

## **Detention services order 10/2012**

### **Removal of blades**

#### **Introduction**

1. This instruction clarifies the steps to be taken when individuals conceal blades about their person to disrupt their lawful removal from the UK.

#### **Purpose**

2. The purpose of this instruction is to ensure that as far as possible all blades are removed from detainees prior to collection from immigration removal centres.

#### **Policy**

3. Detention Centre Rule 41 authorises the use of force by a detainee custody officer (DCO) when dealing with a detained person. With any use of force, consideration must be given to several common principles and force must only be used when it is:
  - reasonable in the circumstances
  - necessary in the circumstances
  - the minimum amount of force which is necessary
  - proportionate to the seriousness of the circumstances.
4. Any use of force must be recorded by the IRC centre manager and reported to UK Border Agency.
5. The operating standards for immigration removal centres state at paragraph 1 (use of force):

‘The centre will ensure that force is used only when necessary to keep a detainee in custody, to prevent violence, to prevent destruction of the property of the removal centre or of others and to prevent detainees from seeking to prevent their own removal physically or physically interfering with the lawful removal of another detainee.’
6. A history of blade use, and a flag if a detainee is believed to have a blade concealed internally, should be documented in the person escort record (PER).

#### **Removal of blades in an immigration removal centre**

7. Occasionally, detainee custody officers (DCOs) and other centre staff may encounter some detainees determined to prevent their own removal by concealing a razor blade(s) or other sharp object about their person and/or making threats to use this blade to harm themselves or others prior to removal. Detainees taking this course of action must be managed fairly and robustly in an effort to achieve their lawful removal and to ensure their and others' wellbeing.
8. Every reasonable effort must be made to persuade a detainee to surrender the blade(s) without requiring the use of force.
9. When a detainee is known to have, or is suspected to have, a blade(s) which we can reasonably consider will be used to prevent their lawful removal or any other impermissible reason (for example, self harm), efforts must be made to verbally persuade a detainee to give up the blade(s).
10. If every reasonable effort to resolve the incident peacefully fails, it is both reasonable and necessary to consider whether there are any use of force techniques appropriate to remove the blade from the detainee. Only approved techniques should be used to effect the removal of the blade, for example, IRCs should consider the use of techniques that may be used if an individual has an unauthorised item which is clearly and fully visible, partly visible, or suspected to be hidden in clothing. Pain compliance techniques may be necessary in appropriate cases if a detainee does not comply with requests to surrender the blade(s).
11. An attempt to retrieve a blade(s) must be treated as a planned use of force and a risk assessment must be completed in advance. This should include consideration of the potential for the detainee to suffer personal injury as a result of any force used. If a detainee has any condition that may mean that use of force would result in a significant injury it should be included in the risk assessment.
12. Detainee custody officers are trained in all aspects of the 'NOMS Use of Force Training Manual 2006'. This means that prior to a planned intervention the supervisor must:
  - make every reasonable effort to persuade the detainee to terminate the incident peacefully
  - assemble the control and restraint (C&R) team (and any necessary reserves)
  - ensure that all staff present are C&R trained and currently qualified (any staff whose qualifications have lapsed must not take part in a planned C&R intervention) including the supervising officer or manager
  - request that healthcare provide any pertinent medical details and they are provided with reasonable time to attend the scene in order to observe the intervention and relocation
  - consider whether to video the intervention and relocation
  - brief the team about the current situation, the detainee involved and the route to where the detainee will be relocated.

13. It is recommended that all staff in a planned C&R incident are provided with, and wear, protective equipment. The Independent Monitoring Board (IMB) should also be invited to attend to witness the planned intervention.
14. If a detainee has concealed a blade(s) internally (such as in the mouth, anus, penis or vagina) then no effort should be made to retrieve the blade(s) other than to verbally encourage the detainee to remove the blade himself or herself. When a detainee has concealed a blade(s) in this manner, escorting staff must be informed in advance as they will need to consider this information when risk assessing the escort.
15. Every effort must be made by IRC staff to present the detainee for escort 'blade free'. Failure to do so presents a significant threat to the detainee and staff.

### **Individuals with a history of blade use**

16. To help ensure the successful removal of individuals with a history of blade use, IRCs should hold a multi-disciplinary meeting to agree a plan for that individual's removal. Attendees should include, as a minimum, representatives from DEPMU, the UK Border Agency's contact management team, representatives from the IRC and escort supplier. The purpose of the meeting is to produce a plan, agreed by all participants, to successfully remove the individual (see Annex A for template). It should be clear from the plan who is responsible for what task.
17. Whilst each case must be dealt with on its individual circumstances, the plan should consider, as a minimum:
  - a. When the removal directions (RDs) should be served,
  - b. Where the individual will be located following service of RDs (**for example**, in Rule 42 accommodation),
  - c. How the individual will be removed (**for example**, following rapid extraction on the night before the removal, and on constant watch prior to handover to escort supplier),
  - d. What contingencies will be put in place if retrieval of the blade fails so that where possible removal still takes place.

The plan might also wish to consider whether the detainee should be x-rayed, and when.

18. Throughout the process, IRC staff should continue to use their interpersonal skills to verbally persuade the detainee to surrender any blades hidden about their person.
19. Following each successful removal or attempted removal the multi-disciplinary meeting should reconvene to review the plan and the incident and discuss any lessons learned. Learning should be shared across all IRCs, where relevant, and approaches revised across the estate as a result.

## **Escorting arrangements**

20. Transfer of authority for detainees from the IRC service provider to the escort service provider takes place at reception on discharge or at another previously agreed location.
21. Every effort will have been made by IRC staff to present detainees for escort 'blade free'.
22. The escorting service provider must prepare an individual risk assessment which has been authorised by the UK Border Agency on the management of the escorting process for individuals who have a history of concealing blades.

May 2012

**To be completed by duty operations manager**

**To be completed by the security department**

**To be completed by the duty operations manager**

## Issue 1

Agreed strategy:

Actions: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Team: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**To be completed by the duty operations manager post removal**

Any information you may find relevant: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Were handcuffs used Yes No

Handcuff in escort vehicle Yes No

Team changed

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Once completed this form should be handed the duty operations manager for discussion at the morning meeting.

Original returned to head of operations.