Abstract
The hotel industry prides itself in its welcoming attitude towards its guests by offering hospitality, comfort and privacy. At the same guest safety and security has been argued to be of primary concern in the industry. The aim of this thesis is a) to study how hoteliers develop and implement risk management plans and procedures to ensure safe hotel operations, and b) to study how it is possible to gap the bridge between providing hospitable services, which at the same time are safe and secure. A qualitative, cross-case study has been applied. The study builds on theories composed primarily of established step-by-step risk management processes. In-depth interviews were carried out with four managers at different hotels across Sweden. The study found that the hotel industry in Sweden lacks a common risk management framework for which to implement consistently and coherently. A common framework would enable hotels to embrace risk management and be able to utilize it in their operation. Furthermore, it was found that risk management ought to be integrated in all organizational activities and processes. It should not be an isolated event, but rather implemented on an on-going basis. It is imperative for hoteliers to realize that hospitality is not only related to offering qualitative services, but also that ensuring guests of their safety/security is a major part of the overall service. In addition, providing hospitable services that are safe at the same time necessitates that risk management is implemented consistently by regularly aiming to raise current standard. Hence, continuous improvement ought to be of fundamental importance in any organization that is fully committed to risk management. This thesis, therefore, suggests a model that interlinks risk- and quality management.

Key words: Risk management, hotel industry, hospitality, safety, security.
Acknowledgement

It is with gratitude that I acknowledge the support and help of my supervisor, Dr. Anders Steene whose encouragement and guidance from the preliminary to the concluding level enabled me to develop an understanding of the subject.

I offer my regards and blessings to all of those who supported me in any respect during the completion of the project.

Stockholm, June 8th 2011
# Table of contents

1. INTRODUCTION .......................................................................................................................... 1
   1.1 Recent Activity in the Hotel Industry .................................................................................. 1
   1.2 Risk Management in the Hotel Industry .............................................................................. 2
   1.3 Organizational Plans and Systems ....................................................................................... 3
   1.4 Problem Statement .............................................................................................................. 4
   1.5 Research Objectives ............................................................................................................ 4
   1.6 Research Questions ............................................................................................................. 4
   1.7 Central Concepts and Definitions ....................................................................................... 4
   1.8 Structure of Thesis .............................................................................................................. 5

2. METHODOLOGY .......................................................................................................................... 6
   2.1 Research Approach ............................................................................................................. 6
   2.2 Qualitative or Quantitative Methods .................................................................................. 6
      2.2.1 Qualitative methods ................................................................................................... 6
      2.2.2 Quantitative methods ............................................................................................... 7
   2.3 Case Study .......................................................................................................................... 7
   2.4 Sample ................................................................................................................................ 8
   2.5 Interviews ............................................................................................................................ 9
   2.6 Limitations, Reliability and Validity ................................................................................... 10

3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK .................................................................................................. 11
   3.1 A Brief Historical Overview .............................................................................................. 11
   3.2 Conceptualization of Risk .................................................................................................. 11
      Physical environment ........................................................................................................... 12
      Social environment .............................................................................................................. 12
      Political environment ......................................................................................................... 12
      Operational environment .................................................................................................... 12
      Economic environment ....................................................................................................... 13
      Legal environment ............................................................................................................. 13
      Cognitive environment ...................................................................................................... 13
   3.3 The Risk Management Process .......................................................................................... 14
      3.3.1 Principles and guidelines – ISO 13000:2009 ............................................................... 14
      3.3.2 Code of practice ......................................................................................................... 15
      3.3.3 The PIER-C approach .............................................................................................. 17
   3.4 Risk Management Responses .............................................................................................. 18
   3.5 The Janus Face of Safety and Security .............................................................................. 19

4. EMPERICAL FINDINGS ............................................................................................................. 21
   4.1 Organizational Plans and Procedures .................................................................................. 21
      4.1.1 Hotel 1 ....................................................................................................................... 21
      4.1.2 Hotel 2 ....................................................................................................................... 22
      4.1.3 Hotel 3 ....................................................................................................................... 22
      4.1.4 Hotel 4 ....................................................................................................................... 23
   4.2 Implementation of Risk Management .................................................................................. 23
      4.2.1 Hotel 1 ....................................................................................................................... 23
      4.2.2 Hotel 2 ....................................................................................................................... 24
      4.2.3 Hotel 3 ....................................................................................................................... 25
      4.2.4 Hotel 4 ....................................................................................................................... 25
   4.3 Management Approach to Safety and Security ................................................................. 25
      4.3.1 Hotel 1 ....................................................................................................................... 25
      4.3.2 Hotel 2 ....................................................................................................................... 26
      4.3.3 Hotel 3 ....................................................................................................................... 27
      4.3.4 Hotel 4 ....................................................................................................................... 27
# Table of figures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 1</td>
<td>RESEARCH STRUCTURE AND DESIGN OF THESIS</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 2</td>
<td>CHARACTERISTICS OF THE FOUR CASES</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 3</td>
<td>PRINCIPLES AND GUIDELINES AS A STEP-BY-STEP PROCESS</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 4</td>
<td>THE CODE OF PRACTICE AS A RISK MANAGEMENT PROCESS</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 5</td>
<td>PIER-C SIX-STEP APPROACH TO EFFECTIVELY MANAGE RISKS</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 6</td>
<td>RISK MANAGEMENT RESPONSES</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 7</td>
<td>THE JANUS FACE AS INTERPRETED FROM INTERVIEWED SECURITY MANAGERS’ EXPERIENCE</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FIGURE 8</td>
<td>INTERLINKING RISK- AND QUALITY MANAGEMENT</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
1. Introduction

“As we enter the new decade, and in spite of all challenges, I am confident this will be remembered as the decade of travel and tourism”

- Mr. Taleb Rifai, Secretary-General, UNWTO

At the International Tourism Bourse (ITB) in Berlin, Germany in March 2011, the secretary-general of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), Mr. Talib Rifai announced that the past decade has been the best of times as well as the worst of times for the travel and tourism industry. Starting with the aftermaths of the September 11 attacks in New York, and ending with the global economic crisis during 2008/2009. The UNWTO indicates that the industry recovered rapidly in 2010, and presents an optimistic outlook for the future. The outlook points to the fact that the industry can soon expect an all-time-high result by reaching approximately 1 billion international tourist arrivals worldwide (World Tourism Barometer, 2011), and momentum is expected to increase into 2011 (WTTC, 2010)

Although the industry is still recovering, primarily led by the Asian countries, the global economic recession left a deep intrinsic mark in the balance sheets as well as in terms of its impact on consumer demand and travel behavior. The travel and tourism industry is the most important in the world in terms of its social and economical effects of a region or country (Holjevac, 2003). There are vast opportunities in the coming years for the industry since it is marked by significant changes in the political, social, demographical and technological spheres (Ibid). More disposable time and higher average income, particularly in less developed countries, are naturally two factors that are of great importance and do contribute immensely to the industry. With the rise of the BRIC nations (Brazil, Russia, India and China) there are numerous of explicit reasons to expect the numbers of international tourist arrivals continually to grow in a rapid pace. Because of the strong drive of capitalist societies to enter into an age of information societies supported by several booming economies, it is possible for people to have more leisure and less work (Ahn, 2009).

Despite the confident standpoint held by the industry, there are still many obstacles to tackle. The issues that hold travel and tourism back from further development have been labeled as being external factors (WTTC, 2003). These factors can be related to legal doubt over ownership, inadequate utilities, poor infrastructure, risks of terrorism, and crime or disease. Regardless of the challenges and opportunities the industry, in general, is facing it remains sensitive to its potential negative effects (Ibid.).

1.1 Recent activity in the hotel industry

To envision the future is a difficult task. The travel and tourism industry is fragmented, relatively decentralized, characterized by rapid change and faces a variety of uncertainties. Within the scope of travel and tourism, the hotel industry has been particularly marked as a result of several incidents generating international attention during the past decade (Israeli et. al, 2011). The focus of the attention has been centered on terror attacks such as the Sinai bombings at Hilton Hotels (2004), Amman bombings at Grand Hyatt and SAS Radisson (2005), Islamabad at Marriott Hotel (2008), Mumbai at Taj
Mahal Palace Hotel (2008) and Jakarta at Ritz-Carlton (2009). In response, hotel properties have been focusing on safety and security more than ever (Goh & Law, 2007). All of these mentioned hotel properties have the common denominator of being middle- and upper class hotels. Pizam (2010), therefore, put forward the question of whether all hotels are potential targets for similar attacks, and he hypothesized that the primary motive was that hotels are weak targets that pose little danger to perpetrators since hotels are seldom properly guarded nor prepared for fear of alienating the guests. Although the question was left unanswered, other scholars have studied the issue of how to draw the line between safety/security and the level of hospitality. Enz and Taylor (2002) stated that for all hoteliers there lies a challenge in making careful choices that provide appropriate standards for guests’ safety without interfering with the expected level of service. The same authors also argue that given the semi-public nature of hotel buildings, it is difficult to differentiate between guests, visitors and with people who pose a threat; “the continuous flow of people in and out of a hotel poses a longstanding challenge to the property’s security and the guests’ safety”. Likewise, Gill et al (2002) argues that the hotel industry prides itself in its welcoming attitude towards its guests by offering comfort, convenience and privacy. Yet crime impacts on hotels as in other industries, little attention has been given to the issue of crime in the context of the hotel industry (Ibid.). This contradictory problem, this paradox, is in many aspects unique and distinctive from other industries. Unlike airports, for example, hotels are expected to look after their guests, to make them feel at home, safe, invited, and taken care of without padlocking doors and completely control who enters and exits the premises. Meanwhile a wide range of criminal activities threatens hotels by its guests, staff and external offenders. This contradiction is a major problem for hotel managers because the first and foremost priority of hotels is, after all, to create a welcoming environment and maintain the reputation for hospitality (Feickert et. al, 2006).

