



## THE ROLE OF HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT SPORTS IN ENHANCING COMBAT READINESS IN REGIONAL INTERNAL AFFAIRS BODIES: LESSONS FROM FOREIGN COUNTRIES' EXPERIENCES

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**Abstract:** This article analyzes the role of hand-to-hand combat sports in enhancing the combat readiness of regional internal affairs personnel, drawing on experiences from foreign countries. It highlights the importance of physical, psychological, and practical skills developed through hand-to-hand combat in service activities. The article provides a comparative analysis of hand-to-hand combat training practices in law enforcement systems of the USA, Russian Federation, Japan, and European countries. Based on this analysis, scientifically grounded conclusions and recommendations are developed for implementing these practices in the activities of national internal affairs bodies.

**Keywords:** internal affairs bodies, combat readiness, hand-to-hand combat, special physical training, foreign experience, law enforcement agencies, extreme situations, service activities.

Currently, complex forms of crime, increasing threats to public safety, and social tensions are posing entirely new and critical challenges for internal affairs bodies. The effective fulfillment of these tasks depends not only on the legal knowledge of internal affairs officers but also on their level of physical, psychological, and combat readiness. In particular, the fact that regional internal affairs personnel frequently encounter various dangerous and extreme situations in their daily service underscores the urgency of enhancing combat readiness.

Combat readiness is a complex concept that encompasses an officer's ability to act swiftly, decisively, and lawfully in critical situations arising during service. It includes physical fitness, mental stability, discipline, self-control in dangerous situations, and the skill to use proportionate force against offenders. Special physical training, particularly martial arts, plays a crucial role in developing these qualities.

From this perspective, hand-to-hand combat is considered one of the most effective means of enhancing combat readiness among internal affairs officers. Hand-to-hand combat incorporates elements from various sports and martial arts, developing physical strength, movement speed, reaction time, balance, and psychological stability in personnel. Most importantly, hand-to-hand combat is structured around practical actions closely related to official duties.

Experience from foreign countries demonstrates that in many developed nations, hand-to-hand combat is regarded as an integral part of special service training within law enforcement systems. For instance, in the USA, "defensive tactics" programs based on hand-to-hand combat have been implemented for police and special service personnel, enabling them to acquire skills in controlling offenders without causing harm. In the Russian Federation, the "rukopashniy boy" system is employed as a mandatory training component in internal affairs and military structures.

In Japan and some European countries, hand-to-hand combat has been refined based on national martial arts, serving not only the physical but also the spiritual and moral education of personnel. Such practices clearly illustrate the universal importance of hand-to-hand combat in improving combat readiness.

In the internal affairs system of the Republic of Uzbekistan, special attention is also given to physical and specialized training. However, considering modern threats, there is a need to organize hand-to-hand combat training systematically, with a scientific foundation and drawing on advanced foreign experiences. Particularly, enhancing combat readiness through hand-to-hand combat for personnel serving in territorial internal affairs bodies will contribute to further increasing service effectiveness.

Therefore, this article analyzes the role of hand-to-hand combat in improving the combat readiness of territorial internal affairs personnel, using examples from foreign countries' experiences, and addresses issues of its implementation in national practice.

Currently, employees of territorial internal affairs bodies face various levels of risks in the course of their daily activities. This requires a high level of not only physical, but also psychological and tactical training. Hand-to-hand combat (hand-to-hand combat, defensive tactics, close-quarters combat) is considered one of the most effective means of increasing the ability of police officers to act effectively in real situations[1]. The experience of foreign countries shows that regular hand-to-hand combat training significantly increases the skills of personnel in attack and defense, endurance, and the ability to make the right decisions in a stressful situation [2].

Hand-to-hand combat is taught in United States police academies alongside Krav Maga, Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu (BJJ), Combatives, and other disciplines. This system teaches employees not only how to strike, but also how to suppress, capture, and control the resistant with minimal force[3]. St. According to the experience of the Paul Police Department, after the introduction of regular training in Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu, cases of use of force decreased by 37%, and injuries to employees and civilians decreased significantly[4]. Also, the Gracie Survival Tactics (GST) program is designed specifically for police officers, which is based on real street fighting techniques[5].

