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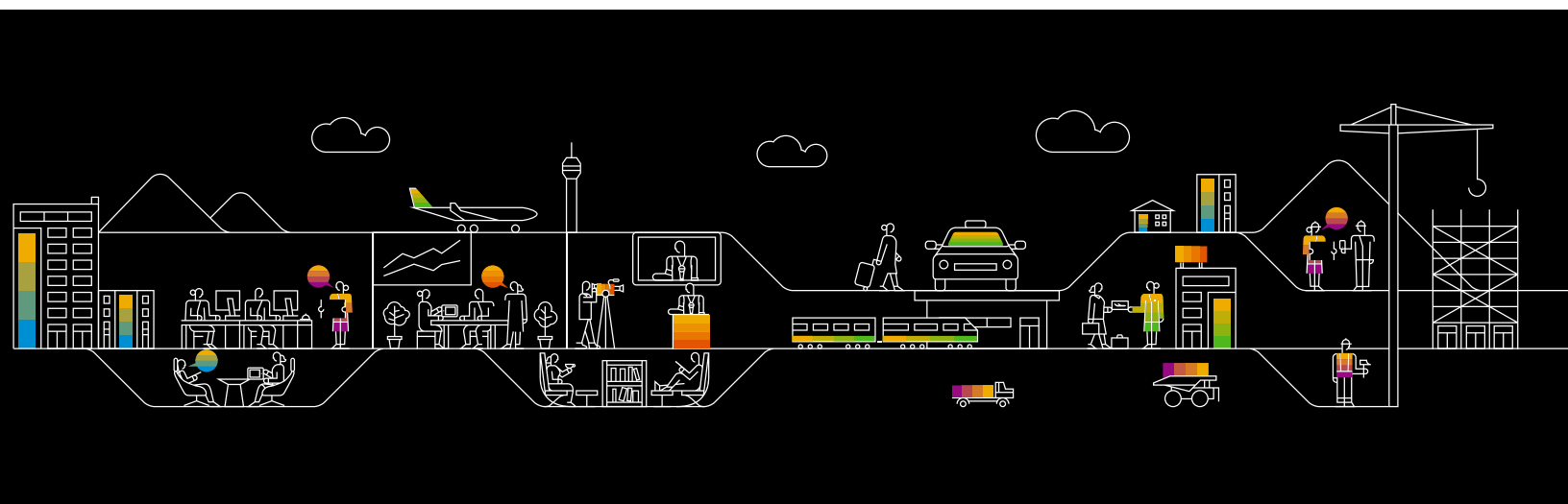
SAP Concur Duty of Care Whitepaper

# More Than a Matter of Safety

## Duty of Care as a Key to Resilience

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## What a Difference a Year Makes

Workplace mobility was already a rapidly evolving topic prior to 2020. Then, in the course of just one calendar year, nearly everything changed. Companies all over the world were forced to rethink what they thought they knew about how and where work gets done. That meant reinventing many policies and procedures designed to manage employees, whether they worked in the office, from home, or in the field. Due to a dizzying pace of change and the emergence of serious new risk categories, employers developed a new sense of urgency when it came to protecting the health and safety of their people.

A few key factors drove the changes that emerged in that unprecedented year:

- **COVID-19.** The global pandemic forced companies to pivot quickly to accommodate and expand remote working models while simultaneously establishing sweeping new infection control protocols.
- **Diversity, Equity, Inclusion.** The Black Lives Matter movement and newly invigorated calls for social justice compelled organizations to examine and improve their own equity practices.
- **Corporate Responsibility.** It became increasingly important for businesses to demonstrate their commitments to issues and goals that prioritized more than just the bottom line.

The thread tying all of this together was a responsibility to keep workers physically and emotionally safe, regardless of location, position, or circumstance. Businesses developed new levels of understanding about their obligation to protect people, while employees justifiably began to expect a greater degree of protection. At the same time, companies explored strategic opportunities to unlock new types of business value in the wake of these changing dynamics.

This renewed emphasis on duty of care, and the shift from programmatic approaches to employee-specific solutions, were arguably among the most important workplace innovations to come out of a very tumultuous 2020.



## A New Normal

Individuals, businesses of every size, and even government entities are now all adapting to changing workforce routines and landscapes, especially with regard to duty of care as it applies to the mobile workforce. Ensuring worker safety in every context and from any location is no longer back of mind. In fact, 97% of business travelers expect a “new normal” for business travel, with some new behaviors expected to persist even after COVID-19 related restrictions are lifted.<sup>1</sup>

Experts predict that post-2020 travel will require navigating new challenges, not just for travelers themselves but also for the employers who require travel. Many restrictions introduced during the pandemic will remain in place, while others will likely emerge. Border closures, travel history requirements, vaccine documentation, and mandated quarantine periods are only a few examples of what will undoubtedly become typical domestic and international travel realities.

