected country to be quarantined for a 14 day period (McKercher & Chon, 2004). Malaysian officials enacted travel bans on all tourists from SARS infected countries while a number of unaffected cities in China issued outright bans of a similar nature (Dombey, 2003; McKercher & Chon, 2004). Despite a raft of individual measures, governments were seen to quickly arrange methods of international cooperation to deal with the crisis and, with key political leaders gathered to combat a global epidemic, these meetings would attract considerable international media coverage (Henderson, 2003). This kind of positive action did not negate the tourism industry belief that government responses were detrimental to the industry.

The authority to receive the brunt of the blame was the WHO which, while earning public praise for its efforts to control the disease, was perceived to be “instrumental in triggering the almost complete eradication of tourism in Asia” (McKercher & Chon, 2004, p. 717). On March 15, 2003, the unprecedented step by the WHO to issue a “general travel advisory” as well as individual advisories against specific regions of
Hong Kong, China, Taiwan and Toronto was seen to set off a chain reaction of responses from individual governments, the collation of which effectively closed borders and disrupted tourism flows (Zeng et al., 2005; Mason et al., 2005).

**A7.5.3. Tourism Industry Impact and Responses**

The impacts of SARS stretched across the world with many countries dealt sharp reductions in tourism flows and tourist activity. General trends included immediate declines in inbound and outbound tourism activity due to fear of catching SARS when flying and declines in domestic activity as people chose to stay indoors amidst the uncertainty and fear. The reduction of movements led to many knock-on effects including significant decreases in hotel occupancy rates, the cancellation of events, poor attendances at attractions and reduced retail sales. The magnitude of these impacts severely threatened the livelihoods of operators, especially the abundance of small scale operations involved in the industry throughout Asia.

**A7.5.4. Tourism - Aviation**

The air travel sector, already suffering from post September 11 and the 2003 Iraq War, was the most immediately affected, with flight seen as facilitating the diffusion of the disease (*Figure 79*). Around the world, reports circulated of decreased bookings, suspension and cancellation of services, financial losses, salary reductions, job losses and capital expenditure delays (Pine & McKercher, 2004, p. 142). In late April 2003, *The Observer’s* Travel Supplement in the UK reported that British Airways was
offering refunds in relation to some flights to China with travel operators “rushing to get customers out of China” and the Federation of Tour Operators suspending trips to affected areas (Templeton, 2003a). Hong Kong-based carrier Cathay Pacific responded to fears that SARS was spread through air travel by placing newspaper advertisements in which it pledged to do “everything in its power to safeguard the health of passengers and staff” (Pine and McKercher, 2004) but patronage continued to plummet. The Hong Kong stock market was especially affected with reports in late April estimating airlines Dragonair and Cathay Pacific had lost two-thirds of their business (The Economist, 2003a). Singapore Airlines the same month cut 60 of its services because of fears over SARS and Qantas reduced international flights by up to 20 percent (Cole, 2003).

The UK Independent newspaper reported in May that as a result of lost traffic, Cathay Pacific was cancelling 50 percent of flights and Dragonair was grounding almost half of its aircraft (Becker, 2003). Cathay Pacific spokesman David Bell, reacting to the cut in flights between Hong Kong and Australia, was quoted as saying that “certainly SARS is having a major impact but it is also possible there is some impact from the war in Iraq. It is difficult to know exactly which is which” (Cole, 2003). Either way, the aviation sector was suffering dramatically. As well as dealing with the effects on their
businesses’ bottom lines, airlines also had to implement stringent measures regarding the cleaning and screening of passengers in accordance with WHO guidelines.

A7.5.5. Tourism – Destinations

International tourism to China, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Vietnam declined more than 50 percent in the first quarter of 2003 (Henderson & Ng, 2004). Destinations where SARS cases were present would suffer similar downturns in tourism activity. The International Labour Organisation calculated that countries where SARS had been present could see reductions of 30 percent in travel and tourism employment while neighbouring destinations were set to forfeit 15 percent. Infection control took precedence although in some destinations, such as Singapore, awareness of the economic havoc being wrought by SARS was revealed in official statements and pledges to help the tourism industry.

A7.5.6. Tourism – SARS Affected Destinations

A7.5.6a. China

During the initial stage of the SARS epidemic in China, the greatest impact on tourism was felt in southern areas. In March 2003, the World Travel and Tourism Council [WTTC] forecast that the effects of the crisis would be exacerbated by uncertainty surrounding the ongoing USA-led war on Iraq, and would lead to bigger losses (Dombey, 2003). Tourism income in China was anticipated to fall by US$16.90 billion (Hai et al., 2003). Coinciding with the peak tourism season in China, tourism businesses
would suffer significant losses as a result of SARS with smaller operators in the industry possessing no capacity to withstand the downturn and consequently their futures were severely jeopardised (Zeng et al., 2005). The loss of businesses, especially small operators, seriously affected individual, family and community well-being. The observation that “unlike other commercial products, reduction in tourism sales is absolute and not recoverable” foretold of the hardship that would continue for many (Ibid.). Immediate impacts were felt by the tourism industry and in April travel agencies throughout the country ceased organising international tourism activity, with arrivals reaching their lowest point in May and outbound tourism almost ceasing altogether (Ibid.).

The downturn in travel was seen to be the result of a combination of internal motivation driven by fear as well as external compulsory measures and travel bans (Wen et al., 2005). However, it would not be until the end of April, particularly in response to the Government’s announcement that the weeklong national holiday in May would be cancelled, that a substantial fear of SARS would spread throughout the country and affect other tourism regions (Zeng et al., 2005). Once this occurred, public confidence in tourism diminished rapidly. In China, the May Day holiday (May 1-7) was one of three week-long holidays throughout the year and usually accounted for 40 percent of the total annual revenue of most major tourism agencies. However, officials cancelled the holiday to avoid the mass movement of people despite the major losses it would inflict on tourism. Any hopes tourism had of solid domestic activity off-setting international losses diminished (Dombey, 2003). Research conducted by the Office of Beijing Youth Press in 2003 into the effects of SARS on tourism activity in the major
cities of Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou found that almost 50 percent of interviewees had cancelled travel because of SARS, with the majority indicating that they intended travelling domestically to other provinces (Zeng et al., 2005).

In Guangdong, where the first SARS case was reported, more than half of inbound tour groups were cancelled while outbound tourism dropped by 80 percent. These reductions caused hotel occupancy rates to drop to as low as 10 percent (Dombey, 2003). Outbound tourism was also affected by the actions of other markets with countries taking measures to restrict entry to Chinese citizens. In June 2003, 126 countries had implemented such measures (Ministry of Foreign Affairs of China [MoFAC], 2003). Moves by governments to enforce restrictions on visiting Chinese, and the negative perception of these moves, also had wider ramifications for foreign investment and were a significant risk to overall economic policy (Dombey, 2003) as well as jeopardising the business tourism sector. Domestically, the situation continued to worsen, spreading beyond tourism-related industries and causing business to almost shut down.

The climate offered little to stimulate enthusiasm in travel or tourist activity with images of empty entertainment and recreation areas, closed offices, and masks and disinfectant products out of stock doing little to reassure the public. Throughout China, the government made the decision to close many attractions and rural areas based on the belief that, as those areas had poor epidemic controls, a shutdown was the only way to prevent an outbreak that ultimately could not be handled. China’s National Tourism Administration [CNTA], in collaboration with the Ministry of Health, issued procedures
guidelines for all tourism industry businesses for the prevention of the virus, with all measures to be implemented immediately (CNTA, 2003).

The CNTA continued to act as a source of information, advising travellers to avoid SARS-affected areas and crowded indoor activities and suggesting that people stay indoors and undertake keep-fit exercises. Tourists were also recommended to stay away from rural areas and tours to and from affected areas were banned (Dombey, 2003). Travel agencies began to focus on anti-SARS campaigns instead of tourism promotion campaigns with inspections conducted by the CNTA to assess measures.

In June 2003, as the crisis was ending, the Chinese Ministry of Labour and Social Guaranteeing reported that SARS would cause the loss of 1.27 million jobs and have greater impacts on employment than on economic growth, with those most affected being in the tourism industry (Zeng et al., 2005).

A7.5.6b. Hong Kong

Hong Kong was a major “hot zone” and the destination was indelibly linked to the disease due to the high media coverage of its spread by a hotel guest after which the outbreak escalated into a global epidemic. The performance of Hong Kong’s tourism industry declined as the number of cases of SARS in the territory increased, suggesting a correlation between the perception of the destination as a major SARS zone and reluctance to travel. A significant inbound market decline of 50 percent, together with plunging outbound bookings to levels 80 percent below the previous year, saw Hong
Kong’s tourism industry grind close to a halt. Conventions were cancelled, companies called off business trips and Hong Kong was left promoting local tourism in an attempt to offset the loss of travellers from mainland China and overseas (Pine & McKercher, 2004).

