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Rescue in Police Operations and Special Situations

Abstract

A crucial element of the state security policy is to have at disposal properly prepared anti-crisis systems. Ways in which individual entities of the anti-crisis system, such as the Police, will be prepared to combat existing threats and how effectively they will perform the assigned tasks in difficult situations depend on numerous factors, including skills, knowledge and quality of people working there. The research results presented by the author and some examples of practical solutions prove that in the scope of improving the current methods within individual formations, services and institutions it is possible to develop better, more effective models and procedures that are successfully used in many countries, and their effectiveness translates directly into the safety of both the conducted activities and the participants of these events themselves.

Keywords: safety of operations, special situations, services, formations, rescue, professional preparation, functionality

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Ratownictwo w działaniach Policji oraz sytuacjach specjalnych

Abstrakt

Posiadanie właściwie przygotowanych systemów antykryzysowych jest obecnie nieodzownym elementem prowadzonej polityki państwa w zakresie bezpieczeństwa. To, w jaki sposób poszczególne podmioty systemu antykryzysowego, takie jak np. Policja, będą przygotowane do zwalczania istniejących zagrożeń i jak skutecznie będą one wykonywać, w trudnych sytuacjach, postawione przed nimi zadania zależy od wielu czynników, w tym umiejętności, wiedzy i jakości ludzi w nich pracujących. Przedstawione przez autora wyniki badań oraz niektóre przykłady praktycznych rozwiązań dowodzą, że w zakresie udoskonalenia posiadanych obecnie metod w ramach poszczególnych formacji, służb i instytucji, można

wpracować doskonalsze, bardziej efektywne modele i procedury, które w wielu krajach są z powodzeniem stosowane, a ich skuteczność przekłada się bezpośrednio na bezpieczeństwo zarówno prowadzonych działań, jak i samych uczestników tych zdarzeń.

Słowa kluczowe: bezpieczeństwo prowadzonych działań, sytuacje specjalne, służby, formacje, ratownictwo, przygotowanie zawodowe, funkcjonalność

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Рятівництво в діяльності поліції та в особливих ситуаціях

Анотація

Правильно приготовані антикризові системи тепер є невід'ємним елементом політики держави в сфері безпеки. Наскільки окремі суб'єкти антикризової системи, такі як поліція, будуть готові до боротьби з існуючими загрозами та наскільки ефективно вони будуть виконуватись у складних ситуаціях, завдання, поставлені перед ними, залежить від багатьох факторів, включаючи навички, знання та якості людей, котрі там працюють. Результати досліджень, представлені автором, та деякі приклади практичних рішень доводять, що в рамках вдосконалення методів, наявних в даний час в окремих формуваннях, службах та установах, можна розробити більш досконалі, ефективніші моделі та процедури, які успішно використовуються у багатьох країнах, а їх ефективність безпосередньо перекладається на безпеку як проведених заходів, так і самих учасників цих заходів.

Ключові слова: безпека проведених операцій, особливі ситуації, служби, формування, рятівництво, професійна підготовка, функціональність

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Introduction

Contemporary expectations of the societies towards all entities that provide services in favour of widely understood security are really broad. This happens for many reasons,

including for example those connected with the dominating role of the state in formulation of procedures aimed at counteracting hazards. In Poland this role has been specified at the level of a basic act and is contained in the Constitution of the Republic of Poland [1]. Procedures, algorithms and operation schemes presently proposed by particular formations, services and established entities should comprise all possible detailed information concerning their activities, and especially those connected with hazardous and variable situations or those that are extremely difficult and demanding, for example works on areas of difficult access, hazardous conditions and environment, which for the needs of the present paper have been referred to jointly by the author as “special situations”. Special situations that may occur in everyday functioning of diverse formations, services and entities acting for security acquire different forms, ranging from extremely dangerous ones to those that are complicated from the technical and specialist viewpoint. Furthermore, one should bear in mind that various incidents may take place at any moment, even one that is least expected, and for this reasons institutions appointed for the purpose must have appropriate resources and forces capable to counteract such hazards.

The present preparation of particular employees to acting in exceptional circumstances must comprise all the possible details that would allow them to cope effectively with the situation. The anticipated broad knowledge and practical abilities presently required from soldiers, policemen, firefighters or guards constitute an indispensable component of their capabilities and effectiveness in operation. A solution for appropriate reconciliation of requirements that result from a given incident with its professional and comprehensive “handling” entails the necessity of assuring multi-dimensional professional education of specialists to enable them to prove in practice their qualifications and practical skills from many fields. This state of affairs originates from coercion components of a special nature, where apart from their basic training particular members of combat teams are required to have also several other useful specialisations, such as for example diver or parachute jumper, combat operator and paramedic or combat operator and pyrotechnician. The adopted principles lead to a situation in which nobody speculates anymore whether a firefighter, a soldier or a policeman would be able to grant first aid or whether they would be able to save a drowning man from water, which would among others prove their swimming skills.

