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YUTA National Associations of Tourist Agencies has brought to our attention today, on behalf of its member agencies selling tourist arrangements for the Halkidiki region, and drawing upon the experiences of a large number of travelers, the situation in Halkidiki, more specifically Kasandra area. Namely, due to cutting costs in Greece in 2012, the competent Greek authorities decided to close down the police station in a place called Polihrono, which covered the resorts of Polihrono, Hanioti and Pefkohori.

In these circumstances, the nearest police station is located some 30km away from Pefkohori and which, as is known, staffed with 6-10 police officers working in all the three shifts patrolling the entire region of about 100km in diameter and the resorts like Nea Fokea, Kalithea, Kriopigi, Polihrono, Hanioti, Pefkohori, Siviri, Furka.....

In the event of breaking and entering apartments (and hotel rooms), as a rule, it takes 30 to 60 minutes for police to arrive to the scene to make a report after the incident has been reported. However, in cases where police come and make on-the-scene report, the injured party is to file a complaint against the unidentified persons and go to the police station in Kasaidria (sometimes 30km away in one direction). Since this is highly time consuming for the injured party (it sometimes takes a whole day), many tourists give up pressing charges. There is an impression that some criminals know that and unscrupulously commit crimes without any fear that they might be caught.

In the case of Sole Azur travel agency, on 21 June, a grand larceny was committed in Polihrono. The police was informed and it made its on-sight report almost two hours later. Police officers asked the injured parties to go to Kassandria with them. They refused because the incident happened on the last day of their holiday (incidentally, police officers made comments to the effect that chances were thin for the perpetrators to be tracked down.).

In its notice, YUTA requested assistance from the Serbian Embassy in Athens and/or the Consulate General in Thessaloniki to ensure police backup in this tourist region.