

# SURVIVOR



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### **Comments to the Editor/Publication**

If there is a SERE or instructional topic (in this publication or not) you would like to discuss or to create cross-flow on, please email it to me and I will post it in the next issue.

### **Survivor's Quote:**

**"The first object of the intelligence, therefore, was to build up the best possible information on local conditions, terrain, railways and communications, in order to enable the escapist to have a sporting chance, based on reasonably good knowledge of what he was up against. In this way, by interrogation of dozens of officers and by the questioning of Ian Howie's artisan 'friends', we were able to build up dossiers of information...**

**Once collected, it was collated and drawn up in a syllabus oriented to escape purposes. Six briefers took groups of intending escapers in instruction on all aspects dealing with their route and plans. An escaping prisoner is often recaptured (if not because of hunger or fatigue) then because he has to make a quick decision in an emergency and lacks local knowledge to make the right one."**

**Jack Pringle**

**Author of Colditz Last Stop: Six Escapes Remembered (pages 110-111)**

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# Urban Movement

By SURVIVOR Staff

## Defined

A basic definition of URBAN as relating to cities and the people who live in them and a basic definition of EVASION is actions to avoid capture in an enemy-dominated territory. When you look at the definitions there seems to be a rock hitting a hard place with the IP caught between. I have always been taught and believe that the urban environment is one of the hardest for the IP to deal with. So while at a base level I always included discussions on urban as much as the environments to evade in. A review of the urban evasion basics will help you to incorporate the differences and considerations of an urban environment when you are teaching evasion even in remote locations.

## Movement

What type(s) of movement an IP uses in an urban area will be dependent on several factors such as the isolating event, the IP's mission, their evasion objectives, density of the local population, and their legal status. Depending on the factors identified above, as well as others, IP could end up using tactical, evasion, disguise, or a combination of all of these movements. The IP should remember that in many cases these movement types can be mixed and interspersed depending on the events, IP and enemy actions, and the rules of engagements.

## Tactical Movement

Tactical movement is not really an IP movement, but

may lead to an isolating event. It is when operators have an objective/mission within the urban environment. During the execution of that objective/mission they try and avoid contact with the enemy. If contact is made with the enemy, the ground forces usually will attack using "evasion through superior fire power". This



technique is very dependent on the mission before the isolating event in example: the mission may have ground forces dressed to blend looking like indigenous homeless at a distance. When ground forces involved in an evasion movement make contact with the enemy they determine a course of action depending on chances of success.

## Evasion Movement

Evasion movement is when the objective is to avoid any contact with the enemy (locals). It is similar to what has been discussed in the evasion chapter, moving from point of concealment to the next point of concealment avoiding any and all contact with the local population.



## Disguise Movement

Disguise movement is when the objective is to avoid contact with enemy (locals), but when and if that contact occurs to be perceived as local. The success of the disguise movement is very dependent on the type of contact the IP has prepared for such as blending in to the local population at 20 feet away verses talking to a local. With this an IP has to continually ask themselves if their movement techniques

are out of place or suspicious. So your dress and appearance should be one of blending or with the local populace, not to stand out. Blending in means wearing similar garb a local or common traveler (in that area) would have – the correct jackets, shoes, hat (or no hat), etc. Or carrying items that make it seem like you belong, going to or from a known location, and have a



purpose i.e. carrying shopping bags, parcels, briefcases, or the type of items locals carry. It also means, in cases when applicable, the type of clothing and the type of identity role the evaders is portraying must match. As in example, an evader (**Two Gold Coins and a Prayer** by James H. Keefe III) helped by the Holland Resistance was outfitted with clothing by a high-end tailor, but his work/identity card identified him as a deaf mute chair weaver. When stopped, it was obvious to the policeman that he was not identified as the type of person expected to be wearing a custom tailored shirt, suit, jacket, and shoes.

Historically escapers who have gone from evasion to disguise movement took great pains to not look like someone the authorities would question to the point of shaving, washing their clothes, and even shinning their civilian shoes. Some even carried luggage thinking that no security personnel would EVER think an escaped POW would be carrying a piece of luggage. It also supported their cover story and identity paperwork of being relocated for work to a city near the border they wanted to cross.

### Observing for Movement

Prior to any movement the IP should try to observe the area for hours prior to leaving initial hide site. Observe for movement or life threatening obstacles. When moving, try to select the time of day that will be the least noticeable.

- Observation can be a two-way street, not using proper concealment and camouflage techniques during observation can lead to the IP being observed. Select the time of day when shadows are cast inside a hole-up/hide site to help hide any silhouette.

Avoid standing or silhouetting yourself in front of any doors, windows, or openings.



Stand to the side, utilizing the corners for observation. If possible, use already available coverings (doors, curtains, debris, etc.) to breakup outline.

### Minimize Signature

When performing evasion movement an IP should stay low to minimize signature. They should stay near battle-damaged area and use clutter in streets and alleys to your advantage, avoiding intact buildings. An IP should utilize buildings, rubble, clutter, foliage, or ditches for terrain masking. And as in all evasion, urban or otherwise, an evader needs to stay alert, ready, and use common sense.

