



Irritant Spray Guidance Document

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1. Introduction / Purpose

- 1.1 This guidance document supports The Police Service of Scotland (hereafter referred to as Police Scotland) [Use of Force](#) Standard Operating Procedure (SOP).
- 1.2 The information contained in this document is designed to provide police officers and Authority/Police Staff with an overarching, generic approach to the use of irritant spray.
- 1.3 This guidance document applies to all Police Officers, Special Constables and designated Authority/Police Staff.
- 1.4 The term staff or staff member will be used to refer to Police Officers, Special Constables and Authority/Police Staff from this point forward.
- 1.5 Where a provision applies to Police Officers, Special Constables or Authority/Police Staff only, this will be clearly identified.
- 1.6 The guidance should not be viewed in isolation with regards to operational safety but seen as the guiding principles and fundamental approach, underpinning the specific training provided to all staff issued with irritant spray.
- 1.7 The use of irritant spray should be seen in the context of the [National Decision Model](#) as a whole and its use viewed as one of the many tactical options that may be available to staff in the resolution of an incident.
- 1.8 This document is based on the most recent Association of Chief Police Officer (ACPO) Guidance on the Use of Incapacitant Spray 2010 from the Policing Lead for Personal Safety and Working Group on Self-Defence, Arrest and Restraint (SDAR) and the Home Office Centre for Applied Science and Technology (CAST). The purpose of these groups is to support and inform decision making in relation to the deployment and use of irritant spray. The guidance provided is for the benefit of Police Officers, Special Constables and Designated Authority/Police Staff that may be required to use irritant spray.
- 1.9 The nature of policing is so diverse that it will never be possible to document guidance to cover every encounter or eventuality; what is important is that any action taken is lawful. Action must be proportionate to the competing rights of individuals and any force used should be no more than absolutely necessary in the circumstances. In this regard individual officers must be prepared to account for their decisions to show that they were justified in doing what they did and that they acted reasonably within the scope of the law on the use of force. Similarly, the Chief Constable will need to be in a position to justify any decision or action in order to avoid or defend civil claims.

2. Guidance, Advice and Procedures

2.1 PAVA Irritant Spray - Description of Equipment

- 2.1.1 Captor I - Irritant is dispensed from a hand held canister in a liquid stream that contains a 0.3% solution of PAVA (Pelargonic Acid Vanillylamide) in a solvent of aqueous ethanol. The propellant is nitrogen. Captor II - Irritant is dispensed from a hand held canister in a liquid stream that contains a 0.3% solution of PAVA in a solvent of monopropylene glycol, water and ethanol. The propellant is nitrogen.
- 2.1.2 Captor I & Captor II - A 0.3% solution has been selected because this is the minimum concentration which will fulfil the purpose of the equipment; namely to minimise a person's capacity for resistance without unnecessarily prolonging their discomfort. It should be noted that PAVA is significantly more potent than CS.
- 2.1.3 The liquid stream is a spray pattern and has a maximum effective range of up to 4 metres. Maximum accuracy, however, will be achieved over a distance of 1.25 - 2 metres. The operating distance is the distance between the canister and the subject's eyes not the distance between the officer and the subject.

2.2 Effects of PAVA

- 2.2.1 PAVA primarily affects the eyes causing closure and severe pain. The pain to the eyes is reported to be greater than that caused by CS. The effectiveness rate is very high once PAVA gets into the eyes. However, there have been occasions where PAVA has failed to work, especially when the subject is under the influence of alcohol. It should be remembered, however, that no irritant is universally effective and there may be individuals on whom the spray may not be effective at all or only partially so.
- 2.2.2 For PAVA to work effectively it must enter the eyes. The effects of PAVA are usually instantaneous if this happens. Exposure to fresh moving air will normally result in a significant recovery from the effects of PAVA within 15 – 20 minutes.

2.3 General

- 2.3.1 Irritant sprays should not be regarded as a replacement for other routinely issued protective equipment but rather one of a number of tactical options. Staff may need to resort to the use of another item of equipment if the irritant is used but does not have the effect intended.