The impact led industry operators to undertake a raft of cost-cutting measures including operational reviews and training, asking staff to take holidays or unpaid leave, cancelling promotional campaigns to reduce expenditure, closing parts of the business (e.g. hotel floors) and asking banks and government for financial assistance (Ibid.). Yet despite these attempts, some tourism businesses were put up for sale.

**A7.5.6c. Singapore**

Singapore became another SARS hot zone, however within weeks of the detection of the disease’s presence in the country, swift control and prevention measures (*Figure 80*) had been enacted (Henderson, 2003). Overseas visitors who continued to arrive in Singapore during the epidemic were hailed by the media, who quoted their favourable opinions about personal safety and comfort in a bid to bolster the Singapore’s image.

*Figure 80:*

*Passengers arriving from Singapore pass through a quarantine check at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport in Manila, April 2003 (SMH, 2003a).*
However, the island-state’s tourism industry could not escape the impacts of the crisis. The aviation sector suspended or cancelled services, released trainees and asked staff to take unpaid leave (Henderson, 2003.). To assist travellers, SARS information was added to corporate websites and ticketing restrictions were relaxed. The Star Cruises ship line decided to relocate all vessels to Australia to continue operations while the SARS crisis persisted, a positive move for the Australian tourism industry where the business flourished (Emerson, 2003).

**A7.5.6d. Canada**

The war in Iraq and the outbreak of SARS dealt a double blow to the Canadian tourism industry. Sharp drops in inbound and outbound passenger movements (Canadian Press Agency, 2003a) were compounded by the war starting in Iraq on March 19 just as SARS was emerging as a threat. Although not impacted to the same magnitude as some Asian destinations, Toronto emerged as the western hot spot of SARS and it could be argued that the detection of SARS in Canada shifted the media focus from an Asian crisis to a global crisis (*Figure 81*). Ordinarily perceived as a safe destination, Toronto was now portrayed as dangerous and off limits (Mason et al., 2005).

*Figure 81:*
A man wearing a protective mask waits for the start of the Toronto Blue Jays and New York Yankees American League baseball season opener in Toronto *(SMH, 2003f).*
Direct effects on tourism in addition to the fall in visitor numbers included empty public places such as cinemas and reduced restaurant patronage, particularly severe in Chinatown (Mason et al., 2005). The SARS crisis resulted in second quarter tourism spending experiencing its largest quarterly decline since Statistics Canada began collecting data in 1986 (Canadian Press Agency, 2003b) predominantly as a result of the decline in numbers of international visitors. Businesses were forced to adjust operations, including staff levels, to sustain the impact. The WHO travel warning against Toronto on 23 April, 2003 was a demoralising event as the city was only days away from beating the disease; the warning hindered the start of the city’s recovery and continued to adversely affect visitor numbers (Canadian Press Agency, 2003a; ETN, 2003b).

A7.5.7. Tourism – SARS Unaffected Destinations

Cases of SARS were reported in 30 countries across the world (WHO, 2003c), however the impacts of the crisis were not restricted to affected areas. The situation in Australia is an example of how the SARS collateral damage was manifest in a non-effected country. Australia’s international tourism industry was declared in crisis as a result of the dual impact of the Iraq war and SARS (Cole, 2003). There were slight benefits during the crisis to countries that remained unaffected, particularly in terms of retaining a safe image, however the focus on travel as contributing to the risk of spreading the disease, and the consequent reluctance to travel, was detrimental to most tourism industries throughout the world. Unaffected areas were also plagued with media reports assessing the capacity to handle an outbreak of SARS should it occur. An Australian
headline declared “We are not ready for SARS outbreak” (Dayton, 2003) and, coupled with coverage of infection status, suspected cases and travel advisories, ensured that elements of panic and fear were just as present as in affected destinations.

The threat was visually compounded by frequent images of masked people, hospitals overflowing with infected patients, confused authorities and deserted destinations. During the crisis, promotion of domestic holidays was strong, although travel bargains did appear in the Australian press for international destinations such as New Zealand, London, Bali and Hawaii (The Weekend Australian, 2003). Ironically, one special during the crisis was for travel to Vietnam – an affected destination – but with the caveat that travel must occur prior to June. Yet, it was clear the tourism industry was not experiencing good times, reinforced by reports of businesses with no customers due to the decline in international arrivals (Emerson and Nason, 2003). Government recognition of the crisis manifested in support for marketing blitzes, however as observed by one tourism industry leader, “internationally, the industry couldn’t even market its way out… [with] operators wasting money on Asian markets” (Ibid.) and forced to simply wait for source markets to beat the outbreak. A pattern was widely observed though that smaller operators servicing independent travellers endured the crisis better than their larger colleagues who focused on package tour products (The Japan Times, 2003).

When the crisis appeared to be easing in May 2003, the Australian Tourism Commission [ATC] looked for means to rebuild consumer confidence to alleviate the hysteria that had developed (Creedy & Roberts, 2003). The Brisbane newspaper The
Courier Mail had focused on the hysteria in its “The Panic Pandemic” story which quoted a senior travel centre manager claiming the “whole SARS thing to be a media beat up” and blaming the WHO’s heavy-handedness for travel disruption (Owen, 2003). However, while it reported that, of the 200 million people travelling since the outbreak only five had contracted the virus, and that airport measures had resulted in cases found during transit dropping to zero, the accompanying images to the story were of masked Asians (Ibid.).

It is clear that the impacts of SARS were not restricted to those destinations with infected victims. Due mainly to the impact on travel movements, source markets that were SARS-free were not immune to the crisis and suffered downturn in activity as well. This meant that destinations, despite their responses, were largely unable to manage the SARS crisis on their own and were instead subject to being merely a piece of the puzzle, dependent on other destinations in their pursuit of recovery (Henderson & Ng, 2004). The tourism industry was also subject to the impacts of actions taken by governments and authorities, particularly the WHO given the central role it played in the crisis.

SARS delivered major impacts on tourism industry sectors worldwide. As downturns of a statistical nature continued, international travel became a less desirable activity with consumers not just altering travel plans but choosing not to travel at all (Mason et al., 2005) leading to considerably fewer movements, even during holiday seasons (The Times, 2003). In hindsight, the SARS crisis is evaluated as a short term and minor epidemic, despite international impressions that perceived otherwise (Zeng et al., 2005).
An important political dimension of the reaction to the SARS outbreak was evident, seen in relationships between organisations, the involvement of the WHO and in the isolated responses of individual countries (Mason et al., 2005). Travel advisories also played a pivotal role, at times appearing to be motivated by political reasons as opposed to risk, and, due to the attention they received and the conditions they imposed, having a significant impact on the actions and responses of other countries (Ibid.). As the crisis neared conclusion, economic impacts were evaluated, however the damage to destination image in affected areas was considered a much more difficult assessment and a cost that could take years to recover.

A7.6. End Phase: July 5, 2003

As cases dwindled, there was growing confidence that the war on SARS was being won. The end of the crisis for many countries was a declaration by the WHO that it was SARS-free thereby signalling an opportunity to return to normality and into a recovery phase. Vietnam – one of six hot zones – would be the first declared SARS-free on 28 April, 2003. For the remaining five hot zones, milestones fell as follows: Singapore – 31 May; Hong Kong - 23 June; Toronto – 2 July (originally removed on 14 May but put back on 26 May); China – 24 June; and Taiwan – 5 July (WHO, 2003c). With the removal of Taiwan, the WHO declared that SARS had been contained worldwide, with the chain of transmission broken. However, in their media release the WHO cautioned that SARS continued to threaten the world with people still hospitalised and undetected cases possible (WHO, 2003a). As at 5 July, the SARS outbreak had stretched to 30 countries, becoming deeply embedded in six, and resulted in a total of 8,437 cases with
It was difficult to find a tourism industry untouched by the crisis in terms of revenue or reputation. The World Travel and Tourism Council [WTTC] estimated that approximately three million tourism industry jobs were lost in the hot zones of China, Hong Kong, Singapore and Vietnam alone (McKercher and Chon, 2004). Countries around the world cautiously began to move on, cognisant of the threat of re-infection – as happened in Canada and China – and the uncertainty that would shadow recovery efforts. Media reports of sporadic outbreaks would continue as isolated cases appeared in Singapore, Taiwan and China, confirming the belief that SARS was not gone completely (Mason et al., 2005). Continued focus on SARS by the health profession – no cure had been found and there was still much to learn about the disease – also fuelled perceptions that the return of the disease was a probability not a possibility (Henderson and Ng, 2004).

