



Home Office

General instructions
Removals, enforcement and detention

Post enforcement visit actions

Version 4.0

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About this guidance

This guidance tells Immigration Enforcement officers about actions to be taken following general enforcement visits and illegal working visits.

Contacts

If you have any questions about the guidance and your line manager or senior caseworker cannot help you or if you think that the guidance has factual errors, email Enforcement Policy.

If you notice any formatting errors in this guidance (broken links, spelling mistakes and so on) or if you have any comments about the layout or navigability of the guidance then you can email the Guidance Review, Atlas and Forms team.

Publication

Below is information on when this version of the guidance was published:

- version **4.0**
- published for Home Office staff on **5 June 2025**

Changes from last version of this guidance

The following changes have been made since the last published version of 7 November 2024:

- clearer definitions of difference between operational debriefs and Critical Incident debriefs
- new section added on post incident procedures following a death or serious injury
- reference to Warnings Index removed due to being decommissioned

Related content

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Post enforcement visit: Officer in charge (OIC) actions

This page tells the OIC of the enforcement visit or operation what they must do once it is over.

General responsibilities

Once the visit or operation is over, at the earliest opportunity the OIC must ensure that:

- all intelligence is passed to the intelligence unit using the Intelligence Management System (IMS), see Intelligence referral form
- PRONTO is accurately updated in a timely manner to reflect all actions that took place during the visit or operation, whilst ensuring that the debrief section and all questions are accurately completed
- any seized material is recorded and stored securely, see Retention of valuable documents and How to store immigration files and records off-site
- warrants are disposed of correctly, see Warrants: procurement and use
- any false documents, including copies, encountered are reported to the forgery team
- the family welfare form (FWF) is updated with any information relevant to the section 55 duty, and wider safeguarding of children (where relevant), see Safeguarding children: advice from the Office of the Children's Champion

Operational debriefing

Timing of the debriefing

It is best to hold a debriefing as soon as practicably possible after the operation has finished so that:

- events are still fresh in the minds of the officers who took part
- any relevant evidence is submitted to the criminal investigation team as early as practicably possible
- any intelligence is submitted to the intelligence unit as early as practicably possible

There may be instances where the debriefing will need to be postponed or not take place at all while other procedures are being followed. An example of such an instance is a critical incident where post-incident procedures must be followed. For further information see [Critical incidents](#).

Benefits of a debriefing

There are many benefits to holding a debriefing after an operation (deployment) including:

- providing all team members the chance to give feedback
- identifying areas that worked well
- identifying areas for improvement
- helping to make changes to future operations
- helping future work to be conducted more efficiently and safely
- helping to identify any actions needed as a result of the operation

Circumstances in which a debriefing must be conducted

The OIC must conduct a mandatory operational debriefing:

- following a family detention visit
- following an arrest visit containing newly trained arrest staff who have yet to complete their mentoring period
- where there are concerns about applied use of force that does not require an investigation or Critical Incident to be declared (see [use of force definition](#) and [Critical incident criteria](#))
- where an area of concern from a visit has been identified by any present team member

While the above are scenarios in which you must conduct a debriefing, you may wish to conduct one where you identify positive actions from a visit that you would like to discuss with the team and keep a record of.

Planning and conducting a debriefing

A debriefing should usually be led and conducted by:

- the OIC where there has been no critical incident or need for investigation following use of force - see:
 - [Use of force definition](#)
 - [Critical incident criteria](#)
- His Majesty's Inspector (HMI) where there are concerns around use of force that has been applied
- the local Gold Commander in the event of a critical incident occurring

For more information on the process following a critical incident see: Critical incident management.

See:

- [Debriefing following use of force](#)
- [Debriefing following a critical incident](#)
- Arrest and restraint

You must encourage officers to identify and highlight good practice, as well as to raise problems or incidents which may have occurred, and to put into place any appropriate remedial action.

If you do not arrange a debriefing, you must still make sure officers have some way to give you feedback. For example, you could distribute a debriefing sheet by email.

When planning a debriefing you must consider the same things as when planning a briefing (see Enforcement planning assessments).

In addition, you must:

- make sure everybody who was on the operation (deployment) is able to attend the debriefing or they are able to give their feedback separately if they cannot attend
- consider:
 - using a minute taker to record what is said and to note any action points
 - if it was a very large operation, asking individual team leaders to hold separate debriefings in accordance with this guidance and feed the results back to you

Performance issues

You must not single out individuals for criticism during a debriefing. If the team identify performance issues, it is essential you hold a full and honest discussion of what happened. If you have concerns about how an individual has acted, you must deal with this separately and privately with the person concerned and their line manager, if appropriate.