2.4 Training

- 2.4.1 The aims and objectives of training in the use of irritant spray are contained in the National Operational Safety Training Programme.
- 2.4.2 Tactical training in the use of the spray should emphasise precautions in relation to self / cross contamination and the use of appropriate restraint techniques after spraying.

- 2.4.3 Trainers should ensure that all staff are familiar with the dangers associated with the conditions known as positional asphyxia and acute behavioural disorder.
- 2.4.5 The provision of appropriate operational safety training is an integral element in the use of irritant spray and other equipment used for self-defence.
- 2.4.6 Operational safety training has developed over time driven by a variety of reasons ranging from various legislative acts together the need to provide staff with the necessary skills to defend themselves and others.
- 2.4.7 The training provided has proved to be an extremely effective control measure, helping to address the risks faced by staff during their day to day activities.
- 2.4.8 There are clear benefits to be accrued from appropriate and frequent operational safety training including a reduction in the number and severity of injuries to staff.
- 2.4.9 All officers and relevant members of police staff will receive initial operational safety training appropriate to their specific roles. This will then be supplemented by regular refresher training designed to maintain their competency in the use of irritant spray, and all other tactical options. This will ensure that staff are fully equipped to manage conflict.
- 2.4.10 Based on the legal requirements, the variety of techniques and equipment together with the need to refresh and demonstrate an appropriate level of competency, staff will complete an appropriate period of operational safety training each year in line with the National Operational Safety Programme. This level of training delivered in a structured, holistic and rotational programme will allow all staff to reach and maintain a standard that will help protect them and others when confronted by violence or the threat of such violence.

2.5 Use

- 2.5.1 Use of the spray is one of a number of tactical options available to staff who are faced with violence or the threat of violence. Its use must be lawful in all the circumstances. The decision to use the spray is an individual one for which staff will be accountable. The use of the spray must be proportionate, legal, necessary and ethical with staff being accountable for their actions. Impact factors, the [National Decision Model](#) and Tactical Options Model (Appendix 'D') will assist officers in making such judgements.
- 2.5.2 The spray should not be used at a distance of less than 1 metre unless the nature of the risk to the officer is such that this cannot be avoided. In such cases, staff must be prepared to justify not only their use of the spray but also their decision to use it at a distance which may cause damage to eyes due to the discharge pressure of the liquid.

- 2.5.3 Since the spray may only cause temporary incapacitation, its use against a subject armed with a firearm may not be appropriate. Where a subject actually has hold of a firearm the effects of the spray may cause them to fire indiscriminately. However, if the firearm is merely close to hand the spray may be useful in preventing subjects actually arming themselves. Because of the extreme dangers, use in such circumstances should be carefully considered.
- 2.5.4 Because of the effects of the spray any decision to use it on a person in charge or in control of a motor vehicle must also be carefully considered.
- 2.5.5 Occasions will arise where it is necessary to use irritant spray on persons whose violent behaviour is due to a mental disorder or illness. In such cases, where it is practicable, advice should be sought from mental health professionals present at the scene. In pre-planned joint activities such discussions could form part of the briefing and risk assessment for the event. Consultation with friends, relatives etc. who are likely to know the person well may also assist in deciding on the most appropriate use of force response. The final decision to use the spray in these circumstances will rest with the staff concerned.

2.6 Aftercare

- 2.6.1 After spraying and once the individual has been properly restrained it is important that staff provide verbal reassurance as to the temporary effects of irritant spray and instructs the individual to breathe normally. This will aid recovery and lessen the risk of hyperventilation. This procedure, together with those below, applies equally to staff or others exposed to irritant, whether in training or operationally.
- 2.6.2 The individual sprayed should be removed to an uncontaminated area where they can be exposed to cool fresh air. This will assist their recovery. Although they should not be forced to open their eyes, they should be advised to do so as soon as they are able. This will allow their tears to flush the irritant from the eyes. They should be told not to rub their eyes or face, as this will only increase the effects of the spray. Exposure to fresh air will normally result in a significant recovery from the effects of the irritants within 15 – 20 minutes.
- 2.6.3 If reactions do persist beyond this period then copious amounts of cool tap water should be used to flush remaining irritant from the face. Under no circumstances should warm water be used.
- 2.6.4 Only the affected person or a healthcare professional should undertake irrigation of the eyes. A healthcare professional should examine those who cannot open their eyes or whose eyes are actively running beyond the normal recovery period. The expected period is 20 minutes after exposure although this varies from individual to individual. The use of so called irritant 'antidote' or 'neutralising' agents have been examined and they are not considered appropriate, in some cases their use may prove harmful.

