

Case Study

Students Evacuated from Egypt Due to Political Unrest

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Situation

In January 2011, a political uprising in Cairo made international news as protesters demanded the resignation of the country's dictator, Hosni Mubarak. Cairo's atmosphere became increasingly volatile as riots began forming in the streets. Almost immediately, EA USA's 24/7 assistance center received a call from the University of California, who activated their ACE Accident & Health travel assistance policy and requested our assistance with assessing the political and security situation on the ground. EA USA activated our agent in Egypt and our security partner to assess the situation and explore options should the University proceed with evacuating the 35 students it had in the country.

Challenges

The US State Department had not yet issued an evacuation advisory which would trigger the ACE coverage to go into effect. Until then, EA USA had to find a safe place for the 35 students. Additionally, once we were able to evacuate the students to a safer location outside the country, we had to make personalized travel arrangements for each student based on whether he or she wanted to return home or join a University of California study abroad program in another country.

Intervention

Thanks to the political and security alert intelligence available with ACE's travel assistance program through EA USA, we were able to get up-to-the-minute developments about the on-the-ground situation in the country, supplemented with information from our agent in Egypt – all of which enabled us to develop an evacuation plan for the University of California students and faculty members, as the climate on the ground grew more chaotic and well before the State Department evacuation advisory was issued.



About Europ Assistance

Europ Assistance takes care of customers when the unexpected happens, anywhere in the world, providing immediate support and assistance to individuals in times of emergency and distress. As the inventor of the assistance concept in 1963, Europ Assistance has handled more than 150 million cases in its 47 year history and today manages 1 assistance every 2 seconds around the world via 39 24/7 multilingual assistance centers. We are the industry leader in protective services for travelers, managing programs for many of the Global 500 and employers of choice.



Working with the university, we compiled a list of students, their locations and contact information and our in-house Logistics team arranged for the initial charter evacuation flight from Cairo to Barcelona, Spain. We also arranged hotel accommodations and ground transportation for the students to a safe location in the country where they could wait until the official State Department evacuation advisory. As the protests and riots increased, the US State Department eventually issued an evacuation advisory and within 24 hours we were able to safely transport the students to Barcelona via chartered aircraft.

Once the students landed in Barcelona, they were given the option to either return home or join another University of California study abroad program. Working with the EA offices in Spain, we coordinated ground transportation, hotel accommodations and travel arrangements based on each student's decision. For the students that wanted to join another study abroad program, we worked with the EA office in that country to arrange the necessary ground transportation and hotel accommodations, all the while monitoring each student's journey to ensure they all reached their final destination safely.

Results

The coordinated efforts of multiple EA offices and agents, led by our in-house Logistics team in concert with the University of California, ACE and our security partner enabled us to quickly locate the university's students and move them to a safer location within the country, providing both the university and the students' parents with peace of mind that the students were accounted for and being taken care of as the political unrest and subsequent violence rapidly escalated. Then using our intelligence assets and our logistical expertise, we were able to quickly develop and put in motion a complicated evacuation plan that allowed the students to go home or continue their studies elsewhere.

