



Home Office

Use of force

Guidance for Immigration Enforcement Officers.

Version 3.0

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About this guidance

This is part of Immigration Enforcement General Instructions.

This guidance tells Immigration Enforcement officers about use of force to arrest or detain a person. This also includes the decision-making process in respect of using control and restraint, including friction-lock batons and handcuffs, plastic handcuffs, limb restraints, carriage, storage, and maintenance of these items and how to record a use of force.

Contacts

If you have any questions about the guidance and your line manager or senior caseworker cannot help you or you think that the guidance has factual errors then email Operational Safety and Wellbeing.

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

Publication

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

- version **3.0**
- published for Home Office staff on **03 May 2022**

Changes from last version of this guidance

- hyperlinks have been updated
- removal of use of force: communicable disease section due to withdrawal of corresponding guidance

Related content

[Contents](#)

National Generic Risk Assessment 05 – Driving fleet vehicles on official business

Use of force and restraint: enforcement

This section tells Immigration Enforcement officers about use of force when arresting or detaining a person, including an officer's power to use force, a definition of when force has been used and reasonable and proportionate use of force.

For guidance on how to effect entry into business or residence premises see Method of entry (MoE) policy.

The use of force by law enforcement officers is an emotive subject that may generate media attention and public debate. You may be called upon to justify that any use of force was reasonable, necessary and proportionate having regard to all the circumstances at the time.

Use of force legislation

Immigration Officers may be required to use force whilst undertaking a range of duties as part of the detention, arrest or removal of immigration offenders. The power to use force for immigration officers are provided in law:

- [Section 146\(1\) of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999](#) which allows Immigration Officers to use reasonable force where necessary in the exercise of any power conferred by the Immigration Acts
- [Section 3\(1\) of the Criminal Law Act 1967](#) is also relevant in this context where reasonable use of force is permissible when an arrest is being made in the prevention of crime, the effecting or assisting in the lawful arrest of offenders or suspected offenders unlawfully at large
- [Article 6 of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 \(Application to immigration officers\) Order 2013](#) which allows officers to use reasonable force when exercising a power applied by [article 3](#) of the order - (not applicable in Scotland)

All reasonable efforts must first be made to manage violent, un-cooperative or disturbed behaviour by effective communication skills that do not entail the use of force. Use of force must always be a last resort when other measures have been unsuccessful or deemed unlikely to succeed in preserving the safety of all individuals involved.

Definition of when you have used force

In many cases when you are arresting a suspect, your words alone may be enough to achieve a safe and lawful arrest. However, there will be circumstances when you need to use a degree of force to enforce effective immigration control and make sure you, your colleagues, the suspect or the public remain safe.

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

All use of force must be recorded on the relevant form of the police reporting and notebook organiser (PRONTO), or in your pocket notebook (PNB). See [Recording use of force](#).

Using reasonable force

Excessive use of force is unlawful. Before using any force, you must consider whether there are any other ways to exercise a power or discharge your duties without using force.

If your decision is that force is necessary, you must use no more force than is necessary to exercise the power. When using force, you must consider if the circumstances make it:

- necessary
- reasonable
- proportionate

Neither necessary nor reasonable are defined terms and therefore their ordinary meanings will apply. You must use your own common sense and good judgement when you make a decision as to whether and how much force you need to use. What is reasonable force will depend on all the circumstances, such as whether the suspect is carrying a weapon. Any use of force must be proportionate to the threat being faced or the intended aim and you must reduce or increase the use of force as soon as the need for it changes.

Use of force: self defence

Officers are entitled to use reasonable force in the exercise of self-defence where they, a third party or property is at immediate risk of harm. This is subject to the same considerations as previously mentioned, that the level of force must be proportionate and non-excessive. You must always be aware that the legitimate use of reasonable force can easily and quickly turn into assault. Where possible, consider if force is the only option and use only that amount of force that is necessary to neutralise the threat.