In the past several years the field of medical rescuing started to gain importance as an element of anti-crisis operations [2, p. 25]. Extensive and multidisciplinary training of persons to the execution of future tasks comprises numerous elements which until

not long ago have been associated with specialist formations; nowadays a policeman has appropriate knowledge related to fire safety and is capable of applying it in practice in the event of a fire, and a firefighter is able to implement tasks for the Police, for example recover items from a crime from under water. As has already been mentioned, this trend, modelled on training template of special forces members, constitutes presently a delimited orientation in the education of specialists in the field of rescuing.

In his study the author will also point to other possibilities of a versatile utilisation of professionals and priorities of their vocational training based on solutions currently adopted in foreign formations and in Polish special forces, which could successfully be deployed universally to principles in use presently in the Police and in the State Fire Service – as a type of solutions in the field of rescuing in special situations. The objective of this paper is to suggest an appropriate comprehensive approach from the organisational, training and logistic viewpoints, which constitute indispensable elements of correct functioning of the anti-crisis system, especially during the occurrence of special situations. Having an appropriately prepared system with this kind of structure would enable making better and more efficient use of its employees who under their duties could offer more comprehensive knowledge and skills, and actions undertaken by them would prove to be more effective. While executing his studies, the author made use of numerous research methods, among others a diagnostic survey and comparisons, which enable the presentation of conclusions contained in the summary of the paper.

Medical coverage of actions in practice

Formations mentioned by the authors, such as the Police [3] or the State Fire Service [4] are institutions, the statutory tasks of which require providing assistance to the society and combatting diverse hazards. Both those entities are of key importance in responding in crisis situations and which constitute a basic component in the anti-crisis system. The scope of operation of those elements is really broad, and the specific nature of operations related to their activity may be accompanied by diverse types of hazards, and what is more the execution of assigned tasks by those formations may cause the occurrence of hazards among direct participants of the incidents, but also of bystanders, and as a result policemen and firefighters are frequently forced to provide first aid. The further fate of the victim depends on the way in which such aid is granted. This shows that an important element of the service is constituted by assuring appropriate

response to situations, during which states of sudden threats to health and life have occurred or do occur [2, p. 42]. In anticipation of the possibility of such circumstances, to be able to respond to them appropriately the above specified formations organise a medical coverage scheme for their operations. Given the diversified activity and nature of incidents, especially those of the highest risk level, such as terrorist attacks, operations executed in areas endangered by explosions, implementation of tasks in a hazardous environment and conditions, it should be assumed that the organised anti-crisis system would comprise elements which could effectively counteract hazards in exceptional and special circumstances.

Pursuant to studies performed in a few garrisons of the Polish police as part of the doctoral dissertation entitled “Medical rescuing in Police operations”, the author has distinguished the main assumptions and standards binding during the execution of medical coverage services for operations of this formation. In the majority of cases those schemes are based on recommendations devised according to recommendations for medical rescuing specialists working in counter-terrorist sub-units. As may be well presumed, models devised by particular special units have been based on guidelines of Tactical Combat Casualty Care (TCCC), Tactical Emergency Medical Support (TEMS) and Tactical Emergency Casualty Care (TECC), which are in use in tactical rescuing. They all assume quick delivery of the victim to the medical team, and then to a specialised medical unit, according to assumptions prescribed by the “chain of survival”. Yet for this assumption to succeed in practice, it is necessary to assure appropriate preparation of its particular components: starting from effective and efficient assistance to victims by rescuers operating on an endangered location and then their transport to the medical team, which should be appropriately trained and prepared to participate in special tasks, and finally transport to the agreed medical centre that needs to guarantee competent handling of numerous victims with multi-organ traumas [6] sustained among others as a results of an explosion or shootings. The need of professional and proper provision of assistance on the scene of an incident caused, especially in units of a special nature, the distinguishing of a “paramedic” in a combat team as additional speciality [7, p. 38], yet up to now this has not been regulated by regulations, despite attempts undertaken in 2018 with the aim of defining a programme of a medical qualification course by the minister of the interior [8], and which would enable at least a minimum level of ordering the present arbitrariness in relation to vocational education of Policemen to providing first aid, including in “special situations”.

The development of rescue medicine and numerous studies related to rescuing human life have proven that in situations of sudden health hazards the crucial element is time that lapses from the occurrence of the given incidents until the moment of providing first aid to the victim [2, p. 81]. Currently the Police are adopting numerous solutions related to providing first aid and medical coverage of police operations, yet to a big extent they are based on operational standards of civil services in a “safe environment”. The Police carry out certain actions, in which the level of associated danger is high or very high. Many situations and their development are unforeseeable, and at times an escalation of hazards resulting from an apparently uncomplicated intervention takes place very quickly and mere seconds may decide on somebody’s life [9, p. 8]. It should be also borne in mind that the variability of adopted models allows for example diversity in interpretations of the term “medical coverage”, as well as in other issues, such as recruitment of candidates to police medical teams employed in full-time structures of police prevention squads and autonomous police prevention subsquads, which currently proceeds without following homogenous standards, e.g. as to specialisation, preparation and vocational predispositions of individuals and on the basis of common standards verifying the knowledge and skills of particular members of police medical teams. The currently applied methods related to the deployment and functioning of such teams differ, and that becomes transposed on a differentiated work and functioning system of those organisational units.

