



# Allmode

**INTERNATIONAL SECURITY SERVICES**

## **Caribbean Yacht Security Bulletin (Maritime)**

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Section 800 – Intelligence

**Yacht Safety and Security**

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## Yacht Safety and Security

Recent events hitting the headlines regarding the murder of a British Businessman in a robbery gone wrong in a St. Lucian port, has brought Yacht owners safety to the forefront. It is for the safety of all yacht owners and tourist alike that we seek to reiterate advice that may enable you to make an informed decision as to where you travel and what precautions you can take.

Security has always been a problem in Caribbean waters. Combined with a mix of outwardly wealthy yacht owners with an increasingly poor and unemployed local community in an ever increasing corridor between the world's biggest drug trafficking countries and the world's biggest market of users, you create a recipe for disaster.

Gang culture has become so endemic in the Caribbean Islands that Anti-Gang legislation has been introduced in some, but not all of the islands. This in itself has been hard to implement and the definition of gang member becomes hard to prove.

It has been recognised that even in the smaller islands, the problems of gang and drug related crimes are not just an urban or inner city phenomenon. It has spread to encompass suburban communities and brings along the crime and disregard for life that is associated with both. Prolific drug use is increasing, as trafficking gangs pay their surrogates in kind, creating a local market for cocaine and crack cocaine.

These traffickers are known to openly carry weapons and the low morale of the police, who earn about \$500 a month, does not make attempts to tackle such gangs an attractive option.

Addressing the security issues in the Caribbean, a popular website has been set up to alert yacht-owners and tourists to the up to date advice.

Visit: [www.safetyandsecuritynet.com](http://www.safetyandsecuritynet.com)

### **Allmode Safety and Security Tips for Yachts visiting the Caribbean:**

- Always ensure that your boat is properly locked and secured at all times and make boarding your yacht as difficult as possible for unwanted visitors.
- Do not anchor your boat in deserted anchorages. If you feel that you want to moor in a deserted bay, let someone from the nearest port authority know that you will be doing it.
- Ensure that you hire contractors known to the boatyards, the local marine trades association and other cruisers. Do not hire someone "off the street" to work for you. They must all be vetted and approved by the local port authority.
- Become acquainted with the cruisers around you, look out for suspicious behaviour by unknown persons and let the local authorities know if you suspect anything.

- Be aware of your surroundings. Use the daily HF radio voice net, 8104 USB at 0815 AST. The daily voice net receives and transmits incident reports and general safety and security related news items as well as communicating boat watches, reporting hazards to navigation (both natural and manmade) and provides other information by request.
- When handling cash and/or credit cards in public places (ATMs, banks, shops etc.) always shield your number and don't go alone.
- As always, it is preferable not to carry large sums of cash with you; leave your cash in a safe place: the bank, hotel safe boxes or ask your boatyard/marina if they provide services for securing valuables.
- Credit cards are more secure, so pay with those rather than carry large amounts of cash.
- Do not invite strangers onto your vessel. People you met in bars may not be as friendly as they first appeared and do not discuss your travel plans with strangers or brag about what you have.
- Pull your dinghies out of the water at night and make sure that they are properly locked to your vessel, dinghy and outboard motor theft ranks amongst the highest yacht related crimes committed in the Caribbean
- Travel in groups as much as you can – particularly when taking public transportation or walking on the road. The buddy-buddy system means more safety in numbers.
- The use of controlled drugs such as cocaine, marijuana etc. is against the law, if you are approached to buy these drugs firmly decline.
- Breaking these laws carry stiff penalties – and can result in long custodial sentences.
- Report all incidents of crime to the relevant authorities, including the police, port authority and the Foreign Office.
- In the unlikely event you are confronted do not resist. Give the criminal whatever he wants, wallet, keys, jewellery, credit cards, mobile 'phone, etc... Your possessions are replaceable.
- If confronted, don't make any sudden, unexpected moves. A nervous criminal may think you are reaching for a concealed weapon.
- If the robber claims he has a gun or knife in his pocket, you may not believe him but never call his bluff, you could be wrong.
- Never try to be a hero and apprehend the robbers. They are most likely taking drugs and will therefore not act in a rational manner. Nothing is worth risking your life.

Most of the above advice is common sense, but many love struck tourists or holiday makers in general seem to leave this at home, adopting an attitude that on holiday everything is rosy.

Nowhere in the world is completely safe, but the responsibility lies with the individuals to seek as much help and advice regarding their destinations as is available.

Social media is the prominent source of communication and this needs to be monitored and closely scrutinised so as not to put you in unnecessary danger. Likewise, it can provide an endless source of relevant and up to date information on your destination. Use it, along with local sources, agents and local newspapers to get a real life feel for a place, this will allow you to take the necessary precautions.

If you are on board a chartered yacht and you feel that your safety is at risk, speak to the Captain who may be happy to take extra precautions, such as round the clock watch, to help alleviate your fear.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION ON SECURITY OR INTELLIGENCE PLEASE CONTACT**

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