



# Field Report:

## IRAQ

June 14, 2004

Centurion Risk Assessment Services

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### GENERAL SITUATION

Assassinations of Iraqi security forces, political activists and those co-operating with the Coalition Provisional Authority and foreign contractors are increasing. With the changeover on June 30, this will inevitably get worse.

Baghdad has seen an increase in mortar and rocket attacks.

Sadr City in Baghdad remains tense and extremely volatile. Daily clashes between Coalition forces and Sadr militiamen have left a lot of collateral damage and the casualty figures continue to mount daily. This is a no-go area for Westerners.

Fighting in Fallujah continues, with the latest battle for control and the insurgency in the western part of the Sunni triangle transformed from the quick shoot-and-escape tactics to the minor unit attacks, indicating that these attacks are supported by foreign fighters. Reports also indicate that former soldiers from Chechnya have been operating alongside local insurgents. Many attacks conducted in the areas mentioned are by 20-50 insurgents at a time.

Places such as ministries, diplomatic offices, police stations and residences associated with the international community remain high on the target list. Locations where Westerners tend to meet or where there are choke points, especially in and around the CPA, etc, are seen as particularly vulnerable. Moreover, recent attacks have tended to focus on security contractors.

There has been an increase of attacks in the south around Basra. Coalition forces are finding more and more IEDs than in previous months. Amarah and Nasiriyah are still seeing pockets of resistance. Routes in and around these areas are still very dangerous to any Westerners and, again, there is a very high risk of kidnapping. The north is starting to see more planned attacks around the Mosul and Tikrit areas.

Threats are still being made against Iraqis for working alongside foreigners, and lawlessness on most road routes increases. Most attacks occur in broad daylight.

The UK military has warned NGOs of explicit threats against them, and to seriously consider the evacuation of their employees. Most NGOs are planning to remove their staff from Iraq until after the handover has been completed and return only after a security analysis has been conducted.

*Many thanks to Centurion advisors, media and others in Iraq for providing information for this Field Report.*

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## VEHICLE SECURITY

The Amman-to-Baghdad road remains a dangerous place to travel. Even though Coalition forces patrol some parts quite heavily, local bandits and insurgents are still out there aiming at soft targets – mostly vehicles with Westerners as occupants.

There is an increase in illegal vehicle checkpoints, especially in the south. The threat of ambushes on all major routes is also increasing.

A couple of days ago a US reporter and his local driver were attacked in the vicinity of Fallujah. They were driving in an armoured civilian vehicle when four armed assailants in an orange and white taxi drew alongside and opened fire with automatic weapons. The attackers aimed at the windows and tyres of the press vehicle. However, the driver was able to manoeuvre out of this ambush and reach the safety of a nearby Coalition base.

There is still a major threat of roadside IEDs and small arms fire ambushes on the Baghdad airport road. Civilian minibuses are shot at randomly along this road and cars are being hijacked with small arms fire backed up by RPGs, usually resulting in death. One such incident involved security personnel.

Reports indicate that there are more illegal roadblocks manned by Iraqi Police loyal to Sadr, or Sadrists dressed in stolen police uniforms and using stolen equipment, as well as the criminal and tribal groups taking advantage of the situation.

**If you find yourself threatened by insurgents and you are in an armoured vehicle, assess the situation immediately. How many armed men? Are they carrying small arms weapons? Are they carrying RPGs or similar?**

**If you are in an armoured vehicle and the insurgents are carrying only small arms weapons, then the decision is yours as to whether to stay and get out of the vehicle and suffer the consequences, or drive out and away from the potential trouble.**

**Remember: if you are in an armoured vehicle, small arms fire will not penetrate the armour, so you could afford to manoeuvre the vehicle and escape or immediately reverse out of the situation. However, if an RPG is present then this will change all courses of action as the RPG round will inflict substantial damage resulting in serious injuries and fatalities to the occupants of that vehicle.**

**Therefore, all plans and actions in case of encounters with insurgents, etc should be discussed and rehearsed prior to any vehicle activity.**

**Important: all members of your team should stick to the original plan otherwise confusion could well be your downfall.**

**A new interim traffic law governs all aspects of road use, including speeding. Iraqi police recently shot an American police advisor who was doing over 100 km/h on his way to the airport.**

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## AIR TRAVEL

As mentioned above, due to the main routes still being under attack or cordoned off by Coalition forces, air travel is still the main option used by most companies. The main airport road still remains vulnerable to attacks from insurgents. Such incidents occur all too frequently, with IEDs being used to initiate attacks.