- 2.6.5 Close monitoring of an individual throughout the recovery period is of utmost importance. If the individual experiences difficulties in resuming normal breathing then medical assistance must be sought immediately and must be given precedence over conveying the subject to the police station. Difficulties with breathing may be reflected in an individual displaying an audible wheeze or an inability to complete a sentence in one breath or an increased respiratory rate beyond the normal recovery period. The expected recovery period for breathing is 5 minutes after exposure. If the individual has been restrained by hand or through the use of handcuffs or other restraint devices then particular attention should be given to monitoring their breathing.
- 2.6.6 If the individual is detained in a cell they should be subject to the same cell supervision provided for individuals who have consumed alcohol or drugs. If there are any signs of adverse or unusual reactions then medical attention should be sought immediately. It is essential that the individual's breathing continues to be closely monitored. Please refer to the [Care and Welfare of Persons in Police Custody SOP](#) for further information.
- 2.6.7 If an individual suffers blistering or redness on the skin that persists for several hours then in both cases they should receive medical assistance.
- 2.6.8 Generally, individuals who have been sprayed with irritants need not be routinely examined by medical staff. Such examinations will be at the discretion of the custody officer who will act in accordance with policy relating to medical treatment of detained persons.
- 2.6.9 On release from custody any individual who has been sprayed with irritant should be given an information leaflet. They should also be advised to seek medical attention if they experience any further related medical problems.
- 2.6.10 Individuals who are sprayed and who are wearing contact lenses may experience greater discomfort. They should be permitted to remove their lenses at the earliest opportunity. On no account should staff attempt to remove contact lenses from another person. The individual, an optician or a healthcare professional should only do this. Exposure to irritants, in common with other substances, may cause damage to certain types of lens; soft lenses should be discarded following exposure. Individuals who experience problems with their lenses after normal cleaning should consult an optician.
- 2.6.11 Ventilation will usually remove the effects of Irritant Spray in a room within 45 minutes. To enhance decontamination, windows and doors should be left open during this period. Where Irritant Sprays have been used within a building, staff should advise the owners in respect of decontamination procedures. They should be provided with an explanatory leaflet, and advised that if the effects have not dissipated within one hour, they should seek further advice from the police.

- 2.6.12 Unless there are exceptional circumstances, individuals will only be transported in General Purpose vans and at all times be accompanied by at least one other staff member, in addition to the driver. Under no circumstances will the driver convey a sprayed person whilst unaccompanied. The use of vans will ensure easier and quicker decontamination than in the close confines, and material construction of seats, in a car.
- 2.6.13 All individuals who have been sprayed with irritant spray will only be taken to Police Stations where there is 24-hour cover. This is to ensure that there are sufficient resources to conduct the checks required for a Special Risk Prisoner.
- 2.6.14 Where Individuals are brought to a Police premises they should be fully decontaminated before entering. If the clothing worn by the individual is contaminated they should be provided with a paper suit and their contaminated clothing sealed in polythene bags to prevent the risk of further of cross contamination.
- 2.6.15 Staff who may come into contact with contaminated persons, clothing or other property should wear gloves and utilise other appropriate equipment (e.g. the ampel probe when searching) to reduce the risks of cross contamination.
- 2.6.16 All individuals who have been sprayed with irritant spray will be regarded as Special Risk Prisoners.
- 2.6.17 In the event of a contaminated prisoner being taken to prison, the Special Risk Form will accompany them, even if they are no longer displaying any obvious effect of exposure. This is to alert staff at the prison to the fact that a prisoner has been sprayed and there may still be a risk of cross contamination from the prisoner or any property / clothing that the prison staff may be required to handle. It also confirms any allegation made to prison staff that the prisoner has been sprayed and will ensure appropriate treatment / decontamination should cross contamination occur.
- 2.6.18 Where an individual has been sprayed with irritant spray, a relevant health care professional (HCP) will be contacted. The decision whether or not to attend and examine the affected individual rests with the HCP, even if the affected individual has indicated that they don't want to be examined.