Use of force: the PLAN strategy

Use the 'PLAN' acronym to help you remember that any use of force must be:

- [proportionate](#)
- [legal](#)
- [accountable](#)
- [necessary](#)

Proportionate

You must:

- use the minimum level of force required to achieve the legitimate objective (your outcome)
- demonstrate you understand the effect of your actions
- only use techniques taught on an approved arrest or personal safety training course

Legal

You can only use force if you are an arrest trained or personal safety trained officer and you are carrying out your duties. When you exercise a power of arrest you must be able to demonstrate that there are reasonable grounds to suspect that either:

- a criminal offence has been committed
- the person may be liable to administrative removal

Accountable

You are accountable for your actions and must only use techniques in line with your arrest or personal safety training. You must ensure you remain trained and in ticket for your role. Additionally, you must:

- record any use of force (see [Recording use of force](#))
- keep the record for 6 years in case there is a legal challenge or complaint

Necessary

You must demonstrate there was no practical alternative to using reasonable force and the force you used was necessary to prevent the suspect:

- causing physical injury to themselves or any other person
- suffering physical injury
- causing loss or damage to property

Related content

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Batons and restraints

This section tells Immigration Enforcement officers about the carriage, storage and maintenance of friction-lock batons, handcuffs and limb restraints. It also tells them what to consider before deciding to use them and when and how they must report their use.

Carriage, storage and maintenance

When planning an operation or enforcement activity where arrest trained staff are to be deployed, the officer in charge (OIC) is required to complete a full and detailed risk assessment of the operation to be undertaken.

It remains mandatory for all arrest trained officers to wear their appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE) (see National Generic Risk Assessments) when engaged in activity where an arrest is planned or anticipated.

The following personnel must not carry or use a friction-lock baton or handcuffs:

- non-arrest trained officers
- non-arrest trained officers awaiting their arrest training course
- arrest trained officers whose certificate has expired
- arrest trained officers awaiting re-certification (refresher personal safety training (PST)) after expiry of their arrest or health ticket
- arrest trained officers who have had their arrest certification suspended
- arrest trained officers who are no longer required to undertake arrest team duties due to a permanent change of role, location or department

Carrying and use of friction-lock batons: enforcement

[Section 1 of the Prevention of Crime Act 1953](#) prohibits the possession in any public place of an offensive weapon without lawful authority or excuse. The term 'offensive weapon' is defined as 'any article made or adapted for use to causing injury to the person or intended by the person having it with him for such use by him or by some other person'. Lawful authority to carry the friction-lock baton (legally classified as an offensive weapon) has been given by the Home Secretary to designated arrest trained officers only.

If, for any reason, you stop being involved in arrest operations you must immediately return your baton to your line manager. If you continue to carry it without permission, you may face disciplinary action and prosecution.

Use of batons is a tactical option for officers and due to the potential for significant harm they must only be used in accordance with your training and PST instructions. Any instance of where a baton is drawn in reaction to a perceived risk must be fully recorded in the police reporting and notebook organiser (PRONTO) or your personal notebook (PNB).

Carriage and storage: exceptional circumstances

It is the responsibility of the individual officer to ensure that when not in use, their friction-lock baton and handcuffs are stored safely and securely within their place of work. A lockable cupboard or storage facility should be made available locally for this purpose.

However, it is acknowledged that in exceptional circumstances (such as next-day training course or unsociable-hours operational briefing away from office), it may be necessary for an arrest officer to store their arrest equipment outside of their office before undertaking a visit. This must be a temporary measure only and the officer must ensure that the equipment is always safely and securely stored and is returned to their place of work as soon as is practicable. The justification for this must be recorded by the OIC of the operation or the officer's line manager.

Wherever possible, arrest equipment should not be left unattended outside of the office environment and specific care must be taken when leaving arrest equipment in hotel rooms or vehicles. The loss or theft of any PPE will be subject to local investigation. Theft must be reported to the local police and a crime reference obtained. You must inform the National Operational Capabilities Unit and consider reporting to Home Office Security. See Security incidents, breaches and concerns.

Rigid handcuff maintenance

On a regular basis, inspect that the handcuff operates in a smooth manner, routinely check the mechanism to make sure that it is free of lint or other potential obstructions that may stop the cuff from closing correctly. Check the double locking system is engaging and that the cuff will not tighten once locked. If the handcuff is used in an environment in which it becomes wet, it must be dried and a light coating of light oil (WD40) or similar applied to the floating ratchet bars. Rotate the arm to ensure free rotation and wipe off excess lubricant. A small amount of oil can be applied to the key hole and double locking hole and any excess wiped off.

Handcuffs must not be left wet and, on each occasion, must be inspected and dried, if needed, on return to the office before being stored securely. This also applies if the handcuffs need to be cleaned following use.

Friction-lock baton maintenance

The baton must be inspected periodically for signs of wear and tear.

