

LOST BAGGAGE GREATER THREAT THAN SWINE FLU



Swine flu scares lots of travellers, nevertheless, South African tourists are more scared by the possibility that their baggage may get lost or stolen.

The swine flu is spreading throughout the world causing lots of fears which naturally negatively affects the tourism industry. Governments and authorities world wide are taking steps to prevent the outbreak of the flu in their regions - as South Africa many are getting ready for vaccinations. Nevertheless, as a recent survey conducted by Travelstart.co.za showed, **only 5 per cent of South African travellers fear the disease**. On the other hand, 53 per cent of them are afraid that their baggage may get lost. Airports Company South Africa as well as the airlines are trying to tackle the problem but only with a limited success. Baggage does get lost all over the world. In 2007 alone some 40 million of personal items were reported lost globally. Last year it was 'only' 32 million. According to the CEO and founder of Travelstart, Stephan Ekbergh, **10,000 personal items were reported lost or stolen in 2008 in South Africa**. Many passengers are, however, unaware of the possibility to demand compensation for their lost or stolen luggage. The usual compensation is 20 USD per kilogram but some companies are more generous, e.g. Air Botswana pays 42 USD per kilogram for lost property.

Some items, however, have much higher price like e.g. jewellery or data in one's laptop. It is therefore important to consider whether you should not insure your baggage. This way a passenger can get a much higher compensation. It is also wise to do the common things to prevent your baggage from being stolen or lost like putting your contact information on and in your baggage.

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