3 Authorisation

- 3.1 Only staff who have undergone the National Initial Operational Safety Training Course and have thereafter completed the mandatory operational safety training recertification course may carry Irritant spray.
- 3.2 On completion of the mandatory OST, staff will be issued with an authorisation card (140-005), which **must** be shown when being issued Irritant spray. This card **must** be carried at all times whilst on duty. Irritant spray must only be issued to those whose authorisation to possess and use it has been recorded and can be verified.

- 3.3 Only Irritant spray issued by Police Scotland will be carried and used by staff.
- 3.4 Under no circumstances will staff possess Irritant spray whilst off duty nor will they carry Irritant spray within their personal vehicle whilst on duty.

4. Issue

- 4.1 Irritant Spray will be issued to Police Officers on an individual, permanent basis. Special Constables and relevant SPA/Authority Police Staff will be issued spray when required from local stocks. Supervisory officers are responsible for ensuring that an accurate record of the issue and return of all Irritant spray is maintained. Once the Irritant spray has been issued to staff, they will be responsible for the canister and will be personally accountable for ensuring that it remains secure at all times. Staff should ensure the canister has no defects prior to the commencement of each shift.
- 4.2 When staff are issued with a new or replacement Irritant spray, an entry must be made in the receiving staff members police issue notebook/personal record. This entry should record the date, time and place of issue, the serial number of the canister, the weight at the time of issue and the name of the issuing officer. This transaction must then be recorded on the daily control sheet. ([Form 064-007](#)).
- 4.3 Where staff are issued a permanent Irritant spray, they may be provided with an individual purpose built locker to store their Irritant spray. One key for this locker will be issued with the other being securely retained at the place of issue. The spare key will only be issued temporarily to allow access to an Irritant spray should a staff member lose or misplace their key. The loss of any Irritant spray locker key **must** be reported to a supervisory officer as soon as possible. Master keys for all Irritant spray lockers are held within premises where irritant spray is stored. These can be accessed via a supervisory officer should they be required.
- 4.4 Within Police buildings that do not have individual purpose built lockers, Irritant spray must be stored as outlined in Section 5

4.5 Temporary Issue

- 4.5.1 Each Division / Local Area will retain a specified number of unallocated Irritant sprays for issue to staff on a temporary basis.
- 4.5.2 Those that are deployed operationally on a temporary basis, away from their permanent place of duty will be issued with a temporary Irritant spray for that tour of duty. This Irritant spray must be issued by a person authorised to do so. There is no requirement for staff to attend at their permanent place of duty to obtain their personal issue Irritant spray.

- 4.5.3 On being issued with a temporary Irritant spray, police officers / special constables must make an entry in their police issue notebook. Issuing officers should also complete the daily control sheet ([Form 064-007](#)). This entry should record the date, time and place of issue, the serial number of the canister, the weight at the time of issue and the name of the issuing officer. Irritant spray issued on a temporary basis must be returned at the conclusion of every tour of duty. The time and date the Irritant canister is returned should also be recorded.
- 4.5.4 When Irritant sprays are replaced and the receiving staff member is not present the officer issuing the spray should leave notification in the Irritant spray locker indicating that it is a new / replacement canister. The notification should also detail the serial number, weight of the canister at the time of issue and the name of the issuing officer. The note should also instruct the receiving person to record the information, as set out above, in their police issue notebook/personal record. This information must then be recorded on the Divisional / Local Area Command Master Control Sheet.