Due to the development over the last decade with numerous incidents striking the hotel industry, much research has been done on how to manage crisis situations (Chen, 2011; Jurowski, 2010; Vassilikopoulou et. al 2009; Rousaki & Alcott 2006; Henderson, 2005). However, research has often been limited to post-incident management rather than addressing the issue of how to manage safety and security to reduce and mitigate risks. Research that focuses on preventive measures is extremely scarce and reflects a general lack of research on the role of safety and security (Gill et. al, 2002). Therefore, there are reasons to research the issue of how to manage safety and security in the hotel industry à priori potential negative incidents occur, which puts the emphasis on risk management (proactive) rather than crisis management (reactive).

1.2 Risk management in the hotel industry

Concern about risks in the industry is nothing new (Peattie et. al, 2005). Nonetheless, the issue has been brought into sharp focus in recent years, and the element of risk involved is increasing (Ibid.). To some extent it is reflected through raising awareness from hoteliers to manage risks, and from guests who wish to avoid being exposed to them (Ibid.) Disasters from industrial, natural, technological, or from deliberate sources such as terrorism or crime are inevitable and increasing in numbers and frequency (Perrow, 2008). Though risks are constantly present, they can be controlled, reduced and mitigated.

The former president of the Educational Institute of the American Hotel & Lodging Association, Anthony G. Marshall, advocated that by common law hotels are required to exercise reasonable care for the safety and security of their guests (Dempsey, 2007). Hotels are also expected to constantly seek for further improvement to raise the standards of managing risks. Marshall advised that hotels have two options; either report and do away with a hazard, or warn guests in an adequate manner so they can take appropriate measures to alleviate it (Ibid.). Furthermore, hotels have historically been held liable for the
loss of a guests’ property if the property and the guest have been within the premises of the hotel (Barth, 2009). This concept is called *infra hospitium*, meaning “within the hotel” (Ibid.).

According to the Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism (DEAT, 2007), concerns over safety and security constitutes the primary reason for not wanting to visit a destination. Similarly, and more specifically, Pizam (2010) stated that guest safety is a primary concern in the lodging sector of the hospitality industry. Who will establish fire safety and security procedures? Who will update management on the latest technology to ensure a safe environment? Which parameters decide safety/security policy and general guidelines? How are the various risks communicated to guests and staff? These are some of the questions that hoteliers should be able to answer if they are truly committed to safeguarding their guests.

Safety and security has become a top-of-the-mind matter for practitioners, policy makers and for guests. There is little doubt that the issue needs to be managed properly. Despite of these circumstances, it is still today a low priority concern. A feasible reason for this is because there lays a negative connotation to the whole concept of risk management, and in dealing with safety and security particularly. The issue should, on the contrary, be discussed positively and openly by sharing best practices instead of worrying about it. Hoteliers should approach security as a positive rather than a necessary evil, according to Bardi (2010). The objectives of managing risks are to increase the probability and impact of positive events, and decrease the probability and impact of negative events by identifying and prioritizing risks (Yeomans, 2011).

1.3 Organizational plans and systems

Risk management in the hotel industry has been touched upon by many scholars. It has been applied and to a variety of different fields and sub-sectors with the vast majority of the studies being related to finance and investment (see Chen, 2010; Larson & Larson, 2009; Nicolau, 2005), and revenue management (see Koenig & Meissner, 2010; Noone & Mattilla, 2009; Tsai & Hung, 2009). When it comes to risk management related to safety and security, the physical attributes have oftentimes been the subject of study. These physical attributes can, for example, be surveillance equipment such as cameras, closed-circuit television (CCTV), electronic card locks, metal detectors, fire extinguishers or exit signs. In the context of risk, safety and security the emphasis of academic studies have focused on the physical attributes in general, and fire safety in particular (see Kobes et. al, 2010; Hassanain, 2009). Though important as these studies might be, they do not question different management approaches. Why is the one approach better than the other? What is the approach that hotel managers have to these issues? Do they differ in any particular sense or are there common tendencies across different hotels? Perrow (2008) states that while we focus on “protecting the targets or reducing the damage to them or the people involved, we do not do an adequate job at this; our organizations are not up to it and tend to neglect the more basic strategy”.

According to Enz & Taylor (2002), safety and security standards are made up of two elements. One is physical safety attributes; the other is organizational systems and plans to ensure safe operations. The former has already briefly been mentioned. The latter, however, is what this report will chiefly focus on. This element involves employing and training personnel as well as establishing plans and procedures relating to safety and security issues (Ibid.).
1.4 Problem statement

The outlook for the travel, tourism and hotel industry is optimistic. However, there are a number of obstacles that need to be addressed. One such obstacle concerns how hotel managers approach and deal with safety and security through risk management by planning and implementing systems and procedures to ensure safe operations.

Another related problem that faces hotel managers concerns raising the awareness amongst practitioners and guests for safety and security, and meanwhile creating a welcoming environment and maintaining a reputation for hospitality. This seeming contradiction in terms is therefore relevant to analyze and obtain a deeper understanding about.

1.5 Research objectives

The research objectives of this study are two-fold:

First, it aims to inquire the risk management process at hotels for the purpose of researching similarities and differences between hoteliers approach to ensure safe and secure stays for guests. This is done by analyzing how these managers plan, implement, develop and evaluate the organizational approach and commitment towards safety and security through risk management with a theoretical framework as a basis.

Second, the objective is to study how hotel managers are able to handle the contradiction of providing and delivering hospitable services, while ensuring safe operations at the same time.

1.6 Research questions

The discussion thus far provides the basis of an inquiry into the appropriateness of:

A. How is risk management implemented to ensure safe and secure hotel operations?

B. How is it possible to overcome the contradiction of hospitality versus safety/security?

1.7 Central concepts and definitions

Although the terms safety and security regularly are used interchangeably as twin concepts, they do differ in the sense that they spotlight different angles. According to Enz and Taylor (2002) safety involves protecting employees and customers within the hotel property from potential injury or death. Safety issues deal with the effects of accidents, hazardous materials, and fire, for example.

Security, however, goes beyond safety matters. Security focuses on preserving guests’ belongings and the property itself. Security issues involve such matters as theft and crime (Ibid.). Thus, when using the terms safety and security in this report, it is in relation to protecting 1) guests, 2) employees, 3) and the property.
There is no standard definition of the term *risk management* in the literature. The definitions vary depending on which types of risks are studied. Risk has been defined as being the likelihood and probability of the harm, size and quality of harmful consequences (Sjöberg, 2000). In a similar sense, it risk has been defined in terms of two dimensions: the probability of an event occurring and the consequences of an event (Albrechtsen, 2008). Hubbard (2009:8) correspondingly defines risk as “the probability and magnitude of a loss, disaster, or other undesirable event”. In addition he defines management as “the planning, organization, coordination, control, and direction of resources toward defined objectives” (p.9). Consequently, *risk management* is defined as a process of “identification, assessment, and prioritization of risks followed by coordinated and economical application of resources to minimize, monitor, and control the probability and/or impact of unfortunate events” (p.10). For the purpose of this report, it is this definition that is used to study risk management.

### 1.8 Structure of thesis

The introductory discussion which outlines the problem pertaining to the subject of risk management in the hotel industry emanates from an in-depth study of relevant literature. With the theoretical framework as the starting point (see chapter 1, 2 and 3), limitations of the thesis are decided upon in order to be able to focus on the implementation of an effective and efficient risk management process and on the issue of hospitality versus safety/security. Based on that approach, the research questions have been developed that later on lay the foundation for the interviews held with managers at selected hotels (see chapter 4 and appendix). Using the interviews as a method to gather empirical data, which then is disseminated, analyzed and codified, the discussion finally connects the theory and results in concluding remarks (see chapter 5 and 6). The figure below illustrates the described structure.

![Figure 1. Research structure and design for this thesis (self-constructed model)](image-url)
2. Methodology

“Using interviews as a research tool makes it possible to go more deeply into the informant’s everyday work and thus bring out their tacit knowledge”

- Albrechtsen, 2008:9

2.1 Research approach

According to Pole and Lampard (2002), a review of the literature is expected by the researcher for the purpose of understanding what is already known about a specific subject. Another reason is to identify gaps in the literature and to find new angles and approaches in well researched areas, or to focus on completely new research (Ibid.). The research approach of this study is qualitative. It is a cross-case study that builds upon existing theoretical concepts. The deductions form the research questions and the interview questions aimed towards the informants composed of middle- and top management at selected hotels across Sweden. This chapter aims to describe the methodology and academic approach of this study so to draw near to the main problem of the chosen topic, and ultimately to answer the research questions.

2.2 Qualitative or quantitative methods

According to Hoy (2009) there are two major approaches to research – qualitative and quantitative. The former focuses on in-depth understanding of social behavior and underlying reasons to such behavior. Qualitative research depends on reported individuals’ experiences of case studies, field work and ethnographic analysis. Quantitative research scientifically deals with experiments and systematic methods which accentuate control and quantified measures of performance.

Pole and Lampard (2002) state that methodology refers to the way research is conducted and its relation to the knowledge which results from the research. In short, methodology has to do with what we know and how we come to know it. Both qualitative and quantitative methods have their respective strengths and weaknesses. They, therefore, constitute alternative, but not mutually exclusive, strategies for research (Patton, 1990).

