



At-Risk Management Safety Unit

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Custodial Operations Practice Directive

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Scope
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Human Rights2. Limitation of Human Rights3. Safety Unit Process Map4. Need for Placement in Unit Identified5. Management of a Prisoner in a Safety Unit6. Management Plans7. Shared Cell Accommodation8. Issuing of Safer Design Clothing, Bedding and Towels9. Restraints10. Return to Sending Centre



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1. Human Rights

To ensure corrective services officers act or make decisions in a way that is compatible with human rights, officers must give proper consideration to human rights, including but not limited to:

- a) the prisoner's right to equal and effective protection against discrimination;
- b) the prisoner's right not to be treated or punished in a cruel, inhumane or degrading way;
- c) the prisoner's right to privacy and reputation;
- d) the prisoner's cultural rights – generally and for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples;
- e) the prisoner's right to not be deprived of liberty except on grounds, and in procedures, established by law;
- f) the prisoner's right to be treated with humanity and respect, and with respect for the inherent dignity of the human person;
- g) the prisoner's right to freedom of religion, including their right to demonstrate their religion individually or as part of a community;
- h) the prisoner's right to freedom of expression including the freedom to seek, receive and impart information in writing;
- i) the prisoner's right to education; and
- j) the prisoner's right to protection of families and children.

2. Limitation of Human Rights

Human rights can be limited if certain conditions are present:

- a) the limit must be provided under law;
- b) the limit must be reasonable; and
- c) any impositions on the human rights must be demonstrably justified in a free and democratic society based on human dignity equality and freedom.

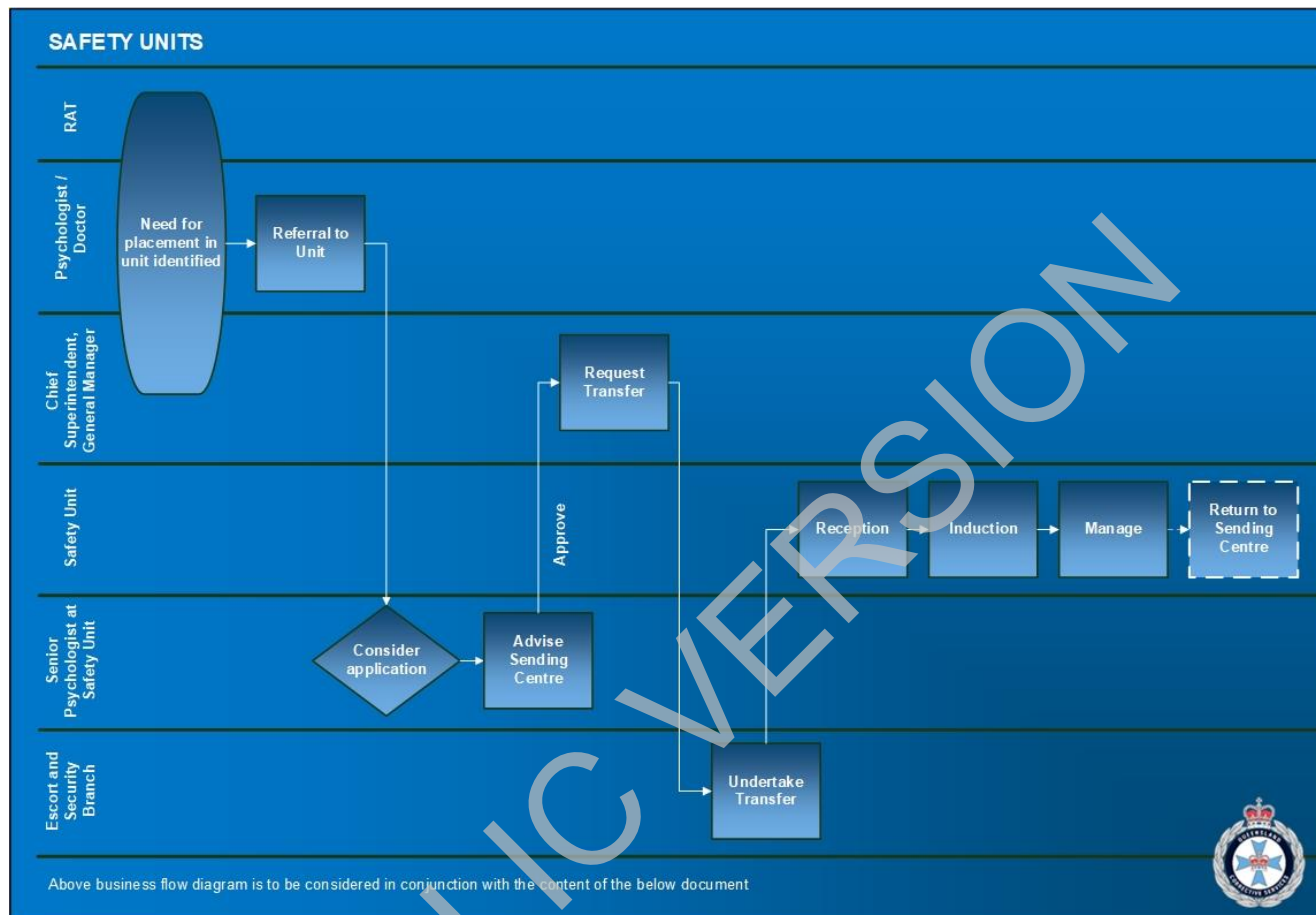
A prisoner's human rights should only be limited to the extent that is reasonably and demonstrably justified.