### Moving Inside Structures

While moving inside a structure an IP should check structural integrity before entering. They should also avoid making noise by rubbing against wall, weighing the noise created while hiding verse the effectiveness of the hole up/hide site such as in the noise movement in a heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) ducts creates. An IP can use a small reflective material or their signal mirror to look around corner prior to moving into a new room. When an IP travels up a stairway, they should avoid moving up the center due to noise, by hugging the wall they will likely make less noises. Additionally, the IP should consider the construction of stairway and material used when stepping near the support frame (wood, metal, nails, bolts, or etc.) to avoid making noise.



### Navigation Aids in Building Designs

In addition to overall city architecture in navigation, the IP can also use individual buildings to help them. Historically, architects would orient buildings to take advantage of sunlight. In the temperate and colder climates of the Northern Hemisphere, buildings are generally oriented facing south (direction of greatest

sunlight). Living rooms or main rooms will generally face south to take advantage of warmth and light while the kitchens will usually be on the north side. In the northern hemisphere, covered porches, were usually located along the south or west elevations, which shaded the building from intense sun and helped to funnel the prevailing breezes to all levels of the building. In the

temperate and colder climates of the Southern Hemisphere, buildings are generally oriented facing north (direction of greatest sunlight). Living rooms will generally face north to take advantage of warmth and light while the kitchens will usually be on the south side. In areas with strong cold prevailing winds, many older homes have doors and windows on the side facing away from the wind or to the side away from it. In hotter locations the general orientation of homes is focused on avoiding the sun and taking advantage of the prevailing winds. Houses may align to take advantage of the wind and provide shade to the living quarters. So following the constants of the way structures are oriented may aid the IP in maintaining a direction of travel. One potential compass rose in Europe, Central America, and South America are the Christian churches. Christian churches historically were oriented east to west with the rising sun shining on the altar. This may give the IP a quick reference to cardinal directions.

### Structures

Reasons an IP would enter a structure during an urban evasion event could be to use it as a hide site or hole up area, to regroup, to break contact, as a strong hold point to defend against the enemy, or a combination of these reasons. In most cases using a structure should be considered a last resort since structures are built to house

people (people catch people), so what and who are encountered on entering is unknown. For this reason, if an IP determines they must enter a structure they should avoid any that are obviously occupied. An IP should also consider that many structures are not occupied 24/7 or even that only part is occupied depending on the time of day, for example people may leave their houses

empty during the day or may sleep on the roof at night.

### Entering a Structure

How an IP enters should support their type of movement such as if disguise movement is being used the disguised IP would draw less attention by using an unlocked door or an available battle damaged hole to just walk in. During tactical and evasion

movements the IP should plan a concealed route to the point of entry. Other urban evasion entry points which an IP may use are subsurface holes, windows (subsurface, surface, or upper story), openings from battle damage, HVAC vents, roof tops, or attic entries. While alternate entry points are less likely to be booby trapped, an IP should always be observant for any signs.



### Locating Hide Sites and Surveillance Points

Once inside, the IP should locate hide sites and surveillance points. The IP should also determine alternate hide sites, existing points, and escape routes. The IP's movement may also involve going from one structure to another using different routes like sewers, roof tops, shared walls, etc.

### Urban Evasion Bottom Line

Since the standard in evasion is that people catch people, an urban evasion has the potential to run completely contrary to this. To me, this truly drives home the incredible potential for difficulties, the critical need for IP situational awareness, and the need for hands-on training/experience to successfully evade in this environment.



## Recommended Reading

### **THE YELLOW PIMPERNELS:**

Collection of straightforward stories of various escapes from East to West Germany during the Cold War era. Emphasis is on the Berlin area of the Wall. Short on “how to” details, but lots on “why they risked all” (their motivations to make bids for freedom). Most chapters were variations of the “His true love was in the East and he was in the West” theme.

An aspect of the topic of escape that isn’t usually discussed, that of “alternative” escape networks- namely for profit (criminal) outfits, was explored. In the early days of the Wall students with political ideals were the one group, which truly believed in the right to freedom ...and backed it up with action (p. 112). Afterwards, escape ‘syndicates’ took over. Far from being altruistic souls who helped others reach the freedom of the West out of the kindness of their hearts, numerous individuals, some who were out-and-out swindlers, realized huge profits from what they regarded as little more than a business of transporting warm bodies. While some people were taken advantage of, others eventually made it to free soil and new lives. Escapes of all types are described in general terms- strapped to the under carriage of a car, in a hidden compartment in a car, sliding down a cable to the other side, swimming through a canal, ice skating, etc.

**AUTHOR:** Alan Shadrake

**TITLE:** The Yellow Pimpernels Subtitled: Escape Stories of the Berlin Wall

**CONFLICT/COUNTRY/DATA/TYPE (POW, HOSTAGE, POLITICAL PRISONER) OF CAPTIVITY:** Fortified border crossings/Berlin Germany/Cold War Era

**WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECT OF THE BOOK:** Imagination, patience and tenacity; these in varying proportions combined with no small amount of luck won freedom for a variety of individuals. Each account offers different motivation and opportunities, that they either had to come up with this on their own, work it out with a small band of friends, or they had to pay someone who had these pieces of the puzzle figured

out. It must be remembered that those who failed in their endeavor to reach the West paid either with their lives or with brutal interrogations and lengthy prison terms. Therefore, the ingenuity, daring and just plain guts it took to pull off these escapes shouldn’t be diminished regardless of the method used. Pages 15-25 give an *excellent* little history of Berlin and how the Wall came to be. Also pages 27-34; include pictures as well.