2.2.1 Qualitative methods

Engaging in systematic inquiry into one’s practice and having an interest in improving one’s practice leads to asking researchable questions, some of which are qualitative (Merriam, 2009). Qualitative research deals with understanding how people interpret their experiences, what meaning they associate with their experiences, and how they construct their worlds (Ibid.). Rather than determining cause and effect, qualitative researchers are interested in uncovering the meaning of a phenomenon for the people and/or organizations involved (Ibid.). Understanding organizational theory can be done by researching organizational contexts, experiences and processes (Marschall & Rossmann, 2010). Observations are interpreted by the researcher subjectively (Zikmund & Babin, 2010). This is often done in a relatively unstructured sense with the researcher being intimately involved and by using a small sample (Ibid.). According to Denscombe (2010) there is a clear relation between qualitative research, its intention to produce explanations based on particular instances, and its requirement of data about procedures and
processes which combined make this method suited for small-scale research. Data collection consists of interviews, observations and documents that are acquired by the researcher being on the field (Patton, 1990). Extensive field notes are collected and sorted into readable themes, categories, and case examples that are extracted through content analysis; “the fruit of qualitative inquiry” emerge from the findings and insights resulting from fieldwork and subsequent analysis (Ibid.)

2.2.2 Quantitative methods
In contrast to the qualitative methodology, the quantitative approach sets to measure reactions from a multitude of people with a limited number of questions, thus enabling comparisons and statistical aggregations of data (Patton, 1990). Quantitative researchers direct their focus towards measuring concepts with scales that provide numeric values (Zikmund & Babin, 2010). This method aims to objectively test hypotheses, measure and test empirical findings in a structured sense by using surveys on a large sample to produce generalizable results (Ibid.).

This thesis aims to study how risk management is adopted in the Swedish hotel industry to ensure safe and secure operations, and to try to understand if hospitality conflicts with safe/secure stays for hotel guests. Therefore a qualitative method has been used. The nature of the research questions deal with how the phenomenon can be understood thus being exploratory rather than descriptive. Another reason for choosing a qualitative approach was because the objective of the thesis is to understand organizational processes rather than trying to test hypotheses or to find causal relations.

2.3 Case study
Case studies are often used in social research, particularly in small-scale research projects (Denscombe, 2010). Case studies focus on one, or a few, occurrences of a particular phenomenon which intends to provide a detailed explanation for events, experiences, relationships or processes that occur in a particular case (Ibid.). Other fields of applications can be when studying individuals, groups, institutions or professions in their current state and context (Gillham, 2008). A case study enables the researcher to explore in detail something which usually cannot be managed with a survey, and ultimately to reflect the overall picture (Ibid.). Case studies provide more opportunities for the researcher to study in-depth to be able to sort out the complexity in any given situation (Denscombe, 2010). This type of approach tends to emphasize the details of social processes and provide a tool to study why or how something looks the way it does. Although the majority of case studies have attempted to discover information (inductive logic), it has however also been used to test theories (deductive logic), but in actual sense it is possible to use case studies in both ranges of application (Ibid.).

According to Gerring (2007) case studies are characterized and defined by being a) qualitative, small sample-based, b) holistic, which requires comprehensive explanation, c) it utilizes a particular type of evidence, e.g., non-survey based, process-tracing, non-structured interviews, or field research, d) the topic is diffuse and somewhat abstract, and e) it investigates the properties of a single phenomenon, instance, or example. In other words, Gerring notes, a case study is an intensive study on a single case to shed light on a larger class of cases. Case study research may also incorporate several cases, also referred to as multiple case study or cross-case study. When the case study shifts from one specific case to involve a sample of cases, the method is referred to as being a cross-case study (Ibid.). In such instance, the study also shifts from being synchronic to being comparative (Ibid.). As Gerring (2007) notes, case study research suffers problems of representativeness because it includes only a small number of cases of a general phenomenon. A discussion concerning the validity and reliability of this study is found in chapter 7.
This thesis applies a cross-case methodology to attain an in-depth understanding of the chosen cases in order to be able compare the hotels’ risk management processes, mainly by deductive logic. In doing so, the study aims to explain the current situation in a holistic sense and explain the overall picture based on a theoretical framework (deductions) and on interviews.

2.4 Sample
Qualitative research involves selecting a sample of observations that the researcher believes will yield the most comprehensive understanding of the subject in question (Rubin & Babbie, 2010). With regard to the qualitative approach of this study, the strategic intent of the sampling process was to select cases on the basis of having a varied, non-probability, sample. This approach is recommended in qualitative, small-scale studies with a small number of units of analysis (Denscombe, 2010). A researcher is expected to attempt to have a sample that is wide-ranging, in different forms, and with different sorts and sizes (Pole & Lampard, 2002). Similarly, Bryman and Burgess (1994), in discussing selection of case sites in a study on schools, note the importance of examining key characteristics of each site. The criteria upon which the selection in their study was based were a) location, b) size of site, c) type, and d) composition. For the purpose of this thesis, a similar method is applied for the sake of simplicity and for the purpose of reliability of this study, although with a slight modification to be able to fit it into the context of hotel site selection.

a) Location: Urban or Rural
b) Size of site: Small, Medium, Large
c) Type: Middle-class, Upper-class
d) Composition: Part of chain, not part of chain

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hotel 1</th>
<th>Hotel 2</th>
<th>Hotel 3</th>
<th>Hotel 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle-class</td>
<td>Upper-class</td>
<td>Middle-class</td>
<td>Middle-class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part of chain</td>
<td>Not part of chain</td>
<td>Not part of chain</td>
<td>Part of chain</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 2. Characteristics of the four cases.

In a similar manner as Gill et al (2002), while not claiming to be representative as a whole, this approach was chosen to provide a good range of hotels with differing characteristics and with different experiences pertaining to safety and security. The hotels were located either in central districts or at the outskirts of Stockholm, Malmö and Lund. The size of site was defined by the number of available rooms at each facility, where 50-100 rooms were defined as being medium. Less or more available rooms than
that number was respectively defined as “small” or “large”. In the category called type, middle-class hotels were defined as 3-star hotels, and upper-class hotels were defined as 4- or 5-star hotels. The reason for not choosing any low-class hotels (correspondingly 2-star hotels), was that most of those types of accommodation facilities were more promoted as being motels or bed- and breakfasts. While safety and security might assuredly be just as important at those types of sites, they have not been part of this project, as discussed in section 2.6 on limitations. The last characteristic was chosen in order to be able to define the risk management process based on whether the hotels were members of a chain or not. In qualitative research there is always a problem of incorporating the most appropriate sample (Denscombe, 2010). It should be mentioned that there probably are other characteristics that have not been taken into consideration. Gill et al (2002), however, did likewise in doing a multi-criteria selection in their study on security management and crime in hotels. In doing so, the four sites reveal an overview that collectively incorporate hotels in Sweden with an array of characteristics that underlie the degree to which the hotels have been working with risk management. The informants at the various hotels held different positions; two general managers, one operations manager, one site manager (as such specialized functions as security managers often did not exist). They were purposefully chosen on the basis of being in charge of the organizational or strategic commitment, development and implementation of risk management.

2.5 Interviews
As illustrated by the quote in the beginning of this chapter interviews enable the researcher to go deep into the informant’s everyday work, something that a survey seldom helps to facilitate. Each case/hotel was represented by one manager. The initial contact was made via e-mail to ask if the managers were interested in partaking of the study. The interview questions were written down and sent to each informant prior to the interview to give them a chance to prepare and have an insight into the purpose of the study. As noted by Gillham (2008), the questions should be written down in an interview guideline; the questions should be tested on a couple of people and if necessary be revised. The interview guideline is composed of 17 semi-structured questions (see appendix). The semi-structured interview has been argued to be most important method of research interview since it entails flexibility that is balanced by structure, hence providing validity to the data (Ibid.). Some interviews took place face-to-face and others took place over the telephone due to making the interview process as efficient as possible. The shortest interview lasted 25 minutes, while the longest lasted 75 minutes depending on how much each informant had to say. Everyone had been given the same questions, but during the interview there were occasionally some additional questions added to clarify the answer.

While note-taking is an integral part of the interview process (Benjamin, 1996), the interviews were also recorded digitally with permission from the informants. By recording the interview, the researcher has a greater chance to focus on the actual interview and afterwards acquire a deeper understanding of the conversation (Ibid.). While on the issue of interview ethics, it was early on evident that several managers expressed concern for partaking due to the mere subject of safety, security, and risk. Some were worried about discussing their risk management process openly. Therefore, it was communicated to the informants that all of the hotels in question, as well as the informants themselves, were to be confidential in the presentation of the study. Instead of presenting the hotels/informants with their names, they are attributed to pseudonyms. Careful attention to preserving confidentiality with respect to the research participants has been taken into consideration. The use of pseudonyms and similar techniques can protect the research participants from the outset to conceal identities of their sources of data (Pole & Lampard, 2002).
2.6 Limitations, reliability and validity

To reach the objectives of this study and answer the proposed research questions this study is limited to examine middle- and upper class hotels. One reason for this is because, as mentioned in the introduction, these are the types of hotels that have primarily been negatively affected, and that are expected to provide safety and security to their guests. Another reason is to focus the study specifically on hotels, not bed- and breakfasts, motels or inns. At each hotel, one manager was purposefully chosen as being in charge of the overall commitment, development and implementation of risk management. Other staff was not interviewed and no documentation (such as policies) or any other source of information was gathered in regards to empirical data collection. This study is also limited to only provide a qualitative approach. Interviews are used to get an in-depth understanding of the subject. In addition, the study is limited to involve four hotels including one manager at each hotel. The study makes no assumption of whether the size of the hotels is related with the commitment it has to risk management. It should be mentioned that the study builds upon on a few presuppositions. Based on the introductory discussion and on the theoretical framework, it is presupposed that hoteliers are liable to ensure safety and security to their guests and provide reasonable care. It is furthermore assumed that hotels work proactively to offer a reasonable level of hospitality, and that risk management is part of the overall function in the operation of the hotels. In addition, the study builds on the notion that it is possible to gap any potential bridge between providing safety/security and hospitality.