### Table 11: WHO: SARS Cases

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date Reported</th>
<th>Cumulative cases(^1)</th>
<th>New cases</th>
<th>Deaths</th>
<th>Recovered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>31 March 2003</td>
<td>1,622</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 April 2003</td>
<td>5,663</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>372</td>
<td>2,470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 May 2003</td>
<td>8,360</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>764</td>
<td>5,264</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 June 2003</td>
<td>8,447</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>811</td>
<td>7,417</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 July 2003</td>
<td>8,437</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>813</td>
<td>7,452</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31 July 2003(^2)</td>
<td>8,098</td>
<td>n/a(^3)</td>
<td>744</td>
<td>n/a(^3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 August 2003</td>
<td>8,422</td>
<td>n/a(^3)</td>
<td>916</td>
<td>7,422</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


1. As SARS is a diagnosis of exclusion, the status of a reported case may change over time. This means that previously reported cases may be discarded after further investigation and follow-up. A decrease in the number of cumulative cases and discrepancies in differences between cumulative numbers of cases are attributed to the discarding of cases.
2. Calculated from September 2003 data.
3. N/A - Data not supplied by WHO.

In hindsight, the SARS crisis was a short term and minor epidemic, despite international impressions that perceived it as otherwise (Zeng et al., 2005). Significant impacts were felt by the tourism industry and these, together with the magnitude of perceptions of the crisis, dictated that significant recovery responses would be required. SARS affected tourism activity rapidly by reducing consumer confidence, but tourism was seen to recover quickly once the crisis had abated. Destinations implemented similar responses to manage the crisis and collaborated in their marketing efforts (Henderson, 2003) which were aggressive but limited by crisis-impaired financial resources depleted by the period of travel inactivity.

Media reports in June 2003 focused on the recovery and collaboration with Asian nations “pulling together celebrities, advertising gurus and anyone with the necessary brain power and charisma to market Asia as a SARS-safe tourism spot” (Rekhi, 2003). Individual governments supported recovery by offering loans to tourism operators and waiving taxes but there were exceptions. The resources needed to fund tourism recovery in Vietnam taxed the government’s resources; in Indonesia, the government was preoccupied with conflict issues in Aceh and the need to support tourism at the same time tested the finances (Ibid.). Conversely, other Asian countries that had plenty of support and were minimally affected by SARS – such as Japan, South Korea and Malaysia – moved ahead quickly with aggressive marketing activities in domestic and international markets.
In a June 2003 interview with ETurbo News [ETN], the Secretary General of the World Tourism Organisation [WTO], Francesco Frangialli, warned the negative impact on many destinations was greater than the terrorist attack on Bali and the impact on civil aviation more pronounced than that from the war in Iraq (Heyer, 2003). He said SARS, together with all of its media activities, was a completely unexpected event while terrorist threats are something that the public has learned to live with and adapt to. While observing it was difficult to predict when recovery would take place, especially when dealing with uncertainty and fear in source markets, Frangialli maintained that the industry proceeded with cautious optimism to restore consumer confidence. As for the media’s role in covering the SARS crisis, Frangialli said that “as much as SARS related media activities were exhaustive, we hope that the confidence will grow consequently with a decline in SARS media coverage” (Ibid.). He believed “the reality of the epidemic was compounded by intense coverage by the media, leading to a veritable wave in paranoia in certain tourism-generating markets” (Ibid.). However, he stopped short of apportioning complete blame to the media, citing the strong negative impact resulting from a combination of factors, including hesitancy to report all cases of SARS and the variety of reactions by decision-makers and potential travellers, which ranged from underestimation to overreaction. He said the media “should more critically approach the issue and not speak about SARS in Asia in general or with inappropriate exaggerations” and cooperate with industry to restore consumer confidence (Ibid.).

The sentiment was echoed by a columnist in the San Diego Union-Tribune (Lubrano, 2003) who, under the headline “SARS and the Media’s Herd Mentality”, said it was incumbent on the media to put the outbreak into perspective, which it was yet to do.
“While most front-page Union-Tribune articles about SARS have focused on the outbreak in Asia and in Toronto, there has not been a story that puts the threat of SARS into perspective,” the columnist wrote. “How does SARS compare to AIDS? Ebola? Influenza? Journalists need to report what is happening, especially in China where SARS was initially underreported and the epidemic was more widespread than initially acknowledged. But, perspective is sorely needed so San Diegans can determine just how much of a threat SARS really is” (Ibid.). Adding some balance, however, was a study of the print media response to SARS in New Zealand’s major daily newspaper (Wilson et al., 2004), which showed that official health spokespeople “were accurately quoted and that no technically incorrect information...was published” although “the newspaper sometimes used headlines...that could be considered alarming” (p. 2). The generation of perceived risk and dangers, and the media’s role in shaping these perceptions and attitudes, had to be countered in recovery efforts. The matter of travel advisories and their acute role in shaping both media and public perceptions was also an issue requiring attention. In addition image repair work was required in the wake of the role of international travel as a conduit for the spread of the disease, particularly with reference to demonstrating to the public the nature and extent of subsequent preventive measures to contain the disease.

In one of the first clear public signals of recovery, representatives from Asia-Pacific countries gathered in July 2003 for a conference on International Cooperation for Tourism Development under a New Paradigm. They issued a Hong Kong Declaration on the Revitalisation of the Asian Tourism Industry, pledging to reassure travellers of their safety and invite them to resume travel. The declaration called for enhanced
international coordination and monitoring systems and the promotion of crisis management plans adopting best practices. In addition, countries vowed to promote inter-governmental cooperation in addressing issues of travel advisories and facilitation of travel (Xinhua, 2003). The conference used its ensuing media coverage to promote recovery with a number of attendees taking the opportunity to launch new tourism packages (Xinhua, 2003). Tourism operators focused on marketing, with advertising and promotion complemented in many destinations by industry collaboration. Progress was measured through an upturn in room occupancy, revenue and reservations and a slowdown in the decline of tourist arrivals (Henderson & Ng, 2004). The experience of SARS as a crisis affecting multiple countries highlighted a need for international collaboration and coordination among tourism departments to develop effective responses (McKercher & Chon, 2004). The lack of coordination originally portrayed by governments had fuelled perceptions that SARS was an out-of-control epidemic and it was believed that collaborative responses to recovery could mitigate the perceptions as well as send out a strong message of a coordinated recovery.

A7.7.1. China

SARS wrought a raft of marketing changes on China’s tourism industry which targeted an increase in family and corporate groups and responded to the public’s preference for attractions and destinations involving minimal contact with people such as nature tourism (Cai, 2003). Wen et al.’s (2005) research into the impact of SARS on tourists, conducted immediately after the WHO’s ban was lifted, found that its greatest impact was on public awareness and concern for hygiene and safety. The research also found
that domestic activity was likely to recover faster than international activity, the latter requiring greater focus of efforts (Wen et al., 2005). Revitalisation of the industry was helped by a number of measures: government financial packages including tax rebates; financial contributions from the corporate sector with donations totalling approximately US$100 million; special promotions and packages; and, domestic and pan-Asian tourism boards collaboration on action plans for new travel products, cooperation with foreign countries and cities, and visitation programs for travel agencies and journalists (Dombey, 2003). The next national holiday week in October was targeted to spur the industry forward, with the domestic market looking to make up for the lost holiday in May. The number of people going on holiday was expected to be equal or greater than the entire European population, all leaving and coming back at the same time (Dombey, 2003). The week turned out to break all records and signalled the strongest possible recovery for China’s tourism (Zeng et al., 2005).

Post-crisis, China also implemented measures to create a far greater understanding of hygiene and health-related matters, including the denouncement of public habits such as spitting with teams of “sputum sweepers” deployed and fines implemented (Dombey, 2003). The Beijing government also established an emergency alert system should the virus reappear.

**A7.7.2. Hong Kong**

The Hong Kong Tourist Board [HKTB] began recovery efforts early, using the lifting of the ban on travel to Hong Kong to promote the WHO’s confidence in Hong Kong’s
high standards of health care and safety for visitors. The HKTB had already drawn up comeback plans in consultation with trade partners and many operators had created a “wealth of exciting offers to tempt travellers with enticing hot deals” (TWN, 2003b). The Hong Kong government had established similar plans for recovery, including a HK$1 billion package to rebuild its battered image and a HK$400 million tourism drive over the ensuing nine months (Pine and McKercher, 2004), with promotion of these plans (Figure 82) occurring before the crisis had ended (TWN, 2003a).