### **NOTABLE QUOTES:**

**WHAT IT TOOK TO TRY:** p. 10- “The casualty rate was scarifyingly high-which was why a mere handful of East Berlin’s 1,087,000 inhabitants even dreamed of making the attempt. To try to clear that Wall meant that a man had an insatiable desire for freedom, or some other motive overwhelming enough to risk his life for. Essential prerequisites for success were daring and agility- and enormous luck. Nor, above all, could an attempt hope to be successful without some organization and planning; or without outside help.” Also page 34- “To hate the Communist regime was not enough. A man or woman had to be passionately dedicated to freedom- or to have some personal motive that made escape essential.”

### **USE OF MULTIPLE SIGNALS:** p. 13&14-

Details how an apartment building on the “free” side was used. “The drawing back of a lace curtain (on the third story of a block of flats) was the signal to start walking towards the Wall, doing his best not to attract attention or cause suspicion. Only when the moment was absolutely right would he be given the final signal to go; a window on the *second* floor

of the block of flats would be thrown open. He was to start running.”

**COVER YOUR TRACKS:** p. 97- Details how one person swam across canals during cold weather, cut the lower strands of barbed wire, and crawl to the West. He went back and forth a number of times, leading others to freedom. He was careful to twist the wires back together after he had passed through so as to leave no trace that might call attention to his activities. **NOTE:** The facing page has a nice photograph of a woman

**Berlin Wall 1973 Postdamer Platz**



being lowered into an escape tunnel on a swing style seat.

**ORGANIZED CRIME:** p. 94-101- These pages encompass chapter eight (along with a couple of photographs). The main thrust is exposing the criminal, underworld elements that profited from running escape lines to the West. Escape became a big business with the risks and rewards both being very high. Everything from criminal jargon, to why people kept silent about being involved is discussed. The amount of commission in the early years of refugee smuggling could be as high as 2,500 Deutschmarks per “order”.

**SPARE NO EXPENSE:** p. 111- One of the clues to their success was that they never tried to do a job on a low budget for the sake of gaining a little extra money. They spent a great deal of money on their European journeys for the printing of passports in Spain, Greece and Turkey, and also on occasions in Denmark. They also paid several couriers, and ran ten luxury cars, suitable for their ‘diplomatic’ visitors from East to West.

**TUNNEL WORK:** p. 113- “The tunnel took nearly seven months to build and cost more than 4,000 DM in materials, special equipment, and wages for the gangs of idealistic students who spent all their free time digging their way under the forbidding barricades. A mining engineer was even brought in to help in the highly sophisticated operation of building the tunnel, which stretched from the small damp cellar of a bakery in the Bernauer Strasse in the French sector of Berlin, to the equally small bathroom of a house in East Berlin. The distance was 140 yards- 140 yards of backbreaking toil which made a way for the escapers.”

**PASSWORDS AND COUNTERSIGNS:** p. 113- “He paused at the railway timetable board and scrutinized the train times between Dresden and Berlin. Within a few minutes of his arrival, someone came up behind him and began studying the timetable over his shoulder. The stranger placed his finger over the first ‘D’ in the word Dresden on the notice board. Thaelmann, without turning to look behind him, softly said the password ‘Tokio’. The stranger repeated the password and turned away, casually walking out of the station with Thaelmann a discreet distance behind him.”



**Tunnel 57 to escape East Germany**

**COW ESCAPE:** p. 156-157; with photo (see page facing 129) A man named Karl-Heinz Bley reenacted the legend of the wooden horse somewhat by using a stuffed cow. He borrowed the cow from a taxidermist by telling him that it was needed for a theatrical presentation. He then took the stuffing out of the belly, and in the space remaining, built a reinforced compartment. Bley then made arrangements for the prop to be shipped by road to West Germany in a wooden crate for ‘theatrical purposes’. He applied successfully for the proper permits, put the cow in a van and stopped to pick up a 22-year-old woman on the way to the boarder. The guards were completely fooled by the deception. He was successful a second time but was caught by suspicious guards on his third attempt.

**FAKE UNIFORM:** p. 157- “One man who never counted himself beaten by the Wall was Fritz Munstock. In an East German magazine, he noticed pictures of American army uniforms in an article about a US Commandant in West Berlin. Studying the uniforms, Fritz noticed that they were very similar in style to those of the Czech army. He managed to obtain a similar uniform as well as American military buttons and badges; he put together a very passable forgery. At that time, Allied soldiers from West Berlin were allowed to stroll freely in and out of East Berlin, either alone or in groups. Choosing a time when there were a number of other soldiers in the area, he walked slowly yet confidently down the Friedrichstrasse towards Checkpoint Charlie, and was never given a second glance. When at the checkpoint he coolly nodded his head and almost with contempt walked past the guards and into West Berlin. Unable to speak a word of English, he was taken into custody by the Americans for interrogation, but his plan had been a success!

**WHAT MAJOR LESSONS LEARNED CAN BE TAKEN FROM THIS BOOK:** There is no such thing as a stress free, easy escape! The theme that repeats in these accounts is one of pertinacious tenacity. Average people went to great lengths to be free to live as they wished. Whether on their own, in a group, or by paying a smuggler for hire- to the escapers the end justified any means. Truly deadly cat and mouse games, these border crossings constituted quite a tribute to the human spirit.

