



KIDNAPPING AND RANSOM

A simple guide

“Better safe than sorry!”

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Joined the Johannesburg Traffic Department in 1969 and rose to the rank of Assistant Superintendent. During his career, four years were spent with the Sandton Town Council where he headed the accident bureau and formed the research and planning section of the department. Other posts included instructor in the academy, traffic observer in the Radio Highveid helicopter and in 1983 was appointed the first public relations officer to a traffic department in the country.

In 1988 he joined Dion Stores as a regional loss control manager and was appointed group loss control manager in the following year.

In 1990 Errol moved to the OK Bazaars where he specialised as a shrinkage Auditor. In 1995 he was appointed loss control executive, OK Stores, and in 1997 to group risk manager.

In 1998 he formed his own security risk consulting business where he specialised in audits, surveys, investigations and presented various awareness and training courses. He lectures on a part time basis at Damelin College and has been appointed subject head for security in the management school.

In 2002 he was appointed as Managing Director of BTC Training (Africa) (Pty) Ltd.

He is a Fellow of the South African Institute of Security and the current Chairman of the Board of Governors, a Certified Fraud Examiner of the Association of Certified Fraud Examiners, USA, a member of the British Security Institute and an associate member of the International Institute of Security & Safety Management. He served on the Special Events and Armed Robbery Survival Skills task team of the Security SGB.

He is an Assessor and Moderator for the Service and SASSETA.

He also obtained a diploma in Security Management from UNISA.

Errol has developed and presented a variety of training courses on Retail Loss Control, Shrinkage and Security. He has also developed and presented training packages on the Occupational Health and Safety Act, fraud, advanced motoring and a seven-module management and business development course.

TOPICS

❖ Kidnapping in Foreign Countries	Page 4
❖ Surviving Kidnapping	Page 5
❖ Surviving Airports	Page 7
❖ Surviving Public Hotel Crime	Page 7
❖ Tiger Kidnapping	Page 8
❖ Survival Planning	Page 8

Kidnapping in Foreign Countries

Kidnapping is a real and dangerous threat in many countries. The only guaranteed way to avoid kidnapping is not to go to risky areas. Since this is impractical for many travellers, the next best thing is to be aware of the risks.

Below are kidnapping statistics for various countries. Please bear in mind that only a tiny fraction [10% ?] of all kidnapping cases are reported to authorities for fear that it will trigger further kidnappings.

Rank	Country	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	Total
1	Colombia	464	244	217	469	947	908	960	972	5,181
2	Mexico	46	87	31	48	109	275	436	402	1,269
3	Former Soviet Union*	5	5	13	3	21	41	57	105	250
4	Brazil	94	66	73	56	65	67	43	51	515
5	Philippines	53	56	78	61	113	61	51	39	492
6	Nigeria	1	0	0	1	0	2	6	24	34
7	India	9	10	13	9	5	8	5	17	76
8	Ecuador	1	10	15	11	7	5	5	12	66
9	Venezuela	15	6	7	7	28	24	10	12	109
10	South Africa	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	10	11
	Total	683	484	447	666	1295	1391	1573	1644	7773

Source: Hiscox Group "(The statistics are based on those cases about which Hiscox has obtained reasonably reliable information and do not purport to represent the full extent of the problem.) * Former Soviet Union comprises the Russian Federation and the 14 fully independent republics of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Estonia, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan"

Other numbers:

Amnesty International Report 2001

Colombia:

More than 300 disappearances, more than 4,000 political killings and about 1,500 kidnappings by the factions involved in the country's armed conflict. 300,000 people displaced.

Surviving Kidnapping

Kidnapping is rampant in many parts of the world -- in fact it is a thriving business in many countries. The U.S. Government provides tips on what you should do when things go bad. The following is excerpted from DEPARTMENT OF STATE PUBLICATION 10217: Security Awareness Overseas, An Overview [Bureau of Diplomatic Security - United States Department of State Overseas Security Advisory Council].

Kidnappings

Kidnapping is a terrifying experience, but you possess more personal resources than you may be aware of to cope with the situation. Remember, you are only of value to them alive, and they want to keep you that way.

The common hostage responses of fear, denial, and withdrawal are all experienced in varying degrees. You may be blindfolded, drugged, handled roughly, or even stuffed in the trunk of a car. If drugs are administered, do not resist. Their purpose will be to sedate you and make you more manageable; these same drugs may actually help you to get control of your emotions, which should be your immediate goal. If conscious, follow your captors' instructions.

Captivity

A hostage-taking situation is at its worst at the onset. The terrorists are nervous and unsure, easily irritated, often irrational. It is a psychologically traumatic moment for the hostage. Violence may be used even if the hostage remains passive, but resistance could result in death.

