



**Policy name:** External Escorts Policy Framework

**Re-issue Date:** 11 February 2026

**Implementation Date:** 5<sup>th</sup> January 2026

**Updates and replaces the following documents (e.g. PSIs, PSOs, Custodial Service Specs) which are hereby cancelled:**

- Prevention of Escapes – External Escorts Policy Framework
- Introduces new forms and amendments to the following documents:
  - New: Annexes A1 – A8: Generic and Specific Escort Risk Assessments
  - New: Annex B PECS Hospital Escort Risk Assessment
  - Amended: Bedwatch Occurrence Log, within Annex E - Bedwatch Pack example.

**Category A and Restricted Status Prisoners Policy Requirements**

Directions about the security and management of these prisoners must be in line with the following:

- The Identification, Initial Categorisation and Management of Potential and Provisional Category A/Restricted Status Prisoners
- The Review of Security Category - Category A/Restricted Status Prisoners
- Management and Security of Category A Prisoners - Internal
- Management and Security of Category A Prisoners - External Movements
- Management of Restricted Status Prisoners

**Action required by:**

X	HMPPS HQ	X	Governors
X	Public Sector Prisons	X	Heads of Group
X	Contracted Prisons		The Probation Service
X	Under 18 Young Offender Institutions		Other providers of Probation and Community Services
	HMPPS Rehabilitation Contract Services Team		

**Mandatory Actions: All groups referenced above must adhere to the Requirements section of this Policy Framework, which contains all mandatory actions.**

All the annexes and supporting tools to this Policy Framework have been classified as OFFICIAL-MOJ USE ONLY and are therefore not for public release. They can only be accessed via HMPPS intranet, for internal use only.

**For Information:**

By the implementation date, Governors<sup>1</sup> of public sector prisons and contracted prisons must ensure that their local procedures have been updated to reflect the changes in this new Policy Framework.

Governors must ensure that any new local policies they develop because of this Policy Framework are compliant with relevant legislation, including the Public Sector Equality Duty (Equality Act 2010).

Section 6 of the Policy Framework contains Guidance to assist implementation of the Requirements set out in Section 4 of this Policy Framework.

Throughout this document, the term Governor also applies to Directors of Contracted Prisons. The term Prison Group Directors (PGDs) also applies to the Head of Prisons Contracts Group.

Unless specific reference is made to Prisoner Escort and Custody Services (PECS), normal contractual agreements must be carried out in relation to PECS escorts.

In the actions required table, Heads of Group includes PECS.

**How this Policy Framework will be audited/monitored:**

In public sector prisons, Prison Group Directors (PGDs) will monitor compliance with requirements set out within the Policy Framework in their prisons using the auditing and monitoring tools described in this Framework. In contracted prisons, monitoring of compliance will be through the standard contract management processes.

Health and Safety (H&S) assurance and monitoring for public sector prisons is undertaken through H&S monitoring and assurance within the H&S function, using the H&S audit and reporting tool compliance checklist. The H&S processes may be different for contracted prisons and therefore, contracted prisons must have their own H&S arrangements which ensure, as far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all employees.

Quality assurance for public sector prisons and contracted prisons is provided by HMPPS Performance, Assurance & Risk Group (PAR) through the security audit.

Mandatory elements should be subject to management checks (and may be subject to self or peer audit by operational line management), as judged to be appropriate by the managers with responsibility for delivery.

**Resource Impact:** This Policy Framework has been assessed as having no significant resource impact as it is the amalgamation and formalisation of existing PSIs and current practice. Security Departments will be required to update their Local Security Strategy (LSS) upon publication and any re-issues of this Policy Framework.

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<sup>1</sup> In this document the term Governor also applies to Directors of contracted prisons.

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It is expected that this Policy Framework will assist prisons in reducing the risk of escape. This in turn will be expected to reduce HMPPS and other agencies financial costs and reputational damage that results from any escape.

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**Approved by OPS for publication:** Helen Judge, Chair, Operational Policy Sub-board, September 2025

**Revisions**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Changes</b>
8/01/2026	Removal of paragraphs 4.20.7 and 4.20.8
11/02/2026	Addition of paragraph 4.2.2

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## **1 Purpose**

- 1.1 HM Prison and Probation Service (HMPPS), as part of the justice system, plays a crucial role in society. HMPPS protects the public, maintains safe and secure prisons and reduces the risk that people will reoffend. Managing the risk of escape is key to public protection.
- 1.2 Keeping prisons secure is fundamental to the role prisons have in protecting the public. Any escape undermines the core principles of the criminal justice system.
- 1.3 This Policy Framework sets out the requirements and guidance for public and contracted prisons to prevent escapes during external escorts. It also recognises the need to uphold the dignity and humanity of those in custody, ensuring a proportionate balance between robust security measures and respectful, humane treatment.
- 1.4 The approach to medical escorts must be based on a risk assessment that considers the nature of the condition and treatment. Security considerations are key to mitigating the risk of escape and risk of harm to staff and the public and should be assessed alongside necessity and decency.

## **2 Evidence**

- 2.1 HMPPS monitors escapes to analyse the frequency and identify trends, focusing on managing the risk to the public. Data on escapes from prisons and escorts is published annually at GOV.UK.
- 2.2 In addition to monitoring escape incidents, HMPPS also tracks and reviews all breaches of restraint protocols. Hospital escorts have been identified as one of the highest-risk settings for such breaches, due to the complex and often unpredictable nature of these environments.

## **3 Outcomes**

- 3.1 This Policy Framework and supporting documents will ensure prisons:
  1. Consider the necessity of an external escort.
  2. Undertake all escort risk assessments using policy approved templates.
  3. Understand how to securely prepare for and undertake any external escort.
  4. Ensure risks are identified and measures are put in place to mitigate these.
  5. Ensure the correct equipment and documentation is in place.
  6. Understand the security measures for bedwatch procedures.
  7. Understand and report escapes correctly as per the following escape definitions:
    - a. A prisoner escapes from a prison if they unlawfully gain their liberty by breaching the secure perimeter of a closed prison, i.e. the outside wall or boundary of the prison. A prisoner escapes from escort when they are able to pass beyond the control of escorting staff. This may involve overcoming physical security restraints such as a wall or fence; locks,

bolts or bars; a secure vehicle; handcuffs; or the direct supervision of escorting staff.

- b. This includes incidents where the prisoner is believed to have been fully or partially responsible for the breach even where their involvement cannot be proven, and incidents where another party is found to have deliberately aided or enabled the escape.
- c. A 'Category A escape' means the escape of a Category A prisoner. Category A prisoners are those whose escape would be highly dangerous to the public, the police or the security of the state.
- d. A prisoner escapes from an escort if they are able to pass beyond the control of escorting staff and leave the escort, the vehicle or the premises (such as a court or hospital).

## **4 Requirements**

### **4.1 Prior to an External Escort**

- 4.1.1 Before an external escort takes place, it must be established that it is necessary and that the purpose of the escort cannot be met within the prison via other means. Prisons should utilise technology where available and feasible, reducing the risk of escape.
- 4.1.2 Considerations can include, but are not limited to:
  - Where a healthcare service can be provided within the prison.
  - Where a healthcare service can be provided via video link or telemedicine.
  - Use of Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL).
  - Whether it is essential for the external escort to take place immediately, or whether it could be postponed until after the prisoner's release (provided this does not compromise the prisoner's health for medical situations).
  - Use of Video Link for Court.
  - Use of IT technology that allows streaming capability for funerals.
- 4.1.3 Hospitals are frequently attended as part of HMPPS escorts. For this reason, prisons should strive to maintain positive relationships with their local hospitals and good practice is to use a memorandum of understanding (MOU). This enables prisons to maintain regular contact and receive/share information about changes to practices which may have an impact on security procedures. The data-sharing-guidance-criminal-justice-system can be used to aid prisons in writing the MOU. Although specific to data sharing, this guide offers generic principles that apply to information sharing.
- 4.1.4 Increases in digital technology should be considered for inclusion in the MOU. Prisons should ensure that hospitals are not providing details or updating appointments online for the duration of time the prisoner is in custody. This will prevent security breaches occurring if family members are able to access prisoners online NHS accounts.
- 4.1.5 The development and regular review of hospital assessments which map out key locations must take place to support the prevention of escape during a hospital escort. Governors must review hospital assessments every two years unless the hospital indicate there has been changes to structural layout. This will aid staff

competing escort risk assessments and staff undertaking the escort to understand the layout of the hospital and note any key security risks which may have an influence on prisoners attempting to escape (see Annex F - Hospital Assessment Example).

- 4.1.6 Prisons must provide bags to safely carry all the necessary equipment and documentation for an external escort. For security reasons, these should be in the form of a backpack which allows escorting staff to remain hands free. Best practice is for hospital escort, bedwatch and childbirth (women's estate only) escorting bags to be prepared in advance and stored securely ready for use.
- 4.1.7 The necessity for the external escort must be recorded on the risk assessment. See section 4.3 for further details on the risk assessment process.
- 4.1.8 Each prison's Local Security Strategy (LSS) must clearly set out the procedures involved in planning the secure escort of all prisoners outside of the prison, including the escort strength and use of restraints. See section 4.2 for further details on restraints.
- 4.1.9 All HMPPS external escorts must consist of at least two prison staff competent in escort procedures. This means that the staff must have the necessary skills, knowledge, training, and experience to securely apply and remove mechanical restraints. Line managers and/or dispatching officers should be in a position to assess competence of staff to undertake external escorts securely.
- 4.1.10 One escorting member of staff must be the same biological sex as the prisoner, particularly when attending medical appointments related to gender specific services such as gynaecology or pregnancy. Where this is not immediately possible, for example due to emergency situations or operational constraints, this must be documented on the risk assessment, and a staff member of same biological sex must be provided as soon as operationally possible.
- 4.1.11 For transgender prisoners, where possible, one member of staff must be the same sex as the prisoner's self-identified gender for any external escort. For example, a transgender female prisoner should be escorted by at least one biological female member of staff or transgender female officer. Where this is not possible, it must be documented in the risk assessment.
- 4.1.12 Except in an operational emergency, at least one escorting member of staff must have passed their probation period. If this requirement is not met, the reasons must be documented in the risk assessment or on the Person Escort Record (PER).
- 4.1.13 Staff welfare must be a key considered in local processes for allocating escort duties. Where feasible, staff should be given advance notice prior to undertaking an escort. Allocation systems should consider shift patterns to ensure staff are rested and alert, and these systems should be reasonable and fair wherever possible. If a staff member is tired or has recently experienced traumatic events, either at home or at work, these factors can significantly impact an individual's ability to remain

alert and responsive to security risks. As such, staff should be encouraged to communicate any concerns that may affect their ability for duty.

4.1.14 Staff also have a responsibility to raise any concerns prior to escort particularly where personal circumstances may impact for example, a funeral escort.

4.1.15 At all times during an external escort, the prisoner remains the responsibility of the despatching prison.

4.1.16 In life-threatening emergencies, an air ambulance may be deployed to attend the prison. Due to space constraints, staff may be unable to accompany the prisoner during the flight. In such cases, decisions must be made locally, guided by the escort risk assessment, particularly considering the actual risk of escape posed by the prisoner while seriously ill. Where indicated by the risk assessment, local arrangements should include engagement with police to assess the need for their support, particularly for prisoners who are deemed high risk of escape and harm to the public. Alternative measures should be explored, such as establishing communication with air ambulance personnel to receive updates upon hospital arrival. Escorting staff must proceed to the hospital immediately and inform the prison of the prisoner's condition on arrival to support appropriate decisions regarding restraints. All relevant risk information must be clearly communicated to both the air ambulance crew and the receiving hospital. As air ambulances are typically used only in critical situations, the preservation of life must remain the primary consideration, ensuring all decisions are proportionate and defensible.

