



HOSTAGE TAKING SITUATIONS in PENITENTIARY ENVIRONMENT



National Correctional Officers Training School Târgu Ocna
Module: Communication in penitentiary environment

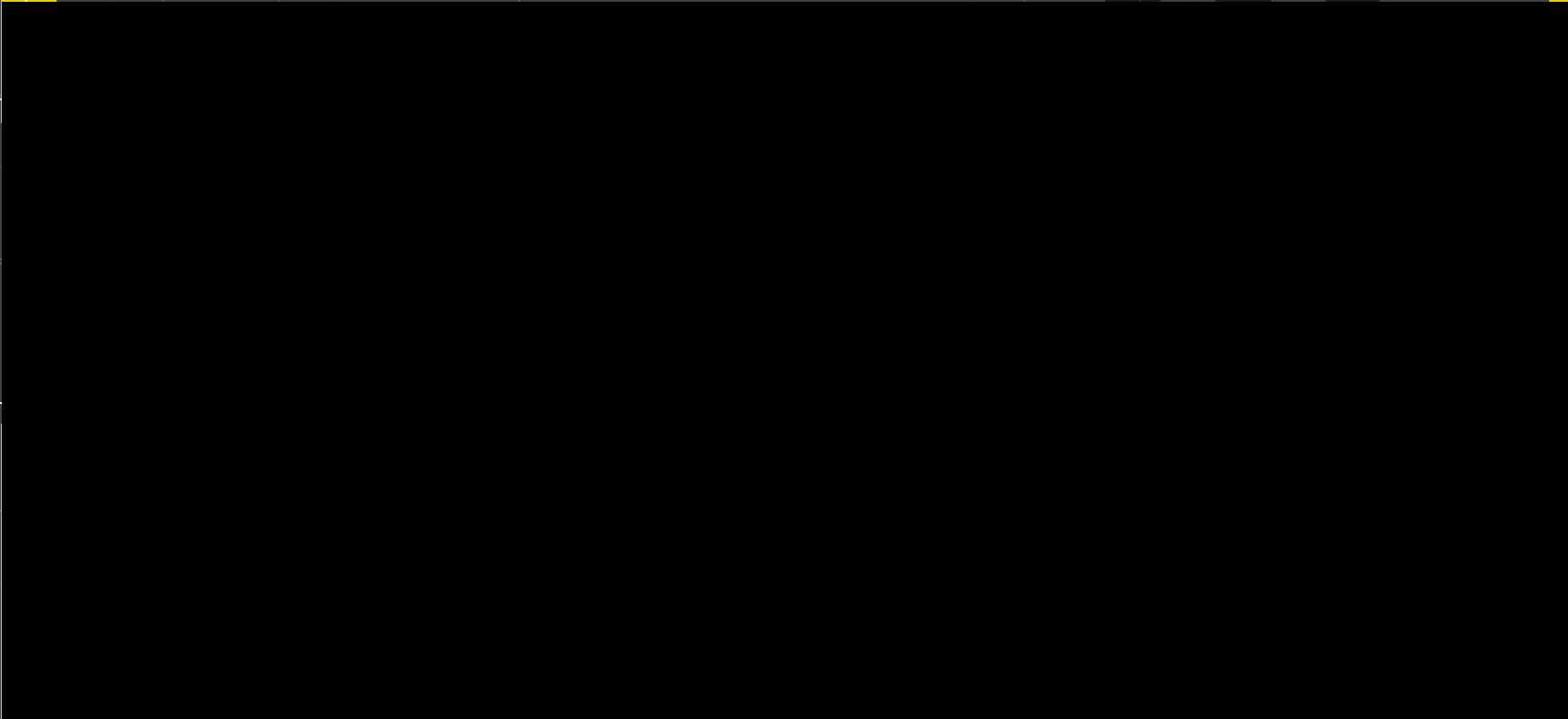


HOSTAGE TAKING IN PENITENTIARY ENVIRONMENT

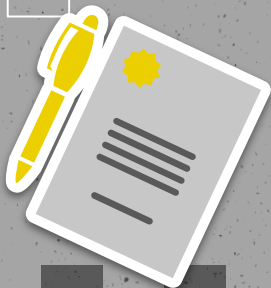


- Why “hostage taking“?
- What does hostage taking in penitentiary environment mean?
- Which are the causes that lead to/favor hostage taking situations?
- Which are the types of persons that can be subject to being taken hostages in penitentiaries?
- Which are the typical actions of the inmates when taking hostages?
- How should a person taken hostage behave in such a situation?
- How should a hostage act during the saving intervention of the specialized team?
- How should the person that has been through such an experience be approached ?

Why „Hostage taking”?



Why „Hostage taking”?



International context of
radicalization and terrorism



National context regarding
organized crime

Specific aspects of the
penitentiary police job



Preparing population for
crisis situations

?Question?



**How would you
react in case of
you were taken
hostage?**





What is hostage taking in penitentiary environment?

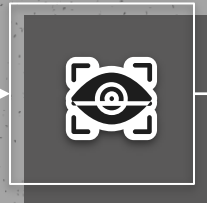
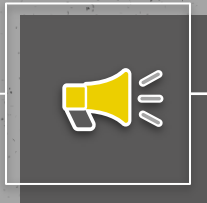


- A hostage taking event is a very serious incident inside the penitentiary environment :
 - It affects the life or the integrity of a/some persons.
 - it endangers the safety of the penitentiary;
 - it affects the state of mind of the inmates and the staff;
- According to the “Incidents management manual“, a hostage taking event is a critical incident.
- Taking hostages inside the penitentiary: apprehending a person under threat or by violent actions by an inmate or group of inmates as a warranty or pressure towards the penitentiary management in order to have their claims or requests solved in favor of the inmate or of the aggressors

Which are the causes that might lead hostage taking events?