The reliability of this study should naturally be questioned and discussed. Reliability, in its simplest definition, refers to a study being consistent (Mackey & Gass, 2005). A study that is internally consistent implies that the results are the same if another similar study would be carried out. In other words, the study is then intersubjective. Research is considered reliable if the researcher avoids systematic and random errors when collecting and analyzing data. The limitations above indicate that the small sample of cases used in this study could result in a similar study pointing to other findings. The fact that the hotels have not been identified could be seen as being problematic since it excludes other researchers to study the same cases. However, the characteristics of each case is presented in chapter 2, which enables other studies to research and conclude similar findings, thus repeatability is achievable since the same procedure can be carried out under similar conditions. Validity, or trustworthiness, is the term used to research which is plausible, credible and defensible (Johnsson & Christensen, 2010). Validity determines if the research measures that which it was intended to (Golafshani, 2003). It is clear that the term risk management, when interviewing the informants of this study, found it difficult, at times, to comprehend the formulated questions in the interview guideline (see appendix). They often found it easier to discuss safety and security rather than discussing risks of different kinds. Operationalizing a few key terms and questions could have been more precisely done. Taking a step away from theory and taking a step into practical application is needed to operationalize important data gathering tools (Kirby et al, 2006).
3. Theoretical framework

“Somehow we must be able to sort out the most important risks we face, determine how vulnerable we really are, and decide where our risk management resources can be most wisely used”

- Abkowitz, 2008: ix

3.1 A brief historical overview
Deborah Lupton, one of the most renowned researchers in the field, notes that risk has become a key concept in western societies (1999). Historically the term was used in an objective sense; “risk designated the possibility of an objective danger, an act of God, a force majeure, a tempest”, which often related to perils that could compromise a voyage on the sea (Ibid.). Despite the historicity of its meaning being associated with travel, changes of its meaning are explained with modernity. The impact of the industrial development and globalization over the past century has been immense and it has affected the way people perceive risks (Nohrstedt, 2010; Lupton, 1999). The word ‘risk’ has changed its meaning. Today it is used in a multitude of denotations and is applied to a plethora of situations. Yet once attributed to an objective nuance, risks today are considered being subjective to a large extent. Fundamental perception of risk amongst people has changed in the way we approach safety and danger (Mythen, 2004).

People are now encouraged to seek for relevant information and to take steps to avoid it as much as possible. From a managerial perspective it is no longer possible to entirely ignore or disregard risks. Risks are now considered as the probability and magnitude of potential negative events that people actually can influence. At the same time, we should have the realization that some risks are simply beyond our control, or too minute to demand priority attention (Abkowitz, 2008). We should become more tolerant of risks in such circumstances (Ibid.).

As established in the introductory discussion, the focus and awareness on safety and security has served to underscore the concern and value amongst travelers. The issue has even turned into a commodity that people are willing to pay for, and that hospitality establishments must be able to provide (Barrows & Powers, 2009). As a result of this trend, there has been a proliferation of private security forces combined with a diversity of numerous measures in order to cope with demand from guests and requirements from governments (Ibid.). Seeing that we continue to witness trade barriers being lifted, and international legislation pave way for increasing mobility of people between countries and regions, it is apparent that globalization has affected the travel and tourism industry. The hotel industry needs to adapt its routines, procedures and standards to fit into the rest of the picture with all of the dynamism that is implied (Ibid.). Accordingly, the field of risk management has grown to grasp the attention of politicians, scholars, and managers. The rapid expansion of knowledge has thus enabled an assemblage of expert systems of risk calculation, risk assessment, and risk management (Ibid.).

3.2 Conceptualization of risk
According to the sociologist Max Weber (1992), risk is a central concept of everyday life. This idea has been widely confirmed by other scholars (Wilkinson, 2010; Denney, 2005; Tullosch & Lupton, 2003).
There are, therefore, reasons to assume that this also applies in the day to day operation at hotels, and in other business environments for that matter. Realizing the presence of risks, and their significance thereof, is a prerequisite to approach risk management. After all, risk is an inherent characteristic of all decisions that are associated to some degree of uncertainty in relation to decision outcomes (Pablo et al, 1996). It is a necessity to first identify what constitutes a risk before continuing to understand the role it plays in any application (Williams & Noyes, 2007).

The sources of risk vary according to different surroundings, and in-depth investigation may be needed in order to identify and classify all risks in detail. A general classification description that can be used in managerial practice can be outlined through the following seven risk sources (Tschankova, 2002):

- Physical environment;
- Social environment;
- Political environment;
- Operational environment;
- Economic environment;
- Legal environment; and
- Cognitive environment.

**Physical environment**
Physical environment is usually associated with risk. Natural adversities such as earthquakes, floods, landslides, hurricanes etc. often lead to losses even though this element depends largely on geographic aspects. Some sites never have reasons to expect an earthquake for example. How people affect the environment is sometimes attributed as an important influential factor in this context.

**Social environment**
Human behavior, values, norms, standards, and state of social structures involve crime, improper conduct, civil unrest, riots and strikes. This is also related to different cultures. Some cultures put more emphasis on workers loyalty towards the employee, whilst other does not. This is furthermore reflected through attitudes towards co-workers and ultimately customers.

**Political environment**
In all countries the political environment poses a risk to some degree, particularly in an international aspect because several external factors can play a significant role to any organization or business. It is also more difficult to anticipate changes in an international arena. To try to impact the political environment in other countries is seldom to be expected from any single organization. Acts of war, global trade, and sudden changes in policies toward businesses are examples of this source of risk.

**Operational environment**
Daily activities in the operation of any business involve uncertainty and creating risks. Unfavorable working conditions for employees might be one such operation. For example, if front office personnel are not well equipped in terms of training or if technological tools, such as the property management systems, are inadequate then the result is likely to be negative for guests, staff, and consequently for management. Failures of installation or production processes are other examples as to how the operational environment can constitute a source of risk.
**Economic environment**
The economic environment is always characterized by risk. In a global market, the risks can be composed of economic recession or currency rates. The local/regional market can also have an influence through credit rates or credit policies. This source of risk can also originate from within a business if, for example, liquidity/cash flow is not managed properly, if expenditure far exceeds earnings, or due to lacking understanding of effective resource utilization. Correspondingly, it has been argued that risk management is now widely acknowledged as the most creative force in the world’s financial markets (Crouhy et. al, 2006).

**Legal environment**
Civil legislation, fines, compliance are examples of legal aspects that businesses should be aware. The legal environment assumes an outlook of obligation for businesses towards their customers, and holds primarily management liable to ensure safe delivery of services of products. Although legal accountability differs from country to country, it still constitutes a source of risk.

**Cognitive environment**
As noted already in this literature review, risk perception has changed from first and foremost being an objective matter to be something that is view upon differently, and that is addressed differently depending on the type of risk. The ability of managers to identify, understand, assess and evaluate risks differs. Therefore, the cognitive environment is a challenge for managers. Bonham (2010) concurs to this idea and adds that this relies on the graders´ expertise for accuracy and sense of consistency due to the subjective nature of risk identification.

Conceptualizing risk is a complex task. The risk spectrum is wide and multifaceted. Some risks are man-made, some are not. Tschankova (2002) further on, states that these sources of risks are composed of three categories: physical-, human-, and financial resource exposure. It should also be mentioned that risk management only investigates risks that raise perils for an organization and threaten its resources (Ibid.).

Risk identification is the first stage of risk management, according to Tchankova (2002). It lays the foundation for a thorough and effective work process (Ibid.). Naturally it is difficult to prevent something without knowing what is supposed to be prevented. The identification process should be thought of in a broad sense, and not only be limited to those aspects that can be insured or mitigated. She continues to state that every risk identification process should be initiated with three basic questions:

- How can the organizational resources be threatened?
- What adverse effect can prevent the organization from achieving its goals?
- What favorable possibility can be revealed?
3.3 The risk management process

The risk management process is not about predicting the unpredictable, rather it is about a process of analyzing and considering possible outcomes, ensuring that an action plan is in place, and moving rapidly and effectively to mitigate conditions as new and unexpected developments arise (Doody, 2009). Several risk management processes, or methods, have progressed over the years. They vary depending on the context to which they are applied. However, the overall objective for organizations to apply risk management in their operations is to enable them to combat an ever-increasing exposure to risks (Ali, 2005).

Oftentimes they are built up as step-by-step processes (Yeomans, 2011; Duckert, 2010; Talbot & Jakeman, 2009; Bonham, 2008). The emphasis that is put on each step differs to some extent. Some processes stress the importance of defining and grading risks according to their potential impact and/or likelihood, sometimes referred to as risk assessment. Others highlight steps of implementation, whilst others focus on control and countermeasures. Despite of the various steps, it has been argued that risk managers must perceive and piece together the entire process in order for risks to be managed thoroughly (Macrae, 2009). Hence, it is a process that ought to be managed in a broad sense to get a comprehensive awareness of the context.

3.3.1 Principles and guidelines – ISO 13000:2009

The International Organization for Standardization recently published a standard that provides a framework on risk management (ISO, 31000:2009). The publication is meant to be applied to “any public, private or community enterprise, association, group or individual”. Its wide-ranging approach makes it useful in many contexts and applications. Briefly, the process is outlined as a 6-step practice.

1. **Identification** of risk in a selected domain of interest
2. **Planning** the remainder of the process.
3. **Mapping out:**
   - the social scope of risk management
   - the identity and objectives of stakeholders
   - the basis upon which risks will be evaluated, constraints.
4. **Defining a framework** for the activity and an agenda for identification.
5. **Developing an analysis** of risks involved in the process.
6. **Mitigation or Solution** of risks using available technological, human and organizational resources.

Figure 3. Principles and guidelines as a step-by-step process (www.iso.org).