The HKTB launched new meetings, incentives, conventions and exhibitions [MICE] marketing campaigns (Figure 83) to refresh the territory’s reputation as a world leader in this market (TWN, 2003a) and “mega-famils” were scheduled for 2003 and 2004 for journalists and tourism operators from the USA, Australasia and European markets (Ibid.). Some of Hong Kong’s biggest firms launched Project Phoenix, targeted at high-end travellers and offering limited edition luxury goods from world-renowned manufacturers for sale only in Hong Kong (Pine and McKercher, 2004). The “Be my Guest” campaign, supported by Hong Kong Hotels Association [HKHA] members, offered discounts of up to 50 percent. Other key initiatives delivered included discounts, refurbishments and new products to demonstrate the superior quality of the destination, the promotion of a 52-strong event calendar for the remainder of the year and the targeted promotion of Hong Kong as a conference destination (TWN, 2003a).
Similar to China, Hong Kong’s tourism industry demonstrated quick recovery once the crisis was brought under control (Pine & McKercher, 2004). Tourist arrivals steadily rose but were still down on the previous year with hotels believing performance would remain under pressure for the second half of the year. Dragonair had gradually begun reinstating services in May and Cathay would restore 170 weekly scheduled services in June, taking its services to approximately 70 percent capacity.
A7.7.3. Singapore

The SARS delisting of Singapore was a turning point and the tourist board initiated a global recovery programme (Figure 84) to restore confidence through advertising, media and trade familiarisations, intensive joint promotion with industry partners, and worldwide marketing (Henderson, 2003). The domestic market was seen as a critical element of recovery. The Singapore Ministry of Trade and Industry allocated a US$130m package to recovery efforts with measures including tax and rental rebates for accommodation and transport operators, bridging loans for tourism-related businesses and training grants. The Civil Aviation Authority also announced financial incentives to encourage air carriers to increase passenger loads. As in other Asian destinations, Singapore’s recovery was rapid and complete by the end of 2003. Initially, recovery efforts were observed to be impacted by ongoing SARS issues elsewhere in the world, and the industry adopted a “pre-event stance of intensified vigilance” (Henderson & Ng, 2004).

Figure 84: “Singapore Roars!” campaign creative (STB, 2003)
A7.7.4. Canada

Toronto authorities were vocal through the media during the SARS crisis and sought a quick recovery. As SARS came under control, Canadian research on American travel trends indicated that while SARS had affected American perceptions of Canada as a safe destination, the likelihood of Americans travelling to Canada had not been significantly affected, signalling the possible quick restoration of a key market (National Family Opinion - Plog Research Incorporated [NFO/Plog], 2003). Other research indicated that Canada’s restoration of its image as a safe destination was fairly rapid, with a Tourism Impact Survey in 2003 ranking Canada as a safe place compared to other destinations (IBM, 2003).

A7.7.5. Regional

Across Southeast Asia, travel companies bombarded customers with “never before” packages once SARS travel advisories were removed (Gupta, 2003). Some destinations, such as India, found that tourist traffic to Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia that had decreased during the SARS scare, had been diverted to destinations like Dubai, Sri Lanka and Mauritius, as well as domestically. To re-attract visitors, initiatives were launched such as that by the Department of Tourism in the Philippines, to grant cash incentives as part of a visa promotion targeted at bringing back foreign passport holders with Filipino ancestry (TWN, 2003c), an initiative that led to an especially large increase in Chinese visitors (ETN, 2004).
A7.8. Epilogue: 2004 →

On March 18, 2004, the WTTC chose the Hong Kong Tourism Symposium to release its 2004 forecast for China, Hong Kong and Macau tourism and travel. It predicted a strong return to growth after SARS “produced perhaps the most dramatic non-conflict losses of travel and tourism business witnessed in any economy in recent years” and predicted that “after several years of weak economy, the terrorism events of 9/11, the war in Iraq and the SARS outbreak, we’re expecting the pent up international demand to join the exploding mainland traffic to provide a much needed boost to the industry and the economy” (TWN, 2004).

SARS clearly remained an industry concern, no doubt influenced by the uncertainty that still surrounded the disease (Alcantara, 2003b) but there was certainty that SARS had delivered many lessons. According to WTO head Frangialli, lessons to be learned from SARS included a need for active communication and information sharing. While the hysteria generated had done great damage, this could have been minimised by alertness and communication, imperatives for the tourism industry going forward given the volatility of the industry and its susceptibility to affects of unpredictable situations (Heyer, 2003).

The World Tourism Organisation responded to the media treatment of SARS by staging a special conference in 2004 to focus on tourism communications at which it called on the media to play “a responsible role in covering events which can impact heavily on the livelihood of travel destinations and their local populations” (WTO, 2004).
conference heard from a Hong Kong government economic development representative who said SARS had shown the territory’s need for strong leadership, speaking with one voice and liaison with all groups of the community to achieve effective communications. Writing at the end of 2003, Alcantara (2003b) observed that “it is hard to believe that, six months ago, SARS was as ubiquitous as news can come.” He said the tourism industry “could have done without the unprecedented travel advisory that the World Health Organisation issued, the media circus that followed, and the loss in revenue, which to this day are still not back to pre-SARS level” (Ibid.). Regarding the role of the media, though, he offered simple advice: “Those who complain about the media’s sensational take on news stories should be cognisant of the simple logic – if precise information is available, the media wouldn’t have to speculate” (Ibid.).

As a result of SARS, the media focus on infectious diseases and the ease of their spread in an era of globalisation had been sharpened. Diseases such as avian influenza continue to appear, although one is yet to emerge on a scale similar to SARS. These are regularly touted in the media as global threats and as such are likely to impact on tourism which now has the lessons learned from SARS to develop response mechanisms (Henderson & Ng, 2004). Today, the WHO recommends that SARS can be controlled by the implementation of simple and non-invasive measures – seen by many commentators as at odds with the panic that was generated in the wake of the 2003 outbreak. Years on from the SARS outbreak, the disease is still under the watchful eye of the WHO and remains the subject of academic and scientific exploration. Despite this focus, it is still thought that uncertainty – the genesis of fear and panic – remains (Mason et al., 2005). This was exemplified with the outbreak in 2009 of the global pandemic of swine flu.
A7.9. Summary

The SARS outbreak in 2003 was a dormant crisis which, once awoken, remained an invisible threat. At the time the outbreak was officially recognised, not much was known – or admitted – about the crisis. It would be more than a month until information flows spread as rapidly as the disease itself. Yet much was still unknown about this invisible threat and the crisis that was emerging across many countries. The ongoing revelation of the true situation, coupled with the uncertainty shrouding responses, led to a chaotic atmosphere infusing world travel. Panic, fear and uncertainty pervaded the public psyche as people sought answers from those who had none. The complex network of stakeholders brought into the fray due to the international scope of the crisis and their lack of knowledge and answers initially compounded these conditions. For tourism, the perceived role of the industry as a vector for the disease heightened the impact on the industry. All the while, the media again played a central role in creating and circulating stories based on what information was available.

The main SARS international media attention period was between March and May 2003, the height of the outbreak. Eventually described by some as a media circus, coverage of the crisis was initially characterised by limited information, disjointed and confusing responses from stakeholders in positions of leadership and reluctant spokespeople. Amidst the complex tapestry of governments, institutions and industry, the World Health Organisation emerged to play a central and controlling role. Eventual actions of individual government and industries would demonstrate seriousness and pro-
active intentions and media reports increased their focus on the impact of SARS on various tourism industry sectors.

Media coverage gathered momentum as the crisis developed despite being hampered by a slow release of expert and official information. The media existed as one of the few early sources of information available to international audiences however it was concurrently blamed for escalating the perception of fear and panic and contributing to the stigmatization of destinations. The pivotal and influential role of the media is apparent, even in the early phases of the crisis when awareness and information was lacking. The influence of other external stakeholders was also felt by tourism. Travel advisories restricted movement and would prove to be a major obstacle in destination recovery, with the tourism industry largely powerless to alter these decisions of external governments. Certain destinations became synonymous with the crisis and the stigma of this association would prove an obstacle in its own right long after the outbreak of the disease had abated.

In summary, the impacts of SARS stretched across the world with many countries experiencing sharp reductions in tourism flows and tourist activity. The aviation industry was dealt a particularly rapid blow given its prominent role in transporting potentially infected travellers. Destinations with cases of SARS within their borders were subject to the fear and regulations imposed by the crisis. However, countries without cases of SARS did not escape unscathed and were affected by loss of travel activity amid health concerns stemming from what travel movements remained. Travel
advisories were a real issue of contention between authorities, governments and the tourism industry and at one stage were labelled “political footballs”.

Government and tourism authorities were vocal during the SARS crisis, especially through the media, and sought a quick recovery. However, particularly in the case of SARS hotspots, the performance of the tourism industry declined as the number of cases of SARS increased, suggesting a correlation between the perception of the destination as a major SARS zone and the reluctance to travel. The pursuit of recovery was therefore largely dependent on a destination’s status as a SARS zone. Once recovery could be pursued, numerous parties assisted recovery efforts. The war in Iraq and the outbreak of SARS dealt a double blow to the global tourism industry, already struggling in the wake of crises such as September 11, 2001 and the Bali bombings.