This main road has seen its fair share of multiple attacks over the last couple of weeks. The US forces cannot secure the 5 km of road and they are even clearing the central reservation of vegetation and laying gravel in order to thwart the concealment of IEDs.

## KIDNAPPINGS

There remains a very high threat of kidnappings in both Sunni and Shi'a Arab areas of Iraq. This includes kidnap by tribal and criminal gangs in order to obtain a reward from militia groups. The threat in Baghdad remains very high and there is an increase of warnings to the north in Tikrit and Mosul. It is also assessed that the threat of kidnapping directed against members of the international community remains high. The threat is now exacerbated by events in the Shi'a south. Insurgent groups are reported to be offering financial rewards for any foreign nationals taken hostage.

In some areas of Iraq, reports state that criminal kidnapping is "rampant and apparently unstoppable".

**We recently published detailed information on kidnapping. Because of its importance, we are repeating it as an Appendix at the end of this Field Report.**

## IEDs (Improvised Explosive Devices)

As always, these remain a favourite weapon against anyone passing the area where they are laid. They still come in numerous forms and are either command detonated, radio controlled or triggered manually – and unwittingly – by their intended victim. They are becoming harder to spot, so remain vigilant and observe ahead of you for any signs of possible IEDs. If in doubt, stop and go back or choose an alternative route. One of the most recent IEDs killed five people and injured 33.

A US patrol spotted an IED after the first vehicle had passed and caused the detonation, but prior to the explosion the forces noticed a purple sign next to the detonation point. The sign had Arabic writing on it and was not there later on. The main explosion seemed to be under a kerb stone that had been removed and then replaced on top of the explosives.

There have been more IEDs in Basra this month than in any month since November 2003.

## BUILDING SECURITY

No one really knows exactly what will happen with security and potential attacks when the handover is implemented on June 30. There is a very high possibility that the KBR security may pull out of the hotel complex, which houses the Sheraton Hotel, etc. This would change the building security in the complex drastically for all agencies residing in that area. UNICEF is in the process of pulling out from the hotel complex area and once they move out completely the rear of some media residences will be exposed.

**New road defences and security will need to be implemented immediately.**

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## INCIDENTS

- The green zone is targeted on a daily basis with several mortar attacks.
- There has been an increase in sabotage in the local electricity plants in and around Baghdad.
- A series of bomb and small arms attacks was carried out in Erbil against Kurdish political offices and administration buildings.
- Another agreement has apparently been signed in Najaf by the Muqtade al Sadr and has been agreed with the Coalition forces. However, this is the third time this has happened and the fighting still continues in and around the holy cities.
- The Sunni triangle is still a very high risk area and should not be entered unless it is really necessary.
- There is an increase of members of the international community being targeted including in hotels and restaurants. This includes the threat of VBIED (vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices).
- Senior medical personnel in Baghdad are being wiped out by kidnapping, extortion and murder.
- Numerous caches are still being found containing anything from detonator cord, small arms ammunition, artillery rounds, rockets, explosives, false IDs, RPGs, primers, flares, mortar rounds, scopes for sniper weapons, stolen UN equipment and vehicles half-converted for use with IEDs.
- The threat remains from Sadrists against the Coalition forces and CPA facilities, principally in the Shi'a south and Baghdad.
- Threats from mass casualty suicide VBIED attacks by Islamist extremists remain.
- Threats continue against infrastructure targets such as power stations, oil installations and utilities, and the targeting of foreign contractors.
- Petrol distribution remains a serious problem, resulting in huge queues.
- Attacks on the road from Baghdad to the airport are reported to be as high as 6-8 a day.
- In Sadr City (Baghdad), at least 12 people on average are being killed every day.
- Over the last few weeks more than 800 people have been killed (that is only the reported ones).