The intention of this international standard is that it is to be utilized to harmonize risk management processes. It is supposed to provide a common approach in support for other processes dealing with safety and security. These principles and guidelines do not have any types of certification systems associated to it. Its wide-ranging scope enables organizations to apply it to a wide range of activities, including strategies and decisions, operations, processes, functions, projects, products, services and
assets (www.iso.org). What should be noted is that the overarching concept of the ISO framework is that risk management is fully integrated and involved in the application of the process (Fraser & Betty, 2010). Due to its general and all-purpose nature, managers still need to identify specific risks and set the guidelines into their specific context.

### 3.3.2 Code of practice

Unlike the ISO framework, the government of Queensland has developed a similar, yet distinct framework uniformly aimed at providing practical advices as how to manage exposure to safety and security risks that can arise from the workplace. This code of practice is used as an advisory standard that originally was used simply as a legal framework, but has been used in numerous applications and it has been addressed by several researchers and business leaders. The code of practice has enabled to bridge a gap of underlying need for a standard (Wilks et al, 2006).

The risk management process is outlined as a 5-step practice. Its focus lays in centering the entire process on a function of consultation. Extensive consultation includes and involves all workers doing the respective task, employers as well as safety experts. Hence, “consultation is the foundation of good risk management” (Queensland Government, 2007).
Depending on the size of the organization and its available resources, it might be more effective to perform several steps at a time. For instance, small businesses should choose to approach the process by focusing on implementing one step at a time so not to compromise for lacking resources and continuing with the ongoing step before thoroughly taking preventive measures all through the process.

The preparation phase implies first of all to define the context. Defining the context basically means to take into consideration a variety of factors. Some of the factors that can be mentioned are the type of industry, location of the business and its vicinity, competitors, customer segmentation, corporate objective, and corporate brand. Some factors are external, some are internal. Some factors are tangible, some are intangible. The second phase of the preparation phase is about identifying tasks, activities, work processes and practices for assessment. That means to prepare for the rest of the process by deciding and allocating required resources and planning for the upcoming task.
Although it might be a complex task to initiate the process, it should be noted that methodical and careful preparation is necessary in order to apply the risk management process and enable safe operations (Ibid.).

3.3.3 The PIER-C approach

The risk management process aims to help organizations to control uncertainties. Yeomans (2011) points out that identifying as many risks as possible is a highly recommended best practice, and there are two types of risks: known and unknown. Only those risks that have been identified are possible to manage. For this reason the same scholar stresses the importance of finding all risks, or they will find you. In addition, he argues, risk management should be conducted in accordance with existing organizational strategy, policy and procedures. Assumptions are to be understood and validated for the purpose of being dealt with in a systematic manner. The risk management process should include all functions in businesses on an ongoing basis, and should not be considered as an optional activity. As illustrated in figure 3 below, the risk management process is described as an interrelated six-step approach to effectively manage risks.

![Figure 5. PIER-C six-step approach to effectively manage risks (Yeomans, 2011)](image)

1. **Plan risk management**: Initiating the entire process is done by planning for how the rest of the steps are to be carried out. This step describes the methodology of how the process is supposed to be accomplished.

2. **Identify risks**: The identification step requires developing a list of risks, the sources from which they originate, set out initial responses, and categorize them. This should be documented in a risk register. Each outcome is to be assigned initial ownership; hence it should be clear who is responsible for managing specific risks or risk groups.
3. **Evaluate - Perform Qualitative Risk Analysis:** This is the first evaluation step, and it is a subjective process. The risk register ought to be analyzed based on the risks’ respective probability and impact.

4. **Evaluate - Perform Quantitative Risk Analysis:** This is considered an optional step. Whether or not this step should be implemented depends on such factors as time, priority, level of effort compared to benefits, and so on. Numerically this objective method is aimed to evaluate multiple risks that are related to a specific project.

5. **Plan Risk Responses:** planning risk responses means developing responses to urgent risks that need to be addressed immediately based on the identification and evaluation steps. Responses should strive to address both positive risks (opportunities) and negative risks (threats). Possible third parties may be involved by contractual agreements as a means of support response. For example, security measures might be outsourced to security companies that have required know-how to deal with certain risks, such as focusing on crime prevention.

6. **Monitor and Control Risk:** The final step involves searching for new/unknown risks and reassessing the known ones. Keeping the risk register updated is fundamental for the risk management process to be effective. In addition, the effectiveness of the entire six-step process is to be evaluated to look for triggers and for early warning signs.

Yeomans (2011) emphasizes, concerning this PIER-C method, that the process does not consist of a one-time-event, but rather is meant to be reiterated. While some risks are added to the risk register, others may be excluded over time. It is therefore of great significance that stakeholders and managers understand the value of an effective risk management system. Commitment from every level of management to perform their particular roles and responsibility in support of the risk management system is another imperative key. One prerequisite to implement, maintain and follow up this approach is to have an open and honest communication to include all stakeholders and ensure maximum management effectiveness. Another prerequisite is to have the risk management process integrated with all organizational activities; it cannot be an isolated event.

3.4 **Risk management responses**

Although we find slight differences between how scholars, managers and government institutions emphasize the various steps/phases in the overall process, the responses are alike. According to Pickett (2005), the response and whole purpose of the process is that risks are to be 1) avoided, 2) reduced, 3) shared, or to be 4) accepted. High-impact and high-likelihood risks tend to be associated with avoidance and reduction, whereas high-impact and low-likelihood is associated with sharing of risks. Low-impact and low-likelihood types of risks tend to be related to acceptance. The purpose is to understand their impact/likelihood in order to develop an action plan. What should be noted in figure 1 is that in the bottom left corner are opportunities for a business to be innovative by exploiting risks. In doing so, they have a chance to turn a negative scenario into a positive one without compromising with the organizations´ resources.
In light of figure 3 above, there is a potential of turning risk management from being incidentally a negative issue in terms if simply being a method to avoid future negative consequences. By linking risk assessment/management with quality assessment/management it is possible to overcome this problem. Despite that risk, safety and security research, as well as quality research focus on the internal aspects and processes of a business, quality research has the additional element of taking into consideration external factors such as customers and stakeholders (Steene, 2009). Because of this additional element, there has been two separate discussions without anyone recognizing the similarities between the fields, but by merging the two together it is perhaps possible to interlink a plan for risk- and quality management to be the same (Ibid). After all, quality and safety/security can be considered as two sides of the same coin (Ibid.).

3.5 The Janus face of safety and security

In a study conducted specifically on security management, Albrechtsen (2008) found that managers’ main expectations and experiences can be described as a Janus face. The managers perceived the users of their particular service, who needed to be protected, both as a resource and as a problem. The users were regarded as a resource when having the ability to behave cautiously, being aware of incidents, threats, vulnerabilities and problems, report on incidents or insecure factors, and when complying with rules.

Figure 6. Risk management responses (Pickett, 2005).
Moreover, Albrechtsen notes that it usually is easier to call to mind negative rather than positive factors in research and in daily life. In sum, the informants focused mainly on the left side of the Janus face. The negative side was mostly related to the day-to-day operation. For example, the people who used the service lacked necessary incentives, knowledge and skills for safe and secure behavior. While people on the one hand to not wish take part of necessary safety/security measures, they do not see the consequences of those measures had not been implemented on the other hand. Therefore, people are often familiar with security measures but fail to take heed to them, and tend to give the measures lower priority.
4. Empirical findings

“What we are trying to do is to maintain a level of safety and security without our guests to see and experience it. However, in this respect we still have a lot to learn from the airline industry.”

- General Manager, Hotel 1

In section 2.5 on the methodology of the interviews it was mentioned that careful attention has been given to preserve confidentiality with respect to the research participants and the security of the hotels in question. For that reason each hotel is labeled with a number (with specified characteristics found in section 2.4). It is also worth noting initially in this chapter that the empirical findings are presented thematically, mainly for two reasons. First, to illustrate and compare different viewpoints on each issue related to the problem statement. The second reason is to assist the reader throughout the chapter by presenting it in an orderly and understandable manner. To remind the reader of the selection of chosen cases in figure 2 and to clearly describe each hotel, the figure below is presented once again.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hotel 1</th>
<th>Hotel 2</th>
<th>Hotel 3</th>
<th>Hotel 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Urban</td>
<td>Rural</td>
<td>Rural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Large</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle-class</td>
<td>Upper-class</td>
<td>Middle-class</td>
<td>Middle-class</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part of chain</td>
<td>Not part of chain</td>
<td>Not part of chain</td>
<td>Part of chain</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.1 Organizational plans and procedures

4.1.1 Hotel 1

The general manager is responsible for the overall operation of Hotel 1. Besides safety and security, the scope of responsibility embraces implementation of fire, environmental and working environment procedures that have been determined by the board of directors in the hotel chain. Although being part of a chain, the focus lies more on ensuring safety and security at this hotel than on an equivalent hotel in the same chain in another part of the city due to the location of the facility. Being located centrally means having to manage a lot of movement of people flowing in and around the premises. The vast
number of people surrounding the hotel is the main reason for having organizational plans and procedures constantly up-to-date. When strategic changes are made by the executive management, the changes are communicated via the general manager at each hotel in the chain through a memorandum. The general manager carries on the communication via the chain’s Intranet or at staff meetings that are held on a regular basis. However, he is ultimately responsible for implementing the risk management policy and ensuring safety and security in the daily operations. The owners are not held liable for any potential damage or other negative incidents in the operation.

Hotel 1 is part of Safesite, which is an online safety solution for hotels that enables its members to share information concerning reported crime in the local area. In that way, the hotel aims to decrease possibility of violence, decrease the number of thefts, and increase control about what is happening in the vicinity. Up-to-date information is communicated between member hotels, local police and an affiliated security company. Front office personnel are able to get immediate information about risks, as well as being able to share information, thus working preventive in joint action with other hotels.

