More than 200 delegates gathered in London for higher education’s premier travel risk event, EWB 2016.

INTERVIEWS
Former marine and law firm senior partner Richard Stephens MBE has some key advice.

FEATURES
Are you ready for a natural disaster? Gillian Dacey explains how you can prepare.

REGIONAL FOCUS
What you need to know if you are planning travel arrangements to troubled Turkey.

INSIDE:
BORDERLESS 2017
The travel risk event for humanitarian, NGO and international development organisations.

Conference Guide starts P25

Need some help navigating the complicated world of law? Legal Corner, our regular feature, has some useful advice - Page 42

SLEEPWALKING INTO A CRISIS - Page 46
Prevention is a great thing. Warnings are also useful. Fortunately, because of prevention and warnings, many people will never face the consequences of a catastrophic crisis, fear for their missing relatives, or personally witness a mass fatality event.

That is not true for me. You see, my job is responding to crises – mostly those with mass fatalities. I have done this for over 25 years, most of my adult life. Earthquakes, tsunamis, floods, plane crashes, maritime disasters, fires, and terrorist attacks, to name a few. Events like the Oklahoma City bombing, 9/11, the Haitian earthquake, Hurricane Katrina, the Asian tsunami, Bali bombings, the Tsunamis beach attack and too many others to count or list. What I’ve learned from these experiences is this: “there are no new lessons to be learned, only new people learning old lessons.”

Sadly, that learning comes at a very high cost for the survivors and families of the missing – those presumed dead. From them, prevention has failed or was simply not possible so the best that can be done is “zero.” You can’t make it better. You can’t undo the event. The best is to not make it worse. In other words, “zero.”

If you can’t prevent all things, or make the consequences better, how do you make them not worse? Here are some of the practical considerations I recommend.

Identify if your organisation is at risk. Beyond the obvious — non-governmental organisations (NGOs), large businesses, corporations in the natural resource sector or hospitality industry, many do not believe they are at risk. Indicators I consider: Do you have people who travel? Travel in groups? Visit less developed areas? Host public gatherings? Sponsor or manage groups that are less life—experienced and likely not as resourceful in a crisis? If so, then you are at risk.

Accept that an event could happen. Often I see complete shock, which is to be expected. Unfortunately, that shock isn’t because of what has happened, but because it has happened to them. Bad things always happen to somebody else.

Accept your responsibility in managing the consequences. Too many companies focus on what has happened and try to protect themselves from blame or liability. The reality is that bad things happen. We can’t prevent them all. Survivors and the families are most interested in what happens now. They miss that class at school about what to do following a bombing or an earthquake. They are looking for someone to provide leadership and guidance; to help them navigate the transition from what was normal to what will be normal. While many different agencies are involved in responding, none manage the overall event. So that will fall to the affected organisation (your company) or the affected families.

For families, it is nearly an impossible task. Where do they begin? How do they understand the different things that are required, while dealing with the fright and apprehension? If there is no support or single system to help guide them, then you add frustration to fear and apprehension. Frustration inevitably leads to ends in anger. Angry at the companies and their executives, not for the event, but for the response or lack thereof. That anger translates to litigation – litigation is an extension of rage. So instead of “zero,” or not making it worse, it becomes much worse for you and them.

I hope that your organisation will never need any of these recommendations. Frankly, I would love to be out of a job in crisis management. But, sadly, every year, I seem a little busier. And when these crises happen – and they will happen – I don’t see people trying to make it worse intentionally, they do so because they are not prepared.

So, get prepared. Devote some of your risk management resources to consequence management. Learn from others before it happens and then you won’t be the one to make it worse.