# Presidential Policy Directive Hostage Recovery Activities

The White House; [Office of the Press Secretary](#)

**PRESIDENTIAL POLICY DIRECTIVE/PPD-30**  
**For Immediate Release June 24, 2015**

SUBJECT: U.S. Nationals Taken Hostage Abroad and  
Personnel Recovery Efforts

The 21st century has witnessed a significant shift in hostage-takings by terrorist organizations and criminal groups abroad. Hostage-takers frequently operate in unstable environments that challenge the ability of the United States Government and its partners and allies to operate effectively. Increasingly, hostage-takers target private citizens -- including journalists and aid workers -- as well as Government officials. They also utilize sophisticated networks and tactics to derive financial, propaganda, and recruitment benefits from hostage-taking operations. The United States Government's response to hostage-takings must evolve with this ever-changing landscape.

This Presidential Policy Directive (PPD), including its classified annex, supersedes and revokes NSPD-12, United States Citizens Taken Hostage Abroad, dated February 18, 2002, along with Annex 1 and Appendix A to NSPD-12, dated December 4, 2008. The policy directs a renewed, more agile United States Government response to hostage-takings of U.S. nationals and other specified individuals abroad. It establishes processes to enable consistent implementation of the policies set forth in this directive, to ensure close interagency coordination in order to employ all appropriate means to recover U.S. hostages held abroad, and to significantly enhance engagement with hostages' families. It also reaffirms the United States Government's personnel recovery policy, which seeks to prevent, prepare for, and respond to hostage-takings and other circumstances in which U.S. nationals are isolated from friendly support. This policy will thereby further important national security and foreign policy interests



by strengthening the protections for U.S. nationals outside the United States.

## 1. Policy

The United States is committed to achieving the safe and rapid recovery of U.S. nationals taken hostage outside the United States. The United States Government will work in a coordinated effort to leverage all instruments of national power to recover U.S. nationals held hostage abroad, unharmed.

The United States Government will strive to counter and diminish the global threat of hostage-taking; reduce the likelihood of U.S. nationals being taken hostage; and enhance United States Government preparation to maximize the probability of a favorable outcome following a hostage-taking.

The United States will use every appropriate resource to gain the safe return of U.S. nationals who are held hostage. But the United States Government will make no concessions to individuals or groups holding U.S. nationals hostage. It is United States policy to deny hostage-takers the benefits of ransom, prisoner releases, policy changes, or other acts of concession. This policy protects U.S. nationals and strengthens national security by removing a key incentive for hostage-takers to target U.S. nationals, thereby interrupting the vicious cycle of hostage-takings, and by helping to deny terrorists and other malicious actors the money, personnel, and other

resources they need to conduct attacks against the United States, its nationals, and its interests. However, this policy does not preclude engaging in communications with hostage-takers. For example, when appropriate the United States may assist private efforts to communicate with hostage-takers, whether directly or through public or private intermediaries, and the United States Government may itself

communicate with hostage-takers, their intermediaries, interested governments, and local communities to attempt to secure the safe recovery of the hostage.

The taking of a U.S. national hostage abroad is a violation of Federal law, and the United States Government is committed to prosecuting and punishing individuals and groups responsible for hostage-taking and related crimes committed against U.S. nationals.



The United States Government will endeavor to work closely with a hostage's family in a coordinated manner and will proactively share as much information as possible with the family, mindful of the need to protect the safety of the hostage, the integrity of any recovery efforts, any ongoing criminal investigation, and intelligence sources and methods. The United States Government will also provide assistance and support services to help hostages and their families cope with the effects of the hostage-taking during the period of captivity, through the resolution of the hostage event, and throughout any prosecution of the hostage-takers.

## 2. Prevention and Preparation

The United States Government will take steps to decrease the likelihood that U.S. nationals will be taken hostage abroad. To that end, the Department of State shall continue to assess the threat and security risk for travel outside of the United States and provide safety and security information for U.S. nationals and U.S. organizations operating abroad. Departments and agencies shall also support engagements with private entities that raise awareness of the risk of hostage-taking and identify best practices for preventing hostage-takings abroad.

The United States Government will lead international efforts to counter, marginalize, and deter hostage-taking by increasing the costs to hostage-takers and eliminating the benefits of hostage-taking. This shall include engagement with foreign governments, international organizations, and other relevant nongovernmental organizations to encourage them to adopt and implement no-concessions policies and statements and to seek commitments to defeat and punish hostage-takers and their aiders and abettors. The United States Government shall also seek to deter the practice of hostage-taking through aggressive interdiction, investigation, and prosecution of hostage-taking and related violations of U.S. law, as well as through sanctions designations, as appropriate.

The safe conduct of Federal business and duties abroad requires both an effective personnel recovery infrastructure and a coordinated response capability to resolve hostage-takings and similar events. The United States Government will leverage educational and training resources to help decrease the vulnerability of United States Government officials and employees working abroad. Each department and agency with overseas responsibilities shall inform its employees of

U.S. policy regarding hostage-takings, and provide personnel recovery preparation, education, and training programs to help their employees understand the risk environment, evade capture, survive captivity, minimize their vulnerability to exploitation, and enable their recovery from a threat environment. Departments and agencies shall also implement individual and organizational protective security measures and ensure there are interoperable systems of communications and support for the accountability of United States Government employees. Each department and agency shall leverage existing programs or develop new ones to offer tailored training for those employees who will participate in response management when U.S. nationals are taken hostage abroad.