Definition on when you have used force

You are considered to have used force for Immigration Enforcement purposes if you:

- arrest or restrain a suspect under any circumstances and you laid hands on them, either before or after you have arrested them
- use handcuffs or lay hands on a suspect for the purpose of compelling them to do something, including:
 - whether you get the suspect's agreement to do this first
 - even for safely transporting the suspect from the place of arrest to a custody suite or detention centre
- use a friction-lock baton or remove the baton from its holder operationally
- apply the escort position
- use any other control or restraint technique taught on an arrest course or during personal safety training

See Use of force.

Debriefing following use of force

Not every instance of use of force requires a debriefing, but all and any use of force must be recorded in accordance with the instructions contained in Arrest and restraint without exception. Any use of force against children, including those

claiming to be children whose age is disputed, must be subject to a formal debriefing with the same applying for any instance where a baton is drawn.

Where a debriefing is required, the OIC should use it to:

- discuss what happened
- detail the level of force used
- determine whether any lessons can be learned

The following staff should attend:

- all staff who used force against the suspect
- all staff who witnessed others using force against the suspect

See Use of force guidance for more detailed information on when a debrief needs to be conducted.

Should a death or serious injury occur following use of force then no debrief can take place as post-incident procedures must be followed. See [Post-incident procedures \(in the event of death or serious injury\)](#) for more information on this process.

Adults at risk: definition

For the purposes of this guidance, an adult at risk, also known as an adult with care and support needs, is a person 18 years of age or over who is, or may be, in need of community care services by reason of mental or other disability, age or illness; and who is, or may be, unable to take care of him or herself, or unable to protect him or herself against significant harm or exploitation, or where there is a risk of self-harm or suicide, or is a victim of trafficking.

Debriefing following encounters with vulnerable or at risk adults

You do not need to conduct a debriefing following every encounter with vulnerable or at risk adults. While a debrief is not required following every encounter, you must follow the guidance in Identifying people at risk and make sure the appropriate referrals are made following a visit. You must also record any vulnerabilities of those encountered within your notes on PRONTO. This must include any known reasonable adjustments they may have for future immigration purposes should they go into detention.

Where a referral is made, this may trigger a debrief and the OIC should determine whether or not one is appropriate. Some examples of when this may be appropriate can include, but are not limited to, referring an adult who:

- shows signs of suicidal behaviour or self-harm
- has care and support needs, is at risk of abuse or neglect, and is unable to care for themselves
- is subject to or at risk of domestic abuse

For further information see:

- Identifying people at risk
- Adult referrals

Staff welfare: family removal work

Family removal work is a difficult and sensitive area of work. You can use the debrief to explore any issues or concerns team members may have and advise them that emotional support can be sought from:

- their line manager or colleagues
- care teams (available in some locations)
- the Employee Assistance Programme
- further options available at Wellbeing support for staff

Following the debriefing

Once the debriefing is finished you must make sure:

- you pass any relevant information to the intelligence unit using the Intelligence Management System (IMS), see Intelligence referral form
- you update interested parties, for example caseworkers and criminal investigation teams, with results
- you allocate any action points
- there is a procedure in place to advise officers about learning points and any resulting changes
- you upload any debriefing notes to the PRONTO visit record

After you have conducted an effective debriefing, you should be able to:

- confirm if the pre-operation planning and operational briefing could have been improved with hindsight
- explain where things
 - went well, and why
 - did not go well, and why
- identify:
 - better ways of doing things
 - learning points
- implement:
 - changes you can make so identified issues do not happen again

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Critical incidents

When a critical incident (CI) should be declared

If any of the below criteria are met, you must declare a CI:

- serious harm to any individual
- significant community or business impact
- significant impact on the confidence of the public in Immigration Enforcement, Border Force, Customer Service or Illegal Migration Intake Unit
- requiring specialist resources to support the management of the incident

Irrespective of the above criteria, if there is indication of a failing in command or a likelihood that operational or organisational learning may be required as a result of the circumstances, declaration of a CI should be given serious consideration. While this guidance is for IE, as above, staff should be conscious of the confidence of the public in other related areas and how this can impact the work we do.

See Critical incident management to familiarise yourself with the full CI guidance.

Debriefing following a critical incident

In the event of a CI, the OIC should consider postponing the operational debriefing while the CI debriefing takes place. This must be led by the Gold Commander and involve all those who played an active part in the incident including other agencies, unless instructed otherwise. This is essential to allow the business to return to normal, to highlight any lessons learned in preventing a similar incident occurring in the future, and to air any difficulties or grievances over the handling of the incident.