Usually it is women who travel by themselves in business that announce concern about their safety, but companies and government authorities do sometimes also express concern about how the hotel manages risks. When negotiating corporate/government agreements, the hotel oftentimes get inquiries as to how they can ensure safety and security. Therefore, the hotel has to meet specific criteria that have been decided upon by international companies and government authorities as a prerequisite to enter into partnership with the hotel, and in order to place their employees at the hotel.

4.1.2 Hotel 2
At Hotel 2, the operations manager is responsible for making sure that the hotel is successful in reaching goals set by executive management. He holds the role of implementing safety and security plans together with the property manager. In addition, each unit has a person ascribed (unit manager) for the day-to-day activities carried out. The front office manager is one such example, where that person is assigned to monitor all of the surveillance cameras.

The hotel is certified by a third-party company called Safehotels that specializes on developing a strategic framework and policy together with partner hotels. The certification program ensures that the hotel holds a certain standard in terms of their security routines and equipment. Once every year the hotel gets a visit from a consultant at Safehotels that checks if the policy is being implemented in the daily operation. That includes, for example, check-ups to see if the staff can handle defibrillators, fire alarms, escape routes, and to see if they are trained in carrying out CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation). The strategic framework is only set the first time the hotel is certified, but the check-ups are done annually.

According to the operations manager, there has been an increase in demand from guests. A couple of years ago the hotel would never receive questions about safety and security as it does today. That particularly includes questions from international guests, and from international companies that require certain criteria to be met for them to send their employees to stay at the hotel. In times of negotiating company agreements, the demand is especially evident.

4.1.3 Hotel 3
The site manager is in charge of running the daily operation at Hotel 3. The hotel has not seen any demand on safety/security at all from their guests. However, since the hotel expects a demand from guests in the near future it is in the process of being certified by Safehotels. It is also a member hotel of Svenska Möten, which is one of the most recognized Destination Management Companies in Sweden. Svenska Möten has classified the conference premises at Hotel 3, and has authorized a safety diploma
that is valid on a one-year basis. Since the hotel is not yet certified by Safehotels there is no safety/security strategy in place.

The overall safety and security is supervised by the general manager who is ultimately responsible. The site manager and the security manager work closely together to make sure that the plans and procedures are implemented. That includes informing staff and making sure all of the personnel are aware and informed about current policy and know how to deal with possible crisis situations. Management, therefore, wish to encourage staff to discuss potential problems during staff meetings that are held from time to time because “everyone is simply expected to know how to handle potential problems”. Staff is trained in knowing about escape routes and about CPR. These training sessions are held once every year to keep personnel reminded of current procedures. However, there is no one in charge of identifying risks, but rather the risk identification process is expected by every employed to take active part in. If anything suspicious or out of the ordinary is found in the daily work, it is expected to be reported to any manager.

4.1.4 Hotel 4
The general manager was interviewed at Hotel 4. The hotel is part of one of the largest hotel chains in Sweden. Being general manager at this hotel has a lot to do with providing staff with necessary tools and conditions for them to deliver hospitality to guests. The vast majority of policy-making dealing with safety and security comes from executive management, and is expected to be implemented via the general manager. Instructions are then further on communicated to staff at meetings and through the company’s Intranet.

There has been a noticeable increase of questions from guests concerning safety and security over the last couple of years, the GM mentions. However, most requirements are put forward by companies and government authorities in their requests for proposals (RFPs). Public procurement for hotel services always involves RFPs with specific requirements concerning safety and security, working conditions for staff, environmental issues. For the hotel to be taken seriously in bids and to be competitive, particularly towards airline companies, it is no doubt that the hotel needs to able to indicate and clearly present to signatories (such as travel managers) how the hotel is working with these issues.

4.2 Implementation of risk management

4.2.1 Hotel 1
The strategy, policy and other systematic implementation of risk management is continuously overlooked and assessed by government officials annually and by personnel on a daily-, weekly- and monthly basis depending on exactly which risks are assessed. For example, staying alert for suspicious items is done daily while there are monthly check-ups on other risks such as making sure exit signs are lit. The implementation is minutely reported in a log book for the general manager to read and to be able to present for government officials when requested for. In addition, the general manager makes randomized check-ups throughout each floor at the hotel. In doing so the plan is to meticulously monitor and control the current state of the hotel and have basic data and a basis for which to, if needed, implement preventive actions. For this system to be implemented consistently there is a set of rules and regulations for the staff to follow. Personnel are obliged to follow these rules and regulations. When any changes of procedure are made, information is presented on the company’s Intranet for everyone in the staff to read. Each manager at the various departments (food and beverage, maintenance, front office etc) is bound to make sure everyone implements these procedures. However, there is no systematic work
to get feedback from personnel. Neither is there a system for personnel to report back to management on how the control measures have been implemented.

For personnel, the informant says, it is of great importance for them to have an influence in the operation of which they are part of. This is because they can at times be exposed to certain types of risks, such as potentially dangerous people or having to extinguish a fire, and thus be vulnerable to certain situations. Due to their vulnerable situation, sometimes it is difficult to find competent and trustworthy staff that can prepare for problematic incidents and implement appointed systems in pressured situations.

“There is certainly room for improvement in having a two-way communication, both down-wards as well as up-wards in the organization.”

By utilizing staff that is well trained and mentally prepared (for example to work during night shift) there is probably a greater chance to reflect stability, safety, confidence towards the guests which in turn gives them sense of assurance. For that reason outsourcing parts of the business is an interesting human resources solution as a risk management tool.

“We might consider outsourcing parts of our front office function to a security company that specializes in providing trained personnel that can cope with ensuring safe operations and meanwhile offer a high-level customer service.”

4.2.2 Hotel 2
As mentioned, Hotel 2 develops their risk management strategy and safety/security policy together with Safehotels. That means the hotel works in close partnership with Safehotels in order to get certified, and also to develop a framework with specific instructions to implement which are assessed on a yearly basis. In doing so the hotel trusts and depends on the know-how and technical assistance of Safehotels.

The annual assessment results in an action plan for the hotel to work with as a tool for continuous improvement. Although the action plan with its proposed control measures is recommended to be implemented as soon as possible, there is no systematic process of monitoring control measures until the upcoming, yearly, review. The review includes checking if staff is trained to know fire evacuation routines, in carrying out CPR, knowing how to use defibrillators etc.

In between the annual check-ups staff meetings are held four times a year for the particular reason of discussing safety and security procedures. Potential problems are discussed, questions are raised and suggestions for improvement are communicated to departmental managers, who in turn are supposed to either take proactive action or to raise the concern with the operations manager. The purpose is to get feedback from personnel. Another tool for feedback is through an assigned folder for staff to make notes and comments on malfunctions and other types of problems in the operation. All personnel are obliged to read through relevant policy when they start working at the hotel. They are also obliged to confirm that they have taken part of relevant information by signing a contract on terms and conditions, and thus are expected to follow up-to-date policy concerning safety and security, environmental matters, Intranet
log-in credentials, and privacy policy concerning which information is not allowed to share with third party stakeholders.

4.2.3 Hotel 3
There is no systematic risk management process at Hotel 3 besides monthly fire check-ups by staff. Each month different personnel are assigned to follow procedures found in a safety folder. If any problems are found, it is to be reported in the folder. These fire check-up include, for example, checking that fire exit signs are working, and making sure fire exits are kept clear. All of the procedures and plans that are implemented at this hotel are prescribed by Swedish law; “these are things that we have to do”. According to the informant, all of the procedures related to safety/security, health, and environmental issues have to be reported to government authorities to show them that continuous work is being made.

4.2.4 Hotel 4
Although there usually is a list of requirements from some customers (for example airline companies) in the bidding process, there is no way for them to actually follow through to check if the requirements are met. This is because travel managers, and other agreement signatories rarely visit the hotel and thus there is no procedure for guaranteeing implementation or any process of continuous improvement in the way the hotel manages risks.

There is no safety/security strategy at Hotel 4, and neither is there a framework at all in the chain. All of the policy, instructions, time tables and routines are documented and kept in a folder. The documentation is overlooked once a year, but there lacks an assessment system of the overall implementation. Staff is trained every two years in fire procedures. No other training is carried out. According to the GM, training is simply something that has to be done as a requirement from official fire and rescue services.

“We encourage our staff to read through relevant documentation that is kept in the folder. It is up to the staff to take preventive action and make sure they are updated in knowing current routines. However, we cannot operate as a police force.”

The general manager states she often reminds front office personnel to have common sense in ensuring a certain level of safety/security. That implies asking guests of identification cards upon check-in, keeping doors locked at night, using panic alarms in emergency situations and avoid emergency exits to be blocked.

4.3 Management approach to safety and security

4.3.1 Hotel 1
Although fire evacuation maps, list of phone numbers to police and ambulance, security instructions, exit signs, alarm buttons are provided at the hotel, it is something that is provided simply because rules and regulations have to be followed.
“We do this because we have to. I do not, however, believe that anyone partakes of this information.”

The primary concern for guests is whether the hotel delivers up to expectation, if the hotel is quiet, if the service is satisfying, if the food is good.

“We do not want to lecture our guests as to how they are to behave, what they can or cannot do while they live here. In my role as general manager my deepest concern is for our level of hospitality and our guests´ sense of well-being.”

The control measures at Hotel 1 have been implemented as much as “reasonably” is possible. There is no specific limit for the amount of resources (including staff, capital, material and equipment) that can be utilized and allocated for these issues since nothing should come in the way of preventing a crisis from occurring. What the hotel can do is to raise the guests´ awareness and try to make them involved in the process. If that would be implemented appropriately it is possible to improve the hotel´s image and reputation. An increased commitment could therefore actually have a double effect for Hotel 1.

