

# Hospitality

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The industry guide to management and career

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## GOLD RUSH TO SOUTHEAST ASIA

Hotel operators all want a share of the 98 million international visitors in the region

*Destination:*  
**MYANMAR**

*SEDA* embarks on  
hotel security training



*A new breed of*  
**BARTENDERS**

# SEDA EMBARKS ON HOTEL SECURITY TRAINING

Seda reveals its effort to develop the knowledge and skills of their security team through an international training program. Lorela U. Sandoval reports

A big part of the request or proposal of multinational companies now prior to accrediting a provider such as hotels to do business with them is security. At least 30 to 40 percent of client's questions pertain to the establishment's security features. Big companies, like the embassies, even come to the establishment to inspect the facilities themselves and interview their security personnel.

Melissa J. Carlos, group director of sales and marketing, **Seda Hotel**, reveals that information in a meeting with the media. With consideration of such requirements, the management of Seda Hotels decided to embark this year on training courses and certification programs developed by the **American Hotel and Lodging Educational Institute (AHLEI)** for its hotel security managers and security officers.

"The AHLEI courses will definitely strengthen Seda's reputation as a safe and secure establishment and reinforce its emphasis on providing the best protection for its clients," **Andrea Mastellone**, Seda's group general manager, says in a statement. He adds that such programs are important and will serve as an assurance to clients that measures are put in place prior to doing business with them.

Seda is the first hotel chain in the country

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to use the Certified Lodging Security Director (CLSD) and Certified Lodging Security Officer (CLSO) professional security programs of AHLEI, the training and education arm of U.S. hotel industry group, **American Hotel and Lodging Association**. Both programs have been considered as the "lodging industry's highest acknowledgement of professionalism for security executives and security officers."



The Certified Lodging Security Officer Certification Program was launched in Seda BGC in January with security providers in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao and Ed Kastli of AHLEI. Photos courtesy of AsiaWorld Hospitality, AHLEI's local representative.

Mastellone explains that the typical security officer is usually just stationed in one post and isn't expected to interact with guests. But with the current security training programs, security officers will learn and improve their customer service and guest relations skills so that "they can be helpful to guests who need assistance and train them to listen, communicate, solve problems, and display good manners and right conduct."

## Local security professional's take

According to **Joel Jesus M. Supan**, CEO of **Stonewall Security Concepts**, no organization in the country currently offers such programs of AHLEI. But the Association of Hotel Security Officers of the Philippines, now known as **Accommodation Establishments Security and Safety Council, Inc. (AESSCI)**, previously conducted a seminar on hotel security management. He says AESSCI is "planning to revive the Security Seminars and subsequently come up with a Hotel Security Management Accreditation Program."

A former director for security at The Westin Philippine Plaza, Supan likewise discloses that a group of large hotels in Asia recently came up also with the ASEAN Security, Safety Hospitality Management Accreditation Seminar, designed to prepare for the upcoming ASEAN Convention in the Philippines. He further says enterprising security training outfits are taking cue from that.

Supan, who is also the chairman of the Commission on Higher Education technical committee for B.S. Industrial Security Administration, says that, in the absence of any other local program, any hotel security training is always welcome as there's "no wasted knowledge." He suggests that hotels should take cue from AHLEI's program offerings, being the first of its kind in the country as far as he knows, but should include local subject matter experts in the training pool who "can best deliver the programs."

Seda communications manager **Genny M. Puno** confirms in a text message that while AHLEI developed the security training programs, the trainer is indeed a Filipino security consultancy expert, **Ace B. Esmeralda**. Esmeralda is a Certified Security Professional (CSP) and Certified Protection Professional (CPP). CSP is the highest recognition in the security profession in the world bestowed by **ASIS International**, an organization for security professionals, while CPP is the highest certification in the Philippines given by the **Philippine Society of Industrial Security**.

On the impacts of security to business, Carlos says having hotel security programs and an efficient security personnel make it easier for them to promote and market the hotel. On the other hand, Supan says the establishment's reputation is at stake if client's expectations in terms of security aren't met. **INFP**

>> **"Into Myanmar,"**  
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as a MICE city, boasting two convention centers and a golf course. The city is surrounded by three reservoirs, which supply water and power. Internet connectivity is easily accessed in the convention centers and hotels.

"If you talk about meetings, a lot of foreign companies are coming here [in Myanmar] to create a hub. Because most of them need to meet with the government, Nay Pyi Taw automatically is the link," says **Philippe Battlé**, area general manager for Myanmar of Accor.

But as a new city, it lacks heritage attractions expected of Myanmar. Interesting city attractions include Uppatasanti Pagoda (a replica of the 643-year old Shwedagon Pagoda in Yangon), a gem museum, zoo, and Parliament House, among others.

### Tourism development

Thus, hotel developments are concentrated in the former capital, Yangon. Mandalay, Inlay Lake, and Bagan, which is home to 2,200 ancient temples, also receive large tourist arrivals.

As investments pour in, the President stressed that Myanmar

## BY THE NUMBERS

### HOTELS

- 1,106 existing hotels
- 43,243 rooms
- 4,000 rooms under construction

### AIR CONNECTIONS

- Mandalay: Bangkok, Kunming (China), Singapore, Chiangmai (Thailand)
- Nay Pyi Taw: Bangkok, Kunming

### Yangon:

- Guangzhou, Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, Phnom Penh, Taipei, Calcutta (India), Hanoi, Ho Chi Min, Incheon (Korea), Doha, Narita (Japan)

### TOURISM

- USD1.79 billion—Tourism expenditure in 2014
- 2.2 million—Domestic tourists in 2014

### 3.08 million—

- Foreign tourists in 2014 (1.95 million entered via land borders)

### TOP SOURCE MARKETS (VIA AIR)

- Thailand—17.52%
- West Europe—16.51%
- China—11.10%
- Japan—7.37%
- U.S.—5.54%
- Korea—5.17%
- Others—36.79%