Under the direction of the Chief of Mission, United States Government officials shall establish and strengthen relationships and information-sharing with partner nations, including their respective diplomatic, military, intelligence, and law enforcement counterparts, to pursue opportunities to build hostage and personnel recovery capacity through security cooperation. The United States Government shall establish dialogues with foreign counterparts about hostage and personnel recovery training and local capabilities. The United States will also work with international organizations and the private sector, as appropriate, to resolve ongoing hostage events and to prevent future hostage-takings.

When appropriate, the United States may provide training, equipment, advice, and intelligence support to foreign governments to aid them in achieving the capability to safely recover, or to assist in the safe recovery of, U.S. nationals held hostage and to hold perpetrators accountable. Unless otherwise directed by the President, all such efforts and activities will be coordinated among the relevant Federal departments and agencies and with the Department of State. This assistance may be provided by appropriate departments and agencies through existing programs, within and consistent with existing legal authorities.

## 3. United States Government Coordination in Support of Hostage Recovery

The United States Government shall work diligently to achieve the safe recovery of U.S. nationals held hostage abroad. The United States Government's response -- which may include diplomatic outreach, intelligence collection, and investigations in support of developing further options, recovery operations, and the use of any

other lawful and appropriate tools -- will depend on many factors. When considering how to respond to a hostage situation, the United States Government shall undertake those options that are most likely to secure the hostage's safe release; deter future hostage-taking of U.S. nationals and combat the financing of terrorist and other criminal enterprises; and protect other U.S. national security interests. The United States Government shall endeavor to work with the nation in which a U.S. national is being held hostage, including supporting that nation's efforts to recover the hostage. However, in extraordinary circumstances, the United States Government may also act unilaterally to protect its nationals and national interests.

The taking of a U.S. national hostage abroad requires a rapid, coordinated response from the United States Government. The Hostage Response Group (HRG), in support of the National Security Council (NSC) Deputies and Principals Committees, and accountable to the NSC chaired by the President, shall coordinate the development and implementation of United States Government policy and strategy with respect to U.S. nationals taken hostage abroad. The interagency Hostage Recovery Fusion Cell (HRFC), in support of the HRG, shall coordinate United States Government efforts to ensure that all relevant department and agency information, expertise, and resources are brought to bear to develop individualized strategies to secure the safe recovery of U.S. nationals held hostage abroad.

The Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs, who shall report to the Secretary of State, shall lead diplomatic engagement on U.S. hostage policy as well as coordinate all diplomatic engagements in support of hostage recovery efforts, in coordination with the HRFC and consistent with policy guidance communicated through the HRG. United States Embassies that have established Personnel Recovery Working Groups or other interagency bodies to coordinate overseas activities in response to a hostage-taking shall ensure that those bodies operate pursuant to policy guidance provided by the HRG and in coordination with the HRFC and with the Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs.



#### *a. Hostage Response Group (HRG)*

The HRG shall be chaired by the Special Assistant to the President and Senior Director for Counterterrorism and shall convene on a regular basis and as needed at the request of the National Security Council. Its regular members shall include the director of the HRFC, the HRFC's Family Engagement Coordinator, and senior representatives from the Department of State, Department of the Treasury, Department of Defense, Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Office of the Director of National Intelligence, and such other executive branch departments, agencies, or offices as the President, from time to time, may designate.

In support of the Deputies Committee chaired by the Assistant to the President for

Homeland Security and Counterterrorism, the HRG shall: (1) identify and recommend hostage recovery options and strategies to the President through the National Security Council; (2) coordinate the development and implementation of U.S. hostage and personnel recovery policies, strategies, and procedures, consistent with the policies set forth in this directive; (3) receive regular updates from the HRFC on the status of U.S. nationals being held hostage abroad and measures being taken to effect the hostages' safe recovery; (4) coordinate the provision of policy guidance to the HRFC, including reviewing recovery options proposed by the HRFC and resolving disputes within the HRFC; and (5) where higher-level guidance is required, make recommendations to the Deputies Committee.

#### *b. Hostage Recovery Fusion Cell (HRFC)*

The HRFC shall serve as the United States Government's dedicated interagency coordinating body at the operational level for the recovery of U.S. national hostages abroad. The HRFC shall: (1) identify and recommend hostage recovery options and strategies to the President through the NSC; (2) coordinate efforts by participating departments and agencies to ensure that information regarding hostage events, including potential recovery options and engagements with families and external actors (to include foreign governments), is appropriately shared within the United States Government to facilitate a coordinated response



to a hostage-taking; (3) assess and track all hostage-takings of U.S. nationals abroad and provide regular reports to the President through the NSC on the status of such cases and any measures being taken toward the hostages' safe recovery; (4) provide a forum for intelligence sharing and, with the support of the Director of National Intelligence, coordinate the declassification of relevant information; (5) coordinate efforts by participating departments and agencies to provide appropriate support and assistance to hostages and their families in a coordinated and consistent manner and to provide families with timely information regarding significant events in their cases; (6) make recommendations to executive departments and agencies in order to reduce the likelihood of U.S. nationals being taken hostage abroad and enhance United States Government preparation to maximize the probability of a favorable outcome following a hostage-taking; and (7) coordinate with departments and agencies regarding congressional, media, and other public inquiries pertaining to hostage events.