SARS can be characterised as a global crisis, hindered by slow release of information and a lack of communication between the numerous authorities involved in dealing with the crisis. Once the true extent of the crisis was known, or rather revealed, numerous actions were taken in attempt to contain the crisis including prevention and control groups, screening of travellers and implementation of reporting systems. However, true recovery hinged on eradicating the disease as opposed to restoring an image of safety and many destinations were left to wait for this to happen before recovery efforts could be pursued effectively. The SARS outbreak affected tourism activity rapidly but tourism was seen to recover quickly once the crisis had abated. As for the media’s role in covering the SARS crisis, the tourism industry saw that a decline in media coverage of
the crisis, in line with a decline in the outbreak, aided the restoration of consumer confidence.
## Appendix 8: Table of Data from Case Study #4 – SARS, 2003

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PHASE OF CRISIS</th>
<th>DATA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pre-Crisis</strong></td>
<td><strong>PROFILE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Strong performance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Strong potential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Broad market appeal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Image-building as safe, cosmopolitan and with distinctive cultural appeal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Economy contribution recognised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>PRECEDENT</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Series of crises endured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>CONDITION</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Challenged by strong competitors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Disparate approaches to operation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Outbreak</strong></td>
<td><strong>NOTICE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Gradual build-up then sudden announcement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>PRECEDENT</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>EXTENT</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Worldwide impact (hot zones; trans-national)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Immediate link to tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>CONDITION</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Lack of clarity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Lack of knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Unanswered questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Uncertainty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Anxiety</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Drastic situation change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>MEDIA – COVERAGE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- None / minimal coverage to increasing cases</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>MEDIA - PERCEPTION</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>RESPONSE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Slow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Secrecy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Sinister motivations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Public actions of government demonstrated seriousness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Public actions of government demonstrated pro-active approach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Consolidation</strong></td>
<td><strong>NOTICE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Reality contradicted official message</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>PRECEDENT</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Nil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>EXTENT</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• Epidemic
  • Global
  • Global anxiety
  • Tourism recognised as vector
  • Tourism linked to crisis directly
  • Quickly identified as crisis
  • invisible

CONDITION
• Unknown
• Fear
• Uncertainty
• ‘Ground Zero’ mentality

MEDIA – COVERAGE
• Global (except China)
• China - little mention
• Gathered momentum with escalation
• General news
• Medical reports
• Stories of heroism
• Stigmatic publicity
• Continued to link disease with travel
• Slow release of knowing what had happened

MEDIA – PERCEPTION
• Escalated the perception of fear and panic

RESPONSE
• Initially disjointed (govt and tourism)
• Confusing (govt and tourism)
• Official line (Beijing) was of normal, safe, tourism is safe, tourism activities were continuing, under control
• WHO took a key role
• Travel advisories implemented – movements restricted
• Travel cover withdrawn

Acceleration

NOTICE
Nil

PRECEDENT
Nil

EXTENT
• Numerous destinations / Global
• Epicentre (China)
• Fluctuating
• Resurgence
• Interest declined as momentum lost
• Travel linked to diffusion
• Destinations linked to disease
• Image damaged, assessment difficult
• Global tourism impact
• Short term future for tourism unclear
• Uncertainty - fear

CONDITION
• Limited number of people possessing knowledge
• Absence of verifiable information
• Lack of factual information
• Lack of clarity
• Delays in communication
- Estimations and exaggerations allowed to circulate
- Iraq war initially took precedence
- Alarm
- Panic
- Widespread fears of infection
- Coincided with peak tourism season
- Despair about future safety and security
- No one could forecast change/end

**MEDIA – COVERAGE**

**HOW**
- Global – given spread
- Vigilant
- Saturation
- Informed
- Defining, frequent images
- Exposure
- Epidemic of the century
- An "open scar"
- An Asian contagion
- A greater threat than Iraq war
- Main media attention period
- Quality press
- Tabloids
- Emphasis varied in destinations
- Blend of global and local reporting
- Online media played a role
- Meetings attracted coverage
- Responses positive but images negative

**CONTENT**
- Role in raising awareness
- Negative / bad
- Traumatic
- Economic and tourism impacts
- Regions not differentiated from hot zones

**DESCRIPTORS**
- Impending crisis ignored
- Changed when magnitude increased
- Functions of surveillance, interpretation, social linkage, education and entertainment (human interest)
- Power
- Portrayal as dangerous and off limits
- Cancellation of events
- Human rights infringements
- Cease in spread saw attention wane
- Overseas visitors hailed
- Positive trend gave the media and the tourism chance to look beyond

**MEDIA – PERCEPTION**
- Sensationalist
- Alarmist
- Ill-informed print reporters
- Focused on sensationalist and exaggerated angles
- Media hyperbole clouded fact
- Amplified a containable, localised problem into a major global problem
- Contributed to creation of panic
- Contributed to creation of fear
- Tourism impact blamed on media attention
- Costless and rapid transmission of information due to modern media technologies impacted
- Criticised capacity to handle crisis
### RESPONSE

**RESPONSES TO THE MEDIA**
- Authorities used media to focus attention on their plight
- Interaction
- Openness
- Demonstration of pro-activity
- Govt guidelines for media to enhance publishing effectiveness (Philippines)
- WHO used media to talk to public
- Public used media to talk to WHO
- Politically independent reporting procedures encouraged
- Peak body PATA called for accurate, restrained and sensible travel advice and media reporting
- Media urged to be geographically specific and not make alarmist general statements
- Doubts about data collection shared with media
- Information gradually reported more quickly
- Use of media to convey truth
- Government recognition of the crisis manifested in support for marketing blitzes

**RESPONSES TO THE CRISIS**
- Travel restrictions
- Panic
- Alarm
- Variances in gaining control
- Public health prioritised
- Systems prevented an accurate assessment of the crisis
- Swift and decisive
- Precautionary measures adopted
- Unprecedented move by the WHO to issue a global health alert
- World needed to work together
- Travellers warned
- Information provided
- Use of media to disseminate messages although unable to control the tone or nature of media treatment
- Stand-off between tourism and WHO
- Delicate relationship between governments and WHO
- WHO responsible for opening up communications
- Detrimental effects of WHO actions on tourism
- Travel advisories used as political footballs
- Ongoing vigilance
- Prevention initiatives
- Low fares
- Discounts
- Enticing offers
- Special festivals
- Global public relations campaign
- Campaigns from tourism giants
- Destinations teamed up
- National campaigns linked
- Campaigns addressed perceptions
- Some countries acted faster than others
- Overreaction
- Unco-ordination
- Misguided responses
- Dual and at times conflicting tasks of combating the disease and protecting tourism
- Disease eradication prioritised at the expense of industry protection
Governments quickly arranged international cooperation
- Refunds offered
- Trips suspended
- Tourism had to implement stringent measures
- Official statements/pledges helped tourism
- Govt issued guidelines for tourism
- China National Tourism Administration (NTA) continued to act as a source of information
- Travel agencies focused on anti-SARS campaigns instead of tourism promotion
- Local tourism focus of promotion
- Cost-cutting measures
- Training
- Leave
- Promotional campaigns cancelled
- Parts of businesses closed
- Financial aid
- Swift control and prevention measures by some
- Favourable opinions about personal safety promoted
- Reduction in aviation services
- Ticketing restrictions relaxed
- Unaffected countries retained a safer image
- Promotion of domestic holidays was strong globally
- Government recognition of the crisis manifested in support for marketing blitzes
- Tourism couldn’t market its way out
- Wasting money on Asian markets
- Forced to simply wait for source markets to beat the outbreak
- Smaller operators endured better
- Australian Tourism Commission (ATC) looked to rebuild consumer confidence to alleviate hysteria
- Destinations largely unable to self-manage the crisis
- Destinations impacted by other destination situations
- Political dimension of the reaction
- Travel advisories motivated by political reasons as opposed to risk
- Conflict with WHO: institutional Uncertainty
- Civil precautionary measures
- International monitoring
- First reaction contingency marketing
- Leadership/spokespeople:
  - WHO
  - China: NTA/govt
  - Singapore: govt and STB
  - Canada: govt
  - Australia: ATC and govt
  - HK: HKTB
  - Others: govt
  - Airlines

**IMPACT**
- International impact
- Domestic impact
- Image damage
- Global consumer confidence suffered drastically
- Temporary shock to economic growth
- Large psychological impact
- Civil liberties infringed
- WHO triggered almost complete eradication of tourism in Asia
- Cancellation of travel
- Cancellation of events
- Closures
- Threatened livelihoods of operators
- Exacerbated by uncertainty surrounding Iraq war
### Appendix: Case Study #4 - SARS, 2003

- Life to almost shut down
- Visitation declined as cases grew
- Empty public places
- Businesses forced to alter operations
- Demoralising
- Ongoing warnings hindered start of recovery
- Impacts not restricted to affected areas
- Link to travel had to be overcome
- Elements of panic and fear had to be overcome
- WHO blamed for heavy-handedness
- Destinations subject to impacts of actions by governments and authorities
- Incomplete knowledge
- Safety and security compromised
- Image problems

