

# VISUAL GUIDE TO LAW ENFORCEMENT AND SECURITY EQUIPMENT



**Omega Research Foundation**



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## ABOUT

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 in, and use of, military, security and police (MSP) equipment. Omega has provided training 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 a national level for state National Preventive Mechanisms under the UN Optional Protocol of the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (OPCAT).

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## ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

<b>Bangkok Rules</b>	UN Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders
<b>CAT</b>	United Nations Committee Against Torture
<b>CCL</b>	Commerce Control List
<b>CN</b>	dibenzoxazepine
<b>CPT</b>	The Council of Europe Committee for the Prevention of Torture
<b>CR</b>	2-chloroacetophenone
<b>CS</b>	2-chlorobenzalmalononitrile
<b>CWC</b>	Chemical Weapons Convention
<b>Havana Rules</b>	United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty
<b>Nelson Mandela Rules</b>	United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners
<b>OHCHR</b>	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
<b>OPCAT</b>	Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture
<b>OSCE/ODIHR</b>	Organisation for Security and Co-Operation in Europe - Office for the Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
<b>PAVA</b>	Pelargonic acid and vanillylamide
<b>SPT</b>	United Nations Subcommittee on the Prevention of Torture
<b>Venice Commission</b>	European Commission for Democracy through Law
<b>UN HRC</b>	United Nations Human Rights Council
<b>UNODC</b>	United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime

## ABOUT THIS GUIDE

The prohibition on torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (other ill-treatment) is absolute and applies in all circumstances to all states. It is incorporated into numerous treaties and documents, including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights<sup>1</sup>, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights<sup>2</sup>, and the United Nations Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.<sup>3</sup> The prohibition against torture is also referenced in a number of regional instruments and declarations, including the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights<sup>4</sup>, the American Convention on Human Rights<sup>5</sup>, the Association of Southeast Nations Human Rights Declaration<sup>6</sup>, the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms<sup>7</sup>, and the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union<sup>8</sup>.

While almost anything can be used to inflict torture and other ill-treatment, it is often perpetrated using specialist law enforcement and security equipment, including technologies that are specifically designed for such purposes. In addition to specialist weapons and equipment, however, equipment that can have a legitimate use when used appropriately and in a human rights-compliant manner, is often misused to commit acts of torture and other ill-treatment by prison, police, and other agencies.

The need to control these technologies has been recognised by the international community. In 2005, the then UN Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (Special Rapporteur on Torture), Prof Theo Van Boven, recommended the prohibition of that the manufacture, transfer, and use of equipment that "has no or virtually no, practical use" other than for torture and other ill-treatment. He advised that Member States introduce "strict controls on the export of other security and law enforcement equipment to help ensure that it is not used to inflict torture or ill-treatment", and that States should also "consider the development of an international regulatory mechanism".<sup>9</sup>

Governments, legal practitioners, intergovernmental institutions, rehabilitation organisations, and civil society are often not fully aware of these technologies and their role in facilitating torture. As a result

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<sup>1</sup> UN, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted and proclaimed by General Assembly resolution 217 A (III)*, 10th December 1948, Article 5.

<sup>2</sup> UN General Assembly, *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, 16 December 1966, United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 999, Article 7.

<sup>3</sup> UN General Assembly, *Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment*, 10 December 1984, United Nations, Treaty Series, vol. 1465, p. 85.

<sup>4</sup> Organization of African Unity (OAU), *African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights ("Banjul Charter")*, 27 June 1981, CAB/LEG/67/3 rev. 5, 21 I.L.M. 58 (1982), Article 5.

<sup>5</sup> Organization of American States (OAS), *American Convention on Human Rights, "Pact of San Jose, Costa Rica"*, 22 November 1969, Article 2.

<sup>6</sup> Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), *ASEAN Human Rights Declaration*, 18 November 2012, Principle 14.

<sup>7</sup> Council of Europe, *European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, as amended by Protocols Nos. 11 and 14*, 4 November 1950, ETS 5, Article 3.

<sup>8</sup> EU, *Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union*, 26 October 2012, 2012/C 326/02, Article 4.

<sup>9</sup> UN Commission on Human Rights, *Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment Report of the Special Rapporteur, Theo van Boven*, 21 February 2005, E/CN.4/2005/62/Add.2, Article 37.

of this knowledge gap, trade control officials fail to prevent transfers that facilitate torture, and law enforcement agencies operate with inappropriate technology, training, and guidelines. Human rights monitors, rehabilitation organisations, and civil society also often lack the evidence necessary to hold those complicit in torture to account, and to prevent future occurrences.

This Guide is a response to this gap, presenting an overview of the different types of weapons and equipment currently used by law enforcement and security personnel (referred to in this Guide as law enforcement officers) around the world, and highlights the human rights issues surrounding their use. It is a practical tool to enable policy makers, human rights monitors, and journalists to recognise the equipment as well as highlight and question its use.

In this Guide, there is a focus on specialist law enforcement and security weapons and equipment. Nonetheless, improvised, ad-hoc or personal equipment, such as sticks, shoes, and rope, are also used by law enforcement officers for torture and other ill-treatment. It is important to document, investigate, and highlight any instances of torture or other ill-treatment.

The Guide links specialist law enforcement weapons and equipment to relevant international regulations and to the international bodies that have made specific recommendations or raised concerns over use of this type of equipment. Key international regulations are referenced throughout. These include:

### **Guidelines governing the treatment of people deprived of their liberty:**

*The United Nations Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Nelson Mandela Rules)*<sup>10</sup> are concerned with all aspects of incarceration, including how instruments and methods of restraint should be used in places of detention. Rule 47 states that “inherently degrading or painful” restraints are should be prohibited, and that “other instruments of restraint” should only be used in certain proscribed circumstances, such as to prevent escape during transfer, to prevent a prisoner injuring themselves or others, or to prevent them from damaging property. Rule 48 is concerned with the type and duration of the restraint, stating that the method used should be the least intrusive available and that the instruments of restraint should only be used for the time period required and removed as soon as possible.

*The United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of their Liberty (Havana Rules)*<sup>11</sup> contain safeguards on the treatment of young people in places of detention. Rule 64 refers to the use of equipment, and states that restraints can only be used in exceptional circumstances, and never to cause humiliation or degradation. Rule 65 prohibits the carrying and use of weapons by personnel in any facility where juveniles are detained.

Rule 24, of *The United Nations Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-custodial Measures for Women Offenders (Bangkok Rules)*<sup>12</sup>, states that restraints should not be used on women during labour, birth, or immediately after birth.

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<sup>10</sup> UN General Assembly, *UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners (Nelson Mandela Rules): resolution / adopted by the General Assembly*, 8 January 2016, A/RES/70/175.

<sup>11</sup> UN General Assembly, *UN Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of Their Liberty (Havana Rules): resolution / adopted by the General Assembly*, 2 April 1991, A/RES/45/113, Rules 64 and 65.

<sup>12</sup> UN General Assembly, *UN Rules for the Treatment of Women Prisoners and Non-Custodial Measures for Women Offenders (Bangkok Rules): note / by the Secretariat*, 6 October 2010, A/C.3/65/L.

## Guidelines governing the use of force by law enforcement officials:

*The UN Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials* states that “law enforcement officials may use force only when strictly necessary and to the extent required for the performance of their duty.”<sup>13</sup>

*The UN Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials* expands on the UN Code of Conduct, stating that use of force by law enforcement officials should be governed by clear, human rights-compliant rules and regulations. Law enforcement officials should have access to a range of different weapons (including less lethal options) for use in appropriate situations, and should use non-violent methods whenever possible. Force and firearms should only be used if other means are ineffective. The Basic Principles also address the manufacture and selection of equipment, noting, for example, that the development and deployment of less lethal weapons should be carefully evaluated and controlled.<sup>14</sup>

Various national, international, and regional bodies have produced additional resources on the use of force by law enforcement officials. Several of these include human rights-based guidance on a range of equipment addressed in this Guide. The resources include:

- UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) *Resources book on the use of Force and Firearms in Law Enforcement*<sup>15</sup>
- OHCHR *UN Human Rights Guidance on Less-Lethal Weapons in Law Enforcement*<sup>16</sup>
- Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe/Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR) *Human Rights Handbook on Policing Assemblies*<sup>17</sup>
- OSCE/ODIHR and The European Commission for Democracy through Law (Venice Commission) *Guidelines on Freedom of Peaceful Assembly*<sup>18</sup>
- OSCE/ODIHR *Handbook on Monitoring Freedom of Peaceful Assembly*<sup>19</sup>

## The key monitoring bodies referred to throughout this Guide include:

The *UN Committee Against Torture* (CAT) monitors the implementation of the UN Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment and scrutinises reports from UN Member States on their implementation of the Convention.<sup>20</sup>

The *UN Subcommittee on the Prevention of Torture* (SPT) conducts visits to places of detention in States who are party to the Optional Protocol to the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT) and

<sup>13</sup> UN General Assembly, *Code of Conduct for Law Enforcement Officials*, 17 December 1979, A/RES/34/169, Article 3.

<sup>14</sup> UN Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner (OHCHR), *Basic Principles on the Use of Force and Firearms by Law Enforcement Officials*, 7 September 1990.

<sup>15</sup> UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) and OHCHR, *Resource book on the use of force and firearms in law enforcement*, 2017.

<sup>16</sup> OHCHR, *UN Human Rights Guidance on Less-Lethal Weapons in Law Enforcement*, 2020.

<sup>17</sup> Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe - Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (OSCE/ODIHR), *Human rights handbook on policing assemblies*, 2016.

<sup>18</sup> European Commission for Democracy Through Law (Venice Commission) and OSCE/ODIHR, *Guidelines on freedom of peaceful assembly*, (3<sup>rd</sup> edition), 8 July 2019, CDL-AD (2019)017.

<sup>19</sup> OSCE/ODIHR, *Handbook on monitoring freedom of peaceful assembly* (2<sup>nd</sup> edition), 2020.

<sup>20</sup> <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/CAT/Pages/CATIntro.aspx>.



produces a written report for the State in question. Although the reports are confidential, countries are encouraged to make them public.<sup>21</sup>

The *Special Procedures of the Human Rights Council* are independent experts who analyse human rights around the world. They include the Special Rapporteur on Torture, the Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association, and the Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions. The Special Rapporteurs make fact-finding visits to UN Member States and report on their findings to the United Nations Human Rights Council (HRC) and the General Assembly.<sup>22</sup>

The *European Committee for Prevention of Torture* (CPT) visits places of detention in Council of Europe (CoE) Member States and reports on the conditions and treatment of people deprived of their liberty. Following their visits, the CPT produces a report for the State in question, and although the reports are confidential, most States publish the report and their response. The CPT also produces an annual public report on its activities.<sup>23</sup>

The reports produced by these bodies include example cases and information on misuse of a range of weapons and equipment, and provide recommendations on appropriate use of force.

### **Developments in international, regional and national trade controls addressing the trade in various types of law enforcement equipment:**

**UN:** The development of an international framework to address the trade in tools of torture is now being carried forward by the UN. In 2019, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution A/73/L.94, *Towards torture-free trade: examining the feasibility, scope and parameters for possible common international standards*.<sup>24</sup> The UN Secretary General's report subsequent to the Resolution analysed Member States' views, and was published in 2020. It noted that most of the States that responded "supported the proposal to establish common international standards". In addition, a majority of these responding States were in favour of a "legally binding instrument establishing measures to control and restrict trade in goods used for capital punishment, torture or other forms of ill-treatment."<sup>25</sup>

**EU:** *Regulation (EU) 2019/125 concerning trade in certain goods which could be used for capital punishment, torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (Anti-torture regulation)*.<sup>26</sup> The EU Regulation prohibits the trade in certain inherently abusive equipment and controls (through licensing) the trade in other specified equipment that could be misused. Under the Regulation, EU Member States are able to introduce stricter controls on certain types of equipment if

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<sup>21</sup> <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/OPCAT/Pages/OPCATIntro.aspx>.

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/SP/Pages/Introduction.aspx>.

<sup>23</sup> <https://www.coe.int/en/web/cpt/about-the-cpt>.

<sup>24</sup> UN General Assembly, *Towards torture-free trade: examining the feasibility, scope and parameters for possible common international standards*, seventy-third session, 21 June 2018, A/73/L/94.

<sup>25</sup> UN General Assembly, *Towards torture-free trade: examining the feasibility, scope and parameters for possible common international standards*, 28 June 2020.

<sup>26</sup> EU, *Regulation (EU) 2019/125 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 16 January 2019 concerning trade in certain goods which could be used for capital punishment, torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment*, PE/59/2018/REV/1, OJ L 30, 31.1.2019, p. 1–57.

they wish, and some States have chosen to introduce such controls.<sup>27</sup> The EU Regulation is currently the only legally-binding regional trade control on law enforcement and security equipment.

**EU:** *The EU Common Position defining common rules governing control of exports of military technology and equipment*<sup>28</sup> requires EU Member States to regulate their trade in equipment on the *Common Military List of the EU*<sup>29</sup> with countries outside the EU. The military list includes conventional weapons and some less lethal weapons such as chemical irritants.

**EU:** *The EU Sanction Guidelines* permits the EU to ban the export of certain equipment as part of its sanction regime. In some cases, the equipment addressed has been beyond the types of goods covered by the EU Military List, and has also prohibited the transfer of additional equipment that could be used for “internal repression”, as detailed on an “internal repression list”. The internal repression list is different to the lists of weapons and equipment developed in the EU Anti-Torture Regulation.<sup>30</sup>

**CoE:** *Recommendation CM/Rec(2021)2 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on measures against the trade in goods used for the death penalty, torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment* provides guidance to CoE member States on reviewing their national legislation and practice on this issue, in order to make sure that they comply with the measures set out in the Recommendation and its appendix.<sup>31</sup>

**US:** The United States maintains the *US Commerce Control List (CCL)*, which controls the trade in a wide range of law enforcement and security equipment.<sup>32</sup>

**UK:** The United Kingdom has a national control regime, which is based on the EU system and EU Anti-Torture Regulation discussed above.<sup>33</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid, Article 14.

<sup>28</sup> EU, *Council Common Position 2008/944/CFSP of 8 December 2008 defining common rules governing control of exports of military technology and equipment*, OJ L 335, 13.12.2008, pp. 99–103.

<sup>29</sup> EU, *Common Military List of the European Union*, ST/5802/2019/INIT, OJ C 95, 12 March 2019, pp. 1–35.

<sup>30</sup> EU, *Guidelines on implementation and evaluation of restrictive measures (Sanctions) in the Framework of the EU Common Foreign and Security Policy-Update*, 4 May 2018.

<sup>31</sup> Council of Europe, *Recommendation CM/Rec(2021)2 of the Committee of Ministers to member States on measures against the trade in goods used for the death penalty, torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment*, 31 March 2021.

<sup>32</sup> Bureau of Industry and Security, *Export administration regulations: US commerce control list (CCL)*, 9 March 2020.

<sup>33</sup> UK Government, *Guidance: Export controls: military goods, software and technology*, 6 September 2019 updated 31 December 2020.

## DOCUMENTING WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT

Recording and identifying weapons and equipment (including improvised, ad hoc, or personal equipment) used by law enforcement officers to commit human rights abuses can provide critical evidence. This evidence can be used to prove such human rights abuses took place, and can help to identify perpetrators. There is, however, a lack of specific information within human rights reporting on how to document the 'tools' used to commit these acts. To address this gap, Omega has compiled the following guidance.

### When documenting equipment, record:

#### Shape and composition

- Record or photograph the equipment, including any distinguishing or unusual features. Make a note of the material the equipment is made from.
- These characteristics are very important in determining what a piece of equipment is, what it can be used for, or even who made it.

#### Colour and markings

- Photograph or record the colour of the equipment and any coloured stripes.
- Photograph or transcribe any logos, writing, or numbers. These can be found on almost any part of a piece of equipment, so look carefully if you have time.
- If you can see them safely these kinds of markings are essential to document, as they can lead to irrefutable identifications of equipment by providing concrete evidence of the product name, the manufacturer or supplier of the equipment, and can help Omega to determine the date of manufacture.

#### Dimensions and scale

- When taking a photograph of equipment, record its dimensions. The most accurate measure is a forensic ruler, but if one is not available, use a universally recognisable object, such as a pen, for comparison.
- This information aids identification.

#### Packaging

- Photograph or record any information on any packaging.
- In certain circumstances, you may be able to see packaging as well as the equipment itself. Equipment may be delivered or stored in its original packaging, which could show vital information about what a piece of equipment is and what it is used for, as well as who made or sold it.

## Context

- Interviewing relevant people and recording how equipment was used can establish if the equipment was misused. Ask interviewees for a description of the circumstances where weapons or equipment were used. If possible, also ask relevant authorities (such as prison governors or national or regional authorities) for copies of policies or regulations governing use of force, particularly any documentation that specifies which weapons and equipment are authorised for use by law enforcement officers and how these weapons can be used (including record keeping, storage, and training).

## Injuries

- For information on documenting injuries caused by policing weapons and equipment, please refer to the Legal Resources Centre's *Guidelines for Frontline Personnel in Combating Torture*, available on their website,<sup>34</sup> as well as the *Istanbul Protocol: Manual on the Effective Investigation and Documentation of Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment*.<sup>35</sup>

### **WARNING:**

#### **Do not put yourself at risk.**

- Always assume that weapons are loaded and that ammunition and ordnance is 'live' and could cause injury.
- Do not take unnecessary risks trying to handle equipment.
- Unless you have received specialist training and know what you are doing, leave the items alone and simply observe from a distance.

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<sup>34</sup> <https://lrc.org.za/wp-content/uploads/Main-Guideline-Document-1.pdf>

<sup>35</sup> OHCHR, *Manual on the effective investigation and documentation of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (Istanbul Protocol)*, 2004, HR/P/PT/8/Rev.1.

**1.**

# **RESTRAINTS**

# 01 | RESTRAINTS

Restraints are items of equipment that are attached to parts of the body to restrict, or in some cases prevent, movement.

Restraints that are frequently used by law enforcement officials include handcuffs, leg cuffs (and combinations of handcuffs and leg cuffs linked by a chain), and belly chains/transport chains. Restraints such as gang chains, thumb cuffs, finger cuffs, neck cuffs, weighted leg cuffs, restraint chairs, restraint beds, and shackle boards are less common but are still available for use in some countries. Improvised, ad-hoc equipment such as shoelaces, rope, and lengths of chain-link could also be used as restraints.

## Use

Restraints are applied to the body to restrict movement. Different types of uses might present different risks, both in terms of physical injuries and psychological harm. For instance, handcuffs can be applied with arms to the front or, more harmfully, behind the back. Handcuffs and leg cuffs are used simultaneously in some jurisdictions, often with a chain connecting them, and this type of use causes additional risks. Detained people are sometimes handcuffed to one another (e.g. during prisoner transfers) or to fixed objects, which is an inappropriate restraint technique.

The use of some types of restraints by law enforcement officers should be prohibited. These inherently abusive restraints include bar fetters, gang chains, thumb cuffs, finger cuffs, thumbscrews, neck cuffs, weighted leg cuffs, restraint chairs with metal restraints, cage or net beds, shackle boards or beds, and hoods or blindfolds. Restraint beds or chairs with soft restraints may be used only by medically trained personnel for medical reasons, and any use must comply with human rights standards (see individual entries for further information).

## Potential Injuries

Injuries from restraints, which in some cases can be life threatening, include:

- cuts and bruises
- open wounds
- joint dislocation
- nerve damage
- suffocation if used around the neck
- positional asphyxia if a person is restrained face down
- hyperextension of limbs
- secondary injuries sustained as a result of falls while restrained.