“Dynamic workers require a higher standard of care while away on business: one which reflects their importance to their organizations, and the strategic nature of their assignments. The travel risk policies and procedures put in place for the wider workforce won’t meet this group’s unique needs”<sup>2</sup>

– Anvil Group (an SAP Concur Partner)



1. SAP Concur, [Global Business Travel Report 2020](#)

2. Anvil Group, Fit for Growth: Building a resilient and valuable travel risk program for COVID-19 and beyond



## Taking Care Makes Business Sense

With the renewed emphasis on duty of care, companies are embracing the fact that employees who travel are exposed to ever-changing and sometimes significant risks to their health and safety. From a business perspective, duty of care is now seen as a strategic tool; a way not only to protect workers but also to strengthen and sustain organizations.

“For a long time, health and safety have been considered important for business, but highly technical and not central to the sustainability discussion. COVID-19 has changed this perception completely,” writes Francesca Viliani, director of public health and co-head of sustainability for the Denmark office of International SOS (an SAP Concur partner).

“The COVID-19 pandemic has been a wakeup call for all employers [who] have now realized that the health and viability of their business is dependent upon the health and vitality of their workforce. Employers will increase their emphasis on maintaining a healthy and safe workforce as a key driver for the sustainability of their business enterprise. The health and productivity and performance of their workers are inextricably linked to the bottom line of the company.”<sup>3</sup>

– Ron Loeppke, Vice Chairman,  
U.S. Preventive Medicine Workforce Resilience Council



3. International SOS, “[Risk Outlook 2021](#).”

“A clear example is the need to reconceptualize the workplace,” Viliani adds. “When most of your employees are working from home, you need to find new ways to protect and support them. What we can see now is that what started off as a response to an emergency, has led to a more profound change to the operating models, with remote working and flexible structures becoming more prevalent. This will result in a significant change in materiality assessment and reporting.”<sup>4</sup>

Helping prove Viliani’s point is a documented shift in expectations when it comes to how and where work gets done. According to SAP Concur partner Deloitte, 79% of survey respondents reported that at least 75% of their workforce has been able to work remotely during the COVID-19 pandemic, and 60% of respondents will be looking to make changes to existing policies to account for changes to their mobile workforce.<sup>5</sup> And it’s not only physical and procedural infrastructures that are changing; approaches to the human experience of working are also evolving.

### The Executive View<sup>6</sup>

- Executives are showing greater comfort with the unknown.
- The nature of business travel is becoming less structured.
- Process automation and data enable change.

### The Business and Employee Response

- Work is expanding, as are the roles of local, traveling, and remote workers.
- Work is a humanizing, positive personal experience.
- Work is digitizing, with tools built on human-centric designs.



4. International SOS, “[How Has COVID-19 Changed the Role of Sustainability for Organisations?](#)”

5. Deloitte, “Maintaining Compliance with a Distributed Workforce,” SAP Concur Fusion 2021

6. Ibid

## Needle-moving Factors

As mobile and remote working models become increasingly prevalent, certain trends are shaping the global workforce, influencing the employee experience, and affecting companies' approach to duty of care.



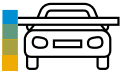
**Remote work.** COVID-related stay-at-home orders proved that working remotely can really work. Productivity does not suffer, virtual tools keep communication channels open, and many employees enjoy an improved work-life balance.



**Environmental considerations.** Even as travel continues, more attention is being paid to the environmental impacts of various modes of transportation and companies are opting for solutions that help them reduce their carbon footprints related to travel and commuting requirements.



**Digitalization.** There is a sensitive and ever-changing data ecosystem at the center of every organization with a remote or traveling workforce. The more complex that web of workers, the greater the need for technological tools that protect both personnel and data.



**Entry restrictions.** Lockdowns and border closures were common during the pandemic. Even prior to COVID, it was not uncommon for regions and nations around the world to prohibit entry – sometimes suddenly – due to political unrest or other concerns.



**Purpose-driven missions.** To appeal to millennial and Gen Z workers, companies are exploring new ways to serve the greater societal good.



**Worker wellbeing.** Increasingly, employers are operationalizing the connections between employee wellbeing and performance. In other words, companies are leaning in on the fact that happy employees are productive employees.

“A large part of reimagining our post-COVID offering comes down to how we use data analytics to collaborate with our customers, supporting them in making decisions and building product offering.”