The debriefing should take place in 2 stages:

- 'Hot' debriefing, which must take place as soon as practicably possible following an incident and should focus on the immediate welfare and safety considerations of those involved. It must also consider any ongoing organisational or operational risks whether they are present or suspected
- 'Cold' debriefing, which should take place a minimum of 72 hours after the conclusion of the incident and should focus on organisational learning

For further information see the 'Debrief and recovery' section of Critical incident management.

Post-incident procedures (in the event of death or serious injury)

Criteria and considerations for post-incident procedures

In the event of a death or serious injury (DSI) occurring during an enforcement visit, it is important that no operational debrief takes place. This is to allow for the post-

incident procedures to be followed that addresses staff welfare, facilitates accountability, and assists in internal and external investigatory processes.

For further information see: IE post incident procedures.

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Post enforcement visit: updating PRONTO

When a visit has been completed, all officers need to ensure that they have completed all relevant forms, set any incomplete / incorrect forms as invalid and marked themselves as departed from the visit on the PRONTO record.

Full guidance on updating PRONTO following an enforcement visit can be found in the PRONTO user guide that all staff should familiarise themselves with.

Updating Atlas

It is essential that Atlas is fully updated. Atlas is the central record to store data on all asylum, immigration and temporary migration applications. It is the responsibility of caseworkers and administrative staff to complete all relevant Atlas services at every stage during the life of the case. Enforcement Activity must be raised within the Compliance and Enforcement Card to record the activity outcome.

Caseworkers and administrative staff must not enter intelligence information that is not to be disclosed on Atlas. It must be referred to the intelligence unit using the Intelligence Management System (IMS), see intelligence referral form.

Official – sensitive: start of section

The information on this page has been removed as it is restricted for internal Home Office use.

Official – sensitive: end of section

Information recorded on Atlas helps inform other decisions, for example on whether to continue with removal action or detention. Documents and records of all communication must be uploaded to the relevant services on Atlas so that all team members have access to the information.

Information recorded on Atlas must be informative, relevant, spell checked and not include personal opinion. Information relating to legal advice must be clearly marked 'Not For Disclosure – Legal Professional Privilege' where appropriate.

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Post enforcement visit: reports and referrals

This page explains what actions to take on PRONTO to allow the civil penalty compliance team (CPCT) to extract illegal working cases.

Referring illegal working cases

Referrals to the civil penalty compliance team (CPCT)

You do not need to send referrals to CPCT as they are extracted directly from PRONTO. This is done by CPCT running a daily report to identify all visits closed on PRONTO the previous day where it has been recorded that a Civil Penalty Referral Notice (CPRN) has been served.

Before closing a visit on PRONTO, you must check that all the relevant information and documents are uploaded such as:

- a clear photograph of the CPRN
- clear photographs of any Additional occupiers / workers forms
- clear photographs of the Notice to Occupier and Power of Entry document (if one is used)
- clear photographs of documents seen, offenders

In addition to completing PRONTO, ensure each worker or occupier's Atlas record has been updated to record their encounter. Details of the encounter must be recorded on the Enforcement Activity Record (EAR) card. This ensures that CPCT can verify the identity of worker or occupier recorded on the CPRN who is subject of the civil penalty referral. CPCT cannot consider the referral without completion of the EAR card.

See also: Referrals to the Civil Penalty Compliance Team (CPCT).

For further information see:

- Referrals to CPCT
- Illegal working operations

To contact CPCT, email: Civil penalty compliance team.

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Illegal working: referral criteria

The following table tells you where to refer the case depending on the applicable legislation.

Date employment began	Applicable legislation	Refer case to
From 27 January 1997 to 28 February 2008	Section 8 of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 (the 1996 Act)	Local CFI
From 29 February 2008 onwards	Sections 15 and 21 of the Immigration, Asylum and Nationality Act 2006 (the 2006 Act)	Section 21 to CFI Section 15 to CPCT (Manchester)
Mix of offenders employed both before and after 29 February 2008	Section 8 of the 1996 Act Sections 15 and 21 of the 2006 Act	Section 8 and section 21 to CFI Section 15 to CPCT (Manchester)
Dates not known or verified	Section 8 of the 1996 Act and / or sections 15 and 21 of the 2006 Act	Section 8 and section 21 to CFI Section 15 to CPCT (Manchester)

A referral that includes a mix of offenders may be split up so relevant cases and individuals are dealt with by the appropriate unit. For example, section 8 cases would go to the local CFI and section 15 to CPCT.

Referral of intelligence

The feedback of intelligence is essential. All information that you come across during the course of your duties must be passed to the intelligence unit using the Intelligence Management System (IMS), see intelligence referral form.

The form must be completed with as much detail as possible.

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