Another element in the field of medical coverage of Police operations that requires further studies is the fact that no standardisation has been done of regulations concerning equipping and functioning of medical ambulances at disposal of police medical teams, and up to now the minimum level of forces and means necessary for implementation of medical coverage of those activities has not been specified. The conducted research has shown that medical coverage of police activities is currently being implemented on the basis of external entities that provide medical services, including medical rescue activities [8], police medical teams and policemen with the required qualifications in rescuing, this particular type of services is generally carried out with the use of own assault teams in counter-terrorist units or during training courses and workshops under local vocational advancement. As indicated by the conducted studies, the way of assuring medical coverage of its operations presently adopted in the Police is haphazard and has not been regulated by any regulations. External teams that provide medical services are insufficiently prepared, equipped and trained with respect to providing first aid in special conditions, and those would certainly occur for

example on the location of an incident of a terrorist nature [10]. On the other hand, nowadays Police medical teams are unable to become a single component to be used to secure actions of the Police due to their insufficient number as compared to data of garrisons, as well as due to shortage of appropriate personnel, consistent enrolment policy, verification and vocational advancement as well appropriate allocation in the system of state medical rescue (SMR) [8]. Studies conducted by the author have shown that the organisation of joint training courses with civil medical teams is not conducted as part of systemic solutions, but in most cases on own initiative of a small group of people [2, p. 80]. It should be borne in mind that basing on the creative operation of particular persons is an obviously preferred and correct approach from the viewpoint of the given institutions, yet the most advantageous effect would be achieved when “good practices” are deployed in a systemic and consequent way, taking into consideration the specific features of the given services, which in the case of the Police and the State Fire Service has become multifaceted.

To be able to cope with requirements imposed on uniformed force members, whose tasks would comprise skilful, safe and correct operating in “special situations” that could appear in the line of everyday service, it should be assumed that their vocational preparation needs to comprise also elements of “special” skills, which certainly include standards related to provision of first aid in hazardous/tactical situations based on TCCC guidelines. Meanwhile in practice the trend seems to be quite different: both in the SFS and in the Police use is being made of recommendations based on civil rescuing. “Tactical rescuing” mentioned by the author may not be considered a happy medium to potential dangerous situations, but all the same assures elementary knowledge on how to survive and how to save somebody’s life. It may constitute indispensable knowledge and abilities of coping in situations that involve saving human lives, which is the highest value protected by all institutions, including the Police [2, p. 8].

Rescuing in special situations – research

In an attempt at anticipating or comprehending mechanisms related to the occurrence and escalation of given types of threats, various scientists have undertaken studies of circumstances that underly the occurrence of diverse phenomena or incidents to be able to devise better ways of coping with the given type of incident or to learn more specific information about it. For the needs of this paper the author will discuss selected conclusions from the surveys performed with Polish and US policemen to identify the

existing needs with respect to their vocational preparation to granting first aid in tactical/special conditions, and will discuss conclusions from the conducted experiments that were aimed at devising simple and effective methods for neutralisation of heated/burning pressurised containers with technical/industrial gases.

Studies pertaining to Police officers were conducted in the period from March 1 to October 31, 2018, and were in the form of a diagnostic survey, making use of a standardised interview questionnaire – the respondents comprised Polish and US policemen from various service levels and with different work experience. They have been deployed in four county Police headquarters of the Pomorskie garrison and in the Police Department of Oceanside in California, in the USA – a total of 282 policemen have been comprised by the survey (201 from Poland and 81 from the USA). The objective of the survey was to determine the type of police training courses and workshops on the provision of first aid and also to identify the level of acquired knowledge and skills of the surveyed policemen with respect to recommendations of TCCC, TECC and TEMS dedicated to the service, as well as knowledge related to standards for provision of first aid addressed at uniformed forces.

The Polish policemen were of the opinion that prior to joining the police force they had not been well prepared for granting first aid – this view was shared by a half of the respondents. 18% persons were convinced of their having good preparation, and further 24% of the respondents were convinced that their preparation was rather insufficient (fig. 1). Further results are not optimistic as regards improvement of the situation after completion of specialised vocational training, because also in this case once again half of the respondents were of the opinion that after their completion the preparation level to provision of first aid tended to be moderate. A total of 31% of surveyed Policemen were convinced about having good or very good preparation, while 19% of the respondents were of the opinion that their preparedness level for granting first aid is inappropriate or insufficient (fig. 1).