To clean the baton:

- unscrew the end cap from the soft rubber grip handle and withdraw the 2 telescopic tubes
- using a cloth, wipe off any dirt or residue from the 2 telescopic tubes, and remove any dirt from the internal part of the end cap
- inspect the spring guide cap to assess if it has become worn or damaged and needs replacing

- reassemble the baton and screw the end cap back into the handle, and check to see that the baton extends as in normal use

To ensure the baton extends smoothly and effectively, an adjustment may be required to increase or decrease the retaining spring pressure. To do this:

- unscrew the end cap from the soft rubber grip handle
- to increase, insert a flathead screw driver into the spring retaining clip and spread the sides of the spring, which will stop the baton opening too easily
- to decrease, use a set of pliers to squeeze the sides of the spring retaining clip together, which will make the extending easier

Once complete, replace the end cap by screwing onto the soft handle end until tight.

Use of handcuffs: enforcement

Those working in an Immigration Compliance and Enforcement (ICE) team may not undertake any operational arrest, restraint or handcuffing unless suitably authorised and hold a valid permit. Line managers must make sure ICE officers:

- complete an initial arrest course certifying the competent use of handcuffs followed and:
 - complete the mandatory annual personal safety training (PST) refresher courses
 - hold a valid handcuff permit, certified after successful completion of the annual refresher course

The techniques and best practice for the use of handcuffs are covered during the training given to authorised staff. You must ensure that you adhere to the guidance you were given and ensure that you maintain your knowledge of any updates and changes to authorised practices.

Deciding whether to use handcuffs

As the arresting officer it is your decision whether to use handcuffs. You must use your judgement at the time of the arrest and, if not used, continue to assess whether any change of circumstances justifies their use, for instance, where the subject's behaviour or attitude gives cause for concern.

If there is more than one officer involved in controlling or restraining a suspect and all of you use force, it is the officer who applies the handcuffs who 'makes the decision' based on their judgment at the time of arrest. Normally this will be the arresting officer's decision but equally this decision can be made by another officer who is assisting with the arrest.

Officers must only use handcuffs where there is an objective basis to do so. This means that there are objective grounds to believe that the person has sought or will seek to escape from custody or that the person has used or is likely to use violence against you, colleagues or members of the public, or likely to injure themselves.

You do not have to wait for a physical act from the person in order to use handcuffs. Your grounds can be based on a range of known circumstances that, taken together, mean you believe there is a real risk as described. These may include factors such as:

- their apparent physical capabilities suggested by age, gender and relative size and appearance
- the seriousness of the offence for which the person has been arrested and the potential consequences
- their previous history of compliance with restrictions and restraints
- verbal and non-verbal indications of a likelihood of escape or violence
- apparent use of drugs or alcohol
- other 'impact factors', including, but not limited to, known skill sets, known warning markers, weapons and environment

An assessment of a person's physical condition may conclude that handcuffs should not be used where there is an apparent risk that their use may aggravate a medical condition. In some cases, it may be necessary, reasonable and proportionate to use handcuffs even where a person has a medical condition. Where handcuffs are used in such circumstances, it is essential that the person is monitored to detect any deterioration in their health.

Transporting a prisoner in a vehicle does not in itself provide grounds to use handcuffs. However, the risks to the driver and other passengers may increase the likelihood that use of handcuffs is reasonable, necessary and proportionate. Each case must be treated on its own merits.

Cases in which handcuffs should only be used in exceptional circumstances

You must only use handcuffs on the elderly, infirm, pregnant women or children in exceptional circumstances. You must not handcuff people with a known chest medical condition, such as asthma, which restricts breathing, behind their back. You must be able to explain and justify why you used handcuffs in every case.

You might be able to justify using handcuffs and reasonable force in these circumstances if:

- they showed the potential for using extreme force or violence against:
 - you
 - other officers
 - any other suspect
 - members of the public
- they have a criminal record which included a recent arrest for extreme violence or assault
- you have knowledge they used or are likely to have concealed weapons on themselves
- they have or are likely to try and injure themselves

You must record any use of handcuffs in the police reporting and notebook organiser (PRONTO) or in your pocket notebook (PNB), detailing the grounds for their use in all cases.

When you record you have applied handcuffs in PRONTO or your PNB, you must include:

- why you decided to use handcuffs
- the position of the handcuffs when they were applied, for example, to the front or rear and their method of application, for instance, front or rear stack
- the time and date when you applied and removed the handcuffs
- record details of any injuries, cuts or marks observed following use of the handcuffs.

See [Recording use of force](#).