## 1.1 HANDCUFFS

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>Two lockable cuffs, usually made of metal, connected by a short chain-link, rigid bar, or hinge.</p> <p>Some models feature a double locking mechanism (this reduces the risk of cuffs being overtightened) and others are single locking.</p> <p>A ratchet allows for the size of the cuff to be adjusted so it can be used on a range of wrist sizes.</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>Handcuffs can be over-tightened by prison officers or detainees, which can cause pain, discomfort, and permanent injury.</p> <p>They can help facilitate torture or other ill-treatment (especially when used to restrain people in stress positions).</p> <p>Cuffs connected by a rigid bar can be used as a weapon for levering a suspect into submission. This increases the risk of wrist injury.</p> <p>Prolonged use of handcuffs can lead to lacerations, which can lead to blood poisoning and other long-term physical impairments.</p> <p>Detainees are sometimes kept in handcuffs for longer than strictly necessary. Handcuffs should be removed at the earliest opportunity and replaced, if necessary, with safe, soft fabric restraints.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>UNODC and OHCHR: "Handcuffs should only be employed when there is an objective reason to believe the offender might escape or is likely to use violence against the law enforcement official or someone else."<sup>36</sup></p> <p>Havana Rules: "Instruments of restraint and force can only be used [on juveniles] in exceptional cases, where all other control methods have been exhausted and failed, and only as explicitly authorized and specified by law and regulation."<sup>37</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation allows for Member States to control the trade in handcuffs. Spain, for example, has implemented these controls and requires export licences for the export of handcuffs.</p> <p>The UK requires export licences to for handcuffs that have an overall dimension (including chains) exceeding 240mm when locked.</p> <p>The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be controlled.</p> <p>Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p> <p>Use should conform with international human rights standards.</p>

<sup>36</sup> UNODC and OHCHR, *Resource book on the use of force and firearms in law enforcement*, 2017, p82.

<sup>37</sup> UN General Assembly, *United Nations Rules for the Protection of Juveniles Deprived of Their Liberty: resolution / adopted by the General Assembly, 2 April 1991, A/RES/45/113, para 64*



◀ **Chain link handcuffs**



◀ **Rigid handcuffs**



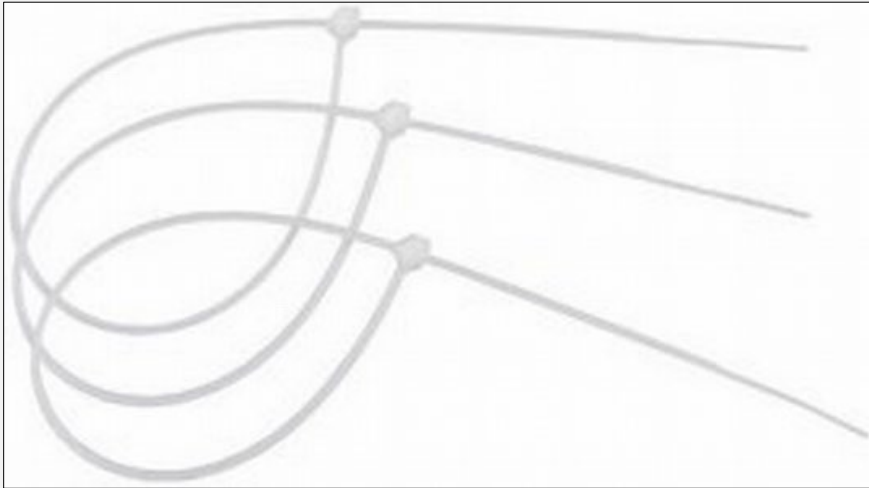
◀ **Hinged handcuffs**



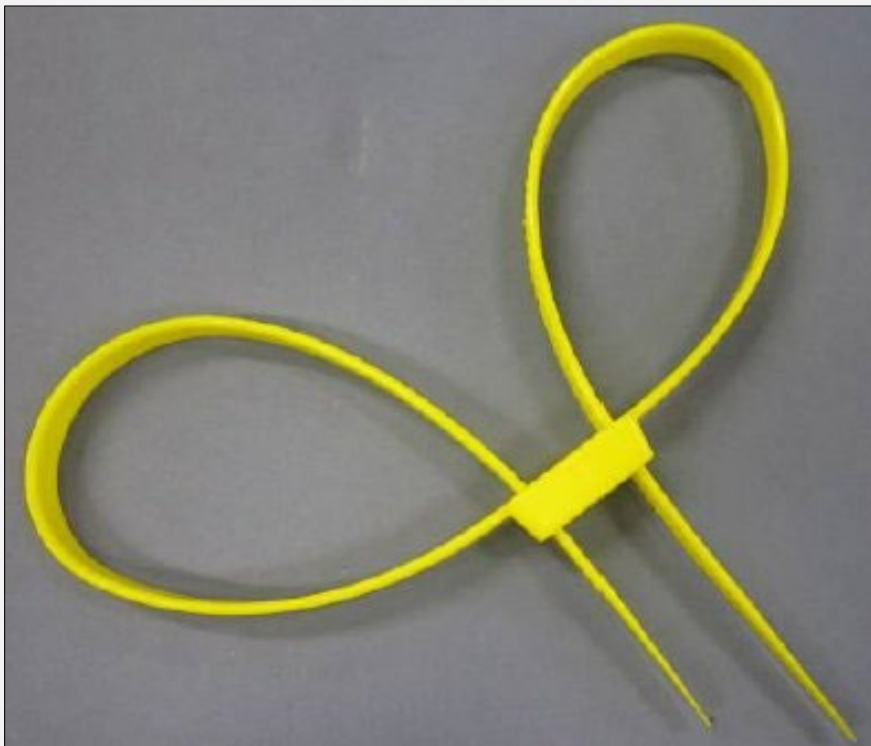
## 1.2 PLASTIC CUFFS, NYLON CUFFS

Key Technical Features	<p>Resembles a plastic 'cable tie' (cable ties are also used as restraints).</p> <p>Can be either single or double cuffs.</p> <p>Most models are designed to restrain the wrists, but there are also models specifically designed to restrain the legs.</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>Most designs can only be tightened, and cannot be loosened once applied. Consequently, it is very easy to purposefully or inadvertently cause the detained individual severe pain and discomfort.</p> <p>Prolonged use of these cuffs can lead to lacerations, which can also lead to blood poisoning and other long-term physical impairments.</p> <p>They can help facilitate torture or other ill-treatment (especially when used to restrain a person in stress positions).</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>UNODC and OHCHR: "Handcuffs should only be employed when there is an objective reason to believe the offender might escape or is likely to use violence against the law enforcement official or someone else."<sup>38</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>To the best of Omega's knowledge, there are no specific controls on the transfer of this equipment</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be controlled.</p> <p>Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p> <p>Use should conform with international human rights standards.</p>

<sup>38</sup> UNODC and OHCHR, Resource book on the use of force and firearms in law enforcement, 2017, p82.



◀ **Single plastic cuff**



◀ **Double plastic cuff**

## 1.3 FIXED CUFFS

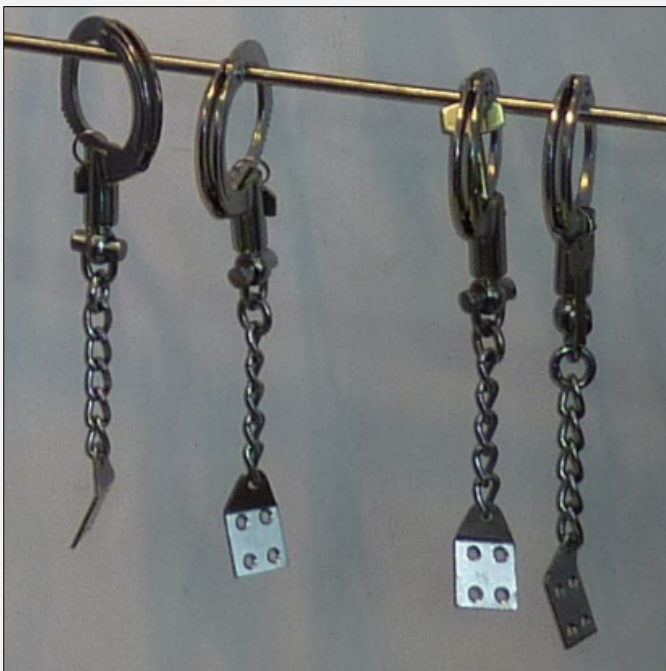
<b>Key Technical Features</b>	Single or double lockable cuffs, usually attached to a metal chain, designed to be bolted or otherwise anchored to the floor, wall, ceiling, or other fixed object.
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>Use of fixed cuffs can help facilitate torture or other ill-treatment (especially when used in stress positions).</p> <p>Their use fulfils no legitimate law enforcement purpose that cannot be achieved through less harmful or less degrading means.</p> <p>The use of this equipment can be considered inhuman and degrading treatment.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>CPT: "The practice of handcuffing a person to a fixed object – especially within a secured area (such as a "designated area") – is particularly inappropriate and may be considered as amounting to degrading treatment".<sup>39</sup></p> <p>Nelson Mandela Rules: "The use of ... instruments of restraint which are inherently degrading or painful shall be prohibited."<sup>40</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation prohibits the trade in this equipment.</p> <p>The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be prohibited.</p> <p>Transfer should be prohibited.</p> <p>Use should be prohibited.</p>

<sup>39</sup> CoE: CPT, *Report to the Government of the Slovak Republic on the visit to the Slovak Republic carried out by the CPT from 19 March to 28 March 2018*, 19 June 2019, CPT/Inf (2019) 20, para 15.

<sup>40</sup> *Nelson Mandela Rules*, 2016, Rule 47



◀ **Single cuff with anchor**



◀ **Single cuff with screw fixings**

## 1.4 SOFT, FABRIC RESTRAINTS

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<b>Key Technical Features</b>	Adjustable cuffs made from soft fabrics that can be fixed to the wrists or ankles with the primary purpose of restricting movement.
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>Although there are fewer risks from their use than from metal restraints, the use of soft/fabric restraints can help facilitate torture or other ill-treatment (especially when used in stress positions).</p> <p>Concerns on the use of restraints generally also apply to soft restraints, including if detainees are placed in restraints for longer than strictly necessary.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	UNODC and OHCHR: "Soft restraints should always be preferred, in line with the Nelson Mandela Rules." <sup>41</sup>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	To the best of Omega's knowledge, there are no specific controls on the transfer of this equipment.
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be controlled.</p> <p>Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p> <p>Use should conform with international human rights standards.</p>

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<sup>41</sup> UNODC and OHCHR, *Resource book on the use of force and firearms in law enforcement*, 2017, p.84.



▲ Fabric leg cuffs

## 1.5 LEG CUFFS

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>Two metal lockable cuffs, usually made of metal, fastened around the ankles and attached by a chain to allow the detainee some movement.</p> <p>The cuff size is usually larger than those of ordinary handcuffs and is adjustable.</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>Leg cuffs can help facilitate torture or other ill-treatment (especially when used to restrain a person in stress positions).</p> <p>They severely restrict movement, leading to a risk of secondary injuries should the detainee fall.</p> <p>Prolonged use of leg cuffs can lead to deep vein thrombosis or lacerations, which can also lead to blood poisoning and other long-term physical impairments.</p> <p>Detainees are sometimes kept in leg cuffs for longer than strictly necessary. Leg cuffs should be removed at the earliest opportunity and replaced, if necessary, with safe, soft fabric restraints.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>UNODC and OHCHR: "Limb restraints should only be used for the necessary amount of time, by officers who have received appropriate training."<sup>42</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation controls the export of this equipment.</p> <p>The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be controlled.</p> <p>Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p> <p>Use should conform with international human rights standards.</p>

<sup>42</sup> UNODC and OHCHR, *Resource book on the use of force and firearms in law enforcement*, 2017, p. 84.





▲ Standard leg cuffs



◀ Standard leg cuffs



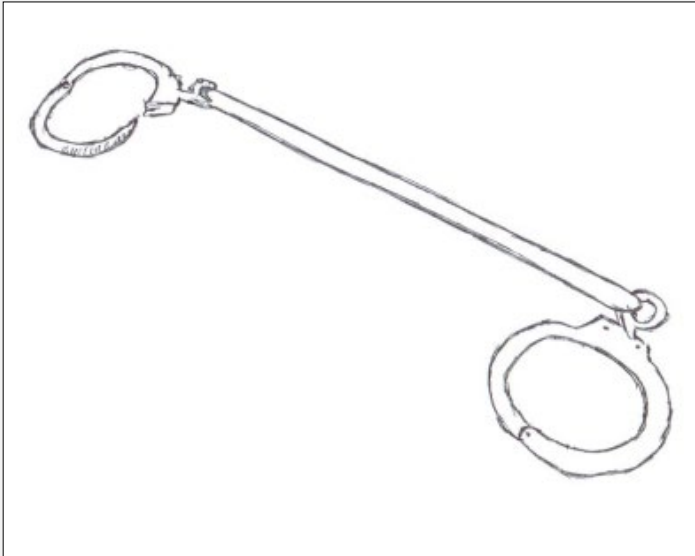
## 1.6 BAR FETTERS

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	A rigid, typically metal, bar connecting two lockable rings or cuffs.
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>Rigid bars significantly restrict movement whilst increasing the risk of ankle injury or falls.</p> <p>Prolonged use of these cuffs can lead to lacerations, which can lead to blood poisoning and other long-term physical impairments.</p> <p>Their use can help facilitate torture or other ill-treatment (especially stress positions).</p> <p>This equipment is inherently degrading and use fulfils no legitimate law enforcement purpose that cannot be achieved through less harmful means.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>Special Rapporteur on Torture: Restraints which have a fixed, rigid bar between cuffs have been described as inherently inhuman and degrading.<sup>43</sup></p> <p>UNODC and OHCHR "There should be an absolute prohibition on ... fetters".<sup>44</sup></p> <p>Nelson Mandela Rules: "The use of ... instruments of restraint which are inherently degrading or painful shall be prohibited."<sup>45</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation prohibits the trade of this equipment.</p> <p>The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be prohibited.</p> <p>Transfer should be prohibited.</p> <p>Use should be prohibited.</p>

<sup>43</sup> UN Commission on Human Rights, *Civil and Political Rights, including the question of torture and detention: Study on the situation of trade in and production of equipment which is specifically designed to inflict torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment, its origin, destination and forms*, 13 January 2003, E/CN.4/2003/69, para 9.

<sup>44</sup> UNODC and OHCHR, *Resource book on the use of force and firearms in law enforcement*, 2017, p. 84.

<sup>45</sup> *Nelson Mandela Rules*, 2016, Rule 47.



◀ **Bar fetters with spreader bar**



▲ **Bar fetters with spreader bar** © Amnesty International

## 1.7 WEIGHTED LEG CUFFS

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>Two metal cuffs, usually larger than those of ordinary handcuffs, attached by a heavy chain to allow the detainee some movement.</p> <p>The cuffs are usually non-adjustable.</p> <p>Models can weigh up to 8 kg (approx. 17.5 lbs.), and they may have additional weights added (for example, on the chain link).</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>The use of weighted leg cuffs constitutes a prima facie violation of the prohibition of torture and other ill-treatment.</p> <p>Their use fulfils no legitimate law enforcement purpose that cannot be achieved through less harmful means.</p> <p>These cuffs are heavier than is necessary to adequately restrain an individual, and wearing them is inherently degrading.</p> <p>The weight significantly restricts movement whilst increasing the risk of ankle injury.</p> <p>Prolonged use of these cuffs can lead to lacerations, which can also lead to blood poisoning and other long-term physical impairments.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>Special Rapporteur on Torture on his 2005 mission to China: the use of weighted leg cuffs on prisoners on death row "is inhuman and degrading and serves only as an additional form of punishment".<sup>46</sup></p> <p>UNODC and OHCHR: "There should be an absolute prohibition on weighted restraints".<sup>47</sup></p> <p>Nelson Mandela Rules: "The use of ... instruments of restraint which are inherently degrading or painful shall be prohibited."<sup>48</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation prohibits the trade in this equipment.</p> <p>The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be prohibited.</p> <p>Transfer should be prohibited.</p> <p>Use should be prohibited.</p>

<sup>46</sup> UN Commission on Human Rights, *Report on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment: Mission to China*, 10 March 2006, E/CN.4/2006/6/Add.6, para 68.

<sup>47</sup> UNODC and OHCHR, *Resource book on the use of force and firearms in law enforcement*, 2017, p. 84.

<sup>48</sup> *Nelson Mandela Rules*, 2016, Rule 47.



▲ Weighted leg cuffs



▲ Weighted leg cuffs with additional weights on the chain



▲ Combination hand and weighted leg cuffs

## 1.8 GANG CHAINS

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	Multiple pairs of leg cuffs, handcuffs, belly chains (chain secured around the waist), or a combination of these, attached to the same chain (often made of metal), allowing for several people to be restrained together.
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>The use of gang chains restricts movement, which increases the risk of falls and resulting injuries if those restrained are unable to break their fall. A falling individual can be hazardous for the rest of the group chained together.</p> <p>Prolonged use of these cuffs can lead to lacerations, which can then cause blood poisoning and other long-term physical impairments.</p> <p>The practice of chaining groups of prisoners together is inherently degrading.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	Nelson Mandela Rules: "The use of ... instruments of restraint which are inherently degrading or painful shall be prohibited." <sup>49</sup>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation controls the export of this equipment and allows Member States to individually prohibit the trade.</p> <p>The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be prohibited.</p> <p>Transfer should be prohibited.</p> <p>Use should be prohibited.</p>

<sup>49</sup> *Nelson Mandela Rules*, 2016, Rule 47.



▲ ► Gang chains



## 1.9 HAND AND LEG CUFFS (COMBINATION)

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>Handcuffs and leg cuffs linked together by a long chain. Occasionally the leg cuffs are weighted.</p> <p>Designed to simultaneously restrict movement in more than one part of the body.</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>These combination cuffs severely restrict movement, leading to a risk of secondary injuries should the detainee fall.</p> <p>If the chain length is too short in relation to the detainee's height, it could force the detainee to stoop, which may be humiliating or degrading. A too-short chain may also pose additional risks of secondary injuries due to falls.</p> <p>Their use can help facilitate torture or other ill-treatment (especially when used to restrain people in stress positions such as a hog-tie).</p> <p>If the cuffs include weighted leg cuffs (see <a href="#">p. 23</a>) their use constitutes a prima facie violation of the prohibition of torture and other ill-treatment.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>UNODC and OHCHR: "Metal limb restraints, such as leg cuffs or chains that connect the limbs with chains to handcuffs and belts, should be avoided ... Hog-tying, that is tying someone's hands and legs together at the back, should not be used given the unnecessary discomfort and suffering it causes, as well as the risk of asphyxiation it poses."<sup>50</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>As this equipment includes leg cuffs, the EU Anti-Torture Regulation controls the export of this equipment.</p> <p>The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be controlled.</p> <p>Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p> <p>Use should conform with international human rights standards.</p> <p>If weighted leg cuffs are included in the design, then the manufacture, trade, and use should be prohibited.</p>

<sup>50</sup> UNODC and OHCHR, *Resource book on the use of force and firearms in law enforcement*, 2017, p84.