Prisoners are required to be managed in the least restrictive environment necessary to ensure safety and security for themselves, other prisoners, staff and visitors. This is balanced by a range of other placement considerations that relate to prisoners (e.g. suicide and self-harm risk, special needs, protection, etc.).





3. Safety Unit Process Map



Refer to COPD At Risk Management, COPD Safety Orders and Intensive Management Plans (IMPs) and Appendix AR7 Special Containment and Interventions Options - Secure.

4. Need for Placement in Unit Identified

A Risk Assessment Team, psychologist or doctor may recommend to a Chief Superintendent, General Manager of the corrective services facility that a prisoner subject to a safety order under section 53 of the *Corrective Services Act 2006* (CSA) be considered for admission to a safety unit if the prisoner:

- is assessed as being at a level of risk of self-harm or suicide requiring close monitoring and intensive intervention that cannot be provided in the mainstream corrections system; or
- has made a suicide attempt and is in need of close monitoring and intensive intervention and cannot be managed in the mainstream corrections system; or
- has self-harmed and is in need of close monitoring and intensive intervention and cannot be managed in mainstream accommodation; and/or
- is considered at risk of harming others and requires specialised confinement and safety intervention.





Where a Chief Superintendent, General Manager of a corrective services facility believes a prisoner should be accommodated in a designated safety unit, a referral to an Assistant Commissioner, Custodial Operations for consideration of the placement of a prisoner in a safety unit will be required. This may also include the transfer of a prisoner to a corrective services facility where there is a designated safety unit.

4.1 Referral for consideration

Referrals should be made by a psychologist or medical officer to an Assistant Commissioner, Custodial Operations. Application must be made using the Administrative Form 81 Safety Unit Referral, which is to be emailed to an Assistant Commissioner, Custodial Operations.

If possible, initial contact for a referral should be made by telephone to an Assistant Commissioner, Custodial Operations

4.2 Consider application - availability of accommodation

An Assistant Commissioner, Custodial Operations may seek further information from the Chief Superintendent, General Manager of the referring corrective services facility and the Senior Psychologist that oversees the Safety Unit to assist in the decision making process and decide priority of placement.

Where the designated safety unit is at capacity when a referral is received for admission, an Assistant Commissioner, Custodial Operations must:

- determine if any prisoner from the safety unit is ready for discharge;
- seek alternate accommodation within the facility for any prisoner eligible for discharge from the safety unit; or
- consider alternative accommodation arrangements for the prisoner.

If no vacancy is available to accept a prisoner or a decision is made that the prisoner is not to be accommodated in a safety unit:

- Administrative Form 82 Safety Unit Outcome of Referral must be sent to the referring facility outlining the reasons for non-acceptance of the referral as soon as practicable and within 12 hours of the initial receipt of the referral; and
- staff experienced in the management of safety unit prisoners will, upon request, provide advice regarding the management of the prisoner until such time as the prisoner is no longer at a level of risk requiring transfer or until a vacancy becomes available and the prisoner may be transferred.

