

Policy & Procedure

Title: Property Management

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Property Management

Part one – Policy

Policy summary

This Policy & Procedure (P&P) outlines procedural guidelines in relation to property in the Force. It incorporates Property Other than Found (POTF), Found and Lost property.

This PD refers to several areas of property:

- Lost and found
- Evidence recovered
- Seized items
- Prisoners/Detainee's property
- Property related to disputed ownership

Aim

- To ensure that property is handled professionally;
- The integrity of evidence is maintained
- The retention of property is critically reviewed
- Ensures safety to all those who deal with property
- To provide a service to the public.

Scope

This policy guidance applies to:

- Police Officers
- All support staff

The [Code of Ethics](#) published in 2014 by the College of Policing requires us all to do the right thing in the right way. It also recognises that the use of discretion in Policing is necessary but in using discretion, states that you should, "*take into account any relevant policing codes, guidance, policies and procedures into consideration.*"

Compliance

This Policy complies with the following legislation, and also various other regulations, circulars and statutory instruments:

- Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 – in particular, section 22.
- Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act (CPIA) 1996
- Police (Property) Act 1879
- Police (Property) Regulations 1997
- Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA) 2002
- Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Act 2002 (COSHH)
- Management of Police Information (MoPi) 2005, NPIA.
- Health and Safety Executive – Explosives guidelines

Definitions

Here is a glossary of some of the terms used in the policy:

- **Property Other than Found** – Property which comes into police possession relating to an incident, investigation or offence. This includes evidence from a crime scene, seized items, prisoner's and detainee's property and property relating to disputed ownership.
- **Found** – This is property which is either lost by an individual or abandoned and either handed to the police whilst on duty or handed into to a police station. Abandoned/found property can often be related to a crime and as such may be converted to POTF.
- **Lost** – Lost property reports can be made to any police station. The property/enquiry officer will take details from the loser and compare this against found property at regular intervals.
- **Firearm** – A lethal barrelled weapon of any description from which any shot, bullet or other missile can be discharged and includes the component parts of such a weapon and any accessory to such a weapon designed or adapted to diminish flash or noise. Any firearm, imitation firearm, flare pistol, antique firearm, gas gun, ball bearing gun, air pistol, air rifle and any other weapon that resembles a firearm. It includes ammunition.
- **Energetic Material** – a material with a high amount of stored chemical energy that can be released. For example, explosives, pyrotechnics, propellants such as smokeless gunpowder, and fuels (petrol and diesel).
- **Hazardous substance** – Hazardous substances can take many forms, including solids, liquids, gases, mists and fumes. With regards to the 'Control of Substances Hazardous to Health' (COSHH) they can be classified as toxic, very toxic, corrosive, harmful or irritant.
- **Interpleader** – an interpleader application is made by third party and brought to the court to determine the ownership rights of rival claimants to the same property that is held by that third person. This may be used in property ownership disputes that are often undertaken by our Legal Services Department.

Related guidelines

There are also other force policies which may further assist in the understanding of this procedure:

- KiM Property Management System Function Guide Version 4.30
- Health and Safety – Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH) and Risk Assessment.
- Crime Management Branch – Witness Statement Taking.
- Crime Management Branch – The Disposal of Controlled Drugs.
- Forensic Submissions
- Recovery of Firearms
- Firearms and Explosive Control
- Recovery, Storage and Disposal of Motor Vehicles via the Vehicle Recovery Scheme
- Passports – loss/stolen guidance from the Identity and Passport Service (IPS). FIB Intranet Page.

Further advice

For further advice regarding this procedure, please contact the Criminal Justice Policy Unit, Operation Branch.

Part two – Policy procedure

Chapter 1

1. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

1.1 Responsibilities

All police officers and police staff:

Property must be dealt with in an appropriate manner in order to prevent any risk to the integrity of the force and maintain a service to the public. The need to retain property must be balanced against factors such as the legal powers and rights of individuals with the costs of storage and administration involved with property.

All Police officers:

You will have overall responsibility for any property, in particular, identifiable property you receive or seize, ensuring:

- The integrity of evidence is maintained.
- It is entered onto the Property Management System (PMS) as soon as possible and before retiring from duty
- That property is packed and labelled properly where necessary.
- If a temporary store is used, your items are secured and anything of significant value should be kept in the safe suitably located nearby.
- You must also ensure it is retained or dealt with accordingly in line with the Force Policy and Procedure.
- It is returned or disposed of appropriately.

Officer in Case (OIC)

This role is an addition to the above guidelines to all Police Officers and applies to Property other than Found (POTF). The OIC is involved in the investigation relating to the POTF. When a POTF record is created on the PMS, the OIC details will automatically be populated with the FIN of the officer booking in, unless manually changed (see OBI). It is the responsibility of the OIC to use the PMS notes system to appraise Property staff on the progress of the property and give authority to retain, return, photograph or dispose of it. In addition to this, the OIC must always update the PMS if/when the OIC relating to this property changes. An OIC can either be a police officer or an investigating officer (police staff). **The OIC is ultimately responsible for the property.**

Officer Booking In

This role is an addition to the above guidelines to Police Officers and applies to all property. Anyone who enters property onto the PMS system will always be known as the OBI, this information cannot be

changed, and this ensures continuity of business and maintains the integrity of evidence. The PMS will populate the OIC box with the details of the OBI automatically, and if the OIC is known to be different to the OBI, this can be changed at any time.

Inspectors

An Inspector's main responsibilities are:

- Supervising the officers under their command regarding property issues – including health and safety.
- Monitoring the storage/safe keeping of property, as well as transportation and recording of property whilst in police custody, and its eventual disposal.
- Reviewing the retention of property, ensuring there is no unnecessary retention of property.
- Authorising and signing off on property, including those items of property that are high risk– i.e. firearms, drugs and cash (that is relevant to their areas of business).

Please note: the responsibilities of inspectors will generally apply to those inspectors with line management duties for property. When necessary (for example, in the absence of these inspectors) some of the responsibilities will also apply to duty inspectors and/or OIC's Inspector supervisors.

Property Supervisors

A Property Supervisor's main responsibilities are:

- Supervising property officers and ensuring compliance with legislation, policies and procedures.
- Monitoring the storage and safe keeping of property, as well as transportation and recording of property whilst in police custody, and its eventual disposal.
- Reviewing the retention of property items, ensuring there is no unnecessary keeping of property.
- Authorise final disposal of property when necessary, such as for higher risk items including, firearms, cash and drugs.
- Provide guidance to Divisional Managers and Police Officers and any Police staff on property issues.

Property Officers

- Property officers will have the overall responsibility for the safe keeping and handling of property given to them.
- They maintain the secure and safe storage of property at all times, taking into account any hazards or hazardous items of property.
- They maintain the PMS for divisional property stores where items are reported lost, found or POTF, and highlight whether they have been received into the property office or not.
- Some property staff have been designated authority levels of the inspector and/or property supervisor for disposal arrangements. This must be sanctioned by an inspector, and only those designated may carry out these tasks.
- Property officers will countersign or 'sign off' on property and make arrangements for its final disposal. Firearms, cash, drugs or any items deemed to be of a higher risk will have final authorisation from the property supervisor or inspector overseeing property.

Enquiry Desk Staff

- Receives, records, stores, manages and disposes of found and Lost property.
- Receives, record firearms that are handed in or surrendered by the public. (POTF)
- Receives, record Passports/documents required to be surrendered by Court Order or for Bail conditions. (POTF)

NPT Assistants

- In addition to all the duties of Enquiry Desk staff, NPT assistants will have the same responsibilities as 'Property Officer'

1.2 KiM Property Management Software

Humberside Police records lost property, found property and Property other than found. All of which will be recorded on the Property Management System which has been developed by KIM Software Solution

This policy should be read in conjunction with the KiM Property Management Function Guide, which can assist in any technical queries to do with the software.

This policy highlights the processes used for managing property and should not be used as a replacement to the KiM function guide or any aide memoirs produced or any training for this software.

Also, there are system administrators based within Humberside that may be able to assist with technical queries. These system administrators are based within the Information Services Joint Delivery Team.

1.3 Necessity of taking property into police storage

Found

The storage of found property by the Police is inconvenient and costly. It must be avoided whenever possible and should only be taken into police custody when it is essential to do so. Its disposal will take place at the earliest opportunity. To safeguard both property and the personnel who deal with it:

- It will only be released from police custody to a claimant on satisfactory proof of ownership. There is a list of items that should never be retained by the claimant, please click this link to view the list of items: [Prohibitions on Retaining Property](#)
- When it passes from the custody of one person to another the factor will be recorded by signature of receipt.
- Property in police possession will be kept in the most secure manner possible.

Property Other Than Found

Is treated the same as in the above paragraph, as storage can be inconvenient and costly. Before taking property other than found into storage these points below must be consulted:

- It is awaiting expert examination.
- It is awaiting identification.
- Proceedings are contemplated against the owner regarding it.
- There is a dispute as to ownership.
- Where there is no clear indication as to ownership or the owner is unknown.
- Retention is required under Section 22 of the PACE Act 1984.
- Possession of such an item would be unlawful, e.g. drugs.
- To establish the relevance of this item.

1.4 Health and Safety - Safe Handling, Storage and Disposal of Property

All staff involved in the handling of property should have the appropriate training, supervision and instruction to assess the risks and implement adequate control. Property shall be packed in a manner that protects the handler from any harm. It should be stored in a way that will contain any leakage and protect the environment it surrounds or any other property from being contaminated. Property that represents a hazard by its nature should be marked hazardous and stored in a location fit for purpose and disposed of in a safe and ethical manner. This is of particular importance when dealing with certain categories of property that may require specific handling, storage and disposal methods – for example, firearms, ammunition, explosives and fuels/hazardous substances. For list of the most commonly used hazard symbols, please click this link, [Hazard Symbols](#).

Lifting and Handling

Lifting property is also part of the handling process, this should be carried out safely and correctly, minimising the chance of injury to the member of staff handling the property. Any member of staff handling bulky, heavy or large items will be aware of the Force guidance on lifting and handling. For more information see the link below that Occupational Health, Welfare and Safety provide for lifting: [Health and Safety - Intranet link](#)

Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)

Certain types of property that either come in as part of a seizure or as found property, may need to be handled with extreme care. Coming into contact with chemicals or other hazardous substances at work can put staff's health at risk; therefore COSHH covers such eventualities and can provide guidance to those handling such types of property.

If a member of staff feels that an item of property comes under this category, they should seek guidance using this link, [COSHH Guidance](#).

Risk Assessment

All members of staff handling property should be diligent in identifying risks associated with that property. Throughout this Policy & Procedure are areas that detail 'specialist instructions' for items of property that require more careful handling.

The majority of the specialist instructions are those relating to firearms, ammunition, explosives, sharps, glass and fragile items, which should be handled with extreme care at all times. Risk assessments will be necessary when firearms etc are brought in to the enquiry desk or are brought to property staff to book in and Property other than found. It will be necessary for the receiving member of staff or officer to initiate a risk assessment using the guidance provided by our Health and Safety Unit. The 'five steps to risk assessment' can be found on the Occupational Health, Welfare and Safety webpage of our Force intranet: [Risk Assessment - Health and Safety Intranet site](#)

Although required for firearms, these guidelines must be used in any scenario deemed a risk to the staff or working environment.

Chapter 2

2. INITIAL HANDLING AND RECORDING OF PROPERTY

2.1 General Procedures for Recording Property

Humberside Police records lost property, found property and Property other than found. All of which will be recorded on the Property Management System which has been developed by KIM Software Solutions. Access to the Property Management System is gained through the Force Intranet Home Page. Click on the link and it will take you to the log on screen where single sign on will take it straight through to the home screen of KiM.

The system will:

- Record details of property seized during investigations (POTF);
- Record details of property reported as lost by the public;
- Record details of property handed in by the public;
- Record details of sudden death property (POTF);
- Enable the matching of lost items with those recorded as found;
- Produce meaningful reports based on a number of criteria;
- Record actions against property items so as to provide a full audit trail during the life of each item.

Entering an Item on the Property System

When entering an item on the PMS:

- Create a 'new entry' from the property management tab whilst on PMS.
- Your name will automatically be populated in the 'Officer Booking In' and 'Officer in Case' boxes. If you are recording it on behalf of another police officer, their FIN should be entered instead of your own inside the OIC box. The OBI box is blue in colour; this identifies a field which cannot be changed. The OIC box can be amended at anytime should the need occur.

- Show full details of the person from whom you have received or taken it from (N.B. this constitutes personal data under the Data Protection Act 1998);
- If the owner is known, endorse the PMS accordingly;
- List each item separately, more than one item can be added to a property entry.
- List banknotes by their denomination - show coins as a cash total;
- Show the correct category, such as found, lost or POTF;
- State whether a finder wishes to claim the property;

A full description of the property must be recorded on the PMS 'various items' will not do. Enter the description of property exactly as it physically appears or as it is on the exhibit label (if applicable) rather than what it may be used for – i.e. weighing scales not drugs scales. The system is in place to protect everyone and, as such, records must be accurate.

When the classification of property is chosen on the PMS the screen alters its layout, depending on whether its POTF lost or found property.

The property number will only become available once the record is complete – make sure all mandatory fields are fully completed before finishing the record.

Definition of the coloured boxes on the entry screen:

- Blue boxes - represent information automatically populated by the PMS and cannot be changed by the user.
- Yellow boxes - represent mandatory field which the Officer booking in must fill in order to create the entry and receive the property number at the end.
- White boxes - represent optional fields – the officer booking in may or may not need to use these boxes depending on the circumstances.
- Red box – this indicates the class of the property – whether it be Lost, Found or POTF.

Entry Notes

Entry notes should be used initially to record information about the event that has occurred or the reason for seizing/detaining property to expand on the drop down option. Notice that you can also add Item notes later when recording details of individual items.

These notes are to help both you and the property officer in managing the property. Please remember that the Defence can always call for this record so think about what you are noting as it cannot later be changed.

2.2 Booking in Property Other than Found (POTF)

Initial Action

POTF is recorded on the Property Management System (PMS) is the responsibility of the officer in the case (OIC) and covers items which:

- Are the subject of a charge or summons;
- Are obtained by means of a crime;
- Represent a security risk; or
- For which proceedings are pending.

All property seized by an officer will be either deposited at the station where the suspect is being held, or if no suspect is involved, it will go to the station where the investigator is based, as soon as possible. This includes property seized as a result of a search of premises. The only exceptions to this rule are when members of the Collision Investigation Unit and Vehicle Investigation Unit deposit vehicle parts (not motor vehicles) seized for examination at the station of storage nearest their branch office, and those recoveries made by Major Incident Team. There are also special provisions regarding the Economic Crime section and firearms – see section on specialised handling of property.

Normally, POTF property items for storage are:

- Dangerous or their possession is illegal;
- Offensive weapons;

- Weapons used to facilitate a crime;
- Required for forensic examination;
- Forged documents;
- Counterfeit goods;
- Required as evidence and a photograph / copy will not suffice; or
- Seized so Humberside Police can return them to the owner.