**QUALIFIER**
- Sensationalism might attract public attention in the short term…but it can cause many unwanted problems

| End | EXTENT
|-----|----------------------------------
|     | Sporadic outbreaks would continue
|     | No cure had been found
|     | Tourism touched globally
|     | Uncertainty shadowed recovery
|     | CONDITION
|     | Growing confidence with less cases
|     | Threat of re-infection
|     | Perceptions that re-emergence was probability not possibility
|     | MEDIA – COVERAGE
|     | Decreased as cases cleared
|     | MEDIA – PERCEPTION
|     | Ongoing negativity
|     | RESPONSE
|     | Leadership: WHO
|     | WHO declaration allowed recovery to really start
|     | WHO cautioned that global threat remained
|     | IMPACT
|     | Nil

| Recovery | EXTENT
|----------|----------------------------------
|          | Greater than Bali; Iraq
|          | Completely unexpected
|          | More widespread than initially acknowledged
|          | Greatest impact on hygiene and safety
|          | CONDITION
|          | Recovery difficult to predict
|          | Reality compounded by coverage
|          | Lack of coordination portrayed
|          | Considered out-of-control epidemic
|          | Performance under pressure
|          | External issues impacting
|          | Uncertainty
|          | Chaos afflicted normality
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEDIA – COVERAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Used alarming headlines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Perspective needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Accurately quoted officials</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• No technically incorrect information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Focused on recovery and collaboration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Called on not to speak about SARS in general terms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Called on to help restore consumer confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Called on to play recovery role</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Recovery period still involved reiteration of the crisis in the media</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MEDIA – PERCEPTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Should approach more critically</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Herd Mentality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Incumbent to deliver perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• negative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESPONSE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESPONSE TO MEDIA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Authorities vocal, through the media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Media generated perceived risk and dangers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Media shaped perceptions and attitudes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Media had to be countered in recovery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Promoted recovery through media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Travel and media familiarisations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Message of safety</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RESPONSE TO CRISIS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Delisting by WHO a turning point</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Promoted WHO’s confidence in destination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Quick recovery once abated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Coverage decline = confidence grow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Call for international coordination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Promotion of inter-governmental cooperation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Need for international collaboration and coordination among tourism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Collaboration on action plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Promotion of crisis management plans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Destinations implemented similar responses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Global recovery programmes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Advertising</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Worldwide marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Financial aid, public and private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Efforts limited by financial resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Cautious optimism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Restoration of consumer confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Image repair work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Re-launch of reputation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Focus on marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Collaboration in marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• New campaigns</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Aggressive marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Raft of marketing changes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Discounts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Refurbishments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• New products</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Demonstrated superior quality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Event calendar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Celebrities used</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Cash incentives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Exhaustive media activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Bombarded customers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix: Case Study #4 - SARS, 2003

**Underestimation to overreaction**
- International conferences
- Special promotions and packages
- Domestic faster recovery
- Targeted key holiday periods
- Created greater understanding of hygiene and health-related matters
- Established emergency alert system
- Hong Kong began recovery efforts early - comeback plans drawn during crisis
- Corporate sector projects
- Research conducted
- Adopted pre-event stance of intensified vigilance
- Diverted promotions to other destinations

**IMPACT**
- Rapid affect
- Reduction in consumer confidence
- Wave of paranoia
- Negative impact of misinformation
- Negative impact of disparate responses
- Ongoing threats

**LESSON**
- Collaborative responses to recovery could mitigate perceptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Epilogue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WTTC chose HK Tourism Symposium to release 2004 forecast</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>produced perhaps most dramatic non-conflict losses in tourism witnessed in any economy in recent years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>saw pent up international demand to provide much needed boost</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>clearly remained an industry concern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>delivered many lessons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>need for active communication and information sharing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uncertainty and hysteria could be minimised by alertness and communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>saw volatility of tourism; susceptibility to affects of unpredictable situations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>called on media to play responsible role in covering events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>World Tourism Organisation response to media: 2004 conference on tourism communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crisis had shown the need for strong leadership, speaking with one voice and liaison with all groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tourism industry could have done without the unprecedented travel advisory that the WHO issued</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>media circus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Those who complain about the media’s sensational take should be cognisant of the simple logic – if precise information is available, the media wouldn’t have to speculate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>media focus on infectious diseases and ease of spread sharpened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>regularly in media as global threats</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SARS can be controlled by simplistic and non-invasive measures; at odds with the panic that was generated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uncertainty – the genesis of fear and panic – remained</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 9

Data for each category across the phases of crises

Table A9.1: Destination Profile characteristics through the phases of the crises

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRISIS PHASE</th>
<th>DESTINATION PROFILE CHARACTERISTICS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Crisis</td>
<td>• Strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Long-standing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Broad market appeal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Economy contribution recognised (*FMD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Not immune to pressures (*BALI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outbreak</td>
<td>• n/a to this phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consolidation</td>
<td>• n/a to this phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceleration</td>
<td>• n/a to this phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End</td>
<td>• n/a to this phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recovery</td>
<td>• n/a to this phase</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table A9.2: Notice characteristics through the phases of the crisis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRISIS PHASE</th>
<th>NOTICE OF CRISIS CHARACTERISTICS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Crisis</td>
<td>• n/a to this phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outbreak</td>
<td>• Immediate (9/11; BALI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Gradual build-up to sudden announcement (FMD; SARS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Through media (9/11; BALI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Official notification (FMD; SARS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consolidation</td>
<td>• Official sketchy messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceleration</td>
<td>• Lack of clarity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Incomplete reach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End</td>
<td>• Signalled by official messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recovery</td>
<td>• n/a to this phase</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Chaos and Order: Tourism and the Media in Global Crises

#### Appendix: Category findings across the phases of the crises

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRISIS PHASE</th>
<th>PRECEDENT CHARACTERISTICS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Crisis</td>
<td>▪ History of threats, incidents or events known</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outbreak</td>
<td>▪ History of threats/events cited</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Consolidation| ▪ Inaction over history of threats cited  
                ▪ Speculation that crisis-specific prior knowledge not shared |
| Acceleration | ▪ n/a to this phase |
| End          | ▪ n/a to this phase |
| Recovery     | ▪ n/a to this phase |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRISIS PHASE</th>
<th>IMMEDIATE IMPACT CHARACTERISTICS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Crisis</td>
<td>▪ n/a to this phase</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Outbreak     | ▪ Worldwide impact (*FMD)  
                ▪ Impact on tourism (imagery; direct link) |
| Consolidation| ▪ Immediate  
                ▪ Global  
                ▪ Visible (*FMD; *SARS) |
| Acceleration | ▪ Uncertainty  
                ▪ Global tourism impact  
                ▪ Short term future for tourism unclear |
| End          | ▪ Ongoing sporadic events  
                ▪ Tourism remained in crisis mode |
| Recovery     | ▪ n/a to this phase |
## Table A9.5: Conditions characteristics through the phases of the crisis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRISIS PHASE</th>
<th>CONDITIONS OF THE ENVIRONMENTS CHARACTERISTICS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Crisis</td>
<td>▪ Fragile&lt;br&gt;▪ Highly susceptible&lt;br&gt;▪ Competition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outbreak</td>
<td>▪ Chaos&lt;br&gt;▪ Shock&lt;br&gt;▪ Confusion&lt;br&gt;▪ Lack of knowledge&lt;br&gt;▪ Tourism vulnerabilities exposed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consolidation</td>
<td>▪ Chaos&lt;br&gt;▪ Uncertainty&lt;br&gt;▪ Confusion&lt;br&gt;▪ Fear&lt;br&gt;▪ Sense of safety shattered&lt;br&gt;▪ Despair/distrust of officials&lt;br&gt;▪ Public demand for information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceleration</td>
<td>▪ Panic&lt;br&gt;▪ Despair about future safety and security&lt;br&gt;▪ Lack of information&lt;br&gt;▪ Communication problems (delay; uncooperative)&lt;br&gt;▪ Inability to forecast change or end</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End</td>
<td>▪ Uncertainty&lt;br&gt;▪ Threat remained&lt;br&gt;▪ Growing confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recovery</td>
<td>▪ Uncertainty&lt;br&gt;▪ Regaining confidence&lt;br&gt;▪ Regaining control&lt;br&gt;▪ Chaos afflicted normality</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table A9.6: Media Coverage characteristics through the phases of the crisis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRISIS PHASE</th>
<th>MEDIA COVERAGE CHARACTERISTICS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Crisis</td>
<td>n/a to this phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outbreak</td>
<td>Saturation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Domination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Public demand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Global spread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(*exc. SARS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consolidation</td>
<td>Immediate (9/11; BALI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gathered momentum (FMD; SARS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Global</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Saturation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Images</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Limited by the knowledge of what had happened</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceleration</td>
<td>Global</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Saturation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Amateur footage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Graphic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emotive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Humanistic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Economic and tourism impacts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End</td>
<td>Waned</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shifted to other content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Some focus still on crisis or crisis-related events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recovery</td>
<td>Emotional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Human</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Focused on recovery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reiteration of crisis at times</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table A9.7: Perceptions of the media through the phases of the crisis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRISIS PHASE</th>
<th>PERCEPTIONS OF THE MEDIA CHARACTERISTICS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Crisis</td>
<td>n/a to this phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outbreak</td>
<td>n/a to this phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consolidation</td>
<td>Escalated fear and panic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exacerbated extent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceleration</td>
<td>Sensationalised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Exaggerated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Distorted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Generalised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Inaccurate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Modern media approach damaging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Contributing to panic and fear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Responsible for tourism impact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End</td>
<td>Negativity of continuing focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recovery</td>
<td>Assessment period of media’s negativity during crisis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table A9.8: Characteristics of Responses through the phases of the crisis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRISIS PHASE</th>
<th>RESPONSES CHARACTERISTICS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Crisis</td>
<td>n/a to this phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outbreak</td>
<td>Military shut-down (9/11; BALI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Slow (FMD; SARS)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tourism recognition of need to act</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consolidation</td>
<td>Swift (9/11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Slow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disjointed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Confused</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emergence of leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Movements restricted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceleration</td>
<td>TO MEDIA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Counter messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Called for restraint, accuracy and truth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Used news in communications</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Used media to relay messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TO CRISIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Emergence of leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conflict between stakeholders, including media (*9/11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uncertainty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Civil precautionary measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International monitoring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>First reaction contingency marketing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End</td>
<td>Role of leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Shift to recollection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Look to recovery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recovery</td>
<td>TO MEDIA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Counter messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Called on media to play role in recovery</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Used media to deliver messages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sought to strengthen media relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sought presence in media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Involved media in recovery efforts (e.g., familiarisations)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TO CRISIS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A need for tourism support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relied on government</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Image recovery objective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Restoration of consumer confidence objective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Short term focus on domestic market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Time needed for international rehabilitation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Targeted seasoned travellers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Various initiatives to stimulate profile and recovery (e.g., campaigns)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table A9.9: Impact characteristics through the phases of the crisis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRISIS PHASE</th>
<th>CRISIS IMPACT CHARACTERISTICS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pre-Crisis</td>
<td>n/a to this phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outbreak</td>
<td>n/a to this phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consolidation</td>
<td>n/a to this phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acceleration</td>
<td>Domestically</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Internationally</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Confusion in markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uncertainty in markets</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Incomplete knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Safety compromised</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Image problems</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Long recovery predicted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End</td>
<td>n/a to this phase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recovery</td>
<td>Consumer confidence impacted by external pressures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Implications of new safety and security measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ongoing threats</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 10: Tourism Impact – Cairns Dengue Fever Outbreak