According to the GM, these issues are naturally complex and do not offer any simple solution. To a large extent it is a matter of prioritizing where to spend resources.

“There is certainly a package of safety and security that we have to manage while we similarly deliver a comfortable product at a decent price. We are working with balancing between delivering a qualitative product without altering with our guests´ safety”.

There is definitely room for improvement and potential to learn from other industries, such as airline companies, but Sweden is in the public eye admittedly a safe destination. Developing frameworks, policies and systems is much up to the Swedish Hotel and Restaurant Association (SHR) to offer assistance in these issues, and also up to government authorities. Particularly government authorities could have tougher requirements for hotels to follow.

“Sometimes we have the sense that we managed to slip through the system although everything did not meet the standards”.

4.3.2 Hotel 2
By following Swedish law and government rules and regulations there is a foundation for which to base the way the hotel works concerning safety and security. According to the informant, Hotel 2, like every hotel, follows what government authorities tell them to do.
“We have to report, we have to implement control measures, we have to monitor. Surely that sometimes interferes with the level of hospitality we are able to offer because ensuring safety and security must always come first”.

Offering a good product also means offering a safe product for the customer to use, the informant says. Surely the hotel industry can improve. For example, hotel guests have no chance of knowing to which degree the hotel is safe to stay at. Standards differ a lot between different hotels. There is no common framework besides government standards.

“As long as you meet the standards, which every hotel does, it is difficult to know anything about the approach and commitment the hotel you are staying at has, if the hotel is committed at all to it or not. As a guest, you are often left to take things for granted”.

4.3.3 Hotel 3
The hotel is open to everyone, including the restaurant and the bar. Everyone is welcome, and Hotel 3 does not want to give the impression that it is a closed facility. Guests are given the impression that it is a safe hotel because of the fire exit signs, cleanliness, everything is tidy and organized, a diploma hanging on the wall stating personnel are trained in carrying out CPR. There are also signs at every room indicating fire exit routes.

“Who knows if guests are checking these signs, surely some are and some are not. Sadly, the day a fire breaks out I’m sure we will know who have read those signs”.

In general, the informant says, the safety and security procedures in Sweden are some of the best in the world. Especially issues relating to fire, hygiene, and environment hotel in Sweden hold a state of the art standard. However, when it comes to improving management of risks it is up to the guests to ask questions and it is up to the largest hotels and hotel chains to take the lead in making further development. The main problem is that no one is really ready to invest more money since risk management requires a lot of investments in terms of money and time.

“To a large extent it is a matter of prioritizing other actions before risk management.”

4.3.4 Hotel 4
There is certainly a problem in ensuring both safe hotel stays, and meanwhile keep the level of hospitality to meet demands that are constantly increasing. For that reason, resources must be assigned to decrease the gap.
“Truthfully speaking, our problem is money. How much money are we supposed to allocate for these issues? Somehow we must be able to trust those people that visit our hotel.”

The hotel industry can surely improve implementation of risk management, but it is up to everyone to take an active role and especially for the largest hotels to take the lead, according to the manager. The main difficulty is that hotels do not want to cooperate with each other. There is no incentive in helping other hotels. Hotels do not want to share their “secrets” with competitors. Despite the possible outcome of improving the overall hotel service, the tough competition in the industry, if anything, points to hotels taking more distance from each other. If only a few hotels try to improve their safety/security plans they would risk scaring potential guests by being too strict. On the other hand it could also be profitable if successfully be turned to a business idea where guests are somehow guaranteed a high-level product, but that is more likely to be attractive for hotel guests that have enough money to actually be able to pay for it.
5. Discussion

“Risk identification is the first stage in risk management. It is the base for correct future work of the organization with regards to developing and implementing new systems for risk control.”

- Tschankova, 2002:297

5.1 Organizational plans and procedures
The quote above points to the notion mentioned in section 3.2 that to be able to manage risks appropriately, it is of utmost importance to conceptualize and define various risks according to the context to which they apply. Defining, mapping out and prioritizing risks is a process needed to develop a plan for how to manage risks. That is why the physical environment and natural adversities are more of immediate interest in some parts of the world which are exposed to earthquakes, floods, hurricanes etc., while in other parts of the world, such as in Sweden, the physical environment is not a prioritized type of risk. Neither is the political, economic, or legal environment directly seen by the managers in this study as being risks related to safety and security that demand priority attention. As Abkowitz (2008) argues, some risks are simply beyond our control or to minute to demand priority attention. However, Yeomans (2011) and Tschankova (2002) stresses that all risks should still be identified. While they might have been identified, it does not mean automatically that they have been taken care of in any sense. It does, however, mean that the organization in question is aware of its presence and has the opportunity to capitalize on that upon decision-making in the context of risk management. Those risks that were mentioned by the informants were related to social, operational, and cognitive risk types. Risks related to the social environment are managed by having policies for staff as to how to behave when confronted with problematic hotel guests, how to behave towards co-workers, and being aware of how to handle crime related situations. Training staff is another form of procedure that is vital for the operation to function effectively and efficiently without causing any problems for the hotel guests. For example, having fire evacuation drills from time to time is a way to systematically manage risks. In terms of the cognitive environment, the ability for managers or hotels to identify, understand, assess and evaluate risks differs depending on their expertise, consistency and accuracy. Therefore, the cognitive environment is managed differently depending on the professional degree of a particular manager or organization, thus pointing back to the idea by Lupton (1999) that risks are primarily subjective in nature.

The empirical findings indicated clearly that not all hotels have established plans and procedures to systematically manage even those risks that were present. Rules and regulations set up by government authorities apply to all hotels which are obliged to follow them, according to Swedish law. However, it was pointed out that these rules and regulations are not particularly strict. Risk management is basically composed of reporting to the authorities annually, and sometimes even though not all criteria have met the standards, hotels are able to “slip through the system”. It was also found that not all hotels have a risk management strategy. They, therefore, lack a long-term plan for dealing with safety and security. A feasible reason is because Sweden is, in general, considered to be a safe destination and for that reason the level of safety/security is considered to be sufficient. In addition, the empirical findings showed a lack of common standard in the industry. Standards differ extensively between different hotels, and the effect is that hotel guests find it difficult to appreciate the commitment of the hotel to ensure safe stays. For the hotels, the main problem in working with risk management is to allocate sufficient resources. While managers on the one hand agree that the guests’ safety and security always must come first, they
do on the other hand not give much attention to ensure it in any way. It is evident that risk management is still considered as a “necessary evil”, and that ensuring safe operation at the hotel is something that simply has to be managed. For that reason, it ought to be suggested that a common standard for hotels to employ as a tool to approach and manage risks is needed in the Swedish hotel industry. A common standard would in such case be outlined as a step-by-step process as described in chapter 3 and in figure 8 below.

5.2 Implementation of risk management
As established, the risk management process entails analyzing and considering possible outcomes, ensuring that an action plan is in place, and moving rapidly and effectively to mitigate conditions as new and unexpected developments arise. Analyzing and considering possible outcomes is intertwined with the process of identifying risks. Despite the interviewees mentioning randomized and sometimes systematic check-ups on a daily, weekly, monthly or annual basis for the purpose of identifying risks, this process is carried out as a common procedure in the operation. In doing so, staff is merely expected to follow procedure and report on potential problems, but there is rarely systematic implementation of risk management with specific resources being allocated and utilized particularly to ensure safe operation of the hotels. Since the hotels lack a specific process of identifying risks, the effect is that any developed action plan being implemented lacks a foundation. The initial quote of this chapter illustrates that without a correct base for future work, the consequent development and implementation of an action plan will not be an effective one. Monitoring, assessing and reviewing the overall risk management process, as well as for specific risks and control measures, was described in chapter 3 as the finishing steps in the risk management process. The principles and guidelines of the ISO: 13000, the Queensland code of practice, and the PIER-C approach, while they certainly provide different features, these systems coincide that management of risks should be dealt with accordingly in a systematic manner.

Although safety and security policies and strategy are at times used as tools to approach risk management, the policies and strategic framework only enable the hotels’ operation to ensure guest safety/security in the sense of managing physical attributes, such as surveillance cameras and fire equipment. Different management approaches, in regards to safety and security, is evidently not a top-of-the-mind matter in the Swedish hotel industry. The general attitude towards Sweden being a safe destination is a viable reason to assume why hotels are not more committed to risk management. The only systematic function is related to meeting government authorities’ criteria on an annual basis. Furthermore, hotels are dependent on third-party companies such as Safehotels, Svenska Möten and private security companies to uphold a certain level of safety and security. Outsourcing parts of businesses is not a new phenomenon. However, in the context of the hotel industry, outsourcing has often been used at certain functions that require lesser know-how, such as cleaning and maintenance. However, a professional approach to risk management requires extensive know-how and understanding since the effect of not implementing risk management properly can have a tremendous effect in a negative sense for hotels. The use of third-party companies can be presumed to be a future trend in the context of risk management in the hotel industry. A reason for this is because of the lack of common standards for hotels to make use of. Since risk management is not a prioritized field, utilizing specialized companies might therefore be an appropriate solution, but only if the objective is to ensure coordinated and economical application of resources for the purpose of minimizing, monitoring and controlling the probability and/or impact of unfortunate events. The problem with utilizing third-party companies is that these companies might not have full insight into the hotel operation. As noted, the risk management process is not a one-time-event, but rather it has to be reiterated to be fully effective. It should be carried out continuously and not simply with a yearly review. In addition, commitment from every level of
management is imperative to make sure personnel perform according to their designated role and area of responsibility. Neither can risk management be carried out as an isolated event. The risk management process has to be integrated with all organizational activities to be fully effective, as the PIER-C approach and the ISO: 13000 emphasizes. Nevertheless, incorporating third-party companies in the risk management process can surely be a solution to avoid, reduce, share or even accept risks which, after all, is the objective of risk management. Cooperating and developing partnerships with third-party companies can be a method to avoid future negative consequences. Linking risk management with quality management is a means of dealing with risks. One reason is because quality management has the additional element of focusing on external factors, not only internal ones as risk management often does. Another reason is because risk management still has a negative connotation since it often implies avoiding risks rather than exploiting them. Furthermore, hotel guests assume and expect a hotel to be safe and secure to visit and therefore sometimes take it for granted. It would therefore be wise to interlink a plan for risk- and quality management to be the same, or at least to be integrated. Consequently the following question is submitted: is the Swedish hotel industry able to develop a framework to consider risk- and quality management as two sides of the same coin?