Use of limb restraints: enforcement

Limb restraints are only to be used by those officers who have received appropriate training. There are several scenarios where it is widely acknowledged that these devices may be of use to reduce risk of injury to officers and subjects, such as:

- moving a person from the scene of arrest to a vehicle
- placing a person into a vehicle or holding room / custody suite
- removing a person from a vehicle or holding room / custody suite
- removal of a person from an airplane
- taking fingerprints by force

Once applied, the device should:

- restrict the movement of the arms / legs to the extent where the person cannot use gross motor actions
- render a person unable to punch, kick, offer substantial resistance or initiate an assault

Effective use of limb restraints allows officers to quickly control a person in a high-risk scenario. This helps to minimise the risk to the officer, public and subject. Any use must be a proportionate response to the situation and justified by the applying officer.

Once applied, officers must routinely risk assess the necessity and proportionality for continued use of the device and monitor any associated medical implications when using limb restraints. Officers must remain vigilant that once restraints are applied, there may be scenarios where subjects become passive and their continued use is no longer required and may put their wellbeing at risk.

If a subject is unknown and the necessity of the situation results in use of limb restraints, officers must ask the subject about any medical issues or vulnerabilities at

an appropriate stage when safe to do so. However, officer safety remains the priority at all stages.

If used, custody or detention officers and/or medical staff should be informed upon arrival of the nature and circumstances surrounding restraint, arrest, transportation of the subject and any medical conditions declared.

You must only use limb restraints on the elderly, infirm, children or pregnant women in exceptional circumstances. You must not use upper body limb restraints on people with a declared medical condition, such as asthma, which restricts the breathing.

If limb restraints are soiled or damaged, they should be disposed of and replaced.

Plastic handcuffs: enforcement

PST level 3/arrest trained officers who have undergone the IE plastic handcuff training, will now be provided with plastic handcuffs. All guidance contained in this document relating to handcuffs also applies to the use of plastic handcuffs.

Plastic handcuffs must only be used once an officer's primary handcuffs have been used. Such as when making multiple arrests requiring handcuffs.

Officers must not attempt to restrain more individuals than otherwise safe to do so. In all circumstances, officers must conduct and maintain a continuous dynamic risk assessment when deploying restraints.

Medical implications

It is essential that restraint methods used do not adversely affect the subject's breathing. Individuals who have identified that they suffer from conditions such as asthma, bronchitis emphysema should not be subject to restraints around the upper arm/chest area. Individuals must not remain, nor be transported in the prone position. The person must always be monitored and if the individual experiences difficulties in resuming normal breathing, then medical assistance must be sought immediately.

Positional asphyxia

Officers must always be aware of positional asphyxia which occurs when someone's position prevents them from breathing adequately. This is likely to occur when a subject is in a position that interferes with inhalation and/or exhalation and they cannot escape from that position.

Those especially vulnerable are those:

- already having to breathe hard to get oxygen in and carbon dioxide out due to severe exertion

- with a medical condition causing low oxygen levels already (for example pneumonia) or acid blood (for example kidney failure or high blood sugar due to diabetes)

Using restraints may cause even lower oxygen levels as the subject gets continually more agitated and needs additional restraint. Officers must remain aware of the signs and symptoms of positional asphyxia as per the Personal Safety Manual.

Circulation

Prolonged or overtight application of limb restraints may cause vascular problems which occur from a tourniquet effect on the subject's lower limbs. This may lead to circulation problems, for example Deep vein thrombosis (DVT) where a partial or full obstruction of leg veins occurs. The necessary tightness of application can result in the knees being tightly compressed and could result in pressure necrosis of the skin between the knees.

Officers may have to justify the length of time a subject is held in limb restraints. If the period of time is greater than 20 minutes the officer may need to consider relieving the tension of the limb restraints or consider placing something soft between areas of bone on bone.

Prolonged or continued overtightening and incorrect application of plastic handcuff, can result in circulation and nerve damage. Mitigations are covered in the guidance and in the National Police Chief Councils Personal Safety Manual and must be taught during training. The necessary tightness of application can result in reddening or indentation around the application site.

Removing restraints

The times when restraints are being applied and removed are potentially most vulnerable to violence or higher levels of non-compliance by the arrested subject.

If you have applied handcuffs but removed them enroute to custody, you must inform the custody officer or custodian of this immediately upon arrival.

Related content

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Control and restraint during operations

This section tells Immigration Enforcement officers what to consider before using control or restraint during an operation.

Control and restraint while searching a person

For general guidance on searching a person, see Search and seizure.