Tourism Impact – Cairns Dengue Fever Outbreak
October 1, 2002 – May 5, 2003

Contents
Methodology
Tourism Impact
Peaks of Coverage
Sources
Electronic Media Data
Print Media Data

Methodology
The analysis is based on a simple methodology.

Electronic media items from all metropolitan and Regional areas were searched via database.

When a reference to the specified area of interest is found, the item is analysed according to who said what, where, when, and how.

In the case of “Tourism Impact – Cairns Dengue Fever Outbreak”, each reference to the issue of Cairns Dengue Fever Outbreak is toned according to the impact it has on Tourism.

A neutral mention is one that merely states the facts, without bias or emotive language.
Executive Summary

The outbreak of dengue fever in Cairns between February and May 2003 generated 845 electronic mentions, 96 per cent of which were neutral. Coverage of the issue within the print media followed similar lines with the 264 print mentions generating mostly neutral coverage (94 per cent).

The bulk of coverage centred on the rising toll of infected people – many radio news bulletins and print items contained little else on the issue. Additional coverage focused on the nature of the disease and explained methods by which people could avoid contracting the illness. Media items focusing on tourism in Cairns were generated but in small numbers. Several such items expressed a negative position only to have it countered by either Tropical Tourism North Queensland’s Bill Calderwood or the Tropical Public Health Unit’s (TPHU) Dr Ross Spark who both played down the severity of the outbreak’s effect on tourism.

The TPHU was the most prominent organisation on the issue. The body had nine spokespeople generating comment on the issue. The issue’s six stakeholders with the greatest level of media exposure were all TPHU spokespeople. This high level of comment from health based spokespeople ensured the issue remained firmly entrenched within a health framework.

A milder version of dengue than prior seasons and an efficient handling of the disease by authorities saw coverage progressively diminish after the peak March 7 – 14 period. It is possible that discussion of a downturn in tourism in Cairns may yet generate coverage, however, wider and more global issues such as the SARS virus and international security may be seen as the cause of such a phenomenon.
Tourism Impact: Cairns Dengue Fever Outbreak

Peaks of Coverage
Peaks of Coverage – High Impact Event Focus

![Graph showing mentions over time for Print and Electronic media]

- March 1-7
- March 8-14
- March 15-21
- March 22-31
- April 1-7
- April 8-14
- April 15-21
- April 22-28
- April 29-May 5
Electronic and Print Media:

October, 2002

Initial reporting of dengue fever focused on methods of minimising risk. Ten items referring to dengue fever were reported in early October 2002 amid early preparation for the wet season. The Tropical Public Health Unit’s Dr Scott Ritchie was the first source to generate comment on the issue, informing people of methods by which they can reduce the threat of dengue around their homes.

A study into mosquito breeding sites around Cairns revealed up to 43 per cent of sites were based around storm water drainage pits. The TPHU’s Brian Montgomery generated two mentions calling for changes to building regulations in a bid to reduce the threat.

December, 2002

Heavy rainfall prompted several media sources to refocus attention of the threat posed to residents in north Queensland of stagnant water in residential areas. Dr Scott Ritchie continued to be quoted on the issue, claiming that only 25 cases of dengue fever were reported in 2002 (Cairns SEAFM Radio News 19/12/2002 8:03am). During an interview on 846 John MacKenzie, Ritchie stated calls to remove accumulations of water around homes in Cairns was not “really a response to a threat” but “more of an annual clean-up campaign” (Cairns 846AM John MacKenzie 19/12/2002 11:40am).

The year ended without any identified outbreaks of dengue fever in the Cairns area being discussed by the media.

March 8 – 14, 2003

Cases of dengue fever began appearing in late February with three Cairns men contracting the disease. The first week of March resulted in a further eight cases of the disease and a steady increase in media coverage.

Electronic media coverage on March 11 heralded the beginning of this heightened media attention. The majority of coverage originated from Queensland media sources. The speed with which the disease seemed to spread caused alarm in certain sectors of the media, with several reports claiming the outbreak was likely to spread beyond Cairns. While most reports focused on the increasing number of cases, many discussed the measures underway to prevent the further spread of the disease. The Triple J network reported “Authorities in Cairns are going house to house eliminating mosquito breeding sites as an outbreak of dengue fever spreads” (Triple J Radio News 11/03/2003 1:00pm).

Dr Jeffrey Hanna, TPHU, was the highly prominent during this time. Hanna highlighted the nature of the outbreak and provided numerous updates to media sources on the number of people being infected. March 12 was the peak day of coverage for the outbreak with 71 electronic and 10 print media mentions. The TPHU continued to maintain a high level of media exposure as the number of reported cases doubled in 24 hours. Most media reports focused on the rising number of cases.
Coverage remained steady for the following week with national and interstate coverage of the outbreak, including Channel Nine’s Today show which claimed “The Dengue fever outbreak in Cairns is continuing to spread” (National Nine Network Today 12/03/2003 7:34am). However, despite the increasing coverage no suggestions were made that tourists should avoid the area.

Six negative mentions were generated during this time, four of which were within news bulletins that claimed, “Tourism operators in the Far North are expecting a drop in inbound visitors due to a looming war with Iraq and the current dengue fever outbreak” (ABC Far North Queensland Radio News 12/03/2003 12:30pm).

Media attention remained steady for several weeks following this peak period, however it also remained in steady decline. Two factors proved primarily responsible for this. The first was a response to the perceived mild nature of the illness. While many media sources discussed the physiological dangers of dengue fever, it was noted that the low levels of hospitalisation when compared to previous outbreaks suggested the 2003 outbreak was less severe. Another element affecting coverage was a steady drop in the rate of infection.

**April 22 – April 28, 2003**

After an extended period in which the number of dengue fever cases had steadily risen, the toll of infected people finally reached 300. This figure acted as a trigger for a brief resurgence in the media attention of the issue. Most coverage originated through news bulletins. A typical example stated, “The number of dengue fever victims in Cairns has topped three hundred” (Geelong K-ROCK Radio News 24/04/2003 9:00am). Despite the opinion of medical professionals claiming the spread of the outbreak was in decline, some media outlets expressed the issue in more emotive language than others. Sky News Australia was one such example with its bulletins claiming, “North Queensland is in the grip of a worsening dengue fever outbreak” (Sky News Australia First Edition 24/04/2003 8:07am).