5. Storage

- 5.1 Relevant police buildings may be fitted with purpose built secure storage lockers.
- 5.2 The area used for storage of irritant spray must be clearly marked. Storage lockers should be located in dry, well ventilated areas and should not be exposed to direct sunlight or near any open flame. Canisters should be stored between 5°C and 50°C. Storage areas must be kept away from public view.
- 5.3 Where there are no purpose built secure storage lockers available, Irritant spray must be stored in a manner which provides 2 layers of security to prevent unauthorised access to the spray. This should include locked boxes contained within a locked and secure cabinet. An appropriate supervisor should have control of access to this box and be responsible for issue to officers.
- 5.4 A Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations (COSHH) Risk Assessment must be displayed in a prominent position as close as possible to all Irritant spray storage lockers, irrespective of size. Should there be an incident which causes the discharge of Irritant Spray from storage lockers within a building, all staff should be aware of the effects and decontamination processes required.
- 5.5 Leaking, damaged, used or contaminated canisters must be kept away from issue stocks. Local Area Commanders must ensure that sufficient storage units are in place to allow separate storage from issue stock.
- 5.6 Irritant Spray **must only** be permanently stored within Police Office's /Police buildings.

- 5.7 Canisters must be returned to an appropriate storage unit prior to the completion of a tour of duty. Canisters must be stored in a vertical position to prevent nozzle blockage.
- 5.8 Staff will have responsibility for the security of their issued Irritant spray canister and when not being carried, they should be secured in the purpose built storage lockers provided or as outlined in section 5.3. The storage units will remain locked at all times.
- 5.9 Area Commanders are responsible for the safe management of storage facilities. Line Managers are responsible for ensuring accurate recording of the daily issue and storage of Irritant spray canisters.
- 5.10 Canisters used for temporary issue, will be stored in the purpose built lock fast metal storage / transit boxes. These should be stored in a locked storage unit and should be accessed by a supervisor or authorised person only.
- 5.11 At no time may a person, other than an authorised member of the police be permitted to possess Irritant spray. To allow such possession may constitute a criminal offence.

6. Transportation

- 6.1 Irritant Spray will only be transported by staff who are authorised to do so
- 6.2 Irritant Spray will be transported within approved, lockable storage boxes **only**. The only exception to this is when being carried operationally by authorised, on duty staff
- 6.3 **Under no circumstances will irritant spray be sent to any location via internal mail.** Failure to comply with this will result in disciplinary action being taken.
- 6.4 Under no circumstances will Irritant spray be transported within staff's private vehicles.

7. Carry Policy

- 7.1 Staff who have failed to attend the mandatory annual OST recertification training will not be authorised to carry Irritant spray (as well as all other PPE) and will be removed from operational duties until such times as the required training is completed.
- 7.2 Irritant spray will be carried at all times by operational, trained and authorised staff whilst on duty where they may come into contact with the public unless in specific circumstances where the carrying of irritant spray is not appropriate. These circumstances can be found further within this section.

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

- 7.3 There are occasions where the carriage of Irritant spray is prohibited and / or would have to be assessed. Authority not to carry Irritant Spray must be sought or given by a supervisory officer. Any such authority must be documented either in the respective officers notebooks or included in an operational order.
- 7.4 Irritant Spray will only be carried in the supplied approved holster, equipment carrier, body armour or covert harness, ensuring security and accessibility at all times.
- 7.5 Irritant Sprays should not be worn on upper docking stations of body armour due to the risk of injury in the event of an accidental discharge, except by mounted branch officers.
- 7.6 Whilst on duty, motorcycle police officers may either carry the spray on their person or in a secure pannier attached to the vehicle.
- 7.7 Staff will not be permitted to carry Irritant spray on a Police helicopter, unless it is carried within an aircraft airtight container specifically installed on the aircraft for the purposes of holding irritant spray canisters and other dangerous goods.
- 7.8 Irritant Spray will not be carried by officer's deployed in full public order dress (level 1) at incidents of serious public disorder where there is, or is likely to be, a petrol bomb threat. In all other instances the carriage of Irritant spray will be dependent on the circumstances and as directed by the respective Police Support Unit (PSU), Operational or Tactical Commanders.
- 7.9 Police Officers attending public order incidents will attend with their personal Irritant spray carried on their belt/Upper body carriage system. PSU vans are equipped with transit boxes for temporary storage of Irritant Spray and PSU supervisors are to ensure these boxes are readily available should officers be required to remove their canisters. In these circumstances PSU van drivers are responsible for the security of the Irritant spray canisters, unless alternative arrangements have been made (e.g. secure storage at a Rendezvous Point).
- 7.10 Irritant Spray must not be carried on non-police aircraft. Police Officers attending any incident on a non-police aircraft must be vigilant to possible cross contamination if Irritant Spray is deployed within an aircraft.
- 7.11 Use of Irritant spray within the confines of a vehicle is inadvisable, due to the potential for the driver / operator being exposed to the effects and the consequences that might entail in respect of road safety.
- 7.12 Officers should not carry Irritant spray when attending any training courses, unless specified otherwise.
- 7.13 Staff attending court either as witnesses or to transport or supervise prisoners will carry Irritant spray if they are on duty.