▲ Combination hand and leg cuffs



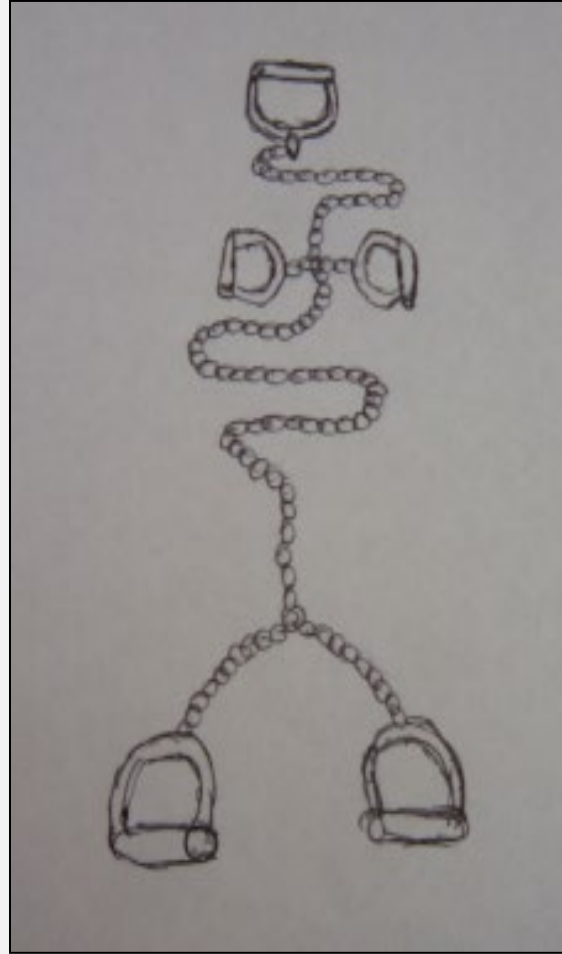
## 1.10 NECK CUFFS AND OTHER RESTRAINTS (COMBINATION)

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	A metal cuff that fastens around the neck and is linked with a chain to other restraints such as handcuffs or leg cuffs.
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>Cuffs designed to be secured around the neck increase the risk of severe neck injuries and asphyxiation.</p> <p>The use of these restraints can help facilitate torture or other ill-treatment (especially when used to restrain a person in stress positions).</p> <p>This equipment is inherently degrading and its use fulfils no legitimate law enforcement purpose that cannot be achieved through less harmful means.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	Nelson Mandela Rules: "The use of ... instruments of restraint which are inherently degrading or painful shall be prohibited." <sup>51</sup>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation controls the export of this equipment.</p> <p>The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be prohibited.</p> <p>Transfer should be prohibited.</p> <p>Use should be prohibited.</p>

<sup>51</sup> *Nelson Mandela Rules*, 2016, Rule 47.



▲ Neck cuff with linked handcuffs



▲ Diagram of neck cuff with linked hand and leg cuffs

## 1.11 THUMB CUFFS AND FINGER CUFFS

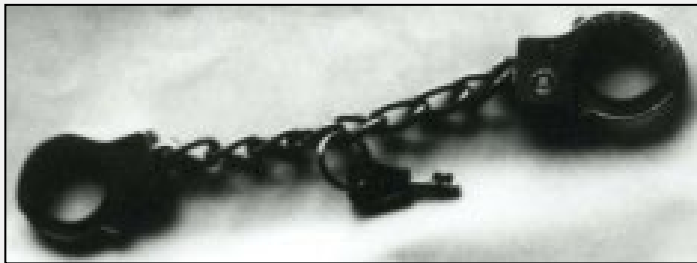
<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>Designed to restrict hand movement by holding thumbs or fingers in a fixed position.</p> <p>Some models of thumb cuffs are serrated on the inner edge</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>There is a high risk of injury to thumbs or fingers from excessive pressure, of fracture of delicate bones, and of nerve damage.</p> <p>There is a risk of secondary injury from falls, as the person restrained would be unable to break their fall.</p> <p>Their use can help facilitate torture or other ill-treatment (especially when used to restrain a person in stress positions).</p> <p>Thumb and finger cuffs are inherently degrading and fulfils no legitimate law enforcement purpose that cannot be achieved through less harmful means.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>Special Rapporteur on Torture: thumb cuffs are examples of "inherently cruel, inhuman or degrading weapons".<sup>52</sup></p> <p>Nelson Mandela Rules: "The use of ... instruments of restraint which are inherently degrading or painful shall be prohibited."<sup>53</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation prohibits the trade in this equipment.</p> <p>The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be prohibited.</p> <p>Transfer should be prohibited.</p> <p>Use should be prohibited.</p>

<sup>52</sup> UN HRC, *Report of the Special Rapporteur on Torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment*, Thirty-fourth session 14 February 2017, A/HRC/34/54, para 51.

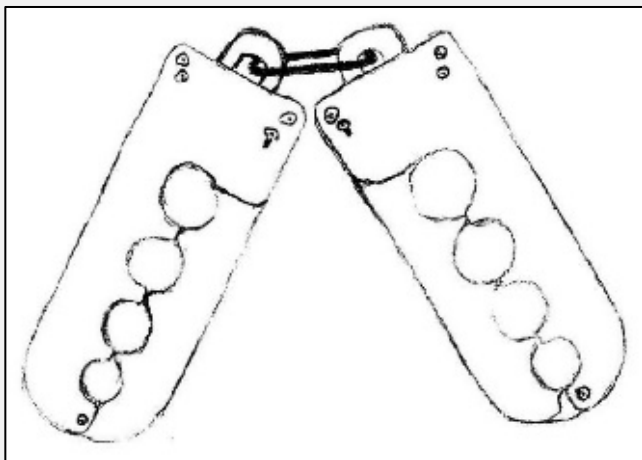
<sup>53</sup> *Nelson Mandela Rules, 2016*, Rule 47.



▲ **Standard thumb cuffs**



◀ **Chain thumb**



◀ **Finger cuffs**

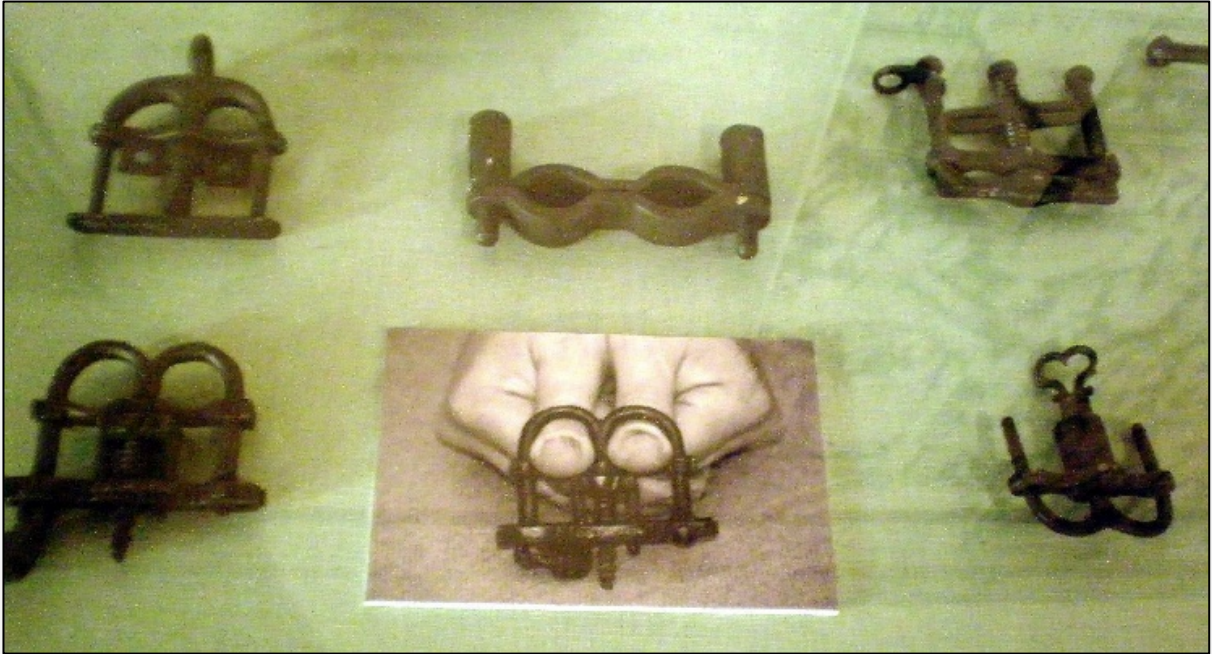
## 1.12 THUMBSCREWS AND FINGER SCREWS

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	Designed to crush fingers or thumbs by screwing two plates together with the fingers or thumbs trapped between.
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	Thumbscrews and finger screws are designed to inflict pain and injury. They have no use other than for torture or other ill-treatment.
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>Special Rapporteur on Torture: this equipment is an example of "inherently cruel, inhuman or degrading weapons".<sup>54</sup></p> <p>OHCHR: "[Thumbscrews] are inherently degrading or unnecessarily painful and should not be used in law enforcement"<sup>55</sup></p> <p>Nelson Mandela Rules: "The use of ... instruments of restraint which are inherently degrading or painful shall be prohibited."<sup>56</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation prohibits the trade in this equipment.</p> <p>The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be prohibited.</p> <p>Transfer should be prohibited.</p> <p>Use should be prohibited.</p>

<sup>54</sup> UN HRC, *Extra-custodial use of force and the prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment : note / by the Secretary-General*, 2017, A/72/178, para 51.

<sup>55</sup> OHCHR, *UN Human Rights Guidance on Less-Lethal Weapons in Law Enforcement*, 2020, para 5.2.

<sup>56</sup> *Nelson Mandela Rules*, 2016, Rule 47.



▲ The above image shows various types of thumbscrews. [CC](#) Cyndy Sims Parr.



▲ The above image shows a thumbscrew. [CC](#) Lichfield District Council.

## 1.13 RESTRAINT CHAIRS WITH FIXED METAL RESTRAINTS

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>Various models of chair exist with a range of restraining points and techniques. Multiple restraining points are often used, but combinations of restraints vary.</p> <p>Features include metal cuffs to restrain at the wrists and ankles, or fixtures to which restraints (such as handcuffs) can be attached. Some models also have a lockable metal table or tray.</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>If a restrained individual is left unattended or is restrained for long periods in a restraint chair, there is a risk of injury or death. These risks are exacerbated if the restrained individual is under the influence of drugs or alcohol.</p> <p>These chairs are prone to being used as a punishment method, and can facilitate torture or other ill-treatment, especially when additional force or equipment is used on the restrained individual, such as electric shock equipment or chemical irritants.</p> <p>This equipment is inherently degrading and use fulfils no legitimate law enforcement purpose that cannot be achieved through less harmful means.</p> <p>Their use constitutes a prima facie violation of the prohibition of torture and other ill-treatment.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>Special Rapporteur on Torture: restraint chairs are "inherently inhuman, degrading or painful".<sup>57</sup></p> <p>CAT: "restraint chairs as methods of restraining those in custody" should be abolished.<sup>58</sup></p> <p>Nelson Mandela Rules: "The use of ... instruments of restraint which are inherently degrading or painful shall be prohibited."<sup>59</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation prohibits the trade in this equipment.</p> <p>The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be prohibited.</p> <p>Transfer should be prohibited.</p> <p>Use should be prohibited.</p>

<sup>57</sup> UN HRC, *Interim report of the Special Rapporteur on Torture*, 2013, A/68/295, para 58

<sup>58</sup> UN CAT, *Conclusions and Recommendations of the CAT: United States of America*, 15 May 2000, CAT/C/24/6, para 180 (e).

<sup>59</sup> *Nelson Mandela Rules*, 2016, Rule 47.





▲ Metal restraint chair with fixed metal restraints



▲ Wooden restraint chair with fixed metal restraints



## 1.14 RESTRAINT CHAIRS WITH STRAPS

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>Various models of chair with a range of restraining points and techniques. Multiple restraining points are often used, but combinations of restraints vary.</p> <p>Attached straps or cuffs are made from fabric or leather.</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>If a restrained individual is left unattended or is restrained for long periods in a restraint chair, there is a risk of injury or death. These risks are exacerbated if the restrained individual is under the influence of drugs or alcohol.</p> <p>These chairs are prone to being used as a punishment method, and can facilitate torture or other ill-treatment, especially when additional force or equipment is used on the restrained individual, such as electric shock equipment or chemical irritants.</p> <p>This type of equipment should only be used by medically trained personnel, and only for a specified and legitimate medical reason, in a human rights-compliant manner.</p> <p>The use of these chairs use in any other circumstances is inherently degrading and fulfils no legitimate law enforcement purpose that cannot be achieved through less harmful means.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>Nelson Mandela Rules: "The use of ... instruments of restraint which are inherently degrading or painful shall be prohibited"<sup>60</sup> [except in cases of legitimate medical use].</p> <p>CAT: "restraint chairs as methods of restraining those in custody" should be abolished.<sup>61</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be controlled.</p> <p>Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p> <p>Used in certain medical situations only and this use should be in line with international human rights standards.</p>

<sup>60</sup> *Nelson Mandela Rules*, 2016, Rule 47.

<sup>61</sup> UN CAT, *Conclusions and Recommendations of the CAT: United States of America*, 15 May 2000, A/55/44, p 32.



▲ Two models of restraint chairs with fabric

## 1.15 CAGE BEDS AND NETS BEDS

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>A bed enclosed by a cage, or a bed with one or more sides fitted with nets. Cage or net may completely enclose the bed on all sides, including the top.</p> <p>The cage may be made of wood, metal, or other material, and nets can be made of soft fabric or other tougher materials.</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>The use of cage or net beds constitutes a prima facie violation of the prohibition of torture and other ill-treatment.</p> <p>If a restrained individual is left unattended or is restrained for long periods in a restraint bed or cage, there is a risk of injury or death. These risks are exacerbated if the restrained individual is under the influence of drugs or alcohol.</p> <p>If the net is torn, it could be used for self-harm or suicide.</p> <p>The restrained individual may be unable to be released quickly in an emergency (e.g. in a fire).</p> <p>The use of cage or net beds fulfils no legitimate law enforcement purpose that cannot be achieved through less harmful means.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>CPT: "The use of net (or cage) beds should be prohibited under all circumstances."<sup>62</sup></p> <p>UN HRC: cage and net beds should not be used in psychiatric institutions, and their use "constitutes inhuman and degrading treatment".<sup>63</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation prohibits the trade in this equipment.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be prohibited.</p> <p>Transfer should be prohibited.</p> <p>Use should be prohibited.</p>

<sup>62</sup> CoE: CPT, *Means of restraint in psychiatric establishments for adults (revised CPT standards)*, 21 March 2017, CPT/Inf(2017)6, para. 3.4.

<sup>63</sup> UN HRC, *Concluding observations of the HRC Croatia*, 4 November 2009, CCPR/C/HRV/CO/2, para 12.



◀ **Cage bed © Volunteers at Kepep.**



◀ **Net beds**



## 1.16 SHACKLE BOARDS OR BEDS WITH FIXED METAL RESTRAINTS

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>Various models of bed exist with a range of restraining points and techniques. Multiple restraining points are often used at any one time, but combinations vary.</p> <p>These boards or beds have metal cuffs to restrain at the wrists and ankles, or have fixtures to which restraints can be connected. Some also have straps at the waist, chest, or shoulders.</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>If a restrained individual is left unattended or is restrained for long periods on a shackle board, there is a risk of injury or death. These risks are exacerbated if the restrained individual is under the influence of drugs or alcohol.</p> <p>Shackle boards and beds are prone to being used as a punishment method, and can facilitate torture or other ill-treatment, especially when additional force or equipment is used on the restrained individual, such as electric shock equipment or chemical irritants.</p> <p>This equipment is inherently degrading and use fulfils no legitimate law enforcement purpose that cannot be achieved through less harmful means.</p> <p>The use of these boards and beds constitutes a prima facie violation of the prohibition of torture and other ill-treatment.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>Nelson Mandela Rules: "The use of ... instruments of restraint which are inherently degrading or painful shall be prohibited."<sup>64</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation prohibits the trade in this equipment.</p> <p>The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be prohibited.</p> <p>Transfer should be prohibited.</p> <p>Use should be prohibited.</p>

<sup>64</sup> *Nelson Mandela Rules*, 2016, Rule 47.



▲ Restraint bed with fixed restraint points. © waterboardingdotorg.

## 1.17 SHACKLE BOARDS OR BEDS WITH STRAPS

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>Various models exist with a range of restraining points, used for various techniques. Multiple restraining points are often used at one time, but combinations vary.</p> <p>The straps or cuffs are often made from fabric or leather.</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>If a restrained individual is left unattended or is restrained for long periods on a shackle board, there is a risk of injury or death. These risks are exacerbated if the restrained individual is under the influence of drugs or alcohol.</p> <p>This type of equipment should only be used by medically trained personnel, for a specified and legitimate medical reason, and in a human rights-compliant manner.</p> <p>Their use in any other circumstances is inherently degrading and fulfils no legitimate law enforcement purpose that cannot be achieved through less harmful means.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>CPT: "In principle, restraint beds should not be used in a non-medical setting."<sup>65</sup></p> <p>CPT: In psychiatric institutions "patients should only be restrained as a measure of last resort (ultimo ratio) to prevent imminent harm to themselves or others and restraints should always be used for the shortest possible time. When the emergency situation resulting in the application of restraint ceases to exist, the patient should be released immediately"<sup>66</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be controlled.</p> <p>Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p> <p>Medical use only, and this use should be in line with international human rights standards.</p>

<sup>65</sup> CoE: CPT, *Report to the Swedish Government on the visit to Sweden carried out by the CPT from 18 to 28 May 2015*, 17 February 2016, CPT/Inf (2016) 1, para. 90.

<sup>66</sup> CoE: CPT, *Means of restraint in psychiatric establishments for adults (revised CPT standards)*, 21 March 2017, CPT/Inf(2017)6, para 1.4.





▲ Shackle bed with plastic



## 1.18 HOODS AND BLINDFOLDS

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>This equipment consists of a piece of cloth to cover the eyes (blindfold), or the entire head and face (hood).</p> <p>Some models are secured in place with a lock around the neck.</p> <p>Some models are attached to other restraints, such as handcuffs.</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>People subjected to hooding or blindfolding are often incapable of identifying their torturers, in these cases the prosecution of torturers is virtually impossible.<sup>67</sup></p> <p>The use of hoods and blindfolds can lead to disorientation and undue stress.</p> <p>The use of certain designs of hood carries a risk of suffocation or strangulation.</p> <p>The use of this equipment fulfils no legitimate law enforcement purpose that cannot be achieved through less harmful means.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>CAT: blindfolding and hooding can constitute torture or other ill-treatment.<sup>68</sup></p> <p>CPT: "recommends that the blindfolding of persons who are in police custody be expressly prohibited".<sup>69</sup></p> <p>European Court of Human Rights: blindfolding a prisoner constitutes cruel or inhuman treatment when used in combination with other interrogation or detention methods,<sup>70</sup> and can constitute torture when used with other techniques.<sup>71</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>To the best of Omega's knowledge, there are no specific controls on the transfer of this equipment.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be prohibited.</p> <p>Transfer should be prohibited.</p> <p>Use should be prohibited.</p>

<sup>67</sup> UN Commission on Human Rights, *Civil and political rights, including the questions of torture and detention : report of the Special Rapporteur, Nigel Rodley, submitted pursuant to Commission on Human Rights resolution 2001/62*, 27 December 2001, E/CN.4/2002/76, p. 6.