In the Israeli police and military forces, Krav Maga is the main form of hand-to-hand combat. This system focuses on quick, decisive, and effective actions, teaching police officers how to withstand multiple resistance, defend against armed attacks, and quickly take control of the situation [6]. Krav Maga's effectiveness in police has been proven in numerous studies: employees' self-confidence increases, fear and panic decrease, and decision-making speed increases [7].

Hand-to-hand combat for police officers in the UK is trained as part of the Personal Safety Training (PST) program. This program teaches hand-to-hand combat, unarmed defense, and methods of avoiding armed attacks. According to the experience of the metro police, regular hand-to-hand combat exercises increased the resistance of personnel to attacks by 18-25%[8]. In the countries of the European Union (Germany, France, Italy), hand-to-hand combat is taught in combination with elements of Judo, Jiu-Jitsu, Savate, and Wing Chun [9].

In the Russian Federation and the former Soviet states, hand-to-hand combat is taught based on Sambo, System, and other national methods. Hand-to-hand combat is part of the basic combat training of police officers in the academies of the Russian Guard and the Ministry of Internal Affairs. These systems teach employees to act effectively in various conditions (in

darkness, in a narrow space, lying on the ground) [10]. According to research, training in hand-to-hand combat with Sambo elements reduces the incidence of injuries by 12-17% [11].

Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu and Muay Thai have been introduced as supplementary training in Brazilian police. A quasi-experimental study conducted in 2022-2023 showed that cadets who performed additional hand-to-hand combat exercises increased the effectiveness of using force by 20-22% and improved teamwork and overall assessment indicators [12]. This practice is being adopted by many state police.

Hand-to-hand combat is taught in Canadian police based on Judo and Brazilian Jiu-Jitsu. Hand-to-hand combat in RCMP (Royal Canadian Mounted Police) is an important part of the Use of Force Continuum program. Regular exercises increase the endurance and defensive skills of personnel and reduce the level of use of force[13].

According to scientists and researchers, hand-to-hand combat in police training develops not only physical strength, but also mental stability, self-control, and the ability to assess the situation [14]. For example, in a systematic analysis conducted by Duarte and Ferraz, it was proven that combat training based on hand-to-hand combat and sports increases the effectiveness of police officers, reduces stress levels, and decreases the risk of injury [15].

Another important advantage of hand-to-hand combat exercises is that they increase employees' self-confidence and reduce apprehensiveness (fear of attack). This prevents excessive use of force in real situations and improves relations with citizens [16]. Foreign experience shows that regular hand-to-hand combat training significantly increases the safety and effectiveness of police officers in their professional activities [17].

For regional internal affairs bodies, studying foreign experience and mastering effective elements of hand-to-hand combat (Krav Maga speed, BJJ control methods, Sambo versatility) is one of the most realistic ways to improve combat readiness [18].

Based on the above analysis, the following conclusions and proposals can be made:

firstly, hand-to-hand combat is one of the most effective means of special physical training in increasing the combat readiness of employees of territorial internal affairs bodies. Therefore, it is advisable to define it as a priority area in the system of official training;

secondly, taking into account the experience of foreign countries, it is necessary to organize hand-to-hand combat training based on practical exercises approximating service activities. This contributes to the correct behavior of employees in extreme situations;

thirdly, it is necessary to improve the system of training qualified hand-to-hand combat coach-instructors in territorial internal affairs bodies and the systematic improvement of their professional potential;

fourthly, by combining hand-to-hand combat training with legal knowledge, it is possible to achieve the formation of a culture of lawful use of force among employees;

fifthly, combat sports in the internal affairs bodies by improving the regulatory and methodological framework for the development of hand-to-hand combat.

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