The studies have also shown that as many as 61% of the surveyed Polish policemen have never become familiar with the rescue procedure under recommendations of the Tactical Combat Casualty Care and its derivatives. 5% of persons came into contact with those guidelines during education in school, while 9% declared that they had contact with this standard for the first time on a vocational training course, and 11% in other additional vocational training courses or workshops, and further 14% of the respondents gained their knowledge from absolutely different sources (fig. 2).

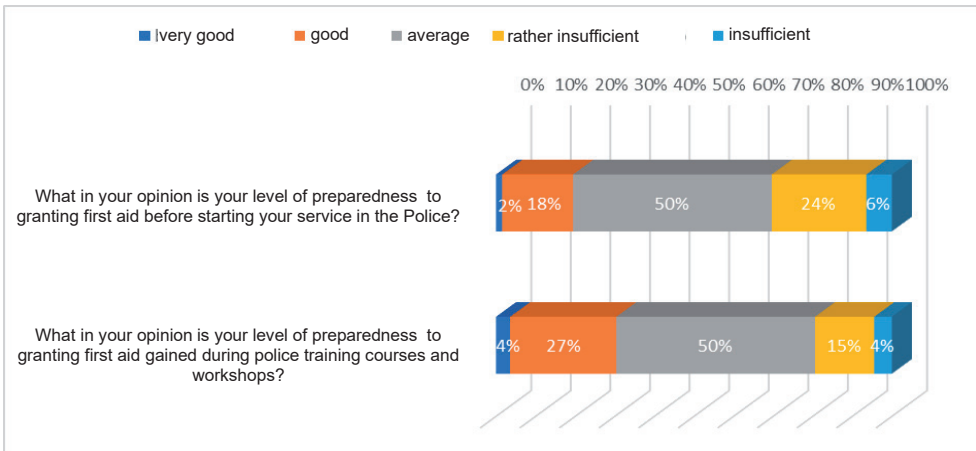


Fig. 1. Assessment of knowledge in provision of first aid gained before and during the service

Source: own study

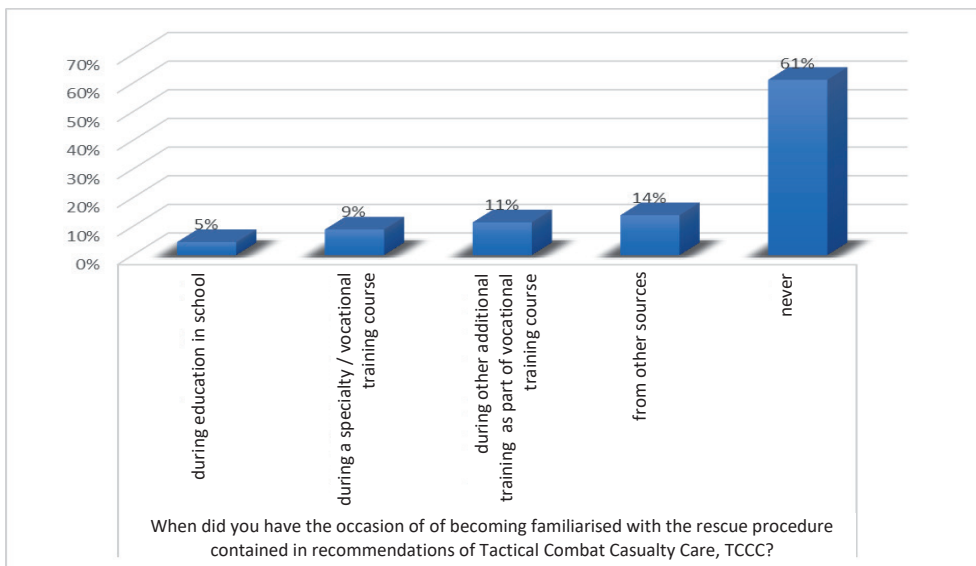


Fig. 2. Time of familiarisation with the TCCC rescue procedure

Source: own study

Polish police officers appraised their own level of knowledge with respect to providing first aid during actions performed on the combat zone to be average (32%), poor (30%) or they admitted that were completely unfamiliar with those principles (27%). Only 11% considered the knowledge level in this respect to be good (fig. 3).

