

All Calm: Thai Tourism Operating Normally

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Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) members in Thailand are keen to reassure the global travel trade that the coup d'etat currently underway in the country has so far been non-violent, and that travel and tourism facilities and services are currently operating normally.

PATA President and CEO Mr Peter de Jong wrote to Thailand-based PATA members this morning: "Even before this political crisis in Thailand comes to a resolution, we at PATA feel that it is important to send a clear message to the global travel industry that, so far at least, the situation here is calm and non-violent."

Responses to his e-mail have been overwhelmingly reassuring. To the question, "Are your current guests feeling comfortable about the situation on the ground?" all respondents have so far answered in the affirmative.

CB Richard Ellis EVP-Corporate Planning Mr Jeffrey Leong wrote: "There was some apprehension among guests last night after news reports and talks of road closures in Bangkok. However, last night's peaceful coup was a relief, and there is a sense of heightened awareness this morning and an expectation that the transition will remain peaceful in the days ahead."

He added: "News coverage, headlines and pictures of tanks and military personnel are not representative of the main parts of Bangkok. Other than some government offices and communication networks occupied by a military presence, most other parts of Bangkok are normal."

Bangkok-based Grand Diamond Suites Hotel General Manager Mr Chetsada Techprasertporn wrote: "All our guests are comfortable and continue to enjoy their shopping and sightseeing." He was keen to reassure the global travel trade that "nothing untoward has happened, especially to tourists visiting Thailand".

Despite the relative calm, Central Hotels & Resorts, Grand Diamond, Minor International and Wired Destinations have all reported cancellations.

Chaophya Park Hotel & Resorts General Manager Mr Andrew J Wood wrote:

"Occupancy has dropped from 74% to 51% and many government functions have been cancelled.

"Everyone is remaining very calm and most guests, both local and overseas, understand very well the political background of current events."

Thai Airways International has announced that it will maintain normal operations for both domestic and international flights.

Updated Thailand tourism information is online at www.PATA.org/crisis.

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