Prone restraint (lying down) search

Prone restraint searches carry a high risk of positional asphyxia, are likely to be rare and should be avoided if possible. The best management is de-escalation, avoiding prone restraint, restraining for the minimum amount of time, lying the detainee on their side and constant monitoring of vital signs.

Prone restraint may be the only option if the person is aggressively uncooperative or if there is a clear threat to the safety of those present, for instance, there is reason to suspect that the person may have a weapon or other harmful object or substance. Officers must keep the period for which it is used to a minimum.

The prone restraint position is a use of force that must be fully reported and requires formal debriefing in accordance with [recording use of force](#) and post enforcement visit actions.

The effects of a violent struggle or restraint can exacerbate the effects of drugs, alcohol or medication. Prolonged restraint and struggling can result in exhaustion and reduced breathing. This, with underlying medical conditions such as cardiac conditions, drugs use or use of certain antipsychotics, can result in sudden death with little warning.

Principal risk factors that can contribute to death during restraint

This includes situations where:

- the body position of a person results in a partial or complete obstruction of the airway and the subject is unable to escape from that position
- pressure is applied to the back of the neck, torso or abdomen of a person held in the prone position
- pressure is applied which restricts the shoulder girdle or accessory muscles of respiration while the person is lying down in any position
- the person is obese (particularly those with large stomachs and abdomens)
- the person is of small or of light build
- the person has alcohol or drug intoxication (especially stimulants, for example cocaine, being on antipsychotic medication – some medications under certain conditions can cause abnormal heart rhythms)

- the person has a heightened level of stress
- you suspect a person has excited delirium, also known as agitated delirium

Control and restraint of families and children

You must carefully consider using control and restraint on adults during any operation and weigh it against the possible impact this may have on any children present.

Where you anticipate that an adult is likely to be disruptive during the return, and control and restraint techniques may need to be used, operational planning must include considerations for shielding the child from witnessing any force being used.

In dynamic situations where the use of control and restraint is not foreseen, you must take reasonable steps to shield a child from witnessing force being used. For guidance, see Enforcement planning assessments and Identifying people at risk.

The control and restraint of children and young people must be limited to circumstances where it is necessary for an officer to use physical intervention to prevent harm to the child or any individual present.

Physical intervention must not be used to force children to comply with a requirement to leave the UK. In the vast majority of cases there will be no need for officers to exercise physical control or restraint of minors.

Home Office staff and authorised contractors must consider the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of the child concerned, and any potential adverse impact to their physical or emotional wellbeing. Children who have been identified as having additional needs, such as medical conditions, learning and/or physical disability, may be more adversely affected by the use of force and this must be taken into account.

In cases where there is active physical resistance, and physical intervention is deemed absolutely necessary to prevent harm, officers and authorised contractors must ensure that any action is:

- limited to the minimum level of force required in that particular circumstance
- justifiable

All physical interventions must be in line with officer training and it is imperative that restraint must only be used for the shortest possible period and de-escalated at the earliest opportunity.

You must record fully any use of force against or in the presence of children. See [Recording use of force](#).

Use of force on pregnant women

You must only ever use force on a pregnant woman to prevent her from harming herself, any member of her family, other persons present, or any member of staff.

Any force used must be justified and proportionate. You must record any use of force, detailing and justifying the reasons for using force. See also: Detention of pregnant women.

Control and restraint to record fingerprints by force

Where a person has been detained, officers may take all such steps as reasonably necessary to identify the person. [Schedule 2 Paragraph 18\(2\) of the Immigration Act 1971](#) allows you to fingerprint a person who is detained or liable to be detained in order to identify them. [Section 141 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999](#) allows for fingerprinting to raise a new record.

You must seek to record fingerprints by consent in the first instance, however when consent is refused you must fully explain to the individual the necessity and power to obtain fingerprints and that officers have the power to record these by force under [Section 146 of the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999](#). Officers must make all reasonable attempts to gain compliance of the individual before exercising the power to record fingerprints by force.

Any use of force to record fingerprints by force must remain necessary and proportionate. Officers must ensure they have an appropriate number of officers present to safely secure the individual in an environment they can control. Consideration must be given to use of restraints to reduce risk of injury to the officer and subject. All fingerprinting by force must be [recorded](#).

Control and Restraint must not be used to record fingerprints of those under the age of 16.