4.1.17 Governors must ensure they have local contingency plans as per Incident Management Policy Framework (Restricted HMPPS only - contact [nimu@justice.gov.uk](mailto:nimu@justice.gov.uk) for access) detailing the actions to take in the event of any attempted or actual escape. Prisons should also consider a local contingency plan for the process to follow for an air ambulance.

## 4.2 Consideration of Restraints

4.2.1 A decision to apply restraints must be made based on an individualised risk assessment. There are different types of approved restraints, all of which can be used to prevent escape with the correct authority and application. These are detailed below:

- Handcuffs, see [Changeover of Restraints](#)
  - Standard handcuffs (D Cuffs) - for use on male prisoners, both adult and those aged under 21 (three sizes of insert are available to ensure a close fit).
  - Ratchet handcuffs - for use on thin wristed male prisoners, in situations where standard handcuffs and inserts do not provide a sufficiently secure fit and for female prisoners.
  - Rigid bar handcuffs - only be used as part of a control and restraint incident.
  - For escort contractors – Ratchet or Hiatt handcuffs and Rigid bar handcuffs for use around immediate safety & security incident response.
- Standard escort cable (D Cuff) or ratchet escort Chain

- This is used to provide distance, for example where a prisoner needs to use a toilet. Where a standard escort cable (D Cuff) or ratchet escort chain is used in public it should be as short as possible to prevent tripping hazards.
- Plastic restraints
  - To be used with the correct authority to prevent escape during medical treatment such as an MRI scan where metal restraints cannot be used, see [Application of Plastic Restraints](#)
- Discreet restraints
  - To be used during court appearances if authorised to prevent escape from the dock/courtroom.
- Body Belt
  - May be used in exceptional circumstances after all other routine methods of mechanical restraint have been considered and discounted in line with Use of Force Policy Framework.

- 4.2.2 Restraints must be applied above the wrist bone for both the prisoner and member of staff and ensuring that they are tight and cannot be moved below the wrist bone.
- 4.2.3 All restraints used by prisons must be supplied by locking section with exception of plastic and discreet handcuffs (which are to be purchased locally). Handcuffs provided by PECS suppliers do not need to be supplied by locking section.
- 4.2.4 Any disposal of handcuffs must be via the National Locking Section to ensure that they are securely destroyed. Contact the National Locking Section at their functional mailbox ([Lockingorders@justice.gov.uk](mailto:Lockingorders@justice.gov.uk)) for further information.
- 4.2.5 The approach to restraints for medical escort must be based on a risk assessment that considers security alongside dignity and humanity. Medical appointments and treatment can be stressful and painful for prisoners and may be difficult for staff. We should always prioritise the risk of escape and risk of harm to staff and the public, as set out in the prisoner's risk assessment. We should also recognise that this risk can change according to a prisoner's medical condition and treatment.
- 4.2.6 The decision to apply restraints and the level of restraint to be used must be assessed on an individual basis and documented in the risk assessment. If the escort risk assessment (see section 4.3) finds the use of restraints appropriate, the following restraints should be applied as appropriate:
- Male Category B (and Category A - Management and Security of Category A Prisoners - External Movements) and Escape List (E-List) prisoners must be double handcuffed on escort.
  - All other prisoners will be single handcuffed unless the individual escort risk assessment indicates differently i.e. double handcuffing is required and proportionate or no restraints are appropriate.
  - Remand prisoners must be assessed on a case-by-case basis to determine the appropriate level of restraint and escort strength.
  - See the following Supporting Tools for guidance on the application of restraints:
  - ST1 Use of plastic restraints instructional video
  - ST2 Application of plastic restrains on external escort infographic

- ST3 Applying single and double handcuffs instructional video
- ST4 Changing over restraints infographic
- ST5 Changing over restraints instructional video
- ST6 Application of the escort chain instructional video
- ST7 Use of inserts for restraints instructional video
- ST8 Using the D Cuff escort chain instructional video

4.2.7 The standard escort cable (D Cuff) and ratchet escort chains must never be used as a less secure form of restraint and must only be used in the circumstances approved on the escort risk assessment.

4.2.8 Restraints must always be carried on an escort in case of a change of demeanour from the prisoner resulting in violent, refractory behaviours or an attempt to escape.

4.2.9 Where restraints are not used, the circumstances must be fully documented on the escort risk assessment. Restraints will not routinely be used in the following circumstances:

- A tetraplegia or paraplegic prisoner must not be handcuffed without the personal approval of one of the following – Executive Director of Security, the Chief Operating Officer of Prisons, the Director General of Operations, or the Director General Chief Executive Officer. This approval must be sought for each time the prisoner is to undergo an external escort unless the HMPPS Chief Executive Officer states otherwise. For Cat A and E-List heightened refer to Management and Security of Category A Prisoners - External Movements: (Restricted), contact LTHSPG.Admin@justice.gov.uk.
- When prisoners are being moved to open conditions.
- On a prisoner with mental health issues who is subject to an order or direction for compulsory detention under the Mental Health Act, unless the Governor, with agreement of a healthcare professional, directs that restraints must be used because the prisoner poses a security or safety risk.
- If the prisoner's medical condition or advanced age or physical impairment renders restraints inappropriate. Restraints will not normally be necessary for example, when mobility is severely limited, e.g., due to advanced age or disability unless there is intelligence to suggest that an escape attempt may be made.
- For further guidance for seriously/terminally ill prisoners, pregnant prisoners and mother and baby escorts see section 4.3 on risk assessments.

4.2.10 Subject to the risk assessment, situations where removal of restraints may be appropriate to include are:

- When a prisoner (any security category) is inside the cubicle of a cellular vehicle, the cell door restraining chain is in place, and the outer door is locked. At the end of the journey, restraints must be reapplied and checked before the outer doors are unlocked. If there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a prisoner has secreted a weapon, the prisoner may be required to wear restraints while locked in the vehicle.
- On arrival in the courtroom, unless the Judge has agreed that the prisoner may be handcuffed in court.

- In a court custody suite, but only after the area has been thoroughly checked. If the court custody suite is assessed as not being secure, restraints must be used, this includes toilets.
- In certain circumstances at funeral services or during a visit to a dying relative.
- In certain circumstances during marriage and civil partnership ceremonies.
- On board an aircraft (local repatriation teams receive specific training).
- During pregnancy, see section 4.5 for further details.
- When a prisoner is being operated on (under general anaesthetic)

4.2.11 There may be other instances where removal of restraints is appropriate. This will be determined in the individual risk assessment with the input of healthcare staff.

### 4.3 Escort Risk Assessment

4.3.1 The relevant risk assessment templates provided below must be used. An escort risk assessment must be completed for any prisoner movement outside the prison when prison staff are escorting the prisoner. Prisons may choose to use the generic risk assessment at Annex A1, or alternatively, the escort-specific Annexes A2-A7. Prisons can use locally adapted forms, but only when they supplement the national template.

- Annex A1 Generic Escort Risk Assessment
- Annex A2M Men's Estate Emergency Risk Assessment
- Annex A2W Women's Estate Emergency Risk Assessment
- Annex A3M Men's Estate Hospital Escort Risk Assessment
- Annex A3W Women's Estate Hospital Escort Risk Assessment
- Annex A4M Men's Estate Bedwatch Risk Assessment
- Annex A4W Women's Estate Bedwatch Risk Assessment
- Annex A5M Men's Estate Funeral Escort Risk Assessment
- Annex A5W Women's Estate Funeral Escort Risk Assessment
- Annex A6M Men's Estate Transfer and Court Risk Assessment
- Annex A6W Women's Estate Transfer and Court Risk Assessment
- Annex A7M Men's Estate Wedding / Civil Partnership Risk Assessment
- Annex A7W Women's Estate Wedding / Civil Partnership Risk Assessment

4.3.2 PECS must complete an escort risk assessment for all planned and emergency hospital escorts. An escort risk assessment must also be in place for those prisoners who are admitted into hospital (bedwatch) whilst in the custody of PECS. See Annex B.

4.3.3 All escort risk assessments must be completed fully, accurately, and promptly, using the most up-to-date information available. Ideally, assessments should be completed no more than 24hrs prior to the escort, except in cases of emergency escorts, prisons are to follow the requirements outlined in 4.4.1 and 4.4.2. If an assessment is completed earlier, it must be reviewed 24 hours before the escort to ensure any new information is included, and the risk assessment is responsive to

any changes. This check must be documented. See ST9 How to complete a Risk Assessment Instructional Video.

- 4.3.4 If more than one prisoner is being escorted, an individual escort risk assessment must be completed for every prisoner.
- 4.3.5 A multi-disciplinary approach between security, healthcare, offender management and any others with relevant information must be used when completing the escort risk assessment. This approach encourages an individualised risk assessment informed by all the information available, leading to a clearly documented rationale for the approach to restraints. The assessment must be kept under review throughout the prisoner's care and treatment as a prisoner's risk of escape and harm to others can change with their medical condition and treatment.
- 4.3.6 Security departments must ensure that all staff involved in risk assessment decisions understand the purpose and process of applying restraints. This knowledge will enable them to make informed contributions to inform the decision-making process.
- 4.3.7 Staff involved in risk assessment decisions must also understand that the unjustified use of restraints on prisoners during medical appointments (including, in some circumstances, when being transported to and from those appointments) is capable of infringing Article 3 of the European Convention of Human Rights (prohibition on torture, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment). For example, in *Graham and Allen v Secretary of State for Justice* [2007] EWHC 2940, the Court held that a prisoner's Article 3 rights had been breached when he was handcuffed while receiving chemotherapy treatment, as he did not represent a risk to the public and there was no risk of escape. This was despite the fact that the prisoner had, prior to his medical treatment, been assessed as a high escape risk.
- 4.3.8 Managers conducting oversight of risk assessments should be aware of the principles established in the Graham judgement and ensure restraint decisions are proportionate and justified and regularly reviewed. Escorting staff should also be aware of these so any change in the prisoner's health should prompt a timely review of the live risk assessment.
- 4.3.9 Where healthcare staff are present in the prison; typically, during normal working hours; they must be involved in the escort risk assessment process. Their clinical input is essential and must be considered by the security team when making decisions. Authorising managers should clearly document on the escort risk assessment that relevant medical information has been considered. In situations where healthcare staff are not available on site (e.g. out of hours or in prisons without 24-hour healthcare cover), efforts should be made where possible to obtain timely clinical advice through appropriate channels (e.g. on call Dr or a healthcare provision).
- 4.3.10 If a prisoner escort turns into a bedwatch, local prison and healthcare staff must promptly liaise with hospital staff to ensure that up-to-date and relevant medical information is shared to support an informed and proportionate bedwatch risk

assessment. For prisons without 24-hour healthcare cover, this process should be completed as soon as operationally possible to ensure a timely risk assessment.

4.3.11 Security departments should consult with relevant healthcare staff at the prison to ensure that any communicable disease risks are addressed and mitigation options detailed in the escort risk assessment.

4.3.12 Sources of information or intelligence to inform the escort risk assessment and defensible decision making on the use of restraints should include but not be limited to (this list is not exhaustive):

- Digital Prison Service - Incentive level, adjudications, staff entries, behavioural warnings, security alerts, visitors, movements, Assessment Care in Custody Teamwork (ACCT) history.
- Security reports – HMPPS Intelligence Management Systems.
- OASys – Risk of Serious Harm, OGRS3 (general reoffending risk assessment), OVP (violence risk predictor), offence history, compliance history, outstanding sentence plan targets and emotional well-being.
- Psychological risk assessments – formulations, patterns of offending, offence paralleling behaviours, personality assessments, custodial behaviour, motivations, mental health/emotional well-being, risk of abscond and non-compliance.
- Key workers – relationships, rapport, current state of mind, levels of engagement.
- Offender Supervisors – relationships, rapport and risk assessment.
- Healthcare providers/assigned nursing staff.
- Chaplaincy Team.
- Previous PERs.
- D-PER (Digital-PER) for PECS staff.
- Police/PIO, this can be for information only initially and where concerns are identified an OPT2 can be completed.