Upon receipt of credible information that a U.S. national has been taken hostage or has been reported missing in a region where hostage-taking is a significant threat, any department or agency with such information shall report that information, along with any action already taken or anticipated in response, to the HRFC and the relevant Chiefs of Mission. If, at any point in a given hostage event, the HRFC has reason to believe that a U.S. national is being held hostage by an entity or individual designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization or designated for sanctions by the President, Secretary of State, or Secretary of the Treasury, the HRFC Director shall promptly inform the HRG of the designated individual or entity involved and the circumstances of the hostage-taking.

#### *c. Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs*

The Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs (Special Envoy) shall report to the Secretary of State and shall: (1) lead diplomatic engagement on U.S. hostage policy; (2) coordinate all diplomatic engagements in support of hostage recovery efforts, in coordination with the HRFC and consistent with policy guidance communicated through the HRG; (3) coordinate with the

HRFC proposals for diplomatic engagements and strategy in support of hostage recovery efforts; (4) provide senior representation from the Special Envoy's office to the HRFC and in the HRG; and (5) in coordination with the HRFC as appropriate, coordinate diplomatic engagements regarding cases in which a foreign government confirms that it has detained a U.S. national but the United States Government regards such detention as unlawful or wrongful.

#### **4. Family and Hostage Engagement**

The United States Government will treat all families and hostages equitably and fairly while respecting their dignity and privacy. All interactions with the family should be undertaken with the utmost professionalism, empathy, and sensitivity to the psychological and emotional disruption the family is experiencing and should be informed by the family's needs, wishes, and rights.

The HRFC, through the Family Engagement Coordinator, shall ensure that all interactions with a hostage's family occur in a coordinated fashion and that the family receives consistent

and accurate information from the United States Government. The Family Engagement Coordinator shall ensure that all communications between United States Government officials and a hostage's family are coordinated to ensure consistent follow-up on questions and requests, and to ensure that any relevant background regarding the family's particular needs is taken into consideration.

The United States Government shall provide the hostage and his or her family with appropriate assistance and support services, including legally mandated crime victims' rights and services, to help them cope with the physical, emotional, and financial impact of a hostage-taking. United States Government officials shall, subject to the family's wishes, maintain regular contact with the family and ensure continuity of care. As appropriate to meet individual needs, United States Government officials may refer hostages and their families to nongovernmental assistance organizations.

The United States Government will share with a hostage's family as much information as possible, mindful of the reliability and credibility of information

provided and the need to protect the safety of the hostage, the integrity of any recovery efforts, any ongoing criminal investigation, and intelligence sources and methods. United States Government officials shall communicate to the family, to the greatest extent possible, information about the circumstances of the hostage's abduction and captivity, what options for the safe recovery of the hostage the United States Government is pursuing, information about relevant law and policy, and the roles and responsibilities of United States Government departments and agencies involved in recovering the hostage. When consistent with each family's preferences and the circumstances of the hostage event, the HRFC shall coordinate efforts by relevant departments and agencies to ensure that the family receives a full informational briefing. The United States Government shall share with the family relevant information, including by making proactive efforts to declassify relevant information or providing unclassified summaries.

The United States Government shall continue to offer appropriate assistance and support services to a hostage and the hostage's family after recovery and through any prosecution of the hostage-takers, consistent with the policies set forth in this directive. The HRFC shall coordinate the delivery of such support services by relevant departments and agencies, including proactive planning for any post-recovery support services that will be provided to a hostage, as appropriate. In the event of a hostage's death in captivity or in the course of a



recovery effort, the HRFC shall also coordinate efforts by relevant departments and agencies to ensure that they provide coordinated assistance and support services to the hostage's family.

#### 5. Intelligence Support

The Director of National Intelligence shall provide for centralized management of hostage-related intelligence in order to coordinate the Intelligence Community's

efforts on hostage-takings and provide synchronized intelligence support to the HRFC. The Intelligence Community shall make proactive efforts to declassify relevant and reliable information or provide unclassified summaries to a hostage's family.

The Intelligence Community shall maintain the capability to provide intelligence collection and analysis support to allow the United States Government to respond to hostage-takings of U.S. nationals abroad. Moreover, the collection, processing, analysis, and dissemination of intelligence related to hostage-taking incidents shall be a priority for the Intelligence Community when such an incident occurs. In order to improve the United States Government's response capability, departments and agencies shall leverage appropriate intelligence support to pursue diplomatic, military, and law enforcement actions in response to a hostage-taking. Consistent with other provisions in this policy, United States Government departments and agencies may work with private entities to further United States Government interests to locate and recover Americans held hostage abroad, including entities that may assist in gathering or establishing sources of information.

#### 6. Prosecution

The investigation and prosecution of hostage-takers is an important means of deterring future acts of hostage-taking and ensuring that hostage-takers are brought to justice. The United States shall diligently seek to ensure that hostage-takers of U.S. nationals are arrested, prosecuted, and punished through a due process criminal justice system in the United States or abroad for crimes related to the hostage-taking.

The United States has jurisdiction over the taking of a U.S. national hostage abroad, as well as over other criminal acts that may be committed against the hostage, and the Department of Justice will seek to prosecute hostage-taking of U.S. nationals and related violations of U.S. law in the U.S. court system whenever possible. The Federal Bureau of Investigation shall investigate violations of U.S. law and shall collect evidence and conduct forensics in furtherance of a potential prosecution, consistent with its statutory authorities and, where applicable, the permission of the foreign government in whose territory it is operating.

