

PAVA Irritant Spray

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Policy Statement

Summary

West Yorkshire Police (WYP) complies with the Authorised Professional Practice (APP) around Public Order and the use of irritant sprays. This local procedure is to provide extra information detailing when and how PAVA can be used by authorised officers.

This policy explains the provisions for use of PAVA spray, including how the individual will be affected and the decontamination process. This is as PAVA spray is primarily designed for dealing with violent people who cannot be otherwise restrained.

The PAVA irritant spray that WYP use is CapTor 2. For the purpose of the policy CapTor 2 will be referred to in the document as PAVA.

Scope

This policy applies to all police officers and police staff.

Principles

Usage and Storage

Usage

- From the 1st April 2017, only PAVA spray will be used by WYP, officers will no longer have access to CS spray.
- Any use of PAVA irritant spray must be reasonable and justified using the National Decision Model (NDM) and only be used against:
 - Individual(s) offering a level of violence which cannot be appropriately dealt with by other tactical options; and
 - Violent offenders where failure to induce immediate incapacitation would increase the risk to any/all persons present.
- PAVA is issued for defensive or offensive use, but must not be regarded as a replacement for other routinely distributed protective equipment.
- PAVA is appropriate to use in crowds or in confined spaces due to the lack of cross-contamination issues.
- In large scale public order situations, officers will be given specific instructions by their designated officer regarding the usage.
- PAVA can only be issued by either a Police Sergeant or Police Staff Supervisor, and upon issuing an entry must be made in the receipt/issue book.
- Officers will only be issued with 1 canister of PAVA spray.
- PAVA can only be carried or used by officers who have been properly authorised to do so following the appropriate training and certification. Officers must undergo refresher training and re-certify bi-annually.
- The equipment must be carried by:

- All police officers deployed on uniformed or plain clothes duties, when it can be reasonably foreseen that they may become involved in confrontational situations;
- Uniformed police officers when attending court for any reasons; and
- Police officers who work within custody.
- If an officer leaves or transfers from their District or Department, their PAVA spray must not be re-issued to another officer, it must be disposed of following the correct procedure.
- Districts and Departments must not provide guidelines on training and use of PAVA spray to solicitors, other agencies, the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) or any individual. Unauthorised disclosure may result in disciplinary action being taken. Any requests for this information must be referred to the Professional Standards Department (PSD).

Storage

- Districts and Departments must have a designated room for the storage of PAVA, which includes a safe for the storage of new and un-issued PAVA as well as a safe for PAVA that's due for disposal or return.
- Protective Services Operations must have a safe storage facility for bulk PAVA.
- When PAVA is delivered to the District or Department, the nominated PAVA representative must ensure it is immediately booked into the PAVA receipt/issue book.
- It is the responsibility of the nominated PAVA representative to conduct regular checks of the un-issued stock against the receipt/issue book for accuracy.
- Individuals must have a locker to store their PAVA spray, which must clearly display their identification information (service number, name and rank).
- It is the responsibility of the appointed Police Sergeant or Police Staff supervisor to issue the locker keys to individuals who are authorised to use PAVA spray, and to make regular checks to confirm that the officers are storing the spray correctly in their locker, particularly on the conclusion of their tour of duty.
- Safe keys and locker keys, including the spares and the master, as well as the irritant canister receipt/issue book must be kept in a secure environment at each district.

Carrying, Ranges and the Effects

Principles

- Spray holders provide protection for the canister and from being snatched by a potential attacker as well as a quick and simple release of the canister. Officers must use the holders in accordance with the following, if the officer is deployed in:
 - Uniform then they must use the spray holder and only carry the canister in a suitable pouch or belt clip; or

- Plain clothes and it is not practical to use a spray holder due to its bulky nature, then they must physically carry the canister at all times.
 - Officers must safely retain the canister after use back into its holder. It is particularly important when in close proximity to members of the public who could seek an opportunity to access the spray, regardless of their intentions.
 - PAVA spray is non-flammable.
 - Officers must consider the use of tactical movement after using PAVA to allow the effects to take place. However an officer may have to control a subject immediately based on the threat/risk posed.
 - The liquid spray from a PAVA canister has a **maximum effective range** of up to **4 metres**. Officers must be aware that the operating distance is the distance between the canister and the subject's eyes, **not** the distance between themselves and the subject.
 - Officers must be aware that if they use PAVA on an individual, it will primarily affect their eyes causing closure and discomfort that can be quite intense. The discomfort will generally take effect within 0 to 5 seconds.
 - The effects should begin to subside within 10 to 15 minutes.
 - It should take approximately 15 to 45 minutes for a full recovery.
 - If the subject is still feeling the effects after 45 minutes, then medical assistance should be sought.
 - Officers must remember that PAVA spray will not be effective on everyone and on some individuals, it may have no effect at all.
 - If the PAVA spray does not work on the individual, then officers should consider the use of other tactical options.
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Drawing and Transporting