4.3.13 Care must be taken when considering the use of restraints on prisoners who are over 70 years old, have disabilities, are pregnant (see section 4.5), or are living with debilitating or life-limiting medical conditions, especially those undergoing treatments such as chemotherapy or other life-saving interventions. It is recognised that older prisoners are at heightened risk of depression and physical decline, which may cause them to appear older than their chronological age<sup>2</sup>. The age of 70 should be treated as a guideline rather than a strict threshold. In such cases, the routine use of restraints, including handcuffs, should be avoided. As part of the risk assessment process, any decision to apply restraints must be clearly justified and thoroughly documented. Staff must base their decisions on the most up-to-date and relevant information available. When setting out the justification for the use of restraints, the following considerations must be considered:

- The distinction between the risk of escape (and the risk to the public) when fit, and those risks posed by the same prisoner when suffering from a medical condition.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.justiceinspectrates.gov.uk/hmiprobation/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2022/12/Academic-Insights-Cadet-Dec-22.pdf>

- Medical information relating to the prisoner's mobility, fitness and health specifically in relation to escape.
- If the prisoner is undergoing medical treatment and/or has a medical condition, careful consideration must be given to the risk and harm and/or escape that they pose at the time of the escort, an unjustified restraint during medical treatment is capable of breaching Article 3 ECHR, as highlighted by the Graham case described in paragraph 4.3.7
- The potential danger a prisoner poses to the public based on the type and seriousness of their offence. This must factor in the prisoner's usual conduct in the presence of staff.
- The likelihood of the prisoner disrupting the escort due to violent and/or abusive behaviour on previous external escorts.
- The likelihood of the prisoner disrupting the escort due to recent violent and/or abusive behaviour towards staff in the prison.
- Sentence length and how long is left until release. This must factor in the prisoner's usual conduct in the presence of staff.
- The mental health, welfare and overall vulnerability of the prisoner taking into consideration any recent personal factors for example a relationship breakdown.
- Evidence of previous escape attempt such as slipping handcuffs during an external escort
- Threat to the personal safety of escorting or medical staff
- Prisoner subject to deportation who has actively stated their intent to remain.
- Security of the escort destination.
- Limited information about the prisoner for example new to custody or a recent recall awaiting full details about the reasons for the recall.

4.3.14 For all external escorts, the escort risk assessment must consider and document where applicable:

- The necessity of the external escort.
- Previous compliance on escort.
- Notoriety of the prisoner.
- The need for the prisoner to be accompanied during consultation.
- The need for privacy during any treatment, particularly where the prisoner is to undergo an intimate examination or procedure.
- Whether restraints are to be used and where justified the level of restraints in transit to and from the hospital; the level of restraints, if required, to be used during the prisoner's stay in hospital if/when admitted and any circumstances that may require the removal of restraints while at hospital.
- Potential use of life saving treatment for any hospital escort, such as the use of Automated External Defibrillators (AED/De-fib) and the risks to staff and prisoners if the prisoner has restraints applied.
- Procedures specific to pregnant prisoners, see section 4.5.

4.3.15 For medical escorts, the Head of Security or nominated manager in their absence (Duty Governor for out of hours) must authorise the escort risk assessment. For planned funeral, dying relative and wedding/civil partnership escorts, the authorising manager is the Deputy Governor, for out of hours unplanned escorts, the

authorising manager can be the Duty Governor although the Deputy Governor / Governor IC should be consulted.

#### 4.4 **Additional Criteria for Medical Escorts**

- 4.4.1 In situations where a medical emergency escort is dispatched, an emergency escort risk assessment must be completed (see Annexes A2M and A2W). The full risk assessment must be provided to escorting staff within 18 hours.
- 4.4.2 In a life-threatening situation, preservation of life takes precedence, and escorts can be dispatched without a risk assessment. The PER must be completed and must note the details of the application of restraints (where appropriate), as decided by the Duty Governor/Orderly Officer. An emergency risk assessment must be provided to escorting staff as soon as possible. A full escort risk assessment should then be completed as soon as operationally possible but within 18 hours of dispatch.
- 4.4.3 Where the security risk of the prisoner is deemed high, staffing levels must be considered given that the prisoner could require restraints removing for an emergency medical procedure of life-threatening situation. This must be a factor that is taken into consideration as part of the assessment prior to the escort leaving, paying specific attention to the court decision on the unnecessary use of handcuffing of prisoners during hospital appointments which could infringe on Article 3 ECHR.
- 4.4.4 For planned medical operations, there will need to be consultation with hospital staff prior to the completion of the risk assessment and escorting staff must be fully briefed to ensure all parties are aware of the procedures to follow. The risk assessment will need to consider and include (where relevant) the following:
- Restraints will be usually removed for the duration of the operation if a prisoner is placed under full anaesthesia or an epidural which prevents mobility. For local anaesthesia, risk assessments will need to consider whether restraints are appropriate depending on the procedure.
  - Escorting staff are not expected to accompany prisoners into the operating theatre during operative procedures.
  - Staff must stay in close vicinity of the theatre whilst the prisoner is undergoing the operation.
  - Restraints must be re-applied in accordance with the risk assessment.
- 4.4.5 Should a security situation arise where there is an assessed need to accompany the prisoner during the operation, a case conference between the sending prison and local health body will need to take place. In cases that may generate public and media interest due to the prisoner's notoriety, the local police will need to be informed. Escorting staff must be selected carefully in these circumstances taking into consideration their own needs and concerns about being in an operating theatre.
- 4.4.6 Security departments must collaborate with healthcare departments to ensure that any prisoner undergoing intimate examinations or procedures have their privacy considered. Privacy should be accommodated to the extent that it does not compromise the security of the escort. The assessment must consider:

1. The need for escorting staff to remain in the consulting room.
2. Appropriateness for the escorting staff to be out of sight but in earshot.
3. Appropriateness for the escorting staff to be out of sight and earshot. In this situation, the escort risk assessment must further consider:
  - Directions for the removal of restraints.
  - Positioning of staff in relation to entrances and exits.
  - Accessibility of windows and windows leading to outside areas (i.e., roof tops).
  - The use of a privacy screen and standard escort cable (D Cuff) or ratchet escort chain as an alternative.

4.4.7 Prisoners attending hospital with serious or terminal diagnoses require sensitive handling to balance security needs with their clinical needs. When considering restraints in these situations, individual escort risk assessments must distinguish between the risk of escape and the risk of harm to the public posed by a healthy prisoner versus the same prisoner suffering from a serious medical condition (consider the court decision on the unnecessary use of handcuffing of prisoners during hospital appointments which could infringe on Article 3 ECHR). See Dying Well in Custody Charter and Annex H Operational Practice Guide External Escorts for further information.

4.4.8 A new escort risk assessment must be conducted for every escort to assess any changes in the prisoner condition that may alter the level of restraint applied during transportation and/or during the prisoner's appointment or stay in hospital. The risk assessment process must include:

- Input from medical professionals involved in the prisoner's treatment.
- Information regarding the prisoners physical and mental health from healthcare professionals.
- Justification for any restraints being applied, particularly for any prisoner undergoing chemotherapy or other lifesaving treatment.
- Consideration of all relevant information with any decision made being clearly proportionate to the risk.
- Security considerations that are specific to the prisoner, particularly when restraints are applied.
- The level of restraints to be used during transportation to and from the hospital.
- The level of restraints to be used during any prisoner's stay in hospital including consideration of the withdrawal of restraints altogether where lifesaving treatment is being administered.
- The circumstances under which close family and relatives may be allowed to visit the prisoner.

4.5 **Additional Criteria for the Women's Estate (pregnancy, mother and baby)** This section must be read in conjunction with: Pregnancy, Mother and Baby Units (MBUs), and Maternal Separation from Children up to the Age of Two in Women's Prisons Policy Framework.

4.5.1 The risk assessment templates at Annexes A2W, A3W and A4W should be used for all medical escorts within the Women's estate. For pregnant prisoners, best practice

is to also refer to their individual care plan when completing the escort risk assessment.

- 4.5.2 Maintaining security during any escort remains a priority, but the welfare and safety of pregnant prisoners and mothers and babies (post-delivery) must also be considered as part of the escort risk assessment process. For this cohort of prisoners, the duration of the escort includes the time from leaving the prison to when they return to the prison. This means that the requirements set out in this section of the policy framework apply throughout the escort regardless of the pregnancy outcome (including if the pregnancy is not yet confirmed, for example awaiting a blood test).
- 4.5.3 The risk assessment must outline the secure arrangements for pregnant prisoners attending hospital. This must include directions for staff during labour (or any intimate examination of a pregnant prisoner) where escorting staff must not be present in the room unless the prisoner requests it or exceptionally the escort risk assessment requires it. The risk assessments must instead direct that staff maintain a close watch of all exits from the room.
- 4.5.4 For medical escorts, the Head of Security or nominated manager in their absence (Duty Governor for out of hours) must authorise the escort risk assessment. Any decision to apply restraints to a pregnant prisoner must be agreed by the Deputy Governor or equivalent including during out of hours.
- 4.5.5 For prisoners attending hospital to give birth, the risk assessment must include details of any birthing partner where relevant. This will have been discussed between the prisoner and staff at the earliest stage of the pregnancy to allow for appropriate security checks to be made. Checks must include the police and social services to ensure there is no unmanageable risks to security or safety of prison staff, the prisoner (and baby), hospital staff, or to the public. Hospital authorities must always be consulted before allowing a birthing partner into the delivery room.
- 4.5.6 Restraints must not be applied to pregnant prisoners, including travel to and from medical appointments, unless there are exceptional circumstances. Any use of restraints must be justified and based on an up to date comprehensive risk assessment. Applying restraints without justification, risks breaching the prisoners Article 3 rights.
- 4.5.7 The following considerations must be considered when setting out the to restrain a pregnant prisoner:
- The potential danger the prisoner poses to the public based on the type and seriousness of their offence. This must factor in the prisoner's usual conduct in the presence of staff. A serious offence on its own does not justify the application of restraints for pregnant prisoners.
  - The likelihood of the prisoner disrupting the escort due to violent and/or abusive behaviour on previous external escorts.
  - The likelihood of the prisoner disrupting the escort due to recent violent and/or abusive behaviour towards staff in the prison.
  - Sentence length and how long is left until release. This must factor in the prisoner's usual conduct in the presence of staff.

- The mental health, welfare and overall vulnerability of the prisoner taking into consideration any recent personal factors for example a relationship breakdown, complications during the pregnancy including suspected or confirmed miscarriage or a termination.
- Evidence of previous escape attempt such as slipping handcuffs during an external escort.
- Threat to the personal safety of escorting or medical staff
- Prisoner subject to deportation who has actively stated their intent to remain.
- Security of the destination, in some cases it may be appropriate to apply restraints during transport between the hospital (or other escort destination) and the prison, but these can be removed once in a more secure location, for example the hospital waiting room or consulting room. The risk assessment should set out where and when restraints will be reapplied on departure.
- Limited information about the prisoner for example new to custody or a recent recall awaiting full details about the reasons for the recall.

4.5.8 If it is assessed that not using restraints would present a significant risk, the first course of action must be to consider increasing the number of escorting staff to manage that risk safely before any consideration is given to applying restraints. The use of restraints should only be considered as a last resort, and only after all alternative measures; particularly enhanced staffing; have been fully explored. Any decision to apply restraints during all or part of a medical appointment must be clearly justified, documented in the risk assessment, and approved by the Deputy Governor or equivalent. All options considered, along with the rationale for the assessed risk level and the final decision, must be recorded in full on the escort risk assessment.

