



Security Practice Guidance

CELL SEARCHING (Security Managers, Deputy Governors & Governors)

July 2021



PURPOSE

To support establishments in their recovery journey and help Security Managers, Deputy Governors and Governors prepare for easing of restrictions with regards to Cell Searching.



LEARNING

Following the outbreak of COVID-19, prisons have experienced significant disruptions to regimes and ways of working, requiring ongoing adaptations to policy and practice.

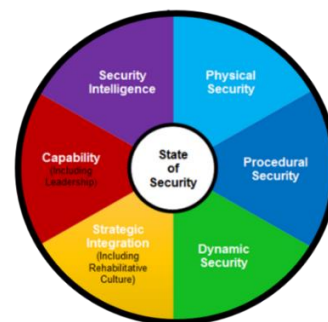
Staff from both operational and other professions have shared concerns about the potential **loss of knowledge and experience in conducting basic, and key, security tasks**. An extended period of change and variation in practices appears to have caused uncertainty around how procedures should be applied and what they will look like as we move through the stages of recovery and return to a 'new normal'.



REFRESHING AND MAINTAINING PRACTICE

Understand and assess your **STATE OF SECURITY**:

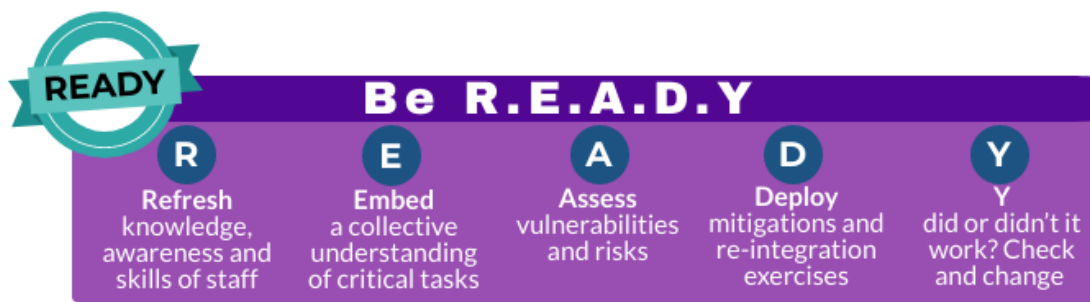
- Consider the impact of your new regime on your Local Security Strategy. **PROCEDURAL**
- Assess the level and frequency of cell searches/checks required under your new regime to maintain safety and security. **PROCEDURAL**
- Consider how routine and intelligence-led searches are delivered and whether increased focus on specific areas or situations is needed. **INTELLIGENCE**
- Factor in potential increased risks resulting from limited staff access to cells during restricted regimes and any increase in prisoners' ability to access or conceal contraband. Consider how best to deploy resources and if areas need to be targeted. **PROCEDURAL CAPABILITY**
- Ensure staff are fully briefed in any changes to local arrangements and before starting the regime. **CAPABILITY**
- Ensure staff are aware of and can apply national searching procedures effectively. Consider holding local refresher sessions for searches using unoccupied cells, where available. **PROCEDURAL CAPABILITY**
- Consider pairing a more experienced member of staff with one less experienced in cell searching to promote learning and confidence. **CAPABILITY STRATEGIC INTEGRATION**



- Ensure search teams are briefed prior to being deployed to an intelligence-led search. **CAPABILITY**
- Ensure technical search aids are available and in good working order, ready to be deployed as appropriate. Ensure staff know how to use them and consider incorporating brief instructions for use as part of any local training. **PHYSICAL CAPABILITY**
- Complete regular assurance checks to ensure staff are competent in their duties, are complying with policy, or if further guidance is needed. **PROCEDURAL CAPABILITY**
- Ensure any finds/evidence are recorded correctly via the IRS system and secured appropriately. This may be the first search staff have conducted in a while and a refresher in the start to end process may be useful. **PROCEDURAL CAPABILITY INTELLIGENCE**

FURTHER INFORMATION

- Searching Policy Framework



Issued by

Risk and Capabilities Unit
Security, Order and Counter-Terrorism Directorate