Principles

- Officers who parade for duty at an even location, away from their station, e.g. on special police services, may draw a PAVA spray from:
 - Their own police station as normal;
 - The host district station where the event takes place, for one day issue only; or
 - The briefing point at the event location.
 - When drawing the spray from their own or host district station, then officers are authorised to carry the PAVA spray while travelling to and from an event location, but only on the of the day event.
 - When drawing the spray from an event location, the host district is authorised to transport the PAVA spray to the event.
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Disposal

Principles

- The nominated PAVA representative is responsible for:

- Recording the serial number of all the canisters that are being disposed in the receipt/issue book. If the serial number cannot be stated then it must be recorded as 'serial number unknown';
 - Individually placing canisters in a sealed clear plastic bag and put into a cardboard box and sealed; and
 - Informing the Headquarters Planning and Logistics department so that a collection of the canisters to be disposed can be arranged.
 - Only the nominated individual from Specialist Operations Training is authorised to endorse the 'Disposal' column of the receipt/issue book.
 - Any canisters that are found or seized from members of the public must be disposed of in the same manner as police owned irritant canisters.
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Responsibilities

Officers

Initial Action

Police officers authorised and trained to use PAVA are responsible for:

- Ensuring where possible and prior to use that a warning is shouted before spraying in short bursts and repeating if necessary, not continually spraying, aiming directly at the individuals face. Officers must remember to not use PAVA at less than one meter to the subject unless the use of force is proportionate and necessary to the circumstances;
- Being prepared to take alternative action, e.g. empty hand skills, use of baton etc., in cases after PAVA has been sprayed but has not caused any effect on the individual;
- Ensuring that for an individual who has been sprayed that any restraint methods used and the physical position they are put in, does not adversely affect their breathing. Individuals must not be left or transported in a prone face down position;
- Speaking to the individual once detained reassuring them and advising that any effects from the spray are only temporary and to encourage them to open their eyes and focus on breathing normally;
- Informing the control room as soon as practicable that PAVA spray has been used on a detainee, the control room then will make transportation arrangements for the medical examination of that individual who has been sprayed, if necessary;
- Exposing the individual sprayed with PAVA to fresh air to aid their recovery. Contamination is less of an issue with PAVA as it is a liquid based spray. Removal of contaminated clothes should not be necessary.

Monitoring

- Monitoring the individual from the time of their arrest, transportation and to arriving at the custody area, to ensure their breathing is normal and that they are kept in an upright position. Taking particular care to monitor individuals who are:
 - Obese;
 - Under the influence of drugs or alcohol;
 - Displaying bizarre or violent behaviour; and

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Apparently unaffected by the irritant.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Diverting immediately from the route to custody, to seek medical assistance if the individual is displaying signs of distress or adverse reactions;
Post Action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Retaining the canister after use for a period of at least 28 days, after which it may then be disposed of subject to any action or complaints made relating to its use; ● Informing the custody officer that PAVA has been used against the detainee. ● Recording any use of PAVA on a Use of Force Reporting Form which is available on Samsung Handheld devices or on the Pronto Desktop system. ● Seeking medical treatment from their own General Practitioner (GP) or casualty department if injured or suffering any illness lasting more than 45 minutes since contamination with the PAVA irritant spray. The Occupational Health Unit (OHU) must also be contacted at the earliest possible opportunity to be able to record the adverse effects.

Custody Officer

Initial Action	<p>Custody officers are responsible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Checking the condition of the detainee when arriving at the custody area, arranging for medical examination if required. If they haven't recovered from the immediate effects then they need to be supervised when washing their eyes with cold water; ● Processing the individual through into custody as normal; ● Segregating the individual from others and placing their contaminated clothing in a sealed bag, if necessary such as cases of severe PAVA contamination;
Monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Monitoring the individual throughout the recovery period in the custody area providing medical attention if required. Subjecting individuals to enhanced cell supervision if they are under the influence of drugs or alcohol; ● Ensuring no individual is left unsupervised until a full recovery has been made from the effects of the PAVA irritant; and
Release	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Informing the individual of the spray that has been used and the actions they must take if they suffer any additional problems, via the Form 303 before releasing them.