If taken hostage, your best defense is passive cooperation. You may be terrified, but try to regain your composure as soon as possible and to organize your thoughts. Being able to behave rationally increases your chances for survival. The more time that passes, the better your chances of being released alive.

Behavior Suggestions

Each captivity is different, but some behaviour suggestions apply to most:

- ❖ Try to establish some kind of rapport with your captors. Family is a universal subject. Avoid political dialogues, but listen attentively to their point of view. If you know their language, listen and observe; and if addressed, use it.
- ❖ Plan on a lengthy stay, and determine to keep track of the passage of time. Captors may attempt to confuse your sense of time by taking your watch, keeping you in a windowless cell, or serving meals at odd hours. However, you can approximate time by noting, for example, changes in temperatures between night and day; the frequency and intensity of outside noises—traffic, whistles, birds; and by observing the alertness of guards.
- ❖ Maintain your dignity and self-respect at all times.
- ❖ Manage your time by setting up schedules for simple tasks, exercises, daydreaming, housekeeping.
- ❖ Build relations with fellow captives and with the terrorists. If hostages are held apart, devise ways to communicate with one another. Where hostages are moved back and forth, to bathrooms for example, messages can be written and left. However, do not jeopardize your safety or the safety or treatment of others if attempting to communicate with fellow captives seems too risky.
- ❖ Maintain your physical and mental health; it is critical to exercise body and mind. Eat food provided without complaint; keep up your strength. Request medical treatment or special medicines if required.

- ❖ Establish exercise and relaxation programs. Exercise produces a healthy tiredness and gives you a sense of accomplishment. If space is confined, do isometrics. Relaxation reduces stress. Techniques include meditation, prayer, daydreaming. • Keep your mind active; read anything available. Write, even if you are not allowed to retain your writings. If materials are not available, mentally compose poetry or fiction, try to recall Scripture, design a house, even “play tennis” (as one hostage did).
- ❖ Take note of the characteristics of your captors and surroundings: their habits, speech, contacts; exterior noises (typical of city or country); and other distinctive sounds. This information could prove very valuable later.

If selected for early release, consider it an opportunity to help remaining hostages. Details you have observed on the terrorists and the general situation can assist authorities with a rescue.

You can expect to be accused of working for the government's intelligence service, to be interrogated extensively, and to lose weight. You may be put in isolation; your captives may try to disorient you. It is important that you mentally maintain control.

Avoidance of Capture or Escape

Efforts to avoid capture or to attempt escape have in most cases been futile. The decision, however, is a personal one, although it could affect fellow hostages by placing them in jeopardy. Several other considerations should be weighed.

To have any chance of success, you should be in excellent physical condition and mentally prepared to react before the terrorists have consolidated their position. This, also, is the riskiest psychological time. You would need to have a plan in mind, and possibly have been trained in special driving tactics or other survival skills.

If you are held in a country in which you would stand out because of race or other physical characteristics, if you know nothing of the language or your location, or if you are held in a country where anti-American or anti-Western attitudes prevail, you should consider the consequences of your escape before attempting it. If you conclude that an escape attempt is worthwhile, take terrorists by surprise and you may make it. If their organization has a poor track record of hostage safety, it may be worth the risk.

Rescue

The termination of any terrorist incident is extremely tense. If an assault force attempts a rescue, it is imperative that you remain calm and out of the way. Make no sudden moves or take any action by which you could be mistaken for a terrorist and risk being injured or killed.

Even in a voluntary release or surrender by the terrorists, tensions are charged and tempers volatile. Very precise instructions will be given to the hostages, either by the captors or the police. Follow instructions precisely. You may be asked to exit with hands in the air, and you may be searched by the rescue team. You may experience rough treatment until you are identified and the situation has stabilized.

Finally, it's worth keeping in mind three facts about terrorism:

- ❖ The overwhelming majority of victims have been abducted from their vehicles on the way to or from work.
- ❖ A large number of people taken hostage ignored the most basic security precautions.
- ❖ Terrorist tactics are not static. As precautions prove effective, they change their methods. There is a brief “window of vulnerability” while we learn to counter their new styles.

Additional Precautions

- ❖ Do not settle into a routine. Vary times and routes to and from work or social engagements.
 - ❖ Remember, there is safety in numbers. Avoid going out alone. When travelling long distances by automobile, go in a convoy. Avoid back country roads and dangerous areas of the city.
 - ❖ A privately owned car generally offers the best security. Avoid luxury or ostentatious cars. Keep your automobile in good repair and the gas tank at least half full. Driving in the centre lane of a multiple lane highway makes it difficult for the car to be forced off the road.
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Surviving Airports

Airports are a hassle. You want to avoid death before you even arrive at your final destination so here are some tips the U.S. Government provides to help you avoid such a fate. The following is excerpted from DEPARTMENT OF STATE PUBLICATION 10217: Security Awareness Overseas, An Overview [Bureau of Diplomatic Security - United States Department of State Overseas Security Advisory Council].

