In Indonesia, police and prison officers use a range of specially designed weapons and equipment. Some, such as electric shock batons and weighted leg cuffs have no legitimate law enforcement use and should never be used by law enforcement officials. Other equipment such as handcuffs, leg cuffs and batons have a legitimate use but there should be appropriate, human rights based, policies and procedures governing any use.

Detention monitors and other human rights observers should collect information on all types of weapons and equipment carried by police and prison officers (including improvised weapons such as wooden sticks), as well as how the equipment is used. This type of documentation will help highlight any systemic misuse of equipment, gather evidence to lobby for increased controls on use of equipment or provide additional evidence of abuse for case studies and reports.

This factsheet provides an overview of the law enforcement weapons and equipment used in Indonesia, the issues surrounding their use, international standards, and key information to note when documenting weapons or equipment.

**Batons/hand held kinetic weapons**

Law enforcement officers use batons to force an individual to comply with an order or to deter individuals from violent actions. Officers also use batons defensively to protect themselves from blows from assailants or in a co-ordinated manner to move or disperse violent participants in an assembly. Batons are widely misused by law enforcement officers to inflict unnecessary or excessive force on target individuals through beatings and are sometimes used to apply dangerous restraint techniques, particularly neck-holds that restrict breathing.

Law enforcement officials should undertake human rights based scenario training before being issued with a baton to ensure that is used correctly and the risk of
excessive or unnecessary use of force is mitigated. The use of batons must be proportionate, legal, and necessary.¹

Omega has recorded frequent accounts of misuse of batons by police and prison officers in Indonesia. Batons are used to beat protesters/detainees, as are wooden sticks and other improvised weapons.

**International Standards**

UN guidance states: “Neck-holds using batons should not be employed as they present an especially high risk of death or serious injury as a result of large blood-vessel or airway compression.” In addition, “Batons shall not be used against a person who is neither engaged in, nor threatening, violent behaviour. Such use is likely to amount to cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment, or even torture.”²

**Restraints**

Law enforcement officials use restraints to detainee individuals. Some restraints, such as handcuffs and leg cuffs have a legitimate law enforcement use but there should clear regulations and polices surrounding the types of restraints that are permitted for use and how restraints should be used. Law enforcement officials should undertake human rights based scenario training before being issue with any restraints.

**Handcuffs and leg cuffs**

Handcuffs and leg cuffs are used to restrain individuals during arrest, when moving them between detention facilities, to prevent them escaping or stop them harming themselves or others. Detainees should not be put in handcuffs and leg cuffs linked by a chain as it severely restricts movement and, if the chain is too short, can be degrading.

In Indonesia, law enforcement officials use handcuffs and leg cuffs on a daily basis. Whilst some of the use will be legitimate there are numerous reports of these restraints

¹ ICRC. International Rules and Standards for Policing, June 2015, p. 18.
being misused with individuals being cuffed in stress positions or cuffed for prolonged periods. There have also been reports of prisoners wearing handcuffs and leg cuffs linked by a short chain when being moved between prisons.³

**Weighted leg cuffs**

Weighted leg cuffs are heavy, usually non-adjustable, leg cuffs models can weigh up to 8kg and may have additional weights added to the chain link.

Law enforcement officials should never use these restraints. They are heavier than is necessary to adequately restrain an individual. In addition, their weight significantly restricts movement whilst increasing the risk of ankle injury. Prolonged use of these cuffs can lead to lacerations, which can lead to blood poisoning and other long-term physical impairments. Wearing them is inherently degrading.

There are no recent reports of these restraints being used in Indonesia, however, additional monitoring and reporting by human rights observers may uncover their use.

**Thumb cuffs**

Thumb cuffs are designed to restrict hand movement by holding thumbs in a fixed position.

Law enforcement officials should never use thumb cuffs, as they have no legitimate law enforcement purpose that cannot be achieved through other types of restraints. Specifically they can help facilitate torture or other ill-treatment (especially stress positions).

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There are no recent reports of these restraints being used in Indonesia, however, additional monitoring and reporting by human rights observers may uncover their use.

