

# Kidnap for Ransom

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"Canadians abroad continue to be at risk of being targeted by hostage-takers due to the low-risk, high-reward nature of kidnap for ransom. Kidnap for ransom continues to pose a serious threat to Canada. The RCMP regards hostage taking as a serious threat to Canadians travelling abroad in the South East Asia (SEA) region."

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The warning above, issued by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP), was recently tweeted by Global News journalist and renowned international terrorism expert, Stewart Bell. It is the result of an *Access to Information and Privacy Act* (ATIP) request.

South East Asia, along with parts of Africa and Latin America remain hotspots for the lucrative kidnap for ransom trade. It's broadly estimated that there are in excess of 20,000 kidnappings annually. The vast majority of these events are handled quickly and quietly through the intervention of private security firms and family members. While distasteful and likely the cause in part of the sheer number of kidnappings on a global basis, the payment of a ransom or a concession (in some form) almost always leads to the safe return of your employees and loved ones.

The most effective way to protect oneself from the scourge of hostage-taking is to simply be situationally aware. Travellers can avoid risk and learn to recognize when a situation on the ground

has negatively evolved, through the provision of training. The vast number of international security situations could have been minimized, if not totally avoided, had people taken the appropriate steps to recognize and mitigate threats. The ICEN Group and its team of internationally recognized experts can give you and your staff the tools to not only avoid risk but to take on market exploitation opportunities that may have been previously denied to you. Nonetheless, the Duty of Care standard makes this an imperative component to your employee safety regime.

In the event that an abduction has taken place, it is crucial to engage the right people, with the right skill sets, to bring about a safe and successful repatriation of your staff and family members. The criminal elements who are responsible for these kidnappings, whether traditional or associated to terrorist elements, are dangerous and unpredictable. They are not to be trifled with or under-estimated. The objective in any hostage event is to end it quickly and safely. If it is necessary to make concessions to the adversarial elements, it's important to do so in a time, cost and resource effective fashion.

The ICEN Group has successfully negotiated for the release of hostages and abducted persons from both criminal and terrorist-related elements. Let the professionals do what they are trained to do.

## "WE GOT YOUR SIX"