4.5.9 In exceptional circumstances where restraints are applied throughout a medical appointment, hospital authorities must be informed in advance of the escort taking place. Escort chains must be used wherever possible to enable women to have confidential interactions with healthcare professionals.

4.5.10 Prisoners escorted to hospital to give birth must be escorted by two female members of staff. Where, exceptionally, this is not operationally possible, at least one member of staff must be female. The exceptional circumstances must be clearly documented in the risk assessment. Every effort should be made to have two female members of staff on the escort as soon as operationally possible. Discretion can be exercised to accommodate the prisoner's preference on the sex of escorting staff, if this does not compromise safety or security. These preferences should be clearly documented in the risk assessment.

4.5.11 Staff escorting pregnant women for labour must be briefed on appropriate conduct including the requirements for privacy and dignity around medical examination and breastfeeding, in addition to requirements surrounding the use of restraints. As set out in 4.5.2 the decision around restraints should be for the entirety of the escort. There must be careful consideration to applying restraints following labour. Any escalation in risk leading to a decision to apply restraints must be documented and

discussed with the Duty Governor and carried out with full consideration given to the individual's physical and emotional wellbeing.

- 4.5.12 Where a prisoner admitted to hospital to give birth presents a high risk of escape, applying restraints should be a last resort and alternative steps to restraints must be taken to ensure the security of the escort including;
- Enhancing staffing levels
  - Requesting hospital security staff
- 4.5.13 Restraints must never be applied to a prisoner who is confirmed to be in active labour. It is important to recognise that not all women; regardless of previous childbirth experience will be able to confidently identify the onset of labour. Signs of labour can vary significantly and may be difficult to interpret, especially in a custodial setting. Under Article 45 of the Nursing and Midwifery Order 2001, only a trained and registered healthcare professional (such as a midwife or doctor) is legally qualified to determine whether a woman is in labour. If no midwife or obstetric staff are available on site, staff must act promptly and seek clinical advice by contacting the labour ward at the nearest hospital. This ensures that decisions to remove or apply restraints are informed by medical expertise while also applying common sense and sensitivity to the situation. Any decision to remove or apply restraints must be discussed with the Duty Governor.
- 4.5.14 Pregnant women who are accessing termination related appointments must be escorted by two female members of staff. Where, exceptionally, this is not operationally possible, at least one member of staff must be a female. Every effort should be made to have two female staff as soon as operationally possible. Discretion can be exercised to accommodate the prisoner's preferences on the sex of escorting staff, if this does not compromise safety or security. These preferences should be clearly documented in the risk assessment. All escort staff must be appropriately briefed and able to support women in these circumstances. Staff must be fully informed of the requirements around termination related appointments to ensure women are supported to comply with arrangements such as fasting and follow up appointments. As set out in 4.5.2 the decision around restraints should be for the entirety of the escort. Any increase in risk that leads to the application of restraints must be clearly documented and discussed with the Duty Governor and carried out with full consideration given to the individuals physical and emotional wellbeing.
- 4.5.15 Prisons are required to facilitate escort by female staff members with whom the prisoner feels comfortable wherever possible. Prisons should ensure that any religious or moral views held by escort staff do not hinder their ability to facilitate this sort of escort.
- 4.5.16 Where a pregnancy ends in circumstances such as miscarriage or neonatal death, it is essential that decisions are made with compassion, ensuring a careful balance between safety, decency, and security. Prisoners must be escorted by two female members of staff to a medical appointment related to a miscarriage. Where, exceptionally, this is not operationally possible, at least one member of staff must be female. Every effort should be made to have two female staff as soon as operationally possible. As outlined in section 4.5.2, decisions regarding the use of restraints should apply throughout the duration of the escort. Sensitivity must be

exercised when considering the use of restraints following a miscarriage. Any increase in risk that leads to the application of restraints must be clearly documented and discussed with the Duty Governor and carried out with full consideration given to the individual's physical and emotional wellbeing.

- 4.5.17 Any decision by escorting staff to apply restraints to a pregnant prisoner, and outside of the directions specified in the risk assessment must only be in exceptional circumstances, such as to prevent the risk of escape or assault on others. Decisions must be discussed (wherever practical) with the Duty Governor. In these circumstances, there must also be evidence of continual dynamic risk assessment during the escort whilst restraints remain in place.
- 4.5.18 The security arrangements for a mother and baby escort must be set out in the risk assessment and take account of the mother's need to look after the baby during the journey and the security required to keep the mother in safe custody. In most cases restraints will not be necessary, where restraints are to be used then this must be fully justified, (see para 4.5.7) and documented in the escort risk assessment. In these situations, a ratchet escort chain must be used as the form of restraint both in transit and at the destination, with discretion being observed throughout. The escort risk assessment must consider:
- The security arrangements for the escort, considering the mothers need to care for the baby.
  - Suitability of the vehicle to be used, allowing mother, baby and one of the escorting staff members to sit together.
  - The requirement for a certified baby/child seat to be used and fitted correctly.
  - The need for regular comfort breaks, and to allow feeding of the baby, utilising local prisons/police stations.
  - Use of a vehicle with standard seatbelts. Lap only belts must never be used by pregnant prisoners as they can cause grave injuries to unborn children in the event of a sudden stop or deceleration.

#### 4.6 **Additional Criteria for Funeral and Dying Relative Escorts**

- 4.6.1 Prisoners may be given Release on Temporary Licence (ROTL) to attend a funeral or to visit a dying relative. If they are not suitable for ROTL then they must be escorted if authorised to attend. Please see the ROTL Policy Framework for details.
- 4.6.2 Prisoners of all security categories can be considered for a funeral escort or visit to see a dying relative. The Governor must be satisfied that the relationship meets the requirements of a 'close relative' as defined in Chapter 5.14 Providing Visits and Services to Visitors PSI 16/2011.
- 4.6.3 All applications must be considered on an individual basis and as a matter of urgency to ensure sufficient time for arrangements to be made. Care must be taken as part of the decision-making process to balance security considerations with decency. Authorisation to attend should only be refused on security grounds where it would pose risks to other attendees, risks to the escorting staff, or where

intelligence suggests a risk of escape. These need to be clearly evidenced on the escort risk assessment.

- 4.6.4 Contact with victims must be considered as part of the risk assessment process in addition to the wishes or concerns of other family member.
- 4.6.5 Distance to the funeral and associated costs can be taken into consideration but on their own and in the absence of any security objections, are not grounds for refusal. Options such as temporary inter prison transfer/overnight lodging should be considered in these circumstances if time allows.
- 4.6.6 The security risks of funeral locations will often be unknown so the escort risk assessment must include input from the police/PIO in addition to setting out the escort strength and appropriate restraints. Where feasible, it may be necessary for a pre-visit of the location to assess the area.
- 4.6.7 The escort risk assessment must provide clear instruction to escorting staff regarding any removal of restraints during the escort. This may be considered where a prisoner's religion requires that they prepare the body of the deceased person for burial/cremation. When this is requested, the risk assessment must be authorised by the most senior operational manager present in the prison at the time the escort risk assessment is completed. The risk assessment will need to fully consider all the facts, including any religious sensitivities around the gender of the staff for the escort. The local faith/chaplaincy team must be consulted, where available, to gain a full understanding of any religious sensitivities.
- 4.6.8 Escorting staff should be individually selected, and their own well-being checked prior to allocating them these duties and pre-escort, once allocated, they must receive a full briefing to include:
- Information about the layout of the venue and communication arrangements with the prison.
  - Elements of the funeral authorised to attend (service, burial/cremation, after funeral reception).
  - Security information about the prisoner.
  - Clear instructions about the arrangements for handcuffing/restraints.
  - Correct protocol in the event of an incident, such as fights, being placed under duress to remove restraints etc.
  - Information about appropriate dress – prisoner and staff.
  - Any special religious considerations (Faith and pastoral care for prisoners: PSI 05/2016).
- 4.7 **Additional Criteria for Marriage/Civil Partnership Escorts (to be read in conjunction with PSI 14/2016)**
- 4.7.1 Prisoners are permitted to marry or register a civil partnership outside of the prison if on Release on Temporary Licence – Consult Release on Temporary Licence Policy Framework.
- 4.7.2 Prisoners are only permitted to marry under escort in exceptional circumstances, such as when terminally ill and in hospital (see PSI 14/2016 Handling Prisoner

Applications to Marry or Form a Civil Partnership). Where this is to be permitted, all relevant requirements within this Policy Framework must be followed.

4.7.3 The security risks of the location must be assessed which may require input from the police/PIO in addition to setting out the escort strength and appropriate restraints. Where feasible, it may be necessary for a pre-visit of the location to assess the area.

4.7.4 Photographs may be taken in compliance with clear permissions set out in the escort risk assessment.

#### 4.8 **Equipment and Documentation for Escorts and Bedwatches**

4.8.1 External escort bags, see supporting tool ST11 must include:

- Standard escort handcuffs (D Cuff) (including a spare set, in case of breakage)
- Three sizes of inserts each set of standard escort handcuffs (D Cuff)
- Standard escort cable (D Cuff) (to be used as the default restraint in both the adult and YCS male estate only)
- Ratchet handcuffs
- Rigid Bar handcuffs (prison dependent)
- Ratchet escort chain (must be included as the live escort risk assessment may change on escorts, i.e., medical, decency and a reduction in risk)
- Plastic handcuffs and safety scissors where one-use plastic handcuffs are used
- Handcuff keys (to be placed immediately on key chain)
- Property seals and bags.
- Fully charged mobile telephone and charger.
- Bedwatch pack and Occurrence Log (should a hospital attendance turn into a bedwatch)
- First Aid kit.
- Sanitary towels for the women's estate.
- Quantity of plastic cutlery (should any hospital attendance turn into a bedwatch) - note any item, including plastic cutlery, capable of prising open a standard escort cable (D Cuff) or ratchet escort chain must be accounted for and not left in the possession of the prisoner.

4.8.2 Documentation (to be prepared by relevant department in advance where possible), must include:

- A completed escort risk assessment form.
- Person Escort Record (PER) and continuation sheets.
- Digital-PER (D-PER) for PECS Escorts.
- Gate pass.
- Escape pack for all Escape-List (E-List) prisoners. Best practice is for all prisoners to have an Escape pack however as a minimum, this should be included for prisoners where security intelligence indicates it is appropriate.
- Bedwatch Occurrence Log for any hospital escort (see Annex E – Bedwatch Pack & Occurrence Log), where applicable.

- Hospital Escort Risk Assessment (see Annexes A3M & A3W – Hospital Escort Risk Assessment) where applicable.
- Prisoner’s medical record where necessary, (the medical record can often be transferred electronically between prisons, this should be confirmed in advance) for disclosure to medical professionals only.
- A completed application for handcuffs to be worn in court (if applicable).
- A warrant or court summons (if applicable).
- Prisoner’s core record (if applicable – transfer only).
- A security information pack to include:
  - Emergency contact numbers.
  - Hospital risk assessments (Annex F - Hospital Assessment example).
- A blank (or open) Assessment Care in Custody Teamwork (ACCT) document.
- Birthing plan and relevant paperwork for women attending hospital to give birth.

4.8.3 A bedwatch bag should be taken on every bedwatch or taken to the hospital upon confirmation of a bedwatch. It is recommended that bedwatch bags are always ready in the prison for cases when an escort unexpectedly turns into a bedwatch. The bedwatch bag must always contain:

- Emergency contact numbers (to include the local police, discharging prison and hospital security) – see Annex E Bedwatch Pack & Occurrence Log.
- Instructions for changing over restraints – See supporting tools ST4
- The Bedwatch Occurrence Log, and a supply of continuation sheets – see Annex E Bedwatch Pack & Occurrence Log.
- The PER.
- Relevant information about the hospital (physical security, standing arrangements etc, hospital risk assessment).
- Quantity of plastic cutlery - note any item, including plastic cutlery, capable of prising open a standard escort cable (D Cuff) or ratchet escort chain must be accounted for and not left in the possession of the prisoner (the prisoner must not be given access to metal cutlery provided by the hospital).
- Night clothes (PJs/slippers).
- Secure mobile PIN phone.
- Sanitary items and items required for a women attending hospital to give birth (women’s estate).