- 7.14 Staff may carry Irritant spray whilst escorting prisoners to or from prisons, or when attending at a prison for any reason. On arrival at any prison, prison staff should be immediately notified that Irritant spray is being carried to allow appropriate arrangements to be made for its secure storage. Agreement has been reached with the Scottish Prison Service to put into place arrangements for the reception at prisons of staff in possession of Irritant spray.
- 7.15 Staff attending at prisons will be given access to a secure cabinet within the vehicle lock in order to store their canisters. Prison staff will not handle Irritant sprays. Irritant Spray will not be carried within the confines of the prison. The Irritant spray will be uplifted by staff on their return to the vehicle lock, prior to exit.

8. Procedures Following the Use of Irritant spray

- 8.1 Once an Irritant spray has been used, even partially, or is seen to be damaged, faulty or expired, it will be immediately withdrawn from use and replaced, even if it has not been emptied.
- 8.2 When Irritant spray has been used, Command and Control must be notified as soon as possible in order that appropriate transport can be arranged and that staff within the custody environment are forewarned.

8.3 Operational Discharge

- 8.3.1 Where an individual has been exposed to Irritant spray, priority must be given to their aftercare, especially where the individual has been restrained. This is of the utmost importance, not only for those to whom the use of the spray was intended, but also for all of those persons who may have been affected. Those exposed to the spray must be closely monitored for any adverse or excessive reaction.
- 8.3.2 On **every** occasion where Irritant spray is discharged operationally, or in the case of an accidental discharge, there is a statutory legal requirement to record the incident and report it to the Police Investigations and Review Commissioner (PIRC) within 24 hours.
- 8.3.3 CS / PAVA Spray Discharge Report ([Form 064-001](#)) **must** be completed by the officer/staff member who discharged same as soon as possible but no later than the end of their duty. If the police officer / police staff is unavailable then a supervisor must arrange its completion.
- 8.3.4 Completed forms should be sent via email to the '[Officer Safety Training CS Spray Discharge](#)' inbox where it will be sent to Police Investigation and Review Commissioner (PIRC) for investigation.
- 8.3.5 **Note:** Completion of this form is separate to the existing 'Use of Force Forms'.

- 8.3.6 Where staff have been affected by Irritant spray, an 'Accident / Incident at Work SCOPE Form should be submitted in addition to the Use of Force Form and CS / PAVA Discharge Report.
- 8.3.7 Where Irritant spray is discharged, the individual must be supplied with a form outlining the effects of the spray. Copies of this form will be held within custody areas.
- 8.3.8 Where Irritant spray is discharged the Command and Control should be notified as soon as possible in order that appropriate transport can be arranged for Supervisors/control room staff will ensure that appropriate measures are in place for the reception of the individual.
- 8.3.9 Unless there are exceptional circumstances, individuals should only be transported in general purpose vans and at all times be accompanied by at least one other staff member, in addition to the driver. **Under no circumstances will the driver convey a sprayed subject whilst unaccompanied.**
- 8.3.10 When individuals are brought to a police station they should be fully decontaminated before entering. If the clothing worn by the individual is contaminated they should be provided with a paper suit and their contaminated clothing should be sealed in polythene bags to prevent any further risk of cross contamination.
- 8.3.11 Careful consideration should be given by staff to the use of Irritant spray within cell areas. If irritant spray is used within cell areas, supervisors will arrange the decontamination/aftercare of the individual who has been sprayed, the subsequent ventilation of the cell area and instruct a check to be conducted to ascertain if any other subject has been affected by the discharge of irritant.
- 8.3.12 The use of irritant spray in situations where large numbers of the public are present has the potential to cause panic. Although there is little in the way of cross contamination with PAVA, given the close proximity of people in crowded areas, there is potential for the PAVA to directly affect a person, other than the individual.
- 8.3.13 Where Irritant spray is discharged within premises, then the relevant guidance sheets must be provided to a person within that premises. The following information sheets are available:
- [Information to Owners Occupiers and Staff of Premises](#)
 - [Information to Owners of Vehicles](#)
 - [Information to Officers/Staff Cross Contaminated](#)
 - [Information for Person Sprayed with Irritant Spray](#)
 - [Information Sheet for Duty Officers](#)