<sup>68</sup> UN CAT, *Report of the CAT*, 10 September 1997, Supplement No. 44, A/52/44; UN CAT, *Report on Mexico produced by the CAT, and Reply from the Government of Mexico*, 26 May 2003, CAT/C/75.

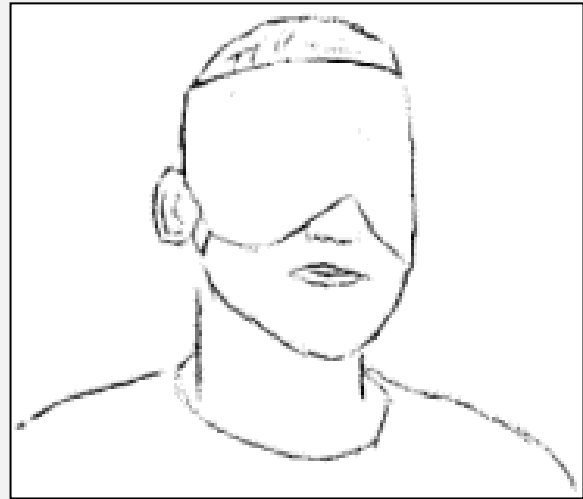
<sup>69</sup> CoE: CPT, *CPT Standards, "Substantive" sections of the CPT's General Reports*, January 2015, CPT/Inf/E (2002) 1 - Rev. 2015, para 38.

<sup>70</sup> Ireland v. United Kingdom, 25 Eur. H.R. Rep. (ser. A) (1978); Ocalan v. Turkey, 37 Eur. Ct. H.R. 238, 222 (2003) cited in IRCT, Statement on hooding, International Forensic Group, *Torture*, volume 21, 3 November 2011, p. 186.

<sup>71</sup> Aksoy v. Turkey, 1996-VI Eur. Ct. H.R. 2260 (1996); Aydin v. Turkey, 1997-VI Eur. H.R. Rep. 1866 (1997). As cited in IRCT, 2011, op. cit.



▲ Hood

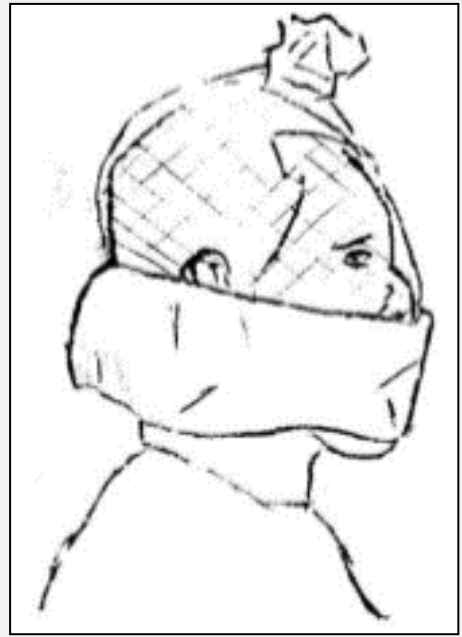


▲ Blindfold

## 1.19 SPIT MASKS, SPIT GUARDS, SPIT HOODS, SPIT HELMETS

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>This equipment consists of a thick piece of material over the mouth and transparent material over eyes.</p> <p>The material covering the mouth should prevent the detainee spitting.</p> <p>The material covering the eyes should not impair the detainees' vision.</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>The use of this equipment carries a risk of suffocation or strangulation if it is used incorrectly, for excessive periods, or if the detainee is left unattended.</p> <p>Risks from this equipment increase if it is used in conjunction with other restraints.</p> <p>If this equipment is used in conjunction with, or following, the use of chemical irritants there is a risk that the irritants may become trapped on or close to the face.</p> <p>There is a lack of research regarding the efficacy of different models in preventing transmission of any disease or infection the detainee may have.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>CPT: "The CPT considers 'spit helmets'... are not appropriate in a secure place of safety, such as police custody" and their use should be reviewed.<sup>72</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation controls the export of this equipment.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be controlled.</p> <p>Transfer should be controlled</p> <p>Use should conform with international human rights standards.</p>

<sup>72</sup> CoE: CPT, *Report to the Government of the United Kingdom on the visit to the United Kingdom carried out by the CPT from 30 March to 12 April 2016*, 19 April 2017, CPT/Inf (2017) 9, para. 15.



▲ Different models of spit hoods

**2.**

**ELECTRIC SHOCK  
WEAPONS**

## 02 | ELECTRIC SHOCK WEAPONS

Electric shock weapons are designed to deliver a high voltage electric shock for a short duration to a target individual. At a minimum, all electric shock weapons have an electrical signal generator, as well as a pair of electrodes that make the electrical connection between the signal generator and the target individual.

There are three main types of electric shock weapons: direct contact weapons (including stun guns, stun batons, stun shields, projectile electric shock weapons when they are used in direct contact with the skin<sup>73</sup>), projectile electric shock weapons, and body-worn electric shock devices (such as stun belts or cuffs).

### Use

Direct contact electric shock weapons are not designed to cause incapacitation but are designed to cause compliance through pain.

Projectile electric shock weapons can be used from a distance to temporarily incapacitate an individual who is posing an immediate threat of serious injury or death to themselves or to others.

Body-worn electric shock devices are designed to force compliance through pain as well as to incapacitate. A small number of countries permit their use in court and during prisoner transfer.

The use of direct contact electric shock equipment and body worn electric shock devices should be prohibited.

### Potential Injuries

Injuries from electric shock weapons, which in some cases can be life threatening, include:

- puncture wounds leading to scars
- severe pain
- burns
- cardiac arrest
- loss of neuro-muscular control, which can also lead to secondary injuries from falls.

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<sup>73</sup> Use of and projectile electric shock weapons in direct contact with the skin is known as 'drive stun', 'touch stun', or 'contact mode',

## 2.1 BODY-WORN ELECTRIC SHOCK DEVICES

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>These devices are worn on the body (e.g. as a belt, sleeve, cuff, or vest).</p> <p>The electric shock is delivered by a third-party activating device by remote control.</p> <p>The remote control range, voltage, and length of shock can vary between models.</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>The electric shock causes severe pain and causes muscles to contract involuntarily, rendering the target individual immobile. Other physical effects can include muscular weakness, involuntary urination and defecation (when device is worn around the waist), heartbeat irregularities, seizures, and welts on the skin.</p> <p>The person holding the remote control can easily abuse the target individual through delivering multiple or continuous shocks. These devices can also be activated accidentally.</p> <p>Wearing the device with the continuous threat of receiving a painful electric shock can cause profound mental suffering to the target individual.</p> <p>Body-worn electric shock weapons are inherently degrading and fulfils no legitimate law enforcement purpose that cannot be achieved through less harmful means.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>CPT: electric shock belts are “inherently degrading for the person to whom it is applied, and the scope for misuse is particularly high.”<sup>74</sup></p> <p>CAT: electric shock stun belts should be abolished as a method of restraining those in custody.<sup>75</sup></p> <p>UNODC and OHCHR: “there is no tactical utility [in electric shock belts] ... that cannot be achieved with another device, and the risk of arbitrary force amounting to torture or other forms of ill-treatment is too great. As such, their use is not advised.”<sup>76</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation prohibits the trade in this equipment.</p> <p>The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be prohibited.</p> <p>Transfer should be prohibited.</p> <p>Use should be prohibited.</p>

<sup>74</sup> CoE: CPT, *CPT Standards*, “Substantive” sections of the CPT’s General Reports, January 2015, para. 74.

<sup>75</sup> UN CAT, *Conclusions and Recommendations of the CAT: United States of America*, 15 May 2000, p.32.

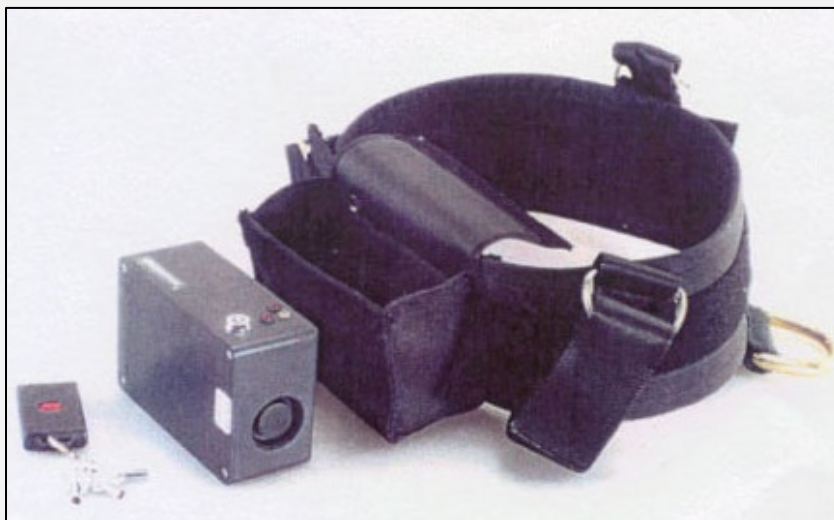
<sup>76</sup> UNODC and OHCHR, *Resource book on the use of force and firearms in law enforcement*, 2017, p. 94.



◀ **Stun sleeve**



◀ **Stun cuff**



◀ **Stun belt**



## 2.2 ELECTRIC SHOCK BATONS (STUN BATONS)

<p><b>Key Technical Features</b></p>	<p>Electric shock batons deliver an electric shock through direct contact between the electrodes and the target individual.</p> <p>Designs vary; the batons can be straight, extendable, or telescopic. Some models have strips or spirals of metal along length of the baton to conduct electricity, others have two to four electrodes on the tip.</p> <p>In some models, the electrodes are hidden under a removable cover or incorporated into a flashlight (stun torch).</p> <p>Voltage varies between models, as does the duration of the shock delivered.</p> <p>Some electric shock batons can also spray chemical irritants.</p>
<p><b>Human Rights Concerns</b></p>	<p>Due to their design and purpose, direct contact electric shock weapons carry an unacceptable risk of arbitrary force.</p> <p>These weapons are inherently abusive equipment that facilitate torture, including through application of multiple or continuous electric shocks, as well as electric shocks to vulnerable areas of the body such as the head, neck, and genitals.</p> <p>Their use fulfils no legitimate law enforcement purpose that cannot be achieved through less harmful means.</p>
<p><b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b></p>	<p>UNODC and OHCHR: "there is no tactical utility [in electric shock batons] ... that cannot be achieved with another device, and the risk of arbitrary force amounting to torture or other forms of ill-treatment is too great. As such, their use is not advised."<sup>77</sup></p> <p>CPT: has "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 the person who must be brought under control.<sup>78</sup></p>
<p><b>Examples of Existing Controls</b></p>	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation controls the export of this equipment and allows Member States to prohibit the trade.</p> <p>The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.</p>
<p><b>Proposed Control</b></p>	<p>Manufacture should be prohibited.</p> <p>Transfer should be prohibited.</p> <p>Use should be prohibited.</p>

<sup>77</sup> UNODC and OHCHR, *Resource book on the use of force and firearms in law enforcement*, 2017, p. 94

<sup>78</sup> CPT, *20th General Report*, CPT/Inf (2010)28, 26, October 2010, para. 78.



▲ Electric shock baton with metal spiral electrode



▲ Telescopic / extendable electric shock baton with metal strip electrode



◀ Electric shock baton with two electrodes

## 2.3 ELECTRIC SHOCK GUNS (STUN GUNS)

<p><b>Key Technical Features</b></p>	<p>Electric shock guns deliver the electric shock through direct contact between electrodes and the target individual.</p> <p>They are either straight or curved. Designs vary, although most have two or four electrodes on the tip.</p> <p>Voltage varies between models, as does the length of the shock delivered.</p> <p>Some electric shock guns feature electrodes hidden under a removable cover or that are incorporated into a flashlight (stun torch).</p> <p>Some models can also spray chemical irritants.</p>
<p><b>Human Rights Concerns</b></p>	<p>Due to their design and purpose, direct contact electric shock weapons carry an unacceptable risk of arbitrary force.</p> <p>These weapons are inherently abusive equipment that facilitates torture and other ill-treatment, including through application of multiple or continuous electric shocks, as well as electric shocks to vulnerable areas of the body such as the head, neck, and genitals.</p> <p>Their use fulfils no legitimate law enforcement purpose that cannot be achieved through less harmful means.</p>
<p><b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b></p>	<p>UNODC and OHCHR: "there is no tactical utility [in electric shock guns] ... that cannot be achieved with another device, and the risk of arbitrary force amounting to torture or other forms of ill-treatment is too great. As such, their use is not advised."<sup>79</sup></p> <p>CPT: has "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 the person who must be brought under control.<sup>80</sup></p>
<p><b>Examples of Existing Controls</b></p>	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation controls the export of this equipment and allows Member States to prohibit the trade.</p> <p>The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.</p>
<p><b>Proposed Control</b></p>	<p>Manufacture should be prohibited.</p> <p>Transfer should be prohibited.</p> <p>Use should be prohibited.</p>

<sup>79</sup> UNODC and OHCHR, *Resource book on the use of force and firearms in law enforcement*, 2017, p. 94

<sup>80</sup> CoE: CPT, *CPT Standards, "Substantive" sections of the CPT's General Reports*, January 2015, para. 78.



◀ **Curved stun gun with four electrodes**



◀ **Straight stun guns with electrodes**

## 2.4 ELECTRIC SHOCK SHIELDS (STUN SHIELDS)

<p><b>Key Technical Features</b></p>	<p>Shield design varies, and can be round, rectangular, or square.</p> <p>Convex or flat models are most often used for policing public gatherings.</p> <p>Concave rectangular models are most often used in places of detention for cell extractions.</p> <p>Electric current runs along one or more conductive strips attached to the face of the shield. Some models feature visible shock sparks, warning alert tones, or sirens. Voltage outputs vary between models (current models range from 6,000 – 5,000,000v.) as does the length of shock delivered.</p> <p>Some models can also spray chemical irritants, have a bright flashlight, or have metal spikes.</p>
<p><b>Human Rights Concerns</b></p>	<p>Due to their and design and purpose, direct contact electric shock weapons carry an unacceptable risk of arbitrary force.</p> <p>Electric shock shields are inherently abusive equipment that facilitate torture and other ill-treatment, including through application of multiple or continuous electric shocks.</p> <p>Their use fulfils no legitimate law enforcement purpose that cannot be achieved through less harmful means.</p>
<p><b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b></p>	<p>UNODC and OHCHR: “there is no tactical utility [in electric shock shields] ... that cannot be achieved with another device, and the risk of arbitrary force amounting to torture or other forms of ill-treatment is too great. As such, their use is not advised.”<sup>81</sup></p> <p>CPT: “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.<sup>82</sup></p>
<p><b>Examples of Existing Controls</b></p>	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation controls the export of this equipment and allows Member States to prohibit the trade.</p> <p>The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.</p>
<p><b>Proposed Control</b></p>	<p>Manufacture should be prohibited.</p> <p>Transfer should be prohibited.</p> <p>Use should be prohibited.</p>

<sup>81</sup> UNODC and OHCHR, *Resource book on the use of force and firearms in law enforcement*, 2017, p. 94

<sup>82</sup> CPT, *20th General Report*, October 2010, para. 78.



◀ **Concave electric shock shield with metal electrode strips**



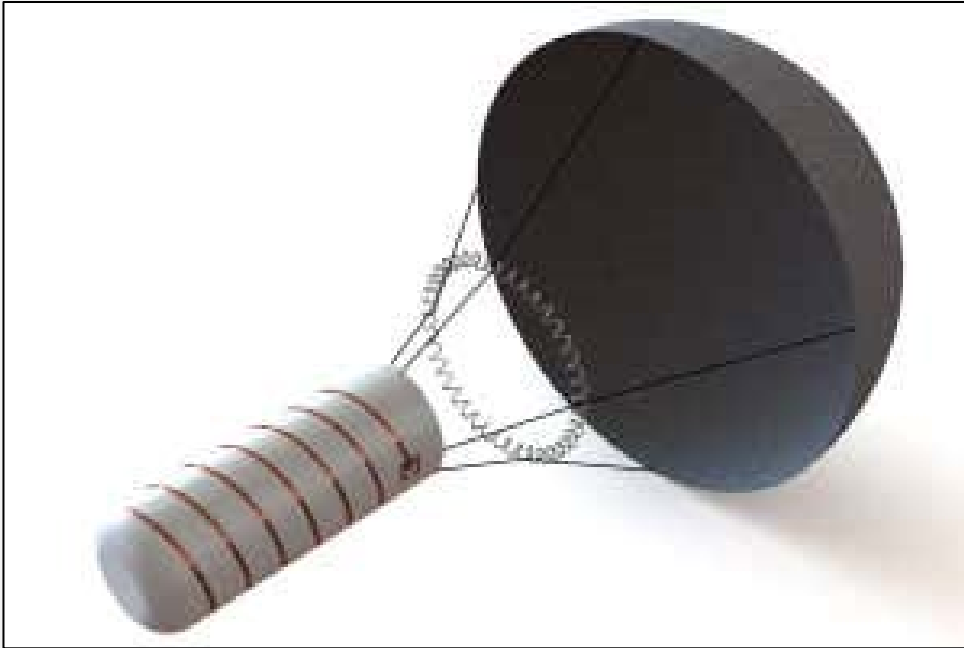
◀ **Round electric shock shield with metal spikes and electrode strips**

## 2.5 WIRELESS PROJECTILE ELECTRIC SHOCK WEAPONS

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<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>Specially designed launchers (including types of shotguns and pistols) that fire projectile stun or kinetic impact cartridges, which can also be called “electric bullets”.</p> <p>Some models of launcher can fire a range of projectiles, including chemical irritants or kinetic impact projectiles.</p> <p>The range of the projectiles, voltage output, and duration of shock varies between models.</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>Some models may facilitate torture and other ill-treatment, including through application of long duration or continuous electric shocks.</p> <p>Once the projectile has left the weapon, the operator has no control over the shocks being delivered.</p> <p>These projectiles are inaccurate and are affected by weather conditions, which increases the risk of head or upper body injury from the kinetic energy impact.</p> <p>There is a lack of research on wireless projectiles, but some studies on wired projectiles have found a risk of cardiac, respiratory, and brain injuries and complications, including a number of cases where death has occurred subsequent to the use of the weapon.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>These projectiles are not widely used and to the best of Omega’s knowledge, there are no statements or standards from human rights bodies on this specific type of equipment.</p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation controls the export of this equipment and allows Member States to prohibit trade.</p> <p>The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Independent and transparent medical and human rights compliance testing is required before any decision to manufacture, purchase, or use this type of equipment.</p>

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▲ **Wireless projectile**



## 2.6 PROJECTILE ELECTRIC SHOCK WEAPONS

### Key Technical Features

Small, usually pistol-shaped. These weapons fit one or more cartridges, which usually contain 2 darts (or probes) attached to thin wires. When fired from the cartridge, the probes deliver an electric shock to the target, remaining attached to the weapon by the wires.

These weapons deliver a high-voltage shock that causes the target individual to lose muscle control (neuro-muscular incapacitation).

Range, voltage, and duration varies between models. Some weapons can be used in direct contact mode (called 'drive stun' or 'touch stun'), where they touch the skin.

### Human Rights Concerns

The use of these weapons causes severe pain as well as incapacitation and loss of body posture, which can result in secondary injuries through falls. Studies have also found a risk of cardiac, respiratory, and brain injuries and complications, including a number of cases where death has occurred subsequent to the use of the weapon.