4.8.4 Whilst on external escort including a bedwatch, staff are permitted to carry BWVC, batons and RBH. The use and rationale for the use of these items during an escort or bedwatch must be documented on the prison’s LSS. This is in line with the Body Worn Video Cameras (BWVC) Policy Framework and The Use of Rigid Bar

Handcuffs (RBH) in Adult Public Sector Prison Establishments Policy Framework (Restricted. For access contact: [orru.enquiries@justice.gov.uk](mailto:orru.enquiries@justice.gov.uk)).

4.8.5 On return to the prison, all completed documentation must be retained and stored in line with [Records information management policy: PSI 04/2018, PI 02/2018](#).

#### 4.9 Escort Vehicles

4.9.1 Public transport must never be used for external escorts.

4.9.2 Prisons and all contracted escort companies must ensure that vehicles used for externally escorting prisoners are secure, risk assessed, fit for use and searched prior to use, see Searching Policy Framework.

4.9.3 Seating arrangements must be considered to ensure that the prisoner(s) can be seated between staff. This is particularly important prior to the use of a hired vehicle or taxi.

4.9.4 There are several different types of vehicles available across the service which can be used for external escorts. The escort risk assessment should identify the type of vehicle to be used, coordinating where appropriate with the escort contractors to consider:

- The prisoner's security category (for Cat A and E-List heightened refer to Management and Security of Category A Prisoners - External Movements: (Restricted), contact [LTHSPG.Admin@justice.gov.uk](mailto:LTHSPG.Admin@justice.gov.uk)).
- Any disabilities.
- Prisoner's height and/or weight.
- Medical considerations.
- E-list, young offender, mother and baby, violent and/or refractory prisoner.

4.9.5 Prisons may set up local contracts for the provision of taxis and other vehicles. When prisons use taxi firms, they must adhere to the Police Act 1997 Criminal Records regulation which mandates that taxi and private hire vehicle drivers must have an Enhanced DBS check, and that only drivers with a completed enhanced DBS will be sent to the prison.

4.9.6 Where a taxi firm uses a large fleet of drivers, prisons should keep an up-to-date list of approved drivers in the gate for staff to check. Good relationships with the

relevant taxi provider(s) will assist with up-to-date lists and the provision of appropriate vehicles.

- 4.9.7 Prisons must hold a list of approved, directly employed staff drivers, for different classes of vehicle, taking into consideration any changes to driving laws and licence conditions.
- 4.9.8 Where a prison does not have a suitable vehicle of its own and a taxi is deemed unsuitable for the escort then arrangements must be made to borrow an appropriate vehicle from a nearby prison.
- 4.9.9 If it is considered that there is a significant risk of a prisoner disrupting or assaulting staff during an escort, consideration must be given to requesting a cellular vehicle to transport the prisoner.
- 4.9.10 Where prison transport is used, staff must ensure that the vehicle contains enough fuel to reach the destination without stopping. Where an electric vehicle is used, the location of appropriate prison based charging points will need to be considered as part of the journey planning.

#### 4.10 **Escort Vehicle Seatbelts**

- 4.10.1 All staff and prisoners must wear seatbelts unless a certificate of exemption has been issued by a registered medical practitioner.
- 4.10.2 If a certificate of exemption has been issued, the use of a cellular vehicle must be considered. This is to prevent injury caused by any collision to both prisoners and staff.
- 4.10.3 Lap only belts must not be used by pregnant prisoners as they can cause grave injuries to unborn children in the event of a sudden stop or deceleration. An alternative vehicle should be sourced with standard seatbelts.
- 4.10.4 All vehicles (especially taxis) will have different fitted seatbelt types, and this must be taken into consideration when completing escort risk assessments. A standard 3-point belt will not be able to be applied correctly to a double handcuffed prisoner. In cases where the escort risk assessment requires the prisoner to be double handcuffed, the following must be considered:
- Requesting an alternative vehicle with a lap belt via the relevant provider (not applicable to pregnant prisoners).
  - Reviewing the risk assessment to consider reducing the level of restraint.
  - Reviewing the risk assessment to consider reducing the level of restraint and mitigating the risk by increasing the escorting staff.
  - Application of single handcuffs with a staff member sat either side of the prisoner in transit with the requirement to apply double handcuffs before exiting the vehicle at the destination.
  - Borrowing an appropriate vehicle from a nearby prison.

4.10.5 The requirement to consider risk to the life and/or personal safety of the prisoner resulting from them not wearing a seatbelt must outweigh the requirement to double handcuff.

#### 4.11 Requirements Prior to Dispatching the External Escort

4.11.1 Prior to undertaking the external escort, staff must have a full understanding of the risks. To ensure this, escort staff must receive a verbal brief from either the security department and/or the dispatching member of staff. The verbal brief must be documented on the PER or the Risk Assessment and include the following information:

- any risks outlined in the escort risk assessment in relation to the prisoner, in particular this must include details of any escape risk.
- the physical layout of the destination and any related security risks.
- The handcuffing requirements and what to do in an emergency. see [Application of Plastic Restraints](#) and [Changeover of Restraints](#)
- How, and when to contact the prison.
- The requirement to check the security of the restraints and the frequency.
- What to document on the PER form during the escort.
- Any ACCT observations and support required.
- The importance of being vigilant throughout the escort.
- Seating arrangements in the vehicle.
- What to do in case of escape, suspected escape or attempted escape including the procedures to follow if an immediate response is needed to prevent an escape (summon help and/or dial 999 requesting immediate police attendance). See Annex G Escape from Escorts Guidance.
- The authority of escorting staff to end an escort, the circumstances in which they can do this, and the procedure to follow, see section 4.13.

4.11.2 Escorting staff must ensure that all escort equipment and documentation is in place and fully completed (see section 4.8) prior to leaving the prison.

4.11.3 Consideration should be given to enabling the prisoner to have access to washing facilities, in a timely manner, in advance of any hospital appointment.

4.11.4 Prior to leaving, escorting staff must be fully informed and carry out all necessary pre-escort checks, this includes:

1. Understanding the arrangements set out in the escort risk assessment in respect of handcuffing requirements throughout the escort.
2. Understanding the contingency arrangements to take in the event of a security breach, escape attempt or death of the prisoner.
3. Taking note and understanding any triggers and support actions/observations required if the prisoner is on an ACCT document.
4. Checking the prisoners' property (where applicable) against the inventory on the PER form.
5. Searching of the escort vehicle in line with the LSS and [Searching Policy Framework](#) ensuring that the driver is aware of the route to the destination and has enough fuel for the journey (unless the length of the journey is such that refuelling is required).

6. Ensuring that all prisoners' property and/or prison records (including security records) are transported in a locked compartment, boot space, or spare cell to which the prisoners do not have access. Prisoners must never load their own property/records on to a vehicle.
7. Ensuring that all prisoners are searched prior to leaving the prison in accordance with the LSS and Searching Policy Framework. A trauma informed approach should be taken when searching prisoners.
8. Ensuring that prisoners are placed in a sterile room following the search to prevent any opportunity to receive/conceal illicit items.
9. Ensuring an accurate description of the clothing worn by the prisoner is recorded prior to dispatch. This should be recorded on the escort risk assessment, listing item, colour and make and brand of item. Clothing worn by a prisoner on escort should balance both security and decency considerations and ensure alignment to Prison Rules 40 (1) - A person being taken to or from a prison in custody shall be exposed as little as possible to public observation, and proper care shall be taken to protect from curiosity and insult.
10. Briefing the prisoner(s) on the purpose of the escort and where they must sit for the journey to ensure they are always visible to escorting staff. Prisoners must not be allowed to select their own seats.
11. Ensuring that the staff are seated to protect the exits and deter escape attempts. In a normal car, the prisoner must be sat in the middle of the back seat with a member of staff on either side. For mothers and babies, this may need alternative options outlining in the risk assessment as a mother and baby may travel together.

4.11.5 Prior to the staff and prisoner leaving, a dispatching member of staff (minimum Band 4 Supervising Officer or above must check:

1. Staff have searched the prisoner in line with the LSS and Searching Policy Framework.
2. Restraints are applied correctly, securely checked and at the level outlined in the escort risk assessment.
3. Escort strength is at the level outlined in the risk assessment and follows the requirements set out in this Policy Framework (minimum 2 members of staff and biological sex appropriate).
4. The prisoner going out on external escort is the correct prisoner. This is completed with the use of a five-point ID check with at least one of the five points being a photo.
5. The escorting staff have been briefed, see para 4.11.1.
6. The PER and escort risk assessment and any other appropriate documentation has been completed for each prisoner on the escort (for emergency escort documentation, see Annexes A2M & A2W).
7. All necessary equipment and documentation are in place to take on the escort (see section 4.8).

#### 4.12 Requirements During an External Escort or Bedwatch

- 4.12.1 The risk assessment must determine whether restraints are to be applied. The decision to apply restraints should be kept under continuous review.
- 4.12.2 If authorised, handcuffs must be correctly applied throughout any escort or bedwatch and only removed as detailed within the escort risk assessment or through appropriate authority set out in this Policy Framework, see section 4.2.
- 4.12.3 At all times when restraints are in use, they must be attached to both the prisoner and the member of staff.
- 4.12.4 Restraint handcuff keys must not routinely be in the possession of the staff member cuffed to the prisoner. This is to prevent the risk of escape if the prisoner gained control of the keys.
- 4.12.5 Situations where the restraint handcuff keys can be held by the staff member handcuffed to the prisoner will include when the member of staff is alone with the prisoner to allow for toilet breaks or contact with the prison. Leaving the keys with the handcuffed member of staff allows for immediate removal of handcuffs if a medical emergency should arise.
- 4.12.6 Escort staff must regularly (and at least hourly) physically check that the prisoner's restraints are properly applied, remain intact and are not tampered with and record these details on the PER or Bedwatch Occurrence Log.
- 4.12.7 Staff must check security arrangements at the destination and report any concerns to the prison. For any unplanned medical escort or any location where a hospital assessment has not been provided, staff must carry out an assessment of any treatment/waiting rooms, identifying doors, windows, false ceilings and any other risk areas on arrival. This enables them to provide the duty governor (via telephone) with a full brief, so that informed decisions can be made on any changes to handcuffing procedures / staffing prior to the examination/procedure taking place.
- 4.12.8 When additional movement is required for the purpose of an examination or similar, escorting staff must apply the standard escort cable (D Cuff) or ratchet escort chain to the prisoner and staff member first before removing the handcuffs from the prisoner. The prisoner must never be left unrestrained during this process. See supporting tools ST4, ST5, ST6 and ST8.
- 4.12.9 When application of the standard escort cable (D Cuff) or ratchet escort chain is required for a prisoner to use the toilet, the following checks/actions must be completed by escorting staff:
- Searching the toilet area, including bins and toilet cisterns etc.
  - Looking for any windows/false ceilings in the toilet area.
  - Searching for any illicit items or items that may assist an attempt at escape.
  - Ensuring the chain is positioned correctly during the toilet use and prevents the prisoner from locking the toilet door (i.e., not under or over the top of the door).
  - Check of the restraints prior to, and after toilet use. This must be documented on the PER/bedwatch log.

