

## Chapter 43 – Index

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### 43. Personal Safety in Enforcement Work

All staff must be aware of the content of the local (level 4) **health and safety policy statement**.

Particular attention should be paid to the sections in the policy statement on:

- ◆ risk assessment;
- ◆ the reporting of accidents, incidents and near misses;
- ◆ procedures in the event of an emergency during a visit.

Staff should also have attended the relevant Personal Safety Training (PST) course.

PST is presented in two separate modules: level 1 (Tactical Communications) and level 2 (Unarmed Defensive Tactics). PST instructors now exist in each district. As well as offering the two levels of training in their district they are a source of information on personal safety issues in both the enforcement environment and at ports. In addition to PST, chapter 19 of the IS Health and Safety Guidance Manual (HSGM) provides additional advice on personal safety. Officers trained to arrest team standard will have undertaken a further level of training in the area of personal safety and they have separate instructions for operating without the police.

Reference to this chapter of the HSGM should be undertaken in conjunction with the materials produced for the level 1 and level 2 PST courses mentioned above.

Reference should also be made to chapter 31, Enforcement Visits and to chapter 31.16, Operations.

### **43.1. Personal safety and violence**

Violence is defined as any incident in which an officer is threatened, abused or assaulted in circumstances arising out of, or in connection with, their work activities and which involves an explicit or implicit challenge to their safety, well being or health. It can include physical assault, verbal abuse and racial abuse, threatening behaviour, harassment or obstruction. IS senior managers have made it clear in their health and safety policy statements that they will not tolerate violence against their staff. Enforcement staff must report any act of violence against them and managers must react promptly to such a report with a view to protecting and supporting their staff.

### **43.2. Risk assessment of an enforcement visit**

A health and safety risk assessment of all work activities is a legal requirement. A generic risk assessment exists for enforcement visits with/without police but in addition to this **all** individual enforcement visits must be risk assessed, the significant findings recorded and the relevant staff informed. Advice on how to carry out the risk assessment for a particular visit and how to act upon it is included in the local (level 4) policy statement on health and safety. A written risk assessment must always be done before the visit is undertaken. The assessment will include consideration of IS/police information on the person and the premises as well as approaching the premises, gaining entry and what may occur during the visit. It must consider the risks to others, not just IS staff. The person responsible for collating the risk information will vary. It could be the officer-in-charge (OIC) of the visit, an IO in an IU or a police officer. This person will submit their findings to the officer authorising the visit (CIO or above). The authorising officer will assess the risk and ensure that necessary control measures are in place to eliminate the risk or reduce it to an acceptable level. Chapter 31.4 refers.

It is important to remember that the assessment of risk may change throughout the visit and all staff must be aware of the need to reassess the risk information on a continual basis. All enforcement officers should continue the dynamic risk assessment during the course of the visit and either notify the OIC or take action as appropriate should an unforeseen situation arise.

### **43.3. Planning a visit**

- ◆ Refer to chapters 31 and 31.16.

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- ◆ Refer to the generic risk assessment for enforcement visits.
- ◆ Complete all pre-visit checks.
- ◆ Don't cut corners or make assumptions.
- ◆ Complete the VEN (or equivalent), highlighting any health and safety issues. This will form part of the risk assessment.
- ◆ All accompanying parties, including police officers, must be briefed in full prior to arrival at the premises. They must be made aware of who will be the OIC of the operation and follow his/her instructions.
- ◆ Officers must not conduct an enforcement visit unless accompanied by police officers (except under the arrangements outlined in chapter 31.1). The police officers will secure the premises.
- ◆ If conducting a pastoral/marriage visit, at least one colleague should accompany the interviewing officer.
- ◆ Each officer must be issued with and must carry a mobile telephone, ensuring it is fully charged.
- ◆ Communication procedures must be established prior to the visit and all parties made aware of them.
- ◆ Dress with awareness of what could be used to harm you or others and the need to move quickly and safely.
- ◆ Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) has been issued and **must** be worn by **all** officers on **all** operational visits. The specific operational risk assessment of the visit will indicate whether the PPE should be worn covertly or overtly.
- ◆ Where other personal protective equipment has been identified as a necessary risk control measure it must be worn for that visit.
- ◆ The OIC must ensure that a critical incident management plan is in place and has been communicated to all parties undertaking the visit.

- ◆ The police should carry out the arrest (except under the arrangements outlined in chapter 31.1).
- ◆ The OIC must contact the duty CIO on completion of the visit to indicate the outcome and safe return to the office or police station.

### **43.4. Getting to the premises to be visited by car**

- ◆ If travel to the premises is undertaken by car, all instructions in the Home Office Transport Manual must be followed.
- ◆ The driver must ensure that basic safety checks are carried out on the vehicle prior to its use.
- ◆ The driver must be fit to operate the vehicle.
- ◆ The driver of the vehicle must not use a mobile telephone, either standard or hands-free, whilst the vehicle is moving.
- ◆ The driver and all passengers must wear seatbelts in accordance with road traffic law.
- ◆ Speed limits must be observed.
- ◆ The route should be planned in advance and a safe route used.
- ◆ The doors and windows should remain locked and secure during the journey when passing through areas where there is a possibility of theft from the car.
- ◆ Inform the police and duty CIO if arrangements are changed en route to the premises.
- ◆ Do not leave valuables in sight inside the car.

### **43.5. In the vicinity of the premises**

- ◆ The mode of entry should be agreed with the police officers in advance at the briefing (unless the arrangements outlined in chapter 31.1 apply).