These weapons are open to misuse through sustained or multiple shocks, or through shocks on vulnerable areas of the body.

The direct contact mode has no legitimate law enforcement use.

### Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies

CAT: "electrical discharge weapons should be used exclusively in extreme and limited situations – where there is a real and immediate threat to life or risk of serious injury".<sup>83</sup> They also assert that the use of the weapons in drive stun mode should be prohibited.<sup>84</sup>

CPT: "the use of [electric discharge weapons] should be limited to situations where there is a real and immediate threat to life or risk of serious injury. Recourse to such weapons for the sole purpose of securing compliance with an order is inadmissible."<sup>85</sup>

### Examples of Existing Controls

The EU Anti-Torture Regulation controls the export of this equipment and allows Member States to prohibit the trade.

The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.

### Proposed Control

Manufacture should be controlled.

Trade and transfer should be controlled.

Use should conform with international human rights standards.

<sup>83</sup> UN CAT, *Concluding observations on the fifth periodic report of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland*, 2013, CAT/C/75/GBR/CO/5, para. 26.

<sup>84</sup> UN CAT, *Concluding observations on the sixth periodic report of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland*, 2019, CAT/C/GBR/CO/6, paras. 28 and 29.

<sup>85</sup> CoE: CPT, 'Electrical Discharge Weapons', *Extract from the 20th General Report of the CPT*, 2010, CPT/Inf(2010)28-part, para. 70.



▲ Projectile stun gun with cartridges of different ranges



▲ Dart from a projectile stun gun



▲ Projectile stun gun and cartridges

**3.**

**HAND-HELD  
KINETIC IMPACT  
WEAPONS**

## 03 | HAND-HELD KINETIC IMPACT WEAPONS

Hand-held kinetic impact weapons (also known as striking weapons) are designed to be used to strike or hit an individual to cause compliance through pain. They are one of the most common less lethal weapons carried by law enforcement officers.

Batons and truncheons are among the striking weapons most often used, and they are usually made of rubber, plastic, wood, or metal, and range in size from 20cm to 2 metres. Other striking weapons, including whips, and smaller weapons such as slappers and billys (which may be weighted), are less common, but are still permitted for law enforcement use in some countries. Some law enforcement officials also use ad-hoc equipment such as sticks, clubs, or other improvised weapons.

### Use

Batons or truncheons are used to push, jab, poke, hit, or beat a person. Frequently, they are used abusively to lever, apply force, or crush parts of the body, or in neck or choke holds. They can also be used as a tool of rape. Any use of a baton on an individual who is already restrained or otherwise under control may amount to torture or other ill-treatment.

While batons may have a legitimate law enforcement role, when used in strict accordance with international human rights standards, all other types of hand-held kinetic impact weapons listed in this section have no legitimate law enforcement use and should not be used in any circumstances (see individual entries for information).

### Potential injuries

Injuries from hand-held kinetic impact weapons, which in some cases can be life threatening, include:

- bruises
- broken bones
- internal bleeding and damage to organs
- concussion and other head injuries.

These weapons are sometimes used to apply dangerous restraint techniques, including:

- applying leverage to limbs for pain compliance
- neck-holds that restrict breathing (this technique can result in serious injury or death due to compression of the airway and damage to the larynx, trachea, and thyroid bone).

## 3.1 BATONS

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>There are 3 main types of batons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Straight baton – length varies from approx. 20cm to 2m. Often made of rubber, plastic, or wood.</li> <li>• Side-handle baton (also known as a tonfa) – straight baton with the addition of a side handle. Often made of plastic or aluminium.</li> <li>• Telescopic or extendable baton – usually extends up to 2- or 3-times the retracted length. Typically made of aluminium.</li> </ul>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>Batons are widely misused by law enforcement officials to inflict unnecessary or excessive force through beating. Law enforcement officials require training to use them safely, if not, serious injury can occur.</p> <p>Force from side-handled and longer batons is harder to control, and they can be used to inflict greater injury.</p> <p>If driven 'end on' into the target individual, batons can cause bleeding and serious injury, including injuries to internal organs. Overarm strikes and strikes to the head and other vulnerable areas increase the risk of serious injury or death.</p> <p>Batons are sometimes used to apply dangerous restraint techniques, particularly neck holds that restrict breathing.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>OHCHR: "Neck holds using batons should not be employed, as they present an especially high risk of death or serious injury as a result of compression of large blood vessels or the airway."<sup>86</sup></p> <p>OHCHR: "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."<sup>87</sup></p> <p>CPT: "recommends that the use of techniques involving physical force which may impede airflow through the respiratory tract be prohibited."<sup>88</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Can be manufactured.</p> <p>Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p> <p>Use should be in-line with international human rights norms.</p>

<sup>86</sup> OHCHR, *UN Human Rights Guidance on Less-Lethal Weapons in Law Enforcement*, 2020, para 7.1.5.

<sup>87</sup> OHCHR, *UN Human Rights Guidance on Less-Lethal Weapons in Law Enforcement*, 2020, para 7.1.5.

<sup>88</sup> CoE: CPT, *Report to the Slovenian Government on the visit to Slovenia carried out by the CPT from 31 January to 6 February 2012*, 19 July 2013, CPT/Inf (2013) 16, para. 67.



▲ **Extendable baton**



▲ **Side-handle baton**



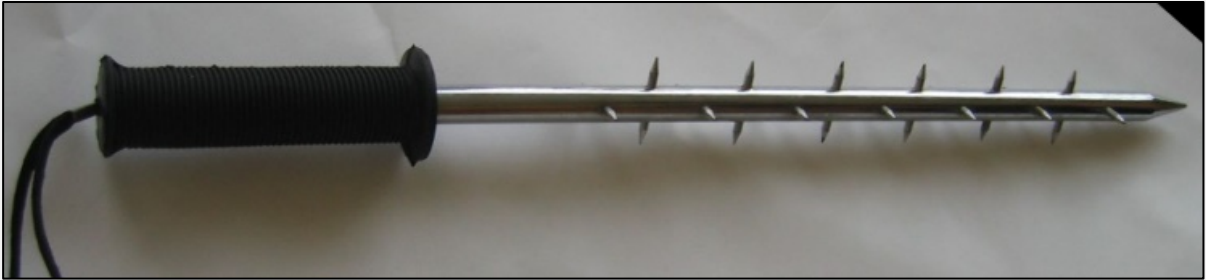
▲ **Straight baton**

## 3.2 SPIKED BATONS

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	A baton with sharp spikes (or other protrusions), usually made from metal, but can be made of other materials such as hardened rubber, plastic, or wood.
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>The use of spiked batons amounts to excessive force or cruel or inhuman treatment, possibly amounting to torture, as they cannot be used without inflicting excessive and unnecessary pain.</p> <p>Their use fulfils no legitimate law enforcement purpose that cannot be achieved through less harmful means.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>Special Rapporteur on Torture: spiked batons are listed as a type of inherently cruel, inhuman or degrading weapon.<sup>89</sup></p> <p>OHCHR: "The use of [spiked batons] is widely considered to violate international human rights law. They should not be used in law enforcement"<sup>90</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation prohibits the trade in this equipment.</p> <p>The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be prohibited.</p> <p>Transfer should be prohibited.</p> <p>Use should be prohibited.</p>

<sup>89</sup> UN HRC, *Extra-custodial use of force and the prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment: note / by the Secretary-General*, 2017, para. 51.

<sup>90</sup> OHCHR, *UN Human rights guidance on less-lethal weapons in law enforcement*, 2020, para 5.1.



▲ Metal baton with spikes along length of shaft



▲ Rubber baton with spikes at the head



### 3.3 SPIKED SHIELDS AND OTHER SPIKED ARMOUR

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<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>A flat, convex, or concave shield with spikes attached to the face.</p> <p>Body armour, such as arm guards, with protruding spikes.</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>The use of spiked shields or spiked armour amounts to excessive force or cruel or inhuman treatment, possibly amounting to torture, as they cannot be used without inflicting excessive and unnecessary pain.</p> <p>Their use fulfils no legitimate law enforcement purpose that cannot be achieved through less harmful means.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>Special Rapporteur on Torture: spiked shields are listed as a type of inherently cruel, inhuman or degrading weapon.<sup>91</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation prohibits the trade in spiked shields.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be prohibited.</p> <p>Transfer should be prohibited.</p> <p>Use should be prohibited.</p>

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<sup>91</sup> UN HRC, *Extra-custodial use of force and the prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment: note / by the Secretary-General*, 2017, para. 51.



▲ Spiked shield



▲ Spiked body armour

## 3.4 WEIGHTED BATONS AND WEIGHTED GLOVES

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<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>There are two main types of weighted batons:</p> <p>Slapper - a flat device consisting of metal (spring steel) encased in thick leather and used for slapping or striking a person.</p> <p>Billy club - a short baton consisting of spring steel encased in leather, sometimes weighted at one end with lead shot, and used for striking a person.</p> <p>Weighted gloves are usually made of leather, and have powdered steel or lead sewn into the material over the knuckle, fingers, or back of the hand.</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>The additional kinetic energy generated from the weight of the gloves or baton is likely to cause significant injury, especially if used on vulnerable areas of the body.</p> <p>Their use fulfils no legitimate law enforcement purpose that cannot be achieved through less harmful means.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>To the best of Omega’s knowledge, there are no statements or standards from human rights bodies on this specific type of equipment.</p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>The US CCL controls the export of batons.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be prohibited.</p> <p>Transfer should be prohibited.</p> <p>Use should be prohibited.</p>

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▲ **Weighted glove**



▲ **Slapper**



◀ **Billy club**

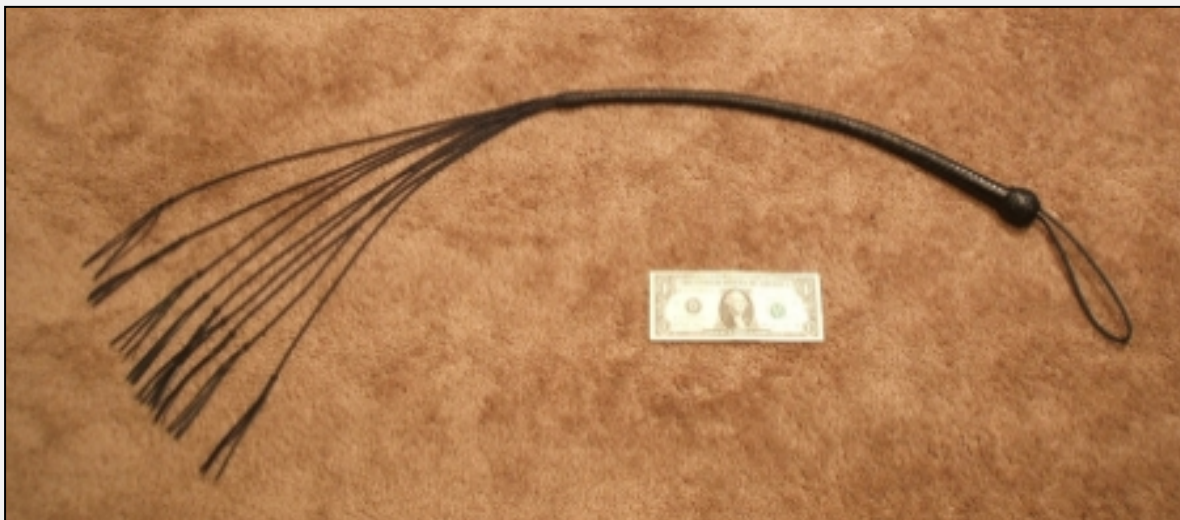
## 3.5 WHIPS

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>A whip is a firm, flexible stick, usually made of leather or other flexible material, or a stick with a piece of fabric or rope attached.</p> <p>Some types of whip may have multiple thongs and/or incorporate barbs, spikes, knots, or hooks, or may be plaited with wire.</p> <p>Sjamboks are a type of heavy whip traditionally made of leather but now also made of other materials, such as plastic.</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>Whips are most often used to carry out corporal punishment.</p> <p>Whips cause lacerations and other injuries, which may lead to permanent scarring. Lack of medical attention or unsanitary conditions can lead to infection.</p> <p>Their use amounts to excessive force or cruel or inhuman treatment, possibly amounting to torture, as they cannot be used without inflicting excessive and unnecessary pain.</p> <p>Use of whips fulfils no legitimate law enforcement purpose that cannot be achieved through less harmful means.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>EU: As part of its commitment to combat torture, the EU urges third countries to abolish all types of judicial corporal punishment.<sup>92</sup></p> <p>UN HRC: "it is the firm opinion of the Committee that corporal punishment constitutes cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment or punishment contrary to article 7 of the Covenant."<sup>93</sup></p> <p>European Court of Human Rights: judicial corporal punishment (whipping) breached Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights.<sup>94</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation prohibits the trade in whips with multiple lashes or thongs and whips that are fitted with barbs, hooks, spikes, etc.</p> <p>The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be prohibited.</p> <p>Transfer should be prohibited.</p> <p>Use should be prohibited.</p>

<sup>92</sup> EU, *Guidelines to EU Policy Towards Third Countries on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment*, 2019 Revision of the Guidelines, 16 September 2019, para 1.1.b.

<sup>93</sup> UN HRC, *George Osbourne v. Jamaica*, CCPR/C/68/D/759/1997, 13 April 2000.

<sup>94</sup> *Tyrer v. The United Kingdom*, 1978.



▲ Multiple lashed whip (Cat O' Nine Tails) © OwenX\_



▲ Sjambok © OwenX

**4.**

**LAUNCHED KINETIC  
IMPACT  
PROJECTILES**

## 04 | LAUNCHED KINETIC IMPACT PROJECTILES

Launched kinetic impact projectiles, sometimes referred to as 'baton rounds', 'rubber bullets', or 'plastic bullets', are expelled from weapon-launched cartridges, or grenades, that are either hand-thrown or weapon-launched. Different types of cartridges or grenades can contain different numbers of projectiles, and the projectiles can also differ in size, velocity (speed), and accuracy. Single or multiple projectiles can be in the form of pellets, balls, blocks, cylinders, or fabric bags filled with pellets ('bean bags').

Many types of launchers can fire kinetic impact projectiles (see section [on launchers for less lethal weapons](#)). Common ammunition calibres include 37/38 mm, 40 mm, or 56 mm (grenade launcher), 12 gauge (shotgun), and 9 mm (pistol). Other specialist weapons and ammunition are also in use.

Kinetic impact projectiles are designed to cause blunt trauma rather than penetration (although they do often penetrate the skin, especially when fired at short range); their desired effect is to elicit compliance through pain.

### Use

Kinetic impact projectiles are used in many different kinds of law enforcement and security operations. Generally used by law enforcement officials to target individuals, inflicting blunt trauma to gain compliance, kinetic impact projectiles are often also used to disperse crowds, and are used in places of detention. If they hit a vulnerable part of the body they can cause injury; consequently, law enforcement officers should never target the head or upper body and instead should aim for the lower body or legs.

Some launched kinetic impact ammunition, which contains a single less lethal projectile and can be accurately aimed, does have a legitimate law enforcement use when used in strict accordance with international human rights standards. All other kinds of launched kinetic impact projectiles should not be used by law enforcement officers.

### Potential Injuries

Injuries from launched kinetic impact weapons, which in some cases can be life threatening, include:

- bruises
- broken bones
- internal bleeding and damage to organs
- temporary or permanent damage to eyesight
- concussion and other head injuries.

Ammunition with multiple small pellets present a particularly high risk of causing ocular injuries and penetration injuries, and should not be used.



## 4.1 AMMUNITION CONTAINING MULTIPLE METAL PROJECTILES (LETHAL)

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<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>Generally fired from shotguns.</p> <p>The size of metal projectiles can range from small 'birdshot' pellets to larger 'buckshot' balls. All should be considered lethal ammunition.</p> <p>This ammunition is designed to penetrate soft tissue.</p> <p>When fired at a shorter distance, the ammunition is more clustered, and therefore has a greater impact on hitting a person.</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>The pellets can be lethal if fired at a close range.</p> <p>Small pellets present a high risk of ocular injuries and penetration injuries.</p> <p>Larger-sized balls can cause significant soft tissue damage, and therefore their use carries an increased likelihood of serious and lethal injury.</p> <p>This, and other kinds of lethal ammunition, should never be used for crowd control.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>OHCHR: "Metal pellets, such as those fired from shotguns, should never be used [for law enforcement]".<sup>95</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>Some national export control regimes include this type of ammunition on their list of equipment that requires an export licence.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be controlled.</p> <p>Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p> <p>Use for crowd control should be prohibited.</p>

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<sup>95</sup> OHCHR, UN *Human Rights Guidance on Less-Lethal Weapons in Law Enforcement*, 2020, para. 7.5.6.



▲ 12 gauge shotgun



▲ 12 gauge shotgun cartridges with variety of metal projectiles

## 4.2 AMMUNITION WITH EXCESSIVE ENERGY

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	Ammunition that impacts with excessive energy. This category includes rubber-coated metal bullets.
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>Ammunition that impacts with excessive energy can cause significant injury, including bruising from the blunt impact trauma.</p> <p>This ammunition can cause bleeding and serious injury, including blunt impact trauma and injuries to internal organs. Impact to the head and other vulnerable areas increases the risk of serious injury or death.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>UNODC and OHCHR: highlights particular risks with the use of rubber-coated metal bullets, stating: "studies have shown that rubber coated metal bullets can lead to death and disability." <sup>96</sup></p> <p>OHCHR: "Rubber-coated metal bullets are particularly dangerous and should not be used." <sup>97</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	Some national export control regimes include this type of ammunition on their list of equipment that requires an export licence.
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be prohibited.</p> <p>Transfer should be prohibited.</p> <p>Use should be prohibited.</p>

<sup>96</sup> UNODC and OHCHR, *Resource book on the use of force and firearms in law enforcement*, 2017, p. 94.

<sup>97</sup> OHCHR, *UN Human Rights Guidance on Less-Lethal Weapons in Law Enforcement*, 2020, para. 7.5.8.



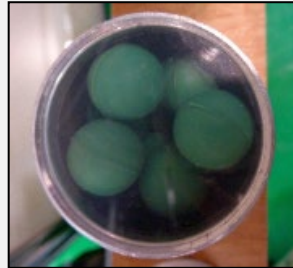
▲ Rubber coated metal bullet showing metal core

## 4.3 AMMUNITION WITH MULTIPLE PROJECTILES

<p><b>Key Technical Features</b></p>	<p>The multiple projectiles contained in the ammunition are often rubber balls or wooden blocks.</p> <p>This kind of ammunition can be fired from different types of launcher or can be hand-thrown. Calibres include 12 gauge (shotgun ammunition), 37/38 mm, 40 mm, and 56 mm.</p>
<p><b>Human Rights Concerns</b></p>	<p>Ammunition containing multiple projectiles are inaccurate, indiscriminate, arbitrary, and cannot be used safely.</p> <p>Projectiles that are too inaccurate can accidentally hit target individuals in vulnerable parts of the body, such as the head, and cause serious injury.</p> <p>Inaccurate projectiles may hit and injure bystanders.</p>
<p><b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b></p>	<p>OHCHR: "Multiple projectiles fired at the same time are inaccurate and, in general, their use cannot comply with the principles of necessity and proportionality".<sup>98</sup></p> <p>UNODC and OHCHR: "Weapons that fire multiple projectiles at the same time ... should never be used due to the risk of injury to bystanders."<sup>99</sup></p>
<p><b>Examples of Existing Controls</b></p>	<p>Some national export control regimes include this type of ammunition on their list of equipment that requires an export licence.</p> <p>As some countries class this ammunition as 'civilian' or 'policing' rather than 'military', they are not always adequately controlled and reported.</p> <p>The EU may prohibit the export of this ammunition under its sanction regime when the objective of the sanctions is to prevent the export of weapons that might be used for internal repression in the destination state.</p>
<p><b>Proposed Control</b></p>	<p>Manufacture should be prohibited.</p> <p>Transfer should be prohibited.</p> <p>Use should be prohibited.</p>

<sup>98</sup> OHCHR, *UN Human Rights Guidance on less-lethal weapons in law enforcement*, 2020, para. 7.5.6.