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## PERSONAL SECURITY AWARENESS

Fallujah has indicated that insurgent groups in the city have issued warnings against the Western media visiting the town and will be attacked and taken hostage wherever possible.

- If travelling from one location to another, remain vigilant at all times, keep an eye on the road and surrounding areas for imminent danger, but also watch for dangers from high points, i.e. buildings.
- If you are advised not to go to a particular place either by your safety advisors or by the Coalition forces, it is advisable to listen to them; they will be telling you this information for a good reason.
- Following recent incidents in which media personnel have been stopped and detained by local insurgents, it has been reported that the threat to their lives was not helped by their wearing US military-type t-shirts, or anything with a "Made in the USA" label.
- Anyone carrying a CPA pass or media ID card with the CPA/MOD/US Govt, etc stamped on it or even issued by those organisations is asking for trouble if stopped and searched. Alternatives should be sought immediately.
- Avoid any embassy stamps or visas in your passport that could indicate you are a member of the Coalition forces. A colour photocopy of the page in the passport containing your name, photo, etc, should be laminated, and carried.
- Do not travel around during the dark hours.

A lot of media members arriving in Baghdad have covered many conflicts worldwide and believe that Press or TV identification will save them from being killed by the insurgents. Alas, Iraq is a different hostile environment and quite unlike any that has been experienced before. Not only can they be kidnapped and even killed by the insurgents, they could easily get shot and killed by the Coalition forces because of some of the actions they are taking as journalists.

A good majority of media injuries and fatalities could have been prevented by using more common sense, taking advice either from other Westerners who have been in Iraq for months, or from security advisors. More and more journalists are taking more and more risks in order to obtain the story. It is not worth your life. Think about it before it is too late.

The coming few weeks will be a testing period for all employed in Iraq, and inevitably will be a very dangerous period as there are several groups out there that do not want to see a successful stable government take over Iraq.

The insurgents are becoming more confident and using a wider range of weapons.

**Stay alert, be vigilant, do not take anything for granted, and above all, listen to the safety advice given, no matter how experienced you may THINK you are.**

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## APPENDIX: ADVICE ON KIDNAPPINGS

### HOSTAGE TAKING/ABDUCTION

#### Risk

Every hostage or kidnapping situation is different. There are no hard and fast rules to follow on how you should cope, react or behave. However, there are a number of advisory measures that you can apply to minimise the effects of detention and enhance your ability to cope and see the incident through, hopefully to a successful release.

Religious and political extremist groups are often relentless in the pursuit of their goals. The risk of abduction by terrorist groups has been heightened by media coverage of recent events.

A broad risk assessment strategy will greatly enhance an individual's and/or group's ability to avoid being taken hostage. Your only job is to survive in this situation.

#### Who are the victims?

Any Westerner operating and working in Iraq could become a hostage. The odds are usually extremely low. However, in Iraq at present anyone could be the next target.

Hostages can be taken depending on employment, location, and threats.

If you feel you are personally in danger of being kidnapped you should be cautious about being in areas where you are unprotected and vulnerable. Security personnel enhance the security to yourself, however all personnel remain vulnerable especially in a well planned, rehearsed armed kidnap by a large attacking force.

#### Abduction

Shock of abduction is an immense psychological problem. It is an aspect that terrorists will try to maintain for as long as possible, and is commonly climaxed by being exposed to gunfire and violence.

#### Pre-Departure Checklist

For any Westerner travelling to Iraq it is strongly recommended to sort out the administration on the following prior to departure:

- Wills
- Emergency Financial Funding
- Current and correct insurance policies
- Benefits and how will they be paid
- Safe and secure repository for all important papers
- Power of attorney.