When property is seized:

- It is brought into a temporary storage location by the seizing officer or other officer intending to enter this property on the system;
- The officer will create an entry on the PMS as per above guidance on [entering property on the PMS](#), describing the items and their exact location at the temporary store. (There are exact locations for officers to choose from on the PMS)
- You should only enter the items seized at the same time/date, from the same person and the same place. If any one of these parameters differs then create a separate entry and cross reference them using a common C and C Ref (Command and Control), Crime Ref or Operation Name. This will ensure they are "Grouped".
- Pay particular attention to forensic items as these are frequently overlooked and, as a result, remain in the property store far longer than necessary;
- Create a cross reference by entering the crime number, log number, custody reference or CATS reference into the POTF property record, at least ONE of these must be filled in, in order to complete the PMS entry.
- When applicable, the officer will add an 'entry note' including specialist handling or other instructions for the receiving property staff.
- Depending on the circumstances of each property entry, the officer booking in the property may print off a receipt to hand to the owner or person the POTF is taken from. This is a function that will be prompted by the PMS when items are entered.
- On occasions where a receipt is unavailable the person whom the property was seized from must have an equivalent receipt exacting the description of the property and obtain the relevant signatures, e.g. an ONB entry.
- Any items added into a property entry that cannot be accounted for by the receiving property staff will be highlighted to the OIC via the PMS. The OIC may receive an email stating 'error with entry'. Therefore, it is crucial that all individual items of property are accounted for at the earliest stage.

Police item/reference numbers (Exhibit numbers) – when property is recovered by an investigator/officer and a witness statement is taken, each item of property should be itemised using a unique reference on the witness statement, this exhibit number can then be added to each item when booked in to the PMS (by whoever is booking property in) . The format for the identification number is outlined in section 2.3. For further information please see the Crime Management Branches Policy & Procedure on: [Witness Statement Taking](#)

Retention of POTF by Owner

Following positive identification, the owner of the POTF will be required to take possession of it at once, except the in the circumstances described in the below section (2.3) regarding refused access. This method is preferred due to the constraints of storage at stations of storage; therefore, officers or investigators must make sure this option is explored before seizing and then storing more than is necessary.

Responsibilities of the OIC when retained by the owner:

- The OIC should ensure that an appropriate entry is made on the PMS and categorised as POTF.
- The OIC should return the property to the owner or the owner's agent as soon as practicable, against a signature in on a receipt that can be produced from the relevant PMS entry
- Also, the OIC must obtain an undertaking in statement form that the property will be made available at any court hearing, if required. This form can also be printed off from the relevant PMS entry.
- In the case of perishable property, obtaining as full a description of it as possible, including serial

numbers and date stamps on wrappers etc. A photograph should then be taken of the property. After this it may then be disposed of by the complainant. 'Perishables' include those items that require refrigeration or freezing such as meats, fats, fruit, vegetables etc.

Production at court

When property retained by the owner is required to be produced at court, it will be the owner's responsibility to do so. Therefore the OIC will ensure the owner is notified of the dates and times and the venue of the court, checking that the property is available for production. The OIC must also update the PMS via the notes section of any updates that may assist the property office i.e. the court dates. This will ensure the review for this property entry is delayed until after the court date.

If the property is not available the OIC will liaise with the appropriate file team decision-maker who will:

- Review the case and, in particular, the availability of secondary evidence to be made available to the court.
- When appropriate, make arrangements for the secondary evidence to be made available to the court.
- Inform the Crown Prosecution Service.

When considered desirable, property may be photographed in order to assist in the presentation of evidence. Details of property, whether or not to be exhibited, is subject to disclosure and should be itemised on the unused material schedule (MG6C).

Retention by a witness

As well as the owner, property involved in an investigation may be kept by the witness until the court date or until the owner is established.

For example, a metal theft investigation may involve several tons of metal. If it has been established that the scrap metal dealer is a witness it will be practicable to ask them to retain the property for safekeeping until the owner is established, or if the owner is unknown, for the duration of the investigation until the property is required for production at court. The OIC must ensure a form 166B 'Statement of Undertaking to Retain Property' is filled out and a signature must be obtained by the witness. If the witness had signed the undertaking, the property becomes their responsibility and they will not dispose of it until instructed to do so by the OIC. The OIC must inform the witness that if they have not received an authorisation to release the property after 3 months, the witness must contact the OIC for further instruction.

If the owner is established after the undertaking has been signed by the witness, the first F166B will be overwritten by a new F166B that will subsequently be issued to the owner.

If it is established that the witness is a suspect, under no circumstances should the property be retained by them.

Property Disclaimers.

A property disclaimer can be signed by an owner of property to give up any rights of ownership to that property. Officers may consider issuing property disclaimers to owner's of property wherever possible. For example, a property disclaimer could be issued for a seized article such as a catapult. This would save the prosecution applying for a confiscation order which may not be issued by the courts.

2.3 Access to Property

When the property is seized by an Officer, the person who had custody or control of it immediately prior to its seizure, or who was the occupier of the premises on which it was seized, must be provided with a list or description of the property, if a request is made, and done in a timely manner.

If the property is for the purpose of investigating an offence then the person who had custody or control of the property immediately prior to it being seized, or an agent, may be allowed supervised access to the

property to examine it or to have it photographed or copied or provided with a photograph/copy within reasonable time of that request.

There is no duty to allow access to or supply a photograph or copy if the OIC of an investigation has reasonable grounds for believing that this would prejudice the investigation of an offence or any criminal proceedings. If access is refused the OIC must inform the property officers via the notes system on the PMS to the relevant POTF entry. A good example of this would be child pornographic material; this has reasonable grounds not to allow access.

Cross contamination should always be considered if OIC's are considering allowing property to be accessed. Integrity of evidence must be upheld at all times.

Provisions should also be made should the prosecutor or defence wish to examine the property, but the property will always remain in the custody of the police during this time.

2.4 **Labelling**

All property which is to be stored at the police station will have a property label securely attached to it.

Every POTF item should be labelled with a yellow evidence label – (or placed in an evidence bag) clearly showing the POTF reference, or otherwise have a tie-on buff label attached showing the POTF reference number. The use of yellow evidence labels provides property staff with the information they need to check against the PMS. It is also helpful if the officer puts all the items from a seizure in the same place/shelf in the temporary store, otherwise it can be confusing for the property staff collecting the property. If the officer booking in felt it necessary to, they can always print out a copy of the history of the property being booked in and attach this to the evidence bag as further reference.

All found property also needs to be correctly labelled displaying the PMS reference number.

2.5 **Specialised handling of property**

Some items of property require more careful consideration and handling than others. For reasons of health and safety and security these items require such handling:

- Firearms, ammunitions and explosives.
- Cash – large amounts.
- Drugs
- Motor Vehicles

Firearms and Ammunition

Initial handling of firearms

A firearm can be seized and then brought into the police station or a person can attend the front counter to surrender or hand in a found firearm. The person receiving the firearm should consider all of the safe handling aspects of such property. A firearm should not be processed until it has been made safe.

Weapons will always be assumed to be loaded until they are made safe (proved).

If the firearm can be made safe by the receiving officer then the correct procedure should be followed and a green label (F854) should be attached to the firearm. Any authorised officer that subsequently makes a weapon safe should always attach a green label after doing so. The firearm should be booked in as normal, following the normal procedure either as a POTF or Found entry. Firearms must be entered on the PMS before being stored.

If a weapon cannot be made safe by the receiving officer, the weapon should be tagged with a red label (F855) indicating that the weapon has not been made safe and placed in a ballistics bag with the muzzle faced downwards. It should then be placed in a secure environment at the earliest opportunity. Prevention of unauthorised persons handling the weapon should be maintained at all times until it is made safe. The receiving officer must then immediately contact an authorised firearms officer such as ARV or OSS or another authorised officer to make it safe.

On some occasions there may not be the option of using a ballistics bag; in this circumstance, the weapon shouldn't be handled until the ARV/OSS can make the firearm safe. On other occasions a trained officer may not be able to make the firearm safe (usually if dealing with a rusty firearm), if this is the case, the firearm will then be transported to the force armourer at Queens Gardens Police Station for further assistance. The firearm should be booked in, following the normal procedure as either a POTF or Found entry on PMS. If the firearm is not required for forensics submission or evidence, it should be disposed of as soon as possible via a return to owner or another licence holder where possible.

When a record for a firearm or ammunition is entered on the KiM system, an automatic email is sent to the firearms SPOC who will then pass on this information to NaBis if the item needs to be analysed.

Points to remember:

- Tags should not be fitted to the trigger or trigger guard. If there is nowhere on the weapon to attach the tag, you should attach it to the seal on the property bag, or seek further advice from Firearms.
- Ammunitions and firearms should not be booked in together as they need to be stored separately. If the items must be booked into together on the same POTF entry, then the POTF entry must show the locations of each separated item.
- Any surrendered firearms, ammunition or explosives by the public will be regarded as POTF and booked in through the normal process.

Firearms Licensing Officers should ensure that they follow the same process for initial handling and booking in should they come into contact with firearms via a licensing issue. The items will be added to the PMS in the same manner.

Initial Handling of Ammunitions and Explosives

In the same way as firearms, whether seized/found/surrendered, ammunition and explosives should be correctly handled by the receiving officer. An officer depositing ammunition or explosives must make the receiving officer aware if they feel they are unstable, is pin fire (grenade) or its appearance/condition raises any concerns. If so, immediate contact must be made with the local Explosive Ordnance Department (EOD) at the Catterick Barracks, who will make the ammunition/explosive safe. They can be contacted through the Northern Command Centre. Until this time, the ammunition/explosive should be stored as safely as possible, making sure no unauthorised handling occurs. The ammunition or explosive should be transported to Tower Grange at the earliest opportunity as they have the only designated bomb safe. Particular attention should be paid to black powder (this is used for civil war re-enactments), which must be stored separately in a wooden box which has been constructed with nails and glued. For further information on the storage of such property, please see [section 4.5](#).

All other ammunition will be entered in the appropriate POTF or found PMS entry through the normal procedure and stored in accordance with storage guidance until its release/disposal is authorised.

PLEASE NOTE: Any further enquiries regarding the initial safe handling of firearms, ammunitions and explosives, please contact either the Firearms Licensing Manager at Firearms Licensing or the Health and Safety Co-ordinator. Also see the Policy & Procedure titled: 'Recovery of Firearms Including Guidance Regarding Forensic Examination'.

Where firearms, ammunition and explosives are needed for subsequent examination or assessment, they should be sent to the National Ballistic Intelligence System (NaBIS), c/o West Midlands Police Headquarters, Force Intelligence, PO Box 52, Lloyd House, Colmore Circus, Queensway, Birmingham, B4 6NQ, email: ah_nabis@west-midlands.pnn.police.uk. This work is carried out by investigators and Firearms Licensing.

Surrendered Firearms

An interim measure has now been implemented when firearms, ammunition and explosives are surrendered to the enquiry offices. For the meantime, when a firearm etc is received, a log will be created containing the details of the surrendered item. This serves three purposes: the first is to show the correct

audit and cross reference when creating a surrendered firearm as a POTF entry on the PMS. The second, is to send to SRV and OSS who can potentially make the firearm safe when receiving staff cannot. The third reason is that the log can serve as a starting point for a potential investigation. Enquiry desk clerks should inform duty inspectors so they can check such firearms.

Fireworks

Fireworks will only be seized if absolutely necessary. If brought in by the public as 'found' property the police are duty bound to accept such property. It must therefore be handled and stored in the correct way. For further guidance see the Specialist Instructions section within the ['Storage' section of this PD](#). Also, for further guidance see the Health and Safety Executive website and their relevant guidance on this:

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/explosives/enforcingauthority.pdf>

For further information regarding this process please see the Crime Management's Policy & Procedure, ['Ballistics Intelligence'](#)

For more general information on the recovery of firearms, see [Recovery of Firearms including guidance regarding forensic examination](#)

Cash Seizure

There are 3 types of POTF cash that the police come into contact with:

- Seized for safe keeping (sudden death or road traffic accidents).
- Seized money – over £1,000.
- Seized money– under £1,000.

Seized Money

Significant amounts of cash may be seized by an officer from a premises or other location that is involved in a specific crime. This section offers guidance to officers who come into contact with cash seizure and explains how to deal with cash with regards to its property function.

Over £1,000

- When money is initially seized with regards to the investigation of a crime, it must be arranged for Scenes of Crime to come and photograph the money in situ.
- Any forensics with regards to the cash must also be preserved by following the relevant forensics guidance.
- Cash will next be double bagged – this means bagging the money into one evidence bag first, and then this bag is placed into another evidence bag and sealed.
- This must be done in the presence of the suspect by two officers, if possible.
- The money **must not** be counted.
- Officers must record any comments made regarding the cash in their official notebooks
- The cash must then be brought to the nearest divisional property office and booked in by the normal POTF procedures. The officer entering the cash onto the PMS must estimate the amount of cash.
- If necessary, it will also be entered into the custody record of the arrested person who was in possession of the cash.
- The evidence bag will be clearly labelled with the property reference number and a description of its contents. For example 'Large sum of money – Estimated £10,000'.
- This will then be stored by the property officer in the safe, or if too bulky, it will be kept in a secure store. This location will be added to the PMS entry.
- If the cash is connected to a detainee in custody and that person is bailed/charged the officer will then need to contact the Economic Crime Section as soon as possible so they can collect the money.
- If 'no further action' the money will be given back to the owner via the correct disposal methods of the property office. The PMS entry will be updated accordingly with this disposal information, via the 'return to owner' option.

It is **essential** that the officer notifies the Economic Crime section as quickly as possible with amounts

over £1,000. This is to ensure the money is presented to the Magistrates' Court within 48 hours (except weekends and bank holidays).

For any further information regarding the initial handling and seizure of cash please see the Economic Crime Section intranet page: [click here](#) Or alternatively, The Crime Management Policy on '[Search, Seizure and Forfeiture of Cash - Proceeds of Crime Act 2002](#)'

Under £1,000

- Seized monies under £1,000 will follow the same seizure process – photographed in situ if necessary as well as preserving any forensic value.
- The cash will be double bagged and witnessed by an officer as well as the person whom it was seized from.
- The decision to count the cash at this stage or once it is taken bagged to the station is at the discretion of the duty inspector.

The PMS system can cater for large amount of money to be calculated via the currency calculator. When entering 'cash' as the subcategory on the description, PMS will automatically assist in counting the currency by denomination, and will divert to another screen where the OBI can enter various denominations.

Receipts

Upon seizure of cash there are three receipts that must be handed to the owner/agent.

- 1) Cash Seizure Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA) Receipt – Every person who has cash seized from them or may have an interest in the cash must be served with a POCA receipt prior to the First Detention Hearing. There are two copies – one for the recipient and the other must be retained for the cash seizure file.
- 2) Cash Seizure Form A – this is completed for continued detention of seized cash over £1,000. This will only apply to certain investigations.
- 3) Cash Seizure Court Notification Form – this form is for the recipient's information only and is served alongside the Form A and POCA receipt.

Counterfeit Currency

The procedures and processes connected to the seizure and processing of counterfeit currency can be found on the Crime Management Branch's Policy & Procedures under Crime Investigation – see link [here](#)

Drugs.