<sup>99</sup> UNODC and OHCHR, *Resource book on the use of force and firearms in law enforcement*, 2017, p. 94.



▲ 44 calibre cartridge with multiple rubber projectiles



◀ 12 gauge shotgun cartridge with multiple rubber projectiles



## 4.4 AMMUNITION WITH SINGLE PROJECTILE

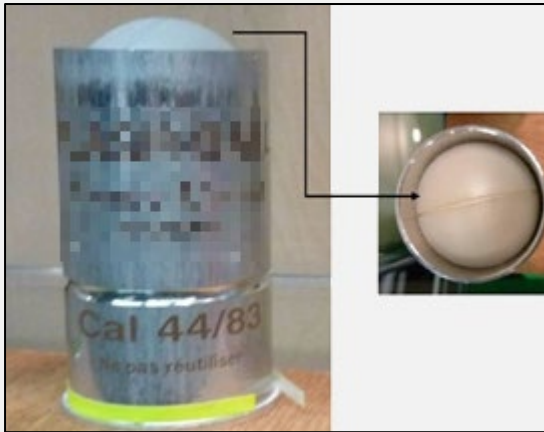
<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>This type of ammunition can be fired from different types of launcher. Calibres include 12 gauge (shotgun ammunition), 37/38 mm, 40 mm, and 42 mm.</p> <p>It is designed to incapacitate the targeted individual via blunt trauma without penetrating the skin or causing permanent injury.</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>Some such projectiles are too inaccurate, and cannot be used safely, as they can accidentally hit target individuals on the head and other vulnerable areas, which increases the risk of serious injury or death.</p> <p>Inaccurate projectiles may hit and injure bystanders.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>ODIHR: kinetic impact projectiles “should never to be shot indiscriminately into a crowd”<sup>100</sup></p> <p>OHCHR: “Kinetic impact projectiles should not be targeted at the head, face or neck”<sup>101</sup>, and “impact projectiles should be capable of striking an individual to within a 10-centimetre diameter of the targeted point when fired from the designated range”.<sup>102</sup></p> <p>UNODC and OHCHR: “Launched kinetic impact projectiles should not be used to disperse a peaceful assembly. In the case of an assembly that has turned violent, this type of ammunition should only be used by trained marksmen capable of individualizing the persons that pose the risk, and only according to the strict requirements of necessity and proportionality.”<sup>103</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>Some national export control regimes include this type of ammunition on their list of equipment that requires an export licence. As some states class this equipment as 'civilian' or 'policing' rather than 'military', they are not always adequately controlled and reported.</p> <p>The EU may prohibit the export of these weapons under its sanction regime when the objective of the sanctions is to prevent the export of weapons that might be used for internal repression in the destination state.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Can be manufactured.</p> <p>Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p> <p>Use should comply with international human rights norms.</p>

<sup>100</sup> OSCE/ODIHR, *Human rights handbook on policing assemblies*, 2016, pp. 80-81.

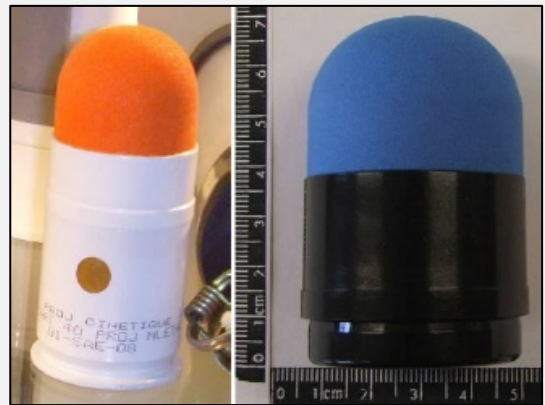
<sup>101</sup> OHCHR, *UN human rights guidance on less-lethal weapons in law enforcement*, 2020, para 7.5.8.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid, para. 7.5.4.

<sup>103</sup> UNODC and OHCHR, *Resource book on the use of force and firearms in law enforcement*, 2017, p. 94.



▲ 44 calibre cartridge with single rubber ball



▲ Foam-tipped projectile



◀ Bean bag projectile



◀ Rubber projectile



# **5.**

# **CHEMICAL IRRITANTS**

## 05 | CHEMICAL IRRITANTS

Chemical irritants for crowd control<sup>104</sup> are a group of chemicals designed to temporarily deter or disable an individual by producing sensory irritation and pain in the eyes, upper respiratory tract and skin. The term 'chemical irritants' refers to tear gas (CS, CN, and CR) and pepper spray (OC or PAVA), and Omega also includes foul-smelling malodorants in this definition.

Chemical irritants can be dispersed in a number of different ways, including as a fine powder or smoke through weapon-launched or hand-thrown projectiles and grenades, via hand-held, shoulder-worn, and backpack sprayers, and by water cannon, where the powder is suspended in solvent and dispersed as a fine spray.

### Use

Chemical irritants can be targeted at a person, a group, or into a room. They are sometimes sprayed directly into the eyes or faces of individuals, which is inappropriate use. In many countries, chemical irritants are increasingly used in large volumes to disperse public assemblies, and this kind of indiscriminate use raises many concerns. Additionally, any use on an individual who is already restrained or otherwise under control may amount to torture or other ill-treatment.

Chemical irritants may have a legitimate law enforcement role, when used in strict accordance with international human rights standards. Nonetheless, they are frequently misused, and some delivery mechanisms, such as large munitions, should never be used.

### Potential injuries

Injuries from exposure to chemical irritants, which in some cases can be life threatening, can include:

- watering eyes
- breathing difficulties, coughing, choking, and suffocation
- vomiting
- irritation, burning, and blistering of the skin
- severe allergic reactions.

Injuries from launched grenades or projectiles can include:

- bruises
- internal bleeding and damage to organs
- broken bones
- temporary or permanent damage to eyesight
- concussion and other head injuries.

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<sup>104</sup> The 1992 Chemical Weapons Convention uses the term "riot control agents", defined as "Any chemical not listed in a Schedule, which can produce rapidly in humans sensory irritation or disabling physical effects which disappear within a short time following termination of exposure." (Art. II(7), 1992 Chemical Weapons Convention). This term is not used in this resource because it is inaccurate and pejorative to refer to all public assemblies as riots. In addition, chemical irritants are also used for purposes other than crowd control.

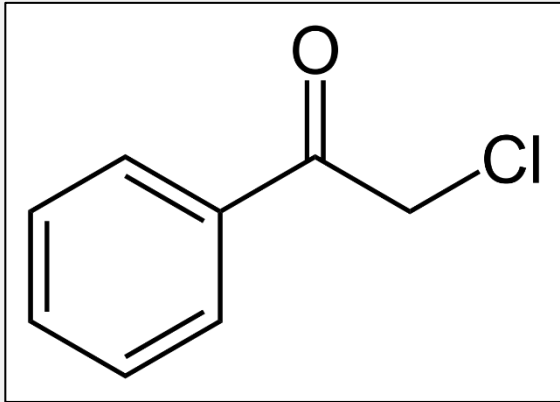
## 5.1 CS, CR, and CN

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>CS (2-chlorobenzalmalononitrile), CR (2-chloroacetophenone), and CN (dibenzoxazepine) are all solids at room temperature.</p> <p>CS, CN, and CR are lachrymatory agents (tear forming) and interact with sensory nerve receptors to produce discomfort, severe pain, itching, and burning, principally in the eyes, respiratory tract, and skin.</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>Inappropriate and excessive use of these chemical irritants is widespread, which can result in serious injury or death through suffocation, allergic reaction, hazardous overdose, or other side effect.</p> <p>Individuals may react differently to the effects of CS, CR, or CN. Reactions may be affected by excessive application, delivery in an enclosed space, prolonged exposure, pre-existing medical conditions, and, for skin reactions, high temperature and relative humidity.</p> <p>Use of these weapons can be indiscriminate, if used at a demonstration, bystanders can be affected even if they are not the target.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>ODIHR and Venice Commission: "Devices with indiscriminate effects such as tear gas ... should be used for the purpose of dispersal only and should not be used where people (participants / bystanders; violent / peaceful persons) cannot leave the scene. They should only be used if violence has reached such a level that targeting individuals engaged in violence is not a possible or sufficient response."<sup>105</sup></p> <p>Special Rapporteur on the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly and of association: tear gas is indiscriminate in nature as it does not differentiate "between demonstrators and non-demonstrators, healthy people and people with health conditions."<sup>106</sup></p> <p>OHCHR: "A chemical irritant should only be used where sufficient toxicological information is available to confirm that it will not cause any unwarranted health problems."<sup>107</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>The EU includes chemical irritants on the EU Military List and requires Member States to license their export.</p> <p>Some national export control regimes include these weapons on their list of equipment that requires an export licence.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be controlled.</p> <p>Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p> <p>Use should conform with international human rights standards.</p>

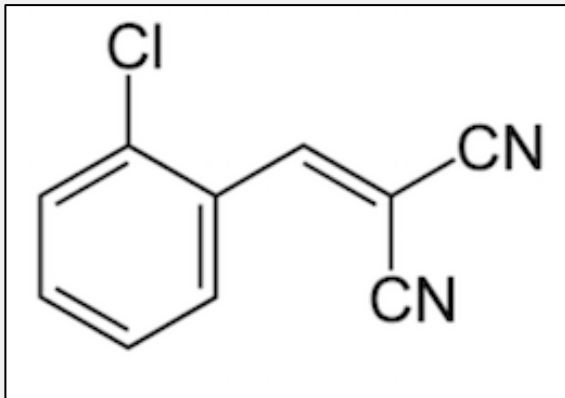
<sup>105</sup> Venice Commission and OSCE/ODIHR, *Guidelines on freedom of peaceful assembly (3<sup>rd</sup> edition)*, 8 July 2019, pp. 72-73.

<sup>106</sup> UN HRC, Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Rights to Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and of Association, 21 May 2012, A/HRC/20/27, para. 35.

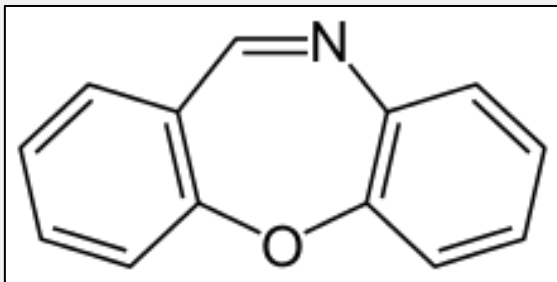
<sup>107</sup> OHCHR, UN Human rights guidance on less-lethal Weapons in law enforcement, 2020, para. 7.2.3.



◀ Structural formula of CN



◀ Structural formula of CS



◀ Structural formula of CR

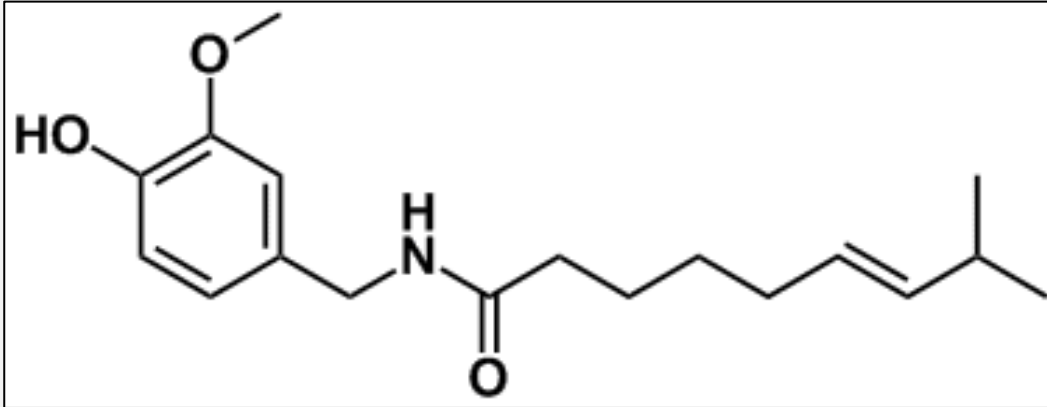
## 5.2 OC AND PAVA

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>OC (Oleoresin Capsicum) is an oil at room temperature and is naturally derived from the capsicum species of plant (such as chili peppers).</p> <p>PAVA (Pelargonic Acid Vanillylamide) is a solid at room temperature, and is a synthetic version of OC.</p> <p>Both OC and PAVA are inflammatory agents, which interact with sensory nerve receptors to produce discomfort, severe pain, and itching or burning, principally in the eyes, respiratory tract, and skin.</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>Inappropriate and excessive use of OC and PAVA is widespread and can result in serious injury or death through factors such as suffocation, allergic reaction, or hazardous overdose.</p> <p>Individuals may react differently to OC and PAVA. Conditions affecting different reactions include excessive application, delivery in an enclosed space, prolonged exposure, pre-existing medical conditions, and, for skin reactions, high temperature and relative humidity.</p> <p>These weapons lack differentiation; if used at a demonstration, for instance, bystanders can also be affected even if they are not the target.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>CPT: "Pepper spray is a potentially dangerous substance and should not be used in confined spaces."<sup>108</sup></p> <p>European Court of Human Rights: pepper spray "can produce effects such as respiratory problems, nausea, vomiting, irritation of the respiratory tract, irritation of the tear ducts and eyes, spasms, chest pain, dermatitis or allergies. In strong doses, it may cause necrosis of tissue in the respiratory or digestive tract, pulmonary oedema or internal haemorrhaging"<sup>109</sup></p> <p>ODIHR: "OC... [is] designed to be sprayed into the face of an individual. This is not appropriate for dispersal purposes or to gain compliance, but only as a defence against violent individuals"<sup>110</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation controls the export of these chemical irritants.</p> <p>The US CCL controls the export of these chemical weapons.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be controlled.</p> <p>Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p> <p>Use should conform with international human rights standards.</p>

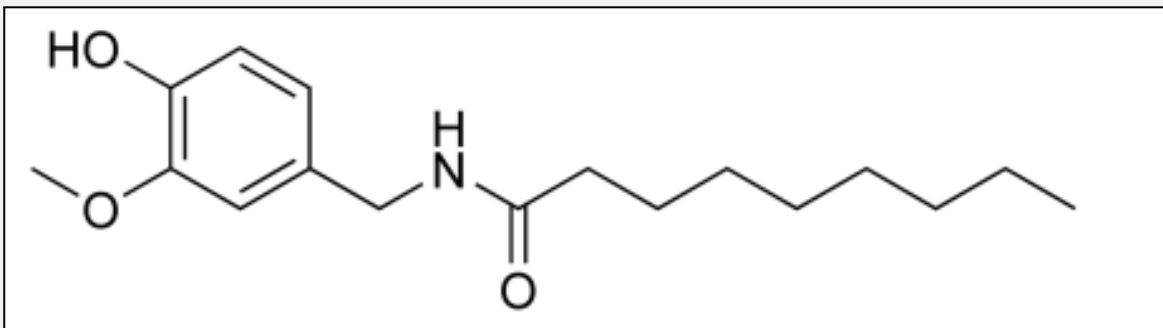
<sup>108</sup> CoE: CPT, *Preliminary observations made by the delegation of the CPT which visited Bosnia and Herzegovina from 19 to 30 March 2007 and Response of the authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina*, 16 July 2007, CPT/Inf (2007) p. 34.

<sup>109</sup> Oya Ataman v. Turkey, 74552/01, *Council of Europe: European Court of Human Rights*, 5 December 2006.

<sup>110</sup> OSCE/ODIHR, *Human rights handbook on policing assemblies*, 2016, p. 79.



▲ Structural formula of OC molecule



▲ Structural formula of PAVA molecule

## 5.3 MALODORANTS

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>A range of chemicals that have a foul and, deeply unpleasant smell.</p> <p>The smell can linger and be difficult to remove from clothing and furniture.</p> <p>Means of dispersal include by hand-held spray, grenades, launched projectiles, drones, and water cannon.</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>It is not known what chemicals are used in malodorant devices, nor has there been research undertaken as to their effects on the people they are used against. Any proposed device and or method of use should be independently tested to assess the medical and health risks.</p> <p>The use of malodorants to disperse a public gathering is indiscriminate, affecting all of those in the contaminated area, and could amount to collective punishment.</p> <p>The use of malodorants chemicals as a method of punishment or humiliation should be classed as ill-treatment and should be prohibited.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>Special Rapporteur on Torture: "certain "less lethal" weapons may have foreseeable long-term or other effects, which must be considered when assessing the proportionality of their use, such as the ... humiliating effect of the use of dyes or malodorants."<sup>111</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>To the best of Omega's knowledge, there are no trade controls on this type of equipment.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Chemical composition should be published.</p> <p>Manufacture should be controlled.</p> <p>Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p>

<sup>111</sup> UN HRC, *Extra-custodial use of force and the prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment : note / by the Secretary-General*, 2017, para 68.



▲ Bottle of malodorant



▲ Malodorant spray



## 5.4 GRENADES OR CARTRIDGES CONTAINING CHEMICAL IRRITANTS

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>Chemical irritant grenades can be hand-thrown or weapon-launched. Cartridge-launched projectiles can be fired from specialist less lethal launchers and shotguns.</p>
	<p>Grenades and projectiles may contain any kind of chemical irritant, and mixtures thereof, and may also include secondary effects such as dye, smoke, or impact projectiles.</p>
	<p>Some grenades or cartridges separate into two or more 'submunitions'.</p>
	<p>Some grenades or cartridges contain an explosive charge to disperse powdered irritant, and some contain a pyrotechnic to disperse irritant smoke through burning.</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>The people targeted, as well as bystanders, could easily be injured by the kinetic impact of the munitions, or by fragments, submunitions, or shrapnel.</p>
	<p>Due to the high risk they may cause injury, grenades or cartridges that contain explosives should not be used.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>OSCE/ODIHR and Venice Commission: "Tear gas canisters should never be fired directly at or against a person".<sup>112</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>Some national export control regimes include this type of projectile on their list of equipment that requires an export licence.</p>
	<p>As some countries class this equipment as 'civilian' or 'policing' rather than 'military', they are not always adequately controlled and reported.</p>
	<p>The EU may prohibit the export of this equipment under its sanction regime when the objective of the sanctions is to prevent the export of equipment that might be used for internal repression in the destination state.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be controlled.</p>
	<p>Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p>
	<p>Use should conform with international human rights standards.</p>

<sup>112</sup> Venice Commission and OSCE/ODIHR, *Guidelines on freedom of peaceful assembly* (3<sup>rd</sup> edition), 8 July 2019, pp. 72-73.



