



# Kidnap and Ransom The Risks, Reality and Response

Warren Risk, Crisis, Intelligence Consulting

The actual number of reported kidnappings every year are in the many thousands, the unreported incidents are significantly more with in excess of 80% of all global kidnappings unreported and managed discreetly.

Fortunately, for foreign nationals travelling or working overseas, they equate to just a small percentage of the total incidents. The numbers are obviously very fluid each year as trends and security stability shifts by region. However there are still a considerable number of foreign nationals globally impacted by kidnap and extortion each year.

Business travellers, Humanitarian workers, Maritime crews, Journalists, Mining, Oil and Gas and Expedition adventurers are all regular victims, but tourists or travellers of any type are also targets.

Some incidents make the news, most do not and for good reason.

Reputable Private Kidnap Consultants assist in many cases, and often non disclosure agreements prevent such reporting.

In Australia and overseas families, victims and employers have criticised their Governments authorities response and assistance in helping its citizens during kidnappings. However it is a complex and convoluted matter requiring much diligence.

Whilst some incidents have a political or other motivation, most are about money or information, and with the right professional response and process, can be effectively resolved to secure a safe repatriation.

Sadly though, all too often this is not the case.

## **Kidnap and ransom, the risks, reality and response**

- **The vast majority of kidnappings are never reported**
- **Most incidents do not make the news**
- **Foreign nationals travelling are just a small percentage of victims**
- **Governments, Police, Military in most countries are often bound by procedure, foreign policy, political and legal nuances**
- **Such constraints can not be accommodated to achieve a fast, safe repatriation**







## The Response Reality

- There are many types of kidnap incidents
- They are complex dangerous crimes
- Rescue is usually dangerous
- Kidnapping requires the most nuanced response with one focus
- No competing agendas or political constraints

Rescue is often the most dangerous solution and is best avoided unless there are no other options. Be aware this may be out of your control or a standby option requiring much influence to mitigate.

Incident types vary across regions, but what is clear, is that without the right professional response and process the risks of tragedy are significant.

In many regions kidnap victims are killed before or after a ransom is paid, the reasons are variable, but are better avoided with a professional response process.

In kidnap for ransom incidents the victim is simply a commodity and the perpetrators want maximum profit for that commodity, with minimum risk.

## The Response Reality

The Police, Military, legal institutions, Intelligence agencies and Foreign Affairs Departments of the country of kidnapping and country of victims residence or citizenship, could all have a role, dependent upon those countries involved.

Accordingly they are then all encapsulated in any incident management. Furthermore employers, insurance providers and families are all possible stakeholders, creating a complex response with competing agendas.

The parameters and complications with this are that each has a differing approach, set of rules, and agenda.

The police may wish to arrest the criminals to make a region safer. Intelligence may need them for information on bigger criminal groups. Foreign Affairs may wish to maintain country trade and diplomatic relations at all cost, and the Military may wish to rescue.

It's complicated, but the employer or families influence and control is often minimal, unless they engage their own professional support.

Kidnappings are a vile appalling crime. The victim is normally completely vulnerable when their world is turned into violent chaos and life threatening uncertainty. Soon after for the family and employer it's a long roller coaster of awful psychological and catastrophic turmoil.

So what is a professional response and process.

A reputable Private Kidnap Consultancy will be a multi disciplined team that abides by it's legal obligations and works discreetly and efficiently to repatriate the victims.

We generally work for the family direct, the employer or insurance underwriters.

We rapidly impose order on the catastrophic turmoil that's unfolding and explain the actual practicalities of the threats, risks and crisis, with our whole objective - **to save lives** without the use of violence or trickery.

## Engaging Professional Support

- **Private Kidnap Consultants work directly for the victims family, employer or an insurance underwriter**
- **Usually a multi disciplined team with intelligence, security, risk and crisis management skills.**
- **We have one focus - getting the victim home safe!**





## How Private repatriation works

- We rapidly impose order on the catastrophic turmoil unfolding
- We explain the actual practicalities, risks and the process ahead
- We help with intelligence analysis to better understand the type of crime and perpetrators
- We help form an effective Crisis Management Team
- We make communications effective
- We help manage all the stakeholders

Where as others may have an understandable, even legislated objective, to arrest, rescue or not interfere in another country, or may be paralysed by foreign policy or laws, our objective is not controlled by so many parameters. **We just want them home safe!**

So how do we achieve this

Publicly disclosing the detail could impact further cases and would be unnecessary, but in general terms we provide timely accurate intelligence and information to families and employers in a clear, plain, effective manner, setting out the reality, risks, and likely phases ahead.

