

## Aid Agency Safety and Security

### Practical simple steps to take when operating in hostile environments

Without the humanity, determination and resolve of so many NGO's, Aid Agencies and Charitable Organisations across the globe, imagine the reality of the world's chaos and tragedy. Whilst so many live an existence of indulgence, peace and prosperity surrounded by relative safety, so many others choose a path of daily trauma, real danger and very basic living and operating conditions for the simple reward of their achievements helping others. Unfortunately, all too often despite their humanity tragic incidents occur and those working to help others become the victims. Aid Agency kidnappings for ransom or hostage taking incidents are not at all uncommon and shootings, bombings, or violent crime and terrorism are just some of the many risks humanitarian staff face.

With so many enquiries from such staff asking what they can do personally to mitigate their risks, our experts have provided the basic core components of personal risk management.

- ✓ **Ascertain accurate information about your role, location, culture, risks, safe borders, security, etc.**
- ✓ **Psychologically prepare yourself and family, be alert, assertive, and in control of personal risks**
- ✓ **Plan carefully your trip, daily routines, dress, equipment and your response to possible incidents**
- ✓ **Always monitor the latest intelligence and security information and adapt to mitigate risks**
- ✓ **Always carry an escape pack with you, with water, first aid, shelter, communications, passport, etc.**
- ✓ **Always carry an escape pouch on a belt with survival necessities, cash, copies of documents, etc.**
- ✓ **Information Security is crucial, be careful what information you tell others**
- ✓ **Remaining alert is critical, sleep and rest only in secure areas**
- ✓ **Minimise the names and contact details you carry with you or keep very secure and not on phones**
- ✓ **Know the procedures for attacks, kidnappings, medical assistance, evacuations, etc.**
- ✓ **Familiarise yourself with the region, maps, safe borders, safe areas, danger areas, medical centres**
- ✓ **Wear any protective devices you are advised to and adhere to all safety and security advice**
- ✓ **Don't just rely on drivers, familiarise yourself with any vehicles**
- ✓ **Always know the whereabouts of vehicle keys, medical kits, communications devices, etc.**
- ✓ **Ensure your family know what to do and not to do if they are contacted by kidnappers, etc.**
- ✓ **Ensure your First Aid and other skills are refreshed and your are confident to apply them**
- ✓ **Attend a briefing or training program on Hostile Environments, Kidnap Survival, etc.**
- ✓ **Research the risks before you go, don't just rely on one source of information.**
- ✓ **Talk with your colleagues and ensure you know who will do what as a team during any incident**
- ✓ **Monitor your own physical and mental health whilst in country and act if concerned**
- ✓ **Separate your professional work and personal life and trust others with sensible caution**
- ✓ **If in doubt, check it out! Report anything of concern and act upon any risks**
- ✓ **Keep a low profile whenever you can**