- 4.12.10 Escort staff must remain professional, focused and vigilant when monitoring the prisoner's behaviour, interactions and physical surroundings. Staff should look for warning signs of agitation, challenging behaviour and distraction tactics, which may be indicators that the prisoner is attempting to escape or conceal illicit items.
- 4.12.11 Staff must remain alert during the escort to any equipment the prisoner could use to aid escape.
- 4.12.12 Escort staff must maintain a consistent method of communication with the prison, reporting any significant events and/or clinical condition of the prisoner that may impact the security measures (restraints and staffing level) of the escort. Restraints should only continue to be applied to a prisoner in hospital where necessary and proportionate. Circumstance where the removal of restraints may be justified include:
- A noticeable change by staff in the medical condition of the prisoner that require restraints being removed.
  - Advice from clinical staff regarding the medical condition of the prisoner suggesting it has deteriorated or is likely to deteriorate further such that the security risk has diminished, and considerations of dignity and humanity suggest the removal of restraints.
  - Where clinical staff advise that the restraints are impeding medical treatment,
- 4.12.13 The decision to remove restraints by a prison manager during a medical escort must be fully informed and documented on the PER/Bedwatch Occurrence Log with the name of the person authorising and documented again when (or if) restraints are reapplied. A fully informed decision takes into consideration the following:
- Dynamic risk assessment of the room undertaken by escorting staff to look for exit routes, including doors, windows, false ceilings or any other risk areas.
  - Security intelligence and any noted escape related information.
  - Consideration around providing additional escorting staff to assist with maintaining security.
  - Medical advice on clinical presentation from hospital staff.
  - Advice from local healthcare staff with knowledge of the prisoner.
- 4.12.14 The frequency of escort staff reporting-in should be agreed locally and set out in the LSS. Every four hours is the recommended time for a bedwatch.
- 4.12.15 During any escort, if a life-threatening emergency occurs that requires the application of defibrillation paddles, escorting staff must comply immediately with the medical professional's request that restraints are removed and consult with the duty governor as soon as is practical. Prisons should ensure that there are appropriate support mechanisms in place for staff who observe this process.
- 4.12.16 In any non-emergency situation, if clinical staff advise that the restraints are impeding medical treatment, a decision to remove restraints must only be taken by the Duty Governor or equivalent. In a situation where a quick response is required and the Duty Governor or equivalent cannot be contacted; the decision can be made by a competent manager. In this instance a competent manager means

someone who has the training, experience, and knowledge necessary to make the decision in line with this Policy Framework.

- 4.12.17 Escort staff must ensure that when restraints are not applied (as per directions in the risk assessment or in a life-threatening emergency), staff are positioned between the prisoner and any exit(s) and as close to the prisoner as is practical considering the prisoner's dignity and humanity. The prisoner should always be within sight or sound of at least one member of prison staff, unless otherwise directed by the escort risk assessment.
- 4.12.18 Where restraints have been removed either on the instruction of a healthcare professional in a life-threatening situation or as directed by a prison manager following a change in circumstances, the person's name and position must be recorded. This should be on the PER or Bedwatch Occurrence Log alongside the name and time authorisation was given (even if retrospective due to an emergency).
- 4.12.19 In situations where the risk assessment directs that no restraints are required but it becomes necessary for security reasons to apply restraints during the escort process, the staff member in charge of the escort must inform the Duty Governor/Orderly Officer at the earliest opportunity and submit an intelligence report on return to the prison outlining why it was necessary to apply restraints.
- 4.12.20 If staff believe an escort needs to be terminated early due to safety or security concerns, they must ensure that the prisoner is in a secure area and contact the sending prison to seek advice from the Duty Governor. In a situation where staff are concerned about the risk of escape and/or volatility of the prisoner, they should return to the prison without delay and/or seek police assistance.
- 4.12.21 If a safety or security incident arises, common law provides circumstances where reasonable force may be used. Section 3 of the Criminal Law Act 1967 permits any person to use reasonable force to prevent crime or arrest/assist in the arrest of offenders, those suspected to be offenders, and those unlawfully at large from prison. Any incident must be fully recorded on the PER/bedwatch log and all actions and paperwork completed in line with [Use of Force Policy Framework](#). Prisoners must be assessed by a healthcare professional as soon as is practical. This may be in the hospital environment or on return to the prison.
- 4.12.22 If a security incident occurs during an external escort, staff may undertake a search of the prisoner under Section 89 of the [Criminal Justice Act 1991](#) and [The Prisoner Escorts Rules 1993](#). These permit searching 'when it appears necessary to do so in

the interests of security, good order or discipline', 'in as seemly a manner as is consistent with discovering anything concealed'

4.12.23 Any search should take place in private wherever possible as the Prison Rules state;

- 12(2) A prisoner shall be searched in as seemly a manner as is consistent with discovering anything concealed.
- 12(3) No prisoner shall be stripped and searched in the sight of another prisoner, or in the sight of a person of the opposite sex.

A trauma informed approach should be taken when searching prisoners.

4.12.24 If an illicit item is discovered during the search, Section 83(2) of the [Criminal Justice Act 1991](#) is the legal authority that sets out the authority for the prisoner to be placed on report (see [Prisoner Discipline Procedures \(Adjudications\) Policy Framework](#)). Any item seized as part of the search must be handled in line with the procedures set out in the [Management and Handling of Evidence Policy Framework](#).

4.12.25 A comprehensive log of events must be maintained in the Person Escort Record (PER) or Bedwatch Occurrence Log for the duration of the escort or bedwatch. This should include any location changes, significant events and/or behaviour of the prisoner. These records can be used to provide an effective handover between staff, influence future escort risk assessments and aid with any future potential litigation claims.

4.12.26 A hospital escort can become a bedwatch if the prisoner is admitted, i.e., they stay at the hospital rather than returning to the prison. As soon as this decision is made, escorting staff must:

- Contact and update the prison to initiate and complete the A4M / A4W - Bedwatch Risk Assessment.
- Request a Bedwatch Pack (see Annex E – Bedwatch Pack & Occurrence Log) to be brought to the hospital (if they do not already have one).
- Move to a standard escort cable (D Cuff) or ratchet escort chain as advised by the prison and reflected in the updated escort risk assessment, see supporting tools ST4, ST5, ST6 and ST8.

4.12.27 For bedwatches, the record of events prior to the bedwatch being confirmed is recorded on the PER. Once a bedwatch is confirmed the Bedwatch Occurrence Log should be used. PER continuation sheets can be used whilst waiting on a Bedwatch Occurrence Log to be provided. See ST13 Bedwatch Log Guidance

4.12.28 During a bedwatch, staff must maintain a comprehensive record of all events in the bedwatch log. Entries should be recorded at least hourly, provide informative updates, be timed and signed with the staff name printed. This ensures key events and security issues are noted for handovers between staff and helps contribute to the ongoing risk assessment. Information that must be recorded in the bedwatch log includes:

- Names of staff on duty and time of handovers.
- Details of visitors to the prisoner.

- Details of the prisoner's behaviour (mood, eating habits, requests).
- Details of the removal and/or re-application of restraints, including the time the restraints were removed/re-applied and the reason for this.
- Checks that restraints are applied properly and have not been tampered with - at least once every 60 minutes.
- Visits by prison management.
- The times that staff contact and provide updates to the prison.
- Meals/medication/treatment received.
- Any other information deemed to be significant in support of the safety and security of the bedwatch.

4.12.29 During a bedwatch, staff must ensure that the prisoner wears night-clothes and all the prisoner's day clothes, and footwear are returned to the prison within 12 hours of a confirmed bedwatch.

4.12.30 During a bedwatch, escort staff must exercise close control and observation of any permitted social visitors to a prisoner, ensuring they do not have the opportunity to receive items during the visit, for further information on visits during a bedwatch, see section 4.15.

4.12.31 When handing over to other staff (either during an escort or bedwatch), the prison must ensure in advance that the escorting staff are given the name(s) and home prison(s) of the relieving staff. Escorting staff must verify the identification of the relieving staff by checking a photographic HMPPS ID and recording this. Where relieving staff cannot provide a photographic HMPPS ID card, escorting staff must contact the Duty Governor immediately for advice. The handover of the escort or bedwatch must only process once the relieving staff's identity has been verified. Where relevant, staff must also check that the Bedwatch Pack is up to date and includes all equipment and handover information.

4.12.32 Spare handcuffs must be used to facilitate the changeover of staff when the standard escort cable (D Cuff) or ratchet escort chain is in use for a bedwatch. The prisoner must never be left unrestrained during this process.

4.12.33 In the unfortunate event of the prisoner dying when on escort or bedwatch, escort staff must remove any restraints immediately. The prison must be informed without delay, and staff should remain at the hospital until a doctor has issued a confirmation of death letter/certificate. Prisons must ensure appropriate support mechanisms are in place for staff in these instances.

4.12.34 In situations where the bedwatch is part of end-of-life care, a prisoner may express a desire to die alone and request that staff leave the room. In such cases, staff must promptly inform the prison, providing detailed information about the security of the prisoner's location, advice from healthcare staff regarding timeframes, and the current condition of the prisoner. It is crucial that decency and compassion guide

any decisions made in these circumstances. Prisons must also ensure that appropriate support is available for staff present during end-of-life care

- 4.12.35 On return to the prison from a bedwatch, the PER must be used at the point of discharge to record the journey back to the prison. Any hospital discharge paperwork provided should be handed over to healthcare.
- 4.12.36 During any hospital escort or bedwatch, staff may become aware of medical information about the prisoner. This must be treated in confidence and should not routinely be recorded on the PER/Bedwatch Occurrence Log. Sometimes this requires a judgement call to be made by escort staff, as for example if a prisoner's treatment/condition results in mood swings or impacts on the mobility of the prisoner, it would be advisable to document this as it may affect the security and restraints application of the escort/bedwatch. In these instances, there would be no need to detail the specific condition, only the impact that the condition or treatment has on the prisoner.
- 4.12.37 Staff must submit an intelligence report on return to the prison (or at the earliest opportunity) for any suspected/ potential escort breaches or concerns about a prisoner's behaviour. In cases of immediate concern, staff should inform the Orderly Officer to submit an intelligence report to prevent any delay in intelligence gathering.
- 4.12.38 Staff must update a prisoner's case notes following return from escort/bedwatch providing a summary of their behaviour and attitude during the escort. This should be completed within an appropriate timeframe.

#### 4.13 Terminating Escorts

- 4.13.1 There are some scenarios where escorts need to be terminated early, and the prisoner returned to the sending prison. Such circumstances may include (but not limited to):
- An attempted escape.
  - Violent behaviour that is unmanageable in the environment and poses a risk to the public.
  - Security compromise.
  - External threats.

4.13.2 Ending an escort early must be a last resort, and where there is no other way to safely and securely manage the situation.

#### 4.14 Phone Calls During a Bedwatch

4.14.1 Many hospitals now provide technology with access to telephones and internet by the bedside. Access to such technology provides several risks and prisoners must not be given access to the internet under any circumstances.

4.14.2 Phone calls need to be approved before being made. Approval will usually be completed by a Band 5 or above at the prison in collaboration with the Offender Management department for any public protection concerns.

4.14.3 Where available, a secure mobile pin phone must always be used. If a secure mobile pin phone is not available, escorting staff must dial the number. Calls must only be approved in line with the prisoner's current approved numbers on their prisoner PIN phone account. The Communications Compact applies to all phone calls whilst on bedwatch.

4.14.4 Where a secure mobile pin phone is in use, staff must ensure that the phone is checked for signs of tampering (removal of SIM) prior to any handover. This check must be logged on the PER. At the end of the bedwatch, staff must also check the mobile phone to ensure that contact details have not been saved to the phone.

4.14.5 Approved numbers from the prison's PIN phone account can be recorded on the escort risk assessment when a bedwatch is established. If more than 2 numbers are approved, good practice would be to print out the prisoner's approved numbers from the BT PIN account and attach them to the escort risk assessment.

