

# STAGING A SAFE AND SUCCESSFUL GLOBAL EVENT DURING A PANDEMIC



A global summit – the first in-person international event since the beginning of the pandemic – was held successfully with Global Rescue’s travel protection services.



GLOBAL **+** *rescue*

## OVERVIEW

The highly-anticipated World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC) 20th Global Summit was held in Cancun, Mexico in April 2021. With more than 600 delegates coming from 40 different countries, WTTC worked with Global Rescue, a global expert in travel risk and crisis management, to deliver the world's first international event safely.

Global Rescue's advance teams were deployed weeks before the Global Summit to assess transportation, health and security resources, infrastructure and protocols. Global Rescue was also on-site for the duration of the event to provide medical and travel advisory services, medical evacuation and logistics oversight, intelligence and field rescue for injury or illness, including COVID-19.

## PROBLEM

WTTC's annual Global Summit is an influential travel and tourism event where the highest-level industry leaders meet with government representatives to take action on the most important issues across the travel industry.

The summit was also the first live, in-person international event since the coronavirus pandemic started in 2020. More than 600 delegates from 40 different countries were arriving at the Moon Palace Resort in Cancun, Mexico to "discuss key issues to develop a path out of this pandemic," said Andrew Brown, regional director of WTTC.

WTTC wanted to demonstrate that health and security preparation coupled with precautionary measures would successfully enable an in-person event during a volatile pandemic period.



Courtesy of World Travel & Tourism Council

## SOLUTION

WTTC worked with Global Rescue, a member and strategic sponsor, to review the global requirements and recommendations from the World Health Organization (WHO), the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, the UK Government and the Government of Quintana Roo.

Global Rescue deployed a team to Mexico weeks before the conference to gather local medical knowledge, evaluate health care capabilities and build relationships with hospital administrators.

“Senior Global Rescue paramedics deployed to Cancun two weeks prior to the main event to vet the medical infrastructure locally,” said Scott Hume, vice president of operations at Global Rescue. “The team met with the hospital’s medical directors and assessed the capabilities of all the private hospitals in Cancun. This was also done with hotel clinics, ground ambulance and air ambulance providers.”

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During the conference, Global Rescue stood at the ready with an on-site operation center to manage, monitor, support and respond to any medical event. This included monitoring coronavirus testing, which ran like clockwork. Circular Lab by Klincore was the official arrival testing provider for the summit bubble and Palace Resorts laboratories provided the antigen arrival tests and PCR and antigen departure tests. Staff took an antigen test immediately on arrival and every 72 hours. All delegates were tested on arrival and, on receipt of negative test, able to check in and collect a summit badge.

Health wasn’t the only travel concern. Security was critical for senior-level attendees that included CEOs, founders, directors, chairman, ministers of tourism and government dignitaries.

Global Rescue was on hand to provide the security support WTTC needed. The Global Rescue operations team – experts with military special operations backgrounds, combat experience, the ability to perform missions in difficult environments and global travel experience – conducted a detailed security assessment of the venue and a broad range of the surrounding area in liaison with hotel management and security staff before the event.

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Once the risk assessment was completed, the Global Rescue security team met with executive staff at all venues to discuss logistics and communications plans, ensuring coordination in an emergency situation. The team remained on the ground throughout the duration of the conference.

"We made the appropriate relationships with everyone involved to identify and avoid any escalating security situations," said Harding Bush, associate manager of operations at Global Rescue.

## IMPACT

With rigorous health and safety protocols in place to ensure the safety of all attendees, the annual Global Summit was a success.

Close to 1,500 PCR and antigen tests were administered during the event. Only two individuals tested positive on arrival and were declined admittance within the summit bubble.

Before entering the summit venue, attendees had their temperatures checked. Mask wearing was mandated in all

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— Virginia Messina, WTTC senior vice president

indoor venues and physical distancing was enforced by all seats being a minimum of 1.5 meters apart throughout indoor venues.

Just one individual tested positive prior to departure, but due to enhanced health and safety protocols, no further positive cases were reported 10 days after the summit.

"Our Global Summit was proof that testing – along with enhanced health and hygiene measures, mandatory mask wearing and complimented by the global vaccine rollout – is the key to safely reopening international travel," said Virginia Messina, WTTC senior vice president. "We truly believe we have shown the world how international events, and indeed international travel, can take place by observing the latest health and safety protocols."

"The initial result was peace of mind for the 600 participants, on-site staff and journalists traveling to the event. The final result was that the conference was run safely and successfully, proving it can be done even before many are vaccinated," said Dan Richards, CEO of Global Rescue.



Courtesy of World Travel & Tourism Council

## YOUR ORGANIZATION IN PARTNERSHIP WITH GLOBAL RESCUE

Global Rescue's travel risk, crisis management and response services empower organizations to host events around the globe, knowing every detail has been carefully examined and every precaution taken. Our medical, security and intelligence experts are available to help from planning to execution, ensuring you make the wisest decisions for your organization, even *before* your event begins. Request a quote for our customized enterprise travel solutions and start talking to our experts today.

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