Drugs may be seized as per normal property seizure guidelines. All drugs to be stored by the property offices must be recorded on the PMS following the normal procedures:

- The drugs should be booked in by the OIC involved in the investigation, but if this is not possible the officer booking in property on behalf on someone will have their details filled in automatically. The OBI should then inform the OIC who will then update the PMS that they with the OIC box with their FIN.
- Suspected or confirmed controlled drugs and related equipment in police possession must be properly itemised and accounted for.
- Entries should be revised when further information is available after scientific analysis – e.g. 250 white tablets = 250 ecstasy tablets.
- If drugs are to be stored at property offices, they must be stored in a secure manner- in a lockable room, where only the property staff have access.
- OIC's must seal the drugs upon seizure, if they come to the property store unsealed, the property staff will contact the OIC (as written on PMS), and get them to come and seal it as soon as possible. Any seals should be added to the PMS on the appropriate property entry. Seal numbers can be added at a later stage if this is required.

OIC's have overall responsibility for any suspected or confirmed controlled drugs they receive or seize. They are required to update the PMS on the progress of the drugs and give authority to retain or dispose of them.

Cannabis Factories

- When items are seized from a cannabis factory, it is not necessary to retain more than one of each item, unless instructed by an authorising officer such as an Inspector, for example, one plant, one lamp, one fan. This is retained for evidential purposes and will be examined at a later date.
- The remaining drugs and paraphernalia will be disposed of as per the guidelines laid out in the Crime Management's Policy & Procedure on 'The seizure of controlled drugs'.
- OIC's must ensure that property officers are always up to date with cannabis seizures. Likewise, property office staff must enquire about the status of that property's investigation should further storage/retention become a problem.
- For packing instructions, please see section [3.3](#)

For more information on Cannabis Factories, see the Crime Management's Crime Investigation section. Policy & Procedure: [Cannabis Factories](#)

Motor Vehicles

For further information on the correct procedures to follow for the recovery of motor vehicles, please see the Policy & Procedure: 'Recovery, Storage and Disposal of Motor Vehicles via the Vehicle Recovery Scheme':

<http://intranet.humberside.police.uk/Branches/Corporate%5FDevelopment/Documents/Practice%5FDirections/Operations/Incident%20Handling/Communications%20Centre/Recovery%20Storage%20and%20Disposal%20of%20Motor%20Vehicles%20v6.0.pdf>

2.6 Handling and Recording Lost Property

Receiving reports

Upon receipt of a report of lost property the patrolling officer will enter details in his official notebook and, at the first opportunity, cause the station procedure to be adopted (see next paragraph). The person receiving a report of lost property at a Police Station will also immediately adopt the station procedure. Officers **must** request that a loser informs the police if the property is recovered so that records may be completed by enquiry desk staff and/or property officers.

Station Procedure

A search must be interrogated of found property on the PMS and if already reported as found, the loser will be informed of this fact either by telephone, letter or both. Generally, if there is no realistic chance of found property being reunited with an owner, the property will be allowed to be retained by the finder. Should the likelihood be that the property can be reunited with the owner; the police in all cases will take possession of the found property.

The finder's personal details will not be given out to the loser, unless we have their prior permission. On most occasions, the finder will be contacted by the property office. This will be a rare occasion as the police will in most part have possession of identifiable found property and will contact the loser.

Recording Lost Property on the PMS

When creating an entry on the PMS, the classification of 'lost' should be selected and the entry screen will alter accordingly, so that the officer making the entry can include the relevant information. When recording lost property, a full and accurate description will always be entered. The same colour coded system for the entry boxes applies – see section 'Definitions of coloured boxes on entry screen'.

Lost Property Traced

See section on Retention and Release of Property – Non Evidential - Lost Property Traced and Release.

Special Instructions

Firearms and Other Potentially Dangerous Items

When an officer receiving a report of lost property is of the opinion that such property may cause danger to the public he will immediately inform the duty inspector or property supervisor who will ensure that adequate measures are taken to safeguard the public. If a report is of a lost firearm and/or ammunition/explosive the officer will also inform Firearms Licensing and circulate details of the loss.

Public Transport

When property is believed to have been lost on public transport, an entry will be made in the PMS and the loser referred to the appropriate transport undertaking.

Postal Orders and Money Orders

When such are reported lost, an entry will be made on the PMS and the loser referred to the local Post Office.

Items Lost on a Particular Route

When property is lost on a particular route (e.g. from a motor vehicle) the person receiving the report will, where appropriate, ensure that enquiries are made of other divisions and forces along the route. If not completed at the time, this will be followed up by a Property Officer.

Circulating Details and Rewards

When a report of lost property merits general circulation the officer or member of staff receiving it will ensure written details are sent to the Divisional Intelligence Bureau for inclusion on crime information briefings. Advice concerning rewards shall not be given to members of the public and the police shall not act as intermediaries. The name and address of finders will not be given to persons wishing to give rewards without prior permission of the finder.

Reports of Loss Made to Different Divisions

If property is reported lost to a station in a division other than in which it was lost, full details will be recorded on the PMS. The officer creating the lost report will be able to specify the location of the loss. Therefore, the lost report will belong to the location it was originally assigned. If the location changes, the PMS can be updated using the 'transfer' button on main screen for that particular lost property entry.

Passports

You should take the following action in relation to lost, found, stolen and non UK passports. The information here is taken directly from the Force Intelligence Bureau webpage, for any further guidance please contact them directly.

Found Passports (Form R01)

The Identity and Passport Service (IPS) ask that under NO circumstances should a passport, handed in at a Police station or found by a police officer during the course of their duties, that has been outside the control of the rightful holder, be returned to the rightful holder. No attempt should be made to try and trace the rightful holder to return the passport. A passport remains the property of HM Government and in order to maintain the integrity of the British passport, it must be returned to IPS to be recorded as recovered and then destroyed. (Please see below for the address).

A passport that has been in the hands of a third party may have been used to carry out fraudulent activity, such as illegal entry to the UK or to obtain financial gain from the financial services sector. IPS shares the Lost and Stolen database with Law Enforcement Agencies such as Interpol. It is therefore imperative that all recoveries are returned to IPS as soon as is practicable so that the relevant databases can be kept up to date.

However, IPS also appreciate that a UK passport may be an exhibit within an investigation and cannot be returned until such time as the investigation has reached its conclusion. Therefore, where a passport is being retained as an exhibit, a form R01 **MUST** be completed and forwarded, in its place, to the IPS address below. Once passports, used as exhibits, are no longer required, they must be returned to IPS for recording and destruction.

Please return all British passports and completed R01s to:
PO Box 654
Peterborough
PE1 1EP

Prior to sending any British passports the top right corner of the front and back cover and the bio-page of the passport, should be cut off to physically cancel the passport to make it less attractive or useful to criminals.

In the circumstances where a member of the public realises that the Police have returned their passport to IPS and feels aggrieved that action was not taken to trace them, the above advice about fraud prevention should be given. This action is designed to help protect members of the public from identity fraud and other related criminality and is therefore in their best interest. Where the passport holder is not satisfied with the response provided they should be referred to IPS Advice line on 0300 222 0000.

Lost/Stolen Passports (LS01)

Should an officer or member of staff receive a report from a member of the public that their passport has been lost or stolen the person should be given a form LS01 which can be downloaded from the www.direct.gov website. Alternatively, the person concerned can call the IPS Advice line on 0300 222 0000 who will supply advice on the different methods of reporting a passport lost or stolen. If the passport is reported **only as lost**, the officer or member of staff **need not record this in the lost property register as this serves no useful purpose**.

All reports of **STOLEN** passports **MUST** be recorded as a crime and referenced in accordance with the National Crime Recording Standards.

The quicker IPS receive notification, from the loser or victim, of loss or theft of passports, the sooner the passports are entered on the list of suspect documents made available to law enforcement staff. Police co-operation is essential in helping to combat identity theft/fraud.

The IPS Lost, Stolen and Recovered Passport Manager can be contacted on 0207 901 2117 if you require any assistance. This information is for police use, the public should be advised to contact the IPS Advice line on 0300 222 0000.

Non-UK Passports

All foreign national passports received by Police forces should be sent by secure means to the National Document Fraud Unit (NDFU).

– **NDFU, PO Box 1000, Hayes, Middlesex, UB3 5WB**

This will include those where there are no visible signs of tampering as well as those tampered with. NDFU are then able to check the individuals to see if they are persons in whom they are interested. The books also enable NDFU to study current trends in document abuse in overseas passports before forwarding them to embassies. The IPS form R01 can be used as a means for Police officers to supply detail to NDFU.

If you require assistance with a passport (UK or non UK) in a criminal enquiry, please contact your Local Immigration Team. Should they be unavailable NDFU may be able to assist. NDFU are based at Status Park near Heathrow Airport and the Duty Officer can be contacted on 020 8745 2480 seven days a week between the hours of 0700 and 2000.

NB. Do not cut document corners from or mutilate non UK passports in any way. They are not HM Government property and therefore should not be rendered invalid by police officers and staff.

For further information regarding passports see Crime Management's Policy on '[Schengen Information System and Reporting Lost/Stolen Passports and UK Driving Licences](#)'

2.7 Handling and Recording Found Property

Initial Action

As previously stated in the introduction, the storage of property by the Police is inconvenient and costly, it should be avoided where at all possible and only taken into police custody when essential to do so, and even then, it will be disposed of at the earliest opportunity.

Members of the public who bring property they have found to the police station and state they wish to claim it should be allowed to keep the property unless common sense dictates otherwise. Where a finder retains an item they should be advised, in order to minimise any criminal or civil liability, to retain the item for at least **14 days before disposing of it or assuming ownership**.

Property staff may receive found property that is deemed to be 'rubbish' and could be disposed of immediately. This should be at the discretion of the property officer, if they deem it to be of no value and extremely unlikely that it would be claimed by an owner. These occasions are ad hoc and will require a check with a property officer supervisor or supervising inspector.

Police officers **and** Enquiry Counter Assistants must check all found property on the CIS4 when it comes into the possession of the Police. If a check shows the property may be the subject of a crime, **the officer must contact the HUB or the OIC of the relevant Crime Report, who may need to inspect the found property item and issue instructions. Property Office will also provide advice.**

Enquiry Office Staff, or any Officer accepting Found property at police stations are required to:

- Make an entry on the Property Management System (PMS) indicating the finders wish either to claim or disclaim the property, record the property properly and manage its retention accordingly;
- Cross check the entry on the PMS. Lost reports.
- Repeat any cross check you may consider useful;
- Label and ensure its safe custody;
- Make enquiries to trace the loser and contact them to arrange return.
- Give a receipt and 'found form', which is located in the print section. The found form is relevant for both property retained by the finder or the police, and is a useful document for staff to use.
- Ensure property to be retained by the police is placed in the Temp Found Store.
- Found Property should be retained in the Enquiry Office Temp Store for a period of 14 days and if not claimed or returned to finder, it can be submitted to the nearest Property Office for disposal.

Prohibitions on Retaining Property

One of the first areas of consideration when dealing with found property is the ability of the finder to retain the property and prohibitions to this retention. The relevant member of staff/officer **must** initially establish if retention is possible and encourage if so.

Person's prohibited- finders will be encouraged to retain property unless:

- All police officers and staff including the Special Constabulary.
- The finder is of no fixed abode or does not reside locally.
- The finder is a juvenile.

Property not to be retained- The following list shows types of property a finder is not allowed to keep:

- Recorded in the Lost property register.
- Identifiable property.
- Drugs.
- Postal orders.
- Property of considerable value, or estimated to be worth over £100.
- Bank cards.
- Firearms (and parts ancillary to firearms), weapons, explosives, ammunition, etc.
- Pornography.
- Items of electrical and electronic equipment which might contain personal data.
- Mobile telephones.
- Gift vouchers.

- Passports.
- Confidential / official documents, birth certificates, death certificates.
- Bankbooks.
- Social Security documents, driving licenses, vehicle excise licenses.
- National insurance and savings certificates / stamps.
- HM Force's equipment.
- Medals.
- Any motorized or electronically propelled vehicle which could be used in an antisocial manner (e.g. Mini motorcycles, powered scooters, etc.).
- Property where continued possession by the finder would be unlawful.
- Cash.

Property Found in Police Vehicles

All property found in police vehicles is to be handed to the relevant property office and recorded as found property (or POTF if appropriate) in the normal manner.

Found Property Reported to Patrolling Officers

If you are handed found property while you are away from a police station:

- Ask the finder to keep the property unless it is a category of property, which must be retained by the police, or something they would not be allowed to keep. If the finder does not wish to keep it obtain a disclaimer;
- Enter the details on the Police officer's pocket book; if property is to be retained by finder, ensure this is written in the PNB and ask the finder to sign it.
- Inform the finder (if they are retaining) that the property must be kept for one month before they can dispose of it.
- Transfer the details to the Property Management System (PMS) as soon as you return to a police station, before retiring your tour of duty;
- If the property is retained by the police, it will be deposited as soon as possible and the location of the property must be specified on the PMS entry. Any other information that may be useful to the property office could be added as an 'entry note'.
- Re-contact the finder with a property reference number and identify whether a receipt is required. Also, if the finder doesn't wish to keep the property when the month has passed, the officer must obtain a disclaimer. The disclaimer can be printed from the PMS entry via the 'print' button.

Claimed by Loser before deposited at Station

Officers in possession of property handed to them in the street which is claimed by the loser before it has been deposited at a station will comply with the following points:

- Satisfy themselves that the claim is genuine with proof of identification if necessary.
- Obtain a full name and address of the claimant, together with his/her signature on the blue and yellow copy of the temporary receipt.
- Make an appropriate official notebook entry.
- Inform the property officer who will make a found entry on the PMS

Property Found on Private Premises or Public Transport

Reported to a Patrolling Officer

When a report of property found on private premises or on a vehicle belonging to a public transport undertaking (train, PCV etc) is made to a patrolling officer, it will be first established if the finder is prohibited from retaining the property. They will be encouraged to return it to the management of the premises or public transport undertaking concerned and the officer will:

- Enter full details in his official notebook, including the words 'Finder agreed to return property to....' (Name and address of premises or public transport undertaking).
- Also if possible, obtain a signature to confirm these details.

- Officer will create entry on the PMS when they return to the station.

Reported to a Police Station

When a report of such property is made at a police station the person receiving it will establish whether the finder is prohibited from retaining it and, if not, encourage the finder to return it. An entry will be made on the PMS with an 'entry note' stating: 'finder agreed to return property to...' (Name and address of premises or public transport undertaking).

Where the finder is prohibited from retaining the property or is unable to return the property to the management of the premises or public transport undertaking, the officer receiving the property will accept it and make an appropriate entry on the PMS (whether to a patrolling officer or at a police station).

Information Management and Return of Property

In the cases covered in the above paragraphs, the person receiving the report will ensure that the management of the premises or public transport undertaking concerned are notified *as soon as possible*. In the case of property found on a vehicle belonging to a public transport undertaking and handed to the police, it may be released into the custody of the owner/owner's agent against signature of receipt of the undertaking following and appropriate entry on the PMS.

2.8 Abandoned Property

Abandoned property is that which by its condition and the nature of the circumstances in which it was found appears to have been abandoned (e.g. old motor cycle or pedal cycle parts recovered from drains etc). If a member of the public brings abandoned property to a property office, they will be instructed to contact the local authority to remove the abandoned property as waste. It shouldn't be booked in as found property.

