

Reality Based Training for the Maritime Environment

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Will your security plan get these results?



Depending on the size of your vessel and your wallet you may not be able to hire Security Professionals for your protection. You may be looking for training solutions as an alternative. Hard Target Security Group (HTSG) provides training for the captain, crew and families in modern techniques for vessel defense including how to avoid unwanted boarding's. The current standard in training the crew the Vessel Security Plan (VSP) is better than nothing, but for most it is a mere walkthrough of the VSP. Adding

Reality Based Training to your preparation will be the catalyst for success in an essential element of survival called stress inoculation. First let's examine what Reality Based Training is. The goal of this type of training is to mirror reality and by doing so induce live stress into the individuals involved. You want the students, in this case Captain and crew, to execute the Vessel Security Plan in a controlled yet realistic role-player scenario. This way, their first dry run is not the actual life and death situation. You want them to experience reality safely and successfully as many times as possible, and ideally you would want them to conduct the training on the vessel they work on. Reality Based Training in the maritime environment should be training that is designed to test and evaluate your VSP, crew responses, and individual performance under life like stress with minimal consequences.

Through this type of training you induce high levels of stress into your training exercise. This is important because of the way our brains work under stress. We operate on a daily basis working from our frontal lobe or rational brain. We are very capable in this regard. When we introduce stress our performance degrades. During this process we experience chemical changes in our bodies (adrenaline) and in our brain that changes our cognitive ability and our rational thought processes. If your training only exposes your crew to working under their rational brain, you should expect failure when they need to perform under stress. By performing under real stress conditions through a number of realistic training scenarios, you will move toward and accomplish stress inoculation. Stress inoculation is just what it sounds like. By exposing individuals to specific types of stress their performance will improve with each exposure so that under high levels of stress or what we call combat stress you can successfully perform instead of freezing up or hesitating.

What has been discovered years ago within the field of training military and law enforcement personnel can now be applied to the maritime environment which we know can become very stressful and unforgiving. Reality based training is complicated and much more involved than merely role playing. It requires specific equipment, safety, and

preparation. Remember true vessel security training should encompass training with the Captain and crew on topics such as mind set, demeanor, awareness, presence, confidence, discipline, then get into practical lessons on weaponry, empty hand strikes, control techniques, and close quarter battle. HTSG has a number of trained professionals with extensive background in providing reality based training programs. For more information contact HTSG by calling 850-559-6452 or email Jason@htsecuritygroup.com