The HRFC shall coordinate efforts by relevant departments and agencies to ensure that all relevant



material and information acquired by the United States Government in the course of a hostage-taking event is made available for use in the effort to recover the hostage and, where possible and consistent with that goal, is managed in such a way as to allow its use in an ongoing criminal investigation or prosecution.

The United States Government shall work with foreign governments to apprehend hostage-takers in their territory. In coordination with one another, the Department of State, Department of Justice, and Department of the Treasury shall engage with foreign governments to seek commitments to punish hostage-takers and their aiders and abettors. In coordinating with the Department of State, relevant departments and agencies should also work to develop the capacity of partner nations, through technical assistance and training in best practices, to collect intelligence for use in hostage recovery efforts while preserving, when possible, opportunities for a criminal prosecution by the United States or the relevant nation.

#### 7. General Provisions

For the purposes of this directive, hostage-taking is defined as the unlawful abduction or holding of a person or persons against their will in order to compel a third person or governmental organization to do or abstain from doing any act as a condition for the release of the person detained. This directive applies to both suspected and confirmed hostage-takings in which a U.S. national, as defined in either 8 U.S.C. 1101(a)(22) or 8 U.S.C. 1408, or a lawful permanent resident alien with significant ties to the United States is abducted or held outside of the United States. This directive shall also apply to other hostage-takings occurring abroad in which the United States has a national interest, such as (but not limited to) hostage-takings of individuals who are not U.S. nationals but who have close links through family, employment, or other connections to the United States, as specifically referred to the HRFC by the Deputies Committee. This directive does not apply if a foreign government confirms that it has detained a U.S. national; such cases are handled by the Department of State in coordination with other relevant departments and agencies. In dealing with such cases, however, the Department of State may draw on the full range of experience and expertise of the HRFC as appropriate, including the HRFC's Family Engagement Coordinator's proficiency in providing and ensuring professionalism, empathy, and sensitivity to the psychological and emotional distress experienced by families in such cases.

Additionally, the U.S. response to the detention of U.S. military personnel by non-state forces in the context of armed conflict should, in appropriate circumstances, be informed by the law of war.

This directive does not alter the authorities or requirements applicable to Federal departments and agencies under the Constitution, Federal statutes, or Executive Orders or, except as set forth herein, alter any existing Presidential Directives. This directive does not expand the scope of services otherwise available to lawful permanent resident aliens pursuant to departments' and agencies' existing authorities.

This directive is consistent with and intended to be guided by the NSC process, as described in Presidential Policy Directive/PPD 1 of February 13, 2009, or any successor to PPD 1.

Each department or agency shall review this directive and ensure that its own policies and procedures are consistent with the policies set forth herein. This directive is not intended to, and does not, create any right or benefit, substantive or procedural, enforceable at law or in equity by any party against the United States, its departments, agencies, or entities, its officers, employees, or agents, or any other person.

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2015/06/24/presidential-policy-directive-hostage-recovery-activities>  
<http://nationalsecurityzone.medill.northwestern.edu/onthebate/u-s-government-hostage-policy-everything-you-need-to-know/>

#### **Survivor's Quote:**

**“Outside events can change a presidential campaign, a president, and the history of the nation: the Iranian hostage crisis, the bombing of the Marine barracks in Beirut, the downing of the helicopter in Mogadishu, Somalia, the suicide attack on the USS Cole, and, of course, the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001.”**

**Mark McKinnon**  
American political advisor & consultancy

# Getting to the Bottom of It

By the SURVIVOR Staff

Most heavily populated and older urban environments have some type of extensive subsurface systems of utility tunnels for steam, water, gas, sewage, and storm water. These subsurface systems may offer them easy cover, concealed means of travel, or it may seem to be an area with limited contact with people.

## Others that Use Subsurface Systems.

An IP needs to remember that others may use a subsurface system for similar reasons or the very nature of the subsurface system may drive the enemy to protect and guard it as much, if not more, than many surface areas i.e. a city's potable water system. Other local inhabitants may include homeless, vagrants, and squatter populations which maybe on the increase due to the conflict which caused the isolating event. Of course for those who grew up in my generation, one must always be on the lookout for any **C.H.U.D.** (Cannibalistic Humanoid Underground Dweller).

**Subsurface Hazards and Obstacles.** Besides contact with people there are other subsurface hazards and obstacles such as:

- Besides encountering and avoiding other people, IPs should be on the watch for any bio-hazardous life forms who live under ground. What type of life form you encounter will largely depend on what environment and climate you find yourself evading in. Life forms can be insect,

reptile, or mammals. Animals that have been commonly found in sewers world-wide are rodents, fish, mosquitos, dogs, and of course the dreaded alligator.

- Dangerous gas buildup which could lead to asphyxiation or explosion. The IP may have difficult time identifying this since many gases are odorless. The presence of rodents may indicate safe air supply, but many gases will rise and fill the top portion of tunnels leaving breathable air for rodents



and several types of rodents can hold their breath for 10-15 minutes. Allow gases to dissipate for 15 minutes (time permitting) before entering enclosed subterranean locations. IP should assess the depth to reach the floor of the subsurface location to determine a safe entry procedure

(ladder, rope, climbing techniques).

- At times sewers may have large quantities of water released by man-made design or during natural events like rainstorms or melting snow. Sewers in these cases may fill up very rapidly causing a flash flood effect drowning an IP. Even normal water activity, flow, and slipperiness may cause difficulties for an IP.