2.9 Disputed Ownership

When there is a civil dispute to the ownership and the parties try to hand the property to the police, it shall not be accepted. However, a report of the dispute will be recorded on Command and Control or in the officer's official notebook.

2.10 Perishables

Perishable property retained by the police where the owner is not known shall not be placed in storage but disposed of at the earliest opportunity. This may be authorised by a police officer or property officer supervisor as soon as possible, ensuring a suitable record of disposal is detailed either in the property book or in the officer's official notebook. All proceeds shall be credited to the Police Fund and returned to the owner if subsequently traced. 'Perishable' includes those commodities, which require preserving by refrigeration or freezing such as meats, sausages, fish, fats etc, in addition to fruit and vegetables etc.

2.11 Initial Handling of Found Money

Small Sum – this will be booked in by the normal 'found property' procedure. The property description must indicate the exact amount of money found. This should be sealed in an envelope or equivalent packaging to ensure it is not re opened unnecessarily. When a property officer determines the exact figure of 'a small amount' they should take all the circumstances into consideration.

Large Sum – A 'large sum' is at the discretion of the supervisor at the property office as exact circumstances surrounding the money will determine different outcomes.

For example, it could be £3,000 found in £1 coins. In this scenario, it may be impracticable to store this at a divisional property store. Therefore, the money will be sent to the Business Administration team for that division who will bank it accordingly for safe-keeping. If it's £3,000 in £50 notes, it may be more practicable to store in the property office where it was booked in. All property staff should weigh up the circumstances accordingly.

The PMS allows has a currency calculator which allows entries by denomination, i.e. 2 x £20 notes, 5 x £10 notes (sterling) etc. This will then be displayed on the property entry screen when completed.

For safe storage, retention and disposal of found money see all the relevant sections regarding each area further on in this Policy & Procedure

2.12 **Handling and Recording of Sudden Death Property**

All property taken as a result of any sudden death must be entered into the PMS as Property other than found. This may be for security and safekeeping purposes, or may be involved in the death itself.

When booking this property in, a full description of the property must be recorded together with a brief clear summary of the nature of the incident so that the property office understands the reason why it has been seized. Include the name and address of the next of kin where possible.

Sudden death property is dealt with in a separate Force Policy in greater detail. But for property that may help identify the cause of death, or possibly linked to the death will be booked in as Property Other than Found by the normal procedures.

For further information on sudden death property see the Crime Management's Policy & Procedure under Crime Investigation.

Chapter 3

3. PACKING PROPERTY

All property should be packed appropriately before storage, to ensure that integrity of evidence is maintained, and well as security and health and safety. All staff coming into contact with property must adhere to the basic packing principles.

3.1 **Examples of packaging property:**

- Place banknotes in a money envelope when possible;
- Put coins in a suitable bag;
- Place sharp instruments in knife tubes
- Place hypodermic needles or syringes in an approved sharps container;
- Put live cannabis plants into brown paper bags;
- Package clothing bedding and footwear in brown paper sacks.

Property bags should not be overfilled. Each bag must have the property number on it. Bulky items need not be bagged but make sure they are correctly labelled with a property tag displaying the property number. When packaging and handling property take into account the health and safety issues of weight / size / shape / etc.

3.2 **Security Ties/Seals**

The security tie is a specially designed plastic fastening bearing a unique serial number. Once properly assembled, it can only be opened by being broken. Security ties are only used when necessary to prove contents have not been removed or disturbed. In the majority of cases 'evidence' is retained in an individual tamper evident bag which has its own unique serial number. On each occasion, serial numbers should be recorded on the relevant PMS entry. If the property is of a sensitive nature, security ties should be considered but in most cases, and ordinary string label will be sufficient. An example of the use for security tags are cash seizures.

Rules for sealing on the PMS

When dealing with seals we mean the concept of tamperproof unique seals that are designed so they cannot be re-used.

The full logic of seals applies and the rules are:

- You cannot seal items that are in two different places.
- You cannot do something to an item in a sealed group unless you either take the same action for all items sealed together or you break the seal first.
- You cannot re-use a seal number.

If a security tie is broken, for instance if the bag is opened by forensics for examination, then the broken seal can be updated as 'broken' on the PMS. The broken seal must be placed in the bag with the property and the PMS must be updated with the new seal when the property is re-sealed. Whoever breaks and re seals should be the officer to update the PMS.

3.3 Packing Specialist Items

Below you will find specialist packing instructions for certain items of property. For a more extensive list, please see Appendix 1 of this document, it will also provide assistance for packing items for forensic submission. Please click [here](#).

Drugs

Cannabis plants can be packed in two ways, depending on their outcome. For live cannabis plants that are intended to be used as exhibits, they should be packed in brown paper sacks. For cannabis plants that are to be disposed of immediately they can be packaged in clear plastic bags. You must shake the soil off the roots and package the whole plant. Then complete exhibit details on the labels and record exhibit numbers in ONB and POTF Record.

Other drugs that are smaller (powder and tablet form) can be stored in standard white/brown envelopes, as long as any staff handling them ensure they are sealed correctly displaying the property number at all times.

Sealing of drug bags is an essential element when packing drugs, seals should only be broken if absolutely necessary for the purposes of the ongoing investigation. For further information on this, please refer to the Crime Management's Policy & Procedure on 'The Authority to Break Drug Seals': [click here](#).

Chemicals and Hazardous substances

All staff handling chemicals and hazardous substances should ensure this is done so with extreme care. On the rare occasion that an unknown chemical is brought into property, it will be assessed based on that specific occasion by seeking further advice from government guidelines on chemicals and hazardous substances: [click here](#). The Fire Brigade often dispose of hazardous substances, it may therefore be useful to make contact with them to organise some further assistance.

Firearms, ammunition, explosives and fireworks

Packing of firearms, ammunition or explosives should be done with extreme care. Staff should always handle firearms carefully and assess each scenario as they deem necessary. Firearms that are not made safe will be handled only to pack them in a ballistics bags with the muzzle faced downwards as described in the 'initial handling' section on firearms, which occurs until a trained firearms officer or designated trained staff member has made the firearm safe.

Ammunition should always be packed separately to any firearm or explosives, even if it forms part of the same investigation, they must be packed and stored separately.

Specialist packing instructions will apply to explosives and fireworks, especially during transportation. The

use of robust cardboard boxes is unlikely to aggravate explosive hazards by creating unwanted confinement and if properly sealed will be the most viable option used for packing. Retail packages (shop display etc) are not normally robust enough for the purposes of transportation. If undamaged, they will be useful for the initial storage of the items before transportation.

For most articles, e.g. fireworks, pyrotechnics flares etc, a stout triple walled cardboard carton with completely taped joints will provide the correct packaging needs. Small arms ammunition can be packed in smaller cardboard cartons, but quantity should be limited for ease of handling.

Officers should utilise the notes section of the PMS to give any advice to other officers or property staff that may handle the firearms at a later date, i.e. when transporting for destruction.

For more information please contact the Force Firearms Licensing Manager who can provide advice on such occurrences.

Dangerous, Sharp or Offensive Weapons

Any sharp weapons including knives will always be packed in sharps tubes; they are adjustable to suit the size of that particular item. Taser barbs are classed as a sharp and will also be placed in sharp tubes.

For items such as a sharp knife, a used needle or blood stained glass fragments, there must be a risk assessment by the officer as to how it should be packed for forensics and safe handling. There must also be a suitable warning on the package to ensure it is as safe as possible.

Cash – large sums over £1,000

Guidelines on packing large sums of money should be strictly adhered to by the seizing officer. It should be correctly bagged by the 'double bag' method (one evidence bag into another). In most cases it will be appropriate to enter the bag up as 'large sums of money' – not counted' and the seal is our security. Large sums will always be bagged in front of a witness. The sealing and witnessing of bags of money will determine that the contents have not been interfered with.

Cash will be then counted once it has been transferred to the Economic Crime Section. It will be counted under controlled conditions and recorded on tape. This is done at the discretion of the Economic Crime Unit once the necessary forensic examinations have been carried out and confirmation from the Crown Prosecution Service that the money is not needed for evidential purposes.

Cash – all other

All other cash to be stored within a property store must be packaged and sealed in the appropriate sized envelope or storage bag.

For storage of cash, see section 4.5 for specialist instructions.

Forensic Submissions

It is also worth noting at this stage that there are also specialist instructions to be applied when packaging property that is to be forensically tested. For more information on this, please visit the Scientific Investigations Forensic Sample collection Guidebook, please click [here](#).

FOR A TABLE OF ALL THE SPECIALIST PACKAGING INSTRUCTIONS FOR FORENSIC SUBMISSIONS, PLEASE CLICK [HERE](#)

Chapter 4

4. STORAGE OF PROPERTY AND BOOKING IN/OUT OF STORAGE

4.1 Place of Storage

Found property and POTF will only be stored at stations specified by the divisional commander or at a designated property store. This will be kept locked when the property officer or other authorised key holder is not present. Out of hours access is only granted in an emergency and accompanied by a property officer (Inspector must authorise the call-out of a property officer). When the property stores are closed, items will be placed in the temporary stores which are designed for short term storage until the items are transferred to the main property store. All officers have unrestricted access to the temporary property stores. Property Office keys can also be kept with the Duty/supervising inspector

Other more general points should be considered before storage:

- Keeping POTF and Found property separate as a better way of retrieving property at a later date.
- Keep 'jobs' of property together. For example, a stolen goods seizure. Each piece of property will be labelled up and identified separately, but it all comes under the same property number and must be stored as a 'job lot'. This may be in a certain section of the property store.
- Security of storage – must be adhered to at all times, ensuring doors are locked when unattended and property bags are sealed correctly during storage. This applies to all POTF and found property retained by the police.
- Lifting heavy goods – health and safety must be considered.

4.2 Security Cabinets/Safe

Any items of high value e.g. cash, jewellery, very small items worth over £100, drugs, poisons or is otherwise of an exceptional nature are placed in a safe which is usually located in enquiry offices throughout the Force. The location of these items will be identified on the PMS entry. For items of this nature a discussion with a supervisor regarding the storage and safety is required. An example of this could be larger items such as stolen televisions. They are often worth well over £100 but are too bulky to store in security cabinets/safes. As a result of this, the property officer will usually store them in a secure store/room.

4.3 Temporary Stores

Temporary stores are used to store found property and evidential property and will only be used for the temporary storage of property received at a station during the absence of a property officer or when arrangements have been made for items to be collected outside of normal office hours. Keys for the temporary store are kept with the property staff as well as a set for the enquiry desk to allow officers to book items in as and when needed. Bulkier items are often stored elsewhere if the temporary store is located at one of the smaller stations. When property is to be put in the store it will, when possible, be placed in a suitable container or bag and sealed appropriately, using a security tie if absolutely necessary. Each working day property officers will ensure that the temporary store is cleared at the earliest opportunity. Property officers can interrogate the PMS to find out what property has been booked in out of hours.

All handling, packing and storage instructions also apply to property stored in the temporary store. Especially those items that require greater care or more specialist handling.

Procedure

When property is received at a station of storage during the absence of the property officer, all officers have access to the temporary property stores. The property is entered onto the PMS, packaged and labelled accordingly with the appropriate reference number attached. The property is then placed on a shelf ready for collection by property staff.

Moving property from temporary stores to the main store (Property Officers only)

- Property officers will move property from temporary stores to the main store.
- All users of the PMS system have a default station but at some point in time will move property from other locations.
- When collecting property from temporary stores to the main stores, the property officer must ensure they choose the correct temporary store from the home screen, under 'user defaults'.

For example, the main store for D Division is Clough Road. There is property to be collected from Pearson Park Temporary Store. The property officer (whether before they leave Clough Rd or when they arrive at Pearson Park) must change their station to Pearson Park in order to 'transfer' the property to Clough Road – the transfer of property is done using the transfer button. Once back at Clough Road, the property officer must change back their station to Clough Road; this will then allow them to 'move' property to the correct area of storage in the main store.

4.4 **Main Stores**

This is where the majority of property is stored and managed by property officers. Main stores are only accessible by the property staff, but some local arrangements for out of hours access with a property officer can be arranged.

4.5 **Booking Property in and out of Storage**

Property is booked in and out of the PMS system, from the various different locations. This function follows the business rule that Police Officers/staff can only book property into or out of temporary store locations. Only the Property Officer can book property in or out of the main store locations.

- When an officer books POTF into KIM from a station away from the Main Store, he/she is responsible for ensuring that property is safely retained for transporting to the Temp Store or Main Store as soon as practicable. Local NPT and Divisional arrangements will be in place for the security of property in this situation. (Retained by officer). Upon its delivery to the Property Office or Temp Store, it will then be booked in to its new location.
- When booking property into a Temp Store location, the OBI will specify the exact location it is placed for temporary storage. (ie: Temp Shelf 22) Or if the property is required for initial investigation, it must be recorded as 'To Officer for enquiry' (for example). The Property office is notified through KiMs that there is property to be collected and booked in to a main store.
- A property officer then collects and checks property in this temporary store that is picked up for depositing to the main store associated to that temporary store.
- The property officer will bring up the management screen for a property entry which will then allow them to 'move' that property into the main store. This will then change the status of the property from 'new entry' to 'current'.
- The property will remain booked in the main store until the property office is instructed to dispose of it or is instructed by the OIC that the property needs to be 'booked-out' to them or to someone else.

OIC/investigator request for 'booking-out' property from a main store.

- If the OIC or other relevant investigator requests the property from the main store they must go into the relevant property entry and add a 'note' requesting the production of the property.
- The OIC may designate someone else to pick up this property on their behalf, e.g. an I.O or CSI officer.
- This will prompt a review to the relevant property office that must have **24 hours notice of this request.**
- A property officer will then 'book-out' the relevant property to the temporary store for the OIC/investigator to pick up. The property officer must specify the FIN or name of the officer they are booking out to as well as the reason for booking out – there is a list of pre-determined reasons for the property officer to choose from, e.g. 'to officer for court' or 'to forensics for examination'. They must also specify the property's exact location within the temporary store.
- The Property officer must then send out an internal memo titled 'outstanding property' to the

OIC's/investigator's e-mail address. This will inform the OIC/investigator that the property is now in the temporary store ready for collection, where it will remain for 7 DAYS before being removed back to the main store if OIC has failed to collect.

- The officer who has property booked out to them and has had the property for sometime may receive an internal memo entitled 'Current Location of Property'. This will ask for the status of the property and to update the PMS. This will assist property staff if officers have already returned property to owners and not updated the PMS, and is a formal reminder for up to date information on the property.
- When an officer has finished with the items of property they should book them back into the temporary store following the same procedure, specifying exactly where the property is located in the store. The property officer will then book the items back into the main store.

This can also be used as a review point for OIC's: does the property still need to be retained, or can the property office be instructed to dispose of it by the appropriate means? If so, the officer should mark for disposal as per the disposal instruction found in chapter 7.

Out of hours access to main store property

Where it has been arranged that property is to be moved from a main store out of hours, the police officer must add a note to say the item(s) has been removed and why. This will flag the entry for review by the property officer who can then retrospectively book the item out to set the correct status but the audit trail is preserved by the officer note. **Please note:** out of hours arrangements for property stores are different for each division, for more information please contact the individual store.

As a general rule police officers and staff wanting property to be booked out of the main store should endeavour to make these requests during offices hours.