#### Family Preparation Checklist

- Talk to next of kin
- Actions family should take in the event of you being seized
- Coping strategies
- Role adjustment
- Independence increased
- Children's emotional problems
- Children's education
- Long-term hostage status
- Reactions of family to hostage statements
- Provisions to support family
- Family resources for support

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## Initial capture by abductors

No one can tell an individual whether he or she should resist or not if taken hostage. The decision rests entirely with each person's own calculated assessment of the circumstances. Resisting the attempt may be extremely risky. You may be injured or killed if you do attempt to resist armed individuals.

Therefore it is **HIGHLY** recommended that you **do not attempt to fight back** as the initial stage of the abduction is the most dangerous.

Physical takeover will be accompanied by

- Noise
- Commotion
- Possible shooting
- Physical abuse

or

- Whole event could be quiet and a simple announcement could be made from one person.
- For the first few minutes, try to stay calm as this is a crucial time.
- Encourage others to remain calm by talking to them in a soft manner.
- Kidnappers may also be nervous and possibly scared.
- Comply with captor(s) instructions.
- If shooting occurs, stay as low as possible.
- Remain alert at all times, even when the situation is really bad.

## Individual Kidnapping

Location of Capture:

- Private residence
- Place of business
- Public building
- Street, car park, café or restaurant
- Vehicle (stationary or moving)
- Rural and urban
- Domestic and/or foreign.

Moment of capture, could be:

- Hour; day or night
- Brief or protracted
- Witnessed or un-witnessed

In Iraq, from the latest reports, hostages have been taken off the street by passing vehicles or even stopped by local police at checkpoints and handed over to the terrorist groups.

## Overpowering of Hostage

- Physical act
- Constructive act
- Planned/unplanned (usually planned, however in 50% of incidents it has been by opportunists)
- Resistance/non-resistance
- Violent/non-violent
- Injuries/no injuries depends on if you offer resistance
- Property (cameras, personal items) damaged/undamaged.

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## Mode of Seizure

- Can be by force
- By trickery and fear
- Use of firearms
- After use of explosives
- By use of other types of weapons
- Group action (reports mention that in some areas local police are stopping Westerners then handing them over to the terrorists)

The initial phase of the kidnapping provides the best opportunity to escape, if you make that assessment, remembering that you may be able to outrun the captors but you can't outrun a bullet. If they do capture you after your attempt to escape, be prepared for severe physical abuse.

If in a public area at the time of abduction, cause as much commotion as possible

## You may be:

- Blindfolded
- Physically attacked (to cause unconsciousness)
- Forced to lie down
- Try not to struggle
- Calm yourself mentally
- Control your breathing
- Your body will be shocked, take control.
- Concentrate on surviving
- Employ your mind by taking in information
- Try to memorise and picture the route being taken (most recent hostages believed they were taken to a rural area such as a farm)
- Take note of smells, time spent, use senses other than sight.

## Shock of Capture

- Preserve the shock of abduction if possible
- Try to hide signs of inner tension, fidgeting and perspiration, etc.

## Intimidation

Begins with abduction and includes the period of taking control and establishing authority. This can be one of the scariest moments, and confusing; stay calm.

Usually the most terrifying and violent stage for the hostage and also remembering that the hostage-takers' adrenalin will be at a high and they will also be on edge and possibly scared.

The abductor(s) may be most violent and brutal during the initial effort to gain rapid control.

Intimidation will fade when:

- Abductors have control (usually done by hooding and silencing their victims).
- They are unchallenged, and their plan is unfolding with few complications.

Captors may separate individuals from the group. Reasons are:

- Citizenship
- Sex
- Race
- Beliefs



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## Violence

Acts of violence to hostages with or without apparent causes will usually occur. Acts may consist of:

- Yelling
- Screaming
- Shoving
- Ordering
- Hitting
- Beatings
- Torturing
- EVEN Murder

Acts of violence for following reasons:

- Make seriousness of the situation vividly apparent to the hostages.
- Prevent counteraction by hostages.
- Serve as an example of what will happen if you do not comply.
- Reduce their own tensions/frustrations.
- Public showing on video, TV etc, if demands are not met.

## Additional Actions

- Passports may be confiscated and inspected.
- Luggage and personal possessions will be ransacked and searched.