Three negative mentions were generated during this period. Two radio news bulletins from Rockhampton 4QO in which it was claimed tourism in Cairns was “suffering from an outbreak of dengue fever” (Rockhampton 4RO Radio News 24/04/2003 6:30am), and a similar bulletin from Geelong’s Bay FM the previous day.
Tourism Impact: Cairns Dengue Fever Outbreak

Sources – Tonal Composition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Negative</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jeffrey Hanna, TPHU</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rose Spencer, TPHU</td>
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<tr>
<td>Scott Ritchie, TPHU</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brian Montgomery, TPHU</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ross Spark, TPHU</td>
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<td>John Pilapanen, TPHU</td>
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<td>Academics</td>
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<td>Tourism Industry</td>
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Dengue Fever Issue Stakeholders
Sources – Media Composition

- Jeffrey Hanna, TPHU
- Rose Spencer, TPHU
- Scott Ritchie, TPHU
- Local Govt.
- Brian Montgomery, TPHU
- Ross Spark, TPHU
- John Plispanen, TPHU
- Academics
- Tourism Industry

Mentions

Print
Electronic
Sources – Textual Analysis

Dr Jeffrey Hanna, Tropical Public Health Unit: – 71 electronic and 3 print mentions.
Dr Jeffrey Hanna generated more comment during the Cairns Dengue Outbreak than any other stakeholder. Like the majority of spokespeople from the TPHU, Dr Hanna’s body of comment was largely neutral. Hanna began generating comment on March 7 and continued to be quoted in the media more regularly than any other source through to April 4. His comment was always medically based, either providing updates on the spread of the virus or discussing the impact the contagion had had on North Queensland’s health services. The sole negative comment from Hanna was also medically based. However, due to the tourism content of the news bulletin in which his comment was contextually located, his remark consequentially also embodied a tourism angle. The bulletin in question claimed, “An outbreak of the deadly dengue fever in Cairns is causing a headache for local health authorities, residents and tourists arriving in the Queensland area”. Hanna then stated “the number of cases will increase” (ABC National Radio The World Today 11/03/2003 12:52pm). As this was a national broadcast, the impact of the comment was further emphasised.

Rose Spencer, Tropical Public Health Unit – 16 electronic and 15 print mentions.
The TPHU’s Rose Spencer was the issue’s major print stakeholder. All comments from Spencer were neutral and were mainly updates on the spread of the outbreak. As with other TPHU spokespeople, Spencer made no reference to the outbreak’s effect on the tourism industry and often attempted to allay community concerns. Mid-way through the peak of the outbreak, Spencer highlighted the low number of people that had been hospitalised by the illness, stating, “We have had one more hospitalised – that brings the total to five – but at this stage we don’t have any cases of hemorrhagic fever” (The Age “Dengue fever cases hit 120” 22/03/03 page 22).

Dr Scott Ritchie, Tropical Public Health Unit – 28 electronic and 3 print mentions.
Dr Scott Ritchie’s coverage was largely based in the electronic media where he generated several mentions on preventative techniques concerning dengue mosquitoes. Ritchie was the first TPHU spokesperson to generate coverage of dengue fever in the Cairns area. During a push to alter building codes to try and curb the proliferation of the dengue-carrying aedes aegypti mosquito, Ritchie was quoted several times on Far North Queensland radio station. He stated “we go around and clean up the breeding sites in the area and it’s usually pot plant bases, tyres and things like this but we have found 43 per cent of the breeding sites were actually these sump pits or gully traps that were in driveways of businesses” (ABC North Queensland Radio News 2/10/2002 5:30pm). Ritchie’s media exposure continued along these lines during the height of the outbreak during which he neither encouraged tourists to stay away or ignore the health risk. By mid-April, many of his comments expressed the view that the outbreak was subsiding and mosquito numbers reducing.
Brian Montgomery, Tropical Public Health Unit: 24 electronic and 1 print
Brian Montgomery also gained a high percentage of coverage through the electronic media. During the early stages of the Cairns outbreak, Montgomery generated several radio mentions and one television mention during which he noted, “there is a definite high number of dengue mosquitoes in the area” (Cairns WIN TV State Television News 28/02/2003 6:08pm). However, he maintained a position of calm through the outbreak, noting, “it has happened before” (612 ABC Brisbane Radio News 17/03/2003 7:00am). Montgomery was the spokesperson quoted during a series of negative radio bulletins which claimed “travellers” posed a possible threat of spreading the disease beyond the original area of contagion. During such reports he continued to state there had been no such spread in the current outbreak and by comparison to previous outbreaks the 2003 event was quite moderate. (Perth 6RN Radio News 17/03/2003 7:00am).

Local Government Spokespeople – 17 electronic and 9 print mentions.
Local government sources generated a moderate amount of coverage, primarily by the Cairns and Townsville City Councils. All council based sources were neutral. Cairns City Council environmental officer Alex Subij generated four electronic mentions in which it was suggested Cairns residents may be fined for not complying with council regulations to remove any residential mosquito breeding sites. Townsville Mayor Tony Mooney was equally preoccupied with preventative measures encouraging Townsville residents to be “ever vigilant” (ABC North Queensland Radio News 14/03/2003 7:30am). Spokespeople from Cooloola, Cardwell, Charters Towers and the Whitsunday Councils all generated coverage, all of which was negative with no tourism impact.

Dr Ross Spark, Tropical Public Health Unit – 15 electronic and 7 print
Dr Ross Spark generated 15 electronic mentions in the final two weeks of March, all on northern Queensland radio and television services with the exception of a mention on the national JJJ radio network. During this broadcast Spark claimed, “the outbreak has been largely contained” (Triple J Radio News 31/03/2003 3:00pm). Spark was the only TPHU spokesperson to generate positive coverage. During two radio news bulletins he labelled tourists a low risk group claiming “many tourists stay in air conditioned and screened accommodation away from the current hotspots” (ABC FNQ Radio News 19/03/2003 7:00am). Approximately a third of Spark’s mentions were generated through the print media where he expressed an equally moderate and objective approach to the outbreak. An article from The Age in which it was claimed tourists had expressed concerns over the outbreak, Spark again downplayed fears claiming “We’ve had more calls than we’ve had cases of dengue fever” (The Age “Health unit plays down fever fears” 01/04/03 page 10).

Tourism Industry Representatives – 4 electronic
Few spokespeople from the tourism industry generated coverage during the outbreak. This reflects the lack of focus by most media sources the issue’s tourism impact. Three electronic media mentions were generated by Tourism Tropical North Queensland’s Bill Calderwood. Calderwood rejected the suggestion that tourism had been adversely affected by the dengue fever outbreak, claiming “there has been no drop in numbers” (ABC Far North Queensland Radio News 12/03/2003 12:30pm). An additional mention was generated by Townsville’s Adventure Backpackers Resort’s Karley Sharman amid claims the backpacker community might spread the dengue virus. Shamran made no reference to Cairns.
## Tourism Impact: Cairns Dengue Fever Outbreak

### National Electronic Media: October 1 – May 5, 2003

### Who Spoke On This Issue?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Totals</th>
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<td>3 1%</td>
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<td>70 99%</td>
<td>3 1%</td>
<td>74 8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comment/Editorial</td>
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<td>53 98%</td>
<td>2 0%</td>
<td>56 6%</td>
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<td>28 98%</td>
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<td>30 3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Brian Montgomery, TPHU</td>
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<td>23 96%</td>
<td>0 0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rose Spencer, TPHU</td>
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<td>16 100%</td>
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<td>32 20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Ross Spark, TPHU</td>
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<td>Nina Hughes, Australian Red Cross</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dr Brian Kay, QIMR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Alex Subij, Cairns City Council</td>
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<td>Reporter</td>
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<tr>
<td>Robin Briggs, dengue fever victim</td>
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<tr>
<td>Russell Manley, TPHU</td>
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<td>Steve Wesselingh, Burnet Institute</td>
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<td>Tony Mooney, Townsville Mayor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bill Calderwood, Tourism Tropical North</td>
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<td>Heather Robinson, TPHU</td>
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<td>Dr Anna Lavelle, Australian Red Cross</td>
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<td>Wendy Edmond, Qld Minister for Health</td>
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<td>Grant Steen, Townsville City Council</td>
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<td>Dr Peter Ryan, QIMR</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peter Tabulo, Cairns City Council</td>
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## Who Spoke On This Issue (cont)?

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<td>Kevin Byrne, Cairns Mayor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frank Milkovic, Dengue fever victim</td>
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<td>Talkback - female</td>
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## Which Commentators Spoke On This Issue?

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**Tourism Impact: Cairns Dengue Fever Outbreak**

National Print Media: October 1 – May 5, 2003

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Bibliography


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Bibliography


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