- ◆ Care should be exercised when taking up position at the rear of premises particularly during the hours of darkness.
- ◆ If issued and where deemed necessary from the risk assessment, personal attack alarms should be carried.
- ◆ Do not allow anyone to become isolated when outside the premises.
- ◆ Ensure that your predetermined communications procedures are effective in the area prior to entering the premises.

### **43.6. Inside the premises**

- ◆ Always identify yourself to whoever answers the door.
- ◆ Where no entry warrant is held, enter the premises only where consent to enter for the stated purpose is clearly and unequivocally given by a person in a position to give such consent.
- ◆ Identify your means of escape – remember that this will not necessarily be the same as your means of entry.
- ◆ Do not pursue anyone who leaves the premises. In the event a person does leave the premises, notify the police officers present who will assess the situation (see chapter 32.10).
- ◆ Identify an area of safety within the premises and ask the occupants to move to it.
- ◆ *Observe* the occupants to check for signs that they have a weapon.
- ◆ Do not approach a person carrying a potential weapon – ensure that it is put somewhere safe before approaching or interviewing.
- ◆ Only commence interviews when the situation has been confirmed as under control by the OIC.
- ◆ Non-arrest team officers must not carry or use restraints.

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- ◆ If a search of the premises is required and authorised by warrant, as the result of an arrest or with the consent of the occupant, implement the plan agreed with colleagues and the police.
- ◆ Avoid talking to offenders in rooms containing potential weapons.
- ◆ Do not turn your back on any occupant of the premises.
- ◆ Do not allow yourself to become trapped in corners.
- ◆ Do not allow anyone (occupant, IS/police personnel or both) to become isolated.
- ◆ Keep colleagues and police officers within sight and earshot at all times.
- ◆ If you propose to move to another part of the premises ensure that a colleague or police officer accompanies you.
- ◆ Stay relaxed and adopt a non- aggressive stance. Remember body language.
- ◆ Maintain eye contact with the occupants of the premises.
- ◆ Keep your distance and allow people their body space.
- ◆ Speak clearly and steadily and do not patronise people.
- ◆ Listen carefully and make accurate notes of information given.
- ◆ Try to maintain a tension-free atmosphere.
- ◆ Never touch anyone unless in self-defence.
- ◆ Should a member of the public or occupant behave aggressively, implement Tactical Communications training (see chapter 43).
- ◆ If violence is envisaged implement your critical incident management plan (for arrested trained officers see chapter 31.1).

- ◆ Arrestees must only be transported to police stations or Removals Centres in authorised vehicles, i.e. police transporters or HO owned vehicles.

#### **43.7. Travelling by public transport to police stations prisons or removal centres (without detainees)**

- ◆ Advise the duty CIO of your route.
- ◆ Carry a personal alarm (if issued) as well as a mobile phone.
- ◆ Dress with awareness of what could be used to harm you or others and the need to move quickly and safely.
- ◆ Remain alert and be aware of your surroundings.
- ◆ Keep to a minimum the amount of official equipment and personal belongings you carry.
- ◆ Take care when negotiating stairs, escalators and getting on and off trains and buses.
- ◆ Avoid dark areas, particularly at bus stops or in train stations.
- ◆ Avoid poorly lit underpasses and subways.
- ◆ Try and sit near other passengers.
- ◆ Avoid confrontation with obviously drunk or volatile passengers.
- ◆ Use Tactical Communication Skills to avoid an incident.
- ◆ If an incident appears likely to happen or happens pull the emergency cord on a train or inform the bus driver.
- ◆ Do not offer physical opposition to anyone threatening violence but consider using Unarmed Defensive Tactics if you have no choice.

- ◆ Consider the use of your personal alarm (if issued).
- ◆ Be prepared to give up the official case or personal belongings. Your safety is more important.
- ◆ Let the duty CIO know as soon as possible if an incident occurs.

### **43.8. Interviewing in police stations and prisons**

- ◆ The local health and safety policy statement will include a section on risk assessment and safe systems of work for carrying out interviews in IS premises.
- ◆ The basic principles of good practice for safe interviewing should be applied equally in a police station or prison interview room.
- ◆ Prior to commencing the interview the officer should establish the layout of the interview room and the procedures in place for calling for assistance.
- ◆ Ensure that the room does not contain objects, which may be used as weapons.
- ◆ If circumstances permit, ask a colleague or police/prison officer to be present during the interview.
- ◆ The interviewing officer should ensure that he/she sits closest to the exit door.
- ◆ Should an incident occur it must be reported to the person in charge of that area of the police station or prison as well as to IS management.

### **43.9. Reporting of accidents, incidents and near misses**

- ◆ HO notice 100/2001 provides guidance on how and why accidents have to be reported to managers and, in some circumstances, to the Health and Safety Executive.

## Enforcement Instructions and Guidance

- ◆ Any incident of the kind described in chapter 43.1 must be reported to the duty officer and line manager as soon as possible after the incident has occurred.
- ◆ The incident will be investigated by the line manager to identify its causes and any useful lessons learnt, and so help prevent similar incidents in the future.
- ◆ If an officer has used Unarmed Defensive Tactics during a violent incident, whether during the course of work hours or outside work hours, this must be notified to the Health and Safety Unit. Prompt accurate reporting will be invaluable for all concerned should a complaint or civil litigation ensue after the incident.
- ◆ Remember that it is as important to report a 'near miss' as it is to report an actual incident.