Injury to or a complaint by detainee

If the detainee makes any complaint (see Safety and personal protection guidance equipment and critical incident management) you must bring it to the attention of:

- the custody officer (when detained in a police station)
- your line manager (in all cases and as soon as possible)
- any other detaining authority – for instance the contractor in an immigration removal centre or short-term holding facility

You must note the complaint on the 'freetext' page of your police and reporting notebook organiser (PRONTO), or in your personal notebook (PNB) and give the detainee the chance to read, agree and sign that the entry confirming it is accurate (PNB only).

If injuries, cuts or marks are visible after you have used force, or the detainee makes a complaint about your use of force or the alleged injury, then your line manager must assess the situation. They will consider whether to refer it to the professional standards unit (PSU) who investigate all complaints of serious misconduct made against Home Office staff.

If you believe a medical examination is appropriate you must make a full note on the 'freetext' page of PRONTO or in your PNB and make the detaining authority or custody officer aware.

Related content

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Recording use of force

This section tells Immigration Enforcement officers when and how to record they have used force.

You must record all use of force in your police and reporting notebook organiser (PRONTO) or your pocket notebook (PNB) at the time of an incident or as soon as possible afterwards.

If officers do not have access to PRONTO they must complete a Use of Force data entry form and submit to Operational Safety and Wellbeing.

See also Record keeping during enforcement visits.

Completing the PRONTO 'use of force' form

Record your actions on the PRONTO 'use of force' form in the following, prompted, order. If you are using a PNB, you must record your actions in the same way to ensure consistency of recorded information.

You must complete the following fields:

- time of use of force
- circumstances (a 'freetext' box to give an overall account of what you did and why)
- justification for use of force (tick box)
- control skill technique used (a comprehensive drop-down menu of all skills taught on the arrest course)
 - technique effective (Yes/No tick box)
 - injury sustained to officer (Yes/No tick box)
 - injury sustained to subject (Yes/No tick box)
- repeat control skill technique (repeat and complete for every control skill used)
- do you consider subject to be physically vulnerable (a tick box field to note things such as pregnant, under 18, over 59)
- was the use of force spontaneous or pre-planned (drop-down menu)
- notes

Holding debriefing meetings when force has been used

The officer in charge (OIC) must hold a debriefing meeting in the following circumstances, where a person has:

- resisted arrest and or search
- made to escape by exiting a premises but was apprehended after a pursuit
- offered verbal or physical aggression sufficient to cause you to believe there is an unacceptable risk to you or others
- been searched in the prone position

The OIC must also hold a debrief meeting in all instances where the team on the visit included newly trained arrest staff who have yet to complete the mentoring period. See also post enforcement visit actions.

Hold a debriefing meeting as soon as possible. The following people must attend:

- all staff who used force against the suspect
- all staff who witnessed others using force against the suspect
- the bronze commander responsible for the location where the incident occurred
- the silver commander for the operation

Use the debriefing meeting to:

- discuss what happened
- confirm whether any officers have been injured as a result of the incident
- detail the level of force used
- determine whether any lessons can be learned from the incident
- identify whether any staff must attend a personal safety training (PST) course or refresher course

The OIC must make and keep a record of what was discussed and agreed at the debriefing meeting. All investigation and management records may be disclosed in court.

Any injuries or near misses must be recorded on the Accident and Incident Reporting form on Horizon.

Witness statements

There will be instances when officers are required to produce a witness statement, such as when a person has been arrested for obstruction or assault.

The line manager must ensure that anyone completing a report or witness statement does it individually by referring to their own PRONTO or PNB record and does not corroborate details with others. If they do have cause to discuss aspects of an incident, for instance in order to verify that all colleagues were accounted for and that there was no further risk, then all those involved must record on the 'fretext' page in PRONTO or in their PNBs:

- when this happened
- what was discussed
- the reason for the discussion

Investigating breaches of use of force policy

Line managers must investigate and report any incidents where there is cause to believe:

- someone has used a disproportionate level of force

- someone has used any level of force that is not an approved PST technique
- any level of force has not been properly recorded
- an officer who has used any level of force is not PST trained or has not attended regular 'refresher' courses

Recording use of force against or in presence of children

In the case of control and restraint involving a child or control and restraint against an adult in the presence of a child, a copy of the PRONTO visit record must be sent to the Office of the Children's Champion. You must record any use of force in detail, setting out:

- why the force was necessary
- the techniques used
- the time of the incident
- who else was involved
- how any officer attempted to de-escalate
- whether any injuries were sustained
- update the notes field on the PRONTO 'use of force' form to describe what was done to shield any child present from witnessing any force on accompanying adults and how successful that was

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