



Protecting the 'Rebel Billionaire'

By Andrea Gural

VAN NUYS, Calif. - Exotic locations are par for the course for the production company behind the new reality show "The Rebel Billionaire: Branson's Quest for the Best," but executives at Bunim-Murray Productions, producers of the series, knew that security in these locations was not to be taken for granted.

Starring self-made billionaire, Richard Branson, founder of the Virgin Group of Companies, "The Rebel Billionaire" and its cast and crew traveled to the southern African nations of Mozambique, Zimbabwe and South Africa, and then to Marrakech, Morocco. The show puts 16 aspiring billionaires through a series of tests and stunts; cast members are eliminated as the show progresses.



"It's very rough in terms of civil wars, corruption, and other serious violence issues," said Robert Seiden, president of Fortress Global, a global investigations and protection firm based in Great Neck, N.Y. Along with Branson's own executive protection team, fully armed Fortress Global protection agents accompanied the star as the show filmed a series of episodes in the African locations. Protection agents from Fortress Global's Johannesburg office, some of whom had protected former South African leader Nelson Mandela, handled that assignment.

Seiden said he wasn't able to disclose how many people Fortress Global was tasked with overseeing. For each member of the cast and crew, the security company secured travel routes, obtained visas and arranged for the television group to have "VIP" treatment through customs and immigration.

Source: Security Director News