**International Standards**

The Mandela Rules state restraints should only be used as a precaution against escape during transfer, to prevent injury, or damage to property. The use must be authorised by law and the restraints only imposed for the shortest possible time.\(^4\) They also state that that instruments of restraint that are inherently degrading should be prohibited.\(^5\)

The Bangkok Rules state that instruments of restraint should never be used on women during labour, during birth and immediately after birth.\(^6\)

The Havana Rules state that instruments of restraint can only be used against juveniles in places of detention in exceptional cases, where all other control methods have been exhausted and failed.\(^7\)

**Electric Shock Weapons**

Electric shock weapons are designed to temporarily disable an individual by delivering a high voltage electric shock.

Direct contact electric shock batons are pressed against the target individual and deliver an intense, localized pain. This equipment is inherently abusive that facilitates torture and should not be used by police or prison officers.

There have been reports of electric shock batons being used by police in Indonesia, especially in Papua\(^8\) although they are not thought to be widely used.

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\(^5\) Ibid, Rule 47.


**Projectile electric shock**

Projectile electric shock weapons (such as Taser) deliver a high-voltage shock that causes the target individual to lose muscle control (neuro-muscular incapacitation).

Law enforcement officers use projectile electric shock weapons to temporarily incapacitate target individuals. The use of these weapons should be limited to situations when the only alternative is the use of lethal force or firearms, when an officer is facing or trying to prevent an imminent threat of death or serious injury.

Any use of projectile electric shock weapons by officers requires clear regulations and polices surrounding use. Law enforcement officials should undertake human rights based scenario training before being issue with the this weapon.

There are reports that Indonesian police have been issued with Taser\(^9\) however, there are no reports on their use. Additional monitoring and reporting by human rights observers may uncover their use.

**International Standards**

The CPT has expressed "strong reservations" about the use of electric shock equipment that is in direct contact with the skin, highlighting that law enforcement officials should have other techniques available to them when they are with touching distance of person who must be brought under control.\(^{10}\)

**Launched Kinetic Impact Weapons**

Launched kinetic impact weapons, sometimes referred to as ‘baton rounds’ or ‘rubber bullets’, are designed to cause ‘blunt trauma’ to an individual and force ‘compliance through pain’.

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\(^{10}\) CPT, European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT), *CPT Standards*, “Substantive” sections of the CPT’s General Reports, CPT/Inf/E (2002) 1 - Rev. 2015, p. 111.
The projectiles that are made from materials such as rubber, wood, fabric bags filled with lead shot, foam or sponge and contained in grenades or cartridges. Some kinetic impact weapons should not be used at all, as they are inaccurate – such as kinetic impact cartridges/grenades containing multiple projectiles/balls – and they cannot be used safely and small hardened rubber balls have caused eye injuries.

These weapons are fired from less lethal launchers that can be vehicle mounted or hand-held. They are often used as a method of crowd control both on the streets and in prisons.

The type of projectile used, the velocity (speed) of the projectile, and the part of the body it hits can effect the type of injury received. For example, if a kinetic impact projectile hits an individual in the head, from close range at a relatively high velocity it can cause lethal injury. As with other equipment law enforcement officials should undertake human rights based scenario training before being issued with these weapons to ensure that they are used correctly.

Launched kinetic impact are reportedly used by Indonesian law enforcement officers when policing protests.\textsuperscript{11}

\textbf{International Standards}

The OSCE-ODIHR Human Rights Handbook on Policing Assemblies\textsuperscript{12}; the UNODC/OHCHR Resource Book on the Use of Force and Firearms in Law Enforcement\textsuperscript{13}; and the UN Guidance on Less-Lethal Weapons in Law Enforcement\textsuperscript{14} all contain guidance on the use of kinetic impact weapons by law enforcement officials. All the guidance states that projectiles should only be used when targeted at an individual and grenades/cartridges containing multiple projectiles should not be used.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{13} UNODC & OHCHR, \textit{Resource book on the use of force and firearms in law enforcement}, 2017, pp. 94-95.
\end{itemize}
Chemical Irritants

Chemical irritants, sometimes referred to as Riot Control Agents (RCAs), refers to ‘tear gas’ (CS, CN and CR) and ‘pepper spray’ (pepper spray or PAVA). They are designed to temporarily deter or disable an individual by producing sensory irritation and are used to disperse a crowd or, if used against an individual, to force compliance.