If the Safety Unit has capacity and there are no pending applications then the Chief Superintendent, General Manager of the corrective services facility may use the Safety Unit cells to manage their own prisoner cohort.

The Administrative Form 82 Safety Unit Outcome of Referral must be responded to within 12 hours of receipt by an Assistant Commissioner, Custodial Operations.

4.3 Advice of decision

The Chief Superintendent, General Manager of a corrective services facility will be advised of the outcome of the application by an Assistant Commissioner, Custodial Operations.





4.4 Request transfer

The Chief Superintendent, General Manager of the corrective services facility is to facilitate the transfer of the prisoner, where a prisoner has been accepted for placement in a designated Safety Unit.



4.5 Undertake transfer

Refer to COPD Sentence Management: Transfers.

To minimise the risk of self-harm or harm to others by a prisoner during transfer to a safety unit at another facility, the referring facility must:

- advise escorting staff that the prisoner is at risk of self-harm or harm to others and case note that this has been completed;
- ensure all at risk paperwork is transported with the prisoner;
- conduct a search of the prisoner requiring the removal of clothing prior to the transfer in accordance with the Direction for a Search of Prisoners Requiring the Removal of Clothing refer s35 CSA; and
- note the observation level on Approved Form 9 – Order for Transfer of a Prisoner.

The prisoner should be transferred as a priority after being notified by the referring facility.

4.6 Reception

Prior to the arrival of a new prisoner subject to a safety order at the safety unit, all other prisoners accommodated in the safety unit must be secured. The immediate management of the new prisoner must ensure their physical safety from self-harm or harm to others. The prisoner being admitted:

- must be under close visual observation during the reception process and while under escort into the safety unit in accordance with the prisoners at-risk management plan;
- must be received by a staff member trained in the safety unit reception management and admission process;
- may be subject to a search requiring the removal of clothing;
- must be provided with safer design clothing and bedding;
- may be placed in an observation cell;
- must be briefed regarding the routine of the safety unit; and
- must be assessed by a registered nurse who will note the medical record accordingly.

5. Management of a Prisoner in a Safety Unit

5.1 Induction

The prisoner must be provided with a general induction to the safety unit, including but not limited to informing the prisoner:

- that the prisoner is expected to participate in the daily routine of the safety unit;
- of the prisoner's privileges, for example; if referred from another facility, a reception buy-up is permitted within 24 hours;
- of the prisoner's responsibilities;
- of the prisoner's right to request a review of their safety order by an official visitor and to submit any information of relevance in relation to a decision to be placed on a consecutive safety order, refer to COPD Safety Orders and IMPs: Safety Orders;





- e) of the safety unit rules which must be clearly displayed for the reference of prisoners and staff including that:
 - i. potentially hazardous items are not permitted in the safety unit;
 - ii. personal belongings may be secured for access only under supervision; and
 - iii. a prisoner is expected to abide by the rules of the safety unit; and
- f) of details of the prisoner's At-Risk Management Plan (ARMP) or Intensive Management Plan (IMP) (as relevant to the prisoner).

5.2 Assessment and interviews by health practitioners

An interview or assessment by a health practitioner may be conducted within view of, but outside the hearing, of at least one corrective services officer.

5.3 Visitors

A prisoner is entitled to visits whilst accommodated in a safety unit, in accordance with the COPD Visitors to a Facility – Visits Process. Consideration must be given to the prisoners ARMP or Safety Order for conditions or any restrictions that may apply.

5.4 Safety unit management team

At each corrective services facility containing a safety unit, a safety unit management team must be formed, and may comprise of the following:

- a) the Chief Superintendent, General Manager and/or Superintendent, Deputy General Manager of the corrective services facility;
- b) the Manager, Offender Development;
- c) an Accommodation Manager;
- d) a Correctional Supervisor;
- e) a Doctor or Psychologist; and
- f) Cultural Liaison Officer.

The Chief Superintendent, General Manager of a corrective services facility may nominate additional members.

The safety unit management team must:

- a) overview the day to day operations of the safety unit;
- b) implement a system of review of (any) local instructions developed for the safety unit;
- c) review any significant incidents occurring within the safety unit to identify opportunities to enhance operations; and
- d) consider options for prisoner engagement and meaningful activities with the safety unit.