– Steve Norris, Corporate Managing Director, EMEA, Flight Centre Travel Group

## Getting Back on the Road

As vaccines become increasingly available, travel volumes will gradually pick up, although perhaps not to pre-pandemic levels for some time. As predicted by some industry experts, Asia and EMEA have led business travel recovery as of Q1 2021, with the Americas slower to return to the road. It is also interesting to note that certain industries are recovering more quickly than others with regard to travel patterns. The mining and construction sectors indicate a faster return to both domestic and international travel in 2021 than other segments surveyed, with training/education and financial services also showing strong signs of travel recovery.<sup>7</sup>

Research suggests that business travelers from every region and industry are eager to return to pre-2020 routines, but safety is an even more crucial consideration than ever before.

### ACCORDING TO 4,850 BUSINESS TRAVELERS FROM 23 MARKETS:<sup>8</sup>

- 97%** expect new norms on the road
- 94%** say company-provided training would be helpful before resuming travel
- 46%** say the most important mobile app features include traveler safety information
- 45%** say the trip itself is now the most stressful stage of business travel



7. FCM Travel, "[A Fresh Approach to Business Travel](#)."  
8. SAP Concur, "[Global Business Traveler Report 2020](#)."



# Duty of Care: Now More Than Ever

Folding duty of care strategies into business operations gives companies the opportunity to cover a variety of risk categories that their workforces, both mobile and in-house, may face. It's also a way to say to employees, "We've got your back, wherever and whenever." A robust duty of care program delivers measurable benefits and immeasurable value:



**Crisis management.** Pivoting quickly to establish COVID-19 safety and communications protocols gave many companies an accelerated education in crisis management. It also showed how important it is to have contingencies in place that cover a wide variety of unforeseen circumstances that can put companies and employees at risk.



**Security.** Protecting employees from everyday safety and security concerns is key to duty of care and critical to consider when workers are away from home.



**Medical.** Health concerns crop up regardless of location. When employees are away from home, particularly across international borders, it can be especially difficult to address medical issues safely and effectively. Tools that connect people to providers and facilities can be literal lifesavers.



**Traveler tracking.** Whether a company sends its workers on the road or across the globe, it has a responsibility to monitor those employees' whereabouts, travel logistics, and safety status. Electronic tracking and communication tools can help companies stay in contact with employees to ensure they are safe and secure.



**Helping avoid sexism, racism, and bias.** Women and members of the BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, and People of Color), AAPI (Asian American Pacific Islander), and LGBTQ+ communities have long faced discrimination at home. When traveling, genuine safety concerns can potentially arise. This is a sweeping and growing component of duty of care.



**Employee wellness.** Programs that support wellness benefit employees and companies alike. Most importantly, they provide tools to boost the physical and emotional health of workers. As an added bonus, employee health initiatives tie directly to company health, as they aid in recruitment and retention.

## DUTY OF CARE FUNDAMENTALS FOR THE MOBILE WORKFORCE<sup>9</sup>

- Systematic travel safety and crisis management protocols
- 24/7 support and communication services for travelers
- Emergency contact lists to assist and extract employees
- Employee tracking systems with integrated two-way communications

“The key thing that organizations can do to support their travelers is to think about travel in two different phases. In the pre-travel phase, organizations need to arm travelers with skills and knowledge about the environment they’re likely to encounter. For women and LGBTQ+ people in particular, that means understanding cultural norms to make sure they don’t increase their risks by their own behavior. Or knowing what to do if they encounter more harassment than they do at home. Then, during travel, organizations need to have a platform that gives travelers 24/7 support – someone who will be there to help with a minor issue like a flight change all the way through an extreme situation like a terrorist attack.”<sup>10</sup>

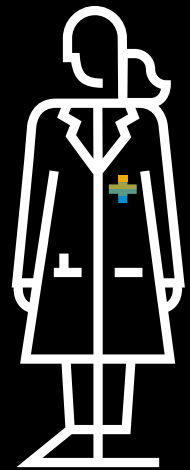
– Sally Napper, Global Head of Security Assistance, International SOS

### SHOULD YOU HAVE A HEALTH ADVISOR?

In-house corporate safety officers have traditionally been responsible for minimizing general workplace safety risks. However, an increasing number of companies are expanding this function to include health and wellness. These “health and safety advisors” are charged with protecting the physical and emotional safety and wellbeing of employees, wherever they may be working. When workers are spread over large geographic areas and exposed to a wide variety of potential safety hazards, this element of duty of care becomes a more significant and complicated responsibility.