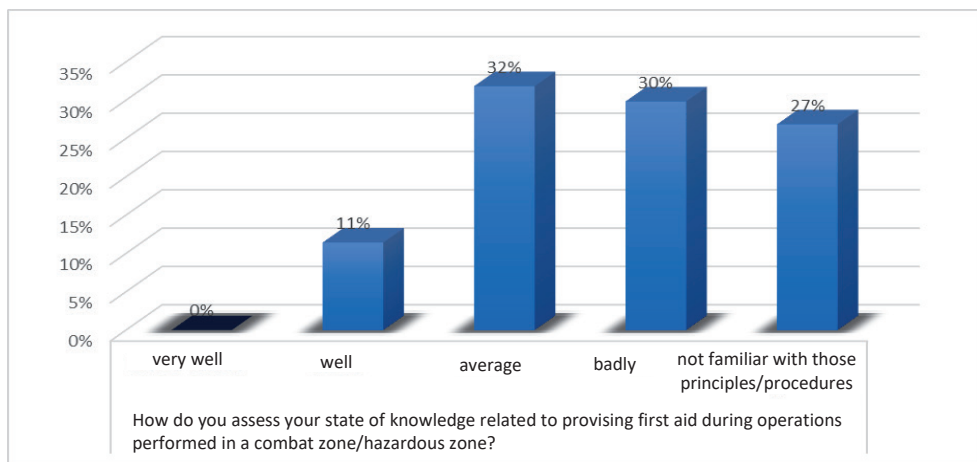


Fig. 3. Evaluation of the knowledge of providing first aid during operations in a hazardous zone

Source: own study

The need for extending their own medical knowledge by further rescue specialties, including the TCCC standards, was reported by 56% of surveyed Policemen. 36% of surveyed persons never gave it a thought, 5% did not have such a need, and 3% admitted that they did not have any possibility of doing so (fig. 4).

For needs of the comparison the author will present selected results of studies carried out among US policemen, which were found to be slightly different as compared to those in studies implemented in Poland.

As a rule the respondents were of the opinion that their professional preparation gained during the service for provision of first aid as good (59%), average – 35%, and very good – 6% respondents. US respondents came for the first time into contact with TCCC guidelines during a course organised by the faculty (54%) or in the police school/academy (28%). Furthermore, 15% persons have been introduced to TCCC standards during external non-agency training courses – financed by the employer, and 3% of respondents during self-financed courses (fig. 5).

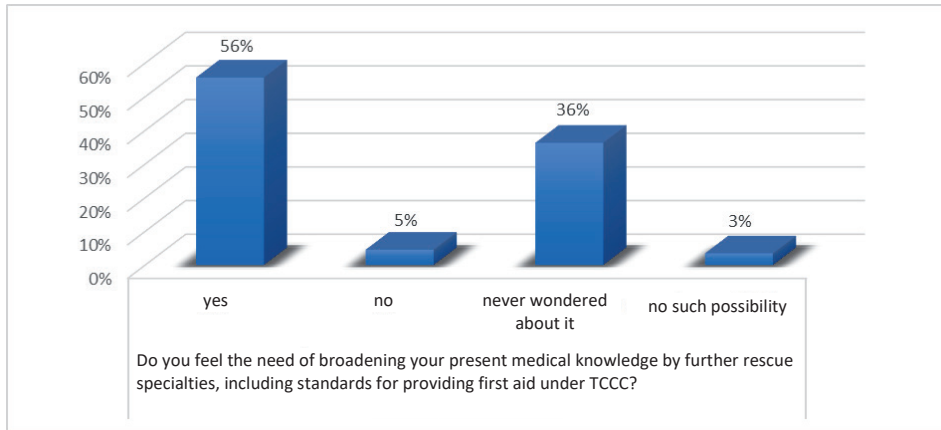


Fig. 4. Need for broadening the knowledge level of Polish policemen with respect to TCCC

Source: own study

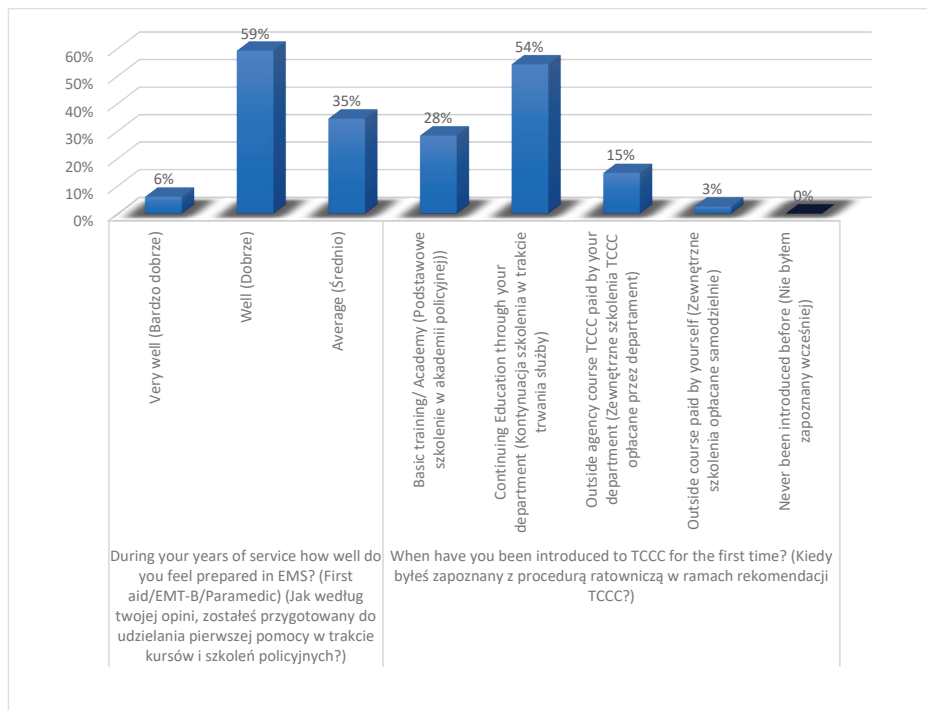


Fig. 5. Evaluation of the knowledge of providing first aid gained during service and time of familiarisation by US Policemen with the TCCC

