



January 4, 2018

2017 proved to be one of the most violent years in history for crimes committed against journalist, aid workers, and missionaries throughout the world. During the past decade, my travels on behalf of the US Government have carried me throughout the Middle East, and to other parts of the globe. Many of my duties were focused on helping recover journalists, aid workers, and even missionaries who had gotten themselves captured by terrorists or criminals. My observation has been that the very people I was focused on helping, had each done something negligent that led to their capture or detainment. The purpose of this article is not to malign my friends in the Press, NGO's, or Missionaries because I believe in each of their causes. Rather, the purpose of this article is to address the issues that take away their freedoms and often cost them their lives, their fortunes, and their health. Likewise, they cost the US Government millions of US Dollars a day trying to bring our kind hearted friends home safely. Perhaps it would be more important to give these people the knowledge, skills, and resources required to avoid potential problems and mitigate them long before they ever happen.

I have witnessed several realities first hand which should be addressed.

- The Journalists, Aid Workers, and Missionary organizations I have worked with, and Ex Pat communities in general, are filled with cognitive dissonance. Many in those groups believe that violence and kidnappings only happen to everyone else. The general belief is that if they treat everyone well and behave, they will not be targeted. Many key indicators are often missed which lead to our friends being victimized, extorted, raped, kidnapped, or even killed. Training in basic security measures all the way down to the lowest level saves lives, and enables groups to stop an event from happening before criminals or terrorists can plan it.
- The training available to the individuals in these groups is often taught from a survival-only perspective and not from a left of incident perspective. Instructors at these companies are skilled at teaching Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape but have not been on the ground employing the left of incident training they offer. Insurance companies most often offer cookie cutter, antiquated travel safety briefings while other training companies offer watered-down, military specific experience tailored for pilots and soldiers. Only on rare occasion do groups get training in cross cultural communication, regional customs, dealing with governmental corruption, and travel awareness, which will prevent workers from being targeted. Training often costs as much as \$4,000 USD for one person to take a two-day seminar. The result is that only a few people ever truly get the training they need to work safely overseas.



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- Non-Governmental Organizations, The Global Media, and Church leadership often pay only lip service to their crisis management programs. The same cognitive dissonance of the Ex Pat community is often shared by this group. In turn these organizations limit their contact with the US Government when a crisis does occur. Organizations rarely train their crisis responders to operate in the real world, and often restrict themselves to working with consultants with antiquated knowledge and skills. The result is that groups are underprepared to leverage every possible option available to bring their workers home.
- In almost all cases, the response market is filled with crisis negotiators who come from law enforcement backgrounds. Law enforcement crisis negotiation is usually focused on barricade situations, and is ill equipped for dealing with complex terrorism kidnappings and/or political hostage taking. In 2015 an antiquated policy: National Security Presidential Directive 12 was updated to become Presidential Policy Directive (PPD) 30 Americans Kidnapped or Held Hostage Abroad. PPD 30 states that the American Government will use all elements of National Power to bring our citizens home. The problem with PPD 30 is that it also states the US Government will not negotiate with criminals or terrorists. PPD 30 does, however, allow families to work through third parties to have a dialogue with criminals and/or terrorists on behalf of the victim. Most often companies and organizations conduct their own dialogue without speaking to the Embassy or Consulate. This limits the group's chances of using everything at their disposal to bring their people home.
- Crisis response training rarely trains groups on information security, leveraging information, or dealing with the host nation government. Crisis response training in the civilian sector often limits information on dealing with the police, or military, and other factors which may impact the victim. Crisis response rarely discusses obtaining information that might be valuable to hostage rescue forces, should a kinetic rescue operation be chosen.
- Consultants sent to support a crisis often rely solely on their own wits. The crisis response systems in place rarely mobilize a repatriation team to take care of the psychological needs of the victim or identify critical information which may be needed to help other victims. The first seventy two hours are critical for someone who has been victimized. When this element is overlooked, the survivor will often suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Depression, Anxiety, and other mental and medical issues which may impact them for the rest of their lives.



- Consultants often do not understand the benefits of working with the government on repatriation issues. The result is that US Citizens and Persons Designated Special Status by the US Government often miss out on better health and psychological repatriation support than can be duplicated on the open market. In many cases NGOs, Journalists, and Missionaries as well as average citizens have an ill-founded fear of the US Government and prosecution for some nebulous crime. Instead the survivor, their family, or the group, end up with extreme medical and mental health bills.
- Crisis events in combat zones like Iraq, Syria, Afghanistan, Turkey, or the Philippines often cost the US Government several million US Dollars a day. In many cases, efforts also cost the US Government time and resources which are focused on preventing suicide bombers from attacking innocent civilians and military bases, fighting terrorists, and doing other critical functions. The reality is that while every life is important, shifting focus away from these critical missions often results in the deaths of innocent people and the potential loss of months of hard work. Training groups and individuals in how to avoid problems and have situational awareness is far more cost effective than allowing an incident to happen.

Captive Audience Prevention Training and Recovery Team offers an alternative to the market standard. Captive Audience PT & RT offers over two decades of Special Operations and Intelligence Community Service with on the ground experience applying the lessons they have learned, surviving, and avoiding being targeted overseas. Captive Audience PT & RT has also acquired years of experience working inter-agency and cross cultural personnel recovery, counter terrorism, and counter insurgency responses. Captive Audience PT & RT is able to train and advise group crisis response teams, support a crisis event, and assist with government deconfliction. Captive Audience PT & RT can deploy an experienced repatriation team capable of supporting the repatriation of a survivor for the first seventy-two hours, and hand the survivor off to mental health professionals upon their return home. At the end of the day Captive Audience PT & RT offers recent experience and expertise coupled with on the ground experience. We are capable of supporting groups before, during, or after a crisis with more than just the industry standard. We see things through a different lens, and focus on more than just getting the survivor home. We are capable of providing the client with a strategic lens of understanding and with a tactical lens solution. We are small, making us more reasonable and cost effective. We are also current, relevant, and ready to go to work.

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