Causes that are linked to a weak authority



Causes that are linked to the abusive/harsh detention regime

Causes that are linked to a permissive disciplinary environment.

Which are the types of hostage taking actions?

Types of hostage taking:

- Planned hostage taking event;
- Unplanned hostage taking event (spontaneous);
- Hostage taking event as a personal deed (for revenge).



The hostage might be:



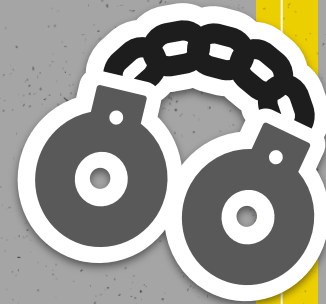
**Penitentiary
staff**



Visitors



Inmates



Which are the types of persons that can be subject to being taken hostages in penitentiaries?



Types of persons:

- The careless naive;
- The tough guy;
- The old man;
- Female staff.



Which are the typical actions of the inmates when taking hostages?

- ✓ At the beginning, the safety of the hostages represents an important issue for the inmates;
- ✓ The inmates will take the keys and the communication devices from the hostages;
- ✓ The inmates might exchange clothes with the hostages;
- ✓ The inmates might use the hostages as a way to communicate with other persons;
- ✓ The inmates might proceed to setting up barricades ;
- ✓ The hostages will be closed, usually, in a cell or in another place that is hard to get to;
- ✓ If the situation lingers or the leader is changed, the safety of the hostages might be endangered;
- ✓ The inmates might threaten with the use of violence or might even use it.





PREREQUISITES:



- The most important factor for successfully releasing the hostage is:

THE HOSTAGE!

- In case of a hostage taking situation the entire staff of the penitentiary will have as main goal and will focus on how to save the hostages!
- The preceding events showed that, so far, there have not situations involving the killing of the hostages by the aggressors!

How should a person taken hostage behave in such a situation?

- ✓ Keep calm and regain control of yourself!
- ✓ Prepare mentally and emotionally for a long strain!
- ✓ Don't try to be a hero!
- ✓ Try to make the aggressors perceive you as a human being!
- ✓ Accept the rules imposed by the aggressors!
- ✓ Let the aggressors know as few details as possible when they ask questions!
- ✓ Gain the respect of the aggressors!
- ✓ Try to understand the aggressors!
- ✓ Remain as mentally active as possible/Keep hoping!
- ✓ Eat and exercise!
- ✓ Accept your failure!
- ✓ Be tolerant with the other hostages!



How should a person taken hostage behave in such a situation?

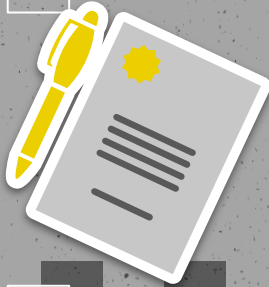


Sexual aggression

If during this period the aggressors committ a sexual assault upon you:

- First, use verbal opposition (screaming, yelling);
- If you cannot defend yourself or you are under the threat of a gun or of physical or psychical constraint, use passive physical opposition (fainting, simulate heart attacks, severe coughing episodes);
- Elliminate bodily fluids as a last solution.

How should a hostage act during the saving intervention of the specialized team?



You might be treated harshly until the situation becomes clear, that is why it is recommended:

- To take a safe position (in a safe, remote place);
- Lie on the ground and try to protect yourself in case of an abrupt intervention;
- If you receive any instruction from the interventional team, move quickly
- Keep your hands at sight, above your head and do not make any sudden movement;
- Be prepared to be taken as an aggressor during the first stage of the intervention;
- If you see fire or smoke, try to get to an emergency exit or to identify a way of getting out.

Recommendations on how to approach a colleague who experienced a traumatic incident



- Listen to him/her! Try to have patience and be a good listener if he/she tells you how things happened ;
- Avoid criticism, even if you believe you are right.
- If the one who was involved in such a traumatic situation tends to feel guilty, try to make him/her leave that feeling away.
- If you notice irritation or aggressiveness in his/her behavior, do not answer back abruptly and do not feel offended.
- Be compassionate about your traumatized colleague, but without exaggerating. Stay kind and available!
- Do not comfort him/her with words like “Thank God you are alive, anything else does not matter.” or „You should be thankful that things were not worse than that.“ Such statements increase and prolong the feeling of danger.

Questions ?

Comments ?



Additional information ?

Challenges ?





Break



Practical exercise



Reminder

- ✓ **Keep calm and regain control of yourself!**
- ✓ **Prepare mentally and emotionally for a long strain!**
- ✓ **Don't try to be a hero!**
- ✓ **Accept the rules imposed by the aggressors!**
- ✓ **Let the aggressors know as few details as possible when they ask questions!**
- ✓ **Remain as mentally active as possible/Keep hoping!**





Preparing for the exercise



- The exercise will take place in the simulator and each one of you will be taken hostage, and the aggressors will treat you like real hostages, so you have to apply all the things that you learnt today;
- The participation is optional and you will sign an agreement;
- During the exercise you can leave if you consider is too much by using the word STOP for three times in a row;
- All the participants must leave in this room their chains, watches, rings, earrings, necklaces, pens, keys, phones and any other object that can put you in danger during the exercise;
- Who does not participate will be an observant in the room;



Good luck



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