“We’ve seen an increasing need from companies requiring a health advisor and a recognition of that role’s importance,” says Dr. Mark Parrish, regional medical director for Northern Europe at International SOS. “After all, companies have legal advisors and security advisors. What happened to health? The position of Chief Health Officer (CHO) is one we see much more now.”

Dr. Parrish adds that International SOS can provide companies with full- or part-time CHOs, each of whom has access to thousands of healthcare professionals within the network. Those CHOs can share tips and information about health-related issues in virtually any country and in most languages.



9. SAP Concur, “[Top Ten Tips for Your Duty of Care Program](#)”

10. International SOS, “[Focus on Women’s Safety](#)”; International SOS, “[Six Steps to Support Your LGBTQ Travellers](#)”

## How and Why to Create a Culture of Safety

Protecting workers is more than just the right thing to do. Mitigating health and safety exposures for employees is rapidly becoming one of the most important resilience and risk management strategies for companies.

According to the Risk Outlook 2021 report issued by International SOS, “Experts interviewed felt that organizations have now recognized how vulnerable they are as a business if they don’t protect their employees from these new risks; in future there will be more emphasis on the health aspects of employee health and safety. Health and wellbeing have now moved to the top of the agenda; it is now for the first time for many companies a board-level matter. There is an expectation not just that there will be an increase in preventative measures, but that there will be an aspect of long-term health monitoring of a company – not just ensuring the business is healthy, but that employees are too. This will in future extend beyond treating the sick or supporting during short crises, to encompass a more holistic measure of health performance.”<sup>11</sup>

There is no prescribed methodology that dictates how companies can and should operationalize duty of care. The right approach depends on many factors. Regardless, the program must contain a cohesive strategy that is easy for every department to understand and adopt.

**Get the necessary departments involved.** An effective duty of care program requires active participation from people and functions across all levels of an organization. Leaders from finance, travel, legal, IT, HR, and other operational areas – including boards and C-suites – should be called upon to champion and design appropriate strategies.

**Arm employees with information.** Protecting employees from everyday safety and security concerns is key to duty of care and critical to consider when workers are away from home.

**Put safety at the heart of travel policies.** Prioritize safety when mapping out future corporate travel strategies. Take into consideration all phases of travel: not just the trip itself, but also safety measures that can be taken before and after any trip.



11. International SOS, “[Risk Outlook 2021](#).”

## Leaning on Personnel and Technology to Mitigate Risk

As businesses get back to travel, travel managers remain one of the most important pieces of the puzzle. With deep understanding of traveler behavior and preferences, they too are paying close attention to duty of care, with 36% expecting enhanced solutions and services to be implemented in the near term.<sup>12</sup> Access to greater resources and close collaboration with finance, human resources, and other departments will be key.

The other key factor to success: technology in the hands of both travel managers and employees. According to FCM Travel, a Travel Management Company and SAP Concur partner, travel managers will be faced with a number of complex variables that will make it critical for them to be able to communicate accurate data to employees in a timely manner.<sup>13</sup>

Given the rapidly increasing complexity of safety concerns that employees face – and that employers should guard against – technological tools that offer the best defense are those that can keep up with that pace and integrate seamlessly with other platforms. Plus, with a range of solutions that can be tailored to individual workforces' specific mobility patterns, companies can customize programs to meet their particular needs. Critically, technology allows employers to scale their duty of care approaches according to the types and breadths of the required data sets.

### A STORY OF SURVIVAL

When an Irish company learned that one of its employees had developed sudden and serious COVID-19 symptoms while working in Iraq, they needed to act quickly to extract her and get her the urgent medical attention she required. The COVID Travel Safe tool from Healix (an SAP Concur partner) ended up being a literal lifesaver, with agents liaising with local authorities, health advisors, and transportation services to determine the best course of action at a time when borders were closing rapidly due to the pandemic. With the family's permission, Healix arranged transport from Iraq back to Ireland via a COVID-equipped air ambulance. Efficient coordination and focused case management, backed by a strong network of agents and providers, meant that Healix was able to navigate flight restrictions and limited hospital capacity to ensure the patient received life-saving care at a center of excellence within just 49 hours of initial notification.<sup>14</sup>

12. SAP Concur, [Global Business Traveler Report 2020](#)

13. FCM Travel Solutions, [Travel Risk Management Beyond COVID](#)

14. Healix Group of Companies, [Suspected COVID Case in Iraq Requiring Evacuation – Navigating a Complex Case During a Global Pandemic](#)



## Tech Tips for Employers

According to Healix, the ability to perform an online travel risk assessment is a critical first step in identifying the best automated tool to suit a company's particular needs.<sup>15</sup> When determining the right solution, look for technology that analyzes:

- Destination
- The health of the employee
- The length of the trip
- The likelihood of community spread
- Availability of local medical supplies, infrastructure, and testing

In addition, seek out tools that deliver near-real-time data to both travelers and employers, including:

- Tracking and visibility tools
- Round-the-clock communication channels
- An immediate security or medical response when minutes matter
- A way to anticipate and avoid location-specific safety concerns before travelers arrive
- Quick adjustments to travel logistics when plans or itineraries change
- Extraction support when necessary

### A LIFELINE FOR STUDENTS

Marquette University relies on the AlertTraveler® tool from SAP Concur partner Terra Dotta to help track and protect the students on its study abroad programs. While the platform delivers everyday duty of care advantages, it has also been key to the university's ability to communicate with and protect students in the wake of serious global incidents. With AlertTraveler, Marquette was able to:

- Track down and confirm the safety of students in London after the 2017 London Bridge attack
- Alert 18 students in Oman about the 2019 attack on two oil tankers on the Gulf of Oman
- Use the check-in feature to learn that two students had traveled from South Africa to South Sudan, a hotbed for violence and political upheaval, and had them return to safety in South Africa
- Inform a student studying in Greece that a student from another school who lived in the same residence hall had tested positive for COVID-19, which she would have had no way of knowing<sup>16</sup>

15. Healix Group of Companies, [Risk Mitigation Tools for 2021](#), Healix

16. Terra Dotta, "[Marquette University: Maintaining Duty of Care with Real-time Data](#)"



## SAP Concur Strengthens the Safety Net

SAP Concur solutions can help you reshape your program to maintain and grow everyone's trust. By capturing all itinerary details (regardless of how they're booked) and adding top-rated apps, SAP Concur solutions can help you wrap travelers in an experience that demonstrates your commitment to prioritizing their safety and their time.

Before each trip begins and while travelers are on the road, you can provide guidance to help them make safe, smart choices, including tools that provide everything from how to navigate specific airports to the COVID-19 protocols in more than 200 cities and countries. This information is all delivered via simple apps that take the everyday hassle out of business travel – alerting travelers to shifts in itineraries and helping them find other options, while also getting rid of frustrating paper receipts.

If unexpected circumstances do arise – anything from virus outbreaks to natural disasters or other issues – our duty of care partners integrate with Concur® Travel so you can support your travelers wherever they are. These solutions quickly identify affected parties, connect with them, and take the steps to get them home safely. Key features include:

- Employee location data that links to HR profiles, location check-ins, and travel bookings
- Continuous global risk monitoring and proactive messaging
- Two-way communication with one, some, or all employees
- Critical security and medical assistance services

“Organizations interested in protecting their people and assets must be warned about impending risks in order to take appropriate action. Risks may take on many different forms. Some risks remain static and predictable, allowing organizations to reliably plan months or years in advance. Others appear out of the blue and require quick action to mitigate negative impact. Through continuous monitoring and swift communication, organizations can ensure they will be able to respond to risks in a way that upholds Duty of Care, no matter the circumstance.”<sup>17</sup>

– Crisis24 (An SAP Concur Partner)



## AMONG OUR DUTY OF CARE PARTNERS ARE THESE SEGMENT LEADERS:

End-to-end solutions to manage risk, track situations, and give workers care and assistance when and where it is needed.

Healix International and its U.S. division, HX Global, provide international medical, security, and travel assistance services for global workforces.

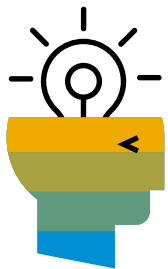
Providing support and assistance in medical or security situations from more than 10,000 health, security and logistic experts across 85 countries around the world.

The leader in higher education software that delivers real-time destination reports and alerts pushed to administrators and travelers.

Innovative solutions that enable multinational organizations to proactively identify and respond to potential threats to people and facilities.

“In a world and business environment which is uncertain and sometimes volatile, the approach to duty of care needs to be flexible to meet the unique and changing needs of organizations. Comprehensive travel and expense data along with powerful duty of care solutions can better enable companies to put their employees’ safety first as they continue working from home, re-enter the office or get back on the road.”<sup>18</sup>

– Kevin Permenter, Research Manager, Enterprise Applications, IDC



[Learn more](#) about how SAP Concur solutions can elevate your organization’s commitment to duty of care.

17. Crisis24, “[Duty of Care](#)”

18. SAP Concur Team, “[New SAP Concur Duty of Care Partner Network](#)”



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