Source: own study

US policemen considered their preparation to granting first aid in a hazardous situation as being average (48%) or good (43%). On the other hand, 84% of them would be interested in gaining more extensive knowledge related to TCCC, and 6% of US policemen did not express interest in broadening that knowledge; 10% of respondents had no opinion in this respect (fig. 6).

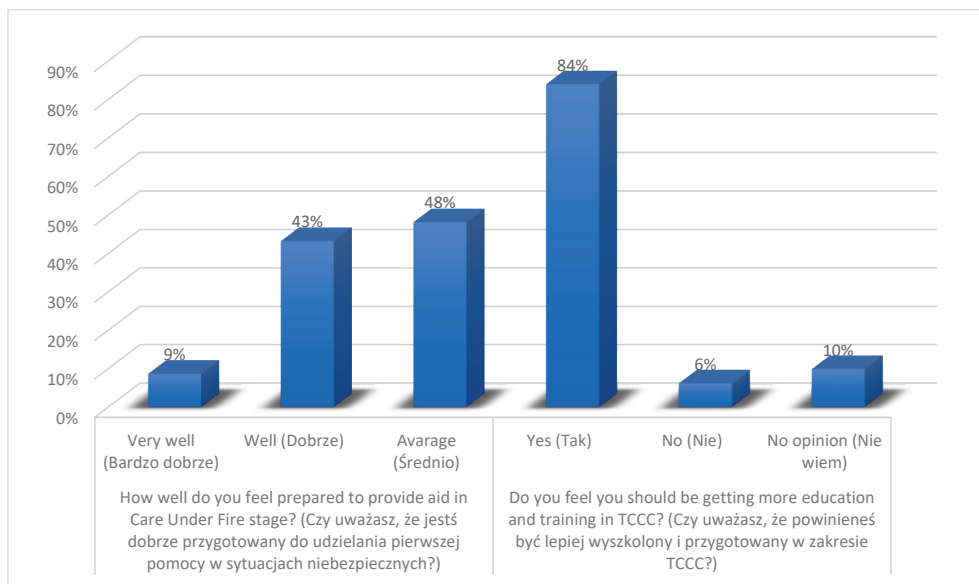


Fig. 6. Evaluation of the state of knowledge related to providing first aid during operations in a hazardous zone and the need of broadening knowledge related to TCCC of US Policemen

Source: own study

In the presented selected results of the survey a clear difference may be observed between Polish and US policemen as regards knowledge, skills and evaluation of their own abilities of granting first aid in conditions of “special situations”. As has already been mentioned, “tactical rescuing” may not be perceived as a universal remedy to potential dangerous situations, but to a bigger extent assures elementary knowledge on how to survive and how to save somebody’s life, which in turn is transposed on the feeling of certainty in the operation of officers, but in addition boosts the general safety level of all people involved in the incidents.

Further studies, the preliminary conclusions of which the authors wishes to present, were dedicated to devising an effective method for neutralisation of pressurised gas

cylinders which due to high temperature could pose a serious hazard. one of the phenomena that cause accidents during a rescue and firefighting action is the explosion. Its scale may be presumed based on statistical data concerning victims of incidents related with technical gas explosions: the number of victims in explosions of technical gases in the years 2000–2014 comprised 48 fatalities and 945 injured, including 84 injured rescuers [11, p. 70]. Representatives of the State Fire Service are conducting studies oriented at devising effective algorithms for measures to be undertaken in the event of occurrence of such events. As has been shown by studies performed on testing grounds carried out in 2016 under project No. DOB-BIO6/02/50/2014, the development of effective protective means is possible – and namely screens to protect firefighters-rescuers from consequences of an explosion of a tank/cylinder containing compressed flammable gas [11, p. 77]. However, would it not be a simpler and more effective solution to this problem to deploy and use solutions that had already been adopted in many countries (e.g. Sweden and Hungary), which in addition have been found to be rather easy, effective and failproof?