4.14.6 In terms of legally privileged/confidential calls, hospital wards are not private spaces and there is therefore a lesser expectation of privacy should such a call need to be made. Staff must try to minimise intrusion (for instance, staff may dial and confirm the legal/confidential number is bona fide, and then ensure they have sight if not sound of the prisoner during the call), but it should be accepted that a given level of intrusion will be necessary given the bedwatch requirements. See Authorised Communications Controls and Interception Policy Framework for more information on interception of confidential calls.

#### 4.15 Visits During a Bedwatch

4.15.1 The circumstances under which visits take place must seek to replicate those of the prison environment. They must be agreed with hospital management, taking place where possible at normal hospital visiting times. Any restrictions, changes and/or booking processes must be clearly shared with visitors.

4.15.2 Visits to prisoners at hospital must be approved on an individual basis and prisons must not have a set timescale in place prior to allowing visits. Hospital visits have many benefits and can aid a prisoner's recovery where appropriate.

4.15.3 It is expected visitors book visits in advance via the prison unless there are exceptional circumstances. This will generally be done via the Duty Governor or Orderly Officer who will inform the bedwatch staff providing details of who will visit

and when. Visits can also be booked via the standard visits booking procedures, depending on local arrangements.

- 4.15.4 There may be occasions when visitors arrive at the hospital unannounced. Hospital visits (announced or unannounced) may be an emotionally charged situation and staff should take this into consideration when discussing the correct process that visitors need to undertake to book a visit. At all times, staff must maintain the upmost respect and decency when dealing with this difficult situation.
- 4.15.5 Staff must provide any unannounced visitors with all the information required to book a visit correctly whilst also updating the prison regarding the visitors unannounced arrival. Prisons may permit the visit to go ahead if identification can be confirmed. This will be assessed on an individual basis dependant on various factors including the prisoner's health and any identified security risks.
- 4.15.6 Approved visitors must produce appropriate identification to staff in line with the Management of Security at Visits Policy Framework.
- 4.15.7 Visitors remain under the same restrictions as when visiting the prison. Items on the prison prohibited items list must be handed to prison staff for secure keeping prior to the visit commencing. Visitors must be informed of this requirement when booking the visit to prevent animosity between staff and visitors at the hospital. Searching requirements as set out in the Searching Policy Framework apply to visitors in these circumstances.
- 4.15.8 Visitors must not hand anything to the prisoner during the visit. This includes food, drink, flowers, and clothing. No items are permitted to be passed between the visitor/s and prisoner.
- 4.15.9 There may be times where non-compliance of visitors compromises security. Staff must be clear on what actions to take in these circumstances. Initially this will include politely asking the visitor to leave; however, it may result in the use of hospital security and/or police if deemed necessary. Any non-compliance of this

sought must be reinforced by the submission of an intelligence report on return to the prison.

#### **4.16 Staff use of Personal Electronic Devices (PEDs) During a Bedwatch**

4.16.1 Vigilant supervision from staff is a crucial to preventing escapes during escorts and bedwatches. Restrictions around PEDs must be followed and must be assured through management checks.

4.16.2 External Escorts – no personal devices are to be taken on external escorts (except for bedwatches). Personal items must only be those which are permitted inside the prison.

4.16.3 Day/night bedwatch – escorting staff are permitted the following items whilst on a bedwatch: books/ magazines, Kindle (Wi-Fi to be switched off) and puzzle games (e.g. Sudoku books etc).

4.16.4 The following are not permitted during an external escort or bedwatch under any circumstances:

- Internet access via PEDs such as kindles. and smart watches (includes live streaming of media). Smart watches are prohibited in prison unless a central authorisation has been granted – see Managing Conveyance of Unauthorised and Illicit Items Policy Framework for more information.
- Use of tablets and Laptops.
- Use of social media (Facebook, WhatsApp, Snapchat etc) on any device.
- Use of cameras or recording capability on any device.
- Headphones.
- Personal mobile phones (except in exceptional circumstances, see 4.16.5.)

4.16.5 If a Governor deems that there are exceptional circumstances which warrant a member of staff taking their personal mobile phone on a bedwatch, this may be granted for that individual only and should be documented in the bedwatch log with the name of the authorising Governor.

#### **4.17 Bedwatch Management Checks**

4.17.1 Bedwatch management checks must be conducted to ensure the escort's security remains appropriate. These checks should also allow for feedback to the prison regarding any developments related to the escort. Additionally, managers conducting these checks must remember to assess the welfare of the escorting staff.

4.17.2 Bedwatch/escort staffing levels must consider the need for staff breaks (toilet/food) and therefore staffing levels may need to be increased to allow for this. These instances should be taken into consideration as part of the management check as well as the initial escort risk assessment.

4.17.3 The initial bedwatch management check must be completed within 24 hours of the bedwatch being confirmed. This check should be conducted in person by a staff member at Band 7 or above, as it provides an opportunity to thoroughly review the risk assessment and confirm that the use of restraints is appropriate. It is

acknowledged that local procedures may vary depending on risk levels and staffing availability outside of normal working hours. However, in all cases, the minimum grade for conducting any bedwatch management check is Band 5. If, due to operational constraints, the initial check is carried out by a Band 5 staff member, this must be done in consultation with the prison's Duty Governor. This ensures that the risk assessment and use of restraints are reviewed in full, considering the specific circumstances of the prisoner at that time.

- 4.17.4 Following the initial management check, it is expected that further checks are completed at least every 72 hours in person. However, the required frequency may vary depending on the prisoner's condition, wellbeing, and assessed risk. As such, local procedures may allow for adjustments. The minimum policy requirement in all cases is one check per week. Any deviation from the 72-hour standard must be clearly documented in local records, with justification based on individual circumstances.
- 4.17.5 In all but exceptional circumstances, management checks should be in person. Where an operational incident prevents this from occurring, a check can be completed over the phone followed by an in person check as soon as possible.
- 4.17.6 Each bedwatch is unique and should consider the specific factors related to the prisoner and the bedwatch itself. This includes ongoing staff support when determining how often management checks should be conducted.
- 4.17.7 Management checks must take place following any significant change in circumstances of the bedwatch to consider changes in the prisoners' medical conditions and whether restraints continue to be appropriate. examples of significant changes may include:
- Reports of tampering with equipment (restraints).
  - Refractory behaviour.
  - Change in hospital ward.
  - Sudden deterioration or improvement in health requiring a review of restraints.
- 4.17.8 When needed, managers may need to liaise with hospital staff to ensure that any potential security issues or general concerns are identified and managed.
- 4.17.9 Management checks must wherever appropriate take place at varied times to include evenings and nights. The visit must be documented within the Bedwatch Occurrence Log along with any action taken. Each entry must be legible, informative, dated and signed with the time recorded.
- 4.17.10 When required, support can be requested from other prisons to undertake the bedwatch management checks. This is particularly relevant when the prisoner is not at a hospital close to the home prison and another prison is located closer.
- 4.18 **Additional Escort Criteria for Court Attendance** (to be read in conjunction with [Security of prisoners at court protocol](#))
- 4.18.1 For most prisoners produced at court, HMPPS standard escort security measures will be enough to ensure the safety and security of the proceedings. In a small

minority of cases however, the risks presented by an individual prisoner will be so great that heightened security measures must be considered.

- 4.18.2 Exceptionally, there are a very small number of prisoners who are not Category A, E-List or Restricted Status (RS), but may still be identified as presenting a high risk of significant harm prejudicial to the safety of the escort. High risk prisoners identified to the court as presenting a significant risk of escape, violence or danger will have priority for the use of Prison Video Link/Video Conference Centres or to have their case allocated to a secure court building/ court room with a secure dock.
- 4.18.3 The Court List Officer must be advised by the prison of those prisoners who have been identified as Cat A, E-List, Restricted Status or as presenting significant risk of harm, see Annex C – Court Risk Identification Email example. To aid this, reception staff should check the PER when a prisoner is returned or received into custody for any handcuff application made whilst the prisoner was at court and note the reasons why. See the Person Escort Record Policy Framework for further information.
- 4.18.4 When prisoners are identified as presenting a heightened risk of escape or of causing significant harm when attending court, a Custody Management Direction Form (CMDf), see Annex D1 / Annex D2 HMPPS / PECS CMDf, must be submitted to the court where the prisoner's case is being heard. The form must be submitted before the prisoners next appearance. To ensure this, wherever possible, prisoners should be assessed on initial reception into custody to identify if these measures are required.
- 4.18.5 The CMDf must set out evidence of the prisoner's identified risk of escape or violence and request the court's approval for security measures to mitigate the risks.
- 4.18.6 The CMDf must be supported by current, specific and credible evidence that the security measures being requested are both necessary and proportionate to the identified risk and that the risk cannot effectively be managed in any other way.
- 4.18.7 The notification must be sent from the prison (via a designated functional email box) to the court and copied to the Prisoner Escort and Custody Services (PECS). This should be within 4 days of the prisoner's reception into custody or at any subsequent stage where the relevant information or intelligence becomes available.
- 4.18.8 The CMDf will be passed via the Court List Officer to the Judge hearing the case. The Judge will decide on what if any further security implications will be imposed, after consulting with the relevant parties, including the defence and the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS).
- 4.18.9 The sending prison must maintain a record of all CMDf's submitted. Records as a minimum must note the prisoner's name/number, court and outcome. If the prisoner

transfers during or prior to the hearing, the forms must be forwarded to the new prison.

4.18.10 The Court List Officer will:

- Provide the prison and PECS Contractors with a response within 1 week outlining the arrangements for listing the case.
- Where a secure listing cannot be provided, provide the reasons to the prison so that alternative security measures can be considered.

4.18.11 There will be occasions when it is not possible to submit a CMDF one week prior to the commencement of the hearing. The CMDF must only be submitted less than a week prior to the court appearance if:

- The initial assessment for E-List occurs within one week of the production.
- New intelligence is identified, or an incident occurs within one week of the production.
- A short notice appearance is listed by the courts.
- The prisoner has been placed on E-List on initial reception with a court appearance the following day.

4.18.12 In any of the circumstances set out in 4.18.11, the CMDF must still be completed and any requests for video link, secure dock, extra security provisions followed up via direct contact with the courts and clearly marked on the PER. It is accepted that limited information may be available in these instances, but it remains the prison's responsibility to provide the court with a completed CMDF giving as full a picture as possible of identified and potential risks.

4.18.13 For prisoner productions outside of the Criminal Courts, prison staff must identify the need and requirement for the prisoner to attend court. These instructions apply equally to the production of high-risk prisoners to civil, family, immigration, and coroner's courts.

4.18.14 In all circumstances where prisoners identified as a heightened risk are required to appear in Civil Courts, Family Courts, Immigration Courts or Coroner's Courts – early contact and consultation with the relevant court staff is required to discuss appropriate security measures.

4.18.15 Higher risk prisoners required to give evidence from an insecure witness box pose a significant security risk. Where a prisoner is required to transfer from a secure dock to an insecure witness box to give evidence a CMDF must be submitted.

4.18.16 If the court refuses an application for heightened security measures, the court will provide reasons for the refusal. The Governor of the dispatching prison will need to resubmit the CMDF, and with the approval of the relevant PGD, the Governor may also make further representations to engage in direct dialogue with the court

regarding the application. This will enable joint decision making between the court and the prison.