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- Passports may be confiscated & inspected.
- Luggage and personal possessions will be ransacked & searched.
- The reasons for your abduction may not be apparent at this stage, but as mentioned already, anyone in Iraq is vulnerable.
  - If ordered or forced to maintain a body position, e.g. lying face down on the floor, talk yourself into relaxing into the position (you may be there for some time).
  - Prepare yourself mentally and emotionally for a long ordeal (a shorter period is a bonus).
  - Do not attempt to hide your passport or belongings.
  - If addressed by abductors, respond in a regulated manner, and be polite. You will obviously detest them at this time, but remain polite!
  - Use the time to observe characteristics and behaviour of captors.
  - Allocate nicknames to individuals, remember what you have been advised from the training you have received.
    - Notice their dress, facial features and temperaments (observe discreetly).
    - If singled out, be responsive, polite, but do not volunteer information.

## Roles of a Hostage

Hostages play certain roles that are crucial and specific to each stage. Played properly, these will enhance the chance of survival.

It will improve treatment, and enable the hostage to cope better with the stress of captivity.

## Conditioning

Captors will know from the outset that all captives will be unwilling to cooperate, so therefore captors will attempt to change the captives' minds by a process called conditioning.

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## Aims of Conditioning

Process is to weaken the hostage by making them worry and feel insecure.

Cutting them off from support usually from colleagues and from friends, the process is normally by blind-folding them and placing them in separate rooms (however, from recent reports 80% of all captives have been in same room).

Reducing and lowering the captives' physical and mental condition (this will inevitably take time).

## Process of Conditioning

Conditioning process may be applied to hostages through their surroundings, by direct assault on their minds and physical pressures, or by a combination of all three.

## Self Induced Pressure (on hostage)

- Fear of the unknown
- Torture
- Feeling of failure
- Worry of family
- Guilt
- Mistrust of colleagues
- Loneliness
- Lack of guidance
- The possibility of death.

## System Induced Conditioning (forced on hostages)

- Unaccustomed to routine
- Discipline
- Diet
- Physical tiredness
- Confinement
- Filthy, squalid conditions
- Lack of news
- Atmosphere of ruthlessness
- Deprivation of sleep
- Mental fatigue

## Physical Conditioning

- Torture
- Physical discomfort
- Handcuffing
- Trussing
- Caging
- Made to sit or stand in uncomfortable positions for long periods
- Deprived of water and food (when fed, food may look disgusting, but take what you are given)
- Lack of medical attention

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## Stages of adjustment to captivity

### 1st stage (seconds to minutes):

- Startle and panic (enforced by gunfire, shouting and abuse)
- Victims immediately feel intensely fearful
- Defenceless
- Confused
- State of panic
- Leads to frozen fright (attempt to try and overcome).

### 2nd stage (minutes to hours):

- Startle and panic fade rapidly
- Gives way to denial
- Numbing
- Sense of disbelief
- Intimidation
- Kidnappers establish their authority and control by violence and beatings.

### 3rd stage (hours to days):

- Hostages may have few feelings due to last stage
- Become extremely wary
- Acutely vigilant
- Attentive to small details

### 4th stage (days to weeks):

- Captors will attempt to make you comply
- Require information for exploitation/propaganda purposes
- Captive should develop a more sophisticated, flexible resistance posture
- Boredom will develop, and abductors may also be bored, so remember to comply with their instructions, as you do not want to give them any excuse to start taking their frustrations and boredom out on you.

### 5th stage (weeks to months):

- Isolation or solitary confinement proves difficult to handle due to:
- Loss of freedom
- Your future
- Loss of contact with loved ones
- Everything you value in life
- Watch out for signs of depression and despair.

### 6th stage (months to years):

- Final stage of adjustment
- Begin to realise and accept that rescue is not imminent
- Living from day to day
- Small things take on great importance
- Make daily events such as eating, cleaning, toilet functions, etc. longer to complete to pass time
- Establish and stick to a schedule
- Boredom will result
- Despair will result.