In the event of uncontrolled heating, e.g. as a result of a fire of a gas cylinder, the currently adopted procedures assume among others cooling cylinders by applying water for a certain time, and then monitoring their state. However, initial conclusions from experiments conducted under the “BLOW” research project, which was initiated in 2014 to study phenomena related with the impact of fire on gas cylinders, both industrial and those used in households and to assess the suitability of the method of shooting cylinders to neutralise them, indicate that the method of unsealing by shooting such cylinders is effective and safe for rescuers. In the experimental testing use was made of more than 100 gas cylinders containing diverse gases on military testing grounds and in shelters [12]. In the opinion of authors of this project, shooting dangerous cylinders with the use of gun bullets opens new possibilities for quick and relatively safe neutralisation of hazardous or unstable cylinders. The correctly executed procedure of unsealing by shooting does not pose a hazard for the shooter even in the case of premature explosion, because he may remain even at a considerable distance, such as more than 200 m from the target, and shooting may be practically done in any weather conditions. Such a solution offers several advantages, for example neutralisation by shooting is very quick and may be executed at any time on demand, and so the rescue team would be able to decide when this should be done, and besides it guarantees very good control over other activities connected for example with suppression of the fire or the undertaken rescue action and does not expose the rescuers

to the hazard of remaining over a longer time in a place at a direct hazard, nor does it force its members to delay the operations. All the given team would have to do would be to hide for a few seconds at the exact time of the neutralisation process. However to be able to use the shooter in the most effective way, he should reach the place of the incident as quickly as possible – preferably concurrently with all other rescue services. This can be achieved if the shooter is for example a member of a team of firefighters or a firefighter having the required qualifications and skills, and the gun is transported as an element of standard equipping in a firefighting truck. Experience from Sweden, Hungary or the US shows that the proposed solution is feasible, yet it should be emphasised that in Sweden – basically – only acetylene cylinders are neutralised by shooting, and in Hungary this method, which is executed by snipers from TEK (Terrorrelhárítási Központ) [13], is recognised by specialists as highly effective.

Authors of the experiments are convinced that the proposed neutralisation method consisting of shooting gas cylinders by unsealing is productive and safe even in the event of other gases (non-toxic ones), and consequently its widespread use in Poland should be taken into consideration [12].

Joint deployment of specialists

It is anticipated that modern rescuers must have such traits, as multidisciplinary, versatility and broad operational spectrum as has been mentioned in the first part by the authors, and as a result they become extremely valuable for particular formations, services and other entities, in which they serve or work. All the same one should keep in mind that comprehensive preparation of such persons necessary to allow their executing assigned tasks requires time – in some cases the process of such preparation may be as long as the entire period of vocational work of such a person – and also a lot of eagerness and extensive financial outlays, frequently borne by the given institution or organisation that as a consequence encumber the state budget. Hence it is justified to enable making use of the knowledge and skills of those specialists in the most rational and effective way. Many countries, including the USA, have developed mechanisms to allow multi-level and extensive organisation of units having above-average knowledge in a given specialty. The anti-crisis system functioning there is characterised by “unconstrained” deployment of specialists in diverse formations and rescue services.

During the studies conducted in departments of the Fire Service and the Oceanside Police Department in California the author had the opportunity to become familiar

with the service model adopted there and operating modes of the officers and the medical personnel, and will present a general description.

In the USA there is no single/joint headquarters of the Police and the State Fire Service. There are autonomously operating departments, also called districts, divisions or bureaus, which can be considerably differentiated with respect to size, ranging from small units employing a few or several persons, to units as extensive as for example in New York, where the New York City Police Department (NYPD) employs also 40 000 policemen [14, p. 30–31]. The US police are operating on three organisational levels: federal, state and county levels. For the needs of the present study the author outlines the county system. At this particular organisational level every state, town or township has its “own” Police, with such procedures, as rules for recruitment, remuneration and retirement benefits for its officers are defined by authorities of particular states. As regards the type of equipping, including vehicles, arms and uniforms, these are determined by local officials [14, p. 32].

The Oceanside Police Department is the counterpart of the Polish County Police Headquarters, and employs 228 sworn policemen and 84 non-sworn Police employees, and the entire department comprises two headquarters and four stations distributed over the jurisdiction of that unit [15]. The police of this department has at its disposal a SWAT team (Special Weapon and Tactics), which comprises volunteers who have to complete specialised training courses and have additional arms and equipping. Their tasks comprise among others detaining particularly hazardous criminals, guarding persons who need to be protected during official visits, participating in actions and operations with the highest risk level, including counter-terrorist actions and freeing of hostages.