▲ 38 mm CS cartridge



▲ 40 mm CS grenade



▲ 40 mm CS grenade



▲ Chemical irritant grenades

## 5.5 HAND-HELD SPRAYERS

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>These sprayers disperse irritant as a fine spray, mist, fog, or as a liquid stream. The dispersal range of different sprayers varies.</p> <p>Sprayers vary in size from small 'personal' 25ml sprayers, to larger 500ml sprayers.</p> <p>Sprayers may contain any chemical irritant or mixture thereof.</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>The use of hand-held sprayers could cause serious injury or death through asphyxiation or agent toxicity, particularly if they are used in enclosed spaces or against restrained individuals.</p> <p>Most sprays allow continuous spraying with no cut off, and this capability risks excessive amounts being used against a person.</p> <p>If chemical irritants are sprayed directly in to the eye they can cause eye damage.</p> <p>There are no common standards on the concentration or amount of irritant, safety of solvents, or the pressure of sprays, which may lead to inconsistency and more dangerous products being used.</p> <p>Use of these weapons can be indiscriminate; if hand-held sprayers are used at a demonstration, bystanders can be affected even if they are not the target.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>ODIHR and Venice Commission: "Devices with indiscriminate effects such as tear gas ... should be used for the purpose of dispersal only and should not be used where people (participants / bystanders; violent / peaceful persons) cannot leave the scene. They should only be used if violence has reached such a level that targeting individuals engaged in violence is not a possible or sufficient response."<sup>113</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation controls the export of portable sprayers that target one individual or affects a small area.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be controlled.</p> <p>Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p> <p>Use should be in line with international human right standards.</p>

<sup>113</sup> Venice Commission and OSCE/ODIHR, *Guidelines on freedom of peaceful assembly (3<sup>d</sup> edition)*, 8 July 2019, pp. 72-73.



◀▲ Various sizes and volumes of handheld sprayer

## 5.6 FIXED CHEMICAL IRRITANT SPRAYERS

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>These sprayers are designed to be mounted or attached to a wall, ceiling, or fence.</p> <p>They can be used indoors or outdoors, and can either be manually operated (i.e. activated by remote control or a remote-control panel) or automatically (using motion sensor technology).</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>These dispensers are designed to be both fixed and, in some cases, potentially automatic or semi-autonomous. As such, if they are used inside detention facilities, there is a possibility that the threshold for use will be too low, and they will be used inappropriately.</p> <p>Use of these weapons can be indiscriminate; if used at a demonstration, bystanders can be affected even if they are not the target.</p> <p>If used outside, those targeted must be able to disperse from the area.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>ODIHR and Venice Commission: "Devices with indiscriminate effects such as tear gas ... should be used for the purpose of dispersal only and should not be used where people (participants / bystanders; violent / peaceful persons) cannot leave the scene. They should only be used if violence has reached such a level that targeting individuals engaged in violence is not a possible or sufficient response."<sup>114</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation controls the export of fixed sprayers that can be fixed inside a building or outdoors.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be controlled.</p> <p>Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p> <p>Use should be in line with international human rights standards.</p>

<sup>114</sup> Venice Commission and OSCE/ODIHR, *Guidelines on freedom of peaceful assembly (3<sup>rd</sup> edition)*, 8 July 2019, pp. 72-73.



◀ **Chemical irritant dispenser for wall or ceiling**



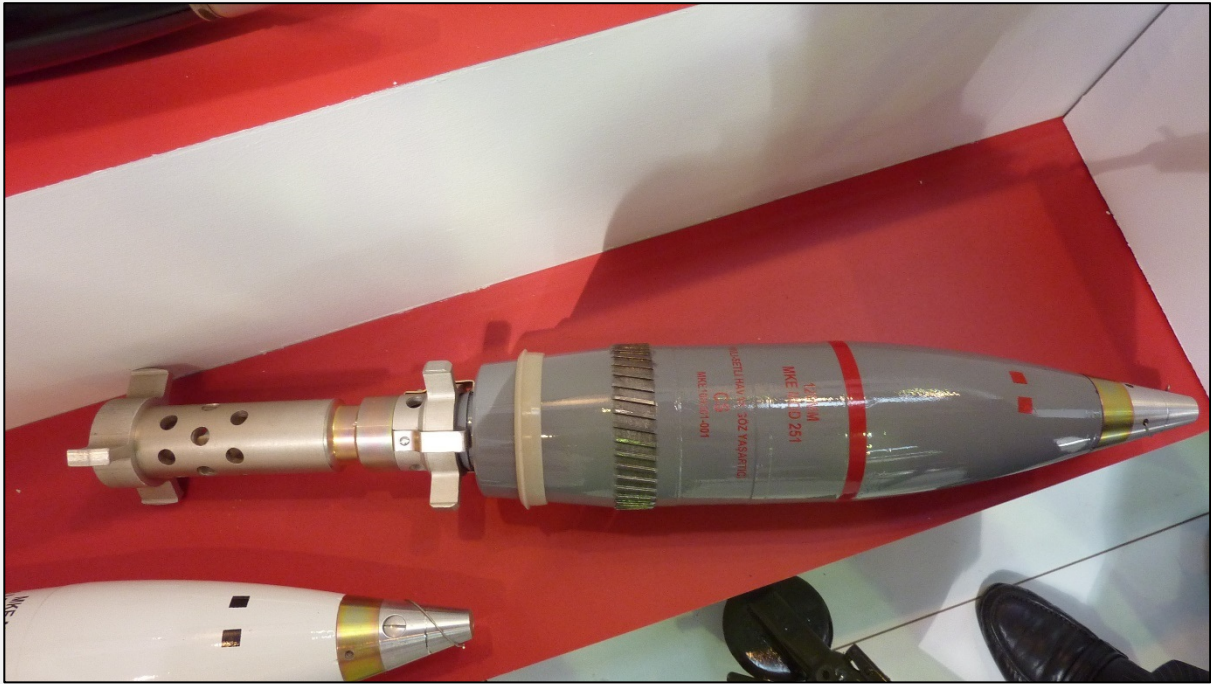
◀ **Chemical irritant dispenser for outside use**

## 5.7 LARGE MUNITIONS CONTAINING CHEMICAL IRRITANTS

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>These weapons are designed to deliver chemical irritants over a very wide area or extended distances.</p> <p>These munitions are fired from a mortar, howitzer, or artillery system. Some munitions are rocket-propelled to increase their range.</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>These large munitions are inherently indiscriminate, and the large amounts of chemical irritant dispersed could cause injury to both those targeted and to bystanders.</p> <p>Both those people targeted, as well as bystanders, could be injured by the kinetic impact of the munitions, fragments, or shrapnel.</p> <p>The munitions could easily be used to collectively ill-treat or punish large groups of people.</p> <p>As the munitions contain a large amount of chemical irritant intended for law enforcement use, they may contravene the Chemical Weapons Convention, and should therefore not be used by States party to the Convention.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>ODIHR and Venice Commission: "Devices with indiscriminate effects such as tear gas ... should be used for the purpose of dispersal only and should not be used where people (participants / bystanders; violent / peaceful persons) cannot leave the scene. They should only be used if violence has reached such a level that targeting individuals engaged in violence is not a possible or sufficient response."<sup>115</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>These munitions may be prohibited under the Chemical Weapons Convention. The Convention only permits the trade of chemical irritants and associated dispersal mechanisms intended for law enforcement purposes where the "types and quantities [of toxic chemicals] are consistent with such purposes". Without further clarification from State Parties to the Convention, it is impossible to determine whether these large munitions are in violation of the Convention.</p> <p>If they are not covered under the Convention, some national export control regimes include this type of projectile on their list of equipment that requires an export licence.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be prohibited.</p> <p>Transfer should be prohibited.</p> <p>Use should be prohibited.</p>

<sup>115</sup> Venice Commission and OSCE/ODIHR, *Guidelines on freedom of peaceful assembly (3<sup>d</sup> edition)*, 8 July 2019, pp. 72-73.





◀ ▲ 120 mm rifled CS mortar bomb



◀ 64 mm CS cartridge projectile with 4 submunition disks



## 5.8 LARGE PORTABLE SPRAYERS

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>One or two large tanks or canisters carried on the back or over the shoulder (depending on size and model). These usually have a capacity between 1 and 5 litres. The trigger and nozzle designs vary.</p> <p>Chemical irritant can be dispersed via short bursts or through a continuous spray until the tank is empty. These systems can disperse a spray or a liquid stream.</p> <p>Could contain any chemical irritant or a malodorant (<a href="#">see pp. 88-93</a>), or mixture thereof.</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>Use of large portable sprayers to disperse chemical irritants can cause serious injury or death through asphyxiation or agent toxicity, particularly if they are used in enclosed spaces or against restrained individuals.</p> <p>Although certain sprayers can be used to target individuals or small groups, the employment of large capacity foggers or sprayers risks indiscriminately affecting everyone in the area.</p> <p>The use of these sprayers increases the risk of a panic-driven stampede, and the high volume of irritant dispersed and the wide area effect could prevent persons from escaping.</p> <p>Such systems could be readily employed to collectively ill-treat or punish large groups of people.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>ODIHR and Venice Commission: "Devices with indiscriminate effects such as tear gas ... should be used for the purpose of dispersal only and should not be used where people (participants / bystanders; violent / peaceful persons) cannot leave the scene. They should only be used if violence has reached such a level that targeting individuals engaged in violence is not a possible or sufficient response."<sup>116</sup></p> <p>OHCHR: "A chemical irritant should be used only...when its delivery against a target is accurate".<sup>117</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation controls the export of equipment.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be controlled.</p> <p>Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p> <p>Use should be in-line with international human right standards.</p>

<sup>116</sup> Venice Commission and OSCE/ODIHR, *Guidelines on freedom of peaceful assembly (3<sup>d</sup> edition)*, 8 July 2019, pp. 72-73.

<sup>117</sup> OHCHR, UN Human Rights *Guidance on less-lethal weapons in law enforcement*, 2020, para 7.2.3



▲ Backpack sprayer



▲ Shoulder/underarm sprayer

**6.**

**LAUNCHERS FOR  
LESS LETHAL  
PROJECTILES**

## 06 | LAUNCHERS FOR LESS LETHAL PROJECTILES

Less lethal launchers are a type of firearm that fires less lethal ammunition. Such ammunition can be used by law enforcement officers to control or disperse protests (for further details on less lethal ammunition please see sections on [chemical irritants](#) and [launched kinetic impact projectiles](#)).

These launchers are often referred to as riot guns, anti-riot guns, crowd control weapons, or less lethal/less than lethal/non-lethal launchers. The launchers come in many different shapes, sizes, and calibres. Common calibres include 37/38 mm, 40 mm, 56 mm, and 12 gauge (shotguns). The launchers may be generic launchers that fire a wide range of less lethal ammunition, or specially designed compressed-air guns that fire small, specialist, projectiles.

### Use

Less lethal launchers are mostly designed to be fired from a distance, although this does depend on the design of the launcher and the specific type of ammunition used. If ammunition from less lethal launchers is aimed at vulnerable parts of the body, such as the head or chest, the ammunition fired from the launchers can cause serious injury or death.

### Potential Injuries

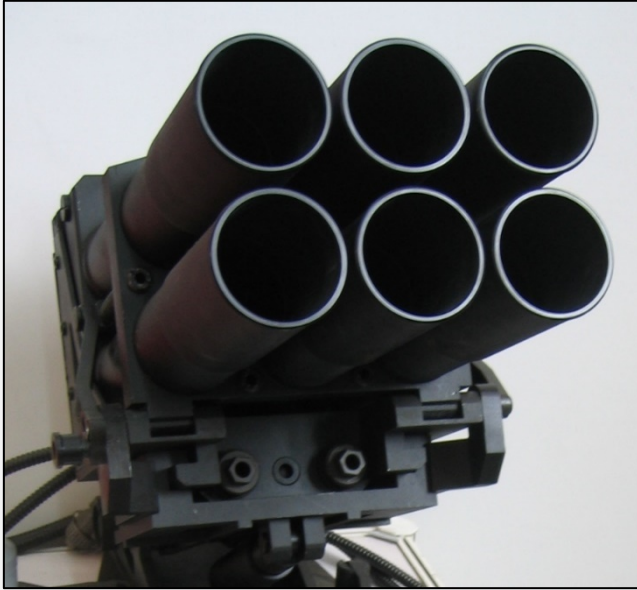
The impact trauma of ammunition fired from less lethal launchers, which in some cases can be life threatening, can include:

- bruises
- broken bones
- internal bleeding and damage to organs
- temporary or permanent damage to eyesight
- concussion and other head injuries.

## 6.1 FIXED OR MOUNTABLE MULTIPLE BARREL LAUNCHERS

<p><b>Key Technical Features</b></p>	<p>The range of the launcher and number of barrels varies. Current models typically have between 2 and 36 barrels, although some have more. Some models can be stacked to increase the number of barrels.</p> <p>These launchers can be stand-alone or mounted onto vehicles, such as 4x4 vehicles, unmanned ground vehicles, or seafaring vessels.</p> <p>Launchers can also be mounted onto permanent structures such as prisons, or other buildings.</p> <p>The launchers can be manually operated via direct operator contact or via remote control.</p> <p>The nature of these weapons allows for individual, sequential, or simultaneous firing of kinetic impact munitions or chemical irritants, resulting in rapid fire or bursts of fire.</p>
<p><b>Human Rights Concerns</b></p>	<p>These launchers can be inaccurate and can be affected by weather conditions, increasing the risk of head or upper body injury.</p> <p>If fired at close-range, these weapons can cause severe injury or death.</p> <p>Their use could lead to injuries resulting from panic and stampedes, particularly when used in larger enclosed areas or where only a small or limited exit is provided.</p> <p>Their use fulfils no legitimate law enforcement purpose that cannot be achieved through less harmful means.</p>
<p><b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b></p>	<p>UNODC and OHCHR: "Weapons that fire multiple projectiles at the same time, or that otherwise cannot be targeted at a specific individual, should never be used due to the risk of injury to bystanders."<sup>118</sup></p>
<p><b>Examples of Existing Controls</b></p>	<p>Some national export control regimes include these weapons on their list of equipment that requires an export licence.</p> <p>As some countries class these weapons as 'civilian' or 'policing' rather than 'military', they are not always adequately controlled and reported.</p> <p>The EU may prohibit the export of these weapons under its sanction regime when the objective of the sanctions is to prevent the export of weapons that might be used for internal repression in the destination state.</p>
<p><b>Proposed Control</b></p>	<p>Manufacture should be controlled.</p> <p>Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p> <p>Use should conform with international human rights standards.</p>

<sup>118</sup> UNODC and OHCHR, *Resource book on the use of force and firearms in law enforcement*, 2017, p. 94.



◀ **Multiple barrel less lethal grenade launchers**



◀ **Stackable multi barrel less lethal grenade launchers**

## 6.2 AERIAL LAUNCHERS

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	These weapons consist of a launcher attached to a manned or unmanned aerial vehicle, which can disperse chemical irritants over a wide area.
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>Aerial vehicles may not allow for sufficient accuracy in targeting to ensure lawful use.</p> <p>Any aerial vehicle must remain under meaningful human control, and all decisions to launch less lethal projectiles must be carried out by a human operator for accountability purposes, and to ensure compliance with international human rights standards.</p> <p>Use of these weapons can be indiscriminate, if used at a demonstration, bystanders can be affected even if they are not the target.</p> <p>If munitions are dropped over or launched directly at an individual or group, the kinetic energy of any impact of the projectile or munition carries a risk of unnecessary injury amounting to excessive force. This risk is significantly greater when munitions are dropped from a great height or a cartridge is launched from a weapon.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	UNODC and OHCHR: "Weapons that fire multiple projectiles at the same time, or that otherwise cannot be targeted at a specific individual, should never be used due to the risk of injury to bystanders." <sup>119</sup>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>The EU Anti-Torture Regulation controls the export of this type of equipment.</p> <p>The US CCL controls the export of this type of equipment.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be controlled.</p> <p>Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p> <p>Use should conform with international human rights standards.</p>

<sup>119</sup> UNODC and OHCHR, *Resource book on the use of force and firearms in law enforcement*, 2017, p. 94.





▲ An unmanned aerial vehicle with launcher attached



## 6.3 HAND-HELD LAUNCHERS

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>The design of hand-held launchers varies, and they can be single-, double-barrel or multi-shot launchers.</p> <p>These launchers allow for individual or sequential firing of kinetic impact projectiles or chemical irritants, resulting in rapid fire or bursts of fire.</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>These launchers can be inaccurate and affected by weather conditions, increasing the risk of head and upper body injury.</p> <p>When multi-shot launchers are used in automatic fire mode, they are particularly inaccurate, and it is difficult to accurately target an individual.</p> <p>If these weapons are fired at close-range, they can cause severe injury or death.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>To the best of Omega’s knowledge, there are no statements or standards from human rights bodies on this specific type of equipment, but standards on the use of kinetic impact projectiles and chemical irritants more generally apply.</p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>Some national export control regimes include these weapons on their list of equipment that requires an export licence. As some states class these weapons as 'civilian' or 'policing' rather than 'military', they are not always adequately controlled and reported.</p> <p>The EU may prohibit the export of these weapons under its sanction regime when the objective of the sanctions is to prevent the export of weapons that might be used for internal repression in the destination state.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be controlled.</p> <p>Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p> <p>Use should conform with international human rights standards.</p>



◀ **Single-shot less lethal  
grenade launchers**



◀ **Two-barrel less lethal  
grenade launcher**



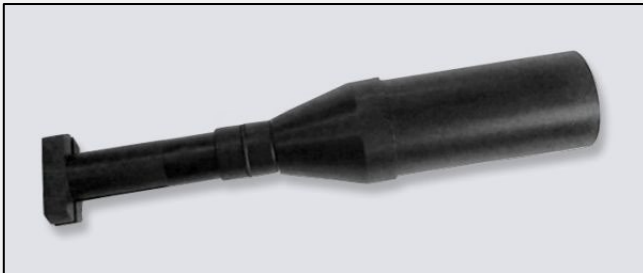
◀ **Multi-shot less lethal  
grenade launcher**

## 6.4 LAUNCHING CUPS

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>Launching cups are a metal attachment that fit over the barrel of the shotgun or rifle.</p> <p>A less lethal grenade is then inserted into the launching cup and a blank cartridge fired, which expels the grenade.</p> <p>The cups can be fitted to the barrels of conventional shotguns or assault rifles, turning them into less lethal weapons.</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>These weapons can be inaccurate and affected by weather conditions, increasing the risk of head and upper body injury.</p> <p>If fired at close range, this weapon can cause severe injury or death.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>To the best of Omega’s knowledge, there are no statements or standards from human rights bodies on this specific type of equipment, but standards on the use of kinetic impact projectiles and chemical irritants more generally apply.</p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>Some national export control regimes include these weapons on their list of equipment that requires an export licence. As some states class these weapons as 'civilian' or 'policing' rather than 'military', they are not always adequately controlled and reported.</p> <p>The EU may prohibit the export of these weapons under its sanction regime when the objective of the sanctions is to prevent the export of weapons that might be used for internal repression in the destination state.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be controlled.</p> <p>Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p> <p>Use should conform with international human rights standards.</p>



▲ Launching cup with 38mm grenade



◀▲ Launching cup with 38mm grenade

## 6.5 SHOTGUNS

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	Shotguns are usually 12 gauge, and can be single- or double-barrelled.
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>Shotguns can fire both less lethal ammunition and lethal ammunition (See <a href="#">p. 45</a>).</p> <p>Shotguns can be inaccurate and affected by weather conditions, which increases the risk of head and upper body injury.</p> <p>If fired at close range, shotguns can cause severe injury or death.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	To the best of Omega’s knowledge, there are no statements or standards from human rights bodies on this specific type of equipment, but standards on the use of kinetic impact projectiles and chemical irritants more generally apply.
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>Some national export control regimes include these weapons on their list of equipment that requires an export licence. As some states class this equipment as 'civilian' or 'policing' rather than 'military', they are not always adequately controlled and reported.</p> <p>The EU may prohibit the export of these weapons under its sanction regime when the objective of the sanctions is to prevent the export of weapons that might be used for internal repression in the destination state.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be controlled.</p> <p>Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p> <p>Use should be in line with international human rights standards.</p>





▲ Various shotgun designs

**7.**

**OTHER CROWD  
CONTROLS  
WEAPONS AND  
EQUIPMENT**

## **07** | **OTHER CROWD CONTROLS WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT**

A range of other weapons and equipment may be used by law enforcement officers. In addition to some ad hoc or improvised weapons, officers also use a range of specially-designed weapons not already discussed in this Guide. Some of these specially-designed weapons and equipment are discussed in the section below.