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## Options open to the captors when questioning

- Conceit
- Monotonous
- Self-justification
- Apparently foolish behaviour
- Revenge
- Show of knowledge
- Rewards
- Appeal for help
- Dilemma questions
- Confirmation
- Guilt complex
- They will also use material found in your possessions, letters from loved ones, pictures of your family, etc to try to intimidate you and threaten you.

## Methods of Questioning

- Deprivation of sleep
- Constant alertness
- Humiliation
- Isolation
- Harassment (latest reports from freed hostages state that most questions to them were about religion. One person was even tested on questions relating to the Bible).

## Hostages will normally:

- Appreciate exoneration from guilt
- Appreciate flattery
- Forget lessons in security and training
- Appreciate kindness and respond to it
- Seek comfort
- Feel the urge to confess
- Rationalise acts which he or she feels guilt
- Resents having a colleague bullied
- Show difference to a superior authority
- Moral will be affected.

## *Do not sign anything.*

### If Interrogated

- Retain a sense of pride
- Be cooperative
- When asked a question, answer it as truthfully as you can and stick by your answer
- Do not antagonise your interrogator with obstinate behaviour, remembering you are a civilian and not a military person, you have nothing to hide and no state secrets to protect.

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## Additional Points

- If kept alive you may be needed for negotiation and bargaining to obtain ransom or exchange of prisoners or for demands.
- One of your colleagues may be shot. It will be painful, emotional especially if they make you witness the incident.
- The captors' behaviour may change for the worse especially in the demanding stage of things with the Coalition forces, etc.
- Settle into the location/positions quickly and try to relax. You need your strength and wits about you at all times.
- Keep your mind active by remaining alert and observant, try to look for the time on assailants' wrist-watches, try to pick up any familiar words, etc.
- Exercise your memory, think positive, pleasant thoughts, think about survival and seeing your family again
- Keep track of time if possible.
- Look for patterns of behaviour from your captors, who is the "bully", who is the "nice guy" (without getting caught!)
- Identify weaknesses or vulnerabilities.
- If there is an opportunity to escape it is up to you as individual whether to take it or not, remembering that escape for yourself may result in severe torture or death to your colleagues.
- Remain cooperative.
- Attempt to establish rapport with captors or guards (if the "friendliness" is right).
- If a level of communication is achieved, try asking for items that may increase your personal comfort, e.g. food, water, etc, but DO NOT push your luck!
- Make them aware of your needs, e.g. water, etc.
- Stay physically active, even if your movement is extremely restricted, just like the passenger aircraft advice, move your feet, ankles, legs, etc.

If there are other hostages present try to establish communication, but do not get caught! (If working together for a long time, cough as you would normally do, colleagues will recognise this and find it a comfort).

If you are hostile to the captors this inevitably will lead to physical abuse, torture or prolonged capture. Think positive.

Maintain your dignity and do not compromise your integrity.

## Communication - this means:

- Talking
- Listening
- Moving
- Gesturing
- Smiling
- Nodding

(only when assailants "promote" you to).

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## Enduring Captivity - Overview

### Fear and Anxiety

- Fear can result in paralysis and inappropriate reaction – try to stay on top of things and above all, stay alert.

### Boredom and despair

- Two worst psychological problems of long-term captives.
- Imagination can become your worst enemy - leads to excessive, non-productive worry.
- Dwells on catastrophic outcomes.

### Guilt

- Emanates from feelings and failure (try to ignore it).
- Based on irrational belief.
- Produces self-recrimination, negativism and depression.

### Fatalism

- Individuals are not usually aware that their attitudes are affecting events around them (get rid of them and think positive and survival)

### Pain

- Results from high stress load (and not forgetting beatings if advice above is not heeded!)
- Usually psychosomatic unless there is actual injury.
- Pain often abates or disappears when the stress level has been lowered.

### Psychiatric Symptoms

- Overwhelming fear of going crazy (especially if aggression is continuous).
- Severe depression (possibly due to guilt, etc)
- Auditory and visual long term hallucinations.