In the Oceanside Police Department in California, as well as in many other Police departments in California, the system of medical coverage for the activities is based on two levels: the first one of them is the use of own policemen, and the second one comprises strict cooperation with external entities, such as for example the Fire Service. In situations that require it, such as for example a sudden health hazard, Oceanside policemen are obliged to provide first aid within limits of their skills and competencies. This aid applies to all participants of the activities, starting from policemen, third parties taking part in the operations, up to detainees. Medical treatments executed on this level make use of TCCC and TEMS guidelines and comprise provision of first aid based on the acquired elementary training. A further element of this system are specially trained medics/rescuers employed basically in the Fire

Service, who after completion of additional specialist training may act as paramedics, e.g. in SWAT teams, or medical consultants and instructors assigned with training the remaining policemen. Given their qualifications, they execute tasks that require a much more extensive medical knowledge. The scope of medical actions, which may be implemented by US medics working in the Fire Service, is similar to those implemented by Polish medical rescuers working under the State Medical Rescue system (SMR). The Oceanside department police, similarly as the remaining police units of the Southern California district, does not employ full-time rescuers, and consequently deploying specialists from another service appears to be fully justified. Medical coverage of operations carried out by the Oceanside Police during its police actions and operations is assured by the local Fire Service. This is done among others given the obligations imposed on it, including competencies of a rescue service. Such a model for medical coverage of services that operate under the crisis management system is very common in the USA, because the Police and the Fire Service cooperate closely by implementing tasks aimed at assuring security of inhabitants of the given department, and their financing comes from the same source, and namely from the municipal budget. Given such a model of joint deployment of specialists, for example a firefighter with qualifications of SWAT Medic, Firefighter/Paramedic, Oceanside Fire Department, is concurrently a medic and works for the Oceanside Police Department and participates in the most complicated actions and operations under actions implemented by the SWAT team and examines, verifies the knowledge and educated policemen in that department. A further element that distinguishes the US Fire Service and which diverges most from the operating model of Polish rescue and firefighting units is the fact that in California, as well as in many other state, the Fire Service is strictly correlated with the medical rescue system, because its structure comprises the medical service (EMS), which is a counterpart of the Polish SMR. In the majority of departments firefighters have their own ambulances and operate as medical teams when dispatched to medical emergencies [14, p. 31]. The EMS and the firefighting system are strictly interrelated; each dispatch related to health hazards is implemented by at least two vehicles manned by full crews: one of them is the medical ambulance, and the other one is a firefighting truck with at least three crew members, one of which is the firefighter/medic who is to assist the medical team, and the remaining two comprise a firefighting technician and a commander. A further task assigned to the US Fire Service is supporting the remaining formations and services. One of them is the Police which – as has been mentioned beforehand – does not have

its own full-time medics and so in this respect needs support by the Fire Service. As has already been mentioned, firefighters may cooperate with the Police in different ways: as active involvement in police operations as medics, e.g. in SWAT teams, but also as instructors and lecturers during courses and periodical exams related to providing first aid. Such services are provided at additional charges, and any ensuing costs are covered from the municipal budget. The system outlined above combines three professions: policeman, firefighter and medic, which guarantees better and more productive work. As qualified medics, spending their whole work in working with the patients, they come into contact with numerous diverse medical cases, which allows them to broaden and enrich their experience, and later on they can benefit from that when asked to make more effective/correct decisions during their actions in the Fire Service or the Police.

Summary

The diversity and multidimensional nature of contemporarily appearing hazards gives rise to the necessity of searching for the best solutions in the field of security, which would prove to be effective in the event of appearance of such incidents. The large number of potential hazardous situations that may be caused by diverse phenomena have been called “special situations”, in the case of which the quality of particular components of the available anti-crisis systems would be a determinant factor for their development. Nevertheless, it should be borne in mind that an essential and perhaps the most important element in the concept connected with the planned anti-crisis system is the human being. As a result of increasingly technically and technologically advanced tools and solutions aimed at improving the widespread methods in preventing and combatting threats persons implementing particular tasks under their assigned duties must be appropriately trained and educated, not merely in the basic scope of operation of the represented formation, but in many cases should also prove to have a much broader knowledge and qualifications to be able to cope with numerous situations that may occur during complicated tasks. The dissimilarity of environments in which the particular formations operate, such as for example the Police, should compel to the distinguishing and diagnosing of potential “special situations” and as an effect attempts should be made to assure appropriate preparation of policemen to operating during such incidents, but also that of other units, such as for example police medical teams, which could be deployed in a much more effective and target way. Furthermore,

it should be borne in mind that the preparation, training and maintaining of particular specialists is a long-lasting, difficult and costly process, and that is why it is justified to make sure that those persons be deployed correctly and in a versatile way under the existing services and formations to enable them to operate equally productively on many fields. Particular concepts connected with joint deployment of specialists in the field of medical rescuing presented by the author, as for example those adopted in the USA for the Fire Service, the Police and medical services may serve as an excellent model to be transposed to Polish conditions. Further possibilities, such as for example those offered by solutions concerning the neutralisation of gas cylinders as a consequence of a fire, which have already been recognised in many countries, allow the implementation of relatively simple solutions (such as shooting of such cylinders) to get rid of direct hazards for rescue teams.

Some of the cited suggestions pertaining to better and more effective deployment of forces and means comprised by anti-crisis systems may for example constitute a perfect contribution to effective, long-term and supplementing model for deploying of specialists, and the structure established as a result of those changes could be an element of their rational (effective) utilisation in special situations.

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