## 7.1 ACOUSTIC HAILING DEVICES

<p><b>Key Technical Features</b></p>	<p>Acoustic hailing devices are also known as ‘sound cannons’, ‘hail and warn devices’, and ‘loud hailers’.</p> <p>Acoustic hailing devices are loudspeakers or megaphones that can be used to either convey voice instructions over a large area, or emit a loud, high frequency ‘deterrent tone’, which is designed to disperse a crowd.</p> <p>Acoustic hailing devices can be free-standing, vehicle-mounted, embedded in a riot control shield, or body-worn (i.e. over the shoulder or strapped to the chest).</p> <p>Certain acoustic devices are designed to target only young people. These emit a high frequency sound, which is irritating and often painful to most people under 20, but that is barely audible to older people.</p>
<p><b>Human Rights Concerns</b></p>	<p>Acoustic devices are indiscriminate, as they cannot be used to target an individual without affecting others nearby.</p> <p>Use of these weapons carries a risk of permanent hearing damage, ear drum rupture, and loss of equilibrium or balance.</p>
<p><b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b></p>	<p>Council of Europe - Parliamentary Assembly: the use of acoustic hailers that target young people violates human rights, including the prohibition of discrimination, the prohibition of torture or other ill-treatment, and, depending on the circumstances, also violates the right of the child to freedom of peaceful assembly.<sup>120</sup></p> <p>OCHCR: “the indiscriminate use...against a crowd, or against targeted individuals at a range where the decibel output is likely to cause permanent hearing damage, would be unlawful.”<sup>121</sup></p>
<p><b>Examples of Existing Controls</b></p>	<p>Some national export control regimes include these weapons on their list of equipment that requires an export licence.</p>
<p><b>Proposed Control</b></p>	<p>Manufacture should be controlled.</p> <p>Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p> <p>Use should conform with international human rights standards.</p>

<sup>120</sup> Council of Europe - Parliamentary Assembly, “Prohibiting the marketing and use of the “Mosquito” youth dispersal device”, *Recommendation 1930* (2010) Final version, adopted on 25 June 2010, paras. 9-12.

<sup>121</sup> OHCHR, UN Human Rights Guidance on Less-Lethal Weapons in Law Enforcement, 2020, para. 7.8.5.



◀ **Vehicle-mounted acoustic hailing device**



◀ **Free-standing acoustic hailing device**

## 7.2 ACTIVE DENIAL SYSTEMS

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>Active denial systems are a type of directed-energy weapon, designed to heat the skin with a focused beam of millimetre wave energy.</p> <p>This weapons technology is currently under development, although vehicle-mounted models as well as models for indoor use have both been marketed.</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>A directed energy beam is silent and invisible, making avoidance of the weapon difficult or impossible, which could stop people from dispersing safely, and could lead to panic-driven stampedes.</p> <p>A long exposure to directed energy, especially one at higher power, could potentially lead to third-degree burns and potentially life-threatening injuries.</p> <p>The energy beam can be widened, which can result in dangerous full body exposure, the targeting of more than one person at a time, or the targeting of a crowd indiscriminately. This risk is particularly the case for larger models.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>OHCHR: "The use of [directed-energy weapons liable to cause serious injury] is widely considered to violate international human rights law. They should not be used in law enforcement."<sup>122</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>These weapons are not widely used and to the best of Omega's knowledge, there are no trade controls on this specific type of weapon.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Independent and transparent medical and human rights-compliance testing is required before decision to manufacture, purchase, or use.</p>

<sup>122</sup> OHCHR, *UN human rights guidance on less-lethal weapons in law enforcement*, 2020, para 5.1.



▲ Active denial system

## 7.3 POLICE DOGS

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>Police use a range of dog breeds in public order policing, including Belgian Malinois, German Shepherd, and Doberman Pinscher. The dogs used are generally large, strong, and aggressive.</p> <p>During a public gathering, police dogs may be used as both a deterrent and an instrument of force. Specific uses include supporting cordons, escorting marches, crowd dispersal, or assisting in the arrest or detention of an individual.</p> <p>Training practices for dogs vary, and they may be trained to bark on command, for example, or tackle targeted individuals.</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>The use of these dogs to police protests and control crowds is problematic, as even a highly-trained dog can attack indiscriminately and the injuries they can cause may be disproportionate to the threat posed.</p> <p>Being attacked by police dogs can be particularly traumatic for the victim, and can leave lasting mental scars.</p> <p>Studies have shown that police dogs tend to bite multiple times, often in the head, neck, upper arms, and chest.<sup>123</sup></p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>International Committee of the Red Cross: "the presence of police dogs at a demonstration is easily perceived by participants as an act of aggression on the part of law enforcement officials. Furthermore, dogs do not distinguish between offenders and bystanders; if not kept under tight control, they may well bite anyone who comes within their reach."<sup>124</sup></p> <p>ODIHR: "the use of dogs may be perceived as intimidating, provocative, or offensive", "dogs cannot discriminate between those who are breaking the law and those who are not", and "[d]ogs should not be used for riot control, containment or dispersal."<sup>125</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>To the best of Omega's knowledge, there are no controls on the transfer of police dogs (other than controls on animal exports).</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Training should conform with international human rights standards.</p> <p>Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p> <p>Use should conform with international human rights standards.</p>

<sup>123</sup> See Peter C. Meade, 'Police and domestic dog bite injuries: What are the differences? What are the implications about police dog use?', *Injury Extra*, Volume 37, Issue 11, 2006, Pages 395-401.

<sup>124</sup> International Committee of the Red Cross, *To serve and protect: Human rights and humanitarian law for police and security services*, 2014, p. 185.

<sup>125</sup> OSCE/ODIHR, *Human rights handbook on policing assemblies*, 2016, p. 72.





▲ Police Dog © Michael Perekas.



▲ Police dog display © Andrew Campbell.

## 7.4 POLICE HORSES

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>Law enforcement officers deployed on horses are commonly referred to as 'mounted police'.</p> <p>Mounted police are deployed during assemblies to monitor and gather information, as well as for their deterrent effect, to disperse crowds, or to create a cordon.</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>Horses can react unpredictably when frightened or over stimulated, which may lead to nearby protesters or bystanders being injured.</p> <p>Due to the elevated position of the officer, any use of striking weapons (batons) by mounted police carries the risk of targeted individuals being struck on the head, potentially leading to serious injury or death.</p> <p>Certain groups may be particularly vulnerable when horses are used to disperse a crowd, particularly those with limited mobility, slow reaction times, or impaired sight (including persons with disabilities, elderly persons, children, pregnant people, for example).</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>ODIHR: "there is a risk of serious bodily injury or death if horses are deployed in inappropriate circumstances, while also noting that their mere presence could unnecessarily escalate tensions."<sup>126</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>To the best of Omega's knowledge, there are no controls on the transfer of police horses (other than controls on animal exports).</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Training should conform with international human rights standards Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p> <p>Use should be in-line with international human rights standards.</p>

<sup>126</sup> OSCE/ODIHR, Handbook on Monitoring Freedom of Peaceful Assembly, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 2020, p. 72.



▲ Horses trained for use in crowd management © Stuart Grout



## 7.5 BARBED OR RAZOR WIRE BARRIERS OR FENCES

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<b>Key Technical Features</b>	Fencing or other type of barrier, which has sharp wire fixed perpendicular to the main body. The barrier is often coiled for transport, and can then be deployed quickly.
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>The use of barriers that have an offensive function beyond the primary purpose of restricting access or movement, such as barbed wire, razor wire, or any other spiked barrier, is disproportionate and unnecessary in a crowd control setting, and should be prohibited.</p> <p>This use of type of barrier as a form of crowd control creates an ongoing, indiscriminate, and uncontrollable risk of unintentional or disproportionate injury.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	OHCHR: "Physical barriers should never be such as to pose a risk to safety. Barbed wire, razor wire or other spiked barriers typically create an undue risk of injury to participants in an assembly. Where a barrier is needed, safer alternatives should be employed". <sup>127</sup>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	The EU may prohibit the export of this equipment under its sanction regime when the objective of the sanctions is to prevent the export of equipment that might be used for internal repression in the destination state.
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be controlled.</p> <p>Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p> <p>Prohibited for use in crowd control.</p>

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<sup>127</sup> OHCHR, UN Human Rights Guidance on Less-Lethal Weapons in Law Enforcement, 2020, para. 6.3.5.



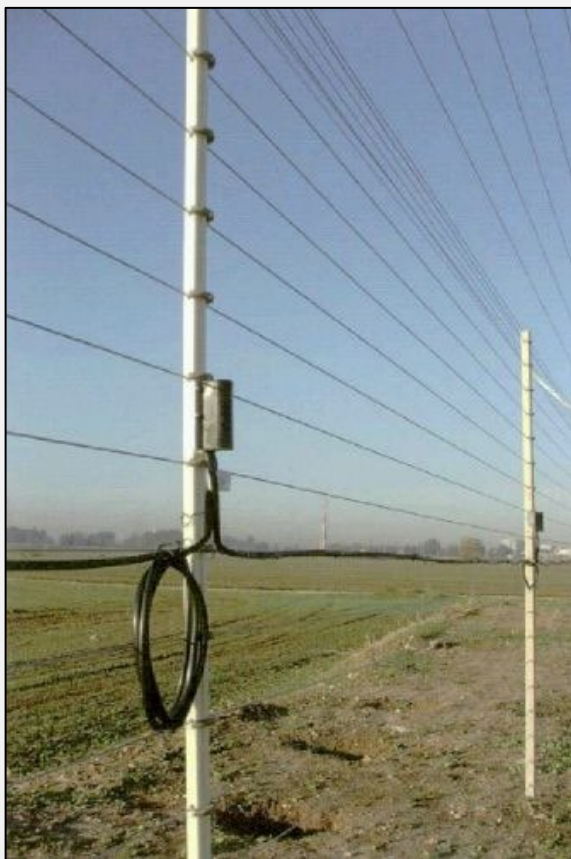
▲ Rapid deployment razor wire

## 7.6 ELECTRIC FENCES OR BARRIERS

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<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>Fencing or other type of barrier that can deliver an electric shock when touched.</p> <p>There are various makes and types of electric barriers or fences. Some can deliver shocks that are potentially injurious or even fatal, and others may deliver painful but not injurious shocks.</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>The use of barriers that have an offensive function beyond the primary purpose of restricting access or movement, such as electric fencing or barrier, is disproportionate and unnecessary in a crowd control setting, and should be prohibited.</p> <p>This type of barrier creates an ongoing, indiscriminate, and uncontrollable risk of unintentional or disproportionate injury.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>To the best of Omega’s knowledge, there are no statements or standards from human rights bodies on this equipment.</p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>To the best of Omega’s knowledge, there are no trade controls on this type of equipment.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be controlled.</p> <p>Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p> <p>Prohibited for use in crowd control.</p>

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▲ Fixed perimeter electric fences

## 7.7 BLINDING LASERS

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>Blinding lasers can be rifle-shaped with bipods and picatinny rail, shaped like a baton, or designed to be attached as accessories to small arms or light weapons.</p> <p>These weapons are specifically designed to be used to cause permanent blindness or severe damage to vision.</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>Blinding lasers can cause permanent loss or damage to vision, blurred vision, sensitivity to light, and headaches.</p> <p>Owing to the recent and ongoing development of these weapons, as of 2021, there has either been a lack of testing of blinding lasers, or a lack of reporting on any testing that has taken place.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons: blinding weapons are “excessively injurious”.<sup>128</sup></p> <p>OHCHR: “The use of [blinding lasers] is widely considered to violate international human rights law. They should not be used in law enforcement”<sup>129</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>Blinding lasers are prohibited under Protocol IV of the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be prohibited.</p> <p>Transfer should be prohibited.</p> <p>Use should be prohibited.</p>

<sup>128</sup> UN, *Convention on Prohibitions or Restrictions on the Use of Certain Conventional Weapons Which May be Deemed to be Excessively Injurious or to Have Indiscriminate Effects*, (As Amended on 21 December 2001), 10 October 1980, 1342 UNTS 137, Protocol IV.

<sup>129</sup> OHCHR, UN *Human rights guidance on less-lethal weapons in law enforcement*, 2020, para 5.1.



▲ Rifle-shaped blinding laser

## 7.8 DAZZLING LASERS

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>Dazzling lasers are optical weapons or ocular disruption devices, which normally include a laser or LEDs. These weapons are intended to cause temporary loss of vision, but no long-term damage to the eyes.</p> <p>Most contemporary dazzling systems operate in either the red or green areas of the electromagnetic spectrum.</p> <p>Some products can “dazzle” suspects from up to 1000m in daylight, and up to 3000m at night.</p> <p>Dazzling laser weapons can be rifle-shaped with bipods and picatinny rail, shaped like a baton, or designed to be attached as accessories to small arms or light weapons.</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>Use of dazzling lasers may cause permanent loss or damage to vision, blurred vision, sensitivity to light, and headaches. Secondary injuries from falls, for example, may also occur as a result of the use of dazzling lasers to cause temporary loss of vision.</p> <p>As of 2021, there has either been a lack of testing done on dazzling lasers, or a lack of reporting on that testing.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>OHCHR: dazzling weapons should not be used “with intent to blind or where permanent blindness is the likely outcome.”<sup>130</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>To the best of Omega’s knowledge, there are no controls on the transfer of this equipment.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be controlled.</p> <p>Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p> <p>Use should be in-line with international human rights norms.</p>

<sup>130</sup> OHCHR, *UN human rights guidance on less-lethal weapons in law enforcement*, para 7.6.4.





▲ Baton-shaped dazling laser



◀ Rifle-shaped dazling laser



▲ Dazling laser for mounting on a weapon.



## 7.9 SHIELDS

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>Shield design varies, and can be round, rectangular, or square.</p> <p>Convex or flat models are most often used for policing public gatherings.</p> <p>Concave rectangular models are most often used in places of detention for cell extractions.</p> <p>Shields are often transparent or contain a transparent window to facilitate officer visual awareness.</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>If a shield is used offensively shield strikes to the vulnerable areas such as the head or neck can increase the risk of serious injury or death.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>ODIHR: "Care should be taken not to use the edge of the shield offensively, as this can cause serious injuries, especially with strikes to the head or neck area, which may be lethal."<sup>131</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be controlled.</p> <p>Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p> <p>Use should conform with international human rights standards.</p>

<sup>131</sup> OSCE/ODIHR, *Human Rights Handbook on Policing Assemblies*, 2016, p. 76



▲ Transparent shield



▲ Shield with transparent window



▲ Crowd control training with shields

## 7.10 STUN GRENADES (FLASHBANG, DISTRACTION DEVICES)

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>Explosive charge from a stun grenade causes a loud bang (approx. 160 - 180 decibels) and as well as a near simultaneous bright flash of light. Combined, these are designed to cause temporary blindness and loss of hearing. This disorientation can cause individuals to panic.</p> <p>Some types of stun grenades also disperse chemical irritant.</p> <p>A range of calibre and types of models are available, which can be hand-thrown or rifle-fired.</p> <p>Parts of the grenade may become shrapnel when it explodes.</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>There Use of stun grenades can cause is a risk of long-term damage to hearing or sight following the use of stun grenades, due to loud noise and bright flash of light.</p> <p>Stun grenades can cause serious injury or death if thrown directly at an individual.</p> <p>Shrapnel from the explosion of the grenade may cause injuries.</p> <p>Their use can cause panic-driven stampedes.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>OHCHR: “[t]he use of pyrotechnic flash-bang grenades directly against a person would be unlawful”.<sup>132</sup></p> <p>Special Rapporteur on Torture: “disorientation devices” are “[w]eapons that might not be inherently cruel, inhuman or degrading [but] may nonetheless carry significant risks of being used in a manner contrary to the prohibition of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment, thus placing particular emphasis on the requirement of precautions.”<sup>133</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>Some national export control regimes include these weapons on their list of equipment that requires an export licence.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be controlled.</p> <p>Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p> <p>The use of stun grenades should be prohibited as a method of crowd dispersal.</p>

<sup>132</sup> OHCHR, *UN human rights guidance on less-lethal weapons in law enforcement*, 2020, para. 6.1.4.

<sup>133</sup> UN HRC, *Extra-custodial use of force and the prohibition of torture and other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment : note / by the Secretary-General*, 2017, paras. 52-53.



## 7.11 WATER CANNON

<b>Key Technical Features</b>	<p>A high-pressure system that shoots jets of water, often mixed with chemical irritants or dye, over dozens of metres.</p> <p>Water cannon are often mounted on crowd control vehicles, but they can also be mounted on buildings or carried as a backpack.</p> <p>Water cannon are used to disperse crowds, keep crowds at a distance, and support police cordons.</p>
<b>Human Rights Concerns</b>	<p>The power of the water jet can knock a person over, push people into fixed objects, or pick up loose objects and propel them as missiles.</p> <p>When water cannon contain a mixture of water and chemical irritants, it impossible to deliver accurate and targeted doses of the irritant. As such, they are indiscriminate and potentially harmful.</p> <p>In the context of a public gathering, any use of water cannon will affect all people in the vicinity, creating a high likelihood of affecting bystanders. Even when targeting those engaged in criminal activity, use of water cannon risks causing them disproportionate harm.</p> <p>The use of water cannon at sub-zero temperatures can cause hypothermia and frostbite.</p>
<b>Statements and Standards from Human Rights Bodies</b>	<p>UNODC and OHCHR: "A water cannon should not be used indiscriminately against a crowd ... Water cannons should not be used against anyone who is unable to move, for example protesters who have locked themselves on a fence, older persons, injured persons or persons with disabilities, children and individuals at elevated height."<sup>134</sup></p> <p>ODIHR: recommendations on the use of water cannons include, "[They] should never be used to disperse a peaceful assembly" and "The presence of a water cannon can be seen as intimidating or as a provocation by the participants in the assembly"<sup>135</sup></p>
<b>Examples of Existing Controls</b>	<p>The US CCL controls the export of this equipment.</p> <p>The EU may prohibit the export of this vehicle under its sanction regime when the objective of the sanctions is to prevent the export of equipment that might be used for internal repression.</p> <p>Depending on specification, some countries also control the export of the crowd control vehicles on which water cannon are mounted.</p>
<b>Proposed Control</b>	<p>Manufacture should be controlled.</p> <p>Trade and transfer should be controlled.</p> <p>Use should conform with international human rights standards.</p>

<sup>134</sup> UNODC and OHCHR, *Resource book on the use of force and firearms in law enforcement*, 2017, p. 90.

<sup>135</sup> OSCE/ODIHR, *Human rights handbook on policing assemblies*, 2016, pp. 77-78.





◀ **Water cannon mounted on large crowd control vehicle**



◀ **Water cannon mounted on small crowd control vehicle**

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