We help to quickly create an effective Crisis Management Team, roles and routines, and assist in investigating a safe secure conduit to the perpetrators.

We assist with understanding, identifying and managing any Third Party Intermediaries.

How the perpetrators like to communicate is very variable by region, so we assist with identifying and securing safe communications.

We establish the exact type of incident, profiling the perpetrators, their demands and regional risks and collate high quality real time intelligence to support negotiations and critical decision making.

We assist with managing all the stakeholders, family, employer, insurance, legal, finance, security, policing, military, diplomatic, media, etc.



We help with assessing and appointing a suitable Negotiator and guide them on the importance of communications and negotiation psychology, whilst supporting the Crisis Management Team with the nuances of such cases and international diplomacy, legal considerations, health and wellbeing.

We organise counselling and security support as required and assist with advice on any ransom or charitable donation transactions, legal obligations and safe repatriation.

How do we maximise a safe repatriation

We introduce focus and a systematic multi disciplinary approach into the crisis chaos bringing about order, better decision making and improved management when it's needed most.

Routines are crafted so life can continue alongside what can be a lengthy crisis.

But mostly it is truly understanding the wants and needs of the perpetrators, then managing expectations.

Understanding what they don't want is also important.

We always aim to change what we can control towards a safe repatriation and influence what we can't control towards the same goal.

When it comes to negotiation the crucial focus for us is human life - everything else can be negotiated if required.

## Private Professional Support

- Intelligence drives decision making
- Psychological support
- International law and diplomacy considerations
- Incidents may be lengthy and we help craft routines to maximise safe repatriation
- Managing perpetrators expectations





## Saving lives

- Captivity times and treatment vary regionally
- Express kidnappings common in many areas
- We have one priority - saving lives!
- No other agendas, no judgment, just getting victims home safe
- Manage these incidents badly and the risks go way beyond just the victim
- Choose wisely how you manage it

We have one priority - **saving lives** - no others, no agendas.

It's not about winning or losing, right or wrong or any judgement, just **saving lives**.

Captivity times and treatment vary regionally, but captivity duration times have reduced in recent years. This is obviously good for those successfully repatriated, but can make the process more risky, especially in regions where they can quickly dispose of one victim and gain another. This is normally in regions with poor governance and security where 'express' style kidnappings or fast cash and rapid turnover is common.

The concept of Private Specialist Consultants like Warren Risks is not new in many regions, but for some authorities it's a nuisance, intrusion or unexpected. There can be many complex legal parameters requiring specific advice by legal experts. A private professional response process however will always aim to comply with all legislation and ensure the clients comply with the spirit of all legal obligations, without constraining or paralysing any repatriation process.

For us it's **saving lives**, whilst liaising and working with the authorities as best required, to ensure the spirit of their objectives are not frustrated.

Please reach out to us for advice and assistance

There are several ways to manage these complex dangerous incidents. Choose wisely as such crimes impact much more than just the victim when managed badly.



# Warren Risk, Crisis, Intelligence Consultants

Keeping you, your family, your staff safe in a complex world of risk



**Contact us today for friendly confidential advice and support**

[www.warrenrisks.com](http://www.warrenrisks.com)

[ops@warrenrisks.com](mailto:ops@warrenrisks.com)



## About this report and disclaimers

Our Kidnap Reports are developed normally when the risks changed quite significantly, either in specific regions or generally, or annually after our Kidnap Response and Intelligence Directive complete an analysis of known incidents, trends and events.

For ease we divide the report normally into the primary continent types such as Africa, Asia, Europe and the Americas, but add the Middle East and other primary risk regions as the focus required, occasionally using MENA too. Obviously Country cross over can occur with such terms, but country incident and trend analysis considers this data as best we can. Our aim is to provide generic clear risk management messaging rather than an academic statistical analysis.

We use open source data, private confidential insurance underwriter response reports and data, and our own confidential client support and crisis response information, along with information from our Intelligence Directive to endeavour to make our reports accurate.

However, we cannot unequivocally ensure all data, information and incidents have been harvested and used to develop such reports and as such the reports accuracy, or if the report is appropriate to any individual, organisation, agency or body, their travel, operations and risks. These are generic reports with generic advice that should not be relied upon in any way without further professional analysis and assessments.

For specific advice and support please contact us

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