- 8.3.14 Where irritant spray is discharged and the individual is conveyed to hospital, It is the responsibility of the police to inform NHS of their intention to convey the subject to hospital and their estimated time of arrival at their premises.
- 8.3.15 All operationally discharged Irritant spray canisters are to be seized and retained as productions. Prior to being lodged, the deployed canister **must** be weighed with the weight clearly marked on the packaging and also in the discharging officer's notebook. Police Staff must inform a relevant supervisor of the weight. This supervisor will then update their own notebook with this weight. The Spray should then be sealed within two plastic bags and the label on the production packaging completed, outlining the staff involved, the locus of the incident, the name of suspect and the date of incident.
- 8.3.16 The serial number of the canister must be entered in the production book or equivalent and on the production bag. The Irritant spray canister should be lodged within a lock fast safe or a suitable secure cabinet. If sprays are in temporary storage then the canisters should be transferred to the safe until they can be secured within a productions store.
- 8.3.17 For further guidance on how long productions should be stored, retained and transported, see the [Productions PSOS SOP](#).
- 8.3.18 The line manager of the discharging staff member will make arrangements to supply the staff member with a canister from temporary local stocks until arrangements can be made to have the staff member issued with a permanent replacement. The appointed person responsible for the Divisional / Area management of Irritant Spray will then update the relevant database with details of the replacement canister.
- 8.3.19 Productions, which are contaminated with Irritant spray, should be aired and dried before packaging in the usual manner and be clearly marked as having been contaminated by Irritant spray to alert any other person who may later handle them.

8.4 Accidental Discharge

- 8.4.1 If a canister is accidentally discharged, the canister should be weighed then sealed, as above in double bags and placed in a secure cabinet.
- 8.4.2 A report should be completed by the discharging staff member, outlining the circumstances of the discharge and serial number of the canister and forwarded to their line manager. The Local Area Commander will be responsible for investigating the circumstances surrounding the accidental discharge. CS / PAVA Spray Discharge Report ([Form 064-001](#)) **must also** be completed.
- 8.4.3 As with operational discharge the line manager will make arrangements to supply a temporary Irritant spray from temporary local stocks until arrangements can be made for a permanent replacement.

8.5 Damaged / Faulty Canisters

- 8.5.1 Where a canister leaks as a result of being damaged, it should be placed in a safe location in the open air until the contents are exhausted or there is unlikely to be any further leakage. The canister should then be sealed inside a knife tube and double production bag. The bag must be clearly labelled to the effect that the canister contained within may be leaking.
- 8.5.2 If an Irritant spray canister is found to be faulty then it must immediately be withdrawn from use. The canister should be sealed as above and placed in a secure cabinet. Arrangements should then be made to transport the canister back to the issuing stores department.
- 8.5.3 Should a canister be found to be defective or damaged in any way, it should be withdrawn from service immediately and the appropriate [Irritant Spray Fault or Failure Record form \(140-040\)](#) completed and held locally. The canister should then be sealed and labelled appropriately and thereafter lodged locally.
- 8.5.4 As with operational and accidental discharges the line manager of the discharging staff member will make arrangements to supply that person with a canister from temporary local stocks until arrangements can be made to have the staff member issued with a permanent replacement.
- 8.5.5 If a canister fails to discharge, then it must immediately be withdrawn from use. The canister should be sealed as above and placed in the appropriate secure cabinet. A use of force form should be submitted, outlining the circumstances where the spray failed to discharge. The Command OST Coordinator should also be notified to allow an investigation into the fail to discharge to be instigated. The OST Coordinator will inform the relevant Health and Safety Advisor so that the appropriate course of action can be taken.