Chemical irritants are usually dispensed via a sprayer or a weapon fired/hand thrown cartridge or grenade (see section above for launchers).

Both of these delivery methods are can be inherently indiscriminate and the amounts of chemical irritant dispersed by certain systems/munitions could cause injury to both those targeted and to bystanders. Law enforcement officials should undertake human rights based scenario training before being issued chemical irritants to ensure that they are used correctly.

Sprayers

Sprayers dispense as a fine spray/mist/fog or a liquid stream. They vary in size from small 25ml sprays that are carried for self-defence to larger underarm/backpack style sprayers or water cannon.
**Hand thrown/weapon launched**

Cartridges/grenades come in a variety of calibres and some separate into two or more ‘submunitions’ when fired. If launched projectiles containing chemical irritants hit a person directly, they can cause penetration wounds, concussion, other head injuries and death.

The majority of chemical irritants Omega has seen used in Indonesia recently are fired from less lethal grenade launchers or sprayed via water cannon.  

**International Standards**

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) has highlighted the “systematic and inappropriate use of tear gas” as a serious impediment to the full realisation of the freedom of assembly. The UNODC/OHCHR Resource Book states: “In public order situations, using tear gas is clearly placed at the far end of the scale of force, as it is difficult to target specific people and therefore it is likely to affect and harm uninvolved bystanders.” The Resource Book includes several recommendations, including that chemical irritants should not be used in confined spaces or against the same people several times in a short time period; and that chemical irritant grenades should not be used in wide areas against larger groups, unless the level of violence has reached such a high level that law enforcement officers cannot address the threat by limiting the use of force to target violent persons only.

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16 Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Resolution 2116 (2016), adopted by the Standing Committee, acting on behalf of the Assembly, on 27 May 2016, para 5.


18 Ibid.
Recording Information

- If visiting places of detention note if prison officers are carrying weapons and/or equipment;
- If appropriate ask relevant authorities for copies of policies or regulations governing use weapons/equipment
- If interviewing an individual who has been injured through use of equipment ask:
  - For a description of the weapon/equipment used, including any distinguishing features or markings
  - Description of how the weapon/equipment was used, including the location of any injuries and any stress positions used
  - Description of any injuries – if possible (and with consent) photograph or record injuries in accordance with the Istanbul Protocol.
- If examining or recording individual weapons/pieces of equipment, if possible record:
  - Markings – photograph or record any logos or serial numbers. These may identify the manufacturer and/or supplier of the weapon/equipment or the date of manufacture
  - Shape/composition – photograph or record the size and any distinguishing features
  - Colours – any colour on the weapon can help identify the manufacturer
  - Dimensions/scale – try to photograph the weapon next to a universally recognisable object such as a pen
  - If recording use, note any information on who used the weapons/equipment (police, particular division, rank etc) and whether the use was offensive or defensive

Please send any information on weapons and equipment used by law enforcement officials to helen@omegaresearchfoundation.org.

WARNING:
Do not put yourself at risk. Some weapons can be dangerous.
- Always assume that ammunition and ordnance is ‘live’ and could cause injury.
- Do not take unnecessary risks trying to handle equipment.
- Unless you know what you are doing, leave the items alone and simply observe from a distance
- If possible take photographs or write detailed descriptions or make drawings of the equipment found.
The **Omega Research Foundation** (Omega) is an independent human rights organisation based in the United Kingdom that provides rigorous, objective, evidence-based research on the global manufacture, trade, and use of, military, security and police (MSP) equipment. Omega has trained and developed resources on MSP equipment for torture prevention monitoring bodies such as the UN Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (SPT) and the European Committee for the Prevention of Torture and Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CPT), as well as at the national level for National Preventive Mechanisms under the UN Optional Protocol of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT).

For further information contact [info@omegaresearchfoundation.org](mailto:info@omegaresearchfoundation.org) or visit our [website](http://omega.org.uk).

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