At an Overseas Airport

- ❖ Maintain a low profile, and avoid public areas as much as possible. Check in quickly and do not delay in the main terminal area. Do not discuss travel plans indiscriminately.
 - ❖ Survey surroundings, noting exits and safe areas. Stay away from unattended baggage. Verify baggage claim checks before and after flight. Always maintain custody of your carry-on bag.
 - ❖ If an incident occurs, survival may depend on your ability to remain calm and alert. During a terrorist attack or rescue operation, you do not want to be confused with the terrorists and shot. Avoid sudden moves; hide behind something and drop to floor.
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Surviving Public Hotel Crime

Most people want to avoid being victimized in their hotel when on vacation or travelling abroad. The U.S. Government provides some tips to help you avoid such a fate. The following is excerpted from DEPARTMENT OF STATE PUBLICATION 10217: Security Awareness Overseas, An Overview [Bureau of Diplomatic Security - United States Department of State Overseas Security Advisory Council].

Hotel Crime

Stay alert in your hotel.

- ❖ Put the "do not disturb" sign on your door to give the impression that the room is occupied. Call the maid when you are ready for the room to be cleaned.
- ❖ Consider leaving the light or TV on when you are out of the room.
- ❖ Carry the room key with you instead of leaving it at front desk.
- ❖ Do not use your name when answering the phone.
- ❖ Do not accept packages or open the door to workmen without verification from the front desk.
- ❖ When walking, remain on wide, well-lit streets.
- ❖ Know where you are going when you leave the hotel-if on a tour, enlist a reputable guide. Generally, the hotel will recommend or procure one.

- ❖ Do not take shortcuts through alleys or off the beaten path. If alone, be back in the hotel by dark.
 - ❖ Never resist armed robbery; it could lead to violence.
 - ❖ Always carry some cash to appease muggers who may resort to violence at finding no reward for their efforts.
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TIGER KIDNAPPING

A **tiger kidnapping** or **tiger robbery** involves two separate crimes. The first crime usually involves an abduction of any person or thing someone highly values. Instead of demanding money, the captors demand that a second crime be committed on their behalf. The second crime could be anything from robbery, murder, to planting a bomb. A person or item held hostage is kept by the captors until their demands are met. The goal of the captors is to have their risky-dirty work performed by another person. The victims of a crime like this are less likely to report to authorities since they just committed a crime themselves.

It is called a tiger kidnapping because of the predatory stalking that precedes it; the crime often requires considerable inside information about the target. Police have identified highly organised paramilitary training camps that prepare potential tiger kidnappers; one witness stated that trainees operate so cohesively that they are comparable to a SWAT team.

Origins

The practice began as a twist on a tactic used by the Irish Republican Army, which kidnapped people in order to coerce them into placing car bombs.

The first recorded crime that can be described as a tiger kidnapping occurred in 1972,¹ but the term was coined in the 1980s and gained more widespread use in the following decade.

Since tiger kidnapping is technically two crimes committed in tandem, statistics regarding their occurrence are difficult to compile. Tiger kidnappings have occurred in several jurisdictions, but are more common in the United Kingdom, Ireland, and Belgium.

Examples include the Northern Bank robbery and Bank of Ireland robbery. According to International Herald Tribune, tiger kidnappings "have become common in Ireland, a close-knit society where criminals can closely track their targets" and "they have typically involved thefts below €1 million. After the 2009 Bank of Ireland robbery, Charlie Flanagan, a member of the Irish Parliament, remarked that "tiger kidnappings are taking place in Ireland... at a rate of almost one per week.'

Countermeasures

Businesses can take several steps to guard against these such as mandating that two or more people must work in tandem in order to open sensitive areas such as bank vaults and cash boxes.

Survival Planning

A survival plan is dependent on three separate but intertwined parts to be successful: planning, preparation, and practice.

Survival planning is nothing more than realizing something could happen that would put you in a survival situation and, with that in mind, taking steps to increase your chances of survival. It can happen to anyone, anywhere, anytime, so remember: **failure to plan is a plan to fail**. Plans are based on evasion and recovery (E&R) considerations and the availability of resupply or emergency bundles. You must take into consideration the mission

duration and the distance to friendly lines; the environment, to include the terrain and weather and possible changes in the weather during a protracted mission; and the platform you will be operating with, such as an aircraft, a multipurpose vehicle, or perhaps just a rucksack. Planning also entails looking at those E&R routes and knowing by memory the major geographical features in case your map and compass are lost. You can use classified and unclassified sources such as the internet, encyclopaedias, and geographic magazines to assist you in planning.