8.6 Expired Canisters

- 8.6.1 Expired canisters of Irritant spray should be returned to the issuing stores department.
- 8.6.2 The line manager of the staff member whose canister has expired will make arrangements to supply that person with a temporary canister until a permanent replacement. The appointed person responsible for the Divisional / Area management of Irritant Sprays will then update the relevant database with the details of the replacement.
- 8.6.3 The issuing stores department will arrange disposal of the expired canisters as per agreed procedures.

8.7 Lost Canisters

- 8.7.1 When an Irritant spray is lost, every effort must be undertaken to trace and retrieve it.

- 8.7.2 Once all appropriate measures have been taken to locate the canister and it has not been found, the staff member will require to be issued with a replacement.
- 8.7.3 Staff concerned must report the loss prior to completing their tour of duty, by completing an Irritant Spray Lost Record ([Form 064-021](#)) outlining the circumstances through which the canister has become lost. This form must include the serial number of the lost canister and the efforts undertaken to locate and retrieve it.
- 8.7.4 The form should be forwarded to the staff member's supervisor, for their comment, which must be appended. The Supervisor will ensure that the Report is forwarded via email before going off duty, to their line manager.

8.8 Authority Suspended

- 8.8.1 The Command OST Co-ordinator, or other person designated by the Head of Operational Training, may order the suspension of a staff member's authority to carry Irritant spray following a failure by that individual to satisfactorily complete the relevant section of OST.
- 8.8.2 Where a staff member has had their authority to carry Irritant spray suspended, they will immediately surrender their Authorisation Card and Irritant spray to their supervisor. They will then be removed from operational duties. The surrendered Irritant spray will be stored within an appropriate secured cabinet until such times as the officer's authority to carry Irritant spray is returned. This also applies in circumstances where a staff member has had their authority to carry Irritant spray suspended as a result of failure to recertify in OST within 12 months.
- 8.8.3 The Professional Standards Department may suspend a Staff Member's authority to carry Irritant spray by virtue of the staff member's suspension from duty. In such cases, notification will be sent to the staff member's supervisors who should take possession of their Authorisation Card and arrange for their personal issue canister to be stored within a secured cabinet until such times as the staff member's authority to carry Irritant spray is resumed.

8.9 Transfers

- 8.9.1 When staff permanently leave a Division / Department, their Irritant spray must be returned to local stocks for re-allocation. The appointed person responsible for the Divisional / Area management of Irritant will then update the relevant database with the details of the return of the Irritant spray and locker for re-allocation.

8.10 Resignation

- 8.10.1 When a staff member resigns, they will return their Irritant spray canister and any other PPE equipment to their Supervisor upon completion of their last tour of duty. The staff member will also surrender their authorisation card, along with keys for any individual storage unit.

- 8.10.2 The Supervisor must then inform the appointed person responsible for the Divisional / Area management of Irritant spray who will then update the relevant database with the details of the return of the Irritant spray and locker for re-allocation

List of Associated Legislation

- [Human Rights Act 1998](#)

List of Associated Reference Documents

Standard Operating Procedures

- [Record Retention SOP](#)
- [Care and Welfare of Persons in Police Custody SOP](#)
- [Productions PSOS SOP](#)
- [Use of Force SOP](#)

Guidance

- [Code of Ethics for Policing in Scotland](#)

List of Associated Forms

List of Associated Forms

- Irritant Spray Lost Record (064-021)
- Accident, Incident, Dangerous Occurrence Third Party Report (076-003)
- CS –PAVA Discharge Report (064-001)
- PAVA Irritant Spray Daily Control Sheet (064-007A)
- PAVA Irritant Spray Master Schedule (064-007C)

Police Scotland Tactical Options Model