### Belief Systems

- Positive mental attitude
- Knowledge - other hostages, believe in their survival as well as yours.
- Beliefs
- Religious values – instilled by your true religion ( in two recent cases in Iraq this has secured the release of two hostages).

### Stockholm Syndrome

Occurs when captive, due to close proximity and constant pressures involved, begins to relate to, and empathise with the captors, usually after a long period of captivity. In some cases, results in the captive joining and participating in the activities of the group.

### Play the “GREY PERSON”

- The best policy for any hostage is to concentrate on becoming a nonentity.
- Do not stand out to the captors.
- Do not be unresponsive.
- Avoid any action or activity, which may bring attention from the captors.
- Maintain a low profile.
- Comply with orders from hostage takers.

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## Rescue

- By rescue team (possible only if location is known to rescuers – do not count on it)
- By negotiations (will be rare in Iraq – do not count on them)
- Hijackers may surrender (not in Iraq)
- Hijackers may abandon their mission (not in Iraq)

## If rescued by rescue team:

- Initial rescue will be noisy
- Chaotic
- Possible shooting
- Possible use of stun-grenades
- If shots are heard drop to the floor and stay there
- If instructed by rescue team to move, do so quickly
- Put your hands in the air or behind your head
- Do not make any sudden moves
- Expect to be treated roughly and hands to be tied
- You will be treated like this until determined by the rescue team that you are the hostage.

## Cost

- Psychological cost to hostage
- Psychological cost to intimates of hostage
- Psychological cost to community
- Economic cost to hostage
- Economic cost to intimates of hostage
- Economic cost to community
- Economic cost of response
- Damage to international relations

## Aids to Surviving

- Religious faith
- Pride
- Personal honour
- Integrity
- Discipline
- Loyalty
- Physical fitness
- Mental fitness
- Self-discipline
- Knowledge
- Belief

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## Tips

- Be patient
- Remain calm
- Try not to show fear
- Do not be confrontational
- Cooperate with captor(s)
- Do as you are told
- Comply with reasonable demands
- Do not act as captor(s) accomplice
- Make mental pictures of your captor(s), weapons and any other information
- Do not be a hero (definitely not worth it)
- Do not act tough
- Do not antagonise the captor(s)
- Do not succumb to their obvious attempts to make you lose your temper
- Do not display emotions
- Do not get involved in arguments
- Be humble, submissive, mild, and polite
- Try to obtain the captors' respect
- If you have strong accent (other than American), use it to your advantage. This happened with a person who had a very dominant Irish accent, it assisted his release).
- You may be asked to read aloud a statement, for political use on TV networks, if you decline they may force you to read the statement with the threat of physical abuse or shooting.
- Be certain that you can explain every item in your possession.
- Do not carry any items that may call into question your motives or status. (A Western civilian passenger in a local vehicle was stopped and searched, and found to be in possession of a Coalition pass. This person was severely beaten, and taken away being accused of being a spy).
- If a hostage knows and understands the methods likely to be used, the purpose of those methods and the effects, he or she will be better able to resist them.
- Never beg, plead or cry.
- Do not make threats against your captors or indicate that you would testify against them.
- Do not get caught studying your captors features, dress and routines.

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## Remember

- Play the "grey person" straight away.
- Knowledge dispels fear.
- Kidnappers can kidnap anyone, anytime, anywhere.
- The attackers wish to appear omnipotent and invincible (especially where religion is concerned).
- Their aim is purely to exploit their prey.
- A "Proof of Life" can be implemented but this method is usually used when ransoms are being sought but may be of some use in Iraq if adapted and amended.

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## Conclusion

Kidnappers in Iraq are not usually organised criminals; they are obviously heavily into the religion and are propelled forward by this into their criminal/terrorist actions.

Survival as a hostage can depend on your own personal traits and characteristics.

Are you healthy, fit, patient, strong willed, self-confident, resourceful, compassionate, etc?

As the hostage, you are in charge of your own safety and security, you only have one chance.

**It is imperative that you remember these basics.**

**If more details are required, please contact Centurion.**