5.3 Management approach to safety and security
Pizam (2010) stated that safety is a primary concern in the lodging industry. This study submits that this is not the case in the Swedish hotel industry. The management approach to safety and security differs between different hoteliers and between different hotels. While it has been expressed by one manager that ensuring safety and security of hotel guests must always come first, it is clear that risk management is not always a prioritized function of hotel operations. Another manager expressed that the hotel only implements as much as reasonably is possible, which certainly correlates with exercising reasonable care, as discussed in section 1.2. However, it was also discussed in the same section that hotels should constantly seek for further improvement to raise the standards of managing risks. The foundation for dealing with risk management, that is government criteria, does not help to facilitate the task of continuous improvement. Continuously working to improve standards is also advocated by monitoring and reviewing the entire risk management process on an ongoing basis. Kaizen is the Japanese work for improvement and is often used in the context of quality management and particularly concerning continuous improvement. Aluka and Manos (2006) describe kaizen being dealt with by using a PDCA cycle – plan, do, check, and act. Below, I therefore submit a suggestion for interlinking risk- and quality management for the purpose of developing a strategic framework and a common standard, which could be implemented in the hotel industry.
Figure 8. Interlinking risk- and quality management (self-constructed model based on the PDCA cycle)

Figure 8 summarizes the three different risk management processes described in chapter 3, it builds on the notion that prioritizing and assigning resources is a key parameter as the empirical findings indicated, and adds the complementary factor concerning continuous improvement. However, even if a common standard would be implemented, the subjective nature of risks and the perception of risks put much responsibility on management at each level, as well as on the entire operation. The commitment the organization has to risk management is vital for the success of bridging any potential gap between providing hospitality and at the same time safe and secure stays for guests. Shifting responsibility to someone or something else appears to be a common tendency after analyzing the empirical findings. It was argued to be the role of other actors to take the lead to further improve Swedish hotel’s risk management. While one manager argued it is up to the larger hotels to take the initial steps, another manager proposed it is up to the Swedish Hotel and Restaurant Association (SHR), and furthermore it was mentioned that guests should first demonstrate the demand for improvement by asking and showing interest about their safety and security. Shifting responsibility without taking any steps at all towards improvement should be considered a risk in itself.

A mutually admitted risk management process to be implemented nationwide, or to strive to develop a common standard, this thesis submits, is a first step to further improve the safety and security at Swedish hotels. A clearly pronounced strategy/plan/system lays the foundation for a consistent implementation of risk management. Not because government authorities demand it, but rather because the primary objective for hoteliers is to offer hospitality, thus providing a safe and secure service that is qualitative as a subsequent outcome. Hence, as quality is said to lie in the eyes of the beholder, so does risks. As the Janus face illustrates, it is up to hoteliers to decide whether risk management is a necessary evil or to capitalize on a long-term commitment by being responsible, aware, and careful as well as being proactive enough to report and act in compliance with regulations.
6. Conclusions

6.1 Answering research questions
This research had two objectives. The first objective was to determine how risk management is implemented at Swedish hotels. The second objective was to get a deeper understanding as to how hoteliers are able to handle the contradiction of providing and delivering hospitable services, while at the same time ensuring safe and secure stays for their guests. The approach to reach these objectives has been by first presenting a theoretical framework. A cross-case study was then carried out through in-depth interviews with four hotel managers at different hotels in Sweden. A discussion on the theories and empirical findings was done in chapter 5. For the purpose of approaching the problem statement and ultimately to reach the objectives, two research questions were presented in the initial chapter which are answered in this chapter.

6.1.1 How is risk management implemented to ensure safe and secure hotel operations?
Risk management in the Swedish hotel industry lacks a common standard for hotels to utilize in the day-to-day operation. Current plans and procedures are composed of policies and government criteria. Internal policies regulate how staff is expected to behave towards guests, it regulates training procedures, and it regulates check-ups and reporting procedures. Government criteria and third-party involvement enables hotels to approach risk management, but do not facilitate the organization to grasp the importance and fully commit to risk management. Although providing a safe and secure service to the customers is said to be the primary concern in the lodging industry, risk management is not a prioritized field in the Swedish context. Allocating sufficient resources to risk management is a major problem for hoteliers. The lack of resources spent on risk management is rarely shown until a crisis occurs and it is too late to take necessary precaution. Risk management is a function that should be coordinated across the industry for the purpose of developing and implementing a common standard for every hotel to embrace and be able to utilize in their operation. Not only would it help to raise the awareness of each hotel and hotelier, but also for guests who would get a chance to recognize the commitment the hotel they are staying at has to risk management. A long-term plan is, after all, a prerequisite for effective implementation of most business functions, which a more systematized risk management process would help to facilitate.

6.1.2 How is it possible to overcome the contradiction of hospitality versus safety/security?
The presupposition that it is possible to overcome the contradiction of hospitality versus safety and security remains. This study suggests that it is possible to bridge the gap. A couple of factors have been determined and conceptualized, which indicate that hospitality and safety/security are not widely different entities. First of all, risk management is not an isolated event. It has to be integrated with all organizational activities and processes. In doing so, realizing that hospitality is not only related to offering a qualitative service, but also that ensuring guests of their safety/security is a major part of the overall service, is imperative for hoteliers to understand. Linking risk- and quality management together, therefore, enables managers to get a more widespread perspective which includes and integrates the two functions. In addition, providing hospitable services that are safe necessitates that risk management is implemented on an on-going basis by regularly aiming to raise the standard. Hence, continuous improvement ought to be of fundamental importance in any organization that is fully committed to risk management.
6.2 Contributions
This research makes two significant contributions to the area of risk management in the hotel industry. First of all, it was found that a common standard for the implementation of risk management would enable a more systematic approach. A common framework would also be used as a tool to raise the awareness amongst practitioners in the industry, as well as for guests who would be able to get an understanding of the commitment each hotel has to risk management as they are *infra hospitium*. The second notable finding was that risk management should not be considered as a closed and separated function, which often is the case. Rather it ought to be integrated with the rest of the day-to-day activities and processes carried out at hotels in order to be effectively implemented. The commitment hoteliers have to risk management affects not only the operation and staff, but also does it affect the guests. A long-term commitment of providing hospitality is fundamental in the industry, and safety/security should be interlinked in this commitment. If the primary objective for hotel managers is to offer qualitative and hospitable services, providing safe and secure services should in such case follow as a subsequent outcome. Generally, the study provides better insight into the academic and managerial field of risk management in the hotel industry by focusing on systems, plans and procedures instead of physical attributes which the vast majority of research thus far has centered its attention on.

6.3 Future research
As for future implications it is worth mentioning that the limitations of this study suggest the need for additional research. Including a larger number of cases as well as trying to quantify the number of hotels that proactively and consistently carry out risk management would be an interesting and relevant field of study. In such case the research would help to contribute with a more comprehensive understanding of this phenomenon. Scholars are recommended to research how risk management effectively could be a) implemented by using a common framework in the hotel industry, and b) integrated in the rest of the organizational activities and processes. The focus of the latter could be done by studying benefits of interlinking risk- and quality management. Are risk management and quality management two sides of the same coin in the hotel industry?
7 References

Books


**Articles**


**Internet**


Appendix

Interview guideline

Many thanks for taking time for an interview regarding the subject of risk management in the hotel industry. To give you an understanding of what I want to discuss with you in detail, I hereby submit the interview questions.

This master’s thesis is undertaken at Södertörn University during the spring of 2011. The thesis goal is to study how the hotel industry in Sweden relates to risk management in order to offer its guests safe and secure hotel stays. Please note that the study will not disclose the name of the hotel or any information that refers to specific hotels or persons.

1. Please describe briefly your business.
2. What is your role/title?
3. Have you noticed any demand for increased/improved safety/security from guests? If yes, in which way?
4. Who is/are responsible for the overall safety/security at the hotel?
   4b. If several people are responsible, how does the role distribution look like?
5. How formal is the risk management process at the hotel? (Policy, certification, strategy, operational work)
6. Is there any relation between the hotel’s daily operation and any potential risk management strategy? In which way?
7. Does the risk management process involve all personnel? In which way?
8. Who is/are responsible to identify and evaluate risks?
9. Which methods/approaches do you have for identifying and evaluating risks?
10. Do you work actively with implementing preventive safety/security measures? In which way?
11. Which factors affects your decisions about choice of safety/security measures? (Resources, demand, news/media coverage)
12. How do you follow up implemented safety and security measures?
13. How do you evaluate the safety and security measures?
14. How do you evaluate the overall risk management process at the hotel?
15. Do you see any contradiction in the fact that the hotel in one way strives to be hospitable and welcoming while also offering the guests a secure/safe stay?
   15b. If yes, how can the hotel work to solve this?
16. In which way do the guests know that this is a safe hotel to stay at?

17. In which way do you think that the hotel industry in Sweden can improve its risk management?

I thank you for taking time to participate in this interview.

Contact details:
Roni Saouma
International Tourism Studies, MSc Candidate
Södertörns University, School of Business Studies
Email: roni.saouma@student.sh.se