Forensic Submissions

If Crime Scene Investigations team (CSI) requires any property to be held within Property stores, this must be entered on the KIM System by them. This is a temporary measure until new forensic submission software is installed in Humberside.

Any property being returned (and/or added) by the Scientific Support following analysis will be updated and/or added by Property Officers on the PMS. For example, a trainer sent off for analysis may have a sample of mud removed for separate analysis, which would mean there are now two items being returned to the property office.

4.6 Long Term Storage

This will be determined on POTF kept for evidential purposes for an ongoing case. Property will be stored for the duration of the ongoing case, and when reviewing property held in storage, the property staff will seek further advice from the OIC on the status of such property if they feel sufficient time has passed. Further retention or possible disposal must be authorised by the OIC. The review dates can be amended on the PMS to reflect this change (for more info on reviews see relevant section later in this policy).

Property staff must make the correct provisions for the possible long term storage of these types of property. *For further information on retention see section 3.6 titled 'Retention and Release of Property'.*

4.7 Storage of specialist property

There are certain types of property that require more careful consideration when it comes to storing them in the correct manner.

Firearms, ammunitions and explosives

The storage of firearms, ammunition and explosives should follow strict guidance as follows:

- A property officer **must not** process a firearm unless accompanied by the 'made safe' Form 854, showing the firearm has been examined by an authorised firearms officer, or a trained member of staff.

- Firearms and ammunition (including shotguns and cartridges) must be stored securely at all times so as to prevent access by unauthorised persons.
- The security of firearms, shotguns and ammunition can be achieved in most cases by the provision and correct use of a metal storage cabinet designed for this purpose, and there should be no more than 9 firearms in this at any time.
- A firearms security cabinet should be sited out of view from people both inside and outside the building.
- The level of security should be proportionate to the risk (i.e. informed by local risk assessment).
- Any keys to a security cabinet or other device must be kept secure with access limited to authorised persons only. The lock should be opened by a separate key, not on box key – only designated property staff will keep such keys.
- All ammunition should be stored separately from the firearms they fit.
- Ammunition containers should not be located in proximity to an area exposed to a risk of fire (e.g. kitchen/boiler room) or a recognised building escape route.
- Signing in and out register – so property staff are aware of all movements regarding a firearm.
- Imitation guns – are covered by separate legislation, and will be stored with less stringent compliances. It is advised that they are kept within the locked room.

For further guidance on storage of firearms see Home Office Publications:

[Firearms Law Guidance 2013](#)

and

[Firearms Security Handbook 2005](#)

Fireworks

Police forces are required to comply with the general provisions of the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. The legislation within this Act that concerns the safe storage of energetic materials is: The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (MHSWR) and The Dangerous Substances and Explosives Atmospheres Regulations 2002 (DSEAR). On 1 January 2005 The Manufacture and Storage of Explosives Regulations 2004 (MSER) was introduced.

It is not uncommon for members of the public to hand in to Police stations items of an energetic nature. The Police are duty bound to accept these items. This type of hazard material will offer the biggest routine risk to safe storage. By its very nature fireworks are susceptible to sparks and are sensitive to heat friction and shock.

Fireworks will require specific storage which will comply with the following:

- Control of the amount of fireworks or other pyrotechnic articles in areas where people are present. This should ideally be in an outside store.
- Fire-fighting equipment must be close to hand.
- Ensure that stored articles do not impede escape routes.
- Prohibiting smoking anywhere near the fireworks or other pyrotechnic articles.
- Ensure the fireworks or other pyrotechnic articles are well away from flammable materials.

Access to these stores out of hours is not always possible; therefore special consideration should be made before booking these items in out of hours.

If the items are general household fireworks, officers or property staff should make sure that all fireworks are in a sealed boxed and stored in a dry place. If you have the possibility to store away from the station then do so. Do not store near heat sources, operating electrical devices or smoking areas.

Drugs

Depending on the sort of drug depends on how it is properly stored. High value drugs are packed, labelled and stored in a locked cupboard/cabinet/safe depending on the size of the property store maintaining property.

Cannabis plants will be stored in brown paper bags (if kept as exhibits) or plastic bags (if to be disposed of immediately) and stored separately to other property due to the odours produced. An outside store is highly recommended, as it is better for ventilation.

Cash – POTF/large amounts

See sections on *'Initial Handling of POTF Property – Specialist Instructions – Cash'* and also *'Packing Property – Specialist Instructions'*.

Any further information on storage of seized cash should be forwarded to the Economic Crime Section.

Cash – found/small amounts

Cash to be stored within the divisional property stores will be either in a safe or secure cabinet/room. The staff of each property office as well as the supervising inspector will have the access to these locked facilities. If the property store is not able to facilitate the safe storage of cash they will either contact Business Administration for it to be banked, or seek further advice from the supervising inspector on the best approach to the situation.

Knives and other dangerous weapons

Knives (and when possible other dangerous weapons) will always be stored in sharp tubes. Larger instruments for example a machete must have provisions made so the blade or dangerous parts of the weapon are wrapped up to prevent any injury for further handling/transportation.

Taser barbs are classed as sharps and will be stored in sharps tubes if they need to be retained by the property office.

Hazardous Substances

In this section we will detail the various dangers associated with liquids hazardous substances as well as some basic advice on handling any that come into the Property Office domain.

Hazardous substances are defined as any material that poses a threat to public health and / or the environment. Typically, hazardous substances are materials that are toxic, corrosive, ignitable, explosive or chemically reactive.

In order to encourage and maintain best practice in relation to the receipt, storage and disposal of hazardous substances which are brought into the property system, the supervising Inspector or property supervisor (in consultation with the Force Health & Safety Advisor) must ensure clear guidelines are provided to property office staff for the storage, handling and disposal of potentially hazardous items.

Hazardous substances should always be carried with care and store in line with health and safety regulations. A full list of the hazard markings and risk phrases are available in Chapter 6, COSHH, more information can be found on the link: <http://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/indg352.pdf>

Hazardous substances should be stored in appropriate approved locations. Do not store substances, especially liquids, above average chest height or where doors, etc. can strike them. Ensure you work carefully to avoid spills, splashes and contamination of the working environment. After handling containers personnel must wash their hands and not eat or drink in the vicinity of where hazardous material is stored. Hazardous substances must be disposed of safely and responsibly to prevent injury / contamination to those individuals undertaking the disposal, to other persons in the workplace and to the public. For further information, contact the Force Health & Safety Officer on the correct procedures for disposing of such

material. In many cases, disposal 'down the sink or drain' will be inappropriate.

Petrol and Diesel Storage

The most common hazardous substances kept in Force storage are petrol and diesel.

Petrol and diesel are required to be booked into the PMS in the normal way whether found or POTF. Officers booking these sorts of substances into property during out of office hours are reminded to use discretion on how and where such items should be stored until the property office take responsibility for them. They should be stored outside or in an outside store because of the health and safety risk. Property officers must ensure that fuels are never stored indoors, are kept away from any other hazardous substances and are always handled with extreme care.

For the disposal of such substances, see section on specialist instructions on disposal.

Pedal Cycles – Seized, Found and Detainee's Property

- Pedal cycles should be stored in the appropriate property stores – whether inside or outside.
- However, pedal cycles kept for cases or evidential purposes should be kept in doors to maintain the integrity of evidence, and should always be labelled with a POTF tag. OIC's must ensure this is reflected on the PMS entry.
- Found pedal cycles can be stored where the property staff deems it necessary. These will be identifiable as 'found' as opposed to POTF, as not to cause any confusion to property staff or other members of staff coming into contact with pedal cycles.
- Cycles stored on behalf of a detainee who came into custody with a pedal cycle as part of his/her property are to be appropriately identifiable. The arresting officer dealing with this detainee should always ensure the pedal cycle is labelled up correctly as not to mistake it for a found cycle. The cycle should be booked into the PMS with the relevant information attached to it. It should also be returned to the detainee upon them leaving custody.

Detainee Property -Large items

Any large items of property that cannot be stored in the custody suite and need to be stored outside or elsewhere (a pram for example) must be booked in as POTF on the PMS system, all other property can be recorded on the custody record as normal.

Chapter 5

5. TRANSFER & TRANSPORTATION OF PROPERTY

5.1 General Transfers

Ownership of property can be transferred much more efficiently on the new PMS system. Should the need arise to transfer the property from one store to another; the property officer can use the 'transfer' function.

This function enables you to transfer property from one store to another. This function should not be used if the property items will come back to your store in the future; the 'Book Out' function should be used if this is the case. When transferring the presumption is that you are handing over responsibility for the item to another store (across divisions), or moving from the temporary store to its main divisional store.

If transferring one or more items of a multiple entry but not all of them, the transferred item(s) will be created as a separate entry at the new station and a new property number will be given to it. If all the items in an entry are being transferred then the numerical part of the entry number stays the same but the store code at the front will change. In all cases the cross referencing of all numbers will be recorded

in the notes and the item history. There are three different types of transfer:

1) Transfer whole entry

All items in the record are displayed. Tick the items to be transferred. Use the drop down list to select the new store and click OK. On clicking OK the screen will return the user to either a previously selected list or the main menu screen as they no longer have responsibility for the entry that has been transferred. You can still see the record if you search for it under the new store. The items will be displayed in the receiving store initial store as “transferred in” and will be treated as any other ‘awaiting entry’ item. The item history will be updated and the old and new number will be cross-referenced.

2) Split entry transfer

For example, selecting one item from three to transfer. On clicking OK you will get confirmation of the new entry being created. On clicking OK your original entry will be displayed showing the changed status of the transferred item and cross referencing. The new entry at receiving store will have a note showing the originating entry and also be grouped because of the common cross reference. The item history to date, transfers with it.

3) Transfer Booked Out

It is also possible to transfer an item whilst it is booked out of the store. This happens if an officer notifies the property officer that an item is going to another store without first being booked back in. Use the same function as described above but the status will change to transfer-booked out’.

For POTF – It is the same procedure as for found property. The audit trail of the movement is kept in the background of the software, and can be checked at anytime by those with system administration rights.

5.2 Firearms, Ammunition and Explosives Transportation

The disposal of firearms, ammunition and explosives is carried out in D Division at the Firearms Licensing Unit. Therefore, transportation of such will be carried out to here on a regular basis. It is essential that procedures regarding the safe transportation of firearms, ammunition and explosives are adhered to by any police officer and police staff that may come into contact with this process.

This procedure must be in accordance with Home Office and the Department of Transport’s Guidelines on the safe carriage of firearms. For further guidance seek help from the Firearms Licensing Team.

A risk assessment in advance of an officer or member of staff transporting firearms, ammunition or explosives are required in every case. For further information on how this is adopted, please contact the Force Health and Safety Co-ordinator. Any one transporting these types of property will strictly adhere to the guidelines.

The instructions relating to the carriage of firearms and ammunition by Firearms Licensing Officers are as follows:

- Any journey with guns or ammunition must not be interrupted by any unavoidable stop (e.g. further visits etc.);
- If carrying guns ensure they have been inspected for safety;
- If collecting guns from an external address ensure the guns and ammunition are safe to transport.
- In the event of an accident or breakdown inform the relevant department.

Guns must be carried securely, covered at all times and when carried in vehicles must be concealed in a boot or carrying area.

5.3 Cash Transportation

There are occasions where cash will need to be transferred to Economic Crime Section. This is in relation to large cash seizures. The money will be picked up from the original station it was booked in to by a

financial investigating officer who has been authorised to do so. Ideally, two members of staff will escort the money back to the Economic Crime Unit, where they will perform their own processes and procedures with regards to counting the money. The PMS must be updated to show that the property has been disposed to the Economic Crime Unit.

Chapter 6

6. RETENTION, REVIEW AND RELEASE OF PROPERTY

6.1 Reviewing Property

This is one of the most important parts of the application and efficient use of the review process will drive the early disposals of property and reduce the level of queries and problems. For this part of the process to work efficiently it is essential to have the co-operation of police officers.

- Property officers have the ability to view the 'review property' option from the drop down menu of 'property management' on the front page of the PMS system. Police officers and other police staff will not have this function.
- From this review button property officers can view any property that has appeared in the review list.
- 'Entry updated by officer' is a tool for property officers and will allow them to view property records (owned by their main store) that have been updated by an officer. The updates range from an officer adding a note, to the adding of extra items to that record. The updated entry will always appear in the review list for property officers to see.

The review process (POTF)

Every entry has a review date. When the property is entered a default review date is set to 28 days and cannot be amended by the OIC:

- 1) 7 DAYS after the property entry has been created, an e-mail is generated by the KiM system and sent to the OIC (as listed on the entry). This email will ask for confirmation of the OIC, and prompts the OIC to decide whether disposal may be appropriate at this early stage. The e-mail contains a link which takes the OIC directly to the property entry in question, where they can update the system accordingly.
- 2) The first review is at 28 DAYS. After this date has passed, an automatic email generated by KiM will be sent to the OIC to ask for an update. The OIC must use the link provided in the e-mail to check the property entry and add a 'note' to update the property staff whether the items need to be retained for longer, or, that they can be disposed of, which the OIC must then mark up for disposal.
- 3) If this e-mail is not responded to within 14 DAYS (28+14) then another email will be generated and sent the OIC as the first reminder, containing the same information.
- 4) If this first reminder is not responded to within another 14 DAYS (28+14+14) then a final reminder will be sent out. If this final reminder is not responded to the supervision of the OIC will then be

contacted for further action, by which time the property office staff may choose to dispose of the property in question.

Review Process (Found)

The process for found property is very similar in that a review is generated after 14 days, except the officer booking in usually remains as the OIC.

Our force policy outlines that found property can be disposed of after 14 days. When a review pops into the review list of a property officer, they have to establish whether the property can be disposed of instantly, or whether there is a finder who wishes to claim, all of which can be found out by entering the relevant property entry. The process for disposal should then be followed as per chapter 7.

Daily Management of Reviews – Property officers

Experience from other forces with KiM PMS has shown that the single most important function of the Property Officer role is the daily review of entries that have either been actioned in some way by an officer or have reached their review date. This review process feeds all other actions for the justification for keeping property or its early disposal. Property officers can view property in the review list by choosing 'review property' from the property management tab on the home screen for KiM (Police officers and staff will not see this function).

Reasons why property entries appear in review list:

- 1) If the OIC has added a note onto a property entry, it will force a review that will appear in the review list which the property officer can see.
- 2) If the review period has expired, this will appear in the review list for the property officer to chase up the OIC.

Please note that when an officer provides positive information about the continued retention of property, the property officer should either take manual control of the entry and manage future e-mail reminders by blocking the automatic sequence, **or** use the auto re-start of automatic e-mails in conjunction with moving the review date forward.

Actions to be taken by a property officer

The Property Officer should now look at each entry and from the information provided, take the appropriate action. Typically a Property Officer will consider the following:

- a) If the officer has notified a court date or justified further retention for investigation then the review date can be extended.
- b) If the officer has authorised disposal then relevant items can be marked for disposal. If other items are still outstanding the OIC should have given justification for continued retention of the items.
- c) If a change of OIC then the new OIC can be sent an appropriate e-mail asking for an update. This can be done automatically if the auto OIC function is switched on in your force. See section below.

