

PRESS RELEASE

Berlin, 21.11.2018

For immediate release

“EXPECT THE UNEXPECTED”

CRISIS MANAGEMENT EXPERT STEFF BERGER SPEAKS ON ANTI-TERRORIST STRATEGIES AT IBTM WORLD 2018 ON 27th November 2018

Steff Berger is a Conference Consultant and Event Planner with specialist expertise and qualifications in Crisis Management. Her company, **VOBE - Inspires People GmbH**, supports mainly European associations in the organisation of events of up to 20,000 capacity.

Would your venue and staff be properly prepared in the event of a terrorist attack?

Steff Berger's presentation deals with all the plans and precautions events organisers and venue staff should consider in order to handle a terrorist attack on their conference, convention or concert.

In the events industry, we are passionate about people, enjoy large events in public venues, and attract participants from all over the world. Our security is unarmed, hired mainly to check accreditation. Terrorists see all these aspects and more as vulnerabilities, and can use them against us to cause fear and destruction.

The aim of Steff's talk is to:

- make the topic more transparent to the MICE (meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions) industry
- bring the MICE industry together to talk and share experiences
- engage with people to promote more awareness, rather than fear
- encourage organisers and venues to include counter terrorism strategies in the crisis management planning for each conference and event.

Steff encourages venues and organisations to:

- implement a risk analysis for each event based on potential terror activities
- raise awareness among all staff members – not only the security team
- integrate emergency management plans
- have information and emergency communication strategies ready
- involve city authorities, venue managers, event organisers and local police in all plans
- be aware but not afraid – good planning and preparation make you and your organization much stronger and might help prevent risks.

Steff does not offer advice or opinion on counter-terrorism strategies in general, government policies or how to actually prevent attacks - this is the realm of the police and security forces.

Steff does offer solid, actionable guidance for events organisers and venue staff to help them frustrate an attack on their event, protect their attendees and handle the situation in the vital 7-15 minutes between when an emergency call is made and the police arrive.

What is a crisis?

A terrorist attack is just one form of crisis that an event might face. Other scenarios falling under this category could include: social media and communication crisis, cancellation of the event; change of venue due to unforeseen circumstances; death of management, speakers or participants during the event, and natural disasters that would have an impact on the event. It is worth considering all the measures you might want to be in place to cover many kinds of situation, depending on where you are in the world, and the risks applicable to your location.

Steff Berger says: "As event organisers and consultants, we cannot prevent unexpected situations happening, but we can educate people in how to deal with them. Our first duty is always to the people who come to our events."

Notes:

A conference consultant and event planner for over 18 years, **Steff Berger** moved into crisis management after the Icelandic volcano eruptions in 2010 stranded 10,000 conference attendees in Vienna.

In October 2017, she became a BCM-certified crisis manager, and later that year attended the anti-terrorist and ATO risk assessment courses at the S2 Institute in Rome and The Hague.

For further information, please email berger@vobe-inspires-people.com
Or find out more at <https://www.vobe-inspires-people.com>

FAQs

CLARIFYING COMMON QUERIES

Can I hire *VOBE - Inspires People GmbH* to create a counter terrorism and/or security strategy for my venue or event?

VOBE does not provide this service in-house, but through our network we can connect you with the right partner to develop the strategy with you, and can of course assist you as an experienced conference consultant to make the best decisions.

Why is Steff Berger talking about counter terrorism when she is not a specialist?

Steff Berger is well-informed and very sensitive around this topic, and attended anti-terrorist and ATO risk assessment courses to enrich her knowledge. She combines her conference expertise with her knowledge of counter terrorism to talk mainly about awareness and how we can support our conferences and events with a good crisis management strategy on counter terrorism.

Has Steff Berger ever had been involved in a terrorist attack?

No, she has been not part of any kind of attack (thank goodness!), but she has a huge amount of experience of high-level protocols, VIPs and political events, plus the knowledge gained from 18 years of involvement in conferences and events in European countries.

Why is Steff Berger not an ATO/cATO?

The ATO (Anti-Terror Officer) / cATO (certified ATO) is a special course for police, security and military staff who are eligible to use weapons and have the right to check people. The certification is not actually relevant for a civilian like Steff, and most of the information is not usable. However, the course's value is in increased awareness of the topic and the analysis of terror threats.

When was Steff Berger certified as a crisis manager?

Steff Berger became a BCM-certified crisis manager in October 2017. Since then, she has followed several further courses on crisis management.

When did Steff Berger attend the ATO course?

She has attended the ATO course in November 2017 and has also attend an ATO Risk Assessment course in December 2017.

How did you come to the topic of counter-terrorism?

During my crisis management education I heard about the ATO course, and as I was a certified crisis manager I was able to join this course.

How does crisis management fit into *VOBE – Inspires People GmbH*?

We are often asked: why are we doing crisis management, and how does this fit with inspiring people? For us it is the perfect match. Our job is to work behind the scenes to guarantee the smooth running of an event, and crisis management is definitely one add-on that helps that happen. We can also ensure you get back to normal in minimal time after an incident, and may even prevent a crisis.

What is the main portfolio of *VOBE - Inspires People GmbH*?

VOBE - Inspires People is a conference consultant company, working mainly for European associations. We work on an hourly basis, and do not ask for any kick-back fees. We have worked in more than 21 European cities, on conferences up to 20,000 capacity.

What has been the largest conference for *VOBE*?

In 2015, the ECC in Vienna for 20,000 people. The average conference is between 3,500 and 20,000 attendees. Evening and Gala events are usually from 500-1,500 people.

Why does *VOBE* do so many different things?

Because, in the end, they are all connected! We are passionate about people and about all our key topics:

- Conference Consulting
- Speaking at conferences
- Training and Workshops
- Crisis management
- Event management
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We love to deal with people, support people and encourage people to develop new ideas.

Thank you for reading. If you have any further queries, please email:
berger@vobe-inspires-people.com