- An IP's navigation aids may not work underground, making it difficult, if not impossible, to maintain direction and knowledge of location.
- To avoid burns, the IP may want to use cardboard or other



handy debris to squeeze past, over, and/or under steam pipes.

- Just like an IP's navigational aids, communication equipment may not work. Electronic signals may not broadcast out to the surface, as well as the IP needing to have easy access to the surface to use other signaling equipment. Additionally, while subsurface the IP may miss opportunities for recovery.
- The darkness of the subsurface location may require an IP to use a light source, the confined space may provide few exists with little room to maneuver, sounds travel long distances, and encounters with animals.

**Entry Points.** Subsurface entry points such as subway, underground rail system, sewers, vehicle tunnels, and utility tunnels may have security guards, gates, turnstiles, cameras, as well as being locked, bolted or welded closed. An IP may try to access these through manholes, maintenance entry points, subway/rail tunnels (using a disguise), service doors, or culverts. When these access points are secured



an IP can attempt to pry open using bolts, metal, sticks, or as a last resort their knife (since it may be broken

easily and not replaceable). An IP can also try to defeat the lock. The difficulty in this is for the IP to have the time to attempt this since disguising these actions may be impossible.

**Disguising Access to an Entry.** Once opened, an IP will usually want to disguise the fact that the entry way has been accessed. In the case of manholes, the IP should pre-position the cover right side up to secure back in place. Since not every country uses round manhole covers, the IP should be careful not to drop the cover into hole. To make re-opening a manhole cover easier an IP may use a piece of debris to wedge it open or line attached to debris/stick through the "pick holes,"

which is where an official would insert a hook handle to lift them.



**Transitioning Above and Below Ground.** If using subsurface location, the IP will need to transition between above and below ground undetected. IP need to ensure security and counter observation measures are taken prior to leaving concealment. The IP needs to stop, look and listen for threats, get a visual of surrounding area, identify the next point of concealment, exit, blend the exit point to look undisturbed, and then move to the new point of concealment.



### Survivor's Quote:

**"Struggling is hard because you never know what's at the end of the tunnel."**

Don Rickles

American Stand-Up Comedian & Actor

## Saved Rounds

### Reader's Comments

Taking this page out for a test spin, my hope is that this will prove to be useful and spark ideas and more comments eventually becoming a reoccurring section of this publication.

I have received ideas from readers for articles which I have implemented into the SURVIVOR to include four in this publication - Recommended Reading, PPD-30, Reader Comments, and the wallet editions.

Received word from a reader who printed the SURVIVOR publications, then the magazines were put in to a binder, and placed in their organization's student break room. This allows their operators to look at SERE related topics during breaks in their training verses standard 1-3 year old gun/knife porn or hunting magazines found in break rooms.

Received emails from USAF and Navy SERE personnel who have pushed the publications to the Intelligence Sections they work with.

Several emails from readers who have taken the electronic copies of SURVIVOR publications I send out and posted them on their organization's websites or training page.

I was notified that a fighter unit and a rescue OSS, have posted some excerpts from the SURVIVOR publications in locations of a captured audience/reader i.e. posted above the urinals.

Last quarter's article on personal survival kits also entailed discussions on the virtue of certain items to meet specific needs i.e. smaller multi-tool knives vs a similar length (but not as wide) sized 2-3 bladed knife. Another discussion that came up as a product of the article was a discussion on scattered method vs. container and from this the material the container was made of. Several comments occurred about sealed metal containers vs sealed plastic containers. This container discussion centered on meeting SERE needs verses durability, weight, and carrying-comfort factor. Metal seemed to have met more uses, but the worry was the weight and un-comfortability might cause the carrier to not carry when they needed it.

## Wallet Edition SERE

### By SURVIVOR STAFF

The idea is to provide a wallet-sized card that can be laminated and carried in a survival kit, every day carry/kit, or in your wallet. How to use:

- Print this page
- Cut out along the dotted lines
- Fold over – at small print *FOLD HERE*
- Laminate
- Carry

### Survivor's Quote:

**"Never give in - never, never, never, never, in nothing great or small, large or petty, never give in except to convictions of honour and good sense. Never yield to force; never yield to the apparently overwhelming might of the enemy."**

*Winston Churchill*  
Defender of the Free World

## Code of Conduct

### for Members of the United States Armed Forces

**1 I am an American**, fighting in the forces which guard my country and our way of life. I am prepared to give my life in their defense.

**2 I will never surrender** of my own free will. If in command, I will never surrender the members of my command while they still have the means to resist.

**3 If I am captured** I will continue to resist by all means available. I will make every effort to escape and aid others to escape. I will accept neither parole nor special favors from the enemy.

**4 If I become a prisoner of war**, I will keep faith with my fellow prisoners. I will give no information or take part in any action which might be harmful to my comrades.

*FOLD HERE*

If I am senior, I will take command. If not, I will obey the lawful orders of those appointed over me and will back them up in every way.

**5 When questioned**, should I become a prisoner of war, I am required to give name, rank, service number and date of birth. I will evade answering further questions to the utmost of my ability. I will make no oral or written statements disloyal to my country and its allies or harmful to their cause.

**6 I will never forget that I am an American**, fighting for freedom, responsible for my actions, and dedicated to the principles which made my country free. I will trust in my God and in the United States of America.