Important information about the review dates and email alerts on the PMS

- It is important to remember that once an officer has provided an update for the continued retention of the property, the automatic e-mails have done their job at that point in time and therefore must be blocked otherwise the wording of the subsequent auto e-mails will be out of context as they usually state that no reply has been received when in fact they have responded.
- It is also important to remember that unblocking the auto e-mails does not re-set them back to Number 1. They will continue through the sequence as each review date is reached. There is an optional function to re-start the auto e-mails – see next section.
- You should also remember that if you as a property officer alter the review date at any time, the auto e-mails will be triggered from that date.
- When an entry is viewed as part of the review process the Property Officer will generally need to change the review date. Property officer must remember to un-tick the box called 'entry updated

by OIC or Note added' to remove the flag that was set to alert the property office that the entry was updated.

- Failing to remove the tick when an officer has updated will simply mean the entry will appear in the review list the next time.

6.2 **Retention of Property other than found/evidential property**

The following brief guide to CPIA Retention has been approved by Legal Services (29/3/2017)

Brief Guide to Evidence and CCTV Retention – POTF

If a suspect is awaiting Trial, all relevant evidence must be retained until the trial is over and done with.

After sentence, the OIC is responsible to inform Property Office (under CPIA rules and PACE) of the following:

1: Which individual items of evidence are 'relevant' to the conviction and therefore need to be retained under CPIA and for how long retention is required.

2: Which items of evidence are not relevant and can be disposed by returning to owner or destroyed. (PACE requires personal property to be returned to owners without undue delay).

3: The question of what is 'relevant' is best known by the OIC who has intimate knowledge of the case. But clearly, if the conviction relies upon CCTV evidence (for example) the Master copy is police owned and should be retained for as long is appropriate. However, the original CCTV images might be taken from a Data device owned by another, which should be considered for return. The same applies for police documentation and all exhibits which are critically relevant to the conviction.

(e.g.) Forensic samples for rape are probably not 'relevant' material if the suspect has admitted contact and intercourse, but pleaded not guilty on the consent issue.

But every case has to be judged on its own merits by the OIC depending upon any special circumstances.

GUIDE for retention periods:

In Crown Court trials we retain relevant CCTV evidence for a minimum 12 months, OR the duration of the sentence (whichever is longer) and at that point, if there is no notification of appeal the OIC Reviews and considers disposal.

And with Magistrate convictions a period of 6 months after conviction is appropriate.

It is worth mentioning, in serious offences such as Rape, Manslaughter, Murder, S18 assault, we should retain all 'relevant' evidence for the duration of the sentence, or the lifetime of the offender if earlier.

Such serious offences are often dealt with by MIT and they have their own exhibits store (Holmes) for this purpose. However, Rape offences are now more common-place and these samples are retained in our KiM PMS Property Stores. Relevant material is retained for the OIC to Review on an Annual basis on such occasions.

Annual reviews are needed as OIC's can be posted or leave the service and a prompt is required to generate a supervisors update.

Important: The OIC must ensure non-relevant personal property is returned to owners without undue delay. The relevant evidence rule applies. Any retention of personal property such as mobile phones, clothing, stolen property, must be fully justifiable under PACE. Nothing needs to be retained if a photograph will do for the case file.

Continued: (In greater detail)

Legal Considerations for Retention

The Criminal Procedures and Investigations Act 1996 (CPIA) along with the associated Code of Practice requires investigating officers to take certain actions in respect of material, which may be relevant to a

criminal investigation.

The CPIA informs us that material must be retained until a decision is taken whether to institute proceedings against a person for an offence.

In detected cases this is relatively straightforward. Where an offence is undetected it is not always so easy.

Material which may be relevant

This is material of any kind, including information, which is obtained in the course of an investigation if it appears to an investigator, police officer in the case (OIC) or disclosure officer it has some bearing on any offence or any person being investigated, or on the surrounding circumstances of the case, unless it is incapable of having any impact on proceedings.

If the material is in the form of information, which is not recorded in any way, the OIC must ensure it is recorded in writing, on video or audiotape, or on computer disk.

Material to be retained

- Crime reports;
- Police officer's pocket notebook;
- Custody records;
- Records derived from tapes of telephone messages containing descriptions of an alleged offence or offender;
- Final versions of witness statements and drafts where their content differs from the original version, including any exhibits mentioned (unless they have been returned to their owner on the understanding that they will be produced at court if required);
- Interview records (written records or audiotape or videotape of interviews with actual or potential witnesses or suspects;
- Communications between the police and experts such as forensic scientists, reports and schedules of work carried out by experts;
- Any material casting doubt on the reliability of a confession;
- Any material casting doubt on the reliability of a witness;
- Any other material, which may fall within the test for primary disclosure in the Act.

Retention of material

If a criminal investigation results in proceedings being instigated, all material, which may be relevant, must be retained at least until the accused is acquitted or convicted or the prosecutor decides not to proceed with the case.

Convicted cases

Where the accused is convicted, all material, which may be relevant, must be retained at least until: The convicted person is released from custody, or discharged from hospital, in cases where the court imposes a custodial sentence or a hospital order;
One hundred and eighty days from the date of conviction, in all other cases (6 months).

In all cases resulting in conviction, the minimum retention period is 6 months. Additionally, all such material must be retained whilst any appeal is in progress until the appeal is determined or whilst the Criminal Cases Review Commission is considering an application.

Suspects identified, but no conviction

For those cases where a suspect has been identified but have not been convicted, the MoPi group that the offence falls into will determine the retention period:

- Group 1= 50 years
- Group 2= 10 years

- Group 3= 6 years.

No suspects identified

Again, for property involved in an offence without a suspect must be retained for the minimum MoPi requirements:

- Group 1= 50 years
- Group 2= 6 years
- Group 3(fingerprints/DNA evidence)= 6 years
- Group 3 (without forensic evidence)= 12 months

Material need not be retained by the Police for the duration of the periods specified above in the following circumstances:

- 1) it was seized and is to be returned to an owner
- 2) if a photograph will suffice, i.e. if the physical material is not necessary for the investigation or is perishable it can be photographed and returned where possible.
- 3) Copies of the material are held by another criminal justice agency and there is an agreement for that agency to retain the material for the correct times and have some sort of sharing agreement in place

Procedure

1) The officer in the case **must** ensure the property store holding the property is notified when the case for which it is being retained is either concluded or discontinued and provide the property officer with details as to any further required retention period (based on the guidance above), or whether the property can be disposed of, this information can be obtained by the 'notification to officer of result of case' form. If property is no longer required for court but is still subject to a period of retention the OIC must notify the property office staff via the KiM system and if it is needed, arrangements for transfer of the property to the main divisional property store, with a suggested disposal date added to the notes section so the property officer can amend the review date accordingly. **It is imperative that the OIC determines which material is relevant to the case and disposes or returns all other property at the earliest opportunity.**

2) If necessary, OIC's will consult further guidance on the allocated periods of retention for property, which can be found with the Corporate Development Branches Information Compliance Unit and their Policy & Procedure on 'Record Management – Disposal Schedule', please click [here](#). When necessary, Property staff should also consult the above documents to ascertain retention periods, as part of their reviewing process.

3) **Please note:** when Property staff conduct reviews of property held in storage, the CPIA legislation must be adhered to. If the property does not have to be retained due to the type of conviction and if the time scale has exceeded 6 months after the date of conviction or exceeded the end of the custodial sentence, then property **can** be disposed of. It is the responsibility of the OIC to make the property staff aware of this, but in cases where this cannot be achieved Property Staff will seek advice from the supervising inspector who can authorise the disposal of all such property. This in turn, will ensure a regular flow of disposal and reduce the backlog of property held unnecessarily.

4) As soon as a property officer has been updated with the result of case information, they can amend the property entry on PMS to show the future review date. Unless this is subject to change, the property officer will not need to re-visit that PMS entry until the review date appears in the review list.

5) Further exhibits subjected to retention requirements are managed separately by the Major Crime Team who handle, store, retain, and dispose of any property related to the more serious crimes, which may retain property for up to 100 years depending on the crime the property is related to. For further advice on Major Crime Exhibiting, please contact the Major Incident team directly.

6.3 Retention of Found Property

Property will be retained at the appropriate stations of storage for 14 days unless otherwise directed (perishables and found pedal cycles). If a finder has indicated a wish to claim the property it will then be

retained for a further 14 days to allow this. It will then be disposed of if it not claimed. Certain property items such as those with a high value will need further discussion with the property supervisor and/or the inspector before authorising disposal. See 'Disposal of Property' for other ways of disposing of found property. If the finder makes no application for the property within 21 days then the property will be disposed of at the end of the month and all proceeds will be paid into the Police (Property) Fund.

6.4 **Action to Trace Owners**

- Enquiries to trace the owners of property brought into police possession will be made by the OIC and property staff. The property officer will initiate any enquiries or circulation to trace the owners, including matching up of any lost and found property recorded within the PMS. This can be done using the 'matching' function – for more information on matching please see the user guide available through the property software.
- The marking of property with a postcode is encouraged by crime prevention officers. Post code searches can be completed by all officers by utilising the force computer programs of Blue8World and the Address and Dwelling search facility that can be accessed via the A to Z on the Intranet site.
- The property officer will examine the property, including a check with an ultra violet lamp, and conduct a CIS4 property enquiry where appropriate.
- When the owner of POTF is not known, the OIC will ensure all possible enquiries are made within 28 days of seizure. If any information regarding the owner is discovered, the OIC must update the PMS entry with the owner details. This can be done for individual items within one record if multiple owners are established. If owners have been added to an item incorrectly, these can also be removed and amended.
Where appropriate the property will be disposed of by the most viable method.
- Details of articles of significant value, when the owner is unknown, may be reported to the Divisional Intelligence Bureau so that circulation can be considered.

6.5 **Special Retention Considerations**

There may be occasions where it is inconvenient, too costly or impracticable to retain property for certain lengths of time. This is of an ad hoc nature and will require further discussion and authorisation between the OIC, their duty Inspector and the property office.

6.6 **Lost Property Traced**

When an item of lost property which has been recorded as lost is subsequently traced, the property officer shall inform the loser either by telephone, letter or both, ensuring all relevant details are given in order for the property to be recovered i.e. Found/POTF reference number. When the property is recovered, the relevant property entries can be updated or matched (depending on the circumstances) and will be endorsed by the property officer or enquiry desk clerk ensuring an accurate audit trail.

Should the property have been retained by the finder, the property officer will ensure that the property is reunited with the owner. Under no circumstances will the finder's details be passed onto the loser without prior permission of the finder.

6.7 **Release of Property**

Property can be released of in the following ways:

- Disposal
- Destruction as per court order
- Return to finder/loser/owner

Chapter 7

7. DISPOSAL OF PROPERTY

7.1 **Legal Requirements for Disposal**

Disposal of property must be carried out in accordance with the Police Property Act 1897 (as amended by the Police (Property) Act 1997) and Police Property Regulations 1997. The decision on which approved disposal method is used for an item is delegated to the OIC. Further approval by the property office may also be sought after receiving the original authority and any dispute that arises as a result of this will be solved by the inspector or supervisor.

- The Police (Property) Act 1997. It amends the Police (Property) Act 1897, introducing changes such as allowing the police authority to retain unclaimed property that previously had to be disposed of - to be used for police purposes.
- The Police (Disposal of Property) Regulations have been replaced by the Police (Property) Regulations 1997. These set out the procedure to be followed for any unclaimed property.

Disposal - in pursuant to the Acts

Where property has come into the possession of Humberside Police in connection with their investigation of a suspected offence, it can be disposed of pursuant to the above legislation. In order to assess whether the Police (Property) Act procedure is appropriate, first consider:

- Are there two or more claimants? If so seek advice from the Legal Services Unit.
- If there is only one claimant, can they prove that they are the true owner?
- Is the claimant the true owner of the property, (not merely the person who has possessory title)? If unable to determine ownership it may be necessary to issue a Police (Property) Act application for disposal of the property.

Disposal - Exception to in pursuant to the Acts

S.2 (2) & (3) of the Police (Property) act allow for the disposal of property at any time in cases where the property is a perishable article or its custody involves unreasonable expense or inconvenience. Proceeds from sale may be applied to the expenses of executing the regulations, and the police shall retain any remainder for a period of one year.

If you wish to apply under this Act for an order of disposal or destruction of property, this Force will retain such items pending any hearing at the magistrates' court. If the matter goes to court and an order is obtained the property is returned to the successful party straightaway.

Deposit the property in a suitable property store, or in the case of vehicles utilise current policy and procedure on the removal and storage of vehicles.

Any letters requesting property be returned to the owner must be forwarded to officer in charge of the property concerned.

For advice in relation to any Police (Property) Act matter contact the Legal Services Unit.

Formal authority to dispose of the property must be received before undertaking disposal / destruction, to prevent the Force being left open to civil claims in respect of conversion and trespass to property.

Forfeiture Orders

The OIC will authorise the property officer to dispose of items, which are subject to a forfeiture order or similar. If you are given the forfeiture order at court, you must pass it to the property office where the property is held.

If case material is subject to a court forfeiture order or similar, the order takes priority over the Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act, 1996 requirement for material to be retained by the police. Such orders

will come to the CJU with the file; these should be detached and sent to the OIC to action with the property teams.

The officer in charge must ensure the forfeiture order is placed in the relevant copy prosecution file and that the file is retained for:

- 7 years, or
- The length of the sentence whichever is the longer.

For further information please refer to the Disposal Schedule, located on the Records Management intranet site.

7.2 Initial Action for Found Property

There are several initial actions that must be carried out before determining how to dispose of found property. These methods should always be attempted first before other methods of disposal are embarked upon.

Notification to Owners and Finders (Found Property)

- Where an owner resides locally, the property officer will notify him to collect his property either by telephone/and or letter which gives detailed information on where to collect the property from and requires a response within 14 days, or otherwise a telephone call to the property office with an update.
- If an item is to be returned to a finder, they will be notified in the same way. If the property has been with the property office for 14 days the finder will be contacted. If there is no response to this communication, property will be kept for a minimum of 14 days before it is disposed of appropriately. This allows time for people to return from a holiday etc.
- When the property is claimed by the loser/original owner, finders will not be notified unless they specifically request.

Property Retained by Finder and Returned to the Owner

- The constraints of the Data Protection Act 1998 determine that under no circumstances will details of the finder be provided to any person (including the original owner) unless the finder has given their express permission and this permission has been recorded against the property entry.

Property Returned to the Owner by Police

- Collected personally – When property retained by the police is collected by the owner (after it has been ascertained that the claim is genuine) the property must print out a receipt from that PMS entry and have the owner sign it. This receipt must be filed.
- Returned by post – When the loser resides some distance from the station of storage property may be returned by post. A 14 day letter will be sent out to the owner and a response is required. If no response is received, the process is as highlighted in the above section 'notification to owners/finders'. The property may be returned by ordinary post but if the value exceeds £20 it will be sent by recorded delivery and the receipt attached to the entry on the PMS. If the cost of return by post or carrier exceeds £1 it will be recovered from the owner before the property is dispatched (cheques are made payable to 'Humberside Police'). The recipient will be requested to complete a receipt which is sent with the property together with a stamped addressed envelope and return it accordingly. On return, the receipt will be attached to the relevant PMS entry or filed accordingly. When the property is cash then a cheque or postal order will be sent and the cost recovered again from the recipient.