- 4.18.17 If following the actions outlined in 4.18.16, the prison still deems it unsafe to send the prisoner to court, then this must be escalated to the relevant PGD.
- 4.18.18 There may be circumstances where risk is only identified on the way to the court whilst the prisoner is in the custody of the escort contractor, or even at court when the prisoner is produced by the police. PECS contractors must ensure that there are procedures in place to produce a CMDF when this is the case. It is the responsibility of the PECS Contractor to make the request for additional security via the CMDF in these situations.
- 4.18.19 If the Court refuses an application made by PECS contractors for heightened security measures the PECS contractors must ensure that there are procedures in place for re-submission of the CMDF.
- 4.18.20 Additional criteria for managing processes at court are set out in [Security of prisoners at court protocol](#).
- 4.19 **Managing the Relationship with the Courts** (to be read in conjunction with [Security of prisoners at court protocol](#))
- 4.19.1 Prisons must hold regular (at least quarterly) meetings with their designated court/s, including representatives from the judiciary, court (court operations manager), prison (custody and security departments) and escort contractor.
- 4.19.2 It is important to maintain a dialogue with the Court Service, its managers, Clerks, Magistrates and Judges in respect of all aspects of the escorting, detention, and production process.
- 4.19.3 Common issues that must be frequently discussed include:
- Provision of secure dock facilities.
  - Security and safety in custody suites.
  - Timely delivery of prisoners to court.
  - Scheduling of cases.
  - Accommodating people with disabilities.
  - The use of mechanical restraints in the dock.
- 4.20 **Processes for Managing Prisoner Refusal to Attend Criminal Court Proceedings** (to be read in conjunction with [Security of prisoners at court protocol](#))
- 4.20.1 Only the court can decide if a prisoner is required to attend court for criminal proceedings. A court/Judge has no legal right to direct a prison Governor or prison staff to use force to compel a prisoner to attend court. Any decision to use force must be in line with the [Use of Force Policy Framework](#).
- 4.20.2 If a prisoner refuses to attend court, the following actions must be taken:
- Inform the court of the refusal as quickly as possible.
  - Advise Prisoner Escort and Custody Services (PECS) on call contract delivery manager (Gold Rota) of the refusal as quickly as possibly

- Identify whether the attendance of the prisoner is necessary.
- Make all attempts to persuade the prisoner to attend court.
- Ensure the prisoner is given a direct order to attend court and consider punishments in line with the Prisoner Discipline Procedures (Adjudications): PSI 05/2018.

4.20.3 When the court advises that the prisoner must attend, the following actions must be taken:

- Prisons must complete Annex D2, the Court Management Direction Form (CMDM) to document a prisoner's refusal to attend court. The form must:
  - Inform the court that the prisoner may need to be brought by force.
  - Clearly outline the safety and security risks involved in escorting the prisoner by force for both the prisoner and escorting staff.
  - Request the court's approval for any additional security measures needed to manage these risks, particularly if the prisoner is likely to remain non-compliant and disrupt proceedings. These should include the need for a secure dock and additional staff.
  - Recommend attendance via video link as an alternative.
  - Be supported by current, specific and credible evidence that any security measures being requested are both necessary and proportionate and that the transfer to court cannot be managed effectively without the use of force.
  - Be sent from the prison (via a designated functional email box) to the court and copied to the PECS on call contract delivery manager (Gold Rota). This should be as soon as information of the prisoner's refusal or expected refusal becomes available.
  - Maintain a record of the submitted CMDM. Records as a minimum must note the prisoner's name/number, court and outcome.

4.20.4 All CMDM security requests should also be followed up with direct communication with both the court and PECS supplier undertaking the escort. All relevant information must be clearly recorded on the DPER.

4.20.5 Use of Force may be considered in this situation in line with the Use of Force Policy Framework when:

- The Judge has confirmed the prisoner needs to attend court.
- All reasonable options to persuade a prisoner to attend court have been exhausted and the use of force is a last resort.
- It is assessed as necessary, reasonable, and proportionate to the seriousness of the circumstances.

4.20.6 This decision to use force must follow a lawful order for the prisoner to attend court. A prison senior manager must agree that Use of Force is appropriate in the circumstances and is appropriate to move the prisoner to reception. All decisions to use force must be recorded.

4.20.7 Any decision to use force must be made with careful consideration of the safety and wellbeing of both staff and the prisoner. Importantly, courts and judges do not have

the legal authority to instruct PECS staff to use force to compel a prisoner to attend court

- 4.20.8 If the court refuses an application for increased security measures as requested in the submitted CMDF, the court must provide reasons for the refusal. The Governor of the dispatching prison and/or the PECS Authorising manager (if the transfer is underway) will need to resubmit the CMDF. The Governor/PECS Authorising Manager may also make further representations to engage in direct dialogue with the court regarding the application. This will enable joint decision making between the court and the prison/PECS.
- 4.20.9 If following the actions outlined above, the prison/PECS deem it unsafe to send/continue the journey to court, then this must be escalated to the relevant PGD/PECS Senior Contract Delivery Manager (SCDM).
- 4.20.10 In any situation where the court has directed the prisoner to attend, use of force may not be justified in the following situations:
- The prisoner is assessed as actively suicidal and under constant supervision.
  - Attendance at court will aggravate or cause significant mental health issues.
  - The prisoner is medically unfit to travel.
  - If it is deemed unsafe or otherwise unreasonable to use force, determined on a case-by-case basis.
- 4.20.11 Where use of force is not justified, prisons/PECS must inform the court as soon as reasonably practicable, setting out the reasons for the decision.
- 4.20.12 For mandatory requirements and guidance in relation to production of prisoners, refer to PSI 26-2012 Production of Prisoners at the request of Warranted Law Agencies (restricted). Contact Security.Procedures@justice.gov.uk.

#### 4.21 Assurance Processes and Record Keeping

- 4.21.1 Governors should ensure that quality checks on a sample of risk assessments are carried out monthly. It is for the Governor to determine who is appropriate to conduct the quality checks, ensuring that the risk assessments are fully completed, identify any learning and use their findings for communication with Custodial Managers and staff.
- 4.21.2 Where local assurance processes identify capability weaknesses, Governors should share these with the PGD, on an annual basis at the minimum, along with any actions taken to address them. PGDs should also follow up on the progress of these issues during prison visits.
- 4.21.3 PGDs should be confident that prisons have effective local assurance processes in place. Prisons must ensure that these processes identify and address any gaps in the skills and capability of staff to include how this will be challenged and the provision of any additional support or training. See supporting tools ST14 & ST15 for further guidance. These processes must be outlined in the LSS to include the following areas:

- Risk Assessments - The process must assure the quality of the information provided covering all elements of the escort risk assessment, and as a minimum to include information sharing, welfare of the prisoner, management of escape, consideration (where relevant) of the court decision, specifically Graham Judgement 2007 on the unnecessary use of handcuffing of prisoners during hospital appointments which could infringe on Article 3 ECHR. See Annex H Operational Practice Guide External Escorts.
- Risk Assessments Pregnant Prisoners – The process must provide assurance that when restraints are applied to pregnant prisoners, this is justified and based on a clear assessment of risk and authorised by the Deputy Governor.
- Restraints - Prisons should have assurance processes in place to ensure that all appropriate staff are refreshed regularly on the application and changeover of restraints and are both competent and confident in undertaking this. Assurance should also be provided for those staff who are either on detached duty or carrying out bedwatch duties for prisons other than their own.
- Discharge Process - Prior to the discharge of any escort there must be an assurance process in place that ensures staff have received a full verbal briefing that incorporates checking competency in the application, changeover and removal of restraints and the action to take in the event of an escape, suspected escape or attempted escape.
- Escort/bedwatch paperwork – The process must provide assurance that staff have fully completed the PER and/or bedwatch occurrence log in line with the requirements of this Policy Framework.
- Bedwatch management checks – The process must ensure that management checks have taken place on all bedwatches in line with the requirements of this Policy Framework. Management checks must include checking the security procedures, appropriateness and application of restraints in addition to the welfare of the staff and prisoner.

4.21.4 Where assurance identifies that staff have not followed procedure, this must be reviewed, documented and challenged accordingly by a manager. Critical prison officer tasks should be clearly identified and focused on for capability skilling to ensure that staff understand them and are refreshed in them regularly. See Supporting Tools ST1-13.

4.21.5 Governors must ensure that all security documentation including assurance checks are retained in line with [Records information management policy: PSI 04/2018, PI 02/2018](#).

## 5. **Constraints**

5.1 There are dependencies between this Policy Framework and the following policy documents:

- [Searching Policy Framework](#).
- [Management and Handling of Evidence Policy Framework](#).
- [Management of Internal Security Procedures to Prevent Escape](#).
- [Management of E-List Prisoners to Prevent Escape](#).

- Person Escort Record Policy Framework.
- Records information management policy: PSI 04/2018, PI 02/2018
- Security of prisoners at court protocol.
- The Identification, Initial Categorisation and Management of Potential and Provisional Category A/Restricted Status Prisoners (Restricted).
- The Review of Security Category - Category A/Restricted Status Prisoners (Restricted)
- Management and Security of Category A Prisoners – Internal (Restricted)
- Management and Security of Category A Prisoners - External Movements (Restricted)
- Management of Restricted Status Prisoners (Restricted).

5.2 Any information relating to an identified or identifiable living individual recorded as a consequence of this framework will be processed in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018, UK General Data Protection Regulation and PSI 04/2018 Records Information Management Policy.

5.3 A full data protection impact assessment has been completed in support of this Policy Framework.

**Freedom of Information Act**

5.4 This Policy Framework has been assessed as OFFICIAL and therefore suitable for public release. All annexes and supporting tools have been assessed as OFFICIAL-MOJ USE ONLY and are not available for public release.

5.5 When communicating to staff, prisoners or visitors, prisons are expected to ensure that briefing documents and information is available in a variety of formats including easy read, braille, voice, and other languages.

5.6 A full equality impact assessment has been completed in support of this Policy Framework.

**5 Annexes and Supporting Tools (MOJ use only)**

Annex A1	Generic Escort Risk Assessment
Annex A2M	Men’s Estate – Emergency Risk Assessment
Annex A2W	Women’s Estate – Emergency Risk Assessment
Annex A3M	Men’s Estate – Hospital Risk Assessment
Annex A3W	Women’s Estate – Hospital Risk Assessment
Annex A4M	Men’s Estate – Bedwatch Risk Assessment
Annex A4W	Women’s Estate – Bedwatch Risk Assessment
Annex A5M	Men’s Estate - Funeral Risk Assessment
Annex A5W	Women’s Estate – Funeral Risk Assessment
Annex A6M	Men’s Estate - Transfer and Court Risk Assessment
Annex A6W	Women’s Estate - Transfer and Court Risk Assessment
Annex A7M	Men’s Estate - Dying Relative Risk Assessment
Annex A7W	Women’s Estate - Dying Relative Risk Assessment
Annex A8M	Men’s Estate - Wedding and Civil Partnership Risk Assessment

Annex A8W	Women's Estate - Wedding and Civil Partnership Risk Assessment
Annex B	PECS Hospital Risk Assessment
Annex C	CMDF Example Email
Annex D1	HMPPS CMDF
Annex D2	PECS CMDF
Annex E	Bedwatch Pack & Occurrence Log
Annex F	Hospital Assessment Example
Annex G	Escape from Escorts Guidance
Annex H	Operational Practice Guide External Escorts
	<b>Supporting Tools (ST)</b>
ST1	Use of plastic restraints instructional video
ST2	Application of plastic restraints on external escort infographic
ST3	Applying single and double handcuffs instructional video
ST4	Changeover of restraints infographic
ST5	Changeover of restraints and application instructional video
ST6	Application of the escort chain instructional video
ST7	Use of inserts for restraints instructional video
ST8	Using the D Cuff escort chain instructional video
ST9.1	Men's Estate - Complete a risk assessment instructional video
ST9.2	Women's Estate - Complete a risk assessment instructional video
ST10.1	Men's Estate - Completing a risk assessment infographic
ST10.2	Women's Estate - Completing a risk assessment infographic
ST11	Contents of an escort bag
ST12	Air Ambulance infographic
ST13	Bedwatch Log Guidance
ST14	Assurance Processes Instructional Video
ST15	Assurance Guidance