

ISLAND SECURITY POLICY INSTITUTE

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WHITE PAPER

Corporate Security and ESG Risk Policy for Island and Pacific Operations

*What Corporations Operating in Hawaii and the Pacific Must
Build — Not Just Disclose*

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- **Continental corporate security frameworks systematically underestimate five categories of risk specific to island operating environments: supply chain singularity and business continuity, insider threat in tourism and hospitality workforces, emergency preparedness duty of care under geographic isolation, ESG accountability to indigenous and Pacific Island communities, and reputational risk in close-knit island social environments.**
- **The gap between continental corporate security assessment and island operational reality creates legal liability that corporations may not recognize until an incident occurs — at which point the inadequacy of their security and preparedness framework becomes a documented failure of duty of care.**
- **ESG frameworks that treat a land acknowledgment statement as adequate community accountability in Native Hawaiian and Pacific Island operating contexts expose corporations to reputational and regulatory risk from increasingly sophisticated indigenous community governance bodies.**
- **Corporations that invest in island-calibrated security and ESG frameworks gain competitive advantages in employee recruitment and retention, community relationship quality, regulatory relationship management, and reputational resilience that more than offset the investment cost.**

A major international hotel corporation operating in Hawaii completed a comprehensive security and ESG risk assessment in 2023. The assessment was conducted by a continental security consulting firm using a standard operational risk framework. It was professionally executed and substantially inadequate for the Hawaii operational context — because the framework applied was designed for continental operating environments and did not account for the five structural differences that make corporate security and ESG risk in island communities fundamentally different from continental corporate security practice.¹

I. The Five Structural Gaps

Gap 1: Supply Chain Singularity and Business Continuity

Continental business continuity planning assumes supply disruption scenarios of hours to days with alternative sourcing options available within the disruption window.² Island business operations face supply chain disruption scenarios that can extend to weeks with no alternative sourcing mechanism when port infrastructure is damaged or suspended. A resort in Hawaii that depends on

daily fresh food deliveries from Honolulu's commercial port has no business continuity plan adequate for a major emergency that disrupts port operations for two weeks — because the business continuity plan was written by consultants whose continental frameworks treat two-week supply disruptions as extreme outliers rather than documented island emergency realities.

Gap 2: Insider Threat in Island Hospitality and Tourism Workforces

Hawaii's hospitality industry operates with workforce characteristics that create insider threat risk profiles that standard corporate security frameworks do not address.³ High turnover rates averaging 73 percent annually create persistent gaps in individual behavioral baseline assessment. Large physical access footprints — where dozens to hundreds of employees have legitimate access to guest accommodations, business facilities, and data systems — create insider threat surface area that access control systems cannot fully manage without disrupting operational requirements. The compound of these factors with the social density of small island community workforces produces a hospitality insider threat profile that neither standard hospitality security frameworks nor standard insider threat frameworks adequately captures.

Gap 3: Emergency Preparedness Duty of Care

Corporations operating in island environments have a legal duty of care to employees and guests that includes emergency preparedness planning calibrated to island-specific hazards and geographic constraints.⁴ Mainland emergency preparedness templates applied without island-specific modification — particularly regarding evacuation route constraints, law enforcement response times, mutual aid limitations, and supply chain disruption duration — represent both a safety gap and a documented legal liability. The August 2023 Lahaina wildfire produced significant wrongful death litigation based substantially on the argument that responsible parties failed to exercise adequate duty of care in emergency preparedness and response.

Gap 4: ESG Accountability to Indigenous Communities

The specific ESG accountability dimensions that matter most in Native Hawaiian and Pacific Island operating contexts include: transparent accounting of impacts on Native Hawaiian cultural resources and practices; meaningful engagement with Native Hawaiian governance bodies in operational decisions affecting Hawaiian cultural landscapes; revenue sharing and community benefit agreements providing direct economic participation; and security and access practices that do not criminalize or restrict Native Hawaiian cultural practices on or adjacent to corporate properties.⁵

Gap 5: Reputational Risk in Close-Knit Island Communities

Corporations operating in island communities operate in social environments where reputational events propagate rapidly and durably through dense,

persistent social networks. A labor relations dispute, a security incident involving community members, or an environmental incident that affects community resources can become a defining community narrative that persists for years — affecting employee recruitment, community relationship quality, regulatory relationships, and customer perception in ways that reputational risk frameworks calibrated for large anonymous metropolitan markets do not anticipate.

II. Policy Recommendations

1. Integrate island-specific security and ESG risk assessment into corporate governance requirements for companies with significant Hawaii and Pacific Island operations — requiring disclosure of island supply chain resilience, emergency preparedness adequacy, and indigenous community ESG accountability.
2. Develop Hawaii-specific corporate ESG accountability standards in partnership with Native Hawaiian governance bodies — standards developed through genuine partnership rather than adapted from continental corporate ESG frameworks.
3. Establish corporate duty of care standards for island emergency preparedness in Hawaii state law — defining the minimum island-calibrated preparedness requirements that fulfill the duty of care obligation for corporations with employees and guests in Hawaii and Pacific Island operating environments.
4. Commission ongoing corporate security and ESG practice research in Hawaii and Pacific Island operating contexts through ISPI and similar institutions — providing the empirical basis for regulatory standard development and investor accountability.

III. Conclusion

Corporations operating in Hawaii and Pacific Island environments face security and ESG risks that continental frameworks were not designed to identify. The gap between continental framework assessment and island operational reality is a fundamental mismatch between the structural assumptions embedded in the frameworks and the structural realities of island operating environments. ISPI accepts commissions for corporate security assessments, ESG accountability framework development, emergency preparedness policy review, and indigenous community engagement policy for corporations operating in Hawaii, Pacific Island territories, and island environments worldwide. Contact ISPIGlobal@proton.me or visit ispiglobal.com/commission.

NOTES AND REFERENCES

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The Island Security Policy Institute (ISPI) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan research organization based in Honolulu, Hawaii. ISPI produces practitioner-led research, policy analysis, training programs, and commissioned research on public safety, emergency preparedness, insider threat, and security policy for island and coastal communities worldwide. ISPI is registered as a federal contractor on SAM.gov under NAICS 541720. Warren Pulley, Founder & Executive Director.

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