Property Returned to the Finder

Property may only be returned to the finder when:

- It has not been claimed by the owner.
- It has been retained by the Police for 14 days and all efforts to trace the owner have been

completed, including a 14 day letter sent out if possible.

- The finder is not an officer (when a special constable finds property while off duty and wishes to claim it, a report will be submitted to the divisional commander for a decision to be made).
- Is not a type covered by special instructions or an item not allowed to be returned to the finder (see page 21).
- The found form is produced by the finder upon collection of property.

If a finder is entitled to claim, the property officers will check the finders details are correct and will return the property on receipt of identification and signature.

Handing Over

On handing over the property, the finder or agent will sign a receipt produced by the PMS and the entry will be updated accordingly with the receipt filed.

Return Outside Office Hours

Property will usually be claimed from a station/location of storage between 0800 to 1600 hours on weekdays. Where a claimant experiences difficulty, property may be transferred to the temporary store with the arrangement of an Enquiry office staff returning the property. The same checks of I.D and signature must still be obtained from the claimant.

Unclaimed Property

Property will be retained at stations of storage for a minimum of 28 days unless otherwise directed. After this length of time it should be re-reviewed by the property staff and disposed of. Property of little value and not suitable for public auction/charitable donation, which may be declared to be of no value by a property supervisor or other supervisor and then destroyed by the property officer.

It will be the responsibility of the property officer to arrange for other property to be sold by 'Auction' in accordance with the current recognised force Auction Contract and Business Centre Administrative procedures. Or, where appropriate, disposed to 'Data Disposal' in accordance with the current force Data Disposal Contract and associated Business Centre procedures.

Property Officers will ensure 'Auction' or 'Data Disposal' is the preferred disposal option with regard to property being subject of the Police (property) Act 1987. 'Charity' disposal will remain as an option but should be the exception rather than the norm. Where any item is disposed to Charity, this should be authorised by the Property Supervisor, or a police Inspector and relevant notes added to the property record.

Other issues on disposal of found property

Other items such as bicycles may cause storage problems if kept for longer than the 14 day standard retention period. This time should be used to ascertain whether there is an owner for this property, and if so, that it is simply 'found' and is not stolen or involved in a crime or criminal activity. It may take more than 14 days for the OIC to establish that a found bicycle is actually a stolen bicycle, in such instances the found entry can be converted to POTF on the PMS.

Examples such as the one above are more ad hoc, and on such occasions the supervising inspector, property office supervisor or designated property staff member should make the appropriate decision.

7.3 Initial Action for Property other than Found (POTF)

Authority Levels for Disposal

As a general overview, before outlining the details of property disposal, it is important to highlight that authority of disposing POTF sits with the OIC. General POTF (items considered of low/no risk) can then be counter authorised by any property officer who then will process the property's disposal by one of the methods as listed later on in this chapter. The items considered to need supervisory authority of an inspector or property supervisor are listed in section 7.5 below. [Click here](#)

On the KiM PMS, the OIC can mark an item of property for disposal. 'Marking for disposal' shows the property office that the OIC has authorised this disposal. There are several options the OIC can choose from. After an item of property has been marked for disposal, the property office can then view this item in the 'dispose property' list available through the Property Management home page. The property officer can then select the property to be disposed by its disposal method – 'Return POTF to owner, 'auction' 'charitable donation' etc.

Request to Clear POTF

As described in the previous chapter of this policy, the PMS has a rigorous review system for property stored by the police. The review system is aimed for the OIC to update the property office with one of the two following instructions:

- To Retain: for owner to be traced, for identification, for court (a date must be given in the notes section on the PMS), disputed ownership, or any other reason (which should be explained in the notes section).
- To Dispose: returning to owner/agent, Court Destruction Order attached, disclaimer attached, owner not traced, or any other reasons.
- The property officer must then counter authorise and dispose of the property as per instruction from the OIC.

Retaining Property

- Upon receipt of the review/reminder email, it is the responsibility of the OIC to provide a valid reason to their supervisor as to the necessity to retain the property. It is essential that the OIC provides clear, unambiguous detail to justify the continued retention of property. Generalities such as 'ongoing enquiries' or 'needed as evidence' will not suffice. If applicable, future court dates are also to be provided by the OIC.
- The OIC will give this explanation including any court dates as an updated 'note' on the relevant PMS entry.

Returning to the Owner

The OIC will be responsible for returning property to the owner as soon as possible. POTF will only be returned as long as it does not contravene the CPIA Legislation regarding retention (see section 6.1). And also, that it was held in the first place as a result of the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984.

Procedure

- Once the property office has received this update via KiM PMS they will organise the return of the property to the owner.
- It is the responsibility of the OIC to provide current up to date address information of the owner/representative of the property together with the exact items to be returned. This information can be recorded to each individual item or to all on that particular PMS entry.
- The property officer will then send out a letter (generated by the PMS on that PMS entry) to the owner informing them that their property is available for collection. This letter gives them 14 days to respond before property officer chases it up.
- For letters that are to be sent to owners that are in prison, allow one month in order for it to pass through all the relevant channels and arrangements for the property to be collected on the owner's behalf.
- All such property will be cleared within one month of notification of result. The file, showing property not cleared but due for return to the owner, will be chased up and become a subject matter of an officer making a monthly examination.
- Upon the owner attending the Police station the Property Officer before returning any property should satisfy themselves as to the person's identity or authorisation to collect on another person's behalf, including the nomination form filled in by the owner.
- The property officer should check off against the property entry in the presence of this person that all authorised items are handed back to them. The entry can be checked and finalised at a later time if necessary.

- Once satisfied that all authorised items have been returned, the collecting person will sign the property receipt. The owner should also record their designation (i.e. Owner, mother, husband, brother etc). The property officer will countersign the entry and record their FIN. The copy of the property receipt should be electronically attached to the PMS entry or filed accordingly.
- At this stage, another option is to have the owner sign a Property Indemnity Form, which would prevent the owner making a claim against the Police regarding the property at a later date (if it was damaged, or they stated it wasn't in its original condition, or they claimed they had not had it returned etc).
- All paperwork should be retained on file to provide an adequate audit trail which may be called upon in the case of a complaint made against the organisation

If the owner/representative fails to contact the property office within one month it will be disposed of under the Police Property Act. There may be occasions where the owner has made contact with the property office but cannot collect the property within one month. For example, a prisoner who doesn't have a representative within the area of Hull may ask to collect their property once they have been released from prison, in these scenarios the property supervisor or inspector will decide on the necessary retention arrangements.

Repossession Refused by the Owner

Owners declining to repossess their property will be required to disclaim all rights of ownership by signing a property Disclaimer. A disclaimer can be printed off from a PMS entry by clicking the 'print' button. Property will then be disposed of as soon as possible. Where the owner refuses to sign a disclaimer, a suitable entry will be made in the officer's notebook and witnessed/counter signed by another officer.

Please note: in the circumstances outlined above property must be disposed of by property officers either by destruction or by sale at public auction (should arrangements be in place). Under no circumstances is it appropriate for a Police Officer or Police employee to take possession of unwanted property whether by payment or not.

Disputed Ownership

Property retained in connection with a charge or offence when there is a dispute as to ownership will be disposed of immediately after the proceedings are completed, by either an order from a Magistrates' Court made under the Police (Property) Act or an Interpleader application.

When there is no clear indication of ownership or a dispute arises and the case is one which cannot be dealt with on conviction or under the Police (property) Act or Interpleader Application, the matter will be referred to an officer not below the rank of Inspector for a decision. Advice may be sought from the Force Solicitor on submission of a report to the Divisional Commander before action is taken as to disposal. In all instances where there is doubt, property shall be handed over against an appropriate signature on form 158A (Property Indemnity). Perishable property will have been disposed of prior to proceedings being completed for obvious reasons.

Owner Unknown

Property which has come into police possession in connection with criminal matters and for which the owner is unknown or there is no court order existing relating to its disposal, will be regarded as being subject of the Police (property) Act 1987.

The exception to this is property of little value and not suitable for public auction/charitable donation, which may be declared to be of no value by a property supervisor or other supervisor and then destroyed by the property officer.

It will be the responsibility of the property officer to arrange for other property to be sold by "Auction" in accordance with the current recognised force Auction Contract and Business Centre Administrative procedures. Or, where appropriate, disposed to 'Data Disposal' in accordance with the current force Data Disposal Contract and associated Business Centre procedures.

Property Officers will ensure 'Auction' or 'Data Disposal' is the preferred disposal option with regard to property being subject of the Police (property) Act 1987. 'Charity' disposal will remain as an option but should be the exception rather than the norm. Where any item is disposed to Charity, this should be authorised by the Property Supervisor, or a police Inspector and relevant explanatory notes added to the property record.

Post court Notifications

Once a case is disposed of at court, there may be property to dispose of in relation to this case. The file will contain the relevant information on the property involved. The file is post-courted by the CJU team and then passed to the Divisional Crime Data Administration teams (CDA). The CDA then complete the pro forma entitled 'Notification to Officer of Result of Case', detailing the result of case. This is then sent to the relevant officer. The form itself contains details such as the Officer and station, the defendant's name; the main file number; the conviction dates and also attaches any forfeiture orders relating to the seized property. From this form, the OIC must determine the outcomes for the property concerned and check the associated retention periods against the specific sentence given to the property's owner/agent. The OIC must either mark the item for disposal on the PMS or add a note detailing the reasons for further retention. The OIC must inform the property office with all of the relevant details and authorities in order for them to make longer term storage arrangements. After the property office has received the correct information, they can then arrange disposal or amend the review date accordingly.

7.4 Methods of Disposal

The disposal of property should be carried out in accordance with the Police (Property) Act 1997 (amended 1997) and Police (Property) Regulations 1997. The decision to authorise the disposal of an item is firstly the responsibility of the OIC with regards to evidential and POTF, and then the overall decision on disposal and its method is either a police officer not below the rank of inspector, a property supervisor, or a designated member of property staff authorised by an inspector.

- An inspector, property supervisor or designated property staff member will also sign off final decisions on found property.
- Some items such as those with a high value or firearms require further supervision before final disposal – see section on 'Specialist instruction for disposal of certain items'.
- Once the above is clarified it is then the correct time to decide on which method of disposal is appropriate for the property in question.

The different methods of disposal are:

- Auction
- Data Disposal
- Destruction
- Property sold for scrap
- Donated to charity/community causes
- Police Use

Auction and Data Disposal

The inspector, property supervisor or designated property officer will send items for disposal by auction to the current force contracted auction house, in accordance with the current recognised force Auction Contract and Business Centre administrative procedures. Or, where appropriate, disposed to 'Data Disposal' in accordance with the current force Data Disposal Contract and associated Business Centre procedures.

Property Officers will ensure 'Auction' or 'Data Disposal' is the preferred disposal option with regard to property being subject of the Police (property) Act 1987. Alternative disposals (above) remain an option but should be the exception rather than the norm. Where any item is disposed by an alternative method, this should be authorised by the Property Supervisor, designated property officer or a police Inspector and relevant explanatory notes added to the property record.

Destruction

Some of the property sent for disposal is by way of destruction. Examples of property to destroy:

- Baseball bats;
- Offensive Weapons
- Items where retaining them is not in the public interest;
- Pornographic material
- Alcohol or consumable liquids (usually poured away)
- Perishable goods
- Any worthless property

The above list is not exhaustive; common sense must be used when considering whether or not to destroy property. Where any item is disposed by destruction this should be authorised by the Property Supervisor, designated property officer or a police Inspector and relevant explanatory notes added to the property record.

Procedure

The usual method of destruction will be by disposal as waste within the general rubbish, unless special treatment such as shredding, incineration, etc. is considered necessary. In disposing of items as waste, wherever possible property should be damaged sufficiently to prevent reuse and dissuade individuals from unauthorised removal of items placed in bins, skips, etc. All packaging labels and tags, which identify Humberside Police as the source of the item, must be removed unless incinerated.

Property should be destroyed by the most efficient and environmentally friendly manner. If the item is considered to be contaminated without its packaging then it should not be disposed of in general waste. Special care should be taken when disposing of hazardous items and other items likely to contaminate the environment (e.g. poisons) and, if necessary, the advice the local council, or possibly the local Fire brigade should be sought.

Other destructions

There are other types of property that have to be destroyed due to their nature and that they are illegal to possess without the correct licenses:

- Firearms, ammunition, explosives and fireworks
- Offensive and dangerous weapons (swords, knives, batons etc)
- Drugs – for further details on drug dispose see Crime Management Branch Policy & Procedure on 'Disposal of Controlled Drugs'. [here](#)

The only exception to this is if the item is of significant historical value, it may then be considered to donate this item to a Museum. These items require specialist disposal – see section 'Special Instructions for Disposal' (section 7.5).

Property Sold as Scrap

Property can also be disposed of locally as scrap to registered scrap dealers – items such as keys and unclaimed scrap metal could be disposed of in this way. Again, common sense should be applied as to what can and cannot be sold as scrap. Property officers must ensure the authority for disposal of scrap involved in a case has been obtained from the OIC.

Please note: Divisions have local arrangements with scrap dealers, this is not the case for the Force as a whole.

Property Donated to Charitable/Community Causes

Property Officers will ensure 'Auction' or 'Data Disposal' is the preferred disposal option with regard to property being subject of the Police (property) Act 1987. 'Charity' disposal will remain as an option but should be the exception rather than the norm. Where any item is disposed to Charity, this should be authorised by the Property Supervisor, or a police Inspector and relevant explanatory notes added to the property record.

Property offices have local arrangements with charities and community causes for certain items of property. This mainly includes found cycle disposal. Local arrangements can be put in place to have a collection of cycles from a station of storage to one of the local prisons.

Police Use

Regulation 7 of the Police (Property) Regulations 1997 permits the retention of unclaimed property for use by Humberside Police.

The property must have remained in police possession:

- No less than eight weeks for found property or;
- For a continuous period of twelve months for evidential (crime) property or;
- Or one hundred and eighty days where it was subject to a forfeiture order under section 143 of the Criminal Courts (Sentencing) Act 2000.

Humberside Police may, if they are of the opinion the property can be used for police purposes, determine the property will be retained by Humberside Police. However, whilst this legal power rests with the Police Authority, in practice it is delegated to the Chief Constable, who in turn further delegates this to the Divisional Commanders. This is then passed onto supervising inspectors of the property office for which the property is stored, and the property officers will make the appropriate arrangements for the property to be sent to the relevant police department who will make use of the property.

In some instances, items such as firearms may be used for training purposes by the Firearms Training Department.

7.5 Special Instructions for Disposal

Authority Levels

For POTF the authority to dispose of any property should always come first from the OIC. It is then the responsibility of the property officer to determine whether the property requires further 'supervisory' authority from a property supervisor or inspector – depending on what the property is. This will be more apparent in the specialist property items as listed below – in particular – firearms, cash or any other items of high value. Property officers will always first seek advice from a supervisor if they feel the item is more high risk.

Perishables

Perishable property shall be disposed of at the earliest opportunity on the authority of a the property supervisor or inspector that is supervising the property office . Before this, the officer disposing it will obtain a full a description as soon as possible, including serial numbers and date stamps on wrappers. If the perishables are POTF and part of an ongoing investigation, it will be practicable in this instance to photograph the perishables for production at court.