Decontamination

Individuals & Eyes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● There is no antidotes for PAVA irritant spray and any product that is sold on the market claiming to do so must not be used as they could do more harm than good.
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- Additional medical attention will be provided to the individual if they request it or if symptoms persist beyond 45 minutes from the initial exposure. This may mean recalling a medical practitioner or transporting the individual to hospital.
 - As a last resort, water can be used to dilute the irritated sensitive areas, but if required this must be cold water and it must be flushed off e.g. the face. The individual must not be given a basin of water to soak the irritated sensitive area.
 - In relation to eyes, it may be necessary to irrigate them. This must only be conducted by a healthcare professional.
 - Individuals exposed to PAVA irritant spray and who wear soft contact lenses, such as disposable ones, may suffer greater discomfort as the irritant will permeate through the lenses material. There isn't sufficient information to say whether these types of lenses can be cleaned and worn again, therefore individuals must be informed to dispose of the contact lenses.
 - Lenses must be removed by the individual, an optician or a Medical Practitioner. Officers must not attempt to remove the lenses from the individual's eyes.
 - Individuals must be informed to wash their hands and face immediately and thoroughly after removing the contact lenses to avoid cross contamination. This must be done prior to putting in new lenses.
 - It must be emphasised that, in any case of doubt, an optician or Medical Practitioner must be sought for advice.
 - Custody areas must make available the saline solution containers to individuals and or officers to use. As soon as they are used, the containers become the property of the user.
 - During training, contact lenses must not be worn by officers.
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Buildings

- Officers must use the appropriate equipment, including disposable gloves when decontaminating buildings including objects or surfaces, to prevent cross contamination.
- Initial action for officers must be ventilation. Ventilation will usually remove the effects of the irritant in a room within 30 minutes.
- Manufactures guidance states to use warm soapy water for walls and surfaces. Special mixing of different agents is not permitted.
- Replacement of carpets and soft furnishings is not required, general vacuuming and warm soapy water is enough to remove the PAVA from these materials. The building owner must be informed of this and the justification as to why it's the preferred option.
- Display items in shop premises must be removed immediately if contaminated or suspected to be contaminated and then thoroughly cleaned. The shop policy must be followed, but consideration must be given to destroying suspected contaminated items, i.e. food items.
- The Form 302 must be given to building owners where their premises has been contaminated with the irritant spray.

Vehicles

- It is the responsibility of the officers involved in the situation where PAVA has been used to make the decision as to whether a vehicle is driveable or not. Decisions must not be influenced by management. Safety is paramount.
 - If a vehicle is deemed not driveable, it must be removed to a police station by way of a recovery vehicle, and a clear sign stating that PAVA is present be displayed on the vehicle. An out of hour's call-out system is managed via Force Communications.
 - If transporting a contaminated individual, a vehicle that does not contain soft furnishings should be used, to allow for easier decontamination. It is advised for windows to be opened during the journey, and then try to 'vent' the vehicle when the individual has been removed.
 - The vehicle ideally must be left for 30 minutes with all windows open to 'vent' it thoroughly and for the PAVA to be adequately clear from the vehicles interior.
 - The services of the contractor must be used in cases of heavy contamination.
 - It is advised to still open a window when the vehicle is in transit after being decontaminated to ensure any excess residue of the irritant is removed.
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PAVA Lost or Misplaced

Information

- PAVA is a Section 5 Firearm and it needs to be kept secure by Officers when carrying this operationally.
 - When not carrying this operationally it needs to be kept in a secure locker in the PAVA store.
 - Should an Officer lose/misplace PAVA then the following must take place:
 - The Officer needs to promptly report this to the duty Inspector.
 - The Officer needs to complete a Security Incident Report and submit this accordingly.
 - The Duty Inspector will oversee immediate efforts to locate this.
 - If the PAVA has been lost during an operational incident, then a search of the locality must take place to try and recover it.
 - A thorough search of Officers locker/kit bags, if not lost during an operational incident, must be undertaken.
 - If the PAVA is not located, then a full report to the Inspector must be produced and niche occurrence created for lost Police property. The Inspector must endorse the OEL with details of the efforts made to locate the PAVA.
 - The Inspector must report the loss of the PAVA to the duty SLT DOC at district with an assessment of whether this is a conduct or performance matter.
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Additional Information

Compliance

This policy complies with the following legislation and policy:

- APP Public Order
 - APP Operations
 - Data Protection Act 2018
 - Officer Safety, Police Support Unit (PSU) Training and Job Related Fitness Testing policy
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