

Monday, August 23, 2021

SITUATION REPORT - KABUL

SSI is working with assets on the ground in Kabul to securely transport evacuees to HKIA, and to subsequently marshal them through the passage of lines, in-processing, and the boarding of charter flights to safe destinations.

The challenges are many, and intelligence is often out of date by the time of dissemination, leading to numerous frictions and failures. However, through proper use of Mission Command, SSI is making steps in the right direction.

Moves to HKIA are fraught with issues - not least those of Taliban checkpoints, and what should be a simple transport becomes a nine-hour epic, only to be turned around at the last moment to try again the next day. People must have correct documentation or they are being turned away, and, at the most, they need only carry one small bag with them with warm clothing, water, food, and essential hygiene items.

Once at HKIA, the wait outside is chaotic. SSI has procedures in place to ease any passage of lines, but the mitigation of some issues does not avail the total wait. Patience is crucial, and travelers should be aware of uncomfortable wait times, lack of medical care, lack of food and water, and the potential for insidious violence.

Logistically, travelers who delay their departure without considering an evolving situation, that may include a wait time lasting 72 hours, can find themselves arriving too late to board. "Ground advice", is to plan with extreme urgency and take action before any travelers are left behind.

However, despite these frustrations, and through the diligent efforts of many persons, people are getting out. We must also be aware that COVID concerns do still play a role, and evacuees may need to prepare themselves to be in some form of quarantine for some time on landing at their destination.