Knives, Dangerous Instruments, and Offensive Weapons

Knives, dangerous instruments and offensive weapons ordered to be forfeited under the Knives Act 1997 are subject to the Knives (Forfeited Property) Regulations 1997. Forfeited property in possession of the police shall normally be destroyed if a recovery under section 7(3) of the Regulations has not been made/decided by a court. However, where the Force is satisfied that property to which the Knives Regulations apply which would otherwise fall to be destroyed is of a particular rarity, aesthetic quality or technical or historic interest, instead of arranging for its destruction, giving or selling it to a museum or similar institution may be appropriate.

Any relevant proceeds of disposals under the Knives Regulations (if any) shall be paid into the relevant authority and subject to regulations made under section 2 of the Police (Property) Act 1897.

Knives, dangerous instruments and offensive weapons are stored safely by divisional property stores until being sent to the Firearms Licensing Unit who have the means of destroying such property. Found property of such nature will be disposed of within one month or as soon as practicable after this time, to ensure valuable property store space is not taken up for a long period of time.

Firearms, Ammunition, and Explosives

When deciding on disposal for firearms, ammunition or explosives the same rules apply. If involved in a case then an OIC must be sent a 166 disposal form in order to give authority to the weapons destruction. The property officer will always consult on the authorisation of disposal with either the property supervisor (if applicable) or the supervising inspector.

Property staff are reminded to handle with extreme care any firearm that has not yet been made safe. Health and safety risk assessment should be maintained at all times. The details of the firearm/ammunition/explosives should always be checked.

All firearms will be destroyed at the earliest opportunity. The Firearms Disposal Register is a sheet which will list the firearms to be sent for disposal. Property staff will send firearms, ammunition and explosives for destruction to Firearms Licensing along with this register which are then signed for by someone in the Firearms team.

Firearms Licensing will then destroy firearms by breaking each into unusable sections which are gathered until they are transported to a smelting works.

Ammunition is made unusable by Firearms Licensing and arrangements are regularly made for the Army to collect and destroy it.

Explosives are collected and destroyed by the Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) section of the Army. These arrangements should always be made through either the Force Firearms Licensing Unit or the Armoury, depending on the circumstance. They can be contact through either the Northern or Southern Command Centres.

Alternatives to destruction of firearms and ammunition

Firearms and ammunition deemed to be rare or of high value can alternatively be donated to Museums. For further information on our links with the Royal Armouries Museum and others please contact the Manager of Firearms Licensing.

Firearms deemed to be useful for police purposes can also be sent to the Force Armoury to be used for the training of the Armed Response Unit and designated Firearms Officers.

If Found property - On the report of a found firearm, officers must bear in mind the statutory conditions imposed on both firearms and shotgun certificate holders regarding loss. Firearms, ammunition or explosives which the owner has not claimed will not be returned to the finder except on the instructions of the divisional commander and the Firearms Licensing Manager, and the finder can prove authority in law

to possess the property. Unclaimed items will be forwarded to the Firearms Licensing Unit for destruction.

Fireworks

As per safe handling guidelines, fireworks will be handled with extreme care. Fireworks will be disposed of via the local authority or trading standards. Once the relevant authorisations have been obtained (by the OIC if POTF, or if found, the property supervisor/inspector) then arrangements will be made by the property office for the local authority or trading standards to collect the fireworks and dispose of them.

Petrol/Diesel.

Property stores will arrange the safe disposal of such substances when all the necessary authorisations have been sought (whether found or POTF). Currently, the disposal method most used for petrol and diesel is by charitable donations. When possible, fuels are donated to charitable community initiatives which are arranged at a divisional level.

High Value - items of cash

When an inspector, property supervisor or property staff member (who has been given designated authority) considers an item to be of a high cash value, discretion may be exercised in retaining it for longer than the minimum retention period of one month. A valuation should be obtained prior to disposal. For guidance on dealing with large amounts of cash see the below section.

Cash – Found/small amounts

If an owner cannot be traced and a finder is not claiming the money, after one month it will be banked into the Police (Property) Act fund by the Force Business Administration team. The authorising officer will make these arrangements. Large sums of money will already have gone through this procedure upon the initial booking in.

Cash – POTF/POCA/large amounts

Cash involved in a crime or criminal activity over £1,000 is dealt with under the Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA) which comes under the Economic Crime Section. The money is banked into an interest bearing account after it has been counted. For further information or advice on disposals please contact the Economic Crime Section via the force intranet.

Other POTF cash – will be retained by the property office until the OIC informs them that the case has concluded and authorises its disposal. It will either be returned to the owner/agent if applicable or banked into the Police (Property) Act fund. If it has already been banked it will remain so and the property office will inform the Business Administration team. In some circumstances, the supervising inspector will have the final authorisation on the correct disposal of the money.

For cash that is kept for safekeeping, it will be given back to the owner/agent as soon as practicable. For example, if money has been recovered from a property of a sudden death or road collision, it will be retained by the police until the next of kin or other agent for the property is established and their identity has been checked.

Drugs

Controlled drugs are disposed of via the Serious Crime Section. See the link to the Force's current policy on such disposals, see [here](#).

OIC's must remember that when they authorise the disposal of drugs, they must endorse the PMS as to their authority and the reason for doing so. They are also responsible for obtaining any necessary disclaimers and to apply through the CPS for any court orders to dispose of drugs.

Mobile telephones or Data Holding Devices

'Data Disposal' is the preferred disposal option with regard to Mobile telephones or Data Holding Devices being subject to disposal under the provisions of the Police (property) Act 1987.

The requirements of the Force when managing personal information (data) are contained in the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA).

Humberside Police has an obligation under Principle 7, DPA to take appropriate technical and organisational measures against unauthorised or unlawful processing of personal data, accidental loss, destruction of, or damage to it. Processing includes everything we do with data; therefore, any item disposed of by the Force containing it must be managed in compliance with Principle 7.

Items containing personal data include:

- Any product or equipment which collects, stores, processes, presents or communicates information by electronic means such as computers, printers, PDA's, personal organisers, copiers, fax machines, telephones, mobile phones, answer phones, telex machines, electrical and electronic typewriters, calculators, recording media e.g. floppy disks, tapes, CD's, DVD's, memory sticks or cartridges.
- Any product or equipment for the purpose of recording or reproducing sound or images, including signals or other technologies for the distribution of sound or image by telecommunications or other means e.g. radios, televisions, iPods, video cameras and recorders, DVD recorders etc. together with cassette tapes and video disks or tapes.

Mobile telephones may contain personal data e.g. names, telephone numbers, etc. Humberside Police has a duty under the above data protection legislation to prevent unauthorised disclosure of this information when disposing of a found or suspect mobile telephone. Therefore, when arrangements are made to dispose of or retain for use mobile telephones, Humberside Police must take reasonable steps to ensure that all personal data is protected and that the telephone is disposed of or used in a secure manner. There are two ways of disposing of mobile phones throughout Humberside Police:

Data Disposal - Disposal in accordance with the current force Data Disposal Contract and associated Business Centre procedures. (This is the default disposal method).

Use for Police Purposes - some divisions allow the Technical Support Unit to select some mobile phones for police use. This is in the form of spare parts or board parts on phones they are examining or using them as practice phones. The SIM cards must be removed and destroyed before this can occur. Where any item is disposed to Police use, this should be authorised by the Property Supervisor, designated property officer or a police Inspector and relevant explanatory notes added to the property record.

Please note: under no circumstances should mobile phones be returned to the finder. This is due to the data protection concerns outlined at the beginning of this section.

Classified or Official documents

When government documents come into police possession they will be forwarded to Headquarters Special Branch for disposal, accompanied by:

- A report containing all available information.
- A print out of the property entry from the PMS
- A service pay book or document of identity may be handed back to the owner (on satisfactory evidence) if claimed within 24 hours, otherwise it is sent back to the appropriate office or issuer. Persons claiming a Government pass which has come into possession of the police may be told that it has been recovered and the claimant should be referred to the office of issue for its return. The claimant will not be informed that it has been handed to the Special Branch.

Service Uniform and Equipment

Details will be sent to the nearest station of that service for enquiry. The identity and whereabouts of owners of military decorations and discharge paper should be obtained by reference to the appropriate record office.

Postal Orders

When a postal order is handed in it will be retained by the police and a notification in writing, quoting the serial number and value will be sent to the Post Office.

Savings Certificates and Premium Bonds

Communications with regards to National Saving Certificates, stamps and gift tokens should be sent back to: Department of National Savings, Charles House, Kensington High Street, W14 8QH. For communication regarding premium bonds send back to: National Savings and Investments, Blackpool, FY3 9YP.

Motor Vehicles

For further information on disposal see the Policy & Procedure under the Northern Command Centre – 'Recovery, Storage and Disposal of Moto Vehicles via the Vehicle Recovery Scheme.'

Keys

When keys or other property bear the address of a registry or a recovery association, the identity of the owner may be sought from such an organisation and the keys handed in to the owner only. All unclaimed keys will be destroyed or scrapped. Property stores will collect keys and dispose of them when practicable.

Spectacles

Spectacles retained by the police will not be sold; they will be destroyed and therefore disposed of when practicable.

Miscellaneous Items

In cases of doubt, reference will be made to the divisional property officer, property supervisor or an inspector for further guidance on disposal of certain miscellaneous items of property.

Chapter 8

8. BACK OFFICE RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PMS SYSTEM

8.1 Contingency plan for when KiM system is suddenly out of action

There may be occasions when the system suddenly becomes out of action for managing property. If the system is unavailable to staff, there are main functions it will effect:

- the creating of new entries on the PMS – if property has to be booked in during a period of unplanned downtime, paper property registers will be used. These property registers will reside with either the property supervisor for the division or other relevant supervision (Sergeant or Inspector). Once the system is up and running, these paper records can be back record converted onto the PMS and the paper document will either be attached to the new electronic

- entry via scanning or the original paper can be filed if necessary
- the booking in/out of property – if property is to be moved between main stores and temporary stores, this must be logged by the property officer and then retrospectively, booked in and out on the PMS to show that this action was done. The police officer may also retrospectively add the request for the property.

Any tasks that can wait until the system is back up and running should be put on hold until this time. This will prevent the loss of any property or information regarding that property.

8.2 Weeding

PMS entries will be automatically weeded from the KiM system 7 years from the date of the disposal of the final item on a property record.

A record will not be weeded if any items on that record have not been disposed of: e.g. if a record contains 20 items and 19 items have been disposed of but 1 item still remains current on the system, this record will not be weeded as it is not completely disposed. This entry will remain on the system and will be periodically reviewed like any other active record until that final item is disposed of. 7 years after that final piece is disposed, it will be weeded.

The property management screen will change when a weed date has been set and the review date becomes the weed date but shown in red.

Policy database administration

Document information

The table below lists the details relating to this document.

Item	Details	
Document Title	Property Management V6.0	
Owner	Superintendent – Policy Unit, CJU	
Author / Reviewer	Chris Baker	
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Revision information

The table below details revision information relating to this document.

Topic Title	Date of last update
Changes to: 6.2 Retention of Property other than found/evidential 2.7 Handling and Recording of Found Property 2.6 Lost Passports.	12/04/2017

Appendix 1 - Packaging

It is important that cross-contamination does not occur. It is essential therefore that items which will be subject to forensic examination are packaged in previously unused evidence bags and containers (i.e. knife tubes). Items stained with wet or dried body fluid present a health and safety risk; therefore, endorse the packaging with health hazard tape.

Property	Packaging	Comments
Bank notes	Double bagged in self-sealed bags	Cash seized from Drugs or POCA jobs in bundles, should not be counted (the notes may contain trace elements of drugs, fingerprints etc). It should be seized in the presence of the suspect or another witness and placed immediately into an evidence bag and sealed. The sealed bag should then be placed into another evidence bag, which must be completed with all the evidential information, and sealed. The seal numbers from both bags must be recorded in the Officers ONB and on the POTF Record. The description of the property will be a 'Quantity of mixed Bank Of England Notes'. No estimation should be made. Sudden Death, theft, or in the case of Found cash, the officer must where possible count the cash in the presence of a witness. Agree the amount - both officers record the details in their ONB and then enter the details and package the cash as above. The exact amount must be recorded on the Evidence Bag.
Coins	Suitable bag	The value must be recorded on the property sheet.
Jewellery	Suitable bag	A full description of each item of jewellery should be recorded on the property sheet. Only items with hallmarks can be described as gold or silver. Any other items should be described as gold or silver coloured.
Drugs	Self – seal drug bag	A detailed description of the drugs will be endorsed on the Property sheet (i.e. – the actual number of tablets – not “a quantity”, or a guide to the size of other types of drugs, rather than “a lump”). Initially drugs will be stored in the nearest accessible safe

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

Live cannabis plants which are intended for use as exhibits.	Brown paper window bags	Shake soil off roots and package the whole plant. Complete exhibit details on the labels. Record Exhibit Numbers in ONB and POTF Record.
Live cannabis plants for immediate disposal	3' x 2' Plastic bags	Cut off stem as close to roots as possible. Cram plants in and seal with a pull-seal. Note all serial numbers on the POTF Record.
Knives / Sharpe instruments / Hypodermic syringes	Rigid plastic knife tube	If bloodstained keep in a cool, dry environment and label bio hazard.
Dry Items Eg clothing, bedding, etc	Brown paper bag, fold twice at top and seal all open edges with adhesive tape	If clothing, particularly shoes are put in poly bags they go mouldy For bedding mark the bed head end and upper face
Damp/wet items Eg clothing, bedding, etc	Poly bag with the top rolled down, then placed in brown bag	This is to prevent the item going mouldy. This should occur if the item cannot be dried. If the item is for a forensic purpose then the item can be dried in a forensic drying cabinet.
Blood / body fluid stained items	As per wet or dry items Must be labelled bio hazard	Must be labelled bio hazard Bloodstained items, particularly clothing, placed in poly bags will go mouldy.
Accelerants Eg petrol on clothing or other items	Immediately into NYLON bags Swan neck seal bag. Do not dry	To swan neck seal a nylon bag tightly twist the top of the bag to form a long neck. Bend the neck back over on itself and secure with a ratchet seal when air tight.
Fuel and Hazardous Substances	Should items be seized bearing toxic or hazardous substance labels the OIC will notify a supervisor and will seek advice from the Health and Safety department and/or the Fire Service with regards to the identification and storage of the substance. If the property is packaged by the OIC any outer packaging should be labelled "hazardous". The Property Officer will be advised at the earliest opportunity.	
Drinking vessels Eg bottles, cans, glasses, etc	Suitable sterile container Can be polythene or paper bag	Keep items containing fluid upright and tightly sealed If item cannot be sealed decant fluid into a sterile container

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

NOT PROTECTIVELY MARKED

Foodstuffs Including chewing gum	Placed in a polypot.
Glass controls Eg from damaged windows, etc	Packaged in a paper wrap (beecham's folded) sealed with sellotape then placed in a ploy bag or the glass can be placed in a poly pot with paper tissue packing.
Antiques and similar fragile items	Wrapped and sealed in a manner which will avoid damage during transit and clearly labelled 'FRAGILE.'