6. Management Plans

All at-risk prisoners placed in a safety unit must be managed in accordance with an ARMP, refer to COPD At Risk Management: At Risk and Administrative Form 57 Observation Log – At Risk Prisoner.

Prisoners that are not considered to at-risk of suicide or self-harm may be accommodated in a safety unit. Prisoners who are not subject to an ARMP may be managed on an IMP or other management regime that is approved by the Chief Superintendent, General Manager or nominee.

Refer COPD Safety Orders and IMP's: Intensive Management Plans.





If considered beneficial to the prisoner and in accordance with the requirements for the disclosure of confidential information appropriate, staff may:

- contact and work with family and nominated support people to assist the prisoner;
- consider the suitability of the prisoner for individual and group programs;
- access special supports and services including, if appropriate, culturally relevant interventions; and
- integrate traditional healing practices into the intervention plan if practicable and relevant.

Refer COPD Disclosure of Confidential Information.

6.1 Requirements

Where a prisoner on a safety order is separately confined in a safety unit in accordance with s53(7) of the CSA, the conditions of this confinement must be in accordance with s4 of the *Corrective Services Regulation 2017* (CSR), including that the prisoner must be given the opportunity to exercise in the fresh air for at least two daylight hours a day unless a doctor or nurse advises that it would not be in the interests of the prisoner's health to exercise for a stated period or indefinitely, refer CSR s4(1)(d). Where a prisoner refuses or declines the out of cell time, or where the prisoner requests that the out of cell time period ceases early this must be recorded in a case note on IOMS. A case note must also be made in circumstances where a prisoner does not receive this period of out cell time detailing the reason for same.

Separate confinement in relation to a prisoner, means the separation of the prisoner from other prisoners, refer CSA, Schedule 4 Dictionary.

A logbook must be maintained for each safety unit. It is to include all elements in accordance with COPD Daily Operations: Gate Books, Log Books and Registers.

- significant events out of the ordinary, whether to do with an individual officer or prisoner, or the management of the area generally, occurring during the shift;
- periods of open-air exercise for prisoners undergoing separate confinement;
- details of safety orders, IMPs or ARMP's, etc.;
- attendance of Queensland Health or other health service providers; and
- any other visitors to the safety unit.

7. Shared Cell Accommodation

An at-risk prisoner should ordinarily be accommodated in a single cell, however, a Risk Assessment Team may determine that an at-risk prisoner is suitable for shared cell accommodation.

Refer COPD At Risk Management: At-Risk.

8. Issuing of Safer Design Clothing, Bedding and Towels

An at-risk prisoner who is assessed to be an extreme risk (requiring continuous observations) or a high risk (requiring 15 or 30 minute observations) is to be issued a safer design towel (where available) only for the time required whilst the prisoner is showering. The towel is to be retrieved from the prisoner after use and is not to remain in the prisoner's cell.

A corrective services officer issuing safer design clothing, bedding or towels to an at-risk prisoner is to undertake a visual inspection of each of the items prior to issue. The inspection is to ensure the items do not display signs of excessive wear, or any damage to the fabric or stitching of the items.





Where there are signs of excessive wear or any damage to the item, the officer must not issue the items to the at-risk prisoner.

9. Restraints

To prevent a prisoner from harming themselves or others, restraints may need to be applied that result in the prisoner having significantly restricted movement. In the event that this occurs, any restriction should be to the lowest level possible whilst still ensuring:

- a) that the prisoner's opportunity to self-harm / suicide is limited to an acceptable level of risk; and
- b) that the officer's safety is protected.

Also, in addition to the above logbook requirements, staff rostered to safety units must record:

- a) the time the restraints were applied and when they are removed; and
- b) the times apparent good health checks are conducted on those prisoners who have restraints applied for purpose of preventing them from harming themselves or others.

Refer to COPD Safety and Security Equipment: Management of Safety and Security Equipment, Appendix SSE24 Safety and Security Equipment Reference Table and training document Control and Restraint Manual.

The above requirement relating to restraints does not apply to prisoners who have restraints applied in accordance with Appendix ESC1 Escort Staffing, Weapons and Restraint Matrix for an external escort.

10. Return to Sending Centre

Where a prisoner is to be discharged from the Safety Unit notification must be forwarded to the transferring centre via the Administrative Form 85 Safety Unit Notification of Impending Discharge.

